

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

ARTICLE II.

CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGY AND THEISM.

BY THE REV. JAMES LINDSAY, D. D.

THIS is a phrase that might very properly lead us to expect some treatment of the attitude of present-day theology to theistic problems, and of the interest and importance which theistic discussion has for such theology. We should have to consider the position of those who contend for no more than a system of theistic philosophy, as well as that of those who are not alive to the profound and far-reaching significance of the philosophic bases of theistic belief. So might we prefer to treat it. But as the phrase has been chosen, none too happily, as title for a work by Dr. R. M. Wenley, of Michigan, professing to deal with *Speculative Theology*, the *Ritschlian Theology*, and the *Theistic Problem*, it may serve some purpose to refer to this threefold aspect. Not that the work in question merits any detailed attention,—under which, indeed, it would too readily fall to theological powder—but merely that it affords occasion to point a needed moral to the theological student, and to rectify some baleful theological impressions. Dr. Wenley leaves us with all the problems, to use words of his own, “problems as much as ever.” No fruitful principle inspires the book: it is bound by no unity, but presents a pointed example of that “piecing” of its parts into a book which is a favorite conception of its author (pp. 116 and 22). No better aid could be desired towards that unfortunate decay of theological interest which Dr. Wenley has elsewhere declared to be so characteristic of the Established Church in Scotland at the present day.

There is no lack of justice to "Hegel's epoch-making incentive to theological progress," but a strange and inexcusable silence as to Schelling's services to speculative method. Schelling's doctrine of potencies, in whatsoever respects defective, gave so great an impulse to theological speculation as ought not to remain unknown and unrecognized. But Schelling is not the only great speculative name to which Dr. Wenley knows not to do justice.

SPECULATIVE THEOLOGY.

Proceeding to state the general principles of the Speculative School, Dr. Wenley's dependence on Pfeiderer is of a kind that reminds us of some who sought to imitate the oratory of Chalmers, and of whom it was said that they had all the contortions, with none of the inspiration! For we have all the movements of Pfeiderer's exposition reproduced without any of his lucidity and charm. The same buttressing of F. C. Baur in both; the same disposition towards questions like that of the Fourth Gospel. Dr. Wenley invokes the Ritschlian School to "preserve the conclusions" of Baur. In an untranslated¹ volume, Wendt, he says, does so "*passim*"! Has Wendt nothing to say of the Fourth Gospel as not well able to have arisen earlier than towards the close of the first Christian century, and has he nothing to put forward, in distinct opposition to the ideal view of Baur, in justification of the real historic supplementing of the earlier source or document? Has Wendt nothing to urge as to the Fourth Gospel's being in source and substance apostolic, and in feature different from all known marks of the second century? Does Dr. Wenley really pretend that such like insistences are of a kind to warrant his slipshod statement that they "preserve the conclusions" of Baur?

¹ Die Lehre Jesu. Erster Theil. Göttingen, 1886. See pp. 334-342.

Dr. Wenley gives what he calls a "somewhat bald" statement of the special results of this school. "Bald" enough his Cairdian reminiscence is, as "bald" as his New Testament "authorities" are astounding. Dr. Wenley loves to speak of a "peddling rationalism" (pp. 40 and 188), but the most "peddling" criticism, saved "as by fire" from underlying rationalistic tendency, is all that his own pages afford, with a lacquer of philosophical phrase. "Theology is not a matter of faith, but of intellectual grasp and careful scholarship." What could be cruder than such a mode of putting the case? No wonder Dr. Wenley thinks that ability to "overcome half-truths is denied to all but a select few," when he is unable to "overcome" the superficiality of such a "half-truth." Any criticism of this school "had far better come from within" (p. 45), says Dr. Wenley, upon whom it has dawned that this school has "run to extremes." Why this resort to feeble partisanship or hothouse protectionism, rather than a fearless welcoming of light from any quarter? His treatment of great questions like the Personality of God, can only be branded as utter shallowness, the question being shirked altogether as "difficult" (p. 27) and "not so pressing" (p. 47). The significance of the question for speculative theology not being in the slightest degree grasped, a "defensible discretion" leaves it alone. There is no thoroughness in Dr. Wenley's method: he has neither skill nor boldness to defend the positions of the school, nor to criticise them. Hence he can only mildly modify extremer presentations with pithless result. The religious problem "gives place" to the philosophical, but "theology should not," he says, "too mildly acquiesce" in this "reduction" to a "subordinate" place. Contemporary theology had, five years before his vague and languid utterance, found it said,— "Recent times have even witnessed tendencies in philosophy to dominate theology, or bring it at undue sacrifice into har-

mony with itself, of which examples may be seen in the uses to which have been put the positions of Kant, of Hegel, and of Hartmann. It were the acme of folly for theology to yield to this tendency, as though unable to find for itself any more stable basis, or footing more in accord with the essential nature of Christianity itself."¹ Then Dr. Wenley curiously recalls personality, which he had dismissed, that it may "put in a claim for reconsideration"! Such is the method of his speculative theology! This dismissed category, Dr. Wenley at length perceives, is, after all, the "highest" known to us! Not the faintest notion is there, on Dr. Wenley's part, that, besides finding the Absolute to be personal and self-conscious, we must even seek some more adequate comprehension of his real relations to the world. Then we are left with a criticism of the Cairdian scheme of religious development which is made up of admissions rendered inevitable before urgings that came not "from within." Anything more lame and halting in the way of critical result it would be hard to conceive, for there is to be merely a "rethinking the entire scheme for ourselves." Anything more characterless, philosophically, than such evasive floundering among subjects like the primal unity and the problem of personality, it would be difficult to imagine. Anything more uninspiring and impotent, religiously, could not be devised than the involved suppression of individuality in man with "a bare minimum of personal religion." The straits of the school again appear when Dr. Wenley feels compelled to admit that the facts of Christian experience, incarnation, atonement, and resurrection, must be eviscerated of all real—not merely intellectual and abstract—significance, in order to the carrying out of its method. But Dr. Wenley's critical admissions win no respect, for they are part of the mental furniture of a man who—whether in philosophy or

¹Lindsay, *The Progressiveness of Modern Christian Thought*, p. 49.

in theology—is unable to “overcome” half-truths, and who only half believes even these.

Are we then to despair of speculative theology? As Dr. Wenley expounds it, yes; but far otherwise is it with a true speculative theology, which commands our highest enthusiasm and interest. Very possible is it to enter into all that is best in the fine speculative impulse and tendency of a Pfeiderer, and to conjoin these with more positive elements, more substantial grounds, more constructive tendencies, than those on which Dr. Wenley dilates. This—a true speculative theology—is to Dr. Wenley’s speculative product as is day to dawn. It has far more philosophical self-consistency, far more scientific thoroughness, incomparably more spiritual depth, and indefinitely more fairness to history. It has no need to shirk the testimony of the spiritual experience of the centuries, whose irrefragable testimony it welcomes; no need to eviscerate the incarnation, the atonement, and the resurrection, of all which it retains the fact wherewith to support, enrich, and confirm the idea; no need under the exigencies of a preconceived scheme, to denude Deity of Personality, Christ of Divinity, man of individuality, the soul of personal religion, the church of supernatural revelation, history of what is real but not to the historian’s liking. The method and main results of Dr. Wenley’s speculative school are quite discredited, as must be plainly said, since the perception comes not “from within.” A true speculative theology does not “have a sketch-plan ready to hand,” that it may “proceed to fill in” the details according to its own arbitrary dialectical method in disregard of fact. The vice even of a Pfeiderer—though Dr. Wenley has scarcely a perception of the fact—is just the tendency to set speculation always more over against history. There is no speculative theology (p. 19) known to Dr. Wenley save that which has “an untrammelled theory of the Universe”! As if speculative

method bore no relation to experience! No reflection on *fact!* The facts of the religious consciousness—empirically and historically presented—have no binding power for “untrammled” speculation. But of what worth is the theory of these airy philosophers when it is of a “Universe” other than the real one—the one of fact? If we are going to make thought absolutely the last thing, it must be as an ultimate reached only by proceeding along an analytical path that sets out from an empirical foundation. From these empirical elements thought must, by means of self-analysis, raise itself until, in fact, thought of an absolute sort be brought forth. But we know no reason why, in transcending or leaving behind—as Kant did, in fact, insist, and as Hegel really repeated—what is of merely accidental character, thought should be content without pressing beyond empirical researches to a truly objective knowledge of divine truth as such. For the inwardness of the spiritual subject is not an abstract inwardness that concerns not itself with objective truth or principle. Dr. Wenley's exclusive assumption of the term “speculative” is itself one of the many “half-truths” which he has been unable to “overcome.” But a true speculative theology will live notwithstanding, and will find in Truth the highest objective principle of its speculative activity. It will find its highest aim in trying to give scientific presentation to the ethical conception of God brought to us by the Christian religion, as that conception finds expression in a consciousness of God always more progressively ethicized. God must be set forth as the absolutely ethical Personality, working in freedom, since without freedom there is no love. This deepening of our ethical consciousness is, of course, something far in advance of making Christianity a mere religious ethic. It is not to be conceived as involving any *sacrificio dell' intelletto*, calling, as it does, for the fuller and deeper activity of speculative intellect.

THE RITSCHLIAN THEOLOGY.

Dr. Wenley claims to be "as fair as human weakness permits" in his dealings with the Ritschlian theology, but the limits are all too soon reached. His criticism is far too slight and imperfect. His treatment of the Ritschlian value-judgments merely affirms that these "depend upon judgments of reality." But he has nothing to say of the Ritschlian claim that these value-judgments are meant to be set over against the theoretic judgments of science, and not put in contrast with real or essential judgments. Nor does he display any proper sense of the attractiveness which Ritschlianism wears in its claim to make Christianity a wholly practical thing, without theoretic or philosophical admixture—an attractiveness constituted, without doubt, by its suitability to the ideas of a scientific and positivist age. Though he deals with the Ritschlian dualism between theoretic and practical knowledge, he does not bring out the necessity, for mind and its energies, that such dualism be transcended, and the unity of the philosophical and Christian world-views grasped. Nor does he, in any adequate manner, realize the greatness of Ritschl's work of theological construction, pursued as it was in an age of agnosticism and destructive criticism. It had been better if Dr. Wenley, instead of turning a great personality like Ritschl into sport for the Philistines, had aspired to some share in Ritschl's noble independence as a thinker, however differing from his methods and results. It seems rather "peddling" criticism to say that "God need have no personality" in the Ritschlian theology, "nor need he have any attribute save love," for the love obviously involves the personality, and is meant to define the quality of his Personality, in pursuance of Ritschl's practical aim. True, Ritschl does not wish the notion of personality to go before that of love, but it is not just or fair to represent him as meaning to deny personality to God. If personality be

but the form in which the revelation comes, his failure to see that personality is the prior conception would only be one of the proofs that philosophy was not a strong point with him. What God is *for us* is his concern, not what God is in himself.

Dr. Wenley's talk of Ritschlianism and "its eviscerated Christ, its pliant view of sin, its comfortable deity, and its secluding agnosticism," sounds strange on the lips of one who has a soft partiality for his own speculative school far removed from this sort of pungency. This we say, although Ritschl, in our view, made a grave mistake in extruding, under recoil from mysticism, elements of spirituality so essential that, wherever there is virile development of the spiritual life, these will lead to a bursting of the swaddling-clothes of Ritschlianism. But this aspect of its historical positivism, with its consequences for living and spiritual Christianity, Dr. Wenley leaves untouched. Yet the Ritschlian denial of direct intercourse with God is one of its most serious defects, one, too, which no weakly sensitive fear of pietistic and mystical extravagances is sufficient to justify. With all its historic positivism, Ritschlianism remains a prey to subjectivism, and comes not forth as a system of objective truth for all, through its dependence on personal intuitions or impressions of value. Its basis is really a subjective idealism far enough removed from giving us the firm ground promised. Such empirical needs as its does satisfy are not final and exhaustive. Its "pliant view of sin" is a grave defect which it shares, in its own way, with the idealism of Dr. Wenley's school, shattered as this latter is through setting sin in relation to an "eviscerated" Deity. The defective view of Ritschlianism as to Christ and sin really constitute an historical rationalism not so far removed from the speculative rationalism of Dr. Wenley's school. But the most vital parts of the whole question are left untouched by Dr. Wenley, who

has nothing to say of Ritschlianism's lack of revelation-value for the Scriptures, or of its divergence from the apostolic faith about Christ. But, Dr. Wenley's defect has been supplied by Ecke, who, in his highly interesting work, declares the Ritschlians to be defective or wavering in attitude towards apostolical witness—that witness which must remain as basis and norm for the life and knowledge of the Christian community.¹ Before speaking of its "eviscerated Christ," Dr. Wenley had better have done a little more to show wherein He is "eviscerated," for there is nothing really adduced by him to show that the Deity of Christ is, in Ritschlianism, meant in a merely moral or religious sense, nothing to mark the fact that the Deity of Christ is, with Ritschl, expressive of the value of his historic work for the mind of the church, but is not on that account held as, in really objective sense, attributable. Christ is, on the Ritschlian theory, only the embodiment of the Divine Revelation, the Founder of the Divine Kingdom, into whose nature or substance as Person we are, however, forbidden to inquire. It should also be made to appear how its homage to Christ—its mode of finding God and salvation only in Christ—is yet one of the sources of the power of Ritschlianism. A passing mention of "its exaltation of Christ" cannot suffice to bring out the stress of Ritschl on the activity of Christ, on his uniqueness as Founder of the Kingdom, and on his peculiar oneness with God. This divineness of Jesus is not meant to mark him off in any absolute way from others. Touching Christ as the source of revelation, it should be observed how strangely Ritschl refrains from staying to inquire into the source and validity of the revelation so summed for him in Christ. Ritschl simply takes it as ultimate: its value is for him final, and found in its fruits. It is really the worth that

¹Die theologische Schule Albrecht Ritschls und die evangelische Kirche der Gegenwart. Berlin, 1897. See pp. 314-316.

Jesus carries for the single soul that is determinative of the divine aspect in which we come to behold him, and it should not be left out of view how strangely unconcerned Ritschl is with the grounds on which we so come to believe in Christ at all. No doubt, it is well to have the Ritschlian stress on the absolute character of revelation, and well, too, to have its emphasis on Christ as positive principle of that revelation, but this absoluteness of revelation is so ill-defined when defined at all, and the way in which Christ comes to be its positive principle is so shirked, that less real ground for satisfaction remains. There is a continual taking refuge in mystery which is far from satisfying to our instinctive craving for light. "Eviscerated" enough the Ritschlian Christ of the present certainly is; nor has it any great future for the Christ; and if none for him, what wonder that it has so little of real world to come for us? And, besides, what right to make us lose the individuality of the believer in the unity of the Kingdom? The oscillation between too radically inharmonious principles—that of an individualistic freedom, based on the Kantian moral autonomy, on the one hand, and a strong churchly socialism on the other, makes it fail of satisfying result. The truth is that Ritschlianism is far more valuable as a fermenting power or influence than it is as a reasoned and coherent system.

THE THEISTIC PROBLEM.

Dr. Wenley sees the problem involved in God's remaining God, and still being for man "a construction derived from experience," and is not without a sense that his speculative school have need to do better by Personality in God and by the single life of man. Now, there has been no lack of conceiving God through the world of finite experience, and such knowledge or conception of him is real, so far as it goes. For, though he be for us the Absolute

Being, and, as such, a self-evident principle of reason, our knowledge of him arises only on occasion of our experientially knowing him in his objective reality. This is not to say that there may not be advantage, such as Biedermann suggests, in beginning with the logico-metaphysical idea of the absoluteness of God's being, rather than with the empirical idea of man.¹ Professor Andrew Seth, in dealing with Theism, seems to us to lose sight of the point as to God's remaining God, while we take experience to be "the only accessible and authentic revelation" of the Absolute. "Without the assumption of the infinite value and significance of human life," he says, "argument about God is simply waste of time."² But, if we are not to argue about God till we get the infinite significance of life, may we not be pardoned for asking whence its significance may be infinitely derived if not from him? Is he not before all our thought and argument about him, and goes he not before our every impulse to seek him? Is "human life" a thing so weighted with significance that it must give all point and value to thought about God? Does not the thought of God much more give force and value to "human life"? Is it quite wise to make "duty" a more "basal certainty" than "God"?³ Is "God" nor base nor sanction of "duty"? May we not still prefer, with the poet, to regard duty as "stern daughter of the voice of God" rather than reduce God to an outcome of duty? Are we really to refuse consideration in our thought to God, save in so far as he is of value for "human life," and not in and for himself alone? Is not the problem really *what*, rather than *whether*, God is? Is it of no consequence for the Universe—a mere "waste of time" to consider—whether there is a God or not, if man's life has not infinite worth? No doubt, where the stress on the moral life is small, argu-

¹ Biedermann, *Christliche Dogmatik*, § 699, pp. 620-621.

² A. Seth, *Two Lectures on Theism*, p. 63. ³*Ibid.*, p. 64.

ment may mean "waste of time" if regarded as argument and nothing more. But we do not set out to seek God from any such assumption as that of Professor Seth, but sheerly from the impulse wrought in us of nature's revelations and those interior revelations that come through feeling and reflection. Being and worth in and for himself we must certainly postulate for God, and not make him of worth only for man or man's life. There is no occasion to deny—if we defer—the "infinite value and significance" of "human life," as seen in creation's having been made for man as its crown. But is there any reason in the world why our thought should never proceed after God, save only on basis of this assumption? Does not the absoluteness of his being and self-revelation exceed our experience, so that experience cannot simply be made its measure? What eternal significance and worth could be held for "human life," should God prove to be blind Fate, as indeed he might eventually prove to be, if we are to determine life's worth before we argue about him? Professor Seth's "assumption" implies that God is of no practical account for man, unless man finds himself to be of "infinite" account in the eyes of God. But what a subjective criterion this involves! The "assumption" certainly *is* an assumption, for we have no direct knowledge of "human life" as of "infinite" worth, and we see our suicides, therefore, lightly throw it away. But whether we must argue for God only by using it is another matter. We hold that man is bound to know, no less than to make moral estimate. The infinite value and significance of "human life" is an assumption based on life which is really phenomenal, inexplicable, and transitory. To assume God without making this explicit assumption may for us be far more rational and easy. True as it is that only as we value life do we reach out to a Higher than we, we yet cannot narrowly reason to God from the sentiments and verdicts of the moral life alone.

We must get our God first, before the "infinite value and significance" can be ours that spring from our being consciously related to him. Then do we see the added worth and significance that have come to our lives from the Universe-serving man, according to the purpose of God. We deny the right to proscribe the speculative impulse in man—on whom rests an imperious obligation to seek truth for its own sake, whether it ministers to the magnifying of man's own life or not—in the interests of the ethical impulse to obey. Professor Seth rightly objects to Hegel's making everything give way before thought or the intellectual interest, and we, with equal right, object to Professor Seth's own one-sided tendency to sacrifice thought and all else before a purely moral interest and human valuation. It ought never to be doubted that an intellectual interest has here its own power to deepen moral earnestness and ought never to be regarded as "waste of time."

But now, just here we must note, with Dr. Wenley's admission of the need to "rate personality at its proper worth" (p. 175), the strange helplessness with which he regards personality, once more introduced. On page 176 we have "personality re-imported as it were"; on page 177, we are told it "may be made subject of hopeful appeal"; on it (p. 179) one "cannot choose but lean"; on page 185, it "points the way, and, to this extent, may assist toward a solution"; and so we are left by Dr. Wenley with another of those "half-truths" in which alone he seems to live and have any philosophic being. What force or impact can belong to work marked by an abortiveness or elusiveness of this sort? Rationalism, "in the guise of a socialized reason," constitutes "the ægis of a satisfactory theology" (p. 188). What, then, does his "socialized reason" mean? We are left to gather it from his telling us that "the average man of the day" reaches results that can hardly be said to be helpful (p. 135), and that he has "leaders on

whom he must perforce rely"! So we are driven to hold by something much more definite and scientific than his vague "socialized reason." We prefer still to trust to religion coming to scientific self-consciousness in the theological subject. For such subject shall scientifically grasp and present the God-consciousness of mankind in all its possibility, necessity, actuality, and fullness of reality. Had Dr. Wenley seriously devoted himself to a competent knowledge of any one of the three subjects he has chosen to treat, he would thereby have escaped the disservice he has rendered to theology. As it is, he has supplied a signal warning of the dangers and shallows that beset such methods of theological study.

The theistic problem, however, is of paramount importance for contemporary theology. The vitality of the universe, the immanence of the life of Deity, are truths which have been much more vividly realized, but faith in the Personality of God has thereby been quickened, not quenched. There is no reason why the vitality of the Divine Life should be a segregated thing, as in some Deistic sort, instead of the Divine Personality being for us renewed or rejuvenated in the life universal. No disclaimer of impersonality could be more complete than that of the newer theism. But no solution of the theistic problem can be satisfactory which shall shrink from the positive assertion and exposition of Personality in Deity, though, of course, we do not by this latter phrase meditate a psychology of the eternal. If those who have approached the subject from the scientific, no less than those from the philosophical, side, have sometimes even timidity and hesitation in speaking of the Infinite Personality or the Infinite Self-Consciousness, that can hardly be wondered at by any one who has deeply pondered those aspects of Deity with which the scientific habit of thought has most to do. Yet God as the Absolute Personal Spirit must be clearly affirmed. From

him the physical universe as objective reality must still be distinguished. A like distinctness of existence must be postulated for ourselves, though made in his likeness. The fundamental reality of the Universe can only be spirit: its highest energy can be no other than that of spirit: the Absolute Being can be no less than personal spirit: the personal and self-conscious alone can love. These considerations should guide and affect us in conceiving the religious relation, so that we view it as involving recognition, on our part, of a real relationship between God and man. We find Professor Seth asking, "What is religion, if not an attitude of the subjective spirit of man"?¹ To which it must be answered, that the religious relation, theistically conceived, is, while involving this, very much more than this.

It is not bare subjectivity, though subjectivity there must be. On its human side it is not mere attitude, but, on any adequate view, action as well. God need not exist at all, in order to religion, so far as Professor Seth's definition is concerned. Religion is not made by him to consist of any relation to God. Can any true and adequate conception of religion be formed, so long as man communes with no one outside of himself, and has no need to postulate a God? There is something *to* which religion binds or ties us when it relates us to God. Religion involves a subjective attitude, but is not constituted by that alone, for it has an objective basis and wears an objective character as related to a Higher than we. Religion presupposes an object, and though we in religion may look at the relation from man's side, yet we cannot overlook that there is an Object, and, what is more, an object with attitude such as properly corresponds with that found in man. But Professor Seth's mode of defining religion ignores the possibility, which is God's, of drawing near to man. I can more eagerly seek after him, but it is also true that he may make fuller or

¹ *Two Lectures on Theism*, p. 36.

clearer revelation of himself to me. Without an Object or Being worthy to be worshiped, *plus* the subjective attitude of man's spirit, the idea of religion is not adequately realized. For the purely subjective view obviously explains only part of the relation subsisting between man and God. In all spheres of relation, there is the thing perceived as well as the perceiving subject, and to leave the reality of the object perceived out of account is manifestly one-sided.

Man worships not himself, nor his own ideas, but the God in whom he has his being. Vital as the subjective self-affirmation of our spiritual consciousness may be, it is very unsatisfactory to represent religion otherwise than as a personal relation importing a communion with God—a reciprocal fellowship—of the most real character. Religion is thus more than a subjective attitude, and involves a participation, a taking possession, of God in this mutual commerce of spirit with spirit, person with person. When the self-relation of man has so met the self-revelation of God, then is religion, by such union of factors, completely realized. The subjectivism of which we have been speaking, has, in its extreme forms, too many affinities with the pure illusion into which German materialism and French positivism have been prone to resolve religion. Such stress on the subjective attitude of man in religion is in danger of becoming too closely allied with the tendency to make God an idea developed by our own thinking, not a Being known through real revealing on his part. Then might we become a prey to agnosticism or to ideal pantheism, and our theism would have perished. But theism still maintains its doctrine of God as the Absolute Spirit, actively revealing himself in the Universe while yet transcending it, and it is careful how it conceives of individual personality in man, which Professor Seth is not without anxiety to conserve, though he has thus spoken. Theism does so because it is wise enough to know that, however

individuals may escape, all such tendencies of thought are inexorably driven to their legitimate conclusion, and so should be firmly adjusted.

Dr. Wenley says that "the priceless treasure of idealism, the rehabilitation of experience," cannot be given up, because some have resolved Deity into nothing more than "the process of ideas." But how can Dr. Wenley delude himself into the belief that he has been rehabilitating experience? It would be nearer truth to say he has been dissolving it before a shadowy Hegelian Universal, and diluting it till it becomes a weak "socialized" solution. We are idealist, and content to be so in a true fashion. But we are not content to make man, in his individual being and experience, the unsubstantial and unessential thing he appears on Dr. Wenley's "untrammelled" theory. Man is more than an aspect of the Absolute Idea, more than a mode of the Absolute Experience, and we need not hoodwink ourselves as to a "final idealism" which means no more than that integration of human existence described as "the experience of the race" (p. 191) or "socialized reason," in which is found the ægis of a "theology" that would be "satisfactory" to Dr. Wenley. Whether the "final idealism" be upon us or not, we are content with the necessary insights of reason in the present, with its permissible hopes for the eternal future, with the actualities of experience, and with the suggestions of conscience. But all this does not imply that, though we know even God in and through our finite experience, we make God only an element *in* experience, or evolve him *out of* experience, or fail to realize how small a part we know of him—his absolute being and working.