

# THE CHANGING BACKGROUND OF THEOLOGICAL STUDIES <sup>1</sup>

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THE University of Manchester has done me a very real honour, and has given me very real pleasure, by inviting me to give one of these lectures in commemoration of the founding of the Faculty of Theology, fifty years ago. The invitation has awakened vivid memories of the sixteen years when I was closely associated with the work of the Faculty, first as a B.D. student, then as a lecturer, and finally as Principal of Egerton Hall, and for a short period, not without its academic alarms and excursions, as Secretary of the Faculty at a time when its syllabus was under revision. I am especially happy that it enables me to pay a grateful tribute to the memory of those distinguished and friendly scholars, pioneers in the shaping of the Faculty itself, to whose teaching I owe more than I can well say, Professors A. S. Peake and T. F. Tout in the University itself, Principal Adeney and Dr. Robert Mackintosh at Lancashire College. And I count it not the least of the gifts which Manchester bestowed upon me that, apart from the Principal of my own College, Archdeacon Allen, who died, full of years and honour, only a few months ago, only one of the teachers under whom I was trained for the Anglican ministry was himself an Anglican. That the comity of scholarship may yet lead to the healing of the churches, the recent public utterances of Professor Peake's successor, Dr. Manson, refresh and renew my hope.

As a young Oxford graduate, coming up a little late for term in October 1908, I had not the smallest idea that the Faculty was then almost as new to its task as I myself was to

<sup>1</sup> A lecture delivered at Manchester University on the 3rd of February, in connection with the jubilee of the Faculty of Theology.

theology. With my own background in the kind of mathematics and the kind of philosophy required for the Oxford Honours Schools I accepted the Manchester way in theology as also among the eternal things. The Faculty was there, visibly in action. Memory still pictures vividly the solid phalanx of Lancashire College men arriving for Professor Tout's lecture, sombre and earnest in bowler hats, a habit which Arthur Wilkinson and I, two weak Anglicans, shattered within a year. It certainly never occurred to me then that Faculties could have a history and a growth, or that theology, with its roots so firmly in the unalterable past, could itself be alive and changing. Still less could I have broken so loose from my schematism of thought, carefully shaped and secured in school and university, as to imagine that the whole great tradition of the *philosophia perennis* would be so transformed within my academic life-time as to be unrecognizable, even in Oxford, its natural and congenial home. And, I am bound to add, the admirable instruction which I received in the Philosophy of Religion from Dr. Robert Mackintosh, whose lecture-notes I have preserved and valued to this day, gave not the slightest hint of the crucial examination of the basic concepts of Space, Time, and Deity, at that very time being carried out in this same University by Professor S. A. Alexander, whom I mention not only as a profound and deeply religious thinker but also as one whose dignity, courtesy, and great kindness to a very raw and young lecturer remain among my cherished memories.

In the field of mathematics the obscurity, mistaken by most of us for security, was even greater. I knew, of course, that pure mathematics and sound logical analysis were closely akin, and I held loyally, as all mathematicians should, to the belief that nobody can really be a philosopher, or, since  $\delta\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \gamma\epsilon\omega\mu\epsilon\tau\rho\epsilon\acute{\iota}$ , a theologian either, unless he starts from a solid mathematical training. But though I knew and thought that I understood the Lorenz transformation, and had dabbled in strange geometries with varying axioms and postulates, it certainly never occurred to me that the whole concept of mathematical proof was tottering to its ruin, that by the year 1925 Hilbert should

have set out upon almost uncharted seas in the attempt to prove that logical consistency is at least conceivable, even if not yet attained, in pure mathematics, and that by 1931 Godel should have shattered Hilbert's argument at its very foundations and therewith, to all appearance, have fatally undermined the whole structure of mathematics itself. What remains is empirically satisfying, sufficient to secure a bridge or to predict the release of atomic energy under certain closely, but not absolutely, defined conditions, but it is now clear that mathematics cannot supply the ultimate security that the *philosophia perennis* demands. It is not without some amusement that I find myself recalling that I, with my roots in Plato's eternal Ideas, in Aristotle's logic, and good grammar school arithmetic, was by 1930 lecturing to surprised theological students on the themes that one and one not only never make two but never add up to the same total twice, and that the concept of nothingness has only significance as function, the function so indicated changing every time it is used. Without a proper appreciation of these matters I held, and still hold, the theology of the fourth and fifth centuries cannot be understood or given any modern interpretation. For it is only by the consideration of such subtleties, near at hand and for the most part quite unsuspected, that such doctrines as Unity in Trinity, or Creation out of nothing, *ex nihilo*, as the Latin version of the cryptic Greek ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων had it, or Creation not in time but with time, can be approached with any hope of grasping what they originally meant or can mean now.

I have approached my subject in this personal way because, as I now realize, my own academic life, from my matriculation at Oxford in 1903, has coincided almost exactly with the life of the Faculty of Theology here in Manchester, and it is of the changing background of theology during that half-century that I can speak with some degree of personal knowledge. It is also the period of which it is easiest to say something relevant, since most of us have been actively engaged in the tasks of scholarship for the greater part of it, and the diversion of some of our time, energy, and attention to the crude urgency of two wars has at least served to keep scholarship painfully aware

of the changing world in which scholars live. The shifting pattern of ideas, symbolisms, ends and habits of thought is the common background of theology and of all other adventures of the human intellect. That theology, which by its very nature must always have its roots in the now unchanging past, has its own peculiar difficulties in keeping pace with and accommodating itself to this changing pattern is a fact of which more must be said in the sequel. At least it may be remarked here that change without stability is not necessarily better than stability without change. And since all theology, so far as it can be distinguished from philosophy or metaphysics, must take the form of some particular theological system, interpreting and conserving the impact of some significant experience or achievement of mankind, there must be inherent in theology some element, truth or meaning not susceptible to change, even though it is against a changing background that it must perennially be re-stated.

One further point may be added here. It is obvious that the familiar tag, *tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis*, has always been true. The change alike in man and in man's environment is one of the central truths of history, and one which the writers of history have, until recent times, almost completely ignored. It is one of the greatest advances in modern theological studies that this problem of discovering the real background of the writings upon which they depend has been realized and a beginning, though as yet only a beginning, made with its exploration. We now know that it is not enough to have the words of Scripture. We must be able somehow to relate those words to the living men who wrote them down in days vastly different from our own. We must try to sort out those elements in the pattern of their emotions, thoughts and behaviour which they share with us and those which are particular to their age or private to themselves. Only when that has been done can the problem of communication across the centuries be solved even in part. Biblical scholars are now tackling this immensely difficult task of reconstituting the patterns within which the language of the Bible alone has its full significance, and their work is bringing a new vitality to

the whole range of theological studies. We need more than a lexicon for the interpretation of the words which were written down by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. We need to know the men themselves and their day and the shape of their thinking and imagining before we can truly say that we have understood what they are trying to say to us.

The same task is urgent, and perhaps even more difficult, over the whole range of church history and the history of doctrine. That Athanasius and Arius had far more in common with one another than with any of us is obvious enough, though it took no mean historian to recognize and state the fact. But the statement of the fact is only the beginning. There remains the endlessly difficult problem, only partly soluble, of reconstructing that common mind of the fourth century, from which sixteen centuries of change and of progress have so strongly separated us.

What at least we can do is to recognize the full significance of this fact of change, a fact fundamental to the continued existence of mankind, and by studying it at the point where we are in living contact with it we may hope to gain a clue to the solution of these very difficult problems of historical reconstruction.

Every science, and every field of theoretical study, including philosophy, in which scholars can be involved, has necessarily a threefold setting or schema of obligation and reference. The emphasis upon the different terms of this schema varies greatly with the different fields of study, and with the direction in which progress is being made at any given moment. But in principle, all three elements of obligation are always present.

The first is the obligation of internal reference, the demand for fuller coherence and progress within the science or philosophical system itself. This demand is in principle an isolating demand, making for an ever greater precision of language and of process which shuts out all except those who are the priests of its mysteries, actively and wholly devoted to their service.

The second is the obligation of external reference, whereby those engaged in each particular field of study draw upon the achievements of scholars in every other field, and at the same

time make available to others the results and hypotheses of their own work. Without this continuing cross-reference there can be no wholeness, which also means health, in our dealings with the total framework of our existence, with the Universe or Kosmos, which is what is ordinarily intended (though not in the least understood) when men speak of the world. It is here that at the present time scientific and philosophical studies are in a state little short of chaos. The obligations of internal reference are everywhere proving stronger than those of correlation and common understanding, with results that are always dangerous and sometimes spectacularly disastrous. We may note that the problem here is very largely one of communication, a theme which is attracting widespread attention among contemporary philosophers, and that communication at this level has special conditions and difficulties, for which no adequate remedy has yet been found.

The third obligation is that of intelligibility and practical application in the everyday world of the common man. This obligation is commonly despised by philosophers altogether and only recognized by scientists in the sphere of practical results. Why should we take time in translating our difficult and rapidly changing theories of mass and energy into the terms of common speech so long as we can provide homes with light and power, and protect them by the confident assurance that we can, if necessary, blow other people's homes to pieces, with the very probable result that they will be blown to pieces too? And why should philosophers try to inflict the long and precise argumentation of metaphysical construction or linguistic analysis upon folk who do not and cannot think in that way? Is it not simpler for the philosopher to hand out to an inattentive public the conclusions to which he has come, provided that he knows himself what those conclusions are?

Of these three obligations it is the second and third that constitute what I have called the changing background of theological studies, and it is of the second that I want to speak more particularly. The whole complex problem is that of the shifting patterns of emotions, symbols and words, whereby

man carries out, imperfectly but perhaps sufficiently for the deepest needs and end of his life, the business of communication. And if this problem is difficult at the second level, the level where scientists, philosophers and scholars in every field meet, or ought to meet, it is obscure to the point of desperation at the third level, the level of common speech. For at this level words are governed by dark energies far deeper than our analysis can follow them, and the very fact that men do speak together and that their words have power, is due less to the words themselves than to the changing and ever-creative dynamic that shapes the destinies of men and nations. Such is the common and familiar speech of everyday usage, and with that speech philosophers and scientists must all reckon with some degree, since they too are men. But the obligation is laid especially upon the theologian, for by the very terms of his trade his work is sterile unless it is continually referred back to the daily life of ordinary folk. The theology that cannot be preached in a mission sermon or worked out in the self-management of a boys' club is unsound theology and a danger to the gospel for the sake of which theology exists. Of this, as I have already said, more will appear in the sequel.

For the present, then, I confine myself to the second level, the world of scholarship, in which the outstanding fact is, that what once was in the main a universe of discourse has been for the last fifty years in increasing danger of becoming a pluriverse. In the first ten years of the work of the Faculty, and the first six of my own study of theology, up to the outbreak of war in 1914, the academic background of most theologians was fairly simple, and not more than twenty or thirty years out of date. In the main it rested upon Kant's philosophy, upon a conception of history which was based upon the historians as its main sources, upon the credal and confessional tradition of the churches, and upon a study of the Bible in which conservative criticism was on the whole well satisfied to hold its own against Strauss or Loisy, and to consider the eschatology of Albert Schweitzer with a rather admiring disapproval, Schweitzer's astonishing reply to which has put all the churches to shame. It is not for me, one of the least of

historians, to say anything about the transformation which the study of history has undergone, largely through the influence of Professor Tout, an influence abundantly evident among historians in Oxford today, though I am sure that the study of church history has already felt the effects of that transformation. And I must leave on one side the whole subject of doctrinal history, which as I first knew it and endeavoured to teach it was greatly in need of that same vitalizing breath, while others have far more right than I to speak of what has happened in the field of Biblical studies. But in the fields in which for the last forty years I have been more especially concerned I am sure that the change of background has been not only rapid but of profound significance, and that the theologians who, like Karl Heim and Dr. C. E. Raven, strive to keep up with it have been few indeed.

Probably it is necessary that the main stream of theology should move rather slowly, since its findings must be intelligible to men and women whose main thought-patterns respond but slowly to the pioneer work of scholars. It is presumably a biological necessity that over the greater part of the matters with which we are concerned we should always be one whole generation behind our times. And this is true even of scholars in the fields in which they are not themselves the pioneers, for no man, despite the efforts of the B.B.C. Third Programme, can be quite up to date in any subject but his own. Certainly it is true that the theology of the decade 1904-14 rested four-square upon the work of Kant, criticizing, re-vivifying, and giving modern form to the great Platonic and Aristotelian tradition. Our textbooks were Plato's *Republic*, with the *Phaedo* and the *Timaeus* in support, Aristotle's *Logic* and *Politics*, and especially the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and Kant's three great *Critiques*, though few of us read and fewer still understood the *Critique of Judgment*, with its foreshadowing of revolutionary things. In principle, our framework of the visible Universe was that of Newton's *Principia*. Number, or in more modern phrase, the principle of numeration, stood for something perfectly clear. How could anybody with five fingers doubt it? And, like Descartes before us, we failed to distinguish

between what is clear and what is comprehensible. Space in three dimensions and time in one, the modes of the transcendental aesthetic, made a secure frame within which all experience could be exactly located, and, though we talked glibly enough about the fourth dimension, that, we were sure, had no significance except as a functional bit of athleticism, whereby mathematicians could jump quickly from one three-dimensional situation to another. Causality was just causality, the essential category of categories, whereby the understanding builds up the experienced world of the scientist, and so, choking a little but swallowing bravely, we were able to accept, in the main, the scientist's approach to the Kosmos. Had we not been warned in advance by Aristotle that the concept of cause would be a troublesome one? And in any case we could still hold firmly to the postulates of God, freedom, and immortality, even though that meant jumping several hundred pages and into the middle of a new *Critique*.

Meanwhile there was still metaphysics, and much of our time was spent in running nervously through Kant's destructive handling of the Theistic Proofs. We turned back, for comfort and reassurance, to Anselm, to Aquinas and the Five Ways, and to Descartes, but remained uneasy, though not without ample material for our lectures. Perhaps our main source of comfort was derived from those who had ventured far up the difficult slopes of Hegel, that Everest among philosophers, and had there found, they told us, a further principle or category, that of Ideal Unity, capable of linking *Verstand* with *Vernunft*, of making peace between the scientist and the metaphysician, and of securing the theistic proofs at their central and most vulnerable point.

Let me be quite clear about this. I am not saying that many theologians did not know much more than this. Some of them were outstanding in learning of many kinds. But I am sure that I am right in asserting that the background, the framework into which that learning had to be thrust, however unconsciously, was of the pattern which I have outlined.

One other detail must be added here, in the light of what was to follow and, therewith, of one of my own major interests.

William James, by his Gifford Lectures on "The Varieties of Religious Experience", had made theologians fully aware of the coming impact of psychology, and the Society for Psychical Research, which had been jogging their elbows without attracting their attention for some forty years, suddenly found that Myers' hypothesis of a subliminal self had been canonized and set to work with full theological approval upon the interpretation of St. Paul's conversion and of many other things. The way had been prepared here, long in advance, by a very great psychologist, St. Augustine. But as yet, up to the year 1914, the psychological background of most theologians was the classical faculty psychology of the middle of the last century. The few who went further knew something of the great textbooks of Ward and James. Of what was to appear from beneath that threshold of consciousness of which Myers and James had spoken they had no prophetic inkling whatever.

It is of course true that all sorts of ferments were in full action behind the reasonably calm academic surface, and that there were individual theologians who knew very well what was happening. There had already begun, quite early in the nineteenth century, the solvent process which was loosening the very roots of mathematics and which, in the astonishing path of adventuring with ever more daring systems of symbol and function which leads from Gauss through Riemann and Cayley to Einstein, was not only to transform the Newtonian conception of space and time, but was also to make it clear that no purely objective conception of space and time is possible. In the last reckoning the observer and the observed fall within a single field of analysis. There is not merely affinity but an actual correlation between the terrifying equation  $E = mc^2$  and the mind which could frame it and give it verifiable meaning. Therein lies our hope as well as our peril.

This loosening of the shackles of space-time was already being undertaken and interpreted in Manchester during the first years of the Faculty by Professor Alexander, and I well remember how he laboured, at meetings of the Philosophical Society, to make clear to us the relation between extension and extensity, labours which, so far as I recall, had not the smallest

influence then upon our theological thinking. Other effects of the inner transformation of mathematics were being felt at Cambridge, where Russell, in his exploration of symbolic logic, was opening up a whole new range of enquiry into the analysis of mental process, an enquiry in which an earlier pioneer, Boole, had done brilliant work without stirring up an adequate response, only to come, I am told, into belated recognition in the service of the electronic brain. The processes of logic were also undergoing a new and more personal treatment at Oxford, where Cook Wilson had broken alike with Aristotle and with Bradley, and was developing the analysis of the phrases of common speech as dynamic in their conveyance of meaning. I recall vividly his exposition of the accuracy of the phrase, "I was under the impression that it was Smith", and even more vividly his analysis of the content of the word "Fire", uttered with urgency from an upper window. But the theologians who taught in Oxford in those days had learned their philosophy long before Cook Wilson stirred the waters. They went their way unperturbed even by the portent of the appearance in Oxford of a lively and vocal pragmatist, F. C. S. Schiller, who, as John Laird has put it, took the line "that the Absolute was frankly mad and that what Bradley called the 'makeshifts' of psychological and other science were not only all that humanity had to go by, but were good enough for anybody". Meanwhile G. E. Moore at Cambridge, in his paper on "The Refutation of Idealism" (*Mind*, 1903), was attacking the same citadel with far more lasting results.

All this was preparing the way for the coming storm, a coming made dramatic and decisive by the war which intervened. None of the forces which made that storm so formidable were in view at all, so far as theological thought was concerned, in 1914. Freud had published his *Traumdeutung* at the turn of the century, but its English version only appeared just before the war, in time to influence a number of medical men in their treatment of war-neurosis. Jung and Adler, deriving their inspiration from Freud, were developing their own specialized and fruitful systems of analysis, but were not as yet known beyond their own circles. The full impact of psychological

analysis was not felt until about 1921, but its effects were then startling in their violence, and were felt by the theologians even more strongly than by the philosophers. For this there was ample cause. Psycho-analysis gripped the popular imagination even more strongly than it interested the academic intellect. It also appeared in the guise of a healing mission to the stricken in their minds and bodies. The theologian, whose theology must in the end speak to the common man, and who is normally by profession a pastor as well, could not but be acutely aware of this immense new force that was re-shaping the pattern of his world.

Meanwhile Wittgenstein had not as yet brooded over the aphorisms which were to appear as the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* in 1922 and which were to become the Gospel not only of philosophers at Cambridge, where he exercised for twenty-two years an influence as remarkable in its silences as in its force, but of younger teachers in colleges and universities throughout the country and over much of the English speaking world.

Freud with Jung to follow, Wittgenstein with Carnap to follow, the atom split by Rutherford, and the astonishing pursuit by mathematics of the receding galaxies and the random interchanges of electron orbits, these constitute the new background against which theologians have had to develop their own science. And a new situation has been arising in theology itself. Our younger theologians have not been trained, as we of the older generation were, in the thought-patterns of the *philosophia perennis* and the securities of the Victorian world and a Newtonian universe. In the days before 1914 we never thought of doubting that when we talked we were talking about something, and that we who talked were. After five years of war even those truths seemed less substantial. After two wars, unless I am much mistaken, at least that degree of assurance is returning again, and Professor Ayer has lived to be accused, at Brussels last year, of being a metaphysician. And I have found among some of the younger scientists in Oxford who, despite the example of some of their seniors, had been basing their work upon materialism, mechanistic or dialectical, for

some twenty-five years, a strong tendency to return to a belief in God, without any clear categories into which either the word God or the word belief can be fitted, and with an enormous gap between their belief and the Creeds.

The details of the transformation which took place between 1920 and 1939 are complex in the extreme, but in principle it was a transformation from static concepts to dynamic coupled with the recognition that the dynamic has always a factor which involves the person, whether of philosopher, scientist or unthinking "man of the machine age". We do not think of equations as leading to mathematical truth. We operate with them, and verify our results with telescopes. We ask of machines not that they should be beautiful illustrations of complex engineering precision, though that is necessary enough, but that they should work. And philosophy has very largely lost its ancient vision in the exacting and exciting pursuit of an accurate grammar or logic of words and syntax, intended, we are told, solely for the purpose of enabling scientists to define their experimental results with precision, and thereby to secure that verification, when secured, really verifies what it is supposed to verify. That Carnapian goal is, I am very sure, a will o' the wisp that can never be overtaken, for the good reason that the processes of the observer must necessarily interfere with absolute verification precisely as they interfere with the absolute measurement of space and time. Along these lines Schiller's "good enough for anybody" is for ever the best that we can do.

The theologian has thus been faced with the problem of working out a theology which will be loyal to historical fact and to the essentials of the faith which underlay the theologies of the past, and to do this against a swiftly changing background, energetic, personal, and intensely alive. In this background the urgency of the historical situation and the succession of startling achievements which science has forced upon our notice are spectacular but comparatively unimportant. The most profound change of all is that in the fundamental concepts of mathematics, and this hardly affects theology directly, since few theologians can understand them or operate with the

necessary symbols. Even here, however, theologians must necessarily take account of the doors into ethics and metaphysics left open by Jeans, and of the theistic conclusions of Eddington and Milne. And if, here in Manchester, you wish to prepare yourselves for that task by an assiduous study of Whitehead's *Process and Reality*, you have with you, in Professor Dorothy Emmet, a first-hand interpreter of that great but difficult guide to an organic understanding of the Kosmos. But the most immediately significant elements in the background were derived from two sources, the linguistic analysis of the philosophers and the analytic probing of behaviour, conscious and unconscious, by the medical psychologists, rapidly joining hands with social anthropologists as the study of dream symbolism led out into the field of myth, folklore, alchemy and cult. These ultimately drew together, as is shown by Professor Wisdom's latest book, *Philosophy and Psychoanalysis*, but of the two it is the situation in the philosophical world that is most significant.

In effect, philosophers in the English-speaking world have turned their attention from the consideration of the subject and the object of discourse to the structure and practical validity of discourse itself. They have, at least temporarily, withdrawn from the speaker and from that which he is trying to say, in order to secure that his speech shall at least be coherent and expressive. This has meant leaving to science the whole business of fact, verification and generalization into hypotheses, and leaving a very misty gap at the speaker's end of the sentence. It has also meant turning back from Kant to the atomic sensationalism of Hume and to the identification by Berkeley of the real world with what is experienced. Here, rather surprisingly, Ayer and Whitehead reveal explicit areas of agreement. But the primary effect of this shift of emphasis has been an insistent demand for accuracy of language, and this, curiously enough, instead of increasing clarity and therewith communication, has enormously intensified the demand for private languages, valid as aids to precision within a particular school of philosophers or scientists, and increasingly incomprehensible to everybody else. The ivory tower of the scholar is threatening to become a

Tower of Babel. Among the philosophers existentialism, as very variously understood on the Continent, seems to produce such varied effects upon the Anglo-Saxon mind as to suggest that we do not grasp its meaning at all, though indeed the word existential is used commonly enough, usually, as it seems to me, with a complete absence of significance. Possibly existentialism does no more than transform the ancient Greek "being is becoming" into the inverse form "becoming is being". However that may be, and despite the courageous pessimism of Sartre in his "encounter with nothing", it is clear, as Marcel and Lotz have shown, that the existentialism of Heidegger and even of Sartre himself is capable of very close links with the Catholic revival of Thomism. While various schools of positivism and of linguistic analysis are prevalent among English-speaking philosophers, and are commonly held to involve the final downfall of metaphysics, Continental writers are seriously seeking its revival. And the writers of these different schools become daily more technical and more accurate in their use of words, with the result that they become increasingly unintelligible to one another.

With the scientists matters are even worse. It is commonly said in Oxford that no scientist knows what the scientist in the next laboratory is about. Certainly the invention of more technical and doubtless more accurate terminologies goes on apace, and any reading of the more professional journals at once discovers their increasing unintelligibility to all except the initiated.

Meanwhile the psychology of the laboratories has not helped us much. It has become increasingly physiological and is claiming full status as a science, supporting that claim by its tendency to split up into eager and diverse schools, each with its different conception of what psychology is about and with its own esoteric jargon. The one really significant contribution to the background of the thought of today has been that of the different schools of analysis which have sprung up as a result of the work of Freud. For though the analysts have come under violent and destructive criticism from all sides, from philosophers such as John Laird, from experimental

psychologists, and even from the modern psychiatrists with their powerful physical treatment of neurosis and psychosis, they have convinced everybody of the intense dynamic of the symbolic processes which are revealed in art, in cults, in mythology, folklore, and dream. The interpretations of Freud and Jung may differ at almost every point, but the essential understanding of symbol remains, and is crucial for our understanding of the use of language itself. The philosophers may be rightly critical of the intellectual woolliness of the psychoanalysts, but they read their works with an avidity which even if horrified is very significant indeed.

What is in fact happening in the philosophies and the sciences in their attempts to create accurate technical languages, the maps and models of Wittgenstein's disciples, is the effort to de-personalize language and so, if possible, to secure an objective standard of knowledge and truth independent of the individual experimenter or thinker. And what is significant about the common speech whereby we communicate with one another in the affairs of daily life, with their emotions, their deeply and darkly hidden energies, and their questing for higher things, is that it remains wholly personal, and largely, if not completely, adequate to its purpose of communication. The artist and the poet speak in this language too, though they become obscure whenever they separate themselves off by becoming self-conscious, and seek to secure new and private insights by creating new and incommunicable idioms. What is clearly important for the world, and therewith for scientist and philosopher alike, is that while the work of their special languages, the maps and models of their own technical interests, is in progress it should constantly be referred back to the language of common speech. For this, in spite of and in part because of the inaccuracies and half-buried meanings of the words it employs, is more and not less adequate to the main ends of life, since it does not leave out of account the persons who use it and for whom it is used.

In this radical reconsideration of language, and in the linguistic experimentation which accompanies it, theology is very closely involved. There have been heavy casualties in the

war of the words. Cause, causation and causality have been so roughly handled by physicists, mathematicians, and logicians, that they will never be quite themselves again. Eternity, everlastingness, and the whole range of the Absolutes and Infinites, are so blunted at the edges, those same edges to which the galaxies are receding, that though still serviceable in the common speech they are almost incapable of accurate use. On the other hand, person and personality, despite Spinoza's inability to give them any clear meaning, which as he said might be known to the saints in heaven but not to anyone else, are coming into their own both with Jung's enrichment of the concept of the Self and with the recognition of the significance of individuality by the American school of Personalist psychologists. Mind and will are the most complete causalities of all, for the Latin scholastic transformation of functions into entities has been finally exploded by Ryle, with the happiest results. It should, of course, have been obvious from the first that to employ conscious mental processes does not mean that we possess things labelled mind or consciousness. And that this illusion, the result of the unphilosophical realism of the Latins, who could not distinguish essences from distilled spirits or faculties and functions from real estate, should be exposed in great gain.

One effect of this radical criticism of some of the basic terms assumed without criticism in our theology will be, I hope, a re-vivifying of the Greek terminology, and of the far more dynamic and functional Greek way of thought, for after all it was in terms of Greek common speech that Christian theology was first framed. The difference may be readily seen by noting that the familiar phrase *mens sana in corpore sano* cannot be translated directly into Greek at all. No Greek word for mind such as *νοῦς* or *διάνοια* will fit the sentence. They are all too functional to carry the adjective. A man may be healthy in his thinking, but he has not a thing called a mind which can be healthy as a body is healthy.

It is in such matters as these that the modern criticism of language may, I hope, renew and vitalize our study of the ways in which the terms of Greek philosophy became, in the fourth and fifth centuries, fitted to the usages of common Christian

speech, with the legalists and administrators of the Latin West struggling to keep pace with their thought, failing again and again to appreciate its deeper reality of meaning, and thinking all the time that they were leading the way.

Upon that task, the study of the past history of doctrinal formulation, I must not now enlarge. There remains the function of theology in the present, and here, as I have already said, theology has a twofold obligation and concern, which must be discharged against a shifting background which is made up of the linguistic and logical explorations of the philosophers, of the revolutionary concepts, verifications and discoveries of mathematicians and scientists, and of the new possibilities of energetic symbolism revealed by the psychological study of dream and myth. Nor can we ignore the possibility that all our constructive thinking, philosophical, scientific, and theological too, may require of us far greater flexibility in the categories which frame it into a universe of discourse. Perhaps some generalized form of the theory of Special Relativity may apply to Logic itself, a hypothesis which seems to be naturally involved in the fundamental mathematical functions whereby observer and observation are now so intimately correlated. In that case the demand for new or extended categories which, as Professor H. H. Price continues to insist, is perhaps the only answer to the apparently well-attested results of psychical research, may yet lead us out to solutions which, however difficult for human thought, will bring within a single system of coherence the ultimate problems of physics and metaphysics, and therewith of theology as well. The universal applicability of any logical system is quite indemonstrable, just as it is impossible to prove that any set of mathematical postulates will not in the end lead to some inconsistency. But it seems unthinkable that there should not, however far beyond our grasp, be some Higher Calculus in which all possible logics, however locally inconsistent, still cohere.

What, then, of the status of theology in these days when words and symbols are at war? We must allow first that theologians must have the same right to their own private language as the philosophers and the scientists, but at the same time

they are especially bound by the necessity that their findings should be generally communicable. This seems to involve an adherence for the most part to the general terminology made available by nearly two thousand years of current use, and still very generally capable of service as part of the coinage of speech. But that terminology must be continually tested against the analytic precisions of the philosophers, and its content enriched in the living present. That that process may not be misleading in the sphere of common speech theology must do as the sciences do, and express its results practically, for this, in the realm of science, is the controlling method of communication. In other words, the Gospel must not only be explained, but also preached and lived. When that is done the language of theology, constantly renewed and made more precise, will also be a means of communication, not only with the common man but with scientist and philosopher, and perhaps even the mathematician, too.

That such intercommunication is something much nearer than a distant and visionary hope we may assure ourselves for two reasons. Christian theology is historical. It rests upon and is controlled by known facts of history, which in their essential outline are available to all who care to study the records. There is nothing esoteric or private about them at all. And those to whom its findings are to be communicated, in word or in action, are primarily and essentially human beings, even though they may *per accidens* be scientists or philosophers as well. They share with us all the same archetypal patterns, the same dominants of the racial unconscious, which are the determining energies in the common speech of man. Their lives are conditioned, just as ours are, by the fundamental biological necessities of food, warmth, shelter and child-bearing, that the human race may survive. They, too, must live, work, and die under the insistent demand of spiritual fulfilment, however little they may like the phrase. And just so far as theology, pressing into its service all the accuracy of scholarship, can relate its language to those same deep energies, there will be no realm of learning just as there will be no human heart where it will not be both relevant and understood.