

OLD AND NEW PROPHETS.

SIX LECTURES

BY

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First Lecture.

As the great teachers of mankind, as the leaders of the peoples forward toward the [1] promised land of hope, as the torch-bearers of the spirit on dark, untrodden paths, the prophets hold a high rank. But — one asks — are these leaders now also reliable? The old prophets are, after all, dead, and the visions of the new ones come at times, here and there, in disquieting confusion. Is it really a law of history that every spiritually stirred age must have its prophets? A critical comparison between antiquity and the present might at the outset tempt one to suppose the opposite.

The ancient world, poor in experience but rich in presentiments and inspired promptings, groped in an outward half-darkness. For want of secure laws and reliable facts, the inner lights, with visions and revelations, had to be its foremost guiding stars: the ancient world needed prophets. But the new world, with its armed eye, its telescopes and microscopes, proceeds by the way of calculation and requires another guidance. In politics, in political economy, in industry and trade one does not consult oracles; in a financial crisis one seeks advice not from prophets, but from expert professionals.

The prophet is like a seer on the mountain. Far off on the horizon, images of the [2] future emerge from the mist of possibilities and are drawn in floating outline upon the airy ground of the clouds; it is refractions of the inner light that give these figures life and color and full presence. Here there is no reliable measure of distance; the prophet sees what is to come as something present: he does not calculate, he beholds. The reasoning inquirer, on the other hand, arrives at his cognitions piecemeal. For him what is to come is a consequence, determined by law according to the connection of things, of what is past; he does not rely on a merely intuiting imagination; he doubts and tests, he reflects and calculates. The latter seems to the enlightened of the present to be fully as sure as the former. True enough, we cannot calculate in advance a political upheaval as the astronomers calculate an eclipse of the sun; unforeseeable circumstances will always play a part in historical events; the most carefully calculated future usually has some surprise or other in reserve. But even if we cannot predict exactly what must necessarily happen, we can nonetheless find out by calculation what will in all probability happen. The calculus of probability, which in our day has gained a wide domain, shows its superiority in the most diverse fields. If one has a sufficient number of statistical data on a country's population over a longer series

of years, then one can, without prophetic inspiration, calculate with fair certainty how many deaths will occur in the coming year, how many suicides, how many will hang themselves, how many will drown themselves, shoot themselves, etc. As regards [3] marriages, one calculates not merely how many will marry in the course of the year, but even how many with young girls, how many with older girls and how many with widows. So far have things come that the postal service can calculate how many letters will be handed in within a year and a day with a wrong address and how many without an address, because in one's haste one has forgotten the address. The calculus of probability is in steady progress; the statistical tables grow in many-sidedness as well as in scope, and will, as far as the educated are concerned, soon, it may be, be said to have more or less replaced the prophecies.

This consideration is misleading, for it displaces the point of view.

In the outward world, indeed even in the inward, there is much that can be calculated, and anyone who in such things will guess his way forward, or rely on presentiments, or choose blindly, must take the consequences of having, out of indolence, neglected to think and calculate. But with the highest concerns of the spirit it is something else. Should there come a time in which the prophetic had no significance, then it would surely have to be a time in which the poetic, in the deeper sense, had no significance either, a time where imagination and feeling, the stirrings of the heart and ideal longings, had no significance, a time in which the soul, the conscience, with everything personal, spent its powers on the acquisition of finite things and the calculation of utility and advantage. In such a time religion would certainly be a fancy, faith superstition, the majesty of the spirit dethroned. But such a time has not yet come and will, it is to be hoped, never come.

[4] It is being prepared, though, people say. Long enough has the old oriental fable of the arbitrary power of a miracle-working spirit tyrannized human nature; it is time that this nature be allowed to move freely and create for itself its own forms of existence. The spirit is not a being by itself, exalted above nature; it is nature itself which in man comes to consciousness and becomes spirit. All human relations, private as well as public, are determined by natural demands and have their ultimate ground in inescapable natural conditions. The man's love for the woman, the mother's love for the child, the people's love for the fatherland, what is that but sheer natural determinations? The same holds of beauty and honor, indeed of truth and right. He who does not have an original, i.e. a natural, sense of the beautiful never comes to know what beauty is. If a human being has by nature no sense of honor, what use

is it then to try to inculcate in him the principles of honor? By suitable application of punishment and reward one can perhaps force unruliness into the forms of a prescribed morality; one can, after all, break in the refractory individual as one breaks in the wild horse, by letting him thirst. But does that promote morality itself? Even if one could, with the enormous apparatus of the wrath and grace of a supernatural arbitrariness, hold out the prospect of nine hells on the one side and as many heavens on the other, one would still not be able, by outward pressure, to press true recognition of truth, freedom and right into a single human soul.

There is an indissoluble bond between nature and truth. To deny what follows from the nature of a matter is to deny the truth; to keep strictly to the nature of [5] the matter is to keep to the truth. A great fuss is made about sin; people weep solemnly over fallen nature. But what is it that produces sin and corrupts nature? It is arbitrariness. Nature in all naturalness cannot corrupt itself; it is precisely the arbitrary, which emerges as natural life is to pass over through man into the life of the spirit, that produces sin. As arbitrariness misjudges the demands of nature and works against its striving, the false, the unnatural, comes forth. Arbitrariness is the principle of evil, the real cause of discord and disorder. What is disorder but unnature? By arbitrary precepts one would force persons of unlike minds, of conflicting natures, to go on living together in marriage because they now once are in marriage, to live as if they were at one at heart, because arbitrariness has commanded that they shall be at one, to live so that it looks as though they loved each other inwardly, although they are manifestly close to hating each other to the death; this untruth, this soul-consuming unnature shall — so runs the command of arbitrariness — be the right sign of moral order, the genuine proof of the sanctity of marriage. What is it that brings society into disorder? This unnatural thing, that something which by its essence is of a lower kind is set up as a higher, while what is by nature higher is held under a pressure that stamps it as a lower; this unnatural thing, that many must suffer so that a few may enjoy, that the one must do the work so that the other may reap the wages; this unnatural thing, that peoples of one root and one blood are torn from each other by arbitrary power, while peoples of different descent, with different language, [6] different customs and different conditions of development, are to be forced to give up what constitutes the natural ground of their life, and to live under an all-levelling uniformity in the same state under the same laws, only because mighty arbitrariness wills it.

It is remarkable to see how arbitrariness, the clerical as well as the secular, sweats

and toils to keep in check the unruliness of the millions and to secure for civil society order and quiet. It will not succeed: sin, ah, wicked sin! sin increases. Faith decreases, corrupted nature grows worse and worse. Quite naturally; as long as one works with the principle of arbitrariness, arbitrary reward and arbitrary punishment, supernatural wrath and supernatural grace, sin, the unnatural, will surely thrive. Go to the nature of the matter, give us light on the ground of the laws, natural relations in the arrangement of society, and the unrest will cease and sin decrease; then comes the new time: as things now are, they cannot possibly remain.

The peculiar mixture of the true and the false which underlies this utterance we shall not here discuss more closely. Only this shall be stressed, that utterances of this nature rest on more than the calculus of probability and statistical tables. They are prophetic voices we hear; the new prophets come forward to replace the old.

Every time in which higher vital forces are stirring and great questions of the spirit are in motion must, in one form or another, necessarily have its prophets. What [7] determines the character of an age is the prevailing world-view. Different kinds of world-view may indeed be contemporaneous and clash with one another; but, unless everything is in chaotic dissolution, there will always be fundamental features of a view which has the future before it. Our ecclesiastical conception of heaven and earth belongs to antiquity, the scientific one to the present. The difference between antiquity and the present is in this respect so thoroughgoing that all signs point toward a radical transformation. Here is a theme for variations rich in mood. It belongs to the essence of prophecy to strike the fundamental chords of existence and touch the strings that vibrate most deeply in the ear of the generations. As the prophets stand on eminent heights, they appear as solitary figures, but if we look more closely, they are by no means solitary; there are thoughts that keep them company, they have their life in the midpoint of the forces. What ferments in the race, its need and longing, its pain and hope, moves powerfully in them and grows clear to their sight; the dimly sensed, the not yet explained, that after which the many grope, what is bound in the mind and has not found the releasing word, this they fetch out of the night of the deep and lift up into the light of day.

The relation of the supernatural to the natural, the relation of freedom to necessity, the will of the ruler of the world and the connection of events, these immortal themes of the spirit keep the movement going and constitute the standing account between old and new prophets.

If we pass over the mythically veiled, in which natural and supernatural are

mingled — the oracles, the sibyls, the völvas —, and keep to the sharply marked opposition of spirit and nature, then we find what is typical of antiquity in Israel's old [8] prophets. Jehovah, the God of the spirit, is the creator of the world, his will almighty. The being and working of the Spirit is therefore not dependent on finite natural conditions; the almighty Spirit works when it will, what it will and as it will, with unconditioned freedom. — With such an arbitrary use of the powers of omnipotence the new prophets can in no way reconcile themselves. A miracle-working will that does as it pleases with nature and plays an Olympian game with causes and laws they find to such a degree contrary to experience and sound reason that, offended at this, they often go to the opposite extreme and deny the original freedom of the spirit. It is then not the free will of the spirit but the immanent necessity of eternal nature that is the all-determining first. What nature demands, the spirit must will: the divine will is, according to this way of seeing, just as little able to change the laws of nature, the course of nature, as the human.

This opposition is strengthened still further by the manner in which the communication of the spirit is supposed to take place.

The old prophets received the Spirit immediately as Jehovah's messengers; the Spirit came upon them with Jehovah's word, proclaiming Jehovah's will. The calling to be a prophet was a miracle of the Spirit. The relation between the divine spirit and human consciousness therefore continued to be miraculous. The prophet knows how to distinguish between his own thoughts and the thoughts that are inspired in him by the Spirit, between his own words to Jehovah and Jehovah's word to him. How circumstantially and with what clarity the Spirit can foretell to the prophet things [9] which no human being could know of himself, of this there are manifold examples. When Samuel (1 Sam. ch. 10) had anointed Saul king over Israel, he kissed him and spoke thus: "When thou goest from me today, thou shalt meet two men by Rachel's sepulchre in the border of Benjamin's lot at Zelzah; they shall say unto thee: The asses which thou wentest to seek are found; but now thy father hath put the matter of the asses out of his head, he is troubled for you and saith: What shall I do for my son? When thou goest on forward from thence and comest to the oak of Tabor, there shall meet thee three men going up to God to Bethel, one of them carrying three kids, another three loaves of bread, the third a bottle of wine. They will salute thee and give thee two loaves, which thou shalt receive of their hands. After that thou shalt come to the hill of God, where the pillar of the Philistines stands; when thou art come thither to the city, thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the

high place with stringed instruments, tabrets, pipes and harps before them, and they shall prophesy. Then the Spirit of Jehovah will come mightily upon thee; thou shalt prophesy with them and be turned into quite another man than before. And when these signs are come, then do what thou feelest the urge to do, for God is with thee". And it happened exactly so. In the moment Saul "turned his back to Samuel, God turned his heart, so that it became another. And all those signs came to pass on that day. When he came to the hill, a company of prophets met him, and the Spirit of God came mightily upon him, and he prophesied among them. All those who knew him [10] beforetime and saw that he prophesied with the prophets said among themselves, what is come unto the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Such a communication of the spirit, so pettily exact a prediction of chance encounters can — according to the new prophets — find credence only with those who feel disposed to every kind of faith, also to faith in clairvoyance and spiritism. No one who has any notion of the laws of existence, spiritual as well as natural, will be able to form any conception of how a spirit which is not our spirit can step forth speaking in our inner self and inform us how many men with kids and bread and bottles of wine we shall meet on the road. — If we call the attention of these wise men to the fact that there are surely many, and that even among the enlightened, who still sincerely believe in Samuel's prophetic foresight, they answer us that this happens through a pious, subtle self-deception. It is with prophetic images of the future as with natural light-images: a slight turn of the mirror's surface can change the whole. Samuel's mind is filled with faith in Jehovah; the spirit stirs in him at the thought of the decisive step of having to choose a king for the people. So he speaks to Saul with an authority which his age and position and superiority of spirit give him. Saul shall no longer search for his father's asses; he shall find the prophets and become a man of the spirit; for only by becoming quite another man than before "will he as king be able to rule Israel". It works on the gifted young man, the word strikes down into his soul like lightning; thus we find him inspired in the circle of the inspired, — Saul among the prophets. That is understandable, for it is natural. When one, half consciously, half [11] unconsciously, substitutes such an explanation, while on the authority of tradition, and because the supernatural always glitters in the imagination, one keeps literally to the narrative, or, as it is so coquettishly and ingratiatingly called, receives the revealed word in all simplicity, one can of course easily persuade oneself and others that, even in the age of unbelief, one is one of the old-fashioned believers. But a cloud of mist of ambiguities broods at the bottom of such souls. If self-examination were

awakened and the light of reflection were allowed to break through, the old-fashioned believers would, surely to their own surprise, come to make modern discoveries. The letter-believing conception and the substituted understanding belong to two utterly conflicting views, that of antiquity and that of the present.

According to the original meaning, the Spirit of Jehovah has arbitrarily, i.e. without any psychological regard whatsoever to natural conditions, inspired Samuel with every word in the prophetic prediction, which is then also confirmed by the signs' coming to pass punctually. But not to speak of the fact that so nature-less, arbitrary a mechanics of the spirit stands in glaring conflict with the inner as well as outer experiences in which every man of the present breathes and lives, there is in this at the same time a contradiction which even the most unconditional faith in miracles is not able to remove. If Jehovah is omniscient, and the Omniscient has once, in all arbitrariness, decided to communicate to a human being what will happen in the nearest future, then on this presupposition one can find it in order that the prediction is fulfilled down to the smallest details. But precisely by holding fast to the presupposition we are driven by an inflexible logic further on to the question: [12] how is it possible that the omniscient spirit, which here has hit so exactly all the side-issues, has missed the main thing? Samuel is in the spirit assured that Saul is the right man, but that is, as the following history shows, a great mistake. Saul is precisely not the right man. Is it now Jehovah who has erred, or is it Samuel, or perhaps both of them? However one turns and twists, one comes into a labyrinth of contradictions. If the Omniscient knew that Saul really was the worthiest when he was chosen king, why then did the Omniscient not also know that he would later make himself unworthy? If one says: the Omniscient knew very well that Saul would fail his calling, but chose him nevertheless, because he would choose him, then we have pure arbitrariness. If one says: Saul's disobedience was an expression of his free will, and what will happen in the near future by virtue of men's free will not even the Omniscient himself can foreknow; then one comes into difficulty with the kids, the loaves and the bottle of wine; unless one will assume that everything was ordered in advance, and that the men Saul met did not meet him with what they carried of their free will, but according to higher orders. If the latter is assumed, what then is Samuel's whole prediction? A prearranged game, a comedy of prophecy. To come out of the labyrinth of arbitrarinesses there is only one way out: to take the natural conditions along and keep to the substituted explanation.

With the entry of the natural conditions arbitrariness departs, and the communi-

cation of the spirit appears in another light. All gifts of the spirit are, originally seen,
 [13] natural gifts; it is only in the gifted, in those by nature especially endowed, in a word: in the geniuses, that the great world-thoughts we call ideas are transfigured into spirit. The ideas do not come through supernatural, miraculous promptings, still less do they fall speaking into the inspired soul! The genius receives his impressions from the surrounding world like other men; the difference is only that he, by virtue of a peculiar organic disposition, works up his impressions in a peculiar manner, re-melts them in memory, gathers them in intuition, forms them, clarifies them and translates them into his own peculiar, yet generally intelligible language.

The inner transformation often takes place in so involuntary a manner that the gifted man may fall into wonder at himself and ask: what is it, then, that goes on in me? It works in here without my working, it thinks even when I do not think; it grows as the grass grows, it grows as the fetus in the pregnant woman. What I bring forth is not of myself; my activity, even if I exert myself to the utmost, is quite subordinate, I am only a servant, a midwife. Thus it may well seem to him that the new visions with the new thoughts are enigmatic promptings. But they are not promptings of a supernatural spirit speaking into the soul; it is the play of the soul's own powers, the nature of genius, in whose secret workshop work goes on according to laws. The gifted man cannot possibly make a separation between what the enigmatic works in him and what he himself effects. By attempting such a separation and taking the natural for something supernatural, he would sink down
 [14] beneath a nature-less mechanism of the spirit and cease to be a genius. Genius is precisely the unity of nature and consciousness, the happy unity in which the activity of nature and self-activity go together into spirit. The word of genius is a human word; but this human word, which the thought of nature has borne and the idea held at its baptism, receives through its consecration a magic power which wonderfully seizes and moves our mind. This human word is the word of the spirit, a prophetic word, with a reflected glory of the divine.

So then: the heralds of antiquity are prophets of supernatural spirit, the heralds of the present are prophets of genius; here we stand at the nodal point. Although much of what the new prophets have to tell us about the laws of nature well deserves to be taken to heart, there is nonetheless something which they partly conceal, partly overlook. They maintain the validity of laws, and we must grant that they are right; where there are no laws, or where the laws are arbitrarily broken, there is no connection, no meaning or understanding. But they speak as if there were no other

laws than the laws of nature, as if the spirit did not also have its laws. It constantly looks as if the physical laws of necessity were everywhere to take the place of the laws of the spirit. Here we must be on our guard; for if the indicated principle is to be carried through, it has very far-reaching consequences. For it follows from this not merely that the divine spirit cannot possibly be any independent being, distinct from nature, but it also follows from this that our soul, our self, our will cannot be any being distinct from our bodily organism either. Has it then really been proved that the self-validity of the laws of the spirit cannot possibly subsist with the laws of nature? By no means! The whole demonstration confines itself to a bare assertion. It [15] must be admitted that our insight into the laws of the spirit is too imperfect for us to be able, in particulars, to give a sufficient account of the interaction between nature and spirit. But, we ask, can the physics-philosophers, by which we mean such critical half-thinkers as live by copying the results of investigating physics, can they then really, on their side, in all particulars — by means of the laws of nature give an account of how the inorganic becomes something organic, the organism a living body, the living body something that looks like a soul, a self-being, a conscious self-determining will? Can the new prophets perhaps explain genius? They will surely come to be brief and let it rest with the categorical declaration that the extraordinary in genius is subject to the laws of nature. With the same right we could then assert that the supernatural in the old prophets' inspiration is subject to the laws of the spirit. Or has it perhaps been proved that the supernatural is the nature-less, the unnatural? No, here is no proof, here is only an assertion.

If we could not know genius by its productions, nor appropriate these productions, rejoice in them and use them, before we had fathomed to the bottom what genius is, and to which mechanical or chemical combination of substances it is to be referred, then we should for the time being have to renounce art and poetry; we should have to regard the heroes of civilization as suspect, enigmatic quantities, indeed, what is more, we would not at all be able to understand the new prophets. But as surely as we can prize and admire the productions of genius without being able [16] to comprehend the inspiration of genius, why then should we not acknowledge the wonderful productions of the spirit of revelation, although we are unable to explain the supernatural inspiration. It is not quite as the most zealous preachers of modern consciousness loudly assure us in streets and market-places — especially in the physics-philosophers' straw-market —, that the independence of the spirit is sheer arbitrariness, that this arbitrariness is to blame for dualism, and dualism to blame

for our spiritual misfortune. It is hardly certain that we shall be rid of the riddles of life because we are rid of arbitrariness, for the unconditioned freedom of the spirit is after all something other than lawless arbitrariness; we dare not, without more ado, rely on death's settling the account of freedom if we merely deny freedom and fall quietly asleep in necessity. Necessity is no more intelligible than freedom. Anyone who feels a calling to undertake investigations will convince himself that the problem of necessity is insoluble precisely because the problem of freedom is insoluble, and conversely; in other words: that genius in the last instance is just as unfathomable as the spirit.

Necessity is the unfathomable of nature; the unfathomable of the spirit is freedom. The original unity of freedom and necessity is hidden in the eternal wisdom. Whether we now feel ourselves addressed rather by the prophets of the spirit or by those of genius, we must trust in wisdom — in folly we could not, after all, trust; we must look at the course of the governance in history. The development of the human race is a naturally conditioned development of the spirit, an often hampered, by manifold obstacles crisscrossed, but on the whole progressing development of freedom.

[17] Arbitrariness and the limits of nature belong to the elementary presuppositions of development. At the limits encountered there arises a feeling of necessity, in the use of arbitrariness a feeling of freedom. Life can as little do without necessity as without freedom; both rise before the enlarged vision as ideal powers in ceaseless strife. Shall freedom serve necessity, or necessity freedom?

Conditions change. Behind the glittering veil of myth necessity begins a grandiose play which sets the youthful powers of the race in motion. Mighty nature takes on human form; it is like a jest and yet fearful earnest. On the tops of the mountains, on the bottom of the sea, in the thicket of the forests, in rivers and trees, everywhere there are human-like beings who live, feel and will. The struggle of the elements is a struggle for freedom, and freedom triumphs: the monsters sink, Olympus is peopled by blessed gods, and from the abyss the sighs of the giants are heard. It is a time of heroes, a time of geniuses with fertile thoughts and great deeds, a spring of civilization, when the faculties shoot up, nature is consecrated to spirit and the ideas blossom. All is beauty and harmony, for freedom is necessary and necessity free. But the glory lasts only a short while; necessity at play takes off its mask, and what is revealed? — The petrifying countenance of fate! Existence darkens, the gods pale, the courage of freedom sinks; the understanding spells out the connection of things, and the further it gets on in the text, the more clearly it shows itself that freedom was

only a dream: real life is bondage.

Conditions change. In order that the necessity of fate shall not strangle freedom, [18] the eternal wisdom has so ordained it that the spirit can come into its own. It begins over again with freedom, but not, as before, in ambiguity. The freedom of nature was an ambiguity and therefore a disappointment. The ambiguity is removed as the spirit separates itself from nature and proclaims itself the Lord of all creation. The proclamation is in the miracle. The natural suffers, the miracle breaks through; before the miracle's blow the threads of necessity must snap and fate sink. It is the work of liberation: the almighty will of the spirit breathes upon the powerless wills, sets the goal of freedom before their eyes and awakens them to renewed struggle. It is the time of revelation, a time of martyrs: the temporal is sacrificed for the eternal, the supernatural gains power over the natural.

Conditions change. The supernatural breakthrough worked so strongly on the human imagination that it was disgusted with the natural and was enthusiastic only for the supernatural. Nature faded; viewed in the supernatural light, it looked like an old harlot, of whose youthful beauty hardly a trace was left. Instead of understanding the declared opposition of spirit and nature as an expression of truth for a deeper unity, one sought liberation in an arbitrary breach of the laws of nature. The real order of things went under in sheer miracles, legends and holy tales. Freedom was misjudged because necessity was misjudged. But conditions change. The eternal wisdom has so ordained it that nature can anew come into its own. The time of discoveries, the time of the natural sciences, the time of free thoughts and of free [19] inquiries is again the time of geniuses, but — on higher terms.

The opposite conditions go, each according to its direction, to such strong, one-sided extremes that for that reason it is difficult for human beings who live in the one condition rightly to understand what was originally lived in the other. But we must trust in wisdom. Only the governing wisdom can give us a key of understanding, a solution of the riddle, a standard for the judgment of *old* and *new prophets*.

Second Lecture.

[20] It is a foreign, long-vanished world, the old kingdom of Israel, with which we are to make acquaintance. But, it is objected, this kingdom surely cannot be said to be foreign to us. The history of the Israelite people is taught, after all, in practically all our schools and is known even to the common man. If there is any people of antiquity about whose life and fate one may presuppose widely spread knowledge, then it is surely the Jewish one. — And yet that kingdom is foreign to us, more foreign than the culture of the Greeks and the Romans, more foreign than the conditions of primeval times in the Stone Age, the Bronze Age and the Iron Age, whose poor remains are dug out of the earth. And why so foreign? Because that which is to characterize its innermost essence is incomprehensible to us.

A great change must have taken place, indeed a transformation, with heaven and earth, since that old realm of wonders vanished. A transformation? Actual nature is, after all, in broad outline the same. Old Egypt with the river Nile, which sinks and rises, exists still. Mount Sinai still stands, a giant of granite, unshakable on its broad foot, although the storms of millennia have whirled about its grey head. And the land [21] of Canaan, the river Jordan and the Dead Sea, Mount Moriah and the rock of Zion, the heights of Lebanon, the valleys of Esdraelon, indeed the roses on the meadows of Sharon — all is here still as in the days of old.

Yes, the natural is here still, but where is the supernatural? A thunder may roll from the top of Sinai and the lightnings hiss like serpents; but where is the sound of the trumpets? Where is the commanding word of the Spirit? The voice of Jehovah has fallen silent. The storms awake, the tempest still rides along the old ways, but where is the chariot of the cherubim, and where is He who once “rode upon the wings of the storm?” Where is the arm of the Almighty? The terrible deeds, the saving deeds, the great signs, when he stretched out his hand from the cloud? where is it all, and what has become of it? — What has become of it, that I shall tell you, answers modern criticism, if you really want to know. It has become what it was and still is and always will be, religious fantasy, productions of a spirit whose innermost essence is illusion.

Now if criticism is right, then we must surely be able to test it. If it is an illusion, then it must, like every other illusion, vanish when in the light of day we call the understanding to our aid and apply the measure of reality. But to whom shall the measure be applied? Not to the people of Israel in general; for this people, with all

its stiff-neckedness, was nevertheless fickle; it changed gods, it changed faith, it was moved hither and thither like the reed and the rush. We must apply the measure to the outstanding characters, the leaders of the people, the chosen of the Spirit; we must take their lives and deeds sharply into view in order, if possible, to discover the illusion.

If a man in our day stepped forth before the common people and spoke thus: I [22] know who it is that has stolen your freedom from you and laid the yoke of bondage on your shoulders. But fear not, take courage! trust in the omnipotence of the Spirit and trust in me; I shall break the heavy yoke, I shall, despite obstacles and dangers, lead you safely to the goal. I need no worldly means; I use no carnal weapons; for the will that works in me is not my will, but his who bears heaven and earth... , if a man, as I said, came forward thus, what would we then judge of him? He is caught in a lamentable illusion. Possibly he himself believes in his mission and means it honestly. But he is an enthusiast, a madman, to put it mildly a fantast. Let him make the attempt and try his powers; we prophesy a sorry end for him; our calculus of probability and our statistical tables prove that he will suffer shipwreck with his attempt and run aground on the rocks of reality.

But is it not strange nonetheless; in that old world of wonders the great leaders stepped forth precisely in such a manner and spoke to the people in such a language. What are we now to judge? Were those men, then, enthusiasts and fantasists? This much is certain, that they did not suffer shipwreck on the probable, but carried their work through to the end. Judge the supernatural as one will, here there is nonetheless something inexplicable. If faith in the supernatural can prove its truth by giving strength to lift the natural and to make the exalted actual, then it is not seen how the supernatural can be the untrue, for faith in the untrue, an untrue faith, cannot possibly be able to transform an illusion into truth. If faith in the supernatural is and [23] remains an imagination which at the very most has only psychological truth, then there must in that world of wonders have been a time when psychological truth was stronger than actual truth; but then it is impossible to understand why the stronger truth should not, at least as far as that time is concerned, also count as the higher truth.

They are characters of great psychological truth, exalted figures, that we have before us. Let us bid them step forth, that we may rightly contemplate them; we shall name three: *Moses, Samuel, Elijah*.

Since Moses is a world-historical character, the lawgiver of the Jewish people and

founder of its constitution, it is natural that he has been compared with other great lawgivers of antiquity, with Lycurgus in Sparta, Solon in Athens and others. But in such comparisons one usually overlooks the characteristic difference and makes Moses a sage in the same sense as Solon. In his essay “Die Sendung Moses” Schiller has treated the matter from a rationalist standpoint.

Initiated into the wisdom of the Egyptian priests, exiled from Pharaoh’s court, Moses in the wilderness of Midian at length worked out how he might best deliver his people, impress upon it the faith of the patriarchs in the one true God, and secure its future as God’s people by an expedient legislation. Without having received any supernatural revelation, he nevertheless, in order to gain credence with the ignorant people, had to stoop to a pious fraud, in that he appealed to a miraculous calling, [24] pretended to stand in a peculiar personal intercourse with Jehovah himself, and thus stepped forth speaking and acting in the name of Jehovah.

The unhistorical in such a conception cannot be proved by a straightforward reference to the testimony of the Old Testament. These testimonies could, after all, merely prove either that the pious fraud was carried through so masterfully that even the foremost among the people took the pretended miracles, the outward ones as well as the miracle of the spirit, for full historical truth, or that the priests, shrewdly sensing the fraud, helped to inspire the popular fantasy and, in the history recorded thereafter, perhaps much later, likewise by a pious fraud, gave the hovering notions of what had happened a fixed dogmatic-miraculous form and thereby secured the mode of presentation that is typical of the theocracy. Here is something that must be openly and unreservedly conceded to criticism. It cannot be proved that the books of Moses were written by Moses himself or by an eyewitness. It cannot be concealed that the intermediate links of conditions that should make an understanding possible for us are omitted at many and most important points. It must be conceded that the believer in miracles, by taking everything according to the letter, gets not a hair’s breadth further, as regards insight into the inner historical connection of the matter, than the non-believer who, rejecting the supernatural, keeps to legends and myths. Both make themselves guilty, if in opposite ways, of the same error: of claiming a knowledge of what cannot be known. Our only guiding star, the only thing we have to hold to, is the *psychological truth*.

[25] That psychological truth cannot coexist with any known fraud whatever, be it pious or impious, is surely indisputable. But should it not be able to coexist with an unconscious self-deception? Even if we assume this, we should still have gained

something that is certain, namely the recognition that Moses, as regards consciousness of revelation, stands on the same, essentially on the very same level as the people of Israel with all its priests and prophets. The psychological question thus becomes this: from what spring of life did the men of the Spirit in the Old Testament themselves believe they drew the courage, the wisdom and strength which let them overcome almost superhuman obstacles and enabled them to carry out their mission?

It is a peculiar sight to see Moses, an unarmed man, indeed a fugitive, standing over against his majesty Pharaoh, commanding him in the name of Jehovah and with the authority of Jehovah: Let my people go! Pharaoh feels himself the holder of power, and a holder of power does not so easily let go of his prey. What does he rely on, then, the unarmed man? In the solitude of the wilderness by Mount Horeb, at the time when he pondered the possibilities, he was irresolute and afraid; he felt his powerlessness, and the sigh sounded: Lord, send another. Now that, in the midst of the stream of events, he sees reality as it is, looks the mighty Pharaoh himself in the eye, now he is not at all afraid. He does not feel his powerlessness; on the contrary, there breathes a growing self-confidence, an ever-rising feeling of power in the repeated words: Let my people go! It is a great change that has taken place in Moses. If this change should have come about through a self-deception, then there must be self-deceptions of very different orders; for the facts show that Pharaoh too [26] finds himself in a self-deception.

Against imaginings and illusion the actual world has strong means; it is a trial of strength between Moses and Pharaoh. If it were permissible to place Moses in line with the geniuses, then in the concurrence of circumstances under which the natural plagues of the land come to his aid, and in the shrewdness with which he knows how to use them and interpret them to his advantage, one might perhaps find a confirmation of the well-known saying: genius has fortune on its side. But to conceive Moses as a genius is to miss the psychological truth. The consciousness of genius is mythical at its ground; genius in a higher power is a hero, begotten by a divine father on a human mother, a demigod in whom the will is force of nature, and force of nature will: in the genius illusion has flesh and blood. Moses is, essentially understood, no genius; the mythically veiled is as remote from his being as possible. The aesthetics of sensuous appearances is wholly unknown to him. Nothing of that twilight magic which lends nature a soul and makes blocks of rock into manifestations of mighty spirits is to be traced in him. For his consciousness the earth is earth, the clouds clouds and the sea sea. He is, in his view of the phenomena of reality, as sober

as a natural scientist in the nineteenth century, in his judgment of civil societies so practically sensible that he would surely gladly have used the statistical tables, if only he had had them.

[27] Moses, it is said, is a practical genius, a genius of will, his wonder-working power is his will. But if the psychological truth is to be sought at this point, where do we then end up? If it is possible that one who must actually feel that he has all strength and help to seek in his own will can be caught in the imagination that it is a will independent of him, a will outside him, from which the help comes, then we must admit that such a self-deception comes very close to the miraculous. How it is psychologically explicable that a practical genius with a prosaically sensible view of nature can — when it does not happen, that is, by a known fraud, in order to dazzle the people — feel inwardly assured that it is not the circumstances or, in the play of chance, the forces of nature, but Jehovah himself, who in the hour of danger comes to the aid of his obedient servant, we are unable to see.

With the enemies behind him and the waters of the sea before him, Moses and his people are in danger. What does “the practical genius” do now? He touches the waters with his staff. “He stretched out his hand over the sea”, says the old Scripture, “and Jehovah caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and he made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided”. If we take Jehovah away and keep the east wind, then chance itself is miraculous; if we let the practical genius poetize his will into an almighty Jehovah, then the self-deception is miraculous. Only on the presupposition that Moses in his inner being originally felt his will moved and strengthened by Jehovah’s will, and for that reason recognizes the same almighty will in the strong wind that divides the waters, is there psychological truth. This psychological truth is one with the wonder of revelation.

[28] To explain the miracle of the spirit, the psychological wonder, is impossible. The religious psychology of our age gives only pale, colourless after-images of the original relation to God. The truth of the inner experiences is a secret of faith which each must keep to himself. The critique of faith that is to be applicable to the history of Moses must rest on the following two principles: 1) all accounts of outward miracles must take their light from the miracle of the spirit, 2) the psychological truth of the miracle of the spirit must be recognized by a judgment of Moses’ character and the work that was his mission.

The enlightened of the present are really at a loss with the historical element in the many miracles. There are those who reason thus: all miracles are equally

miraculous; one must therefore either accept them all or reject them all. Accept them we cannot, without committing a spiritual suicide; we must therefore reject them, i.e. assign them a place in the great museum of the legends and myths of antiquity. This way of seeing is only consistent if one at the same time rejects the miracle of the spirit and makes Moses' faith an imagination. But to hold on to the miracle of the spirit and place Moses on the level of revelation among the exemplars of faith, although one leaves his other miracles standing in all their ambiguity, will in no way do. If the notion Moses himself has of a miracle is ambiguous, then his notion of Jehovah is surely ambiguous too, and his faith ambiguous. Moses is then a man of an ambiguous character. If on the other hand all is right with Moses' own faith; if there is no ambiguity, but full clarity, in his inner being when he speaks of his mission and of all that Jehovah himself reveals to him, and thus no ambiguity in his notion of the miracle of the spirit, then neither can there be any ambiguity in his notion of the miracles of events in the outward world. If Moses is entitled to come forward as Jehovah's envoy, then he is also entitled to regard every extraordinary event that serves his purpose as a helping hand from Jehovah, a sign from the Almighty. [29]

Here there is no question at all whether Moses was able to draw any objective boundary between what Jehovah works through natural causes and what happens in a supernatural way. That the waters of the Red Sea were divided according to Jehovah's will, of this Moses is convinced, but the physical-critical-metaphysical relation between the east wind and the divine will he leaves to the modern consciousness to discover. — So then, it is objected, the difference between miracles and natural occurrences can from this standpoint be both posited arbitrarily and effaced arbitrarily; religious fantasy thus has just as free a play in the doctrine of revelation as in mythology. Where is the critique of faith now, and what does one get out of the miracle of revelation? Not to speak of how naturally it comes to the peoples of antiquity to introduce the gods speaking and acting, it is surely well known that enthusiasts and fanatics have pretended to inner revelations without its being possible to conclude from this that they were deceivers. Supernatural visions can surely, as physiology shows, be explained as hallucinations, natural outbursts of a religious delirium.

We would point out that it is not a doubling of imagination but a doubling of will, an inner opposition of divine and human will, about whose personal character the inquiry turns. By the fruits shall the tree be known, by the actions shall the will be known; by the clear grasp of life's oppositions shall the understanding be known. [30]

We ask: is there in the character of Moses a single trait which points to a mythical intermingling of the divine and the human? Does his inspiration betray anything that could arouse suspicion of ecstatic confusion? Do the spiritual laws from Sinai perhaps bear traces of a sick brain, a disquieting stamp of hallucinations?

Can physiology give an account of how a man whose innermost being is imagination and error is able to carry out a giant's work such as this: to save a people from bondage? Is there any psychology that explains how it comes about that a human being first converts his own will into the form of an almighty will of God, and then, without suspecting the monstrous self-deception, bows under this will of God as an obedient servant, labours with an ungrateful people through a long, long life, without weakening, without growing dull, is there really any psychology that explains this to us?

"And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho, and Jehovah shewed him the land of Gilead unto Dan; and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah unto the sea behind it; and the south, and the plain, the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar. And Jehovah said: This is the land which I swore unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob,... but thou shalt not go over thither... And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died; his eyes were not dim, nor did his strength depart from him. But there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, for with him Jehovah had stood face to face." (Deuteronomy ch. 34.).

[31] The next prophet we named was Samuel, the last among the judges of Israel. His time is another, his more limited sphere of activity another, but the spirit is essentially the same. Early, already as a child, Samuel was called to be a prophet. There rests over his calling an indescribable glow of idyllic peace and yet of spiritual, tense, presentient expectation. Dedicated by his pious mother to the service of Jehovah, he is sent as a little boy to Shiloh, to the high priest Eli. Eli is weak and his sons dissolute; it bodes ill for the house of Eli. Samuel sleeps near the sanctuary where the lamp of Jehovah burns. He sleeps securely in the still night, but wakes, for a voice calls. He believes that it is the old man, and goes in to him and asks: Lord, didst thou call me? When it happens again, Eli understands that it is Jehovah who is calling the boy. "Therefore Eli said unto Samuel: Go, lie down! and if Jehovah call thee, thou shalt say: "Speak, Jehovah! for thy servant heareth." Then comes the revelation." Jehovah said to Samuel: Now I will do a thing in Israel at which both the ears of him that heareth it shall ring... I will judge the house of Eli for ever for the iniquity that he knew how his

sons brought a curse upon themselves, and yet he rebuked them not.” What is Samuel to do now: a child and yet a prophet, he is afraid to speak to Eli of the vision. But Eli called Samuel and said: “What was it that he spake unto thee? Now thou must not hide it from me. God punish thee in his wrath if thou hidest anything from me of all that he spake unto thee. Then Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him.” — Wonderful is the seeming composure with which the old high priest [32] hears his sentence. He does not repent, for his soul is faint; he does not act, for his will is lame, he does not pray, for his hope is extinguished. With an almost apathetic resignation he answers: “He is Jehovah and may do what seemeth him good.”

And the omens were fulfilled. Samuel grows up to manhood and is honoured by the people; as judge he upholds the law of Jehovah and in his old age receives the peculiar calling to choose and anoint the first two kings in Israel.

In the history of Samuel the supernatural is so peculiarly interspersed in the natural that understanding seems near at hand and yet suddenly eludes us when we think we have it in hand. It is the psychological element that attracts and repels. Samuel finds himself at a critical turning point, for the Mosaic theocracy is about to change its form. The time of the judges was a time of unrest and lawlessness, “every man did what seemed good to him”. No wonder the people found the state of things intolerable and desired a king. Although it was a demand that in no way conflicted with the law, it is nevertheless understandable that it had to arouse concern in Samuel. Not to speak of the fact that the dignity of judge was thereby lost to his family, there was here a religious moment of special weight and significance. Had the people’s demand sprung from faith in Jehovah, the eternal King; was it not rather from worldly desire and self-wise considerations? Where was the man to be found who, clothed with earthly royal power, would unconditionally be Jehovah’s servant? It is understandable that the old prophet, partly from hierarchical jealousy, but chiefly from zeal for the right of the Spirit against encroachment on the king’s part, may have [33] found it necessary to keep a sharp eye on Saul and, given occasion, to put him to the test. The Philistines took the field with a terrible army. “Saul was yet in Gilgal, and all the people that were with him were terrified. He tarried seven days, until the time that Samuel had said, but Samuel came not to Gilgal, and the people were scattered. . . Then Saul said: Bring hither to me the burnt offerings and the thank offerings, and he offered the burnt offering. As soon as he had made an end of the burnt offering, Samuel came, and Saul went out to meet him, to salute him. Samuel said, what hast thou done? And Saul said: When I saw that the people were scattered from me, and

that thou camest not after the appointed number of days, and the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash, then I thought: Now will the Philistines come down upon me to Gilgal, before I have appeased the face of Jehovah; therefore I made bold to offer the burnt offering. And Samuel said to Saul: Thou hast done foolishly... now thy kingdom shall not continue. Jehovah will seek him a man after his own heart and appoint him prince over his people, because thou hast not kept that which Jehovah commanded thee." It is, finally, understandable on grounds of general psychology that Saul, who is rejected by the prophet, and who more and more comes to suspect that it is David who is chosen to be his successor, becomes bitter and dark, and sees treachery and intrigues in those nearest him.

No one shall say that in this history the spirit has encroached too closely on nature. Saul and David are not shadowy beings, theocratic abstractions; they are [34] individualities in flesh and blood with great powers and great passions; what contrasts of light and shadow! Saul's demon and David's harp-playing, the wild outbursts of Saul's hatred and David's wonderful good fortune: the spear is hurled, but it does not strike him. Battles and adventures, friendship, enmity, love and poetry, all unite to make this first strife over the throne in Israel as attractive as possible. In Gibeah under a tamarisk Saul sits on a height with his spear; dark is his countenance, but his spirit is darker still. His servants, who stand about him, must hear from his mouth that they are traitors all together. What pain, that Jonathan himself is in league with the son of Jesse! Ahimelech in Nob is called to account, and the sword of Doeg the Edomite cuts down the priests of Jehovah. But Saul is doomed to destruction; his strength is broken. At last he is only a ruin of a soul, a burnt-out volcano, a despairing man who under cover of night seeks counsel of the dead. He has recourse to the woman at Endor. She excites his fantasy and conjures shades up out of the grave. The dead man speaks: "Wherefore wilt thou ask of me? Jehovah is departed from thee and is become thine enemy." — The prophet's voice! Saul is condemned and sinks down powerless before Samuel's shade.

But just as the consciousness of the present is, along this way, on the point of appropriating the content of the history, there suddenly appears the repellent element: the will of Jehovah with the theocratic mechanism breaks off understanding. "What arbitrariness, to make it a crime of Saul's that, in the extreme moment of danger, he will as king provide for the defence of his country, instead of wasting time waiting for a man who delays and does not keep his word". Yet from the standpoint of revelation, that is, of the miracle of the spirit, Samuel is right. What is demanded of

Saul is unconditional obedience to Jehovah's law, is in other words: spirit-will, not self-willed drive-will. By mistrusting the prophet Saul has himself undermined the ground on which he was to stand, for only by virtue of the prophet's choice is he king. We shall admit that the miraculous relation to God on which the prophetic authority rests cannot become transparent to us; but we shall also recognize that this relation to God is neither speculated up nor reasoned up, but originally posited by the Spirit as spirit; we shall recognize that the people of Israel had its spiritual life in this relation with just as fully valid truth as any people of the present can have its worldly life in an idea of culture; we shall recognize that what we call the harsh, the arbitrary, the mechanical, is precisely the unambiguous expression of the separation of God's will and man's will which conditions an actual manifestation of spirit-will. [35]

We now go further forward, to meet Elijah the Tishbite. Of this prophet too it holds that, although the conditions of the time have changed, the spirit is nevertheless the same. After having torn itself loose from the kingdom of Judah and having had the calf-worship introduced in Dan and Bethel, Israel is in full course of changing the calf-worship into the grossest idolatry. It then comes to a violent struggle between Jehovah and the idols. Omri's son Ahab, who has taken Jezebel, a daughter of King Ethbaal of Sidon, to wife and built Baal a house of prayer in Samaria, is a zealous idolater. There is talk of four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and of four hundred prophets of Astarte, who ate at Jezebel's table. Against this abomination, ruinous to the people, the prophet Elijah comes forward. His will is a holy passion, the spirit in him is fire and flame; in his zeal he ventures all, he sets heaven and earth in motion. He speaks to Ahab: "As Jehovah, the God of Israel, liveth, whom I serve, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." Then he flees, not from cowardice, but at Jehovah's command; he drinks of the brook Cherith, and the ravens bring him food. When the brook is dried up, he goes to the widow in Zarephath; the meal in the barrel does not waste, and the oil in the cruse does not fail: he raises her son from the dead. When the plague on the land had lasted into the third year, and the famine had risen high in Samaria, Elijah received the command to show himself to Ahab. Ahab meets him with these words: "Is it thou that troublest Israel?" The prophet answers: "it is not I that trouble Israel, but thou it is, and thy father's house, because ye forsake the commandment of Jehovah and thou followest the Baalim." It now comes to a decisive trial. All Israel with the prophets of Baal and Astarte are gathered, at Ahab's command, about the prophet of Jehovah on Mount Carmel. "Then Elijah came unto all the people and said: How long will ye halt on both sides? If [36]

Jehovah be God, follow him; if Baal, then follow him! But the people answered him not a word.” Only when the trial of sacrifice was ended, and it had been shown that the deaf idol gave no sound, however much his priests cried and cut themselves till the blood came with knives, but that Jehovah answered Elijah by the fire that fell down and consumed his burnt offering: then the people threw themselves on their faces and cried: “Jehovah is God, Jehovah is God!” The prophets of Baal are slain, and the plague on the land ceases. But Jezebel rages. Elijah must flee to the wilderness; [37] despondent and weary, he wishes for death; “Jehovah, now take my life, for I am not better than my fathers.” He is strengthened and refreshed and comes to Horeb, the mount of God; zeal will consume him, he complains and prays: “God of hosts! The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars and slain thy prophets with the sword; I alone am left, but me too they seek to take my life.” But the cool winds cool him, a breath of holy devotion brings calm to his mind and subdues his passion. Jehovah himself will come. “A great and strong storm, which rent the mountains and brake the rocks, went before, but Jehovah was not in the storm. After the storm came an earthquake, but Jehovah was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came lightning, but Jehovah was not in the lightning. After the lightning came a still, soft sound; then the prophet wrapped his face in his mantle”, and perceived in all meekness the presence of Jehovah.

Only a few more steps, and he is at the goal. After having called Elisha to be his disciple, and foretold to Ahab and Jezebel a bloody, ignominious death, he ends his stormy life in a tempest. “He went away from Gilgal, and said to Elisha: Tarry thou here, for Jehovah sendeth me to Bethel; but Elisha answered: As surely as Jehovah liveth and thy soul, I will not leave thee. So they went in haste from Gilgal to Bethel, from Bethel to Jericho, from Jericho to Jordan, where Elijah wrapped his mantle together and smote the waters, so that they were divided. As they went over, Elijah said to Elisha: “Ask something that I shall do for thee”, and Elisha prayed: “Might there but be a double portion of thy spirit upon me!” The answer sounded: “Thou [38] hast asked boldly. If thou see me taken away from thee, thou shalt have it; if not, then thou shalt have nothing.”

How foreign it is to us and remote, that old kingdom of wonders of Israel! What use is it, then, to pretend that one literally believes the history of Elijah, and then, when it comes to an explanation, to have nothing else to rely on than some elements of general religious psychology with phrases and assurances and all manner of probabilities. Only the Spirit itself can recognize what the Spirit wondrously brings forth. Had

Elisha merely seen with sensuous eyes, he would no doubt have seen lightning and storm clouds, but not Elijah as he was taken from him; had he only seen the actual in a natural light, he would not have seen the ascension. But that in the midst of the sensuous he really saw the supersensuous, and inwardly in the spirit of Jehovah experienced the miracle, we hear from his outcry: "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!"

The actuality of revelation is actuality of spirit, actuality for the Spirit.

Third Lecture.

[39] The authors at the Old Testament stage stand so immediately under the impression of the supernatural that, in the re-forming activity in which the accounts were written down, they typically let the miraculous break in with abrupt transitions and surprising particulars. The events are not photographed; they have passed through a re-forming in religious imagination. As far as the principle goes, one may very well remain convinced of the psychological validity of the miracle of the spirit without thereby inferring the literal infallibility of the historical tradition. The interpreters at the present stage can have only a mediate and derived impression of the supernatural; they are referred to a conception that places the natural conditions of the soul in the foreground; they must content themselves with a reflected gleam of the miraculous, an afterglow, which sets its divine stamp on the thinking, willing and acting of the great characters. In deep acknowledgment of the wonderful strength and the soul-powerful truth of the prophetic characters, the psychology of faith has at all times a religious element in which it can meet with the psychology of revelation.

[40] When the prophetic spirit is to be determined in particular as a spirit of prophecy, let one beware of conceiving prophecy without spirit. Some examples.

The blind Ahijah and Jeroboam's wife (1 Kings ch. 14). The same prophet who had foretold to Jeroboam that he should become king over the ten tribes comes in his old age to foretell to him that his downfall is near, that his house shall fall. The closer circumstances are well known: Jeroboam's son Abijah fell sick; the king, who knew in himself how deeply he had offended the prophet, has his wife disguise herself and go to Shiloh, to hear a prophecy of the son's life. "And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah. But he could not see, for his eyes' light was quenched by age." If we now keep the supernatural in the twilight of the background, then it is not inexplicable that the blind seer may have recognised the disguised queen, that he may have foretold death and ruin over the whole idolatrous house, and that the image of fall and desolation which the old blind man saw in the spirit may in its particulars have been all the more terrible the stronger his inspiration was at the given moment. This is indeed also the narrative's fundamental character in terms of general psychology. But the psychology of revelation demands a striking, miraculous working of the supernatural, and the account runs: "Jehovah said unto Ahijah, Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son; for

he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for when she cometh in, she will feign herself to be another woman. And as soon as Ahijah heard the sound of her feet approaching the door, he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy tidings. Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel: Forasmuch as I exalted thee over the people to which thou didst belong, and made thee prince over my people Israel, and rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it thee; and because thou hast not been as my servant David, but hast done more wickedly than all..., behold, therefore I will bring evil upon thy house... Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air devour; for Jehovah hath spoken it. Arise thou therefore, get thee home, when thy foot entereth into the street of the city, the child shall die.” [41]

It will be seen that it can be neither the literal holding fast to all particulars, nor the naturalistic explaining away of the supernatural, still less the limping mediation between the probable and the improbable, in which an interpretation is to be sought here. Anyone unbiased must be able to see that it is precisely the refraction of supernatural and natural light in the prism of the psychology of revelation that gives the picture its character and colour.

Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel ch. 2). In the psychology of revelation the gaze is directed immediately toward the miraculous, whether it comes chiefly from within or from without. By what, then, shall a true prophet be known from the false? By the fact that the Omniscient reveals to him things of which no human being can of himself have any knowledge. It is this proof that is brought before Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, the first destroyer of Jehovah's temple. In the second year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar dreamed a dream; “and his spirit was troubled, and his sleep brake from him. Then the king commanded to call the scribes, and the enchanters, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans, for to shew the king his dream; and they came and stood before the king. And the king said unto them, I have dreamed a dream, and my spirit was troubled, so I will know the dream. Then spake the Chaldeans to the king in Aramaic, O king, live for ever: tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation. The king answered and said to the Chaldeans, The command is gone forth from me: if ye will not make known unto me the dream, with the interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces, and your houses shall be made a dunghill.” Nebuchadnezzar is at one and the same time a wise man and a mad man, a practical genius and a visionary. The Chaldeans beat about the bush; [42]

but the king stands firm on this: as surely as they can *interpret* the dream to him, they must also be able to *tell* him the dream. If they cannot do the latter, then the former is lies and deceit. An unbending and sound logic! On this logic the Chaldean wise men were executed. Daniel is called; he is brought before the king and says: "The secret which the king demandeth to know cannot the wise men, the enchanters, the scribes, the astrologers shew unto the king. But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and he hath made known to Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days." In the revelation of secrets the miracle of the spirit seems all at once to become so unconditional that every glimmer of natural understanding must vanish; the religious psychology of the present is close to despair. And yet there are hints here of a general-psychological nature. Facing the mighty conqueror, Nebuchadnezzar [43] drunk with his own greatness and power, stands Daniel with a composure, a clarity of survey and a superiority of spirit which recall Moses when he stood before Pharaoh. — What does a Nebuchadnezzar dream of? Of his own greatness and that of his realm! What sort of dream-images can they be that, in visions over his head about his bed, could cause his spirit to be troubled? Images of greatness and of the fall of greatness! "Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible." Straightway at this beginning the prophet can read in the king's countenance that he has hit upon the right thing; he continues: "This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs thereon of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay." The psychological stress lies on this: that through Daniel's words the content of the dream comes into being anew before Nebuchadnezzar's inner sight, and surely in clearer, more definite, more significant features. "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Nebuchadnezzar listens and ponders; he dreams his dream over again as he hears the prophet's interpretation; and the interpretation is in truth magnificent.

[44] The conception can now swing between two poles, the miraculous and the general-psychological, but always within the sphere of the spirit. If there is truth in the dream and its interpretation, then there is also reality; but it is not political reality, with

statistical tables as the guiding thread in the history of states; it is, with all its historical weight, reality of the spirit, reality for the spirit.

Messianic prophecies. As long as the miracle of the spirit is in full psychological activity, and faith in revelation lives in its original relation to God, the prophecies can be taken singly, indeed sentence by sentence, without the conception thereby becoming spiritless: a name, an image, an ambiguous expression is often enough to set a stream of spiritual life in motion. But when the impression of the original has grown faint, when the present has become so poor in spirit that it lives only in shadowy re-formings of the past and must console itself with the hope of something to come, then sentence-by-sentence interpretations of old prophecies are a doubtful matter.

The prophets have prophesied of a Messiah who was to come. Can one really show that these prophecies fit Jesus of Nazareth and no other? The Christians assert it, the Jews deny it, both parties with equal right, so long as one keeps one-sidedly to words and sentences. It cannot be denied from this point of view that the objections of the rabbis have often shone with sharp criticism and obscured the defence of our ecclesiastical dogmaticians. We choose a single passage (Isa. 7:14–16): the prophet speaks to the king of Judah, who, threatened by overpowering enemies, in his despondency does not dare to ask a sign of salvation from Jehovah: “Therefore [45] shall Jehovah give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Immanuel; milk and honey shall he eat, until he learns to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child learns to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land shall be made desolate before whose two kings” (Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel) “thou art in dread.” This, now, according to orthodox dogmatics, is absolutely to be a messianic passage of Scripture, indeed a principal passage. “The virgin-born, Immanuel, the God-man, a sign of salvation! — a passage of Scripture which is moreover cited by the evangelist Matthew (ch. 1, v. 22–23): he who cannot see how the prophet here has *beheld* in the *spirit* the great saving wonder, that Jesus in the fulness of time should be born of Mary, the pure virgin, must not have theological eyes in his head.” There is needed, however, neither rabbinical learning nor super-theological acuteness to discover that the orthodox assertion rests on weak grounds. Of a miraculous virgin birth there is no question here at all. The prophet speaks, according to the words of the original text, not of the pure virgin, but rather of his young wife, whose sons (cf. ch. 8, v. 3) he gives symbolic names. The salvation of which he gives warning is so far from being placed in a

distant future that, on the contrary, by the words “before the child learns to refuse the evil and choose the good” it is expressly made known how near the salvation is. If the land is to be saved before Immanuel has learned to distinguish between good and evil, how then can Immanuel be the Saviour? When, on the other hand, the evangelist, [46] using the Alexandrian translation, looks back on the passage in Isaiah, stresses the word “the virgin”, and so finds the prophecy fulfilled a second time, indeed in a higher sense perfectly fulfilled, then in the name of revelation we must grant that he is right; but his right is in the spirit.

Regarded in the light of the spirit, the whole Old Testament is a prophecy of the New, as surely as the growing youth is a prophecy of the man, the unfolding flower a prophecy of the fruit. The law is the foundation of the Gospel, and the Gospel is the fulness of the law. But the transition does not take place quietly and organically as in the life of plants; the higher stage of revelation is not related straightforwardly to the lower as the deed of manhood to the dreams of youth.

What gives the law of Moses the stamp of divine revelation, namely the unconditional presupposition that every one of its commandments is immediately dictated by Jehovah himself, enables the spirit-will to assert its sovereign right over the natural side of human life in all civil and moral relations, and to found a state that allows political life no particular independence over against the religious. A consequence of this was that the prophets, although not invested with worldly power, could exercise a mighty influence on the course of government, and their authoritative word be decisive for war and alliance with nearer and more distant peoples. It is related (Isa. ch. 7) that when the rumour of the threatening advance of Rezin and Pekah spread in Judah, “then the king’s heart trembled, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood tremble before the wind”. At Jehovah’s command Isaiah goes to meet [47] Ahaz and says: “Take heed, be quiet, fear not, neither let thine heart be faint... for these two smoking firebrands, for the snorting wrath of Rezin and of Syria and of the son of Remaliah. Syria hath taken evil counsel against thee, with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, saying: Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and take it to us, and set Tabeal as king over it. But thus saith the Lord Jehovah: It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass.” Ahaz and the people see the danger where it is not, and do not see it where it is. They would make an alliance with Assyria, perhaps even seek help from Egypt, and do not consider that when these great heathen peoples gain entry into the land, they will trample everything under foot and destroy the theocracy. Egyptians and Assyrians do not come as helpers; they come only on the

day of wrath as Jehovah's instruments to carry out a sentence of punishment. "In that day shall Jehovah hiss for the fly that is at the borders of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria; and they shall come and encamp together in the shut-in valleys, in the clefts of the rocks, and upon all thorn hedges, and upon all meadows ..." In every place where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings", oxen and sheep and wild beasts now graze. "With arrows and with bows shall men go thither, for all the land shall become thorns and thistles."

Humanly regarded, the life of the prophets is unceasingly in danger. The authority of the word and the power of kings, the right of eternity and the demands of the moment, the requirements of the law and the passions of the people: here are unequal weapons! The people of Israel, which according to its fundamental determination is a people of the spirit, Jehovah's people, is according to its elementary natural determination at the same time a sensual, selfish and hard-hearted people, a God-fearing and yet ungodly people, faithful and yet faithless, obedient and yet defiant, courageous and yet faint-hearted, self-sacrificing and yet egoistic, a contentious and [48] contrary people, at strife with its God and at strife with itself.

The clearest testimony to the power of the spirit in prophetic inspiration is the honesty, the purity of will and the unshakeable courage with which Jehovah's messengers carry out his errand. The prophets are men of the people in the true sense of the word; they live with the people and for the people, they comfort it in the time of trial, they strengthen its hope, they awaken its strength and open bright prospects to it; but always on one condition, the unalterable condition that the people will honestly keep to the word and spirit of the law. Never do we hear them say: this people is a people of God, for its heart is as God's heart; what such a people of God with a God's heart has now got a vision of, even if it were a little calf-worship, must surely be the right thing: the people knows it, the people understands it. No, when the people sins and the spirit is wrathful, then the word sounds stern; we hear Isaiah (ch. 1) cry: "Woe, a sinful people! — The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."

The distinguishing mark of the revelation of the law must be sought precisely in this: that the spirit-will stands unveiled, pure and clear over against the drive-will; the sensuous self is to bow unconditionally to the command of the spirit. That was the hard thing in Israel's election, that the divine spirit came so immediately near to the natural man. Against the wrath in the prophet's word the heart of the people was hardened, for truth wounds; when the spirit shone like the sun of heaven, the eye was

[49] blinded by the strong rays. Truth and hardening, revelation and blinding correspond to each other psychologically. The blinded people slew its prophets; the relation to spirit made the children of Israel criminals against the spirit: what a wondrous union of blessing and curse! It was the condition of freedom, and yet a fate so hard that love itself had to weep over it. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

That Jehovah's law had to be fulfilled, on that prophets and priests were unconditionally agreed. But fulfilment has two sides, an outward and an inward. There is an observance of the single commandments in the outward which is to a certain degree conditioned by obedience, but the obedience is only a semblance, for the disposition does not answer to the deed. The fulfilment which the law of the spirit demands is essentially inward, an obedience in mind and heart, an observance in deed and in truth. By casting a glance at the unequal conditions of the priests and the prophets in the Jewish theocracy it will become intelligible to us that the former kept chiefly to the outward, the latter above all to the inward. The priests, the guardians of the holy tradition, the supports and bearers of the established order, had the calling to attend to the sacrificial service in the temple, to read out the law, to provide for purifications, sabbaths and feasts, and to see closely that the religious ceremonies took place in the prescribed order. Their activity was what one calls official, and so too was their position. The tribe of Levi, with fixed cities and fixed revenues, tithes, [50] prescribed vestments, etc., *furnished* the officials of the theocracy. The prophets were not officials, had neither tithes nor vestments nor fixed dwellings; they lived freely as the birds under heaven, and made do with the uncertain: if men would not provide for them, then the ravens had to do it. — It was with solemn ceremonies that Moses (Lev. ch. 8) consecrated Aaron. "And he put upon him the coat, and girded him with the girdle, and clothed him with the robe; and he put the ephod over it, and he girded him with the curious girdle of the ephod. And he put the breastplate upon him, and in the breastplate he put the Urim and the Thummim. And he put a high mitre upon his head, and upon the mitre in front a golden plate, the holy ornament." So was the high priest Aaron in full vestments. In like manner the priests, Aaron's sons, were furnished with coats and girdles and high mitres. Here was something outward, something for the assembled congregation to look at. With the calling of the prophets it was otherwise. "Elijah found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him (he himself was with the twelfth); as Elijah passed by

he cast his mantle upon him (1 Kings ch. 19); with that Elisha was called. The spirit makes no great ceremony; it comes, and then it is enough: Amos, the herdsman of Tekoa, was called from the flock of sheep.

It is intelligible that the prophets made a quite different demand upon the inward than the priests did. The demand, the necessity of an inward fulfilment of the law, Isaiah (ch. 1) has uttered with a voice that sounds through the ages, and with an emphasis of truth that can make outwardness itself tremble: "Hear the word of [51] Jehovah, ye princes of Sodom; mark the word of God, ye people of Gomorrah! To what purpose are your many sacrifices unto me, saith Jehovah; I am full of the burnt offerings of rams and of the fat of slaughtered beasts; in the blood of bullocks and of lambs and of he goats I have no delight. When ye come to appear before my face, who hath required this at your hand? Ye tread my courts... I care not for iniquity and the solemn day. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are to me a burden, I am weary of bearing them. When ye spread forth your hands, I hide mine eyes from you. Though ye make your prayers many, yet I will not hear you: your hands are full of blood. — Cease to do evil, learn to do good;... procure right for the fatherless, plead the widow's cause; come then, and let us reason together, saith Jehovah, and though your sins be red as purple, they shall be white as snow" (cf. Isaiah ch. 48; ch. 58).

It goes in the spiritual world as in the bodily, that a motion which is to overcome hindrances presupposes a pressure and a driving force. The terrible threats in union with the great promises furnished, as regards the fulfilment of the law, the pressure and the driving force. Had the promises been exclusively bound to an outward fulfilment of the outward commandments according to the letter, then the driving force would soon have been used up, for experience taught that a just requital did not take place in the outward; but the prophetic word held doubt down by placing the guilt in the disposition, pointing to those who are righteous in truth (Ezekiel 14:14), and referring to the future. Had the promises been exclusively bound to the inward fulfilment, then [52] the firm Mosaic foundation would have dissolved into an indefinite spirituality, a formless inwardness, which conflicted with the purpose of revelation: to educate the people to a real recognition of Jehovah's will, to unconditional obedience to the laws of the spirit.

To understand the old prophets, we must rightly note this peculiarity, that the fulfilment of the law points just as much outward as inward, and that the same holds of threats and promises, while the outward nevertheless is and remains so heterogeneous

with the inward that the miraculous everywhere shines through. The psychological tension which thereby arises and sets the imagination of faith astir casts the light of understanding on the breakers and surges under which the prophetic discourses are continually moved between fact and image, reality and symbolism. — “Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, because they hanker after drink. They sit far into the night, and wine inflames them. Harps, citherns, tabrets, pipes and wine are at their feasts, but the work of Jehovah they will not see. Woe unto them that say of evil: it is good, and of good, it is evil. They make the ungodly righteous for the sake of a reward, and take away the right of the righteous from him. Therefore, as the flame of fire devoureth the stubble, and dry grass sinks together in the blaze, so shall their root be as mouldiness and their blossom pass away as the dust; for they despised the law of Jehovah Sabaoth, they scorned the word of the Holy One of Israel. Therefore the wrath of Jehovah blazes up against his people; he stretcheth out his [53] hand over it, he smiteth it so that the mountains tremble: the corpses lie like refuse in the street.” (Isa. ch. 5.) This alternating play of image and fact, symbol and reality is characteristic of the messianic prophecies.

Images of the Messiah. In the law the relation to God is posited unconditionally as a relation of will; from the strict demands of the fulfilment of the law spring the image-rich portrayals of the expected Saviour. At first it looks as though the people could really fulfil the law, if only it earnestly would; but gradually it becomes evident that the same God who has given his people the law must also by his spirit help it to have the law fulfilled. The relation between Jehovah’s supernatural will and human freedom is then more closely determined thus: that the law is transgressed is men’s own guilt, and the divine punishments are just; but that the law is fulfilled is conditioned by God’s grace, God’s spirit, for of himself man has not the strength to satisfy the law. The actual state is now this, that the people, on account of the transgressions, finds itself in distress and danger, oppressed and threatened by overpowering enemies. The condition of salvation is that the people acknowledge its guilt and its impotence, turn to Jehovah and trust unconditionally in his promises. When, then, the prophet portrays sin and punishment, he keeps close to the actual, even if the features appear enlarged in the mirror of revelation; but if he speaks of grace and salvation, then the imagination glowing in hope goes far out beyond the natural bounds of reality; the light from the supernatural breaks forth with many-coloured rays and glorifies the whole of nature. “The people that walked in darkness beholds a great light, a light is [54] risen over them that dwell in the land of the shadows of death... For unto us a child

is born, unto us a son is given. The government shall be upon his shoulder; his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of the government and of the peace there shall be no end". — The throne of David and his kingdom shall be established with judgment and with justice (Isa. ch. 9). If we ask who this Prince of Peace is, and whence he shall come, the prophet answers (Isa. ch. 11): "There cometh forth a shoot out of the stump of Jesse, and a sprout from its roots shall blossom forth. Upon him resteth the spirit of Jehovah, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah... He smiteth the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the ungodly... Then shall a wolf abide with a lamb, and a panther lie with a kid; a calf and a young lion shall be together: a child can lead them."

It is the spiritual Israel from whose root the Wonderful One springs forth. The fundamental features of his being, his working and his temporal lot can be seen in the history of the chosen people; for it is this people, and this alone, that has had to bear and suffer for the victory of the spirit-will, for the holy cause of truth and righteousness. "He grew up as a shoot before the face of Jehovah, and as a sprout out of a dry ground. He had no form nor glory, that we should look upon him, no comeliness, that we could have delight in him. He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows, acquainted with sickness, as one from whom men hide their face; so despised that we esteemed him as nothing. Surely he bore our sicknesses, and our sorrows he took upon himself; we esteemed him as one that was stricken, smitten [55] of God and sorely afflicted. And he was pierced for our transgressions and smitten for our sins. The chastisement was upon him, that we should have peace, and by his wounds we are healed." (Isa. 53:2–5). It is the spiritual Israel which, to the prophet's sight, takes on personal form; it is "the servant of Jehovah", who in patience suffers for the carnal Israel and takes its transgressions upon himself; it is he who in voluntary obedience fulfils the law and brings the great sacrifice which alone has power to blot out the guilt.

The servant of Jehovah is the son of Jehovah; but the son who was to restore Israel's kingdom and raise up David's fallen tabernacle," (Amos 9:11) had to have not only a servant's patience, but also a kingly, indeed supernatural power. "I will give thee the peoples that rage, and the wide circle of the earth for thy possession; thou shalt break the heathen with a rod of iron, like a potter's vessel shalt thou dash them in pieces." (Psalm 2). During the Babylonian exile, when there was no prospect at all

of a restoration of the kingdom by worldly weapons, faith in the supra-worldly had to be doubly strengthened. What is not to be seen on earth the prophet then sees in the clouds of heaven. "I saw in the night visions, and behold: with the clouds of heaven came one like a son of man, and came to the Ancient of days and was brought before him. And there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, tribes and tongues should worship him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which passeth not away, his kingdom shall not perish." (Daniel 7:13–14).

[56] However unlike these images of the Messiah — the servant in lowliness and the mighty king, the meek Prince of Peace and the supernaturally armed warrior, the one who suffers on earth and the son of the Ancient in the clouds — however unlike these images are among themselves, yet the family features in them all are so essential that they fall together into one fundamental image, the image of him who fulfils the law.

But at the Old Testament standpoint the law cannot be fulfilled. To fulfil the law is one with abolishing the law; that is a secret of revelation which none of the old prophets has been able to see through. The fulfilment of the law is conditioned by the transformation of Judaism, a transformation in which it perishes. As long as the supernatural and the natural, the divine and the human being, continued to stand so sharply against each other as they, for the unambiguous manifestation of the spirit-will, had to stand precisely at the stage of Judaism, so long must the fulfilment of the law in spirit and truth remain an unfulfilled demand. After the time of the exile, when Zion was again seen in Jehovah's light and the second temple was raised, idolatry ceased, and the gross apostasy. The law was read aloud, the people listened and understood that its life and independence unalterably depended on a punctual fulfilment of the law. But it was really only a fulfilment in the outward, a ceremonial priestly fulfilment, that was reached: the spirit was gone, the prophetic voices had fallen silent. So men lived on upon a tradition. Pharisaism and Sadduceeism strove over the interpretation of Scripture, and political ideals from the heroic age of the

[57] Maccabees mingled with the messianic expectations. In order not to be dissolved into Greek and Roman heathenism, men held, under the pressure of worldly superior power from without, to the letter of the law, to the forms of worship, and the forms crystallised. Such was the state of things that coincided immediately with "the fulness of time". The Messiah came. The spiritual Israel, the narrow circle of the quiet in the land, greeted him in faith and hope with the humble joy of expectation; but the priests and Pharisees were offended at him, feared him, hated him and saw in him a seducer of the people, a blasphemer, a criminal against the law. He who fulfilled the

law was judged according to the law and crucified as a malefactor: a soul-shaking contradiction, deeply grounded in the essence of Judaism! The law is fulfilled; but the fulfilment is surrounded by terrors. The Messiah dies: the sun of Judaism is darkened, its foundations tremble, its graves open, the veil of the temple is rent; but — the law was fulfilled, the prophecies were fulfilled.

Fourth Lecture.

[58] The reconciliation of the supernatural with the natural, of the will of the Spirit with the essence of man, was — on a supernatural foundation — accomplished by the God-man. That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, means that he reconciled man's determination as spirit with his original determination by nature. It is not a part of man, his heart alone or his head, his feeling or his understanding, his imagination or his will, but the whole man, man as he proceeds from the hand of nature, that is to be transformed. The whole of nature, and then in a special sense the nature of man, is the workshop of the spirit, the foundation on which it builds, the instrument with which it works, the material it needs, the immediate stuff it shapes and forms. But, we repeat it, the reconciliation is grounded in the supernatural. The birth of Christ is a wonder, his resurrection is a wonder, regeneration, the new birth of water and of the Spirit, is a wonder which no scribe Nicodemus comprehends.

But that the wonder in the New Testament points to a far more inward union of the natural with the supernatural than in the Old is seen, among other things, from [59] this, that the prophetic changes its character. The old prophets stood under the Spirit as almighty will; it came upon them when it would, and withdrew again when it would. The prophet from Nazareth, on the other hand, lives in the Spirit; it is "abiding upon him", it is, as the Spirit of personality, one with his holy will, as the Spirit of love inwardly one with his pure nature. The ancients spoke in the name of the Spirit: *thus saith Jehovah*; the One sent by the Father speaks in his own name: *Verily, verily I say unto you*.

At the stage of the Law the kingdom of the Spirit is a supramundane kingdom, which the almighty will — no doubt for the good of men, but yet in the proper sense for the sake of its own dominion — wills to establish on earth. From this standpoint Jehovah can be likened to a king who wages war with earthly potentates, and who, although he could crush them all with one blow, yet for the sake of his name and his honor condescends to make use of human forces. He then recruits troops, promises the faithful, who will obey his commands, high wages, and threatens the cowardly and the defiant, who transgress discipline, with harsh punishment. They are good terms he offers; the warriors must regard it as a true good fortune to fight under his banner. By serving such a king they serve themselves; for he has land to distribute, and the land he has promised them is fair: it flows with milk and honey. The faithful

servants can be assured that, when the victory is won and the land conquered, he will keep his word and let them live long and happily in the land. But the kingdom, of course, is and remains his own kingdom: his fighting men are only servants. It is thus not really for the sake of the kingdom, but for the high wages and the good terms in the kingdom, that his servants fight. If there were another king who offered [60] them higher wages and a richer land, they would naturally prefer him, as is also seen from the fact that many who think they have not received their pay and bread in due time become deserters, to serve another king. Here there is, on the side of the obedient as on the side of the disobedient, a finite calculation of loss and gain, an external settlement between sacrifice and self-interest.

At the stage of the Gospel human nature is essentially reconciled with the spirit; here another image fits. The Father of spirits, who wages war with the world-powers hostile to the spirit, has a Son whom he loves, and this Son is a man, a real Son of man in flesh and blood, and the Son of man is the heir of the kingdom. Now as the Son fights for the spreading of the Father's kingdom, he fights at the same time for the spreading of his own kingdom, and gathers fighting men. But what kind of fighting men are these? Not mercenaries, recruited soldiers who are compelled to obedience by strict discipline and fight for external wages. No, the reward is inward, the obedience voluntary: the aim of the kingdom is the salvation of men. So he calls them on the terms of salvation and freedom. "*Come unto me!*" Let us fight for the kingdom of the Spirit, for this kingdom of my heavenly Father is also my kingdom; I, the Son of man, am the heir of the kingdom. "*Come unto me!*" You, my brothers and sisters, are my joint heirs; the kingdom of the Spirit and of truth and of freedom is also your kingdom, a true and real kingdom of men. *Come unto me!* Let us fight for our own kingdom, that it may conquer, and we with it. — Here there is no question of obedience from fear or of external wages; self-interest is excluded; life is staked [61] so that life may be won. The reward is to enter into the kingdom; the punishment is to exclude oneself from the kingdom. Thus the aim of the spirit is expressly set as the aim of man. Man's spiritual development goes as one with the transfiguration of human nature by virtue of the supernatural, a transfiguration in soul and body, a victory over the corruptible, a resurrection to incorruption and eternal life.

For the prophecies of the spreading, struggles and victories of this kingdom, the discourses (Matthew ch. 24, Luke ch. 21) on the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world provide the typical conclusion. Judaism perishes, the heathen powers tear one another apart, the abyss of the lie opens and swallows its prey. But when

everything that does not have the sustaining ground of truth topples and collapses, the revealer of truth stands transfigured as the Word itself, the Word of life and of personality, of righteousness and of love, that is to judge the world. In the Revelation of John this world-upheaval is further painted in visions and images and Old Testament symbols. — Our characterization of the prophets of revelation is herewith concluded.

With the end of the apostolic age it looks as if the stream of revelation stopped, and the supernatural all at once withdrew; for we cannot believe in the miraculous communication of the Spirit on which the Catholic Church would ground its infallibility. The Montanist prophets it rejected early; Bernard of Clairvaux was a mystical hierarch, Joachim of Flora's "eternal Gospel" found no entry; Birgitta, the Sibyl of [62] the North, stands as an exception. It is a priests' church, which with its hierarchical dogma of inspiration must stifle all prophetic inspiration by stifling the free movement of the spirit. Not only the insolent, defiant word of unbelief, not only the wild, fantastic word of the mystic and the enthusiast, but even the truly rebuking, chastening word that turns against its own corruption, must it bring to silence: it has burned an Arnold, it has burned a John Huss, yes, what is more, it has condemned and burned a Savonarola.

However, the spokesmen of Catholicism could here meet us with a weighty objection. "By breaking with the Catholic Church you Protestants have, without knowing it, broken with Christianity and denied revelation, for you have denied the continued activity of the supernatural. It is this denial which your new prophets, the prophets of genius, now at last make manifest. The denial of the spirit with which they surprise you, the unbelief with which they offend you, is at bottom only a purer, clearer expression of your own unbelief, your own apostasy, your own denial of the spirit from the beginning. They are right against you and will by degrees sweep you all along with them. The flood of unbelief is swelling, it grows ever broader and stronger; it has inflow from so many sources, both open and hidden, that the inundation will soon rise to a true Deluge.

You would gladly believe that the supernatural once, in days of old, showed itself and worked on earth; but in the present it dare not show itself at all, not work at all. You assume with us that the apostolic age was a time of miracles, that the outpouring of the Spirit at the feast of Pentecost was a church-founding miracle; but that the [63] Church which is founded by a miracle must also be sustained and governed by a miracle, this you will not assume. Sound logic ought surely to be able to teach you one of two things: either the outpouring of the Spirit at the feast of Pentecost is a

real miracle, and then our doctrine of the abiding of the Spirit in the Church and its supernatural presence at the ecumenical councils is irrefutable; or, if our Church's dogma of the continuing inspiration is called into doubt, then the inspiration at the first Pentecost must also be called into doubt. Either the accounts of the miracles of the apostles are trustworthy, and then the miracles which in the course of the ages have taken place through the great witnesses in the bosom of the Church, through and with its saints, men and women, must also be trustworthy; or: if the miracles by which the Church to this very day is glorified by its holy ones are called into doubt, then the miracles of the apostle Peter must be called into doubt, the miracles of Christ called into doubt. Christ's ascension, Christ's resurrection, Christ's birth of Mary, the pure Virgin, all this you Protestants must, with your culture and modern consciousness, call into doubt, and where are you then? You criticized the Church and believed in Scripture without criticism; you went further: you criticized Scripture in order to believe in reason; you went further: you criticized reason, pure reason, in order to believe in? — well, that is a question. Your much-praised progress in free enlightenment is, in brief, this: you began by pushing the Church aside in order to believe in the Gospel; you end by pushing the Gospel aside in order to believe in criticism".

We have cited these objections, not in order to defend ourselves against the Catholics, but in order to come to clarity about the essence of Protestantism and its fundamental position toward culture and science. The Catholics' assertion that [64] the Protestant Church must necessarily end in self-dissolution finds strong support among the spokesmen of the modern consciousness. "So long as Protestantism has not yet let go of the last remnant of the old faith in Christianity as supernatural revelation, so long will it, as a medieval relic, continue to be in conflict with reason and culture." — The world-view that corresponds to faith in revelation is, it is said, *dualistic*; the rational world-view of the present, on the other hand, is *monistic*. The watchwords are: *dualism* and *monism*.

So that the educated public may not have the trouble of finding out the meaning of these obscure words, a short and comprehensible explanation is given. The word *dualism* means everything stupid, unclear, illogical and obscurantist that one can imagine; the word *monism*, which shines like a star on the storm-helmet of the physicist-philosophers, means the clever, the clear, the logically coherent, that which alone can satisfy free thought. After this explanation it is no wonder that the educated, who want to keep pace with the times, turn their backs on dualism in order to follow

at a brisk trot the monism shining on the storm-helmet.

“If monism were not the truth, the future would look black. To derive nature from spirit, to assert the spirit-will and set freedom highest, is dualistic and old-fashioned; to derive spirit from nature, to deify the drive-will and set necessity highest, is monistic and genuinely modern. If the modern consciousness were not one with
[65] modern nature, if it were thinkable that the storm-helmets could be blown off the physico-philosophical geniuses, as the downy caps in the field are blown off “the dandelions”, what then would become of freedom and progress? Should the spirit-will really be higher than the drive-will, and necessity be mastered by freedom, then the cause of mankind were lost, old age without comfort, manhood without courage, youth without hope. If one dares to doubt monism, then one dares to doubt Darwin’s grand hypothesis, the only scientific dogma about whose unconditional validity free thought has not yet dared to doubt. Could one, were it possible, could one doubt the monistic unity of human nature with ape nature, the monistic descent of the human form from the ape form — dreadful thought! then one would surely have to despair of the aim of life; for when man does not know his descent, by what should he then know his aim; when he does not know his birth, how should he know the nobility of his birth? If necessity were not the blind mother of seeing freedom, if the gigantic exertions of the human will with virtues and vices, historical exploits and poetic crimes could not monistically be traced back to the monistic womb of monistic nature: what then would become of the natural rights of man, of the harmony of life in the endless struggle for existence!” — This is in outline the monistic program of the modern consciousness.

The world-view decried as dualism is, moreover, not dualism, namely not dualism in the sense that existence should fall apart from itself into two pieces, a supernatural
[66] and a natural; faith in revelation is, by its principle, not dualistic in the sense that the system of the laws of nature should fall outside that of the laws of spirit, and for that reason now and then be arbitrarily broken and arbitrarily healed by a supernatural will of omnipotence; such a presentation is a distortion that serves only to recommend and glorify monism. The dualism in which the Protestant faith in revelation is grounded has the unity of spirit and nature, freedom and necessity, God and world as its presupposition. This original, all-embracing unity is a unity of strong oppositions; but precisely thereby a strong and deep and rich original unity. The unity of spirit and nature, of God and world, is a unity of freedom, an almighty unity of will. Hereby is determined the relation between knowledge and faith.

Protestantism recognizes the right of free thought to the widest extent, that is, it recognizes everything that thorough investigation is able to confirm; it protests against everything that is demonstrably hollow and groundless. — “Is there a living God who cares like a father for his creatures, especially for man, or is the all-producing being, in infinite enjoyment of its productions, infinitely indifferent to the weal and woe of the living individuals?” No human being knows it, no scientific investigation is able to decide it. “Are souls immortal, or do they vanish with the dissolution of the body like lights that are put out?” No one knows it, no scientific proof can decide it. But when science cannot decide which of the opposed assumptions is the right one, when the one of them, according to the verdict of science, is just as possible as the other, then it is surely folly to demand a scientific decision of that which science [67] cannot decide. — But if, then, the educated of the present were in consequence of this to agree that what cannot be known cannot be believed either, then Protestantism would protest against all the educated of the present. To doubt everything is despair, to live on loose opinions is looseness; the seriousness of life demands an answer to the questions of life, a decision on its highest concerns. “But who is to answer the great questions, who is to settle the highest concerns?” Man himself and no other. “How many mistakes and errors are not possible here, then?” Here only one mistake is possible, one only, which consists in man’s being mistaken about himself; here only one error is possible, one only, and it consists in man’s going astray in himself.

By making the highest questions of human life personal questions and granting man the capacity and authority to answer these questions himself, Protestantism has made faith a matter personal in the highest sense and placed the center of gravity of existence in personality. But, it will be asked, what has that to do with positive religion? The answer is: personality is conditioned by self-understanding, but self-understanding is conditioned by instruction, upbringing and means of awakening which positive religion offers. At first it seems as though faith rested on its authority alone, but as personal development advances, the relation is reversed, so that the authority of religion in the last instance comes to rest on personal self-understanding. The principle of faith then coincides with the principle of self-understanding: authority [68] is only a support, a railing on the heights, so that the one climbing up shall not grow dizzy. Should anyone think that such a conception of personal faith cannot possibly be consistent with the faith in a historical revelation which the Protestant Church has professed and must still constantly profess in order to be a church: then let him note well that it is not self-understanding that produces religion, but the reverse. There is

a world of difference between revealing the personal truth and recognizing the truth in the self-revealing personality. The spirit-will is the center of personality; if the spirit-will is in its essence only relative, a transient magnitude that arises in time and passes away in time, then the personal has only a relative worth, and freedom perishes in necessity. If freedom is to conquer and personality to count unconditionally, then the spirit-will must itself be a will that bears the whole of existence, an almighty will that expresses itself in the laws of nature as well as in those of the spirit. Only the man whose personal self-understanding goes so deep that he recognizes his powerless will as inspirited and moved by the almighty will reaches the anchor-ground of personality.

From this it will be understood with what caution the inner, individual experiences must be treated, how carefully they must be compared with the outer ones, what perseverance in psychological observation and self-criticism is required, in order that the Protestant faith in revelation can be said to be a fully conscious faith, a faith that can give an account of its origin and its character. The Protestant consciousness at its present stage of culture by no means finds itself in immediate and sympathetic [69] understanding with the spiritual phenomena it meets in revelation. On the contrary; the more externally historically these phenomena are taken, the more repellent they are. Only when the external is led back to its internal does understanding begin. It is the relation of the spirit-will to the nature of man that provides the foundation of understanding.

The Protestant consciousness of culture is an ideal product of manifold transformations, long, preceding labors; in these labors it has its history; in this history it must seek the presuppositions for an understanding of itself. The same holds of the Protestant consciousness of faith. It has in revealed religion and the subsequent conceptions of its character and essence its history, and in this history the presuppositions for the understanding of itself. Religion is a relation to God. That this relation to God does not come about by man's himself seeking and finding a God, the consciousness of culture can testify. It is, after all, precisely assured that one can seek God inwardly and outwardly, on earth and in heaven and wherever one likes, and yet find him nowhere. Criticism makes it manifest that the relation to God which is arbitrarily posited by man himself is subjective and groundless, that the God who is produced by human feeling, human imagination and human thought must just as surely become an idol as the gods that are produced by human hands.

As surely now as the relation to God is the fundamental relation of personality, and this fundamental relation cannot have reality unless it is originally posited by

God, so the Protestant personality that is sure of itself will hold itself assured that the will of God, the almighty spirit-will, continually stands in an active relation to [70] the human will: this active relation is the wonder. The wonder, so understood, is not the same as the miracle. All being is wonder (*alles Sein ist Wunder*), this saying of a famous physicist we apply here in the sense that a divine thinking, a divine willing pervades the whole material world, that the forces of matter act precisely as natural causes in acting according to their natural dispositions, that these natural dispositions must be referred to a divine willing, that things, in other words, realize the Creator's will by acting according to their nature. On the presupposition that the spirit-will is active in the whole of nature, it must then also be active in man, and its activity is seen in the peculiar dispositions of human nature.

From this standpoint the Protestant personality can, for religious-psychological self-understanding, without coming into contradiction with science, make clear to himself the historical presuppositions on which his faith rests. That there must lie in the nature of man an original need of religion is seen already from the myths. In the mythical relation to God the divine is just as much active as the human. The time is past when the mythical gods were regarded as arbitrary inventions. But under the form of myth the divine is hidden in the natural; only at the stage of revelation does the spirit separate itself from nature, as seeing freedom from blind necessity; the relation to God is posited by the spirit itself as a relation of will, and the consciousness of the personal comes into being for man.

How it actually came about that the divine spirit, in the course of the ages, in the [71] progress of development, changed its willing into will, how eternal freedom stepped forth against natural necessity and set its self-revelation in the place of myth, these are questions whose answer lies beyond the bounds of knowledge. The objection that no change can take place in the divine mode of operation, since God surely is and must be unchangeable, is reasoning in the air; it lies precisely in the nature of will to be able to change its operation without changing its essence. The mystery is the unfathomable relation between freedom and necessity; we must keep to the religious-psychological.

As the Protestant personality feels repelled by the miracle of the Spirit, he discovers in what is immediately repellent at the same time something essentially attractive. It is the speaking God, the supernatural declaration of God's will, that repels; and why? Because such a declaration falls outside all experience in the present and presupposes a state of soul that has long since vanished. But in this strange thing there is yet for

him something familiar, something inwardly akin to his own state. At his own stage of consciousness the personality cannot in and by himself discover the influence of the supernatural will; in his inner experiences he is referred to a general presupposing of divine thinking and divine willing; he does not get, and cannot get, further, for his relation to God is reflected. What then does he discover? That this reflected relation to God is a mirroring of that original one, and religious inspiring a psychological [72] after-effect of the miracle of the Spirit. He does not believe in the miracle of the Spirit because he believes in the authority of a tradition; but he believes in the authority of tradition because he recognizes in self-understanding that the perennial wonder in which his relation to God is grounded, the increase of will by which his independence grows, the luminous ether in which his freedom breathes, includes the miracle of the Spirit as the possibility of its coming-to-be, its original presupposition. So understood, the derived leads to continued deepening in the original.

The Protestant faith in revelation is essentially different from the Catholic. The difference comes only partly to light so long as the dispute is chiefly about what it is *in which* one is to believe, *how much* one is to believe, etc. The fundamental difference shows itself only when the question is *how* one is to believe, and what faith is in its principle.

Catholic faith is immediate faith in authority, its faith in miracles a spiritless faith, and spiritless faith superstition. The Catholic Church has not merely imitated Judaism in externality; with its enormous apparatus of tradition, its forms of doctrine, its cult, its church discipline and above all through its intricate world-politics it has gone much further. Those who love prophecies in the form of propositions and let the prophet "behold in the spirit" the future when he speaks of his own day, can rightly assert that it is Catholic externality that Isaiah beheld in the spirit, since they can here repeat with emphasis, yes, with tenfold emphasis, the words of Jehovah: "I am weary of your many sacrifices... Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a burden unto me."

[73] At last, when the abuse was at its height, there came an outbreak from the ground, and the forces of the spirit stirred. But the breakthrough was no miraculous outbreak; it was no new revelation, it was a return to the original, it was the Reformation. Luther is a prophet, but not by virtue of a miracle of the Spirit.

In Luther's inspiring the supernatural does not come specially forward; it is on the contrary hidden under sheer natural conditions. In judging Luther's grand character, the point is to conceive him at once as a man of the spirit and a man of

genius. In a prophet like Isaiah, an evangelist like John, an apostle like Paul, the greatness of natural endowment is unmistakable: but one will not on that account conceive Isaiah, John and Paul as geniuses. And why not? Because the natural in them is so wholly in the service of the spirit-will that it does not shine with its own light, but feeds the flame of the spirit and only gives it a changing tint. In Luther the relation is reversed; the spirit-will is here and stirs powerfully. Luther has courage because he has faith, and he has faith because he is deeply gripped by the spirit. Read, for example, his letter to the Elector when he left the Wartburg: "Your Electoral Grace knows, or if you do not know it, I hereby make it known to you, that I have the Gospel not from men, but from heaven alone through our Lord Jesus Christ... But that I offered to submit myself to examination and judgment happened not because I doubted, but out of humility, to entice the others. But since I now see that my all too great humility would turn to the abasement of the Gospel, and that the devil would take the place altogether if I yield him but a hand's breadth, I must, compelled by my [74] conscience, take hold of the matter otherwise. I have shown Your Electoral Grace obedience enough in that, in order to serve Your Electoral Grace, I have held back this year... This I know with myself, that if this matter stood in Leipzig as it stands in Wittenberg, I would nevertheless ride in there, even if (may Your Electoral Grace forgive me my foolish talk) it rained nothing but Duke Georges for nine days, and each of them were nine times as furious as this one... Let this be written to Your Electoral Grace to the end that Your Electoral Grace may know that I come to Wittenberg under a far higher protection than the Elector's. Nor have I any mind to ask for Your Electoral Grace's protection; indeed I hold that I should sooner protect Your Electoral Grace than you could protect me. Moreover, if I knew that Your Electoral Grace could and would protect me, I would not come. This matter shall not and cannot be helped and furthered by the sword; God alone must govern here, without any human care and assistance. Therefore he who is strongest in faith is here the best protector; and since I now perceive that Your Electoral Grace is quite weak in faith, I can by no means hold Your Grace to be the man who should be able to protect or save me".

When one considers that Luther, when he wrote this letter, was an outlaw, and that the Elector Frederick the Wise was the only one who, humanly speaking, could take him under his protection, one gets the impression of a faith and a courage that recall the old prophets.

Nonetheless the activity of the spirit is peculiarly conditioned by his individual [75] nature. His crises of soul, the conditions of his age, the temper of his people, his

grand passion, the strong lightning from the spiritual storm into which he comes, all together belong to a cultural-historical atmosphere that surges about his figure and shows him to us as a man of the idea, a man of genius. However independent Luther was of all calculations of the understanding and finite considerations of prudence, he was nonetheless unable, with all his strength of faith and the honesty of his religious character, to hold fast his evangelical idea of freedom in its original purity; he had at last to give way to the conditions of the world and put up with limits he was not able to break through.

It is remarkable to see how the priestly-theological element in Luther little by little gains preponderance over the prophetic. Zwickau prophets, peasants' revolt, heretics and enthusiasts of every color showed by clear signs that the wild spirits were let loose. "When we", says Luther, "with the help of the Gospel began to teach that external things could not save,... these people, even great and learned people, went so far that baptism as external water, the Word as external, human speech, Scripture as external letters made of ink, wine and the bread as baked by the baker, were to be nothing at all, for they were external, perishable things; so they fell to the cry: Spirit! Spirit! The Spirit must do it, the letter killeth! — But "Paul" (1 Cor. 15, 3–4) regards Scripture as his strongest testimony and shows that there is no means of holding
[76] our doctrine and faith except the bodily or written word, composed in letters and orally preached by him or others. For here it stands clearly: Scripture, Scripture. But Scripture is not sheer spirit, about which they babble that the Spirit must do it alone, that Scripture is a dead letter and cannot give life. Make no great ado about the Spirit when you do not have the external, manifest Word, for it will surely not be a good spirit, but the loathsome Satan from hell. For the Holy Spirit has surely enclosed his truth, his counsels and all mysteries in the Word and revealed them in Scripture, so that no one can excuse himself or has to seek or search after anything else".

However gladly we grant the validity of these words when they are rightly understood, however much we appreciate the endeavors of Luther and the Reformers to secure for the Church a confession of faith and to build the system of doctrine on a firm foundation, we must yet expressly emphasize that it was precisely on a mistake in these endeavors that the carrying through of the principle of Protestantism ran aground. What lived in Luther himself, but never dawned on Luther's consciousness, the great problem of how things really stand with the Word and the Spirit, with the authority of Scripture and the free appropriation of truth, could become still less clear to his zealous followers. They yearned for a new state of things and worked for

something established; they needed order and discipline in what is external, and out of the words of Scripture and the teaching of Scripture, whose elements the heat of the Reformation had melted, and the wild spirits had mixed with impure ingredients, they crystallized out the Lutheran dogmas for juridical use and formed a firm foundation [77] for the Lutheran state church. Once more faith in authority, once more externality!

Protestant externality was in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries just as spiritless as the Catholic, and far more outrageous, because it stood in glaring contradiction with the principle. As the glowing masses and hot vapors in the interior of the earth, under the pressure of the solid crust, increase in elastic force until the crust cracks and a volcanic eruption occurs, so the inquiring spirit, under the heavy pressure of external authority, at last gained the elastic force to break the crust and give itself air. After single, scattered eruptions the flames of freedom break out in a chain of volcanoes, serial volcanoes, whose fire cannot possibly be quenched; for when one stops up the crater of one, the others are in full activity: in the glare of these volcanoes we meet *the new prophets*.

Fifth Lecture.

[78] The French Revolution of 1789 was not one rebellion among many; it was a revolution of the foundations, an earthquake in the history of the world. The tremors reached far and were felt everywhere, not only in what is outward, but also, and chiefly, in what is inward. That rotten pillars fell, that thrones toppled together with old dynasties, was perceived with terror in the visible world; but in the invisible world too, the world of minds, of thoughts, of ideas, there were dynasties that fell: authority fell, legitimacy fell, piety fell, the venerable majesty of Christianity was trampled underfoot. It was the drive-will from the abyss of blind necessity that raised the banner of freedom and rose up with its whole army of selfishly flaming passions. A stream of fire swept through the wild souls, and human heads were mown down like thistle heads. The demon of the Revolution shook its bloody wings and swore not to rest until all the barriers to freedom had been broken through, the bulwarks of privilege razed, and the towers of tyranny levelled with the ground.

When the storm had at last spent its fury, when the old altars with the old faith, [79] the old thrones with the old authorities had risen again, there were no doubt many who thought that a repetition of such dreadful catastrophes could be prevented, and the traces of the devastations wiped out, if the legitimate rulers took the grace of God to their aid, and Church and police joined in applying greater vigilance; but experience has so far not confirmed their expectation. We shall not treat the political complications here, but fix our attention exclusively on the “Kulturkampf”, the struggle that is waged between the old and the new with ideal weapons. The old has no living prophets, all its prophets are dead; but — the new prophets are living.

Which, then, are these new prophets? What do they look like? Where do they come from? What do they want? Where is the goal to which they point? It is difficult to answer these questions precisely. The crowd is motley, its number scarcely to be counted. Different physiognomies, masks, costumes: how different they are, after all, in gifts, education, bearing and attitude! They come, indeed, from all spheres of life, from the workers’ workshops, from the camps of politics, from the hearths of agitation and from the quiet realm of science; we find them in literature, we hear them in the popular assemblies; they shine in practical adventures, we meet them in novels and plays. A Byron and a Darwin, a Saint-Simon and a George Sand, an Auguste Comte and a Hartmann, a Louis Blanc and an Alfred de Musset, a Proudhon

and a Stuart Mill, a Fourier and a Lassalle, how utterly unlike, indeed how much at odds with one another! Nevertheless they all belong under the same category; they all stand on the ground of the Revolution. Despite their mutual divergences they are agreed in one thing, and this one thing is decisive: the supernatural must go, only the [80] natural counts; the spirit-will is a shadow, only the drive-will has flesh and blood.

Without going into the differences in detail, we shall here confine ourselves to what in this connection concerns our task, a characterization of the common main thought, and, for closer illumination, cite some examples.

A new religion. As the first in the series we must name Saint-Simon, the founder of the religion called Saint-Simonism, a characteristic product from the hearth of the Revolution. When religion is spoken of here, it must be well noted that it is religion in the modern sense, a religion without God. — Claude Henri, Count of Saint-Simon (born 1760, died 1825) belonged to the highest nobility in France — he claimed descent from Charlemagne — and led an adventurous youth; was Lafayette's comrade in arms in the American War of Independence, etc. Alternately rich and poor, industrious and idle, ambitious and dissolute, he set himself as his goal: to save the fallen human race and to do better than Christ. Christ had provided only for the spiritual and overlooked the fleshly, which was a great one-sidedness; Saint-Simon would provide for both the spiritual and the bodily by restoring the flesh to its rights (*Nouveau Christianisme*). Instead of an otherworldly, unreal kingdom of heaven, he would found an earthly, real kingdom of workers, sanctify industry, work upon the Godhead by working upon matter, and improve the lot of the poor. He thus said: "If this very day death carried off all the princes of the blood, all the high officers of the Crown, the ministers of state, presidents, bishops and 10,000 of France's greatest landowners, it would cause [81] grief, because they are persons of high standing; but the state would not be shaken by a hair's breadth, and the day after these 30,000 pillars would have been replaced, since thousands of people are able to accomplish what princes of the blood, ministers, rich men and high prelates have to do in the world. But if those who died in this way were the most important master craftsmen, the greatest employers, the country's chemists, physicists, artists and poets, then the loss of these perhaps only 3000 persons could not be made good at all." — Saint-Simon was set by his disciples high above Christ. He lived for his idea, but yet did not die like Christ, for his death was the consequence of a failed suicide. To the disciples who stood by his bed he spoke these prophetic words: "The pear is ripe, you will pick it."

And they picked "the pear", but soon fell out. It was chiefly marriage and the

emancipation of woman that provoked the quarrel. One of the high priests in the Saint-Simonian hierarchy, Père Enfantin, had namely discovered that in the human race there are two kinds of male individuals. There are, namely, individuals with feelings so constant that, once they have fallen in love, they cling with a firm, stubborn persistence to one and the same person; these are “Othello natures”, peculiarly disposed to lifelong marriage (*le mariage définitif*). In contrast to them there are other individualities, lively, mobile natures, who flit from beauty to beauty — chivalrous butterflies, who do not stay hanging on a single flower, so as not to do the other flowers an injustice! [82] — these are “Don Juan natures”, which are fit only for transient marriage (*mariage provisoire*). Père Enfantin confessed openly that he belonged to the latter. If this was now the case with the male individuals, then there was surely good reason to presume that it must be similar with the female; only that these, on account of long oppression, did not dare to make their innate natural peculiarity known so straightforwardly. Père Enfantin therefore found that it was his duty as high priest to investigate the matter gently and feel his way forward, in order to discover “the free woman”.

New-moral motives. The old morality is wont, when the talk is of virtue and duty, to refer every human being to his own conscience and remind him to subdue the dangerous passions. But from the modern standpoint this morality must be rejected. The drives, the inclinations, the passions are not to be subdued; on the contrary, they are to be let loose into free and many-sided interaction. By subjugating the drives, chaining the passions and blunting the inclinations, one robs the individual of its innate incentives, the most powerful motives for moral activity. Man cannot do anything other than what he has a desire to do, when it is to be done to good effect. The one among the new prophets who has declared this with the greatest energy is Charl. Fourier (died 1837). In his doctrine of the four movements (*le mouvement social, le mouvement animal, le mouvement organique et le mouvement matériel*), whose second part expressly recommends itself to the pleasure-seeking (*les voluptueux*), he sets forth the fundamental thought that, just as the physical world-order subsists by [83] material attraction according to Newton’s law, so the new social order will come to rest on a mutual attraction of the individuals’ inclinations (*attraction passionnée*); every hindrance in this respect must be especially painful for woman. The universe is a constantly creating association, in which all suns and planets are members and co-workers according to their different properties and inclinations. On the earth the human race is the creating element. It is the task of society to restore the harmony among the manifold drives and passions of men by grouping the individuals for

different labours according to their inclinations and interests.

When one has rightly grasped that the moral motives are to be sought exclusively in drives and inclinations, one will be able to understand the expediency of the provisional marriages and penetrate into the mysteries of eroticism. In one of her novels George Sand has the lover say: "I have never worked upon my imagination in order to kindle anew or revive a feeling in my soul that was no longer to be found there; I have never imposed love on myself as a duty, constancy as a role. When I have felt love being extinguished in my soul, I have said so, without being ashamed of it and without remorse of conscience." The mistress in another novel from the same hand confesses unreservedly: "Of all these infatuations to which I had given way childishly and blindly, none, and no liaison, seemed to me so blameworthy as the one which, in spite of myself, I tried to make last beyond its time."

Denial of God and Providence. If dualism is intolerable because it presupposes not merely a world-nature but also a God, then for monism God must necessarily be [84] abolished, for the actual nature, after all, cannot be abolished. But when God drops away, Providence stands on weak feet. The prophet and world-saviour who has made himself famous above all by declaring open war on God and Providence is Pierre Jos. Proudhon (b. 1809, d. 1865). A true fiery spirit — an Elijah among the modern prophets — Proudhon raises his face towards heaven, addresses the highest being and says: "Now you are dethroned and crushed. Your name, which for so long has been the last word of the wise man, a consecration for the judge, the strength of the prince, the hope of the poor, the refuge of the penitent, this intractable name will henceforth be devoted to contempt, to cursing, and be mocked by men." What, then, is God? he asks. "God is folly and cowardice, God is hypocrisy and lie, God is tyranny and misery, God is evil." This pathetic expectoration finds an even and calm expression in the positivists' principle that the absolute does not exist at all, that everything is relative.

That there can be no Providence, of that Proudhon is clear in his own mind, not on account of the natural evils, diseases, the infirmities of old age and the like, for these are, after all, consequences of the finitude of individuals; nor on account of the moral evils, for these can, after all, be ascribed to men's misuse of free will; but — on account of the economic evils. "Had there been a divine Providence, it must surely have known from eternity what we poor mortals only now come to know after 6000 years of painful experience, that freedom, wealth, knowledge cannot be furthered and realized in societies like ours without plunging us into an abyss of misery. Why has [85]

Providence not warned us, and led us on better ways, but left us to our own imperfect logic? Because there is no Providence.”

Maternal nature, which must now take the place of Providence, nurses her children at the breast of necessity and makes experiments with their upbringing, experiments that are both fine and chemical. “Every nation” — says Taine — “resembles a great experiment undertaken by nature. Every country is a crucible into which different substances are thrown in unequal proportions and under particular conditions. Those substances are the temperaments and the characters. These conditions are the climates and the original situation of the social classes. The mixture ferments according to fixed laws, imperceptibly through centuries, and produces in the one case a solid substance, in another a compound that explodes. It is a pleasure to observe the dull labour that brings these gigantic masses slowly and unceasingly to the boil. One comes to know the countless forces that crush or scatter or draw together the multitude of living particles that are subject to them. One feels the regular progress which, through a series of stages one can count and of transformations one can foresee, brings them to the final and predetermined state. One rejoices sympathetically at the omnipotence of nature, and one smiles when one sees the eternal chemist, by a slight change in proportions, in conditions or in substances, produce revolutions, fashion destinies, call forth greatness or decline, and determine in advance for each people which works it shall accomplish, and what misery it shall suffer. It is a noble spectacle to see the [86] infinite laboratory extended in time as in space, where so many different vessels, some cold and filled with the barren ash, others boiling and red with fruitful flames, reveal the diversity of surging life and the uniformity of the immortal laws. Though shut up in a corner of space and of time, though ephemeral beings whose life is perhaps cut short tomorrow by the effects of an explosion or by the accident of a mixture, we can yet discover several of those laws and form for ourselves a concept of life in the connected whole.”

The improvement of the world. Having freed himself from the old prejudices and thrown off the heavy supernaturalist pack, modern man feels so light, so light; the chest expands, the brow is raised, the head clear and the muscles ready: now the work is to be taken in hand. But it is a hard work. The world is to be improved, society transformed from the ground up, and the warped human nature as good as entirely remade. What is it that makes the provisional marriages not quite work? The warped human nature. “Marriage”, says George Sand through her dear Jacques, “is now and always, in my opinion, one of the most odious institutions. I do not doubt that it

will be abolished if the human race makes any progress towards justice and reason; a more human and no less holy bond will then replace it and will be able to secure the existence of the children without chaining the freedom of the parents for ever. But the men are far too coarse, and the women far too cowardly, to demand a nobler law than the iron law that rules them. For beings without conscience and without [87] virtue heavy chains are fitting. The improvements of which some noble spirits dream are impossible to realize in this century; these spirits forget that they are a hundred years ahead of their contemporaries, and that before one changes the law, one must change man.” — What is it that makes Fourier’s phalanxes not work? The warped human nature. “Men are to be ordered according to their different desires in circles of 12–1800, which have their own buildings, phalanstères. All circles across the earth are to stand in connection with one another, and the threads of connection run together in Constantinople. Each can choose whatever occupation he likes, and when he grows tired of it, he can exchange it for another. No desire is to be set a limit, no self-esteem is to be humbled, but each is to have his share of the yield in proportion to capital, labour and ability.” Can anything better be offered? Lifeless nature is normal, it still goes, as from eternity, according to Newton’s *attraction matérielle*, but so warped is human nature that it no longer obeys its own law of nature: it will not, after all, go according to Fourier’s *attraction passionnée*.

But poor human nature is lawfully excused. What use is it that it has a will, when the will is a product of opposing inclinations (egoism and altruism), just as water is a product of oxygen and hydrogen? The great prophets of the physics-philosophers, Auguste Comte and Stuart Mill, have after all thoroughly proved that in “social statics” and “social dynamics” they know their way neither with natural necessity [88] nor with human freedom, when it comes to the point. That “human actions are the result produced by the general relations of human nature together with man’s own particular character” is incontestable. But when we then ask how the particular character forms itself, we get the answer “that the character in turn is a consequence of the natural circumstances that bring it up”, and it is added, as something that goes without saying, that the individual’s “own conscious endeavours also belong among the circumstances”. Then one looks at the statistical tables, and sees how what is peculiar in all productions rests on the circumstances. The moisture of the Dutch soil produces the grass, the grass produces the cows, the cows produce the butter and the cheese, the butter and the cheese produce the Dutchman — on account of the circumstances.

How, now, is one to get such a world improved? If one lays stress on the self-conscious exertion of the human will, only that this will must not imagine that it can raise itself above natural causes or free itself from the influence of conditions and circumstances, then one does after all presuppose something peculiar which one calls will. The improvement of the world is to take place through the united exertions of millions of wills. The will must exert itself: nature does not exert itself. The riddle of the world, then, lies enclosed in the one question: what is the will? If one answers: the will is a composite quantity, a product of elements such as “virtue and vice, such as vitriol and sugar”, then we must ask: which of the many elements is it, then, that [89] must exert itself? Is it only a single element, or are all the elements perhaps to exert themselves? Are they to exert themselves before the product, with the product or after the product? — One will surely be forced to give up the improvement of the world and let it rest at rejoicing sympathetically over “the omnipotence of nature”, and smiling when one sees “the eternal chemist”, by analyses and compositions of the elements, “fashion destinies, call forth greatness or decline” and determine in advance for each people”, and then also for each individual in each people, “what great things it shall accomplish and what misery it shall suffer”.

Hope and despondency. That the new prophets go forward with a radiant hope is understandable; they want, after all, freedom and progress, and freedom and progress is the watchword of mankind. But that it can nonetheless grow dark for them, and clouds of despondency spread over their faces, when they rightly consider how warped human nature is, and how slowly the improvement of the world proceeds, is also understandable. It is all very well with all this sympathy with fate, this reconciliation with necessity, this resting at the breast of nature; but such things also have their questionable side. “The eternal chemist” with his experiments is not always to be relied on; nature’s motherly breast is now too warm and now too cold. “Before the great and fruitful mother, whom nothing disturbs, because nothing is outside her, there develops” — says Taine — “in the soul a feeling, a deep and hitherto unknown one. Its very foundation comes to light; the countless layers that life has deposited over it, all remnants of passions and hopes, all the human filth that has accumulated on the surface, vanish; it becomes simple, it finds again the instinct of the most ancient [90] times, the indeterminate, uniform words that once put it in connection with the gods, the natural gods who live in things; it feels that all the words which it has since said or heard are only involved chatter, only outbursts of the moment, only noise in the street, and that if there is one minute in life which is healthy and desirable, it is the

one in which the soul forgets the buzzing and vexations of the great anthill, and, as the ancient sages said, perceives the harmony of the spheres, the heartbeat of the eternal universe.”

But nature is not always in so festive a mood, and the soul not always prepared for such a festival of eternity. When the fundamental forces break loose and the elements hammer, the individual must creep into hiding if it does not want to be crushed. Even in the sublime calm with which silent nature looks down on the bustle of the anthill, with great and small, there is an indifference which recalls the superior smile with which the gods of Olympus once looked down on the mortal races. “What a collection of ruins, what a graveyard is history! How many human hearts have beaten of which no other trace has remained than a form hewn in a stone! How indifferently the peaceful sky smiles, how cruel is the beauty of the shining dome that day after day stands spread out over races that fall, as a canopy stands over a coffin.”

In softer natures, in an Alfred de Musset, such a mood of despondency can, in critical, painful moments, even turn into the blackest despair. Under the mask of *Rolla* Musset has expressed despair over the fact that the old has fallen and that the new has no foundation. “I do not believe, Christ, in thy holy word; too late have I come [91] into a world that has outlived itself. From a century without hope arises another without fear; the comets of our century have depopulated the heavens. — Yet let it be permitted to the most unbelieving child of this century without faith to kiss the dust upon thy cross and to weep, O Christ, upon this cold earth, which lived by thy death and which will die without thee. For whom do you labour, foolish destroyers, when you mutilate Christ on his *altar*. . . You would shape man after your imagination, you *would* form a world. Well then, you have formed it. Your world is splendid and your man is perfect, the mountains are levelled, the plain is lit up, you have prudently pruned the tree of life. All is well swept on your railways, all is great, all is good, but one suffocates in your air. You make splendid words ring out; they flutter far away in the pestilent winds. — Hypocrisy is dead, one no longer believes in the priests; virtue dies, one no longer believes in God. Voltaire can then sleep content, with the hideous smile fluttering over his dried-up cheeks. His century, they say, was too young to be able to read him; ours must please him, and his men are born; for the monstrous building has fallen upon us, the one he with his broad hands undermined night and day. Well then, since it is so: long live love, which intoxication accompanies; let the burning kisses glow with the wine of Spain. Let the spirit of giddiness and the noisy feasts lead us into the arms of the genius of joy. Well then, sing of Bacchus, of love

[92] and of madness, drink to time, which vanishes, to death, to life. Forget, drink, let freedom live, sing of gold and night, wine and beauty!”

Nihilism. One sees from this what the world is, what life is worth and what all human thinking and striving amounts to; it is disappointment, delusion and illusion, all of it. In the author of “The Philosophy of the Unconscious”, E. v. Hartmann, the modern world-view, *monism*, has a prophet who is all the more reliable as he is at the same time a monist philosopher. There are, according to v. Hartmann, three stages of consciousness, corresponding to three stages on the way of the illusions. — The first stage of illusion is marked by the individual’s imagining that it can, in the given state of the world, attain bliss on earth. That this is a deception is easy to see. All pleasure is only a condition for displeasure, all enjoyment for suffering, all joy a condition for sorrow and pain, and conversely. If men would only make it clear to themselves that joy is related to sorrow overcome as the cessation of pain to the torments of the rack, they would soon be cured of the spreading craving for pleasure. What is nowadays called the spectre of pauperism is nothing other than the consciousness that the struggle with want, the sorrows and their relief lie on the pain side of the zero point of sensation, while earlier, when the poverty of the masses was ten times greater, this consciousness was lacking, and the people bore its poverty as by the grace of God. — At the second stage of illusion the individual imagines that it is to reach happiness in a life beyond, after death. That is the Christian deception. Jesus’s world-view is too naive and childlike to separate soul and body, which is why “the [93] resurrection of the flesh” is also included in the third article of faith. — The third and last stage of illusion is the one on which we ride as on a railway. The imagination is that happiness lies in a great political-social future. One expects salvation from an improved social order, from progress in industry and science: a monstrous deception!

“The end will be that the old, outlived human race is tired, tired to death, tired of the labours and of the enjoyments, without heirs and without love, tired of everything. Then it will come, that sublime melancholy which one usually finds in geniuses and spiritually eminent old men; then it will come, the pure clarity of heaven, that cool divine calm which wafts in Spinoza’s *Ethics*, where the passions are swallowed by the abyss of reason, because they are clearly and distinctly grasped in ideas. Then illusion is dead; then hope is burnt out, for what should one still hope for? Then exhausted mankind recognizes only one thing that is blessed — rest from sorrow and want, painlessness in the pure nothing.”

But may we now assert that the new prophets are all without exception nihilists?

It depends on what one understands by nihilism. According to the usual opinion, nothing is the pure zero, the thinnest and emptiest and most tedious of all: something is always better than nothing at all. From this point of view the nihilists would accordingly be people who wanted nothing, did not mean anything seriously and had no goal for the attainment of which they found it worth working. That is a great misunderstanding. The nihilists are people with a sense for the tasks of actual life, indeed with an almost greedy appetite for actuality. The Nothing that furnishes the watchword means only that God is nothing, that the supernatural, the beyond, is nothing, but not that nature with its forces and laws, not that the present life with [94] its labours, means and ends is nothing. Is life then really better than nothing? It depends on the circumstances. As long as the vital forces offer themselves, one ought to use them. Ought? Of course, it is no unconditional duty; everything is relative, the unconditioned, the absolute is nothing. Each must use his forces in accordance with his individual nature, his drives and inclinations, and be prepared for the consequences. That is why we find the idle and the industrious, the frivolous and the serious, the cowardly and the brave, the effeminate and the hardy, the pleasure-seeking and the energetic, egoists who care only for themselves, and altruists who sacrifice themselves and work for the whole of mankind, in motley mixtures gathered under the flag of nihilism. They all grant that life can be better than nothing, but they all admit too that it can be worse than nothing: only the philosophical heads — but they are, after all, almost all philosophical heads — know within themselves that the whole is at bottom nothing.

This “at bottom nothing” is the secret, the secret that does away with dualism. The flaw of dualism is a twoness, and the twoness splits again into multiplicity. Actual nature is infected with dualism: up stands against down, right against left, the positive pole of the magnet against the negative, the acid against the base, the male flower against the female flower; not even the most fleeting provisional marriage can be consummated without dualism. Monism wants unity; but the undifferentiated unity of all is nothing. As long as something distinguishes itself from something else, as long as one leaf in the forest is unlike the other, one wave in the sea opposed to [95] the other, so long one has only plurality, not unity. To reach complete unity we must think of all inequality, all difference as erased. When all difference falls away, the undifferentiated unity remains as the ground; but the undifferentiated unity is at bottom nothing: consistent monism is nihilism. If one thinks that philosophical nihilism is impractical, but that monism is nevertheless the only world-view which,

practically understood, suits the present age, the only one capable of awakening the courage of youth and pointing to the goal, then we ask: what sort of liberator is it, then, who stands there — over by the goal? Death, the great nihilist! Death is practical, and death is nothing. Death levels everything, it satiates ethics, it digests criticism, it abolishes the principle of contradiction. In nihilism, thoroughly understood, there is no difference between good and evil, between truth and lie. The old prophets of life are dead, the new prophets of death live — in order to die; so at last the new meet the old in death's pure nothing, the infinite all-unity: that is monistic reconciliation.

Sixth Lecture.

Despite the strong ferment of the age, there is still without doubt a majority of fellow [96] citizens who, although they have a good deal to object to in the established order, turn away with aversion from the new prophets; the sober judgement runs thus: When we hear these men's often wild and offensive outbursts of blasphemy, when we see the arrogant self-confidence with which they appear, the recklessness with which they confuse the concepts of duty and conscience and tear apart moral bonds, the violence with which they attack the foundation pillars of society, without yet, by their loose, mutually contradictory projects, putting anything better in their place, then we must, with all respect for the talent and well-meant zeal of individuals, hold ourselves convinced that they are on a wrong path. Indeed, there are surely those whose verdict of rejection will find a harsher expression. And yet we may by no means suppose, as regards the matter as a whole, that the general public is clear with itself. Tender spots are being touched, something is being spoken of that arouses attention; the new prophets have words that ring in the ears of the present day.

It is quite true that spokesmen who know how to incite the passions and dazzle the crowd with promising prospects must have a great advantage over those who feel [97] obliged to inculcate self-limitation and sober progress. Those who say to the common man: The road is paved, the time has come, strike! no doubt win more followers than those who early and late must remind him to take small steps, since the obstacles are manifold and the rutted roads hardly passable. How should the leaders who demand education, discipline and order be able to keep step with those whose battle cry is: Solidarity, boldness, swift decision! Therefore we must by no means imagine that the storm will gradually abate and the ferment settle, if one only goes on quietly with the old and carefully avoids touching the real fundamental questions. "Just hold back, hold back!" This "hold back" acts narcotically on the nerves of society; the established order keeps silent about its vital questions until they die, as a sluggish mother overlies her children until they die. When one is then once roused, as by a pistol shot, from one's spiritual torpor, one carries on as if it were a matter of shooting sparrows with cannons. Orthodoxy flies into a rage, the great bell is rung: "Antichrist is come, he works signs and seduces the peoples; Gog and Magog stand at the door. Out with the sacraments, away with reason; the priest alone has authority, the priest alone dares look the living Satan steadily in his treacherous eye!"

Above all we must not forget that the gifted powers also derive from spirit, and that the spirit does not let itself be bound in outward chains; the heavier the chains weigh, the more active are these spirits, the more zealously do they work. We must not [98] forget that on the road of spiritual cultivation there stand questions in plenty, decisive questions, which the prophets of free thought have raised, but which the defenders of the established order so gladly go around? Indeed, there are many who think that this is for good reasons. We must not forget that in the camps of naturalism there are men who have a sharp eye for states of the soul, and speak the clear, penetrating language of thorough inquiry. When such an investigator gathers himself for a word of admonition, he may have a good deal to urge upon his contemporaries; let us hear him.

“There is, as is well known, a considerable difference between juridical and psychological truth, between juridical and psychological right. When someone assures us that he believes every word in the symbolic books of the Lutheran Church, then he has, if nothing else can be adduced from his other statements that conflicts with this, undeniably a juridical right to call himself a Lutheran. But whether he also has a psychological right is another question. Suppose that he, following the stream of culture, has gradually come to live with wholly different notions of heaven and earth, of the natural and the supernatural, of the being of God and of man, indeed with notions that the symbolic books expressly condemn, then he finds himself, even if he has not become clearly conscious of the deviations, in a state of psychological untruth; and if, fully conscious of the deviations, he appeals to his juridical right, then we tell him to his face that he lives in a psychological lie.”

“You Lutherans of the present day, with your positive revelation, your Bible and symbolic books, do you really live with Luther’s faith, in Luther’s spirit, after [99] Luther’s direction? If you have Luther’s faith in Christ, then you must surely also have Luther’s faith in the Devil, for that is fully warranted in Scripture. That the old Lutherans believed in the supernatural in dead earnest, they proved by their living faith in demonic possession. If you still believe in demonic possession, then you must not only find it natural that the modern prophets laugh at you, but, what is more, you must break with the whole of more recent culture, the present reality, in which you nonetheless live and breathe. You stammer and fumble and seek evasions when one presses you close about the Devil, and do not notice that in so doing you stammer and fumble in your faith in Christ. For Christ’s personality receives its significance precisely through its express opposition to the personal Devil; for this

purpose, according to the word of Scripture, the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. You speak with unction of sin and grace, but whether you also, with Luther and Scripture itself, know what grace works, how it works, and what sin is, of that it is permitted to doubt; certain it is that many of the liberties you now regard as permissible the old Lutherans stamped as mortal sins. You stand with one foot in the present, with the other in the past; you have two rooms in your consciousness, you go from present to past as easily as one goes in a house from one room into the other, when there is only a door between them, and the door stands ajar”.

“You scorn monism because it remains standing at the natural ground of our life without bringing in something supernatural; you are edified by dualism, that Christ fights against Satan, so that the new man, especially on Sundays, is busy strangling [100] the old. But you would not have the old Adam quite strangled, for you are humane. Your fathers were hard-hearted, they whipped the old one and could without mercy see the loathsome sinner hanged. But you are not hard-hearted, you have pity on the old Adam, after all he is still so young! To be sure, the rogue must be punished; but when it comes to the execution, when he kicks on the rope and gasps for air, then you find the punishment barbaric. And the old Eve — still so young and fair! how much wrong, indeed how many injuries, has she not to avenge. But when she sees her Adam’s repentant mien, his pleading look, and hears his sigh, then she forgets everything, then she forgives everything. She bends over the humble one, she pats his cheek, she kisses his mouth, she fans him with the fan of poetry, she cools his brow with the eau de Cologne bottle of the erotic. See, such is your Lutheran dualism!”

“It must surely be dreadful to live with a split being, a soul whose one, sinful part rightly belongs to the Devil, whose other and regenerate part belongs to Christ. You go about with a two-part soul and believe in an eternal life. The Devil with the old Adam pulls to one side, Christ with the Holy Ghost to the other. If Christ wins, then you will be eternally blessed, but — do not forget it! — if the Devil wins, then you will be eternally damned. How can you live on such terms? I know well enough that there are those among you who imagine that here there is no danger at all, since you have baptism and faith. But the faith that is to bring unity into such disruption, peace and [101] reconciliation despite such a tension, must have more than Herculean powers; it must be a miracle-working faith, a faith that can move mountains. What miracles, then, have you worked, how many mountains has your faith moved? The real mountains you nicely let stand; so they must presumably be mountains of fantasy. You have

Lutheranism in feelings, emotions and consoling fantasies. You fight bravely with the old Adam and win the one fantasy-victory more splendid than the other. If the Devil now and then comes up behind you with a little politics, what does that matter? You have, after all, the rock in the word of faith, and in baptism a children's powder of grace."

"You have perhaps read a tale by Hoffmann called *"Elixire des Teufels"*, or, if you have not read it, then by all means read it, so that you may properly get an impression of what it means to have one's I, one's being, dualistically split in imagination. — A young, gifted monk named Medardus has found in a monastery a bottle of the Devil's elixir; he drinks from the bottle, and at once his being is split, so that he can appear in more than one form. Entangled in love adventures and dreadful crimes, it becomes quite impossible for him to find himself again: "I am, he says, what I seem, and do not seem what I am; an inscrutable riddle to myself, I lie in strife with my own I." After having been in prison and having been interrogated and acquitted of a murder which he nevertheless really committed, he is released, and now comes his life's happiest day, it is his wedding day. He relates: "There arose a dull noise in the
[102] street, hollow voices cried out among one another, and the booming rattle of a heavy, slowly rolling wagon could be heard. I hurried to the window. There, just in front of the palace, stood the wagon drawn by the knacker's men, on which the monk sat backwards; before him a Capuchin, who prayed loudly and eagerly together with him. He was disfigured by the pallor of the fear of death and the bristling beard; yet the features of the dreadful double were only all too recognizable to me. Just as the wagon, which had for a moment been halted by the crowding mass of people, rolled on again, he cast the fixed, terrible gaze of his glittering eyes up at me, and laughed and howled: Bridegroom, bridegroom — come up on the roof — then we shall wrestle with each other, and he who pushes the other down is king and may drink blood. I cried: Dreadful man, what do you want of me? — Aurelia embraced me, tore me from the window and cried: For the sake of God and the Holy Virgin... They are leading Medardus, my brother's murderer, to death... Leonard — Leonard! Then the spirits of hell within me awoke and rose up with the power that had been given them over me, guilty, deranged sinner. — I seized Aurelia in fury, so that she started: Ha, ha, ha — mad woman — I — I, your lover, your bridegroom, am Medardus, am your brother's murderer. You, the monk's bride, would howl perdition down upon your bridegroom? Ho, ho, ho — I am king — I drink your blood." — He rushes down into the street, frees the monk, hews and stabs and strikes about him, and flees into the

forest. "Only the thought of fleeing like a hunted beast stood fast in my soul. I got up, but I had scarcely gone a few steps before a man sprang up onto my back and flung [103] his arms around my neck. In vain I tried to shake him off, I threw myself down, I pressed myself against the trees. All in vain; the man tittered and laughed scornfully. Then the moon broke through the black fir trees, shining brightly, and the monk's deathly pale, ghastly face, the face of the supposed Medardus, the double, stared at me with a ghastly look, as if up from the wagon. Hee-hee-hee — little brother — you must carry me, now I am always with you, I cannot run, I come straight from the gallows, they meant to break me on the wheel."

"Lutherans, do you understand this story? — Luther understood it when he sat alone in the night and threw the inkpot against the wall at the Wartburg. It is a little story about dualism."

Having heard how bitterly and sharply the spokesman of modern monism expresses himself against dualism, we have come to a turning point where the real question in dispute: spirit-will or drive-will? can come clearly forward, and the great matter outstanding show itself in full light. Dualism is no arbitrary invention, a whim that one can kill with a stroke of the pen. Dualism has the testimony of life and of reality on its side: Old and new prophets, what a dualism! So long as all spirit has not yet become nature, so long as elementary nature has not yet been volatilized into spirit, so long as there is still a remnant of opposition between spirit-will and drive-will left, so long does dualism remain in force. The animal with its drive-will does not notice dualism; but man with his spirit-will gets to feel it thoroughly. Man is [104] dualistic, the ape is monistic; should the radical means of abolishing dualism perhaps consist in reducing man to an ape?

The only serious attempt that the new age has seen at levelling out the dualistic is evidently rationalism, not in its older, sober form of the understanding, but in a more many-sided, more spirited form, familiar with ideas, as *neo-rationalism*. This endeavour has found able leaders, gifted spokesmen in Germany, in Switzerland, in Holland, in Sweden. What, then, does neo-rationalism want? "With Schleiermacher it will seek the innermost essence of religion in *the depths of the mind*, in the ground of man's life, in the proper centre of the spirit, but also bring the unfolding of cognition and of will into inward connection with this central relation. From an ethical standpoint it will bring about a purification and renewal of a large part of the dogmas belonging to the anthropological-soteriological circle, of the doctrine of free will, of sin, of grace and of substitution, etc. It will seek to attain a deeper connection

between divine dependence and human freedom, to arrive at a truer understanding of the interaction between the divine and the human factor in the process of salvation. It will not merely purify and make inward dogmatics, transform its outward juridical and magical notions into moral-religious ones; it will also deepen morality, part it from its vain self-righteousness, its superficial Pelagianism, in short, from its finitude, by sinking the roots of morality in the depths of religion, man's finite will in the
 [105] infinity of the divine will, his freedom in boundness by the divine. It will thereby abolish the fateful and pernicious separation of the religious and the moral.”*)

It is in truth a noble endeavour; but the question is whether it can be carried through. That rationalism takes no account of the welfare of the old Church is obvious. It will assert the independence of scientific inquiry from the authority of Scripture and of the symbols, and in this we must grant it is right; but when it then demands that faith in revelation shall submit to the authority of science, then it undermines, surely, both the Church and the life of the congregation. It admits no difference in principle between faith and knowledge. If it is, e.g., settled that the historical accounts of Christ's resurrection have no probative force in science, then they may have no validity in the Church either. If the Lutheran dogma of the Lord's Supper, scientifically regarded, cannot stand before the judgement of criticism, then at once the Church must give up its dogma and make the use of the sacrament dependent on the verdict of science. Is such a demand well founded? Yes, in a radical misunderstanding of the essence of faith.

What is it, then, that the religious consciousness seeks in the historical accounts of Christ's resurrection? A testimony that the apostles really believed in this resurrection, that the Church was founded, and the congregation baptized, on this faith. Let criticism prove that the accounts, as we have them, do not derive directly from eyewitnesses, that discrepancies in particulars suggest that they passed from mouth to mouth before
 [106] they were written down: it means nothing; the Church can grant it, the congregation come to know of it, without being in the least affected by it. The testimony to Christ's resurrection is a testimony of believers about faith to believers; the circle of the testimony is so closed that no criticism from outside is able to break through it.

Only one objection would have validity, but it is not taken from biblical criticism, it is taken from physics, or rather from the philosophy of physics, and runs thus: “Christ is not risen, for the resurrection is a miracle, and the miracle is an absurdity,

*) Den nyeste Theologies Historie i kort Fremstilling [The Most Recent History of Theology, in Brief Presentation], by Dr. Karl Schwartz. Danish translation. Copenhagen 1869. pp. 466–67.

a contradiction, an impossibility". If rationalism will now bow to the authority of this knowledge, in order to satisfy the modern consciousness, then it must take the consequences.

What science is to acknowledge must be capable of being proved in science. Rationalism speaks of the living God, a divine love, a living providence, a holy, divine, righteous will, and for the sake of religion and morality will not give up the immortality of the soul; but, we ask, can such things be grounded scientifically? Modern knowledge can just as little come to terms with the immortality of the soul as with Christ's resurrection. If the love of God is to be filtered through science, then it will in truth be a cold love.

Rationalism will free the religious consciousness from immediate dependence on the forms of doctrine handed down in the Church. The current mechanical doctrine of inspiration is designated as "an intolerably crude husk, in which the kernel is: the unique value of the biblical books". The ecclesiastical dogma of inspiration, it is said, has "long been recognized as something that caused embarrassment, as a hampering [107] evil. It is nothing other than an exaggeration and undue intensification of the truth, serves no real but only an imagined need of piety, namely this: to have an absolutely finished expression of the truth."

We grant it. Personal liberation from outward authority is of just as thoroughgoing significance for religion as for science. It is rationalism's immortal merit to have fought for this liberation in the Church; but all the more regrettable is it that it has misunderstood the essence of liberation. To want, on the authority of Scripture and the Church, to force the religious consciousness of the present into a literal acceptance of the biblical notions of the supernatural kingdom, and still more, into a literal adherence to the supranatural mechanism of orthodox dogmatics, worked out down to the smallest details, is certainly so enormous a blunder that one will hardly be able to say whether it is the men of free thought or the men of bound thought who contribute most to undermining religion. But because the people of Israel once lived in a wholly different circle of notions from ours, does it follow from this that it had its spiritual life in sheer imaginings? Because our orthodox fathers formed concepts of the intervention of the supernatural in the natural whose objective validity we can by no means acknowledge, does it follow from this that the supernatural does not exist at all, that nature itself cannot have its ground in something supernatural? If the rationalists' "living God" is to mean the same as living nature, then one does not see what difference there is between neo-rationalism and naturalism. But if the

[108] living God as spirit is to be different from nature, then he must surely be either a supernatural or an unnatural being.

Neo-rationalism has an essential advantage in that, with a view to the union of the religious and the moral, it asserts the humane and chooses its centre in man's conscience. Starting from conscience, the actively present inward, it strives "to draw religion down from its abstract, supramundane, supramoral height into the very midst of moral interests and reconcile it with the whole cultural life of the present." Will it succeed? "The congregations", says Karl Schwarz, "have awoken from their slumber; the unnaturalness, intolerance and lust for power of the Lutheran clergy have risen to such a degree that they have called forth the strongest counteraction from the people. The deeper religious need of the educated demands, imperiously and fully consciously, a different satisfaction from the one previously offered. We are still in the moment of expectation and of hope. But the new age is approaching, we feel its breath of spirit stirring. What everything points towards, and what must be striven for by all clear spirits, is the liberation of the Church from the firm embrace of the existing system of the state, so that it shall not be dragged along into all its ill-fated crises. This liberation is synonymous with a building up from the ground of the people's consciousness, a free shaping of the genuine, simple, inward Christianity as it lives in the people. Only in an organic association proceeding from the midst of the congregations will all the oppressed and hidden powers of spirit be set free, the whole culture of the present be led back into the dried-up ecclesiastical channels, and [109] the Church itself become the *home of truth* and of *life*, proclaimer of the most inward faith of conscience." — Will this prophecy be fulfilled?

If a human being is to find in his conscience testimony to an eternal righteousness, a holy, divine love, then he must have a conscience of faith; for in a conscience of knowledge there is nothing of that. He who conscientiously wants to remove everything that does not have confirmation in science, and to free his soul from expectations whose fulfilment cannot be brought into full harmony with earthly conditions and unchangeable laws of nature, will find in his conscience no trace either of supramundane righteousness or of divine love. Should he once, in an inspired mood, let himself be carried away into reaching for the supramundane, he may well be ashamed of himself afterwards and feel reproaches of conscience; — "it was only a mood, after all; the heart has its right, life its poetry". It is in vain to remind him that personal worth is only imagination if there is nothing eternal and unconditioned in the will: he dismisses it as a subjective idea and seeks the riddle of life solved in

physiology. Unscientific, half-scientific people take his unbelief for defiance. They do not understand him; it is not defiance, it is conscience, scientific conscience. It has perhaps cost him sleepless nights and bitter tears before he let go of the consoling illusions; but — “truth is objective, science is objective!” Would such a graduate in modern knowledge feel a need to let his culture go back “into the dried-up ecclesiastical channels” and become a member of a neo-rationalist congregation?

With the conscience of faith it is another matter; it has a spark of eternity, some- [110] thing unconditioned in the self. But precisely in this the opposition between the supernatural and the natural comes forward in the innermost depths of consciousness. When the personality is about to form itself, the spirit-will steps up against the drive-will, and man finds himself as a dualistic being. What is painful in dualism does not consist in there being, in the ground of life itself, dispositions of different kinds. The natural life of the individual furnishes precisely the foundation of its spiritual life. No, the strife arises from the drive-will, in its sensuous immediacy, not being willing to submit to the spirit-will. What, then, does the drive-will want? A momentary satisfaction of natural desire or, if the momentary desire is to be sacrificed, at least a satisfaction of a selfishly ruling passion. And what does the spirit-will want? To rule, and to rule unconditionally. It is a true torment for the natural man to get the spirit-will along with him, for it will never allow the drives, not even the gifted ones, to break loose and go off on their own; it watches over them like a guardian, it sees to their upbringing and keeps them under strict discipline. Immediate feeling may well find it outrageous that the innocent inclinations, the merry genii of enjoyment, these playing children of nature, are so pettily kept in check; but conscience, the conscience of faith, says the spirit-will is right; both agree that the unconditioned must unconditionally be held fast. It is not from lust for power, nor from hatred of the drives, nor from contempt for the individual’s natural dispositions, that the spirit-will wants to rule in this way; no, it is for the sake of freedom, for the sake of personality, so that there may come independence into the individual’s character, unity into man’s [111] being. The true unity is unity of self: the goal of development is the personal self.

By raising itself above the merely natural and transforming the drives into means, the spirit-will shows its kinship with the supernatural. The task of life cannot be solved ascetically by subduing the natural; but neither can it be solved monistically by denying the spirit-will in order to cultivate the drive-will. If there is nothing at all supernatural in man’s will, then we must let nature have its own way, and then things look doubtful for the neo-rationalist principle of morality. What, in the deepest

sense, is the supernatural? Precisely that in which everything natural is grounded. “The more of the supernatural there is in a human being’s will, the more personal is this will; the more personal the will is, the more it will be able to work through the natural ground of individuality, develop its faculties and strengthen its dispositions, first and last its disposition to eternity, so that the corruptible may die away, and the incorruptible live.” That is the testimony of the conscience of faith. — Would not a human being with such a “faith of conscience” prefer to remain in Luther’s old Church and — with the reservation of the personal freedom of appropriation — bow in reverence before its dogmas and sacraments, instead of seeking comfort and counsel in the rationalist unity of faith and knowledge?

[112] Existence is a wonder — alles Sein ist Wunder; it is admitted from the side of science as well as from that of religion that here is a riddle that cannot be solved. The present-day assumption that sensuous nature with its phenomena and laws is a blind product of a blind necessity that does not understand itself is just as one-sided, and as unsatisfying for personal self-understanding, as the Middle Ages’ notion of the arbitrary intervention of the supernatural in the connection of things is outrageous to the present day’s scientific consciousness. The enigmatic interaction of the supernatural and the natural — the perennial wonder — is a unity-in-doubling of nature’s means and the spirit’s ends, impenetrable to the human understanding, a unity-in-doubling which from the standpoint of knowledge must be judged according to the laws of necessity, from the standpoint of faith according to the laws of freedom. As surely as science, on behalf of inquiry, criticism and culture, has the right to declare hollow and fantastic every attempt, however profound, that would explain the intervention of the supernatural will by overlooking, misunderstanding or subtly evading the laws of nature, just as surely has religion, with its faith in revelation, in the name of personality, humanity and freedom, the right to protest against every encroachment that, under the pretence of raising self-consciousness to a higher level, makes the being of the self into semblance and knowingly violates the laws of spirit. Within these limits the measure is kept — for a characterization of *old* and *new prophets*.