

philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University · Loyola Heights, Quezon City · 1108 Philippines

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Philippine Studies vol. 4, no. 1 (1956): 41–56

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John Dewey's Substitute For Religion

RALPH B. GEHRING

IN the hope of alerting others to certain grave defects in the philosophy of John Dewey, deservedly famous American educator and thinker, the present writer recently outlined and criticised his doctrines on the origins of religion.¹ No notice, however, was then taken of his opinions on Christianity's contribution to the growth of religion. That omission was deliberate, for it seemed best that those opinions be presented in conjunction with the topic of the present article, which is Dewey's substitute for religions. To this substitute—a religious attitude devoid of any reference to God—Dewey's way of regarding Christianity provides a natural introduction.

I. DEWEY'S DOCTRINES

THE UNFORTUNATE ADVENT OF CHRISTIANITY

Religion, according to Dewey, was born of primitive man's fear of natural forces that rendered his existence precarious and against which he strove to protect himself by a superstitious insurance of rite and cult. Once born, religion spread throughout mankind and history, acquiring a universality that in large measure was due to the dramatic qualities inherent in worship. Philosophy, too, lent its support at an early date, for it provided the distinction between the natural and the supernatural and thus supplanted what in primitive religion had been little more than a difference between the ordinary

and the extraordinary. Those early thinkers had "discovered the delights of thought and inquiry," and in rational knowledge "escaped from the world of vicissitude and uncertainty... into rational communion with the divine." Nevertheless Western man might have risen sooner from his errors in matters of religion, if it had not been for Christianity.

How far this glorification by philosophers and scientific investigators of a life of knowing, apart from and above a life of doing, might have impressed the popular mind without adventitious aid there is no saying. But external aid came. Theologians of the Christian Church adopted this view in a form adapted to their religious purposes. The perfect and ultimate reality was God: to know Him was eternal bliss. The world in which man lived was a world of trials and troubles to test and prepare him for a higher destiny. Through thousands of ways, including histories and rites, with symbols that engaged the emotions and imagination, the essentials of the doctrine of classic philosophy filtered its way into the popular mind.²

Thus the process with generated religion was completed for John Dewey. Fear of nature had stampeded the primitive, the early Greek philosopher lost himself in an ivory tower, Christian theologians pursued their "religious purposes" and the common people were led astray. A single period of history, "the days of the Sophists and their great Athenian successors," had escaped the general contagion but this period of progress did not endure; there followed

...a failure of nerve, and a return to the supernatural. Yet the episode even if brief is more than historically significant. It manifests another way open to man in the midst of an uncertain, incomplete and precarious universe... Through instrumental arts, arts of control based on study of nature, objects which are fulfilling and good may be multiplied and rendered secure. This road after almost two millenia of obscuration and desertion was re-found and retaken; its rediscovery marks what we call the modern era.³

THE OTHER WAY

Although man's first road to security had been religion, "the method of changing self in emotion and idea," and although "the other course is to invent arts and by their means to turn the powers of nature to account... the method of changing the world through action,"⁴ the new alternative de-

manded changes in the self as truly as did the former. What they were and how they were to be brought about, was indicated in the following words:

If men had been educated to think about broader humane values as they have now learned to think about matters which fall within the scope of technical arts, our whole present situation would be very different... Suppose also men had been systematically educated to believe that the important thing is not to get themselves personally "right" in relation to the antecedent author and guarantor [of values that were real independently of what men did], but to form their judgments and carry on their activity on the basis of public, objective and shared consequences. Imagine ...what the present situation might be.⁵

Fortunately the situation had been gradually changing, even without such systematic education. Man had in fact been on the new road for centuries unaware, for it was not a sudden reversal of direction; it was rather a deeply significant curve. There had been an "historic increase of the ethical and ideal content of religions [which suggested] that the process of purification may be carried further."⁶

Creeds display great power of accommodation; their articles undergo insensible change of perspective; emphases are altered, and new meanings creep in. The Catholic Church, particularly, has shown leniency in dealing with intellectual deviations as long as they do not touch discipline, rites, and sacraments.⁷

The above sentiments were not expressed with any intention of favoring the Catholic Church for her alleged leniency, nor yet to advocate a reformation of any existing religion by the disposal of outworn traits. The purification Dewey had in mind was not a purification of religion at all. It was a purification of the "distinctively religious values inherent in natural experience," and these values were to be purified precisely of those adventitious encumbrances, religions, for "the opposition between religious values as I conceive them and religions is not to be abridged."⁸

RELIGION AND THE RELIGIOUS

To Dewey religion always signified "a special body of beliefs and practises having some kind of institutional organization," and always, it should be remembered, a thing that had

its origins in ignorance and fear, desire for enjoyment, wishful thinking and vested interests. The religious, on the contrary, was an attitude which "may be taken toward every object and every proposed end or ideal." It was not a specific kind of experience distinct "from experience as esthetic, scientific, moral, political; from experience as companionship and friendship." Even in the phenomenon called religious experience by many people, "the actual religious quality is the *effect* produced, the better adjustment to life and its conditions, not the manner and cause of its production." This readjustment of the self to the universe all religions marked by ideal quality had claimed to effect, but "we need to reverse the ordinary statement and say that whatever introduces genuine perspective is religious, not that religion is something that introduces it."¹⁹

Dewey felt the need of a rapprochement of his own definition of religion to the traditional definition. Early in *A Common Faith* he discussed the Oxford Dictionary definition of religion: Recognition on the part of man of some unseen higher power as having control of his destiny and as being entitled to obedience, reverence and worship. Dewey argued that little meaning could be found in the Oxford definition when applied to the particular concrete religions that have existed, for they conceived the higher power in a "multitude of incompatible ways" and worshipped it with cult no less various. He concluded, however, that if his conception of the religious attitude were applied to the Oxford definition of religion, its terms

...take on new significance. An unseen power controlling our destiny becomes the power of an ideal. All possibilities, as possibilities, are ideal in character. The artist, scientist, citizen, parent, as far as they are actuated by the spirit of their callings, are controlled by the unseen. For all endeavor for the better is moved by faith in what is possible, not by adherence to the actual. Nor does this faith depend for its moving power upon intellectual assurance or belief that the things worked for must surely prevail and come into embodied existence. For the authority of the object to determine our attitude and conduct, the right that is given it to claim our allegiance and devotion is based on the intrinsic nature of the ideal. The outcome, given our best endeavor, is not with us. The inherent vice of all intellectual schemes of idealism

is that they convert the idealism of action into a system of beliefs about antecedent reality.... These schemes inevitably glide into alliance with the supernatural.¹⁰

The Deweyan religious attitude thus had four characteristics: 1) it was fundamentally a faith in the ideal possibilities of the natural as opposed to the supernatural; 2) it was already actuating man's strivings for the better; 3) its authority to control conduct was the intrinsic goodness of the ideal rather than antecedent reality; 4) its aspirations were not certain of final realization. Dewey's understanding of these characteristics will be clear from the following paragraphs.

THE NATURE OF MORAL FAITH

Dewey was well aware of the existence of that faith which was the acceptance of something as true upon the authority of another — thus had John Locke well defined it!—but in his opinion religious faith of such a kind was a speculative or intellectual belief having no moral or practical import. There was another faith which did have moral or practical import, and which was “a conviction that some end should be supreme over conduct” rather than “that some object or being exists as a truth for the intellect.” This conviction “signifies being conquered... in our active nature by an ideal end; it signifies acknowledgement of its rightful claim over our desires and purposes. Such acknowledgement is practical, not primarily intellectual.” Dewey’s adversaries, “converting moral realities into matters of intellectual asset... have evinced lack of moral faith.”¹¹ But the object of this moral faith, already indicated in the revision of the Oxford Dictionary definition of religion, was neither a God known by man’s unaided reason nor the content of a divine revelation.

Faith in the continued disclosing of truth through directed cooperative human endeavor is more religious in quality than is any faith in a completed revelation.

What I have been critising is the identification of the ideal with a particular Being, especially when that identification makes necessary the conclusion that this Being is outside of nature, and what I have tried to show is that ideal itself has its roots in na-

tural conditions... We need no external criterion and guarantee for [natural values'] goodness.¹²

In a discussion of the 'conflict' between religion and science, Dewey expressly repudiated all objects of faith but one. He wrote:

The religious attitude as a sense of the possibilities of existence and as devotion to the cause of these possibilities, as distinct from acceptance of what is given at the time, gradually extricates itself from these unnecessary intellectual commitments... a religious attitude would surrender once for all commitment to beliefs about matters of fact, whether physical, social or metaphysical. It would leave such matters to inquirers in other fields. Nor would it substitute in their place fixed beliefs about values, *save the one value* of the worth of discovering the possibilities of the actual and striving to realise them.¹³

MORAL FAITH ALREADY ACCEPTED

The fundamental component of Dewey's religious attitude, i.e. moral faith, was already working in man. "The artist, scientist, citizen, parent, as far as they are actuated by the spirit of their callings," were controlled by it, for "all endeavor for the better is moved by faith in what is possible." Even the motivation ascribed to religion was fundamentally a faith in the possibilities of earthly and present existence:

We may well ask whether the power and significance in life of the traditional conceptions of God are not due to the ideal qualities referred to by them, the hypostatization of them into an existence being due to a conflux of tendencies in human nature that converts the object of desire into an antecedent reality...

...goods actually experienced in the concrete relations of family, neighborhood, citizenship, pursuit of art and science, are what men actually depend upon for guidance and support, and... their reference to a supernatural and other-worldly locus has obscured their real nature and has weakened their force.

...the values prized in those religions that have ideal elements are idealizations of things characteristic of natural association, which have then been projected into a supernatural realm for safe-keeping and sanction. Note the role of such terms as Father, Son, Bride, Fellowship and Communion in the vocabulary of Christianity, and note also the tendency, even, if a somewhat inchoate one, of terms that express the more intimate phases of

association to displace those of legal, political origin: King, Judge, and Lord of Hosts.¹⁴

MORAL FAITH'S AUTHORITY

"All endeavor for the better is moved by faith in what is possible, not by adherence to the actual," but these words were not intended to express the obvious truth that men do not strive for what they already possess. They were rather, in Dewey's usage, a denial of the fact of a truly supernatural motivation and, consequently, of the possibility of human betterment stemming from faith in values which did not exist in man himself but in one perfect Being, an actual and "antecedent" Reality.

The assumption that these objects of religion exist already in some realm of Being seems to add nothing to their force, while it weakens their claim over us as ideals, in so far as it bases that claim upon matters that are intellectually dubious....

It seems more credible that religious persons have been supported and consoled by the reality with which ideal values appeal to them than that they have been upborne by sheer matter of fact existence....

Any other conception of the religious attitude, when it is adequately analyzed, means that those who hold it care more for force than for ideal values — since all that an Existence can add is force to establish, to punish, and to reward.¹⁵

Such an Existence was unnecessary. The object of moral faith possessed a sufficient power of motivation independently of a God. The ideal itself had an "authority" to determine attitude and conduct, a "right" to allegiance and devotion, and both authority and right were "based on the intrinsic nature of the ideal."

A clear and intense conception of a union of ideal ends with actual conditions is capable of arousing steady emotion.... Whether one gives the name of "God" to this union, operative in thought and action, is a matter for individual decision.¹⁶

The claims of the beautiful to be admired and cherished do not depend upon ability to demonstrate statements about the past history of art. The demand of righteousness for reverence does not depend upon ability to prove the existence of an antecedent Being who is righteous.¹⁷

THE UNCERTAIN GOAL

As a reward for man's striving to realize the possibilities of his earthly existence, Dewey held out to him a possible, but a merely possible, millennium. He had no "intellectual assurance or belief that the things worked for must surely prevail and come into embodied existence.... The outcome, given our best endeavor, is not with us."¹⁸ He did not "assert that intelligence will ever dominate the course of events;" he did even

...imply that it will save from ruin and destruction What the method of intelligent, thoughtful valuation will accomplish, if once it be tried, is for the result of trial to determine. Since it is relative to the intersection in existence of hazard and rule, of contingency and order, faith in a wholesale and final triumph is fantastic. But some procedure has to be tried...¹⁹

This was not a particularly cheering doctrine. Moral faith, active rather than intellectual, was likely to suffer from inertia, man being what he was and knowing his best efforts might terminate so dubiously. He was being told to change his world through action and, at the same time, that his world might any moment fall about his ears. The quest for certainty and security seemed to have made no radical advance. Yet Dewey was but following his premises to the bitter end, and he offered no palliative. Sometimes he implied that man must make the best of a bad lot—"some procedure has to be tried" and intelligence was "the stay and support of all reasonable hopes."²⁰ At other times he appealed to self-reliance: "It is the part of manliness to insist upon the capacity of mankind to strive 'to direct natural and social forces to humane ends,' whereas 'dependence upon an external power is the counterpart of surrender of human endeavor," although the word God could be kept for those who needed it: "Use of the word 'God' or 'divine' to convey the union of the actual with ideal may protect man from a sense of isolation and from consequent despair or defiance."²¹

II. CRITICISM OF DEWEY'S DOCTRINES

The preceding section may be little more than a mosaic, but there seemed no better way than copious citation to por-

tray, within brief compass, the character of Dewey's religious philosophy. If there have been ellipses, even within quotations, there has been no distortion of Dewey's thought. It has rather been set in relief, where, without the distraction of other and often valuable insights to obscure its religious deficiencies, it can be recognized for what it is— untenable.

THE FORTUNATE ADVENT OF CHRISTIANITY

It is easy to interpret history as the unfolding of this or that preconceived plan or process. It is easy, in other words, to view the progress of human events in the light of a theory which, starting from certain facts, nevertheless goes farther than they warrant and is not subsequently confirmed by other facts, nor even, if the truth be admitted, in accordance with all the facts contemporaneous with those upon which the theory was based. Dewey was guilty of such a procedure. It is a fact that pre-Christian thinkers discovered "the delights of thought and inquiry," and that Christian theology gave to philosophical and scientific speculation an external aid. It is not a fact but a gratuitous assertion, that that aid was adventitious in the chance or accidental sense, rather than providential in the religious sense. Dewey's atheistic preconceptions could not of course admit the latter possibility, for there is no room in atheism for any providence other than man's own.

That the early Christian Church glorified a life of knowing apart from and above a life of doing is a specious simplification of her teaching, for a merely intellectual knowledge of God was never her road to eternal bliss nor the end of that road. There was "doing" enough in the life and teaching of her Founder, and the early and later Church preached plainly that faith without works was dead. She insisted, however, on an order in man's works; she never thought that the kingdom of man was to be preferred before the Kingdom of God. In her beginnings she had other things to think about than instrumental arts with which to subjugate Nature; man's own nature needed subjugation and she thought this more important, as she does still. In later centuries—those centuries of "ob-

scuration" for which the barbarian invasions of Europe, and not the Church, were responsible—it was her monastic orders that fostered what instrumental arts survived, and it was she, more than any other, who preserved the writings of that Grecian period which alone, in Dewey's view, had been an age of progress. Her "religious purposes" were broad enough to include the natural improvement of humanity, but she never thought that such improvement might lead to an earthly paradise, and history to date has but confirmed her opinion. History, too, records the acts of her martyrs, and finds no "failure of nerve" in their witness to the existence of a perfect and ultimate reality. Their deaths were "more than historically significant," but John Dewey was blind to certain significances.

THE OTHER WAY

With Dewey's wish to change the world through action, there are few Christian or non-Christian philosophers who disagree.²² His method, however, of bringing such change about, leaves much to be desired. It is all very well to talk about systematically educating men "to form their judgments and carry on their activity on the basis of public, objective and shared consequences," but, if one is in favor of unprejudiced inquiry, should not the public, objective and shared consequences of religious experience be considered? And, perhaps more so, the consequences of irreligion? More systematic thinking about such topics as these would have saved Dewey himself from many of his errors, for the thinking that he did expend on them betrays a superficiality and prejudice of which no philosopher or educator should be guilty. One can easily "imagine what the present situation might be" if men had been "systematically educated to believe that the important thing is *not* to get themselves personally 'right' in relation to the antecedent author and guarantor" of religious values that are real independently of what men do. One can easily imagine such a situation for education in many quarters has effectively, if not always systematically, done just that. Where educators *a priori* limit the consequences of human acts to life in this world and take no notice of possible public, objective and

shared *antecedents* such as a God who is author and guarantor of values, Dewey's philosophy has been put into practise.

In Dewey's affirmation of an "historic increase of the ethical and ideal content of religions," the present writer sees little more than another arbitrary interpretation of history. This may surprise the reader who regards Christianity as an advance over Judaism, and Judaism as an advance not only over polytheism but even over earlier monotheism. It should be remembered, however, that in Dewey's view the increase in the ethical and ideal content of religions was the result of a purely natural process of "purification" which could be "carried further" by methods equally natural. Moreover, the process tended to nothing other than the elimination of religions themselves. The arbitrariness of this interpretation should be patent. It completely ignores the claims of Christianity and of Judaism to divine revelations which were the source of their ethical and ideal contents. Such claims cannot be justifiably ignored by one who wishes to prove the historic process completely natural. Moreover, Christianity—Catholic Christianity, at least—denies any increase in its ethical or ideal content. It admits, of course, a development of the explicit from the implicit, but, as Dewey knew well, it is a "faith in a completed revelation."²³ How he could say that "the Catholic Church, particularly, has shown leniency in dealing with intellectual deviations," is difficult to understand. It is true that he added the reservation: "as long as they do not touch discipline, rites, and sacraments." But Dewey was not sufficiently a student of Catholic theology to understand that there is no intellectual deviation from the Catholic faith which does not touch "discipline, rites and sacraments," nor would such an interpretation of his statement have furthered his contentions. It was necessary for his thesis that all creeds "display great power of accommodation"; he could not admit that the strongest creed of all might be an exception.

THE "RELIGIOUS" FOR RELIGION

Dewey put the cart before the horse when he defined religion as a "body of beliefs and practises having some kind of

institutional organization," and he put the wrong horse to the wagon when he substituted ideal possibilities never perhaps to be realized, for an unseen power controlling human destiny. An organization may profess beliefs and have practises, but a body of beliefs can scarcely have an institutional organization. An unseen power controlling human destiny is something for men to reckon with; Dewey's "ideal" is not: it is a crippled dream, ending in nightmare.

There is a religious attitude, and it may be taken toward every object, and toward every *good end*. One may or may not wish to call it an experience, but there is such a thing as religious experience, specifically distinct from experience as esthetic, scientific, moral, political; from companionship and friendship. And in this truly *sui generis* phenomenon of religious experience there is not only an "actual religious quality" in the effect produced (as Dewey said), but also in "the manner and cause of its production (which Dewey denied), for its cause is God and its effect is union with Him. Moreover, the effect of religious experience is a "better adjustment to life and its conditions" precisely because life and its conditions are dependent on their Author and because there is no truer "readjustment of the self to the universe" than effective recognition of its Maker. Such recognition "introduces genuine perspective" into human affairs, and such recognition is religion. The Oxford definition is better than Dewey's. Dewey's substitutions are a travesty.

Are possibilities, as possibilities, "ideal in character"? Is all endeavor for the better moved by "faith in what is possible, not by adherence to the actual"? Possibilities as possibilities are certainly not actualities, but they are nevertheless real, for only real possibilities could ever become actual. Man's endeavor for the better is moved by faith in what is possible of human attainment (and faith is never more man's motive force than in his strivings toward a supernatural destiny), but his faith itself is an "adherence to the actual," for by the actual alone can possibilities be actualized. The possible is possible precisely by reason of actual and "antecedent" reality. This doctrine entails no "intellectual idealism"; it is an intellectual

realism, and the only realism where possibilities are concerned. If it inevitably glides into alliance with the supernatural, it is the part of the wise to accept the inevitable. If Dewey's "idealism of action" is not converted to a belief in the existence of an antecedent reality able to be author and guarantor of man and his possibilities, changing the world through action will never change it for the better.

"MORAL FAITH"

Dewey was bent on getting away from faith understood in the traditional sense of intellectual assent, but he was unable to do so. His moral faith, "a conviction that some end should be supreme over conduct," needed an intellectual foundation, and he unobtrusively admitted this when he said that its significance was "not primarily intellectual." By insistence on practise and action, however, he hoped to escape the inaction and consequent insecurity of earthly existence which allegedly were the connatural results of traditional religious faith. "Faith that something *should be* in existence as far as lies in our power" must not be converted into "the intellectual belief that it is already in existence,"²⁴ for then we would do nothing about it.

Unfortunately for Dewey's argument, religious faith is not an intellectual belief that man's goal is already in his grasp, even though that goal, God, exists; and in religion's view, though not in Dewey's, there is room for certain hope of achievement of the goal. True religion, moreover, does not think the "given at the time" to involve it in "unnecessary intellectual commitments"; it has a respect for data that Dewey seems to have frequently lacked. It is content to leave many things to other inquirers, knowing that honest inquiry in any field works no ravages in its own, but it is not ready to admit that it itself is unconcerned with matters of fact. Religion is an historical thing; it cannot be unconcerned with matters of fact.

True religion, more than any art or science, is concerned with "the possibilities of the actual and striving to realize them". It separates from Dewey not only in the method of

realizing these possibilities, but in its doctrine of their nature, for it separates from him on the nature of the actual. It is inevitable that it so separate from him, for Dewey arbitrarily limits himself to a partial view of actual reality, the view that does not take in God. *If* there is no perfect Being outside of nature, he was quite right in criticising "the identification of the ideal with a particular Being...outside of nature," but his historical arguments against religions demonstrate nothing against the existence of such a divine Being and the hypothesis remains a pure assumption on his part.

In a certain sense it is true to say that "the ideal itself has its roots in natural conditions," even when the ideal is God, for it is precisely from the mutability and contingency and teleology of natural conditions that the human mind rises to the affirmation of God. If Dewey had risen to such an ideal, he could have fixed his hopes for man higher than poor man himself.

Have men already accepted "moral faith"? Are the artist, scientist, citizen and parent actuated by it? Men certainly are actuated by "the spirit of their callings," but in the artistic, scientific, civic and parental spirit there is no negation of God. It is not Dewey's faith that moves them, but one which is open to possibilities and to actualities that Dewey denied. Art may and science does prescind from the supernatural, but negate it they do not.

"Stripped of the supernatural," the motivation ascribed to religions would undoubtedly be nothing more than faith in the possibilities of a present existence bereft of Guarantor and Author, but why should religions be so stripped? Has Dewey shown any valid reason for doing so? It is one thing to say that "the values prized in those religions... are idealizations of things characteristic of natural association... projected into a supernatural realm for safe-keeping and sanction." It is quite another thing to prove that in the values prized by religions there is nothing more than such idealizations and projection. It is particularly difficult in the case of Christianity, even when, following Dewey's advice, one notes the role of such terms as Father, Son, Bride, etc., for Christianity bases its

usage of such terms upon a claim to revelation, and Dewey has not shown that claim to be false. As for the inchoate tendency of terms expressing the "more intimate phases of association" to displace those of "legal, political origin," Dewey forgot that such "displacement" is as old as Christianity itself, the New Testament being in this respect quite different from the Old, and sanctioning whatever of displacement has occurred.

MORAL FAITH IS INADEQUATE

Dewey's completely anthropomorphic explanation of religious origins and of supernatural motivation will not deceive the critical and judicious, but his plea for the adequacy of motivation of moral faith should leave almost all men cold. Men have had too long experience of their own defections to trust the "steady emotion" which Dewey claimed "a clear and intense conception of a union of ideal ends with actual conditions is capable of arousing." His ideal's authority to determine conduct and its right to allegiance and devotion evaporate by the very fact that they are "based on the intrinsic nature" of this ideal, for the Deweyan ideal does not exist and, on his own admission, perhaps will never exist. Indeed it may be asked whether the attainment of the Deweyan ideal would not be its own frustration, for it would thus become an "antecedent reality" and worthy of all the opprobrium Dewey heaped upon such reality when proposed by religions! But, in sum, the authority of the Deweyan ideal to determine conduct looks very much like the authority of a self-imposed obligation, a Kantian imperative in more modern dress: Choose to be ruled by it, and you will be.

Quite other is the authority over conduct of the religious faith which Dewey rejected. Behind the values religion proposes to man there stands an "Existence... to establish, to punish, and to reward." Dewey rejected such an Authority as "intellectually dubious," "sheer matter of fact," "force." To acknowledge such an "antecedent reality" might offer security, but it would be a "surrender." Better, thought Dewey, to shut one's eyes to a "dependence upon an external power," and choosing "the part of manliness... insist upon the capacity of

mankind to strive to direct natural and social forces to humane ends." These are brave words; but they have a certain ostrich-like quality. They exhibit a philosophical obtuseness that only carefully cultivated prejudice seems able to explain. The present writer is aware that men who knew Dewey personally have lauded his philosophical sincerity. Strong prejudices, however, are not incompatible even with a crusading sincerity. The late nineteenth and early twentieth century intellectual atmosphere which Dewey breathed, reeked with irreligious prejudice. It is little wonder that he was infected by it. Infected, however, he certainly was, or the philosopher in him would never have been sincerely able to brush aside the Existence of a Being outside nature, and able "to establish, to punish, and to reward." To an unprejudiced philosopher, the mere possibility of such a Being, God, is a question of absorbing interest, for it is a question of tremendous importance for himself and all men. It is a possibility to be examined in its uttermost consequence, and whose acceptance entails no "surrender" of one's "manliness" but rather of human presumption.

* * *

¹ PHILIPPINE STUDIES, III (September, 1955), 275-287.

² John Dewey, *The Quest for Certainty* (New York: Milton Balch & Co., 1929), pp. 292-93. Confer also Dewey's *Experience and Nature* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1929), pp. 153-54.

³ *Experience and Nature*, pp. 126-37;

⁴ *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 3. ⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁶ John Dewey, *A Common Faith* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1934), p. 8.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 63.; ⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-14, 24.; ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-22.; ¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 48. Confer also pp. 50-53 (Dewey's analysis of "God").

¹³ *The Quest for Certainty*, pp. 303-304. Italics added.

¹⁴ *A Common Faith*, pp. 43, 71, 73.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 41-44.; ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

¹⁷ *The Quest for Certainty*, p. 304.; ¹⁸ *A Common Faith*, p. 23.

¹⁹ *Experience and Nature*, pp. 407, 437.; ²⁰ *Loc. cit.*

²¹ *A Common Faith*, pp. 24, 45, 53.

²² For a Christian concept of the way to "change the world through action," confer James Keller, M.M., *You Can Change the World* (New York and Toronto: Longmans, Green and Company, 1948).

²³ *A Common Faith*, p. 26.; ²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.