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About the Institute

The Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, a research division of Carnegie Mellon University, specializes in the history of botany and all aspects of plant science and serves the international scientific community through research and documentation. To this end, the Institute acquires and maintains authoritative collections of books, plant images, manuscripts, portraits and data files, and provides publications and other modes of information service. The Institute meets the reference needs of botanists, biologists, historians, conservationists, librarians, bibliographers and the public at large, especially those concerned with any aspect of the North American flora.

Hunt Institute was dedicated in 1961 as the Rachel McMasters Miller Hunt Botanical Library, an international center for bibliographical research and service in the interests of botany and horticulture, as well as a center for the study of all aspects of the history of the plant sciences. By 1971 the Library's activities had so diversified that the name was changed to Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation. Growth in collections and research projects led to the establishment of four programmatic departments: Archives, Art, Bibliography and the Library.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY
BERKELEY

September 6, 1932

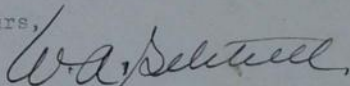
Marcus E. Jones, M. A.,
Pomona College,
Claremont, California.

Dear Friend Marcus:-

I am sending with this two transcriptions of your biographical notes as related to Mrs. Bracelin and as finally put into typewritten form here. As I remember, this was the arrangement and you would then make such corrections, alterations, etc., as suited your taste and inclination when you came to read them over and that you would return one copy to us amended and emended, in order that we might have the final authoritative account of a long, industrious, and not unexciting life.

Trusting that you are feeling fine and that you are thinking of visiting us again in the near future, I remain

Most sincerely yours,



W. A. Setchell
Professor of Botany

Autobiography.

While working in the herbarium at Berkeley in February of this year (1932) Prof. Setchell approached me with the proposition that I write out a complete account of my botanical activities in the last sixty years. I demurred from lack of time, but he would not be rebuffed, and insisted that I was now getting along in years (80 years old) when it was unsafe to put things off, and reminding me that I have been one of the most persistent critics of the other botanists who have put off giving accounts of their lives till it was too late. In addition I had promised my oldest daughter long ago that I would write my autobiography, and had gotten cold feet, and not done it. So I have dictated a first draft of it covering my botanical activities mostly, and incidentally my mining and judicial (work as a court expert) only so far as they connected up with botany. My magazine writings which cover hundreds of articles, and my religious work, are for the most part passed over, left out, as well as my social life. I have preserved various photographs of myself in action, some of which may be presented here, only to acquaint readers with my personality than for vanity reasons. The photos that others call characteristic do not appeal to me, only the leading one presented here has my approval. I feel that it is a great loss to present photos of men in their old age when they have passed their prime, but these are the only ones available in the case of Brandegee, Mrs. Brandegee, Parish, Alphonse DeCandolle, and others. There is no intention on my part ever to publish my autobiography. I did at one time intend to do so. But the facts are now available in MS. form, and I specifically demand that no one ever publish it in any garbled form after I am gone. My life has been an aggressive one, and a continual fight against evil tendencies in botany, and I don't want any cowardly pussyfoot to misrepresent me by giving a garbled account of my work, under the pretense of friendship, or any other pretense.

There has been a complete change in my religious attitude in the last twenty years. Up to that time I was a thoroughly orthodox member of the Congregational church, founded three churches, and preached for seven years, but

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my contact with Christian ministers in church work revealed so much hypocrisy *that I began to feel that the system was at fault and must* and cant and incompetence, *that I was compelled to* investigate the foundations again in the light *of* my scientific knowledge, and ~~to~~ look the facts squarely in the face, and weigh all the evidence. The result was ⁺ the rejection of the whole system as fraudulent. And I am now prepared to take the consequences. I have investigated about all the other religions and find them all tarred with the same stick. ~~They~~ They are all apparently based on superstition and ignorance and the gullibility of the crowd. So I am like the Indian found wandering in the woods. When asked if he was lost. He ~~replied~~ ^{replied} that he was not lost but ~~wickiup~~ ^{wickiup} lost.

To me it is tragic, but there is no other way. I feel tremendously hostile to myself for being such a fool as to have believed for so long in the traditions of Christianity when I now see that the Jews were the greatest and most monumental ~~laars~~ ^{laars} God ever made, to whom to lie about a good thing was considered a virtue. All religions begin in the same way, by some devote ^d patriot trying to break the fetters of the half wits who always get control of all social machinery. The success of the effort in each case is proportional to the self abnegation of the leader, and ends in the exaltation of the ^{leader} ~~leader~~ as divine, and in his assumption of authority over his followers and in crushing them into intellectual and other slavery. It is nothing but the carnivorous spirit over and over again crushing out all that is worth while. Humanity does not ever seem to be able to avoid making an ass of itself when it gets into power. To me the unrest in all departments of scientific activity, and craze to dominate others is all a part of the same spirit. I feel that it is vital that the individual be free from any kind of domination. it makes no difference what you call it, atheism, rationalism, or orthodoxy, the individual must be free. ~~Our ancestral cause therefore~~ Progress is not half so important as ^{as} freedom. Our ancestors came here to get away from the very thing that now is trying to strangle American thought. Each of us has to fight for his very existence in the midst of the rabble of cowardly pussyfoots, and his mind must not be handicapped by a mass of inhibitions, handed down by a lot of half wits with flexible imaginations, who thought they were talking with God.

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In stating that I consider the foundations of Christianity fraudulent I do not give up for a moment the moral basis of Christianity. Paul puts it in a good way when he says "The truth shall set you free"., and with all that accompanies it I agree. But Paul ^{was} a fanatic and assumed as the truth a false foundation, for with him if a thing was in the Scriptures it was infallibly true. So he went off wrong on ~~any~~ ^{many} fundamentals, and was very hazy on others. To me the greatest crime a man can commit is to deviate from the truth. The fact that we exist requires everyone of us to seek the truth though the heaven fall, and to abide by the truth always, even to the detriment of our own condition. To lie or even to dissemble is to me a grievous sin. This is why I hate cowardly pussy-foots, and all the double dealing that prevails in the world. One's first business is ~~first~~ ^{the second is} to find out what is the truth and to align oneself to it. That most people have to be slobbered over to get them to do right is no excuse for slobber. It all ends in evil. Stripped of all the fairytales the teachings of the Bible are of paramount importance, but everywhere you find miracles set in to make them more effective, till you come to abhor the Jews. One would assume that my present stand is that of a unitarian. The unitarians kid ^m themselves into calling themselves Christians. They are a feeble folk, never got any where and never will. I can see the use for religion in moral uplift, but I do not see any use in bunking people to get it. Asceticism seems the most effective in elevating thinking, but I abhor it. There ought to be a better way.

I realize that my scientific work is nearly done, and for this reason I am taking opportunity to say a few things. I also feel that I owe this to the innumerable friends, many of whom I have never met, who in spirit stand behind me, and wish me well. I crave no sympathy, all I want is a fair field and if I can't get one I will make one. No one prizes friends more than I. But they must not ask me to deviate from what I think is best.

In giving the account in Cont. IV 332-3 I was writing of a historical fact and making no apologies for events and I never have regretted what I did then nor do I now. A man who does not fight for his rights is a fool. In my younger days I used to believe implicitly in the hairbrained theories of the Christian church on nonresistance and in divorce not being allowable except for violation of the marital vow., but my experience in ^{life} has taught me that there are people who will skin you out of your eye teeth in the sacred name of love, and the only way to get relief is to fight for it. In Mexico the average man is decent and law-abiding but you often come on men who bluff you into getting what is yours, particularly white men from the north. This is why folks carry guns to protect themselves, and is why they use them at times. A show of arms is the best protection. Once in 1930 I was set on by two ^{show} Mexicans who intended to rob me, but a show of my arms led them to postpone the attack. The case in point was due to the greed of two San Diego men who thought they could rob me but found out differently. Pringle was a Quaker and lived his religion but I am not and never was nor could be. I now believe that the theories of the Christian church are the product of a hairbrained religious enthusiast who tried to go against the consensus of opinion of the world in social matters and who claimed things that were not true and tried to enforce them on an unwilling world, and who passed out of the picture as he should. I have no quarrel with those who think differently from me, but I act on my own judgment. ^{this has led me to despise} those people who pussfoot through life,

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Personally I do not believe that I have had any first hand experience which gives real evidence of a divine spiritual element in life, a Christ, or a life after death. I doubt that I will ever have such an experience and I realize that possibly it will be my own fault - due to my attitude - if I do not.

Most of the religious beliefs which I held until recently I adopted unquestioningly from people whom I regarded and still regard with a great deal of respect. I was raised in a religious environment and before I was old enough to think seriously about religious matters I had unconsciously grafted onto myself the beliefs of my parents and of other good people with whom I was closely associated. I had so much esteem for the characters of these people and they seemed so confident in their convictions that for me there did not seem to be need or room for doubt. Later, in college doubts did arise yet these were subdued, to a large degree at least, by several different cooperating forces; by the influence of the religious atmosphere of the college, by my early training, by my reluctance to lower the prospects of a future happy existence and by my respect for the opinions and convictions of others. Others did not seem to have my doubts so rather than believe that my doubts were warranted and that all religious people were being hoaxed or were hoaxing themselves I decided that I had missed or had not encountered the confidence-producing evidence or experience. This evidence I tried to gain by striving to lead a model Christian life and I even went so far as to offer my life services as a missionary to the cause. Matters went along fairly smoothly for a while but gradually it became more and more apparent to me that I was not cultivating that degree of faith which others evinced. This fact bothered me because I felt that a religious worker, before using his influence on others should have rock bottom foundations for his convictions. Then I began to inquire into the foundations for the faith which I was trying to develop. I made an inventory of my religious stock and arrived at the conclusion that I had experienced nothing which gave real confirmation of my beliefs - nothing to produce that high degree of confidence I sought. Also I realized that the religious conceptions I held had been taken in wholesale fashion from the beliefs of other people and that I had assimilated these into my own mind partly by a sub-conscious desire and effort to believe what others believed; I had kept myself in a receptive state of mind - one of believing without questioning - and by trying for a long time to make religious things appear real to myself I had succeeded in rousing a certain measure of confidence in my religious program.

Now, as I reflect on this faith or semi-confidence which I had, I do not feel that it was induced by Christ's influence or anything of that sort; rather that it was an artificial state of mind which I had produced. I can give a partial justification of this faith in so far as it was stimulated by learning of the convictions of other people. Just because I have had no experience of Christ I am not justified in assuming that He does not exist and that others have not had an unquestionable indication of His existence. I appreciate that fact and yet I do not dare trust the assurances of others so very far for the reason that I believe that there are a great many who are in the same boat and are sailing in the same direction that I was - many who do not have any more foundation for their beliefs than I did for mine. Their beliefs may have been built up in the same illogical way that I started mine. I think that many people accept Christianity in the same way and for the same reason that they vote the Democratic or the Republican ticket - because their fathers did. We seem to leave religious thinking to our ancestors to a large degree and even tho by chance the reasoning of our ancestors was of a superior type this fact, it seems to me, does not justify the blind acceptance of religious doctrine. Probably the ancestors of our ancestors, rather than do independent thinking and trust their own minds on religious matters, accepted bodily the religion of their ancestors, etc.. If this were not the case we might expect to find the different great religions of the world scattered rather indiscriminately instead of being confined

to certain continents, countries, races or tribes.

It is partly from the standpoint that a person can easily delude himself, and incidentally others too, into religious convictions that I feel that no one - except a person who is on a higher plane of information than the ordinary level or some one who is sure that he has had a definite spiritual experience which has given him an insight into the whys and ifs of this life and a next one and is in a position to see that such reasoning as mine is headed on a wrong tack - is justified in making converts to his religion or denomination by imposing his ideas on some one else. Possibly the ideas of the converter will not hold water any better than those of the converted. Every religion has its public preachers who try to stimulate faith and if we grant that the faith of the Mormon or of the Mohammedan is produced by mental delusion (self delusion or otherwise) we ought to admit the possibility that our own faith is a psychological result which might be expected and that our preachers, as well as those of other religions or denominations are spreaders of delusion. I do not mean to imply that preachers as a class are calculating grafters because of course a great many of them are conscientious and sincere nor am I sure that the delusion, if delusion it is, which preachers foster is not the best thing for a certain class of people.

I think that by continued striving to believe something which he desires to believe, something which the very uncertain is not unreasonable, a person can arrive at the stage at which he is not sure but what the thing is really a fact. I think that this is the situation in which I placed myself. The faith which resulted from my efforts to adopt the beliefs of others I consider as a sort of hallucination which can be explained on a psychological basis. Aside from this process of gradual self-delusion, belief seems to me to be an involuntary matter. I do not agree with the principle that "Believing is Seeing" and I do not think that it should be applied. The Bible says that "If thou wouldst believe thou wouldst see" as the believing were entirely a matter of willing. I think that belief which is arrived at logically depends on two things; first on the amount and quality of evidence which can be derived from the individual's experience and from the experience of others with whom the individual comes into contact, and second, on the frame of mind - sceptical and analytical or gullible - which heredity or past experiences or both, have left with him. A person who uses his will to produce belief often does so by voluntarily darkening or eliminating, as far as he is concerned, sources of information which do not support the belief he desires. If a person is impartial in securing information - i.e. if he does not limit the source - he will, whether he wishes to or not, form opinions based on evidence which he has obtained directly or indirectly and if this evidence is sufficient in amount and nature his opinion will tend to become a belief. I think that belief in religious matters question should be arrived at by the weighing of evidence pro and con, just as we determine truth in other matters and that the idea of developing belief by volition should be abandoned since this method may lead a person unwittingly to a conclusion for which there is no real foundation.

Since I seem to be comparatively sceptical I have been led to wonder at the differences between myself and others and at the inevitable injustice of any scheme of judgment and reward for these differences - no matter what standards are used as a basis for judgment. Is my sceptical nature destined to consign me to an unhappy fate hereafter? I certainly don't think so. I do not think that Lincoln's statement that all men are born equal is applicable to anything besides politics and maybe that is all that Lincoln intended it to cover. We all have different qualities and types of equipment as far as body and mind are concerned and these differences are due largely if not entirely to the attributes of our ancestors and to the nature of our environment rather than to independent decisions of our own. I think that this is a pretty well established fact and that it is fairly certain that an ego

uninfluenced by external and internal conditioning factors does not exist. We may have some leeway in determining our destinies but for the most part our hereditary traits combined with the environment in which we happen to be or to which our heredity assigns us decide how we will think and how we will conduct ourselves. I think that my sceptical nature and all the rest of my personal characteristics are the result of circumstances and conditions ~~##~~ which I could not control. Even the will seems to be ruled by heredity and environment. Not that I am trying to excuse my sceptical nature and am complaining of my lot in general. I think that I am very lucky as compared to those who have ungovernable passions, criminal inclinations and the like. This consideration makes me wonder whether we have the right to apply the terms "good" and "bad" to such people in the full sense that these terms are usually used. Possibly we should be judged by our talents but if so where do our talents leave off and where does unhampered volition enter? Where does extra-determination stop and where does individual initiative unaffected by the heredity and environment of the individual and of others who come into contact with the individual, begin? In many cases I think that you can not censure a man for his attitude and actions any more than you have the right to blame a man for being born insane. In fact I am not at all sure that there is such a thing as uninfluenced volition or individual leeway in the matter of will; we seem to be pretty much the puppets of destiny.

I cannot see that Christianity has a proof of its verity in the effect it has on its adherents. If an individual tries sincerely to mold his character after some worthy model - say his father, Lincoln, Christ or any one else of a good type - we may reasonably expect a desirable effect on the person. Christianity has very high ideals, probably more so than any other religion so why should we not expect results which compare favorably with those of any other religion? One religion because of better principles incorporated into its program will tend to turn out a more desirable type of citizen than another religion with ~~an~~ inferior creeds and doctrines. The results are a measure of the efficiency of a religion and not necessarily of the genuineness of its tenets. The real pragmatic test of Christianity and of most religions comes after death.

I am recording these views for the use of some one who may want to know my religious status and also for my own benefit - to make my own ideas more definite to myself by projecting them into writing. The evidence I am presenting is largely materialistic - partly because I have a leaning towards the materialistic and mechanistic interpretation and partly because this side of the question is not before a persons mind as much as the other side. Religious people usually present only the one side of the problem and ignore the other side. They do not seem to care to realize that there is another side - the plausibility of a materialistic explanation - maybe because it seems sacrilegious to do so or maybe because it would ~~work~~ have with their cherished dreams of a bright hereafter.

I have not given myself entirely over to materialism. I still have a small degree of confidence in the spiritual side due partly, possibly to the fact that I have not accustomed myself to the materialistic view, partly because I am taking into consideration the fact that I may not be as fortunate or deserving as others in not having experienced anything which would have made me conscious of the reality of spiritual things and partly because along with materialistic explanations there seems to be ~~some~~ some room for the interpretation of the creation of the universes by a God who is personal and altruistic.

I'll confess that my faith even in God is not very strong. As I look at the matter this does not mean that I am doomed to torture or anything of the sort. Maybe with persistent effort I could develop faith but would I have any assurance that it was not a psychological consequence which could have been predicted rather than a response to an external stimulus such as Christ spirit or influence. Should I ignore reason in a blind attempt to stimulate

faith, when reason rather than feeling or emotion is our most reliable means of ascertaining truth?

If salvation does depend upon faith as well as upon works then I must admit that my prospects of salvation might be much rosier. Supposing that there is such a thing as salvation, no matter how good and helpful I might be to might to my fellow-men if I did not have much faith in God I would be out of luck. I can not conceive of a God who is at once so great as to create the universe or universes and so good as to have a personal and boundless interest - "love" - in each one of the billions of us human beings, living and dead and who yet is so narrow and unaltruistic as to permit that interest in us to be overshadowed by displeasure, wounded pride or desire for punishment when we insignificant mortals chance to have a mind which will not vouch for His existence. That attitude would hardly fit in with the ideal of brotherly love as it should be applied between members of society - it is not impartial - so how much less worthy it seems when considered as part of God's attitude toward us! I think that if salvation depended upon faith God would not have left the question of believing so much a matter for conjecture.

At times lately I have done a good deal of reading from the New Testament and tho the writing seems sincere and in that respect at least, is almost all that a critical person could hope for, yet when I consider the fact that other religious books have been concocted by unscrupulous or misguided individuals - the Koran, the Buddhist Scriptures, the Zend-Avesta etc. - and that these have been accepted and followed unreservedly by the masses of common people, I do not feel enough confidence in it to derive any spiritual support from the reading. We say that the followers of other religions than our own are deluded heathen and they have the same attitude toward us. Do they not have just about as much grounds for believing their sacred literature as we do for ours? Apparently they seem to think so.

The fact that all races have a religion or something approaching a religion is sometimes used as an argument for Christianity but to me it seems more of a hindrance than a help. If only one race - say the white race - started with a religion and other races based their religions on this one, I think I would have more confidence in this one (if it were a fairly reasonable one) than I do in Christianity which is only one of scores of religions which are adapted to the type of mind and degree of civilization of the people who invented them. The fact that a savage has his own religion with its God or gods, should not, in my opinion, give us confidence in our own God and our own religion. To me this abundance of religions indicates the workings of the frail human mind rather than the workings of a capacity to divine or sense the supernatural, implanted in us by a God who was anxious to be recognized and respected by man. I think of religions in general as being the products of man's imagination instead of being a result of or a response to a certain inherited faculty which enables man to sense the existence of God. I can no more think of the savage being impelled into his religious belief than I can of Brigham Young, Joseph Smith or Mohammed. If I try to place myself in the position of a savage who is so ignorant that he does not realize that there are such things as natural phenomena, who does not have any more idea of the extent of the world and the world's life than has an oyster on the beach, than I can readily conceive of myself as ascribing the actions of the sun, wind, gravity, lightning and the like to the machinations of different, friendly or hostile, super-human entities. I have not studied the history of religions but I expect that when the savage came to realize that he was living on a big world and when he became far enough advanced to wonder about the nature and origin of the world, he decided that it was more logical

to assume that the creation was effected by one great God rather than by the cooperation of several or many minor Gods. In this respect his religion took a step toward the more advanced religions. Religions have evolved with the minds that have created them.

During the past few centuries man has learned the explanation (to some degree of satisfactoriness at least) of so many things formerly considered supernatural that it seems as tho we ought to begin to see the fallacy of dogmatically designating as supernatural and inexplicable from anything but a teleological basis things which can not be fully explained at present. We marvel at the careful disposition of the planets and the sun in their relation to the earth but quite possibly life on the earth in its evolution has adapted itself to the chance position of the world with respect to the rest of the universe, has adapted itself to the light, energy and movement of the sun, to the kinds of chemical elements and compounds present on the earth, to the type of atmosphere enveloping the earth, etc. Rather than that the whole universe was especially arranged by God to make possible the evolution of life on this planet or specifically for man, quite possibly the universe came gradually into existence via the nebular route. Possibly the beginning of life in its simplest form or forms was made possible by a chance adjustment of physical and chemical conditions. The exact nature of life has not been determined yet but I do not think that this fact justifies us in definitely assigning life and the origin of life to a teleological and supernatural category. Maybe some one will satisfactorily explain life on physical-chemical basis but even if the future should bring contrary evidence - that life is not generated by matter alone but depends upon a spiritual force - would it be reasonable to make an unreserved conclusion that the spiritual force in question is controlled by a superhuman Being and that this Being in addition to his greatness is also personal and altruistic?

My chief criticism of the church, of ministers and of most religious people as well is that they incline to be too dogmatic. It is possible that they are following the right clue but they should realize that on the other hand they may be entirely wrong. The likelihood of a future existence when considered rationally seems very uncertain at best. Apparently the instigator of religious dogmatism is the Bible. The Bible is the final authority for dogmatic assertions on the part of the clergy and like Kaiser Bill and the Pope the Bible is supposed to be God's infallible instrument. It eliminates to a large degree the inclination and tendency to do original thinking about religious and philosophical matters - makes it superfluous. The attitude seems to be that if the individual mind and the Bible conflict that the mind should surrender to the higher authority. I feel that in trying to fathom religious problems the majority of people are seriously handicapped by their lack of accurate information about and appreciation of science - especially biological science. They do not have the information about the "created" things which would increase their competence to in speculation about the Creator.

I am not sure that this generation or even the generations immediately succeeding would be benefited by an exposure of dogmatism in religion. Without the common conceptions of heaven and hell (or of heaven alone) to serve as inducements to good living probably a great many people would be much less desirable members of society than they are at present. On the other hand I feel sure that there are a great many people who would be helpful and unselfish even if they realized that chances for reward in another sphere were very doubtful. Quite possibly the virtuous side of people can be as effectively developed by education and by early training in unselfishness, as by the incentive to earn salvation or to avoid hell or both. One advantage of the educational method if it proved feasible is that knowledge and truth would have a better opportunity to advance since the false foundations supported at present by dogmatism would be removed and would be replaced by a logical, impartial and reasoning attitude.

6

A thing which seems peculiar to me is the fact that many parents intentionally dupe their own children. It seems serious enough to delude children by making them believe fairy stories and by building up faith in such bunk

as Santa Claus. Fairy tales need not be swallowed whole to give enjoyment to the reader and exercise to the imagination nor is a child likely to appreciate his Christmas gifts less if he knows that they are from his parents and not from Santa Claus. The parents place themselves in a false position by their misrepresentation and when the youth becomes too old to remain under delusion he may be disgusted by his discovery and may lose trust in and respect for his parents and other people. What seems even more serious to me is the fact that many parents who in their own religious views are quite liberal, inject into their children strictly orthodox ideas - they represent as true and as facts things which they themselves doubt or disbelieve. Why fool the children? I think that a child is entitled to know as much of fact in religion and all other matters as his parents and older friends can reasonably reveal and that the cultivation of the desire for truth should begin very early.

To my mind the whole religious problem resolves itself into a weighing of evidence for two diametrically opposed propositions - the spiritualistic versus the materialistic, the existence or the non-existence of the soul. I have come to no final decision but the materialistic end seems to overbalance the spiritualistic. On neither side of the question do I have much more than ideas - no profound convictions. I think that this is the ideal situation for me and that it will continue to be the ideal situation for some time yet. I do not think that I ought to render a conclusive decision for one side or the other unless I have pretty positive proof that the other side is wrong. Maybe I ought never to align myself definitely on one side or the other since I do not see how either the spiritualist or the materialist - since they employ entirely different methods - can absolutely prove that one is right and that the other is wrong. I aim to keep weighing the evidence for both sides impartially, to keep my mind open to all sources of information, to lead as constructive and helpful a life as I can and as society has the right to expect of me, and finally, in my religious thinking not to be so much concerned in trying to insure salvation as in trying to do up what is what and why.

Fundamentalism.

To attempt to examine Christianity to determine its authority in human affairs, to many seems wicked. It is so old and time-honored that even the suggestion seems sacrilegious. We were brought up to ^{love} it as sacred and all of its ^{tenets} ~~tenets~~ as taboo, and yet from the beginning it has been assailed from every side, most of the criticism coming from pronounced enemies.

In the last few generations, since the advent of the methods of scientific research, a system of recorded observations, well meaning men within the church have attempted to subject this religion to unbiased examination of its basic principles in the light of observed facts. This has split believers into two camps-- Fundamentalists, and Rationalists, and the latter have been assailed as covert infidels, and frowned upon as faithless men.

It hardly needs repeating that the final results cannot differ in true religion and scientific research for they must be based on the same facts. But the present situation is not harmony. The man of faith jumps the gaps, and claims the same authority for his flights of imagination as the scientist claims for his observed facts, and in addition he reviles the man of science as a wicked man because he will not accept the other's faith in the "Thus saith the Lord" of the Bible which is the statement of some Old Testament writer of the long ago who had no better foundation for his statement than that some one still older than himself had written it in the sacred books. Now the scientist comes along and insists on an examination of the evidence, and when he finds that there is no real evidence he is branded as an infidel because he dares to say so.

The two common methods of investigation are an examination of the Scriptures themselves to see what evidence they give of their authority, and to seek to know if the Scriptures accord with observed fact and with reasonable deductions from those facts. Men who hold the latter view are called Rationalists, which they are, but the fact, in the eyes of many Christians carries the stigma of infidelity. No doubt the suggestion to submit the matter to reason results from insufficient evidence, but the Fundamentalists contend that there is a higher spiritual realm where the laws of ~~matter~~ ~~the physical~~ ~~laws~~ do not prevail, where the physical laws do not

~~xxxxxxxx~~. Scientists claim that it is not reasonable to assume as a fact the ^x thing you start out to prove, and this is the dilemma of the Fundamentalists. In addition they have never yet secured any means of testing the so-called spiritual phenomena to determine their genuineness. Much of the Christianity of today is built on the assumption of a spiritual world, for which there is as yet ~~is~~ no evidence of its actual existence.

Now let us take up the Scriptures to see what internal evidence they have of their authority. For many years the geography and history of Palestine were the battleground, but it has been fairly well established that archaeology shows ^{there} ~~there~~ is no good ground for doubting the historicity of the Scriptures since the time of Abraham. This fact adds weight to the assumption of the complete reliability of the Bible. Taking up the pre-Abrahamic part of the Bible we first find a circumstantial account of Creation including ~~Man~~ and his history to the time of Abraham. Without at this time () going into details of the account we say without hesitation that the whole account is a pure fabrication of the priesthood for the purpose of saddling the priestly cult on an unwilling people in order to give authority for the existence of the system and for the adoption of its method assumed to be those of the Creator. As a result of the account in Genesis Christianity still believes that Man was created perfect and instantaneously, and yet without any ^{moral} ~~moral~~ resistance, so that when he was tempted by an assumed devil in an assumed Garden of Eden he fell so hard that he cursed all his offspring to the present day and caused such degeneration that the race has been going from bad to worse ever since till the time of Christ, who came into the world for the purpose of atoning to God for this curse on humanity. Now the facts of paleontology show conclusively that Man never was a degenerate, that he has come up from the lower orders by development, and that the man of today is the best developed man that ever lived, and that the ^{term} ~~term~~ of life of today is the longest Man ever knew. ~~For a more extended examination of these data see Appendix.~~ Now again ~~we~~ ask what further evidence is there that the Bible is the word of God? Peter and Paul, in one place each, are the only scriptural writers who speak of inspiration. Both say that the Scriptures were written by men of God (godly men) for the purpose of instruction in moral things, and for this purpose were inspired.

e infallible) by God. What evidence they had they do not give. Now ~~to~~ ^{the}

the Scriptures we find the account of Creation and man's history false

At the time of Abraham. It may be contended that the Scriptures do not pretend to be infallible in secular things. But reading the accounts given in the Bible there is no difference in the method of statement of the Garden of Eden incidents from those given of the travels or teachings of Jesus, and people have always been accustomed to accepting the whole and on the same basis. Now if anyone in the Bible was infallible it must have been the founder of Christianity, Jesus. In the parable of the mustard seed Jesus speaks of it as having the smallest of seeds and of its becoming a tree, neither of which is true. This shows that the botanical knowledge of Jesus was defective. He speaks of the wind as blowing from the four corners of the Earth, when there are no corners and never were. This shows his geography was that of his time and not that of God. In the 13th. chapter of Mark Jesus gives a circumstantial account of the end of the world, winding up by saying that it would all happen in his generation, and all the disciples died with the firm conviction that it was the time of the End. The outcome shows that Jesus did not know what he was talking about. Now how can this be harmonized with the conception of God incarnated in the flesh? Suppose we pass by for the time secular things and take up other things conceded to be more or less moral. Jesus's teachings in the matter of marriage and divorce are those of the most radical priests of his time, and he is unequivocally sure that once married always married is God's law. No government in the world today accepts Jesus's ideas for they are unworkable. They have caused untold misery in keeping up impossible unions that never should have been made, and they still curse civilization so that the state has repudiated the whole. There is no denying that the insight of Jesus in moral things was marvelous in its adjustment to the best interests of Man, but in the matter of marriage and divorce the state finds him unreliable.

There are many things assumed to be true in Christianity which cluster around and are conditioned on a future existence, and which wait for their fulfillment on an adjustment beyond the grave, and for that adjustment continual self-sacrifice in this life is preached, but so far as science can go there is

idence of any such life. The gospel of Paul in his various writings is full
 his doctrine, and has had a profound influence in molding men along those
lines, but his basic fact is false, namely that Man is a degenerate, and the neg-
 lect of the body that resulted from ^{his} repeated statements that everything bodily
 was carnal and vile resulted in the ruin of millions of lives, and today still
 affects humanity. ^{natural} The advent of science, and the application of ~~its~~ its methods
 to sickness and disease has given the young a new impetus for living, and ~~increased~~
 immeasurably advanced the race in the face of the opposition of the clergy. We do
 do not hear so much today about blind submission to the will of divine Providence
 in the death of friends, and we hear a great deal more about taking proper care
 of the house we live in. We seldom now hear God blamed for the death of infants
 and we hear a Great deal more about the responsibility of parents for protecting
 infants against infection. All this is in line with with a rational adjustment
 to the evils afflicting humanity. But there is much more to be done to drive
 away the superstitions of the ^{clergy} ~~clergy~~. There never was any authority for the as-
 sumptions of the clergy in marriage, and yet women still seem to think they are
 not really married till some minister goes through his ~~flummies~~ ^{flummies} over her. We
 still feel a shudder going through us at having a man ^{buried} ~~married~~ without a preacher
 incanting over his grave. We still ^{look} ~~look~~ on a church edifice as the house of God
 when in fact it is mostly a house of superstition. We still look on a minister as
 as a man of God when for the most part he is a social grafter preaching flatulent
 nothings. Looked at from the standpoint of efficiency the modern church is a
 conspicuous example of asinine ~~inefficiency~~ incompetence. Today in the minds
 of the majority of people the sanctity of the clergy and of the church is gone.
 The pangs of a Hell in the next world do not scare the young. There is a saner
 attitude, but there is a distinct slackening in the incentive to correct living
 since the fears of future punishment are gone. It is harder today to get the young
 young to practise self-denial and exercise more self-control in order to bring
 the body to maximum efficiency. This state of things no doubt is directly charge-
 able to the influence of natural scientists in revealing the weakness of some
 supposed basic principles of Christianity, and so far as a lack of spirituality
 goes the Fundamentalists have an apparent justification for their opposition.

After all who is to blame ? The scientists for revealing the rottenness of foundations stones, or the Fundamentalists for putting those stones on the foundation?

There is no one thing more evident than that there must be a new alignment in the theology of Christianity if it is to hold its own in the present day. And it would far better behoove the Fundamentalists to spend their time readjusting things than in calling names.

It might seem to some that I am an enemy of Christianity, but this is not so. There is nothing sweeter to me than the Christian hope of a future life and of all the beauties it may contain, but there is no real evidence of its existence. There is nothing more helpful than to feel that there is a living Christ standing by your side ready to help in every time of need, and on whom you can rely absolutely. In addition I am a confirmed believer in the efficacy of prayer to the great Creator and reliance on His guidance. But I feel intensely that there is too much rubbish in the Christian faith to make it possible for a man with his eyes open to accept, without drastic reconstruction.

Marcus E. Jones