

livia, Peru, Ecuador, and Venezuela, has been mentioned; but merely in a speculative way. If we include Bolivia with the southern system, where it naturally belongs, the latter will form a political area 15,000,000 square kilometres in extent, with an ultimate population of 50,000,000. It will be a worthy pendant of the North American power, and will be scarcely inferior to the latter in economic resources, embracing as it will the products of both the tropic and the temperate zone. But its population will be scarcely a third that of its northern neighbor; and in total power and resources it will be greatly the inferior of the latter. Furthermore, the A B C must contend with a divided leadership, while the United States of America will continue to possess undisputed supremacy within its zone of control.

This concludes our little analysis. Its object is to point out a subdivision in the unity of the two Americas more important than the geographical division between the Northern and the Southern continents, or the linguistic

and racial division between the Anglo-Saxons and the Latins. It points to a development likely to supersede the premises of Monroe and to retard the realization of a Pan-America. It suggests also a development likely to absorb the future energy of the United States in its own hemisphere and to handicap its efforts to Americanize the world.

Naturally, this geo-political analysis does not presume to be a political prophecy. If America's efforts at expansion are now focused on the South, it will be the first case in history where this has occurred. All previous experience indicates that this Power, the greatest in the world since the conclusion of the war, will tend to extend along its own parallels of latitude — toward Asia and Europe. Quite possibly that will be the shortest route to a mastery of South America; for Europe and Japan are the last flank defenses of the Southern continent. In last analysis, the vigor and power of the other continents will be the principal obstacles to the unity of America.

## THE RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT OF H. G. WELLS. II

BY A. E. BAKER

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(LONDON THEOLOGICAL JOURNAL)

It would be unjust, not to recognize that there is another side to Mr. Wells's theology. His God, he tells us, is of the nature of will, as will is of the nature of thought. That seems to imply a certain initiative on the part of the deity, a further personality than the abstract idea which is all that Positivism has ever worshiped. 'God is a person who

can be known as one knows a friend . . . he is helped and gladdened by us. He hopes and attempts. . . . God is no abstraction or trick of words, no Infinite. He is as real as a bayonet thrust or an embrace. . . .'

Elsewhere he speaks of God as 'spontaneous,' and says 'He himself remains freedom, and we find our free-

dom in him.' And again, 'In this book it is assumed that *God responds*, that he gives courage, and the power of self-suppression to our weakness.' It is assumed that God responds! There is no attempt to prove it, because Mr. Wells's belief on this point rests, not on argument, but on experience. The reality of his religious experience is one of the most interesting things in Mr. Wells's theology, especially to Christians.

No living writer of fiction has made so many attempts to describe that immediate experience of God which gives certainty and passion to the religion of all who have passed through it. The visions in *The Soul of a Bishop*, and the religious experience of Mr. Britling, are still fresh in the public memory. But similar descriptions, varied and often beautiful, sometimes strangely convincing and reminiscent of the writings of the mystics, are scattered through many of the novels. There are many in *The Passionate Friends*. As far back as 1906, *In the Days of the Comet* shows that he understands the mental and spiritual conditions of such experience, and can describe its effects. He describes, in a way which shows the influence of James's *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, how restricted living and base immediate motives make life unendurably bitter, how disappointments and thwartings light up, though indistinctly, the darkness of the unregenerate life, until a sudden disgust, a sense of unworthiness, a realization of sin, issue in the desire for a comprehensive sustaining communion, a great passion to escape from the jealous prison of self. . . .

It is in *Mr. Britling Sees It Through* that Mr. Wells has given his most realistic description of religious experience, and one which illustrates what is the common Christian instinct, that the important conditions of spiritual illumination are not physical, but moral.

(As our Lord said, 'He that doeth the will of God, he shall know.') It was when Mr. Britling was doing all that he could do to make future wars impossible, by writing a letter which should attempt to explain England to Germany, the ordinary decent Englishman, father of a son who had fallen in the war, to an ordinary decent German father whose son had also been killed, it was then, as he tried to say the reconciling word, that he realized the presence of the God of whom he had thought many times: —

a presence so clear to him that it was behind his eyes and in his brain and hands. . . . Mr. Britling's thinking about God hitherto had been like someone who has found an empty house, very beautiful and pleasant, full of the promise of a fine personality. And then as this discoverer makes his lonely, curious explorations, he hears downstairs, clear and friendly, the voice of the Master coming in.

The Christian God, at the beginning, was a democratic God, a King whose subjects were all his dear children, who numbered the hairs of their heads, and gave his Son that they might share his freedom. The patient trust in the plain man, which expected the best from him and waited until he gave it freely, implied no less than this. This was the religion of Jesus, of St. Paul at his best (as when he wrote the Epistle to the Galatians), of Luther when he wrote *The Freedom of the Christian Man*. For this faith Father Tyrrell was a martyr, and this is what is expressed in Rabindranath Tagore's *King of the Dark Chamber*.

If there is such a thing as Divine Providence, this is what God is revealing to the men of our generation through the political, social, and economic movements of our time, and through modern science also. And it inspires a significant passage in *Joan and Peter*, a passage which suggests what is part of

the ultimate Christian solution of the 'Problem of Evil.' Peter dreams that he seeks out God, and arraigns Him for the lack of decency, the lack of order, all the cruel and unclean things, in the universe. God challenges him to change it. 'If you have no will to change it, you have no right to criticize it.' He has been busy complaining of God and his pastors, masters, and teachers. But from himself, positive achievements are still to seek. He has been a vigorous member of the consuming class, but he's got nothing clear and planned. He complains of God's lack of order: —

Where's the order in your own mind? If, says God, I was the hot-tempered old autocrat some of you people pretend I am, I should have been tickling you up with a thunder-bolt long ago. But I happen to have this democratic fad as badly as anyone — Freewill is what they used to call it — and so I leave you to work out your own salvation. And if I leave you alone, then I have to leave that other — that other (like you) at Potsdam — alone. . . . What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the Kaiser. I've got to leave you all alone if I leave one alone. In spite of the mess you are in. So don't blame me. . . . There is n't a thing in the whole of this concern of mine that Man can't control if only he chooses to control it. . . .

Intellectually, of course, Mr. Wells is an agnostic. But he is not an agnostic of the school of Huxley, but of the characteristically English, and Christian, school of Bishop Butler and Mr. Balfour. He knows how indefinable are the grounds of faith or doubt, how subconscious, bedded deep in what is instinctive and hereditary and non-rational, are the roots of the 'will to believe.' There can be no mathematical demonstration of spiritual realities, the answer to faith's questions is always, as it was to Elijah, a voice of silence. It is higher than language, deeper than thought, wider than all definition. And

yet it is there, more, not less, real and significant than the things we can state and prove and pigeon-hole. The concluding passages of *Joan and Peter* are an impressive statement of this Higher Probability.

There was a light upon his life, and the truth was that he could not discover the source of the light nor define its nature; there was a presence in the world about him that made life worth while, and yet it was nameless and incomprehensible. It was the essence beyond reality, it was the heart of all things. . . . It did so uphold him that he could go on, he knew, though happiness were denied him; though defeat and death stared him in the face.

The important thing about Mr. Wells's religion, as this passage illustrates, is that, like Bishop Butler and Cardinal Newman, he is dominated by the certainty of that which logic cannot prove, the faith in which is beset by almost insuperable difficulties, which stands rooted in denials, but for whom he feels the undeniable obligation to give all that he is, come what may. *The Undying Fire*, Mr. Wells's fascinating modernization of the Book of Job, shows a man whom the urge of God drives on to conquer doubts, weakness, and the tyranny of circumstance: —

There burns an undying fire in the hearts of men. By that fire I live. By that I know the God of my salvation. His will is Truth; his will is Service. He urges me to conflict, without consolations, without rewards. He takes, and does not restore. He uses up and does not atone. He suffers — perhaps to triumph, and we must suffer and find our hope of triumph in him. He will not let me shut my eyes to sorrow, failure, or perplexity. Though the universe torment and slay me, yet will I trust in him — and if he also must die — nevertheless I can do no more; I must serve him.

The reality of Mr. Wells's religion is revealed most convincingly, perhaps, in an important detail that is easily overlooked, although in it Mr. Wells es-

capas from a characteristic weakness of 'advanced' thought. It is common to-day for people to pose as reluctant agnostics, who would believe if they could. They seek for God, but cannot find Him. . . .

But the more ordinary witness of genuine religious experience is that God is an abiding presence, in whom we live and move and are, who is so terrible that no man can see His face and live, from whose overwhelming presence, though we flee in fear, we cannot escape. This terror of the infinite is the note of Francis Thompson's *Hound of Heaven*.

In the experience of the mystics these two elements are combined, the search for God and the terror of God, 'love and dread,' as Mother Julian calls them. And they are combined in Mr. Wells:

The individual human mind [he says in *Boon*] spends itself equally in headlong flight from the Universal, which it dreads as

something that will envelop and subjugate it, and in headlong flight to the Universal, which it seeks as a refuge from its own loneliness and silliness. It knows very certainly that the Universal will ultimately comprehend and incorporate it, yet it desires always that the Universal should *mother* it, take it up without injuring it in the slightest degree, foment and nourish its egotism, cherish fondly all its distinctness, give it all the kingdoms of existence to play with. . . .

Ordinary people snuggle up to God as a lost leveret in a freezing wilderness might snuggle up to a Siberian tiger. . . .

We like to think of religion as something safely specialized, codified, and put away. Then we can learn the rules and kick about a bit. But when some one comes along saying that science is religion, literature is religion, business . . . is religion! . . . it spoils the afternoon. . . .

However much we may dislike Mr. Wells, it is at our peril that we deny the presence of the real prophetic note in such writing as this.

## WAR IN THE PACIFIC

BY JOHN L. BALDERSTON

From *The Outlook*, May 28

(LONDON CONSERVATIVE LITERARY WEEKLY)

MANY years ago it was an American, Captain Mahan, who made England understand the fundamental principles of sea power. Now, a British writer<sup>1</sup> repays the debt by explaining to the Americans the strategical situation in the Pacific, and calling their attention to the omissions and deficiencies in their naval preparations that make for almost inevitable disaster if they have to fight Japan in the near future. It is

<sup>1</sup>*Sea Power in the Pacific*. By Hector C. Bywater. Constable.

extraordinary that no American writer has undertaken the task; many 'scare' books have been written, dealing with imaginary Japanese assaults on the Pacific coast, and other absurdities, but no one before Mr. Bywater has attempted an informed study of the navies of the two Powers and the strategical and political factors in Eastern waters that would determine their activities in case of war.

Mr. Bywater's book contains an analysis of the existing and projected