



# MORAL SCIENCE AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

ADDRESS DELIVERED, BY INVITATION OF  
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BY

CHARLES BEATTY ALEXANDER, LL.D., Litt.D.

A REGENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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## MORAL SCIENCE AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM

In asking me to speak at these commencement exercises, you have done me an honor which, for many reasons, I appreciate very highly. Any American, no matter from what part of the country he may come, should be impressed by visiting this university, and taking part in its proceedings. It bears the name of two great soldiers and statesmen—both men of sincerity and noble character. They fought for causes in which they believed most firmly, in the face of hardship and self-sacrifice. While the name of Washington reminds us that we are all sons of one fatherland, that of Lee tells us, I am sure, that old wounds have been healed; and that if by chance some scars remain, they are tokens of endurance and of dauntless courage.

The sister university, of which I have the honor to be a graduate, is associated not indeed with the name, but with the deeds of Washington. For a time he made his headquarters at Princeton, in Nassau Hall; and

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on the battlefield hard by, where Mercer, that brave Virginian fell, Washington won the day.

Moreover, among the many sons of the Old Dominion who have been educated at Princeton, there is one of whose deeds every alumnus is proud—I mean that gallant and brilliant warrior of the Revolution, “Light Horse Harry Lee.”

As a member of the Society of the Cincinnati, I am gratified to observe that you maintain the Cincinnati Orators Medal, in memory of a generous gift from the Virginia State Society.

This is a region of Virginia in which I feel myself particularly at home. My grandfather, Archibald Alexander, was born only a few miles east of Lexington, and his private diary, now in my possession, proves that throughout his long life he had a passionate affection for the very soil here—an affection like that of Scotsmen for their native moors and highlands, like that of the Swiss for their Alpine summits. He records the fact that his father gave the land for the erection of the buildings, at the time of the removal of Liberty Hall to Lexington, by William Graham in 1780.

Long before this institution had reached

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maturity, the people of Virginia, and especially of Augusta and Rockbridge county, showed a warm and intelligent enthusiasm for education and learning. In the midst of a society tossed about, sometimes furiously, by religious and political fanaticism, and imperiled by ignorance and vice, they looked forward with serene hope, and set before them high ideals.

This University is a conspicuous result of their ambition and wisdom. Names like those of Graham, Reid, Rice, Speece and Stanhope Smith, cannot be forgotten. They were men who educated themselves that they might inform others—fastidious classical scholars, accustomed to metaphysical and ethical meditation; and they were ready debaters. It was through the influence of that really great man Graham, of Liberty Hall, that my grandfather, Archibald Alexander, was inspired and enabled to begin, and to continue, his career as a man of learning, and at length to found at Princeton a theological school, to insure the higher education of the ministry. The unswerving fidelity to superior intellectual and moral principles, like that displayed by the men of Rockbridge county, has made this commonwealth not only a “mother of presidents” but a “mother of arts and eloquence.” The

earlier advocates of sound education here, led those about them to avoid many of the rocks of danger, and with clear eye and unfaltering resolution to steer for the open sea.

It was in thinking of these men of high character, and of their work, that I decided to speak to you to-day on the relation of moral teaching to the University, with special reference to academic freedom. In discussing this theme before such an audience I hope I may not be accused of bringing coals to Newcastle. The subject may seem to you dry and worn out; but every university man knows, that it is one of the most imminent and insistent questions, with which masters of education are now confronted. While I cannot claim wide experience, or commanding authority in presenting such a topic, I plead as an excuse for doing so, my great interest in education—an interest which has been deepened by my recent election, at a joint meeting of the Legislature of my State, to the historic office of Regent of the University of the State of New York.

I have said that this question is imminent, and it involves two important issues: I. How far is the university responsible for the teaching of moral science? II. If moral teaching is

given, what should be its character; what kind of moral principles should be taught?

## I

In this country there was a time, when the religious and moral aspects of education, were more conspicuous than they are now. The older colleges were, in nearly every case, founded under religious, if not under ecclesiastical auspices, and ethical instruction was naturally informed and inspired by religious doctrine. But at present our institutions of learning are becoming more and more non-sectarian. In many of them attendance at religious services is no longer compulsory; and where religious services are held, representatives of widely different denominations are heard from time to time in the university pulpit. This religious neutrality has led many of the churches to establish their own denominational colleges, which present definite religious and moral doctrine in a didactic form. But in the case of non-sectarian institutions we have to ask, how far are they responsible for giving ethical instruction to the students?

The rapid secularization of education which has lately taken place in France, makes that

country an excellent object lesson to us. The problem is presented very distinctly there, especially because, as a rule, the French dislike compromise, and are not afraid to draw extreme logical conclusions from their principles. The problem is significant chiefly at the universities, where moral discipline is necessarily rather lax, and where students released from the restraints of home life and of primary and secondary schools, are free to do that which is right in their own eyes. So acutely was this difficulty felt, that in the year 1911, the French Academy of Moral and Political Sciences offered prizes for the best treatises on "The Place that Moral Teaching Should Have in the Different Grades of Public Instruction." The subject has great importance, because the anti-clerical party has been successful. It insists upon religious neutrality. It forbids the teaching of religious ethics. Consequently, in certain quarters, there are fears entertained lest the morality of the people may suffer from the loose ethics taught in many of the French institutions of learning. Serious criticism is made by Frenchmen themselves of French society for its moral indifference. Writers point to the alarming increase of vice and crime, particularly among the young; to the



unbridled license of the French stage, to the relaxing of family ties, and to the neglect of religion. Compayré, an impartial authority, remarks, that although our age lacks virtue it does not lack professors of virtue, and that morality has never been taught so much and practised so little. He would not on this account, however, do away with moral instruction.

But a teacher in a French state school, in a recent book on "The New Pedagogy," is of a different opinion. He declares that not only institutions of learning, but the family itself, should be forbidden to teach morals, because such teaching is an infringement on personal liberty; that by teaching one cannot make an "honest man," for "we don't know what an honest man is." If it be asked what then becomes of morality and how shall society be conserved, he replies that morality and society must look out for themselves. Of course this anarchistic opinion is not widely shared, although William James admitted that purely theoretical teaching of moral science had never made men moral. It is generally agreed, however, that the university has a grave responsibility in this respect, and that some sort of ethical

culture should be substituted for clerical teaching. It may seem as if we were considering the old question, whether virtue is teachable, which, as you will remember, is discussed in Plato's "Protagoras." Of course it does not follow that a knowledge of what virtue is will make a man virtuous, just as a knowledge of physiology will not make a man prudent in his living. If, however, as we are told on high authority "conduct is three-fourths of life," it would seem to be preposterous to leave out of the university curriculum the science of conduct, even if the teaching of this science does not always have practical effects.

Permit me, in passing, to distinguish here between discipline and moral teaching. It is one thing to insist, that the members of a university community, shall lead an orderly life; it is quite another thing to insist, that they shall be taught the principles of morals. Every day our university students are less swayed by fear of pains and penalties, and are showing a capacity to govern themselves. Discipline is best maintained, I believe, by making the standard of scholarship very high, and by encouraging a proper cultivation of athletics. It happens only rarely that a young

man of vicious habits can do the work required, if a high standard be maintained. It has been proved that athletic sports promote self-control, temperance, courage and endurance; that bodily exercise is a safety valve, and that it keeps men from many of those alluring, frivolous and mischievous undertakings, which used unhappily to be characteristic of student days. Undergraduates are becoming more and more a self-governing body, and I am happy to say that the "honor system," according to which the students are guided by gentlemanly instinct, rather than by fear of punishment, had its origin in Virginia.

But the teaching of moral science is quite different from the exercise of discipline. And if it be admitted that the university has a duty in giving men ethical instruction, we are confronted by a second question: what kind of ethical principles shall be taught? Evidently at this point some kind of balance must be sought between moral restraint on the one hand, and academic freedom on the other. Can the freedom of a professor to teach any moral system he pleases be limited or not? This brings us to the second part of the subject before us.

## II

The successful competitors for the prizes offered by the French Academy, to whom I have alluded, were men prominent in the work of secondary education. They were all agreed that the university was responsible for moral teaching, but they were not agreed as to what kind of moral teaching should be given. All seemed uncertain as to this problem: how can good moral teaching be insured without limiting the professor's liberty?

M. Arthur Bauer suggests an avoidance of the dilemma, in a way which does not seem to me to be intellectually honest. He contends that the professor should be perfectly free to defend any kind of moral theory, in which he may believe, in his books, articles, and non-academic utterances. This is the professor's right as a citizen. But as a teacher he should forego this frankness of expression. He should avoid novel and revolutionary doctrines which seem to be true, but have only the effect of provoking doubt, and agitating the feelings. M. Bauer thinks that the teacher should present to his classes only that which has been proved to be true. He is to deal with certitude, not with speculation; and the

substance of his moral theory should be only that which is approved by the collective conscience of men, whatever that may be. Such a professor would, I think, be in many cases a sort of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, uttering on the one hand a few moral axioms, and on the other hand becoming a free-lance, contradicting his esoteric by his exoteric teaching.

But without thus splitting the professor into two persons—one a sort of Bedouin philosopher in the world of letters, the other a moral bore in the lecture-room—other ways far more serious have been suggested to further neutrality in teaching ethics. Let me refer very briefly to these.

1. There is what may be called the *diffusive method*. It has many advocates, especially in the schools, and it has been formally recommended by a contemporary writer on pedagogy, M. Alfred Croiset. According to him, and to those who think as he does, there should be no special chair of ethics. Moral principles should be taught in teaching all branches of the curriculum. We should find "sermons in stones." For example, the professor of history should hold up the good personages for admiration and the bad for reprobation. A reading of Plutarch's



"Lives," with judicious comment, should lead to an appreciation of the pagan virtues. The story of declining Rome should warn the student against the dangers of a luxurious society. Louis XI furnishes an example of superstition and cruelty, Napoleon of the failure of unscrupulous ambition. Professors of physiology and of chemistry can have their innings against food adulteration, intemperance and the abuse of poisons. The naturalist should, like Dr. Watts, point the moral of the busy bee, or, like Wordsworth, grow ecstatic over the humility and modesty of the flower. All science would thus become a moral allegory and every university lecture a moral tract.

Many of us older men can recall a kind of religious and moral literature once in vogue. It was in the narrative form. It consisted first of a story quite in the style of the dime novel. The moral, like the sting of a wasp, was concealed in the end. This sort of ethical teaching had its admirers, but I confess that, especially as a boy, I disliked the method. One became suspicious of tracts and "Sunday books" in which the scantiness of the story made one despise the moral, and the moral was dreaded as a disagreeable

creature, hiding in waiting, to pounce upon the unsuspecting reader. It seems to me that scientific teaching would suffer, if it were made a text for moral preaching, and that morality would not be advanced.

2. Another method which finds many defenders may be called the *didactic method*. It is well liked because it is thought to be "so practical." It is urged that, after all, men do not differ very greatly as to practical ethics, and so the teaching of practical ethics can easily be made neutral. No theological or metaphysical, or even psychological theory is necessary. We require only a vague and generally undisputed *Credo*. A very modern writer gives this *Credo*: "I believe in the power of humanity, I believe in the Reason. I believe in the aid given to me and which is unceasingly given by the sages of all periods—those intelligences which sought the truth and longed for the ideal." Need I call your attention to the utility and definiteness of this action of grace? It seems to me as if it were proposed to hand a man a table of logarithms when he had asked for the multiplication table. But we are told that the professor setting out from this creed should simply inform the students as to what their duties are.

Even if the university should be responsible for moral teaching, it should not, under the cover of neutrality, descend to mere banalities and moral platitudes. If the didactic method be adopted, moral science becomes a weary proverbial philosophy. The professor should declare: "be virtuous and you will be happy," "cleanliness is next to godliness," and other occult aphorisms of the kind, which are simple and not open to debate.

This method cannot be called scientific. The more unchallenged principles are, the less the need of teaching them at all. But the moment it is asked, *why* a moral principle of any kind is to be accepted, at that moment moral science is begun. It is not by the repetition of maxims, but by the explanation of principles, that moral science is to be taught. Furthermore, every intelligent student knows these maxims quite as well as the professor does. To present them to the student, is as if a teacher of rhetoric should be content to repeat the alphabet, and dwell upon the advantages of orthography. Men make mistakes of many kinds through ignorance, but very few do what is wrong deliberately without knowing that it is wrong.

3. Another method of teaching moral sci-

ence may be called the method of *legalism*. According to this, students are to be instructed as to the duties prescribed for them by statute law. Moral science, it is assumed, is contained in the civil and criminal codes. I will not, in spite of my profession, object to the extension of legal knowledge among the laity, although there is a familiar saying concerning the man who is his own lawyer. But those who advocate the method of legalism, surely confuse a knowledge of the law with moral science, in a way which is likely to be both superficial and pernicious.

It is not the statute law which forms public opinion, sentiment and morality. On the contrary, you cannot successfully enforce the law, without the social sanction. Some years ago, Professor Fowler, of Oxford, published a small but interesting book on "Progressive Morality," in which he noticed the conflict between the religious, the moral, the social, and the legal sanctions at different periods of history. He showed that at times the religious sanction was less moral than the social sanction, and the legal was not always in agreement with the others. This legal conception of moral teaching has been lately approved by Mr. A. E. J. Rawlinson, who, following Aristotle, thinks

that "if we would become good we must begin by doing good actions, suggested to us by the legislator, even though our actions be not, properly speaking, virtuous, until rationalized by that insight into the principle underlying them, which only subsequent reflection can give." In the State of New York, there is at present a case in point displaying one aspect of such a discrepancy or conflict. A committee, known as the Wagner Committee, was appointed to inquire into police affairs in the metropolis. Let me quote a few words from their admirable report:

"The testimony," the committee says, "was such as to leave no doubt in our minds as to the cause of most lamentable conditions. It is found in the obligation of a police officer to treat as a crime, that which neither he nor a majority of his fellow citizens considers to be criminal, and to enforce laws which are not in substantial accord with his or their beliefs and habits of life.

"In the desire of extremists to enforce ideal conditions relating to the sale of liquor, they have been too ready to write general rules of conduct into the criminal code. Laws to be respected must be enforced, and to be enforced they must represent the body of public opinion.



It is impossible to enforce laws relating to personal conduct against the wish of a large part of the citizens."

I am quite sure that in the state prisons of our country there are confirmed criminals who know the criminal code far better than it is known by most exemplary members of the community. The effect upon their conduct has been inappreciable so far as moral advantage is concerned. You cannot make an honest druggist simply by teaching him the table of apothecaries' weight; nor will a man discover the North Pole because he knows geography. It is a good thing to have a knowledge of the law, for *ignorantia legis neminem excusat*; but such knowledge does not necessarily involve the character to obey it.

Besides, I do not think any one will affirm that all our laws are of themselves morally persuasive, or commend themselves to what we call conscience. For example, it has been held by the highest tribunal in New York in the case of *Crashley vs. Press Pub. Co.*, 179 N. Y., 33, that it is not actionable, *per se*, to say of a man that he revolted against the constituted authorities, although such revolution was contrary to the statute law, because such revolt might imply that he had devoted or

sacrificed himself to right some great political wrong and to bring about a freer enjoyment of political rights or a more moral administration of government.

It is a crime, in my state, for a baker to keep his shop open for more than ten hours a day, and yet there is no necessary moral turpitude in so doing. It is a crime to exceed the speed limit with an automobile, but my fellow offenders will not agree with one who claims that it is a breach of good morals. Some years ago it was a misdemeanor in New York to feed English sparrows. It will not be thought that there was any immorality in feeding them.

The country was startled recently by a report that the President of the United States had been reproved by a Washington patrolman for a breach of the local law. Relief was felt when it was learned that the offense complained of was a breach of Section 54 of the Street Traffic Regulations which forbids pedestrians from crossing the road diagonally. It is hard to believe that there was any moral obligation on the President to cross at right angles.

No doubt the fear of prosecution acts as a deterrent to fraud and violence, but this is not the formation of a moral character. And then,

I would remind you, our present-day reformers are saying with great emphasis, that one of the most serious political and social perils, is the tendency of men to regulate their conduct by the letter of the law, without a sensitive regard for the dictates of the moral judgment. There is a tendency to skate upon very thin ice just because no signal happens to warn of danger. As Compayré remarks: "It is not sufficient to present to the student a list, a catalogue of obligations. The essential thing is to inspire the feelings, which constitute love of duty and the courage, which gives the force to do it. We are to make moral beings and not simply obedient citizens."

4. A fourth method of observing neutrality in the teaching of moral principles is the *historical* method. This has many advantages. Instead of insisting upon the acceptance of any one system, the professor leads the student to consider all the principal theories in the history of thought. The historical method may or may not be critical. It can be thoroughly neutral. Free choice is offered of any one ethic in the long series from Socrates to the present. If you do not like the ideas of Plato, why not try Epicurus? If you hesitate

to adopt the principles of Kant, why not take those of Bentham? If the Sermon on the Mount fails to satisfy you, there is Nietzsche with his doctrine of the Superman. You will find a great variety of opinions, and you have only to pick out that which is most nearly conformed to your character or taste. Let us turn the university into a sort of department store, and the professor's desk into a moral bargain counter. Let us present to the student ethical theories as if they were colored ribbons. Let us say: "this style was much liked in the thirteenth century, but perhaps you prefer the fashions of the Renaissance, of the Revolution, of the Directory or of the Empire. This shade of doctrine suits exactly your intellectual and moral complexion: this is quite *à la mode*. Eschew the tints which are not generally approved of. There is a fashion in morality just as there is in dress. It changes with the times. It may be that your conscience is not up to date. Let it alone so that it may at length be in accord with current opinion."

I ask you, could there be a method of surveying moral principles, more frivolous and absurd? It is a method which might lead at least to temporal damnation.

M. Arthur Bauer, to whom I referred before, protests against the exclusive use of the historical method, which results in what he calls *historisme*. He thinks that it provokes uncertainty, moral instability, and even melancholy. One becomes a spectator of the constant flux and change of opinion, sceptical in his moral beliefs and irresolute in action. No scientific man can be indifferent to the many advantages of the historical method in every department, but it is doubtful whether a mere knowledge of what previous moralists have taught will lead to right action.

Nor are objections to the use of the historical method much lessened, if it be supplemented by criticism of the successive ethical doctrines. Aside from the pedagogical mistake of cultivating a criticism, which may lead only to negation and doubt, it is plain that in order to criticise effectively, the critic must himself take some positive stand in opposition to the principles which he attacks. He cannot attack egoism, without assuming the truth of some form of altruism. If he impugns the validity and authority of our moral judgments, he must defend some theory of "consequences." In short, if the historical method be employed alone, the student is



perplexed, and if the critical method be introduced to remove this perplexity, instruction in moral principles ceases to be neutral. It is explicitly partisan, and involves the difficulties which are incident to a didactic or positive treatment of the subject.

The suggestions, which I have just been considering, refer to the mode rather than to the substance of moral instruction. They all show the serious difficulty of solving the antinomy between effective ethical teaching and academic freedom. If the university insists upon being responsible for a certain kind of moral doctrine, and the professor is obliged to agree, his freedom is violated. And if the university refuses to take such a responsibility, and leaves it to the professor, there is always a possibility that an injurious moral theory may be taught. If a professor cannot teach what he pleases, but is confined by external rules, his sincerity may be corrupted and his influence impaired. On the contrary, if his academic freedom be absolute, the university may be held responsible for doctrines, which are a menace to society and destructive to moral life.

But if the professor is not to decide this matter, who shall decide it? It may be answered:

it is for the governing body to decide it. They appointed him. They are responsible for him and, therefore, for the effects of his moral attitude. They can turn him out if they do not like his ethical teaching. That answer is no doubt in strict conformity to the law, but may do a wrong to the professor. Against his expert opinion—for we must suppose him to be an expert—is put up the opinion of a body of men, some of whom, at least, are less competent judges than the professor. Academic freedom is denied to the professor, but is allowed to the governing body. Such a conflict of judgment might easily be unjust to the teacher, and one is reminded of Cicero's question : *Quis custodiet custodes ?*

I find the doctors and the sages  
Have differ'd in all climes and ages,  
And two in fifty scarce agree  
On what is pure morality.

MOORE.

The history of education in Europe, and in this country, shows that I am not drawing on my imagination in suggesting such an issue as this. But without referring to actual cases, let me suppose some very extreme examples in order to illustrate what I have in mind.

Suppose a professor of mathematics were

to scoff at arithmetic and geometry, were to say that the half was greater than the whole and that two sides of a triangle were less than the third side. Suppose a professor of astronomy were to mock the Copernican theory, or a teacher of physiology should maintain that functions of mind were localized in the liver. In such cases the governing body would rightly decide that a strait jacket should take the place of the professor's academic costume. Again, suppose that a professor of political science were to teach that anarchy and assassination were admirable, that prisons should be abolished and crimes rewarded; the governing body would be generally condemned which failed to ask for his resignation. If a professor of ethics should assert that the arrogant use of power was superior to benevolence and kindness, that self-interest should be the motive of conduct, or that, as Helvétius taught, man differs from the brute only in the outward structure of his body, there is probably not a university corporation in the country which would refrain from forbidding such teaching.

The answer which will be very naturally given to these questions is: that the suppositions are extreme and absurd; that no uni-

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versity authorities would be so foolish as to  
defy the social sanction.

This is the very point toward which my discussion of this subject has been directed. Is society with its sanctions to lead or to follow our university teaching? I ask whether we are to grant a liberty to society which we deny to the professor. I confess to feeling jealous for the liberty of the latter, when I think how much injustice has been done, in condemning men for teaching, what they thought to be true. But if one is jealous for the academic freedom of the professor, one should be even more concerned for the welfare of society. Yet how is the sentiment of society, in these matters to be determined? Some of you know far better than I do that current thought is, as it were, in a state of solution, and that fundamental principles which were once thought to be indisputable are now subjects of discussion.

There are men holding high civic and even university positions, who tell us that the very structure of our modern society is the cause of moral wrongs. What we need, they say, is not so much the reformation of the individual man, in a badly organized state, as the reorganization of society itself. A bad structure

cannot perform good functions. When society shall have been properly organized, the life of its members will be moral. Thus it is expected that social science shall determine what our moral science should be. It is, we are told, the office of the social organism to prescribe the norm of morality. That this may be done we must revolutionize society itself. In other words, society has not power enough, while the individual man has too much power. Let the social organism insist upon equality, and the golden age will begin.

I am not about to weary you with a criticism of socialism. Socialism is what logicians call a "question-begging epithet." We are apt to apply the term to any theory which we do not like. I know that there are many kinds of socialism, and in almost every kind there is a good element. But we are not to encourage the kind of socialism which propagates the doctrine of equality, at the expense of liberty, or which rebels against the principle of property, and refuses to the individual man what he has acquired by superior intelligence and effort. This social panacea is very often recommended by an appeal to the teachings of Jesus. Reform society, it is said, ac-

according to his principles and moral teaching will be unnecessary. Change the organization, and the individual will be, and will live well. But you cannot reform society, you cannot reform the "social organism" without first reforming the individual men and women who compose it. The problem still remains: how shall ethics be taught, particularly at our universities?

It follows, I think, from what I have said, that there is no way of getting rid of this antinomy between moral restraint, and academic freedom. If the liberty of the professor to teach a certain ethical doctrine is challenged, he can appeal to the governing body; and if the liberty of the governing body to permit such teaching is challenged, they can appeal to society. In other words, the university should have autonomy in such matters, if it is to be the master, and not the slave of public opinion. If the professor teaches a theory of morals which is wrong, he does it at his peril. If the university permits such teaching, it does so at its peril.

There is indeed a danger, that ambition for the advancement of the interests of a university, may lead those who control it, to take positions which they may personally deplore.

In a recent address, Dr. Hibben, the President of Princeton, said that his university sought especially to affirm and defend the principle of human personality. No one who has even a superficial acquaintance with philosophy, can fail to appreciate the importance of such a declaration. In earlier times, men of science were fond of dwelling upon the order, the uniformity and the beauty of nature, and upon the teleology manifest in being and in life. But our modern and perhaps more enlightened conception of things is leading us scientifically farther and farther away from the idea of Cosmos—of a well-ordered universe. Nature appears to us not as a fixed reality, but as a process which takes little account of the individual, which permits disorder, waste, degeneration, decay and perpetual change. It is "red in tooth and claw." It does not always reward virtue. It often puts vice upon a throne. In his book on "Science and Religion," M. Boutroux, of the French Institute, has an eloquent passage about the tendency of men to take refuge in a theistic creed from the perplexity caused by this persistent Becoming.

Seven of the younger and more advanced men in Oxford have this year published seven

essays entitled "Foundations." Mr. Talbot, of Balliol, is the author of the first of these compositions, entitled "The Modern Situation." He claims that Victorian optimism has been sapped by a "Cosmic" uneasiness, by a philosophy of relativity, by realization of the indifference of nature to the individual, leading to a prudent reliance upon the weapons that money can buy for the struggle for existence; and a doubt whether morality is not the philosophy either of those who are paid to maintain it or of those who can afford to be good. He claims that the whole mind of our time, is tainted by the moral powerlessness of men, in modern competitive business—where men are as good as they dare to be—where it is evident that the world left to run loose, and not battled with, is indifferent to the hopes and fears of individual human beings. He judges that this condition of men's minds will bring about a great turning Godward.

Mr. Richard Brook, of Merton, follows with an essay. He quotes from Tyrrell, "Christianity at the Cross Roads," that in the measure that a man tries to live widely, deeply, nobly, he is bound to become a pessimist. It is the verdict of experience.

But God is not merely a useful moral postu-



late. God, unless we are to surrender to pessimism, and to despair of the future, is a scientific necessity. The personality of man is a principle which signifies his responsibility to a personal God. Society is a collection of persons, not an impersonal organism. Sooner or later it must acknowledge its responsibility to something higher, and more awful than itself.

If I have discussed with a certain degree of impartiality, alternative methods of moral teaching, I would not have you suppose that this impartiality is a mark of indifference or of doubt. Speaking here, in this venerable home of learning, my thoughts revert to the men who laid the foundations of Washington and Lee University. They were not men of wealth. Compared with ours, their surroundings were primitive. They did not have great libraries nor well furnished laboratories. They knew that they were pilgrims and strangers here. But they sought a country—a country of bright hope, of a nobler life, of a more perfect civilization. They did this, sustained not by capricious and charlatan notions of society, of religion, of virtue, of the right of property. They were directed by an irresistible moral force. They had an almost immediate con-

sciousness of an invisible world of high ideals. Their eyes were fixed upon God, to whom they looked as the source of moral truth, as the principle of order in the midst of threatening disorder and chaos, as Light of Light. Theirs might have been the device of the University of Oxford:

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