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War conditions having rendered it impracticable to hold an Ordinary Meeting on February 15th, 1943, the Paper for that date was circulated to subscribers and is here published, together with the written discussion elicited.

*THE WHOLESOMENESS OF CHRISTIANITY, AS
SHOWN IN THE UNITED STATES, NEW ZEALAND
AND CERTAIN PACIFIC ISLANDS.*

By Rev. PROF. A. K. RULE, PH.D.

BY the term "wholesomeness" as applied to Christianity in this paper, we shall mean its tendency to produce and to maintain social health. We would agree that Christianity also has a tendency to promote individual health, but for the present we confine our attention to social health. Our method must be, not a speculative deduction from the nature of ideal Christianity, but a frank survey of the actual outcome of Christian influences in certain definite geographical areas. These areas are chosen, negatively, because other areas have been or will be dealt with by other writers, and, positively, because this writer possesses a combination of first and second hand acquaintance with them that perhaps justifies a judgment. The historical facts which we shall cite are perfectly straightforward and well known, requiring no defence; but to characterize a tendency as "wholesome" is to pronounce a value judgment, and that is a very different matter. Value judgments, if seriously challenged, are notoriously difficult to defend. We can only endeavour to confine ourselves to judgments that will not be widely or stubbornly gainsaid. In short, we must appeal to common sense for our social evaluations.

The Pacific Ocean areas with which we shall deal are New Zealand, the Hawaiian Islands and the Fiji Islands. They offer some striking points of agreement and of difference sufficient to enable us to make a loose employment of the Joint Method of Agreement and Difference and thus to reach a fairly definite decision. There can, I think, be little doubt as to the splendid social health of any of the three. Judged by any of the standards by means of which social health is ordinarily estimated, or by all of them, each of these areas would rank high. In all of them

life is pleasant ; education is free and compulsory, and literacy is common ; crime is relatively infrequent ; the administration of justice is impartial and progressive ; the institutions of social mercy are adequate ; the now famous " four freedoms " are valued and enjoyed. When these three areas are compared, in these respects, with many another region, they stand out so clearly that some explanation of their high social achievement is imperatively demanded. Whatever it is, it must be something that is common to these three areas and that is lacking in less successful places. What can it be ?

It will perhaps be readily granted by all, except those who are bound to acknowledge only economic explanations of social facts, that a full explanation cannot be found in the common prosperity of these three areas. That all three were favoured by Nature, that they are now relatively prosperous, and that this has contributed something to their achievement of social health will not, we assume, be denied. But it would not be difficult to point to other regions that compare favourably in natural advantages and in actual prosperity but have made a very different record in respect to social health. It seems clear that the difference in this kind of achievement between the unnamed areas and those that have been mentioned must be due to some differences in the human factor. What might they be ?

It will be acknowledged that the native peoples in New Zealand, Hawaii and Fiji have proved to be good stock, and that apart from their natural capacities no such achievement of social health would have been possible ; but, on the other hand, it cannot be admitted that a sufficient explanation of the social success is to be found in the native characteristics of the aborigines. The natives of Hawaii and of New Zealand are Polynesians, and it has been demonstrated that, under certain conditions, people of this stock are capable of splendid social achievement ; but the high achievement must be attributed to the combination of their natural capacity and the proper conditions, for, under different conditions, no marked achievement of social health has appeared. The Fiji natives are of a different racial origin. It would not be difficult to point to other native peoples, of similar racial origins, who have failed thus far to achieve high and healthy social goals. It thus appears that, though the native capacity of the aborigines in New Zealand, Hawaii and Fiji has undoubtedly been a condition of the splendid

social achievements in those areas, it does not constitute a sufficient cause.

Shall we say, then, that the splendid social health achieved in these areas is due to the impact of white civilization, under favourable economic conditions, on a capable native people? The facts make it evident that, with such a statement, we are approaching the explanation that we seek; for, though social health on a primitive level characterized these native peoples before the advent of the white man, their present high achievement clearly depends on white influences. But the statement as it stands cannot be accepted as adequate. Some of the white influences have been almost disastrous; others have been wholly good. At certain times, and in some other Pacific areas inhabited by natives of similar racial stocks, white influences have been bad or only moderately good. That being so, it ought to be possible to employ a Method of Concomitant Variations and thus to isolate the element or group of elements in the white influence that has been responsible for the high social achievement which we are seeking to explain.

The fact that stands out so clearly that it cannot be mistaken, is that white influences in all the Pacific areas have been socially constructive when, and in proportion as, they have been permeated by the spirit and principles of Christianity. Christianity has exerted its influence both directly and indirectly. We may say roughly that the direct influence has been exerted through Christian missions, through regular church organizations subsequently set up in these areas, and through the conscious efforts of people, working individually and through various social institutions to bring all of life into conformity with the teachings of Christ. The indirect influence has been exerted through the pervasive pressure of a society that has, to a large extent and often without realizing it, been Christianized. This indirect influence is made effective, not only through a Christianized society in general, but also through special institutions. Through their efforts to promote fair and progressive legislation, to administer justice, to secure adequate educational opportunities for all, to support works of mercy, to keep business practices on a high plane, and in numerous similar ways, the "secular" British and American governments, for example, are constantly serving as indirect agencies for the Christianizing of life in these areas. Now, our contention is that the achievement of social health in the areas under consideration, and the application of

these direct and indirect Christian influences, have varied together so closely that there must have been a causal relation between them. More specifically, the wholesomeness of life in these areas is the result of Christian influences, working directly and indirectly on native peoples who had a capacity for high living, and under economic and other circumstances that were, on the whole, favourable.

That the social health and the Christian influences have varied together there can be no doubt. In the Hawaiian Islands, direct Christian influences were brought to bear very early. As the islands developed economically the missionary families largely controlled that development, and they did so with wisdom and fairness. When conditions threatened to snatch the control of Hawaiian life out of such Christian hands, the American government was called in; and through it indirect Christian influences were mustered to supplement the good work of the earlier direct Christian influences. The outcome is an open book. A wholesome social life was developed in Hawaii from the first, and it has been maintained there in spite of a subsequent "flooding" of the Islands with people from non-Christian environments.

In New Zealand and Fiji the experience has been somewhat different. In their case, the direct and indirect Christian influences were somewhat tardy. The first effective contacts were through sailors and traders; and, in each case, social chaos rapidly appeared. Any student of New Zealand history will name, without doubt or hesitation, the event which brought about the change of social tendency in New Zealand. It was the coming of the Reverend Samuel Marsden, the first Christian missionary. His good work was continued and expanded by that of other missionaries, by the establishment of fully organized churches on a non-missionary basis, and by the indirectly Christian influence of the British government. That story has subsequently been reinacted in Fiji. And, as if to leave no possible doubt that it was something specifically Christian that brought such desirable results, and not simply an economic improvement, one incident in New Zealand history is particularly impressive. In an effort to deal fairly with the Maoris it was early decided that the purchase or renting of their land would be handled through the government. This action brought economic prosperity to the Maoris, and should have resulted directly in an improvement of their social health if the economic

theory of history is adequate. But as a matter of fact it resulted disastrously. Economic improvement is probably a necessary condition of high attainment in social health, but it is not a sufficient cause, and, by itself, may have exactly the opposite effect. The historical facts seem to justify the conclusion that the splendid social results achieved in Hawaii, New Zealand and Fiji are attributable to the broad, direct and indirect, impact of the Christian way of life on a people of good stock under favourable economic conditions.

In discussing the effect of Christianity on social health in the United States of America, we would claim (1) that this country has enjoyed certain advantages, as compared with the older countries of Europe, but has also presented some unusual obstacles to the achievement of social health; (2) that, partly for that reason, Christianity has here developed within itself certain characteristics which may have hampered it in its efforts to produce and maintain social health; and (3) that, for all that, the social history of this country as a whole, and numerous dramatic occurrences within it, prove the effectiveness of Christianity in producing and maintaining social health.

The great advantages enjoyed by this country were (1) a fresh beginning by men, the leaders among whom were motivated by the highest Christian idealism and guided to some extent by the record of successes in Europe which they might emulate and failures which they might avoid; and (2) an unusually fluid social condition which made promising experiments possible and mistakes remediable. It is recognized, of course, that these are not unmixed blessings, but it is claimed that, on the whole, these have been favourable aspects of the situation.

Among the handicaps we would mention first the great intermixture of peoples in this country. That, of course, has not been entirely a handicap, and it will probably prove, in the long run, to have been a very great blessing. But its blessed aspects appear only if, and in so far as, the obstacles which it presents are overcome. In itself it threatens social chaos, and, especially in its more recent form, it offers a great opportunity to certain other anti-social forces. That more recent form appeared along with the industrial revolution, which fostered the growth of large cities and the concentration in slum areas within them of unassimilated national and racial groups. This form of heterogeneity was bad enough in itself, but it also offered opportunities for vicious forms of economic and political

exploitation, poisoning the social organism and greatly hindering the development of social health. It is doubtful whether any other country has had to face this problem in as intensified a form.

A second handicap, or group of handicaps, has arisen out of the experimental nature of social life in general, and of political life in particular, in this country. Of course, all governments are to some extent experimental, if they are in any way progressive, and the government of Great Britain is notably of this character. But on your side of the Atlantic, experiments have been much more guided and restrained by a sense of continuity with the past. The Americans have not ignored the lessons of the past, of course, but they have often been much more strongly motivated by a desire to get away from the past, and so their experiments have been freer and more risky. As we indicated above, we believe that, on the whole, this characteristic of American life has been socially advantageous; but not all of the experiments have been accompanied by safeguards which a greater attachment to the past might have suggested, and the price has had to be paid. For example, the desire to give to the accused a greater assurance of justice than they seemed to be getting in Europe has brought about conditions that unduly favour criminals. Again, as a measure of assurance against governmental tyranny, the right to possess arms has been constitutionally guaranteed to the people. These two conditions, both due to high principles which were not adequately safeguarded, are the main reasons for the comparatively high incidence of violent crimes in America. Once more, the desire to afford to every man his rights in a democracy has opened the way for the "spoils system" in a particularly unabashed form. Here, again, we find a noble intention leading to disastrous moral results through lack of adequate safeguards. These and many another unfortunate result of the experimental nature of American social institutions have hindered the achievement of a splendid social health in the United States.

A third important handicap to the attainment and maintenance of social health has been the proximity, in space and time, of frontier conditions. Frontier conditions make for an individualism that all too readily develops into lawlessness. Something of the lawlessness of the frontier tends to seep back into adjacent areas that are more settled; people in the latter areas who resent the restraints of organized life tend to move to

the frontiers to avoid discipline or to live loose and undisciplined lives at home with the idea that, if they finally get into difficulties there, they can always escape to the frontiers. In these and other ways, the proximity of a frontier fosters restlessness and a certain shiftlessness. This is also the probable reason for the prominence of "revivalism" in an extreme form in American religious life and for the large number of "fad" religions which flourish in this country.

But, in spite of the peculiar handicaps, a very healthy social life has been attained in America; and it is generally admitted that religion has made an indispensable contribution to this achievement. It has done so through its steady, unspectacular, pervasive influence, and it has done so in certain dramatic movements. The latter, of course, are much easier to point out in a brief paper such as this, but something ought also to be said of the former.

The original Anglo-Saxon settlement in America was an outcome of a vast social revolution in England, and religion was perhaps the stimulus, certainly the focus, of that revolution. Thus, even if it be true, as has been claimed, that a majority of the original settlers had little religious interest, and that commercial motives were really uppermost in the founding of these colonies, it is still true that religion played a large part in the beginning of the English occupation of this country. One result was that definite efforts were early made to elevate the religious and social life of the Indians, with a degree of success that was not as slight as some historians would have us believe. Such work among the Indians has continued with decidedly happy results. A recent visit to a Navajo mission in Northern Arizona enables me to testify to that fact from personal observation. It is a fact, too, that the church was the social centre of most of the early communities, as it still is in many country districts and in numerous areas within our big cities. From these churches and from the schools which were often directed by them went forth into the communities almost the only influences of an elevating character to offset the drabness and coarseness of frontier life. The beneficent influence of the Sunday School movement, the Chatauqua movement which was its offspring, the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations, and of similar religiously motivated movements has been of incalculable amount in American life. Until the various states were ready to originate and maintain secondary schools the

churches filled the breach with their academies and parochial schools. Most of the colleges in America were founded by the churches, and many of them are still maintained by the church. Church people played a large part, too, in founding some of the State Universities. They have supported all the movements for social amelioration, and many of these movements have had little support from other sources. Such service on the part of the church has been much more pervasive than is sometimes supposed. For example, the first Medical School in the State of Illinois was a department of a church college, and a considerable number of the grade and high school teachers of America get both their general and specialized training in church supported colleges. The churches have flooded the country with religious periodicals, with devotional literature of various kinds, with missionary magazines. They taught America to sing, and hymns and sacred songs still form a sizable part of the musical expression of the American people. In ways like these, but too numerous to list exhaustively, religion has from the beginning exercised a pervasive, steady influence, raising the tone of social life and helping mightily to attain and maintain social health.

Among the more dramatic contributions to social health may be mentioned certain well-known revival movements and the movement indicated by the expression "the church follows the frontier." As the frontier swept across America from East to West, such socially healthy institutions as schools, libraries, hospitals and even law courts lagged behind, but the church kept pace with her itinerant missionaries, her settled missions and organized congregations, and presently her schools and colleges. The story is a thrilling one; the contribution to social health is undeniable and incalculable.

The best known of the revival movements are the Great Awakening which took place along the Atlantic seaboard about the middle of the eighteenth century, the Cumberland Revival which began about 1800 on the borders of Kentucky and Tennessee and spread through the surrounding territory, and the work of D. L. Moody at the close of the War Between the States. There has been a widespread tendency in recent years to decry revivalism, and in that interest much has been said of the exaggerated emotionalism of these and other revivals and of the impermanence of their results. That such criticisms are well founded cannot be gainsaid, but they do not tell the

whole story. There is something else about these revivals that cannot be denied either. In each case they were preceded by periods of extremely low moral and spiritual tone; and in each case the improvement which they wrought was unmistakable. If we had only the testimony of ministers for those claims the weight of such testimony would be impressive; but it might perhaps be dismissed or largely discounted by the cynical. But the dry and impartial court records substantiate the testimony of the clergy. Again and again, in the history of this country, periods of moral and spiritual lassitude which were produced now by one combination of circumstances and now by another, and which the churches were unable to prevent, have been terminated by energetic action on the part of the churches. These facts show what institution it is that has the power of producing social health. It is organized religion, and no other to anything like the same degree. And, while religion has not succeeded in preventing the occurrence of these periods of moral and spiritual lapse, few students of American social life would deny that the general trend of social health has been upward.

In America, as in the Pacific areas which we studied, religion has proved itself to be socially wholesome.

DISCUSSION.

Lieut.-Col. F. A. MOLONY said: The Victoria Institute is much indebted to Dr. Rule for his careful paper. A notable contribution to the series, which certainly has brought before us very strong evidence of the wholesomeness of Christianity under very varied circumstances.

We ought to take special note of what he says about the effect of U.S.A. laws regarding carrying firearms on the prevalence of crimes of violence in their country. His testimony regarding the wholesomeness of Christianity in Pacific islands is also noteworthy, being based on experience.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION.

Rev. Principal H. S. CURR wrote: The dominating place held by the Christian faith in the creation and maintenance of well-being in that unique organism, the body politic of the United States of America, seems to be demonstrated so effectively in Professor

Rule's paper that no impartial student can do otherwise than to concede his contentions which are stated with admirable moderation and modesty. A case like his gains by under-statement, and loses by extravagant emphasis.

There is an aspect of America's debt to Christianity which can never be overlooked. Professor Rule refers to the character of the Pilgrim Fathers who may be legitimately described as the founders of the great trans-Atlantic commonwealth. It is always desirable to remark that they were Puritans to the core, both in theology, piety, and morality. Their settlements were established on that foundation, and for a prolonged period these retained the principles of Puritanism as their guides and ideals. It is true that Puritanism no longer influences American religion and morals as it once did, but that does not imply its exhaustion or extinction. Men and women have a remarkable way of returning to their origins. Like Jacob, they are always going back to Bethel. That is illustrated very clearly in the story of the United States. The basic Puritanism which has been derived from the fathers and founders is always manifesting itself, although it is as invisible as the Gulf Stream, while equally potent. There may be times and seasons when it might seem hard to produce much convincing evidence of such a contention, but these are followed by other times and seasons which illustrate once again that profound and powerful saying of Our Lord, " Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit " (John xii, 24).

Two illustrations, strangely contrasted in character, will illustrate my meaning. One is drawn from the succession of American Presidents. Nothing is further from my thought than to suggest that all the occupants of the White House have been champions of the Puritanic ideal. But when they are compared with the succession of British Prime Ministers in the same period, a certain justification for this argument may be found. The other is based on the prevalence of Fundamentalism in the United States. That movement, whose genius is the defence and diffusion of the historic orthodoxy of the Christian Church, is much stronger in America than in Europe. This may well be due to the perseverance of the Puritan tradition, the savour of religious and moral salt in the life of nations, and, perhaps, in international affairs as well.

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THE ATONEMENT AND PSYCHOLOGY.

By Rev. Prof. J. G. MCKENZIE, M.A., D.D.

INTRODUCTION.

PSYCHOLOGY, as a science, is still suspect in many theological and philosophical quarters. To Barthians it is almost anathema; while to many others it seems to be an attempt to explain away the objectivity of religious experience rather than an aid to its explanation.

Nevertheless, there can be no question about the intimate relations between theology and psychology. Psychology describes and analyses the experiences; theology formulates its doctrines in relation to the objects of those experiences. Psychology has no technique whereby it could validate or invalidate the doctrine of God, the Incarnation, the Atonement or the Resurrection; but it does accept as psychological fact that men have experiences which they relate to these doctrines. "I saw God high and lifted up" is an experience; "I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me" is an experience; "Therefore, there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" is an experience. Every one of these experiences involve theological dogma; the concepts on which the dogmas are built may be true or false, but the experience is nevertheless psychologically real.

The central and indeed the crucial experience of the Christian believer is that of being reconciled to God, of being at one with Him, of sins forgiven, of being right with God. His experience of forgiveness and of being reconciled to God are immediate in exactly the same sense as I have an experience of a patch of colour. I may be wrong in referring my experience to an external world; or granting an external world, I may be mistaken as to the object to which I refer my experience of the patch