

doubtless, would have been transmitted without the Gospels, but the fact is that they have been transmitted chiefly in this way. This renders it probable, though not necessarily certain, that the account, on the whole, including the narrative of the advent and the resurrection, is substantially authentic.

The more essential features of Christianity are:

1. Faith in the uniqueness of the advent, personality, teaching, sacrifice, and history of Jesus Christ.

2. Actual experience by believers of personal union with God, of a kind best expressed by the term sonship.

3. A sense of personal loyalty to Christ.

4. Unselfish fellowship and emulation among believers.

5. Consciousness of the forgiveness of sin, and of the possession and joyful exercise of a power to live righteously.

6. Active, loving service in individual and corporate form of Christian work, with a confident hope of a larger life, in closer union with God, after death.

The original impulse of the founder has been continually modified in passing

through the media of subsequent development, and Christianity will not be a finished product until the passing of the last individual Christian.

XIII.

I think of Christianity, on the divine side, as God's endeavor to declare his desires and purposes toward men in terms of life. Therefore Christianity seems to me to be the ultimate religion. No other method of communicating himself than through life could be complete and satisfying. This method having been taken, nothing more can be reasonably expected. All the great elements of a personal revelation—truth, justice, mercy, sacrifice—meet in Jesus Christ.

Personal Christianity seems to me to be the appropriation by faith of the life of Jesus Christ. Faith is not the ambitious attempt to imitate Jesus; it is the simple acceptance of him in his personal relations to the individual soul. It is the grateful surrender of the life to the spirit and purpose of Jesus. Personal Christianity is the appropriation, according to one's capacity, of whatever Christ has to confer.

III.—The Creed of a College Class

By William De Witt Hyde

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It is the custom in the course in government at Bowdoin College to require each student to write out his individual political platform; so that in case of future Fullers, Fryes, and Reeds we can trace the development of their opinions from their college views. One's religious creed bears much the same relation to the study of philosophy that one's political platform does to the theoretical study of government. Accordingly, I asked a class of sixty students, mostly seniors, to write out their individual creeds. In these individual creeds I asked each man to state as exactly as possible both his belief and his unbelief; and to define, as far as possible, the sense in which he held the things in which he believed and the sense in which he rejected the things he did not believe. I then reduced these sixty creeds to a single composite creed.

Into this composite creed I put everything which any student had affirmed, except what some one of them had denied; aiming in this way to get a class creed to which each individual member would assent. I distributed copies of this composite creed to each member of the class, and invited criticism and amendment. We then spent two hours together in discussing the articles of the creed one by one; making such modifications and concessions at each point as were necessary to secure their unanimous acceptance by the class. At the end of the second hour the creed was adopted by a unanimous vote.

Of course a creed composed in this way is by no means an ideal or model creed. Many of the individual creeds were far more positive and comprehensive than this composite creed. As showing, however, the things on which a typical

college class can agree, this creed may be of interest. While many things are of necessity left out which we would like to see included, yet the fact that a typical college class can agree on as much as is included here is a sufficient assurance that the great institutions of Family, State, and Church will be safe in their hands; and that their fundamental attitude toward God, duty, and life, if not quite the traditional one, is yet positive, wholesome, and reverent. I inclose three creeds: one of the more conservative type, one of the more radical type, and one the composite creed agreed upon by all the class:

A CONSERVATIVE COLLEGE CREED

I believe in

1. God as the central power of the universe, present alike in the works of man and nature.
2. Christ as the truest expression of the character of God and the supreme example for man to pattern after.
3. In the Holy Ghost as that which urges man to better and higher things, and especially that which creates in the breast of man the love and trust in the Infinite and the satisfaction and peace at the knowledge of doing His will.
4. Prayer as the effective means of obtaining what is for our permanent good when coupled with the efforts and faith of the asker. Also as the surest way to keep before man's consciousness the example of Christ's life.
5. I believe in the eternal life as the survival after death of the mind of man.
6. In heaven as the knowledge that we have lived to the best of our ability after the teachings of Christ.
7. In hell as the realization of falling below our ideals through our own faults.
8. In salvation as the conscious choosing by man of the life of Christ as his ideal and pattern.
9. In the whole Bible as the inspired word of God to man. In that all that which is high and noble comes from God. Also that the Bible is, as a whole, the truest expression of God's will to man.

If perhaps some things appear to be beyond the understanding of man, and apparently contrary to science, I remember that science is the product of man's observation, and that there may have been extra-scientific things beyond the

comprehension of man. Again, there is so much symbolism throughout the Bible that it is hard to separate it from what was intended as fact. Therefore it is possible for me to see truth in the whole of the New Testament, either actual or symbolical.

A RADICAL COLLEGE CREED

What I do not believe.

I do not believe in the doctrine of original sin, nor in the various Biblical miracles, nor in the divine conception of Jesus, nor in the doctrine of atonement, nor in the Trinity, nor do I deem it necessary to believe these in order to be a Christian.

What I do believe.

I believe in the existence of God, a divine Creator and Ruler, who is only personal to the extent that He has purposes and effects results.

I believe in the fundamental, immutable principle, Truth, akin to God, if not synonymous with God; that this Truth is the only imperishable thing in the universe, and that all other things are ephemeral.

I believe that as certain human beings have to a finite extent apprehended a bit of the Truth and promulgated it, they have become known as great teachers, and won followers through the inherent yet passive force of the Truth.

I believe Jesus Christ to have been the greatest of these teachers, inasmuch as he apprehended the Truth to a greater degree than all others.

I believe his doctrines to have spread, not through the agency of any active spiritual essence known as the Holy Ghost, but because of their own inherent immortality and the transitoriness of all opposition.

I believe Jesus Christ to have been divine only as he expounded the Truth, even as Confucius and Buddha, Socrates and Mohammed, may likewise be called divine, though to a less degree.

THE CREED OF THE CLASS OF 1903

I believe in one God, present in nature as law, in science as truth, in art as beauty, in history as justice, in society as sympathy, in conscience as duty, and supremely in Christ as our highest ideal.

I believe in the Bible as the expression

of God's will through man; in prayer as the devotion of man's will to God; and in the church as the fellowship of those who try to do God's will in the world.

I believe in worship as the highest inspiration to work; in sacrifice as the price we must pay to make right what is wrong; in salvation as growth out of

selfishness into service; in eternal life as the survival of what loves and is lovable in each individual; and in judgment as the obvious fact that the condition of the gentle, the generous, the modest, the pure, and the true is always and everywhere preferable to that of the cruel, the sensual, the mean, the proud, and the false.

Fiction-Readers and the Libraries

By John Cotton Dana

Librarian of the Public Library of Newark, New Jersey

SEVERAL observers of the book market have recently remarked that the day of the booming of the novel is nearly over. They think that the time when a new story can be puffed and advertised into tremendous popularity is past. This opinion has little basis in fact. Novels have been increasingly with us for a round hundred years. For several thousand years men have taken pleasure in prose fiction. Like the ruler, the priest, the trader, and the artist, the story-teller has been with us from camp-fires to cities and from huts to palaces. We cannot shake him off, and would not if we could. He has made us known to ourselves. At his best he has interpreted life for us, broadened us and mellowed us; at his poorest he has diverted us and made us forget the pettiness of our work and spirit. When his tales found the opportunity of print, and multiplied themselves a thousand times in an hour, his fascination did not increase, but his circle of listeners widened. It is widening still.

Consider the present situation and its signs of the future. There are to-day in this country probably twice as many readers of newspapers as there were ten years ago. Many of those who read before now read more. But those who read ten years ago could not, if they read all day and all night, consume the thousands of millions of papers and journals our presses now give us each year. The ranks of the readers get new recruits every day. A few come up into the reading class through high schools and colleges; but only the smallest fraction through the latter, and only a pitifully small percentage through the former. The most come up through A, B, ab, street signs, posters,

nickel stories, and the daily paper itself. Not all of us are readers yet. There is much popular error on this subject. Few adults in America are illiterates; but not all who know how to read take advantage of their knowledge. The majority of all the possible readers in this country do not, properly speaking, read at all. I mean this literally. I do not mean that they do not clearly understand what they read, but that they do not use print, save very rarely, for any purpose whatsoever. But out of this majority there are passing every year thousands and millions into the reading class. That this change has been taking place rapidly in the past ten years the growth of newspaper production and of an accompanying newspaper consumption in that period is abundant evidence. That the transformation is not complete, that many millions of literates have yet to graduate into the class of actual readers, could be shown by statistics of present newspaper consumption and of the possible readers in the country, set forth in connection with a study of the areas in which the present output of reading is consumed. Every month and every year a new army of users of print marches into the field out of the country of the non-reading. This army is recruited partly from the additions to our population, but chiefly, as I have said, from those who could read before and did not. These incoming hordes of devourers of books are nearly all of the class that gets its fundamentals only from the public schools, its practice from wayside fences and daily papers. They want the facts of life. They get them, disjointed and disconnected, from the newspapers. They want also the story; the romance; the