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THE RELIGIOUS THOUGHT OF G.A. STUDDERT KENNEDY,
(1883 - 1929), IN RELATION TO ITS SOCIAL AND
INTELLECTUAL CONTEXT.

A thesis submitted for the degree of

Master of Arts

in the University of Durham

by

WILLIAM HUMPHREY HOPKINSON

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ABSTRACT

G.A. Studdert Kennedy was a preacher and rhymster who was widely acclaimed both as a first world war chaplain and as Messenger of the Industrial Christian Fellowship. This work examines the relation of his religious thought to the intellectual and social context and suggests possible reasons for the apparent aptness of his message.

The effects of the war and the intellectual climate are summarized as a disruption of traditional social patterns and the fostering of a meaning in the new environment. Similarly, in post war society, industrialization and secularization are seen as accelerated by the war, bringing man's desire for 'rootedness' into greater prominence.

A review of Kennedy's writings reveals underlying all a coherent and developing message. Seeing a history of duality in Christian worship between the 'Almighty God' and the 'suffering God', he rejected the former on the grounds it was unhelpful and consistently interpreted belief in terms of the latter. The concepts of salvation and society are particularly influenced by concentration upon the logos. The power of salvation is the effect of the logos picture upon the mind, the logos provides the direction of social progress.

It is suggested that the 'suffering God' was a felicitous motif for Kennedy's context. It has the potential of providing meaning and motivation in the godforsakenness of war, succour for the working man, and a spiritual dynamic for growing collectivism, although Kennedy has difficulty in sustaining the relevance of his social thought to secular society.

In conclusion it is suggested that the 'suffering God' motif is balanced by an eschatological 'Almighty' quality but that the power of the logos picture as a dynamic for change remains unproven.

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FOREWORD

Sincere thanks are due to Canon S.W. Sykes for help and encouragement in the supervision of this thesis. A grateful acknowledgement is also made to Rev. H. Cooke for permission to consult the records and library at the Industrial Christian Fellowship at St. Mary's Kree Church, London.

INTRODUCTION

Why study Woodbine Willie, G.A. Studdert Kennedy, 1889-1929? He was a first world war chaplain who gained a reputation for preaching and writing doggerel, but he was not a theologian. He did not care to relate himself to contemporary theological debate, nor to the affairs of the church which was undergoing substantial change, except when such concerns bore upon his passion that ordinary men and women should have the power of religion within them, and that society should be redeemed by Christ. The interest in Kennedy is that men of his day called him a prophet and a seeker after truth, and that he succeeded to a rare extent in communicating religious ideas to a 'secular' audience in wartime, 1914-1919 and in peace, 1919-1929. There is the promise that in his religious thought there are elements for which there was a 'secular' readiness.

This work therefore treats Kennedy on his own terms, and does not accord him the honour of treating his religious thought as if it were well-researched, or defensible in contemporary religious debate. Attention is directed towards the relation of the particular features of his religious thought to the particular features of his social and intellectual context.

Firstly, there is a review of some prominent features of the intellectual climate leading into the period of Kennedy's main activity, 1914 to 1929, and a review of the social context both during and after the war. For the treatment of this section an acknowledgement is made to Stuart Mews for the suggestion in his thesis, 'The Effects of the First World War on English Religious Life and Thought',¹ that the effect of the war upon religious thought might be seen as an intensification of industrialization.

Secondly, existing biographical material is brought together in a novel way, to illustrate the development of religious thought in Kennedy through its formative influences, from sources such as the major composite

1. Mews S.P. M A, Leeds (1967)

biography, By His Friends,² published shortly after his death, but also from other scattered sources, and less accessible material, such as that housed in the library of the Industrial Christian Fellowship.

Thirdly, the written remains of Kennedy are examined to identify his characteristic thought. Two prior works which serve as an introduction to this subject, have not, by the nature of those works, been able to give more than a superficial treatment. William Temple in a hasty chapter for By His Friends disappointingly does little more than recall the main headings of Kennedy's message. William Purcell in his biography of Kennedy,³ points out in a way consistent with a popular work, Kennedy's main theme, 'the suffering God', and reviews the contents of his major books. This work goes beyond those introductions: in surveying Kennedy's published remains comprehensively; in producing evidence of the integrity and development in his thought through the period of his writing; in examining the motif for which Kennedy was best known, 'the suffering God', to see something of its detail and substructure, and its relation to other prominent themes within his writings; in treating two other themes which occupy a high volume of his writings, 'the religion and psychology of the individual' and 'society and the world', the former of which has not been widely recognised as a major component of his thought.

Finally, the features of Kennedy's thought are examined in relation to the context to which they were delivered in order to consider, in what is necessarily a tentative and suggestive manner, the aptness of his thought, and in particular, those specific characteristics for which there was readiness.

2. G.A. Studdert Kennedy: By His Friends, edited by J.K. Mozley (London 1920) Hereafter abbreviated to BHF.

3. William Purcell, Woodbine Willie (London 1962)

CHAPTER ONETHE SOCIAL AND INTELLECTUAL CONTEXT OF G.A. STUDDERT KENNEDY,
(1883 - 1929), AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

The greatness of some thinkers lies in the apparent timelessness of their thought. They are able to speak to generation after generation through the centuries with clarity and precision. Perhaps there is some measure of this kind of greatness in Geoffrey Studdert Kennedy. One of his books, The Wicket Gate, was still being printed in 1963, forty years after the first edition. However, if the religious thought of a man is to be understood, it is to be understood firstly in terms of that man and his environment, the original context to which it was addressed, irrespective of the ability of that thought to address itself suggestively to other parallel situations. There are two other reasons why it is necessary for the life situation of Kennedy in particular, to be studied. Firstly, it was an unusual time. He lived in a period of social turbulence caused primarily by the first world war and its aftermath. The disjunction of the war hastened those general trends which may be termed industrialization and secularization, and hence presented the associated problems of those trends in a sharper focus than at many other times in recent history. Secondly, the very nature of Kennedy's religious thought as a professional communicator was to address himself to contemporary society, and to embrace issues which though vital in their time have proved to be transient.

Kennedy's thought must be prefaced by a review of its context. This chapter reviews the intellectual and social context in three sections: firstly the intellectual movements, and what may be called the 'modern mind'; and secondly and thirdly the social conditions during and after the war respectively, looking as much at the influence social conditions had on the ordinary man (to whom Kennedy addressed himself) as at change in social structures.

1. The 'Modern Mind'

At the beginning of the twentieth century there was a great deal of talk about the 'spirit of modernity'. Each generation is of course modern, but this was a period conscious of its modernity. Heir to the developing historical consciousness of the nineteenth century it was a time in which few thinkers could fail to be aware of the critical spirit which brought into question the established structures of knowledge, religion and society, particularly after the first world war. It is not that the time was modern in the newness of the processes at work. That watershed belongs a full two hundred years before to the end of the seventeenth century with the birth of Newtonian science, and the rationalists. Rather, it seems to be that, by the beginning of the twentieth century, the continuing critical processes had brought a coincidence of threat to long established structures in a number of sectors. Evolution had overthrown many long-espoused notions of the nature of man and the world. The technology which fed industrialization continued to change the working environment where it was economically advantageous. Biblical criticism undermined the authority of the church and morality. In many such fields authority was scrutinized by a generation which congratulated itself on reaching the heights of its critical powers. As Burnett Streeter points out, the 'modern mind' brings into question the very foundation of the beliefs that men have held:¹

The modern world is asking questions. Christianity and its traditional theology have come down to us from an age very different from our own, an age when the sun and the stars moved round the earth, when the meaning of natural law and evolution was only dimly apprehended, when the psychology of religion, the historical method and the critical study of ancient documents were yet unborn. These things touch the foundations of the old

1. Foundations: A Statement of Christian Belief in Terms of Modern Thought edited by B.H. Streeter, (London, 1912), p. vii.

beliefs, and it is about the foundations that the world is asking.

The popular component of the 'spirit of modernity' was the feeling of estrangement from past structures, a sense at once of the excitement of freedom, and yet of the fear of the unknown.

Certainly not all embraced the modern spirit with equal vigour, particularly within the church. The term 'modernist' applied by contemporary theological reactionaries to those who examined the Bible and doctrines of the church in the light of modern thought carries still an adverse value judgement.² Despite such resistance there was rapid popular movement towards the acceptance of the modern ideas of theology. There was much 'modernist' controversy before the war, but the heat of argument dissipated somewhat as the tenets of that particular modernism were absorbed by the church. Many other disciplines rendered nineteenth century thinkers out of date by the rapid transitions they underwent, notably psychology, physics, chemistry, and sociology.

It is not possible in a short space to identify more than a handful of the diverse influences and trends which crop up as constituent elements in 'the modern mind'. Neither is it possible to examine the extent or mutual interaction of influences, except in passing. The following survey therefore limits itself to looking at the most important categories of modern thinking.

EVOLUTION

'The modern mind' of the early twentieth century was proud of its scientific outlook, although prior to the revival of realism it

2. Shorter OED, 'Modernism' 3. First use 1907.

is arguably not truly scientific. The work of Lyell and Darwin was a crucial turning point in geology and biology, but the idea of evolution quickly came to be related to other fields as a universal principle. Evolution is a powerful paradigm, particularly for a society experiencing a degree of transition, so it is not to be wondered that a theory of biological development gave birth to a cosmic philosophy. Victorian culture embraced evolutionary philosophy with speed and serenity. J.R. Illingworth writing in 1889 a little ahead of his time can be taken as representative of informed, moderately conservative opinion at the turn of the century:³

Great scientific discoveries. . . are not merely new facts to be assimilated; they involve new ways of looking at things. And this has been pre-eminently the case with the law of evolution; which, once observed, has rapidly extended to every department of thought and history, and altered our attitude towards all knowledge. Organisms, nations, language, institutions, customs, creeds, have all come to be regarded in the light of their development, and we feel that to understand what a thing really is, we must examine how it came to be. Evolution is in the air. It is the category of the age.

The twentieth century inherited the Victorian belief in benevolent cosmic progress. It is a resilient belief which still has currency today. Certainly there were set backs to be negotiated, such as the growing awareness of malignancy within society before and after the first world war, and above all the war itself which transpired, despite early hopes to work against progress. Hope sprang again in the nineteen twenties. It is not unusual for the time to discover a discussion of evolutionary progress throughout Kennedy's writing, culminating in an extended discussion in his last book The Warrior, The Woman and The Christ, (1928). However, progress began to change its emphases, from Illingworth's generalized historical consciousness of progress on all fronts, towards technological, political and social progress in particular. The progress of man continued to occupy

3. Lux Mundi, edited by G. Gore, (London, 1889), p. 181.

some place in the 'modern mind', as is reflected by the interest in eugenics, and the work of Henri Bergson, but there was also another voice heard after the first world war in expressions of disillusionment and disenchantment, typified by T.S. Eliot's The Waste Land. By 1924 the 'modern mind' increasingly doubted the inevitability of the progress of man.

The end of the Victorian age can be seen as marking a change in the interpretation of Darwin. T.H. Huxley, and many with him, interpreted evolution in a deterministic way, so that future progress could be seen as following the same inexorable laws that had brought evolution thus far. However Henri Bergson reintroduced the role of chance in evolution as a point of creativity. The growing emphasis on chance in the early twentieth century was a challenge to some churchmen, because, whereas the design of God could be seen in the laws of determinism, God was not so easily seen in the unpredictability of chance. The law of cruelty in Darwinism, Tennyson's verdict that Nature was a gladiatorial ^{u/} show 'red in tooth and claw', continued to exercise modern thinkers throughout. On the one hand some accepted it as part of progress, after Herbert Spencer, and contributed to internecine competition in embracing 'Social Darwinism', an egocentric or nationalistic ethic of survival of the fittest. On the other hand many churchmen found some kind of apology necessary for the cruelty of nature. Henry Drummond's suggestion of the law of self-sacrifice as a second factor in evolution⁴ is one which finds its way into many writings of the following thirty years. Drummond puts the law of sacrifice in these terms:⁵

Every plant in the world lives for others. It sets aside

4. Henry Drummond, The Ascent of Man, (London, 1894), p. 17.

5. Drummond, p. 296.

something, something costly, cared for, the highest expression of its nature. The Seed is the tithe of Love, the tithe which Nature renders to Man. When man lives upon Seeds he lives upon Love.

The sentimentality tends to obscure an observation which other scientists have also made. Charles Raven wisely cautions:⁶

When the great French entomologist Fabre, who has recorded the ghoulish stories of the predatory wasps or of the nuptials of the praying mantis, put on record his belief that all nature seemed to him 'obedient to a sublime law of sacrifice' we may think his phrase inappropriate, but should be slow to question his right to express an authoritative opinion.

The nature of evolution was an important question. Whilst the intense individualistic competition of the Victorian outlook was at home with a competitive struggle, the developing social consciousness of the later period began to interpret struggle in a less egocentric way. The willing acceptance of the 'struggle for Belgium' and later the 'struggle to end all wars' of the beginning of the first world war is a measure of the extent to which progress was seen in terms of self-sacrifice, the tithe of Love to use Drummond's phrase. Drummond had a third category of development, co-relation between individuals, or society-making. Various strands of this theme of progress through brotherhood can be seen before and after the war, but supremely during it. The growth of the unions up to 1922, and the immense literature which exalts the comradeship of war, bears testimony to brotherhood. A World Brotherhood Federation was set up in September 1919,⁷ to present this challenge, 'The nineteenth century made the world a neighbourhood. It is the task of the twentieth century to make the world a Brotherhood'.⁸

6. Charles E. Raven, Science and the Christian Man, (London, 1952), p. 38.

7. World Brotherhood: The thoughts of Mr Lloyd George, Mr Arthur Henderson, Lord Robert Cecil and others on the Real Basis of World-Reconstruction. edited by Basil Mathews, (London, 1919), pp. 274,5.

8. World Brotherhood, p. v.

Later, it is also seen in the League of Nations internationally, and the political levelling of classes and sexes.

THE SCIENCES

Technology certainly changed twentieth century society with new drugs, telephones, synthetic dyes, and the like. Generally, the doors that the keys of science opened were welcomed, the frightening use of technology in the war being a significant exception. But men did not think chemically, physically, biologically or whatever, no matter how influenced they might be by the economic exploitation of technology. The pure and applied sciences have to be seen as peripheral to the 'modern mind'. Quantum chemistry and relativity, watersheds in scientific thinking of the same order of innovation as biological evolution were not popular paradigms, even though they were a basis for Russell and Whitehead's realism in the nineteen twenties. The empirical attitude itself, however, could be said to have been popularized after the war. The human sciences, psychology, sociology and later, anthropology are of much greater general intellectual interest. The history of atonement theology is a useful barometer in respect of the impact of psychology. J. McLeod Campbell was tried for heresy because of his views expressed in The Nature of the Atonement (1856) that Atonement should be examined in the light of how it meets the need of men. R.W. Dale in The Atonement (1875), and Lyttleton's article in Lux Mundi (1889) made little use of psychological perspectives, but by the turn of the century McLeod Campbell was no longer regarded as a heretic, and R.C. Moberly wrote his Atonement and Personality (1901) in which he justifies his penetrating psychological insight from the church fathers, particularly Irenaeus. Moberly lifted the discussion out of the transactional framework of so much prior atonement theology

into the sphere of personal reality. This psychological trend is evident in other writing including that of evangelicals such as J. Denney and A.E. Garvie, and the modernists above all. Hastings Rashdall's The Idea of the Atonement (1915) is thoroughly personalistic. Even the punitive theory, which seems intractably resistant to the approach, was given a thoroughly psychological renovation by J.K. Mozley in The Doctrine of the Atonement (1915).

The same psychological development is reflected in the discussion of modern philosophy in the next section. The 'modern mind' used the models of psychology to be objective about itself. The models were those of functionalists such as William James or Lloyd Morgan, who looked at behaviour in terms of adaptation to the environment, or those of behaviourists such as William McDougall who took a more neurological line and compared reflex behaviour in man and animals in order to predict and control behaviour. The 'New Psychology', primarily Freud's introspective analysis of conscious and unconscious mind, also found its way rapidly into popular literature. The comparative use of the terms 'reality' and 'phantasy' came into vogue as a result of Freudian psychoanalysis. One significance of psychology is in qualifying the prevailing notion of scientific objectivity.

PHILOSOPHY

Melvin Richter has written; 'Between 1880 and 1914, few, if any, other philosophers exerted a greater influence upon British thought and public policy than did T.H. Green.'⁹ There is little doubt that the philosophical idealism promoted by T.H. Green held the stage in Britain at the beginning of the twentieth century. It is inherent in many of

9. Melvin Richter, The Politics of Conscience : T.H. Green and His Age, (London, 1964), p. 13.

the features of the 'modern mind' we have already recognized. Green used Idealism as a method which enabled him to translate the language of Christianity without losing its meaning. Abandoning the doctrine of God's transcendence he built up the theory that God is immanent in the universe in the sense of being its constitutive principle. Thus Idealism provided a platform for the acceptance of evolutionary philosophy. The ideal being that there is a plan of the world. At the same time Idealism encouraged the immanentism characteristic of the turn of the century. Equally Green argued that God is immanent in men, in the sense of being the principle of reason and morality with them; thus it can be seen that R.C. Moberly, a student of Green, can look for atonement within the psychology of man. Green's humanism renewed Liberal politics. In pointing to something higher than materialism and hedonism he turned the old individualistic liberalism of the Manchester school towards the new collective liberalism seen in Asquith's pre-war social legislation. It was not an economic socialism. Green's humanism can be seen in the philanthropic liberalism of the early twentieth century, and in the beginnings of social conscience, but there is little evidence that it was the inspiration of 'brotherhood' or of the labour movement.

An alternative contemporary philosophy, naturalism, popularized by H. Spencer and T.H. Huxley, might be considered to be more in keeping with the evolutionary spirit. Naturalism is the more 'scientific' in that it sees reality not in the plan or mind behind the universe, but in observable events themselves. The evolutionary spirit was predominantly idealistic and not naturalistic, however. Naturalism did not have a substantial following because it denies the satisfying teleology of idealism. Nevertheless it survives as a strand of the 'modern mind' until revived by the new logic of Russell in realism.

The pre-war challenge to idealism, however, was from pragmatism. It is an elusive thought to capture, because of its relation to both idealism and the realism which followed, and because it changed its popular form very quickly. Alban Widgery, reviewing contemporary thought in 1927, writes:¹⁰

In the first decade of the century the attention of philosophical thinkers, and, in an exceptional manner the interest of the general reader also, were attracted to what at first appeared a somewhat revolutionary attitude to thought. To-day, in spite of evidence of its influence, it is almost difficult to believe that the discussions of Pragmatism occurred within the period of contemporary thought . . . Rarely within modern times has a movement which aroused so much attention sunk so soon into the background.

Pragmatism is the child of the movement towards the study of man.

It was popularized mainly by the work of psychologists, William James being the key figure. Pragmatism made its appearance¹¹ in England in 1902 in a volume of philosophical essays entitled Personal Idealism.¹²

The volume was a reaction to the absolute idealism of the successors to T.H.Green, F.H. Bradley and B. Bosanquet who went beyond their mentor in explicitly denying that personality could be real. The essays polarized against absolute idealism and denied cosmic idealism in the insistence that the significance of the human self is fundamental. One of the essayists, F.H.C. Schiller, in 'Axioms as Postulates' developed pragmatism out of personal idealism. Strictly speaking pragmatism is not idealism in that it denies the attainability of any one reality and looks instead for value. A truth is a proposition of value of the self. It is at once subjective and dynamic. Perhaps the most suggestive functional feature is the possibility of novelty.

10. Alban Widgery, Contemporary Thought of Great Britain, (London, 1927), p. 120

11. According to C.C.J. Webb, A Study of the Religious Thought in England from 1850, (Oxford, 1933), p. 29.

12. Personal Idealism : Philosophical Essays by Eight Members of the University of Oxford, edited by H. Sturt, (London, 1902).

Whereas for absolute idealism, what is, eternally is and change is illusory, for pragmatic humanism constancy of Being is not necessary. Bergson's evolutionary development theory of *élan vital*, can be seen at this point to be related to pragmatic humanism. The move towards pluralism paved the way for realism. Alban Widgery dates the advent of realism as follows: 'In isolated circles among philosophical thinkers Realism had begun to reassert itself quite definitely before the war. The war did much to hasten its becoming a more general movement.'¹³

The realists, more circumspect naturalists, reverted to the British empirical tradition of Locke, Berkeley, Hume and J.S. Mill into which idealism seems an interruption. They maintained in different ways that reality is to be found in space-time and not from the mind. Minds are pluralities, but features of space-time. The realists, often using a particular scientific model, for instance Russell's logical atomism or Whitehead's process philosophy, attempted to face, in a patient and detailed way, the problem of matter and man's perception of it. The importance of realism is in the revival of opposition to speculative metaphysics and the extent to which its conclusions, particularly in logical positivism, circumscribed religious thought. Realism promoted despair in the realization of meaninglessness:¹⁴

That Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noon-day brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins - all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain,

14. Bertrand Russell, 'The Free Man's Worship', The Independent Review, I (December 1903), p. 415. Reprinted in Philosophical Essays, (London, 1918), ch. 3. Widgery refers, p. 161

that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundations of unyielding despair, can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built.

This was a period in which science 'disproved' religion. T.H. Huxley had battled before of course, but although he defeated Bishop Wilberforce, idealism remained strong. In the nineteen twenties many were brought to the wilderness of rationalism, and they doubted that there is anything 'behind it all'.

2. The Effects of the War

The first world war has been described as 'bursting like a bombshell upon ordinary people', 'a real bolt from the blue'.¹⁵ There is little doubt that it made a sudden and traumatic impact on the consciousness of the British public, despite the political grumblings which led up to combat. One element in the general failure to recognize the possibility of war was the belief in the progress of civilized man. The Kaiser and his government were after all civilized and modern men. War might be a necessary evil to bring a civilized solution to problems in lesser nations, and there were many in Britain in 1914 who were familiar with such war. But it was unthinkable that war could ever be a solution to the differences of two enlightened nations. The corresponding element in the first impact of war was a strain in the belief of man's progress. Later there were further factors to bring the belief to breaking point, but immediately the old attitude towards war, and the belief in Britain as an enlightened nation were reinforced in the popular casting of Germany as the morally lesser barbaric aggressor and Britain as the morally superior protector of 'little

15. M.H. Macmillan, Autobiography, 6 vols (London, 1966-73) I, 59.

Belgium', The diverse life of the nation was abruptly integrated into the cause of upholding civilization, in an amazingly whole hearted crusade. The public school and university men rose to the cause in a clamour not to miss the sport. Ramsay MacDonald misjudged the temper of the labour movement, which was overwhelmingly behind the war effort, in his opposition to the war, and found few companions in the political desert he endured throughout the war. (He lost his seat as a result in the 1918 coupon election.) Women soon found a role in distributing white feathers to those men who were slow to respond to Lord Kitchener's appeal.

There are two important religious components in the response of the nation that highlight the relationship of the church to religious thinking. Firstly, the crusade for the sake of civilization was one with which churchmen could identify, in so far as civilized values were part of the church's contemporary proclamation. Men were able to go to war in the name of the church, and indeed Bishop Winnington-Ingram could be a very effective recruiter. At the same time the church lost its distinctiveness in being so completely absorbed into the nationalistic crusade. Distinctiveness was reasserted at a later stage of the war; Randall Davidson, for instance, drew back from full endorsement of the war cabinet in criticism of reprisals for air attacks by the Germans, or again the National Mission recognized a need for spiritual renewal within the church. Secondly, the crusade for civilization had an integrative effect on the nation which to some extent relieved traditional religious functions, those of giving meaning and direction to life, and healing estrangement. However, the results of the secular integrative forces could be, and were welcomed in the name of Christ. Sir Arthur Haworth addressing the Congregational Union in 1916 spoke with enthusiasm of the 'religious effects of the war': 'Men and women had set aside their quarrels,

political rancour was buried, industrial strife had ceased, absorbing devotion to pleasure had disappeared, and their place taken by a sense of duty.¹⁶

An essential dichotomy has to be made between the religious thought of the combatant and that of the home public. Whereas the combatant was torn from his social context, exposed to a cross-section of thought on a scale not known before, and subject to an experience which was disruptive towards the old social mores, that was far less the case at home where Winston Churchill could at least make a pretence of 'business as usual'. Communication between soldier and home was slight. The home public considered themselves starved of news of what was going on at the front, indeed letters were freely censored. The papers were the main channel of communication, and they presented an emasculated version of the combat. When men returned on leave for brief periods they were often reticent about their new values which were out of place in the old social context. Even more they often lacked the linguistic ability to capture for wives and family the experiences they were undergoing. On the home front it can be said that despite the thirst for news, people did not want the truth. Those writers who most realistically captured the spirit of the men at the front were not widely accepted even in the years immediately following the war. Noreen Branson contrasts this with the eager embrace of the crusading spirit:¹⁷

The quality of writers like Owen, Sassoon and Rosenberg came to be recognized by a later generation. In the years just after the war they were hardly noticed outside a small circle of intellectuals and dedicated pacifists. Rupert Brooke, who died on his way to Gallipoli in 1915, was the most highly regarded poet; he had been fired with enthusiasm for the war. 'Now God be thanked Who has matched us with

16. R. Tudor Jones, Congregationalism in England 1662-1962, (London, 1962) p. 356.

17. Noreen Branson, Britain in the Nineteen Twenties, (London, 1975), p. 241

this hour, And caught our youth, and wakened us from sleeping,' he had written on the outbreak. His 1914 and Other Poems had been a best seller after his death.

Whilst for the fighting men idealism was sorely tested and usually failed, at home idealism was the continuing context for adjustments in thought. The breakdown of idealism began for some as early as their training barracks. A.J.P. Taylor records:¹⁸

Moreover, enthusiasm brought in more recruits than the existing military machine could handle. There were not enough barracks, often not enough rifles for them. Recruits spent the winter months in tents and trained with sticks. There were few qualified men to train them. Kitchener formed the remaining regular troops into divisions and sent them to France, instead of using them to shape the New Army. The young enthusiasts were handled by elderly officers and sergeant-majors, who had completed their service before the death of Queen Victoria. It was the beginning of disenchantment.

Even so it took more than a little privation or inadequate equipment or training to deter the average soldier. Harold Macmillan's spirit is typical: 'The Adjutant had been a Regular soldier; but no-one else, with the exception of one or two sergeants, seemed to have any military experience. However, what we lacked in knowledge, we made up in enthusiasm!'¹⁹ When men got to France there was more disillusionment in store: Kitchener's mishandling of supply and strategy, the failure of many generals to grasp the novelty of the military situation. For many working men this was not a drastic transformation from their labouring context where they rarely found meaning greater than their own function, and often endured privation at work and home. Transformation there was in war however, in the increase of a sense of meaninglessness and in the experience of growing privation, and it was accompanied by a growth in the psychological forces which already mitigated the harshness of industry; the forces of brotherhood and of sharing the lot of trench life together.

18. A.J.P. Taylor, English History 1914-1945, (Harmondsworth 1970), p. 49.

19. Macmillan, I, 62.

Comradeship kept the crusading spirit alive, wounded as it was by trench life and poor command. Totally new was the freedom to kill other men, and the imminent possibility of one's own death. This was a new frame of mind, the disjunction from the home context in which the crusading spirit eventually died, and gave way to other ways of thinking. Donald Hankey, one of the most penetrating reporters of the minds of men at the front, in a dispatch in 1915, analyses the philosophical phases through which the average soldier might pass. His article is quoted at length as a rare example of war thought:²⁰

Suddenly, quite unexpectedly, he found himself lifted out of his office chair and after a short interval deposited 'somewhere in France'. Here he found himself leading a ridiculously uncivilized and uncomfortable life, and standing in constant danger of being blown to pieces. Naturally the transition was a little bewildering. Outwardly he remained calm; but below the surface strange things were happening - nothing less than a complete readjustment of his mental perspective. . . . A man couldn't sit in a trench hour after hour and day after day with shells whizzing through the air over his head, or bursting thunderously ten yards from him, without trying to get some grip of his mental attitude towards them. He could not see his comrades killed and maimed and mutilated without in some way defining his views on life and death and duty and fate. He could not shoot and bayonet his fellow-men without trying to formulate some justification for such an unprecedented course of action. His mind was compelled to react to the situations with which it was confronted.

One afternoon he was in a support trench, and the Germans had got it pretty well right, and were enfilading it at long range with their heavy guns. The shells began dropping at the far end of the trench, which they blew to pieces most successfully. They then began to creep up in his direction, the range lengthening about twenty-five yards after each half dozen shells. Would they reach him? Would he be at the end or in the middle of this beastly interval of twenty-five yards? In short, would the shells drop on top of him or about ten yards short or ten yards over? It was an agonizing half-hour, and in the course of it he very nearly became a Mohammedan. He didn't call it that. But he tried to read a comic paper, and told himself that it was simply a question of fate. "I can't do anything about it," he said to himself. "If the damned thing drops, it drops; I can't stop it by worrying." Fate, that was the solution. "Kismet!" he repeated to himself, thinking in a moment of inspiration, of Oscar Asche. As a matter of fact, the enfilade was not perfect, and as the shells crept up the exact direction was lost, and they burst harmlessly about fifteen yards behind the trench instead of in it. The Average Englishman murmured "Praise be to Allah!" and relit his pipe. . . .

20. Donald W.A. Hankey, A Student in Arms, 2 Vols (London, 1916-7) I, 135-145.

Then a day or two later his company was moved up to the firing trench. . . It was no longer a question of sitting tight and waiting; one had to watch very carefully, and the element of retaliation came in, too. He found himself sitting up half the night with a pile of bombs on the sandbags in front of him, watching the grass with straining eyes. It was nervous work. He had never thrown a bomb. Of course it was quite simple. You just pulled a pin out, counted four and let fly, But supposing you dropped the beastly thing! Though it was a cold night he sweated at the thought. Self-confidence was what he wanted now - self-confidence and the will to conquer. Where that last phrase came from he was not sure. He luckily did not realize how near he was to becoming a disciple of the Hunnish Nietzsche! "The will to prevail," that was the phrase which pleased him. . .

But the next morning it rained. The trench being brand-new, there were no dug-outs, and he had to stand in water and get wet. It was horrible. "Kismet" irritated him; "the will to prevail" did not help. Yet it was no use grousing. It only made matters worse for himself and the other fellows. Then he remembered a phrase from a boys' club in poorer London: "Keep Smiling" was the legend written over the door and he remembered that the motto on the club button was "Fratres". By God, those kids had a pretty thin time of it! But yet, somehow, when all the "Fratres" had made a determined effort to keep smiling, the result was rather wonderful. Yes, "Keep Smiling" was the best motto he could find for a wet day, and he tried hard to live up to it . . .

Acting as orderly corporal the Average Englishman thought over his experiences, and it suddenly struck him that during his fortnight as a section commander he had actually forgotten to be afraid or even nervous! It was really astounding. Moreover, his mind rose to the occasion, and pointed out the reason. He had been so anxious for his section that he had never once thought of himself! With a feeling of utter astonishment he realized that he had stumbled upon the very roots of courage - unselfishness. He, the Average Englishman, had made an epoch-making philosophical discovery!

The turmoil of the average soldier's mind is the facing of reality. It is well not to jump into the assumption that the war turned soldiers into realists in a technical sense. Face to face with reality there are a number of reactions. Donald Hankey records a pragmatic search for a formula that will work and carry the soldier through. Within that pragmatic adjustment, it could be said that inter-cultural differences came to the bar of reality, and foundered, finding a new life within the pluralistic equality of comradeship. Many commentators after the war see men coming to terms with the reality of death, perhaps rediscovering the corruption of man and being disillusioned as a result.²¹ It cannot be denied that the forces of disillusionment

21. Particularly C.E. Montague, Disenchantment, (London, 1922)

were present, but equally there were strong integrative forces, which deferred disillusionment, the fatalism, aggression, fraternity, self-sacrifice which Hankey describes are good examples. Even more basic to men's minds is the task-orientated nature of their venture. Despite the senselessness of the military stalemate, men's minds were held by the end of surviving and winning. The removal of that teleology in the post-war era contributes to the upsurge of the literature of disenchantment. Furthermore, reality was postponed to the post-war period by the fantasy of the old reality with which men held the realities of war at bay. F.R. Barry, in his essay 'Faith in the Light of War' in The Church in the Furnace (1917) identifies such fantasy as sacraments of sanity:²²

I have seen two subalterns sitting in a shell-hole in the middle of the fiercest shelling, playing calm, enthusiastic chess. Take up a dozen books of soldiers' verse, the subjects do not as a rule, turn upon the war at all. 'Mud and blood and khaki are conspicuously absent.' They are concerned with Wiltshire Downs and Cotswolds, with the Cher and King's and country rectories, or with the hopes that lie behind the stars. To them the phrase "realities of war" is entirely inadmissible. As the men all feel that their real lives are not here at all but across in 'Elighty', so to Faith the Real is elsewhere.

The religious thought of the combatant reflects his experience. Many chaplains were unable to enter that experience and spoke of the lack of religious thought of the soldier, as Hankey observed:²³

They saw the inarticulateness, and assumed a lack of any religion. They remonstrated with their hearers for not saving their prayers, and not coming to Communion, and not being afraid to die without making their peace with God. They did not grasp that the men really had deep-seated beliefs in goodness and that the only reason they did not pray and go to Communion was that they never connected the goodness in which they believed with the God in Whom the chaplains said they ought to believe.

22. The Church in the Furnace, edited by F.E. Macnutt, (London, 1917), p. 40. Abbreviation hereafter, C F

23. Hankey, I, 113

Presumably the tendencies which Michael Argyle reports of the US army surveys (1949)²⁴ apply roughly to the first world war, namely that religious thought increases substantially with war activity, but that religious behaviour declines marginally. F.R. Barry supports this tendency:²⁵

It is true that men do not flock in crowds to services, that their language is astounding, that they sing profane and ludicrous parodies. But all such things are wholly on the surface, and we are now out to discover truth. I make no claim to understand the men properly. Each day one feels the failures more acutely. But I do maintain that there is in the Army a very large amount of true religion. It is not, certainly, what people before the war were accustomed to call religion, but perhaps it may be nearer the 'real thing'.

For some chaplains this daring statement by Barry, that the soldiers' religion 'may be nearer the "real thing"' was a radical step in seeing religion outside of the conventional religious and moral observances.

James Hannay, writing the essay 'Man to Man' in The Church in the Furnace sees this clearly:²⁶

We have been endeavouring to tie the growing shoots of rose bushes, espalier-wise to the rigid laths of trellis work. We have failed in the endeavour; but while we mourned our failure the rose trees flowered. A much greater thing than we consciously aimed at has been accomplished.

The canonization of the British Tommy, morals and all (not to be confused with the secular canonization of heroic self-sacrifice) as one development within the chaplains is evidence that the church had broken through to some kind of understanding of the religion of the working man, although at some reduction of doctrine. C.E. Montague in Disenchantment (1922) notes the way in which the padres were well capable of comraderie but at the cost of a distinctive message of

24. Michael Argyle, Religious Behaviour, (London, 1958), p. 50.

25. C.F. p. 53.

26. C.F. p. 346.

their own:²⁷

Your virilist chaplain was apt to overdo, to their mind, his jolly implied disclaimers of any compromising connection with kingdoms not of this world. . . They felt that there was something or other - they could not tell what - which he might have been and was not. They could talk lyddite and ammonal well enough for themselves, but, surprising to say, they secretly wanted a change from themselves; had the parsons really nothing to say of their own about this noisome mess in which the good old world seemed to be foundering?

The soldier did not find help in his religious gropings from a chaplain who left all to come to his level. Nor was the dogmatic evangelical chaplain favoured by Bishop Taylor Smith much better. Few soldiers were prepared to accept the totems of authority. They had the suspicion that the Bible was discredited, the church divided, the moral standards counter to the comradeship they valued. Above all the evangelistic tactics of preaching conversion before battle misfired. Donald Hankey recalls how this might happen:²⁸

We had just been to an open-air service, where the chaplain had made a desperate effort to frighten us. The result was just what might have been expected. We were all rather indignant. We might be a little bit frightened inside; but we were not going to admit it. Above all we were not going to turn religious at the last minute because we were afraid.

Some clergy were adequate for the task, although their merit is clouded by post-war criticism; clergy from the slums who did not have to spend the war coming to terms with the working man, the sacramentalist who showed men how to find meaning and hope, and saints, such as T.B. Hardy, who lived a powerfully religious life. For the average soldier, however, despite possible increase in religious thought, the war was destructive of religious belief. In going to war he faced a reversal of moral values, he had been told it was wrong to kill, and now it became a

27. Montague, pp. 72-3.

28. Hankey, I, 111.

virtue. It became difficult to know where the church stood as it adjusted its position throughout the war, and there were a few thin voices of pacifism which served to sow a niggling moral doubt about war here and there. As C.E. Montague explains of a new recruit, the war is too serious, the need to win too great to allow religion to interfere, 'so saying, a certain New Army recruit folded up his religion in 1914 and put it away, as it were, in a drawer with his other civil attire to wait until public affairs should again permit of their use.'²⁹ Not all put on again their religious attire when they returned. Men were changed by the morality of army and navy life. There was the suspension of the old moral authorities, and intimate contact with alternative moral ideas. Men found too frequently the church had nothing to say, they could hear, and so embraced secular images and morality.

On the home front there were three important evolutions, technology, nationalization, and increasingly liberation of women. Britain went to war with the facile slogan 'We don't want to fight, but by jingo if we do, we've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too.' Unfortunately what Britain had not got was a chemical, dyestuffs, explosives, metal or glass industry which could supply a war, the inheritance of a lack of political interest in scientific research. A permanent thrust was given to the education of scientists, research and industrial exploitation in the setting up of what became the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research. The sudden acceleration of the technological band-wagon to meet the needs of war provided a momentum which kept it rolling through the nineteen twenties, gathering speed wherever there were commercial possibilities.

29. Montague, p. 74.

There is some truth in Arthur Marwick's suggestion of an ideological watershed:³⁰

One hundred years before, Lord Liverpool's ministry had sought release from the physical and spiritual ills which afflicted the country at the end of the Napoleonic Wars by providing one million pounds for the building of new churches. Now in the later part of another war, Parliament again passed a 'Million Act', the money this time to be devoted to scientific research. A new deity was being enthroned.

Just as the war compelled a new technology, so it encouraged a new economic policy and view of the state. Free Trade and Free Money were not sound policies for the war effort which finally sounded the death knell of Adam Smith capitalism. The McKenna duties imposed in 1915 made an end of Free Trade, the gold standard was abandoned, income tax spiralled to meet war costs and inflation resulting from the printing of additional currency, above all essential industries were nationalized. The new phenomenon of state intervention in economics was a feature of a collective conscience stemming from the integration of the nation for a single purpose. It was a temporary expedient, Churchill advocated 'war socialism' for the purpose of winning the war, but economic collectivism and state intervention left their marks. Despite the dismantling of nationalization and the eventual return to the gold standard, the state was never returned to marginal intervention in economics again. Later experience of the failure of pre-war economic policy, and comparison with the successful Russian experiment in collectivist economics, which weathered the export slump well, led to an insurgent hope of salvation in socialism, although that was not the deliberate course of government or industry in the nineteen twenties. Materially, socialism had gained a great deal of ground as a result of the war. There was a general upgrading of lower status

30. Arthur Marwick, The Deluge, (Harmondsworth 1967), pp. 229-230.

workers to fill the place of army volunteers. There were generous labour agreements in order to oil the machinery of production. Canteens and welfare became an important consideration for efficient industry, particularly since women were employed in large numbers. Perhaps it was initially a socialism based on the interests of other than the working class, but it was ground that the Labour movement could hold.

The war, calling on hitherto repressed resources, discovered an equality in women. A.J.P. Taylor writes: 'It was a decisive moment in women's emancipation, women became more independent and more enterprising.'³¹ Certainly, before the war, enterprising was not a term which could be applied to many women. The indifference of most women was the bane of feminist reforms. During the war however, women alone by the hearth or in the drawing room found themselves drawn out into social concourse, and managing their own households. Most found some active contribution to the war effort if only in household provisions, such as garments for the forces. Middle class women particularly plunged with determination into being ticket collectors, milk deliverers, women police officers, nurses or above all shorthand typists, whilst working class women exchanged their jobs as industrial drudges for the responsibility of engineering and munitions work, although only on the basis of diluting men workers. Women found the confidence ^{that} they could do men's jobs, and with some reserve the nation admitted as much. Most significantly women found their way into the auxiliary services of the armed forces and in the reform of the franchise to cover all fighting for king and country it was hardly possible to overlook the women, whose courage, like that of Edith Cavell, might equal that of men. (But it was still

31. Taylor; p. 69.

by Members of Parliament
 unthinkable/that women should outnumber men, hence the higher age limit)
 Although women gave up their jobs at the end of the war the social order
 had to adapt to take account of the modern woman, ready for action in
 her short serviceable skirts, and self-confident in rediscovered
 cosmetics.

There was growing discontent on the home front as the war progressed,
 most particularly in 1917. Food was never short, except perhaps sugar,
 but panic buying produced rationing and queues. There was labour
 discontent despite the generally better wage with respect to inflation.
 Bad housing, skilled workers receiving the same money as unskilled,
 conscription, and suspected profiteering contributed to discontent.
 Excitement was stirred by the Russian revolution of 1917. It was by
 no means the same as post-war disillusionment, but it was a platform
 for what followed. A minority of the labour movement had, like
 Ramsey MacDonald, resisted co-operation with the war effort, but
 there were others, less strongly dogmatic, for whom commitment to the
 war was never strong. For such workers the war spirit could melt
 away when there were labour issues to be faced. These were the men
 who were in the vanguard of disillusionment after the war.

3. Reconstruction

The immediate post-war period shows several strands of dispiritment.
 Most obvious is the loss of the war spirit. The war had acted to
 integrate the nation and efforts were made to maintain that corporate
 morale so long as the war continued. At the end of hostilities
 morale was no longer fostered. The new question was where to pick
 up the threads of life. For many, returning home was to be a return
 to what had been left behind. War had been 'time-out' from real life,
 and the combatant longed to get back. But he was a different person,

going home to a wife or family changed by their own experience, and a country transformed by industry and economics. It was not so easy to slip back into the position left behind. Things could never be the same again. Some had the experience of being misfits, disinherited by time out, such as the young men who never entered an apprenticeship and failed to find employment right through the export depression of the nineteen twenties. Others were misfits because of some incapacity, the scar of war. Some were wounded and could not find work, many were 'shell-shocked' which meant they were

unable to settle to work. Some were angry about the conditions to which they returned, the war had eroded differentials between skilled and unskilled workers, housing had not begun to improve. They were dispirited to find that Britain was a fit land for profiteers, but there was no miracle for the hero. There was a feeling of having been cheated of power and glory. Lawrence of Arabia makes a bitter remark about the old men who usurped the victory:³²

We lived many lives in those whirling campaigns, never sparing ourselves any good or evil: yet when we achieved and the new world dawned, the old men came out again and took from us our victory, and re-made it in the likeness of the former world they knew. Youth could win but had not learned to keep, and was pitifully weak against age. We stammered that we had worked for a new heaven and a new earth, and they thanked us kindly and made their peace.

Kennedy captures a more general mood of deception in the title of his book Lies! published in November 1919. In the preface he writes, 'This post-war world is black with lies - biting and buzzing round everything.'³³

A model for considering social tensions after the war is that of new battle positions which emerge between those who dreamt of a new world and those who dreamt of the old, with a number of ways of

32. The Letters of T.E. Lawrence, edited by David Garnett, (London, 1938), p. 262.

33. G.A. Studdert Kennedy, Lies!, (London, 1919), p. 9. Abbreviation hereafter L.

casting the tableau: soldier versus government, young versus old, employees versus employers, socialism versus free capitalism, realism versus idealism, laissez-faire versus authoritarianism. A paradox becomes apparent as we consider what happened. There was a collapse of pre-war values, in economics, industry and morals. Yet there was a prevalent disillusionment that great dreams had not been fulfilled. The paradox is all the greater when one considers the material state of the nineteen twenties. A.J.P. Taylor writes, 'By any more prosaic standard, this was the best time mankind, or at any rate Englishmen, had known: more considerate, with more welfare for the mass of people packed into a few years than into the whole of previous history.'³⁴ Certainly people were better off financially, from 1918 to 1920 wages rose faster than the cost of living, and from 1922 to 1932 wages remained static while the cost of living fell.³⁵ Furthermore, technology was making rapid strides. The mood of disenchantment of the later twenties appears therefore to be intellectual, perhaps ideological, in its source, rather than based directly on material considerations. That monitor of the public mind, literature, reveals a tension. On the one hand there were the realists, and on the other the escapists. T.S. Eliot is the supreme example of the realist in poetry. In Prufrock and Other Observations (1917) and Ara Vos Prec (1920) he reveals an intense inner longing and the desire to break through to reality. The Waste Land (1922) was more popular, although within a narrow circle, evoking the sense of loss. D.H. Lawrence's novel Aaron's Rod (1922) picks up a similar theme in the decay of the old Christian and liberal-humanist ideals and the search for charisma.

34. Taylor, p. 236.

35. Branson, p. 159.

G.S. Fraser commenting on the novel sees that:³⁶

Words or ideas like love, liberty, justice, brotherhood have all gone bad. Political planning is a trap - any revolution would be pointless, since it would leave the mass of men just the unsatisfactory creatures they are . . . What is valuable for Lawrence at this stage is masculine independence, separateness: not 'giving in' to society, to political movements, above all to women. Nevertheless, some man-to-man, male to male relationship is necessary. Lawrence . . . sees this relationship as a leader-follower, master-disciple one, based not on love (one of the words that for Lawrence has gone bad) but on frank recognition of charisma - on authority or power of a personal rather than a political sort.

But whilst such literature was prolific it was not common. Lawrence's writing circulated surreptitiously.³⁷ It was lighter escapist entertainment which was bought in the shops. Whilst a few read Lawrence or Eliot the majority watched the tragi-comedy of Charlie Chaplain, or exhibited a shallow gaiety in dancing in one of the many dance clubs and dance halls that sprang up. Jazz and syncopated music became the rage because as Jack Payne remarked 'we all want to be happy'.³⁸ It is only at the end of the period that a public taste for what Roger Lloyd has called 'the literature of disenchantment',³⁹ became the vogue. War literature became anti-war literature after everyone agreed that war was a bad thing, roughly around 1928 at the time when the nations of the world signed the Kellogg Pact, renouncing war as an instrument of national policy.

It seems right to agree with David Thomson who describes the middle years 1924-1929 as 'the years of promise'.⁴⁰ He writes of these years that the waste land seemed to have been traversed. Perhaps it had yet to be properly discovered, but it is right to contrast 1924 with the

36. The Twentieth Century Mind, edited by C.B. Cox and A.E. Dyer 3 vols (London, 1972) II, 385-6.

37. Taylor, p. 236n.

38. Branson, p. 279.

39. Roger Lloyd, The Church of England in the Twentieth Century, 2 vols, (London, 1946, 1950) II, 2.

40. David Thomson, England in the Twentieth Century, Pelican History of England vol 9 (Harmonsworth, 1965), p. 91. subheading of chapter 4, 1924-9.

gloom of previous years when unemployment was at a peak and prospects in a trough.⁴¹

These years came as time of hope and promise. . . The most outstanding features of the new landscape were, in economic life, a growing prosperity despite persistent mass unemployment: in politics, a mood of conciliation and pacification marred by the General Strike of 1926: in external relations, an era of better feeling and firmer co-operation. . . We, knowing the outcome and the sequel to this checkered era of promise, must ask whether the signs of better times to come were only a mirage. If they were, why did they seem so substantial and so real at the time?

The picture of the twenties as a dissipated age hiding an inner vacuum under a cloak of gaiety needs to be tempered by the resurgence of hope, and the belief in progress which the second half of the decade held. It echoed the Edwardian dream of progress but it was now transformed into the dream of socialist progress.

After the first world war socialism made great strides, It was not wholly the doing of the trade unions. Many trade unionists had been traditionally liberal. Apart from the early victories of the miners, railwaymen and dockers in 1919 and 1920, the trade unions were not able to achieve a great deal in the period, in fact the Great Strike was a serious blow for union prestige and leadership. One measure of popularity is the drop in membership from 8.3 million in 1920 to 5.6 million in 1923.⁴² Nor could the labour party be said to have been the sole inspiration of socialism. It gained greater credibility during the period, and a session as a minority government, but spent the latter five years under a heavy conservative majority. Its policies when in office were not progressive in the eyes of Arthur Marwick, 'in the event the Labour Government made no attempt at, nor preparation for, nationalizing any industry, and Snowden's

41. Thomson, p. 91.

42. Henry Pelling, A History of British Trade Unionism, (Harmondsworth, 1963), p. 262.

budget reflected Gladstonian rather than Socialist principles.⁴³

The situation appears to be that moderate socialism was the direction of all three parties. Lloyd George, in opposition to Labour after the 1918 coupon election, conceded much in the way of social reform, including welfare, and moves in the direction of nationalization. Even Baldwin after 1924 continued that economic policy which made the poor richer and the rich poorer. The war had demonstrated the way in which state intervention could operate for the nation, and even under Baldwin state socialism grew. Christopher Dawson, writing at the end of the post-war decade, looks back to see the loss of the spiritual dynamic which had fired society:⁴⁴

Behind this temporary movement of discouragement and disillusion there are signs of a deeper change, which marks the passing not merely of an age, or a social order, but of an intellectual tradition. We are accustomed to speak of this change as a reaction from Victorian ideas, but something more fundamental is at stake, for Victorian ideas were but the English middle class version of the optimistic Liberal creed, which had set out to re-fashion the world in the preceding century.

This creed has played somewhat the same part in our civilization as that taken by religion at other periods of history. Every living culture must possess some spiritual dynamic, which provides the energy necessary for that sustained social effort which is civilization.

Socialism partly filled the void left by Victorian ideas. G.D.H. Cole, historian of the working class, cites an example of what the propogandists were achieving:⁴⁵

In God and My Neighbour, in Not Guilty and in his stream of articles in the press, Blatchford gave the British people, with its strong non-conformist religious tradition, an ethical version of socialism which made it a substitute for the orthodox doctrines in which they were losing faith.

Even so there were many, if Eliot and Lawrence are representative, who

43. Arthur Marwick, The Explosion of British Society, second edition (London, 1970), p. 65.
44. Christopher Dawson, Progress and Religion, (London, 1929), p. vii.
45. G.D.H. Cole, A Short History of the British Working Class Movement 1789-1947, second edition (London, 1948), p. 290.

felt leaderless, and who felt, despite the material prosperity of the nineteen twenties, an inner longing to break through to reality.

For women the post-war period was a fight to assert the new found confidence they had discovered during their period of independence and resourcefulness during the war. Working women were only standing in for their men folk. They had understood that. Yet they could not entirely return to being the submissive household skivvy, or underpaid industrial drudge. Fashions show the strength of the desire to be as good as men with short hair styles, flat bosoms, and the short practical skirt, although the new flesh-coloured stockings, and cosmetics show that femininity was not thrown overboard. The nineteen twenties were a period of adjustment to a new morality concerning women. It became acceptable for them to smoke in public, and to mix more freely with men. Moreover there was a changing attitude to marriage. Before the war very large families had been the trend, but afterwards there was a growing realization that couples could choose whether or not to have children. Thousands of men had been introduced to contraceptives by the army, and women saw themselves in a new role. The old morality had been shaken by the war and this encouraged the discussion of sex to come out from behind the veil of taboo. Dr Marie Stopes achieved considerable notoriety for her frankness and advocacy of contraception in 1918, but family planning had achieved respectability by the end of the nineteen twenties. Contraception is one part of the laissez-faire morality of the nineteen twenties. Licentiousness could be traced to the disjunction of the patterns of authority during the war, although it is a movement which has roots in the nineteenth century. It was felt in the nineteen twenties that 'everything is relative'. That is another way of saying that it is rootless, or after Eliot, hollow. It is instructive in contrast to the supposed

rootlessness of morality to read that respectable but pessimistic churchman W.R. Inge, reviewing contemporary morality in England (1926), acknowledging the spread of 'revolt against Puritan ethics' into the working class but summarizing: 'Nevertheless, I do not think that the national character has really deteriorated, except in its attitude towards industry and hard work.'⁴⁶ He excuses the trivial or morbid in entertainment as having 'the appearance of being caused by boredom and nervous depression,'⁴⁷ and sees the positive value of the decrease in drunkenness increase in self-respect and ready heroism. Not all churchmen of his time would agree with Inge about the moral condition of the nation, but what is significant is the confidence and lack of trauma he depicts in an age of rapid change. It suggests that before we ask the question 'What was the church doing about the secularization of morality?' of the nineteen twenties, we ask, 'Who in the church was discomfited by moral trends?' The conditions under which people lived showed a steady progress through the twenties. Housing was held up by government cuts, but a decent rate of building was finally achieved, between 1924 and 1927. It relieved overcrowding and replaced some of the worst housing, perhaps back to back, or gloomy tenements with communal water supply and water closet, with the council house. The vast estates created a new style of living. The break up of family units was balanced by new standards of hygiene, and new potentials, such as gardening. Domestic life became easier through labour saving technology. The exception to progress was among the unemployed of whom the young soldiers, who never served an apprenticeship, were worst hit. W.R. Inge referred to moral decline in hard work, and this is the group towards which much attention was directed. A report on

46. W.R. Inge, England, The Modern World: A Survey of Historical Forces, volume 7 (London, 1926), p. 287.

47. Inge, p. 285.

the effects of the slump specifically isolates the youths. 'Among them are found such cases of shirking of available employment as have come up . . . Their case presents a special problem of progressive demoralization and places a special responsibility on the society that let them come into their present condition.'⁴⁸ Whilst the extent of unemployment was greater than had been known before the war, there was alleviation of poverty by the operation of Poor Law. It relieved much of the distress of unemployment, but brought other problems contemporary commentators were quick to see. It was a trauma for the self-sufficient man to go to the Poor Law Guardians for relief, it took away from him a cherished set of values: pride, thrift and independence. Commenting on unemployment in Middlesbrough, the report referred to earlier suggests:⁴⁹

It must be recognized that a mechanical automatic system of relief has a tendency to destroy resourcefulness and personal initiative. After the first honest reluctance to take money off the Guardians, for which no contribution has been made, there comes often a placid acquiescence and acceptance of conditions which just conserve existence without effort. Doubtless, among hundreds gathered at the relieving stations there are many who honestly would ten times rather have work than relief, but there are others slipping gradually down to dangerous indifference, and others who, after years of thrift, are saying, "It does not pay to be thrifty."

Even so conditions were not desperate, and whilst unemployment tended to be concentrated in pockets where old export orientated industries were, it was nothing like the scale of the nineteen thirties when a whole town like Jarrow might be 'murdered'. Employment was picking up in the new consumer industries of the nineteen twenties.

The place of the church in the social context of the nineteen twenties was undergoing change. Probably the most noticeable feature

48. The Third Winter of Unemployment: The Report of an Enquiry Undertaken in the Autumn of 1922, (London, 1922), p. 74.

49. The Third Winter, p. 257.

in the needy parish was a shortage of man power. During the war the supply of ordination candidates all but dried up, and continued at a low level through the nineteen twenties, despite the setting up of the Knutsford centre for ex-servicemen. The possibility of an increase in numbers during the later twenties was depressed by the unfavourable economic situation. Men were dissuaded from coming forward for training by the observation of a few unfortunate men in industrial dioceses who were unable to find a parish which could afford to pay a curate. Similarly the parish offering an incumbent a small fixed income found its problems sharply increased following the inflation of the war years. The effect was that the most economically deprived areas were also the most clerically deprived.

The attitude towards the church was also undergoing change. It had become less credible as a result of internal struggle. The Crockford preface for 1924 mocks, 'It seems to be somewhat widely assumed, as axiomatic, that the Church of England is the outcome of a collision between two irreconcilably hostile forces.'⁵⁰ And if it was divided within itself, it also ran down the sources of its own authority. Many ordinary people believed the Bible and miracles in particular to have been discredited by scientific study. The creeds, it seemed could be legitimately be interpreted more loosely by 'Modern Churchmen'. Furthermore, the moral authority of the church had been severely eroded by the disjunctive and innovating effects of the war. Within the whole society morality became more secular, as did the attitude towards progress. Many thinkers, and ordinary men and women, found themselves believing that 'God is a hypothesis which the present world does not need.' In the face of secularism many clergy were despondent.

50. Crockford Prefaces : The Editor looks back (London, 1947), p.31.

Roger Lloyd uses the phrase 'the Religious famine' of the inter-war years.⁵¹ But despite a general unease with the old message of the church (except among such groups as the conservative evangelicals whose new message was a call to entrenchment) there were three particular messages which continued to be of importance in the nineteen twenties, social teaching, sacramentalism and religious experience.

For some time before the war there had been an increasing attention to the subject of religious experience. W.R. Inge and Evelyn Underhill revived interest in mysticism, and William James had made a significant impact with his classic work The Varieties of Religious Experience. One of the greatest works on the subject was The Mystical Element of Religion by von Hügel published in 1908. All of these were appropriate for an age in which authority was in decline, in that religious experience may be its own authority.

There is a connection between mysticism and sacramentalism, even in the thought of W.R. Inge who was not a thorough going sacramentalist. Mysticism was for him 'a type of religion which puts the inner light above human authority and finds its sacraments everywhere.'⁵² Elsewhere the connection between sacramentalism and mysticism can be seen in the mystical treatment of eucharistic worship by the anglocatholics, and in the call of the Archbishops' second committee of enquiry for the national mission, on the worship of the church, for the provision of new acts of devotion of a more popular kind than provided for be the book of common prayer. The committee wanted acts in which:⁵³

For introduction to and maintenance in the presence of God, the picture of Christ (as the Son revealing the Father) must be brought before the mind, and interwoven with the whole devotion, which should proceed from the known life and known desires of Christ, and concentrate the mind thereon.

51. Lloyd, II, 164.

52. J.K. Mozley, Some Tendencies in British Theology, (London, 1951), p. 28.

53. The Worship of the Church, Being the Report of the Archbishops' Second Committee of Inquiry, (London, 1918), p. 38.

The sacrament was not just a feature of the anglocatholic message. The fact that there was disagreement between a vocal minority of anglo-catholics and a vocal minority of evangelicals over the revised prayer book should not cloud the issue that most of the church was finding the sacramental emphasis appropriate for its time. J.K. Mozley identifies the trend:⁵⁴

Because of the special place occupied in relation to worship by the sacraments, and especially by the Eucharist, the meaning and value and relevance of the sacraments have received a fullness of consideration over and above that which belongs to them in virtue of their dogmatic significance. This attention has been given for the most part by those who represent the Catholic side of Christian tradition. But there are signs of an increasing interest in sacramental theology and worship on the part of those who would lay stress on their Evangelical and Protestant background.

One of the main forces for promoting sacramental worship was the discovery of its value by the chaplains to the forces. Whereas the penitential approach of the daily office seemed out of touch with the men, communion had found more appreciation. The chaplains on the second committee wrote of communion, 'We think all chaplains will return home anxious to make this service the main, corporate, family congregational act of worship and fellowship.'⁵⁵ The sacramental emphasis also has a relation to the social message of the church. Christian fellowship was a discovery within the communion, which in turn was the keynote of the churches social ideas of the post-war period. Fellowship was super^sceding philanthropy in social policy, reflecting the political change to collectivism from free capitalism. Collectivism was the preserve of social radicals before the war, but in 1920, the committee appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to report on 'The Church and Social Service' revealed a more general acceptance of the collectivist

54. J.K. Mozley, Some Tendencies, p. 63.

55. The Worship of the Church, p. 35.

principles within the church. Prebendary P.T.C. Kirk was so motivated by this document that he reformed the Navy Mission into the Industrial Christian Fellowship, and then incorporated the Christian Social Union into the federal structure of the Fellowship. Other signs of social teaching are seen in the setting up of COPEC⁵⁶ by William Temple. He had originally espoused a liberal co-operative ethic, but he came to a collectivist position by the time of COPEC, partly perhaps through the influence of R.H. Tawney, who wrote Acquisitive Society (1920). E.R. Norman identifies COPEC as a watershed in the development of social teaching in the Church:⁵⁷

On the one side it brought to a more systematic and coherent statement the social radicalism of the preceding decade, and stamped the mind of the Church with a definite bias towards a social interpretation of Christianity; on the other, it prepared the ground for the mood of criticism and social writing known as 'Christian Sociology'.

The war had helped to prepare for COPEC. Many chaplains found themselves rubbing shoulders with the poor in a way they had never done before. The result was a conviction that social reform was a necessary part of reconstruction after the war. So it was that the church appeared to be in the vanguard of social reform in the nineteen twenties.

56. The Conference on Politics; Economics and Citizenship

57. E.R. Norman, Church and Society in England 1770-1970, A Historical Study(London,1976), p. 279,

CHAPTER TWOFORMATIVE INFLUENCES UPON THE DEVELOPMENT OF G.A. STUDDERT-KENNEDYRELIGIOUS THOUGHT

It is not possible to identify all the influences of social and intellectual context which bear upon the production of the religious thought of a man. This biographical sketch of the formative influences on Studdert Kennedy does not attempt to be comprehensive in that sense. Neither does it attempt to take the developed religious thought of Kennedy and look for its sources. It reviews what published biographical material is available and considers its significance in the development of his religious thought.

Geoffrey Anketell Studdert Kennedy was born into the vicarage of St Mary's, Quarry Hill, a poor district of Leeds, on June 27 1883.

He grew up familiar with the poverty of the working class slum.

Roger Lloyd describes the housing conditions prior to demolition:¹

The oldest type had just two rooms, a living room and bedroom. Under the living room was a small coal-hole. Food had to be kept in a cupboard in the living room, or on shelves on the stairway to the coal hole. There was nowhere else to keep it. In the living room the family sat and fed, cooked and washed, were born, ailed, died and waited for burial. No hot water was laid on. There was just an earthenware sink with one cold tap. . . No house boasted a lavatory of its own. Outside in the street there might be two built together to serve a whole block, and things were contrived so that there was a bedroom over them.

Kennedy appears to have been deeply influenced by this background. His school friend, J.K. Mozley, testifies, 'Geoffrey learnt in this parish his profound affection for the poor, and a reverence for them which never weakened into sentimentality or an ignoring of their failures.'²

Moreover he developed the capacity to think as the slum dwellers thought,

1. Lloyd, II, 130.

2. G.A. Studdert Kennedy; By His Friends, edited by J.K. Mozley, (London, 1929) p. 33. Further references to this book in this chapter are given as page numbers only, in the text.

and to communicate within their context.

His own family were far from rich. William Studdert Kennedy had come from Ireland because of economic pressure and ministered in the poorest endowed of the parishes of Leeds. The size of the family added to the problems. Geoffrey was the seventh of nine children by his father's second marriage. The boys had private coaching, and attended Leeds Grammar School, but their father's income could not be stretched to sending the boys to Oxford or Cambridge. Geoffrey graduated from Trinity College, Dublin where he did not have to keep full residence, and where he could lodge with relatives when necessary.

Some of the characteristics of his father's ministry are reflected in Geoffrey. William Studdert Kennedy concentrated his interests in his parish. Venerable, kindly, and faithful, he worked in humble surroundings without any recognition or desire for applause. He was a quiet man, not easily separated from, nor often out of his parish. He was not an evangelist primarily. The fruits of his ministry were rather to be found in the commitment and depth of spirituality of the faithful within his charge. The services were not well attended at St Mary's, the church being over large, and many of the parishoners Roman Catholics or Jews, but there was according to Mozley 'an atmosphere of homeliness about the church and the services which triumphed over the size of the building and smallness of the congregation' (p. 32). Single-minded commitment, and self-giving are ever present characteristics of Geoffrey's ministry, and even as an evangelist, his concern was depth of spirituality and never mere head-hunting.

The home was the scene of open-handed Irish hospitality; the door was never locked, nobody was ever turned away. It was congenial to Geoffrey's temperament and nourished that quixotic generosity for which he was notorious, such as, giving away his overcoat in Rugby, or a bed in Worcester, or the proceeds of a book in the army, or the easter

collection at St Edmunds, Lombard St. It is an important facet of his development in that compassionate self-giving became such a central feature of his understanding of the christian life.

Geoffrey learnt early the critical tools of debate. Both home and school provided opportunity. At home he managed to hold his own against his older brothers and his father, and of his fervour in debate, brother Gerald relates (p.45) 'I well remember Father turning to me one day after a very brain-cracking discussion, and saying with a chuckle: "When I discuss things with dear Geoff, I almost see the perspiration coming out of the top of his head, his brain seems to be working so hard"'. At school he was an active member of the debating society. However, A.V. Baillie, his first vicar, draws attention more to the fervour than to the discipline of his contentions:³

Kennedy was one of the strangest characters I ever knew. An Irishman, with brains, he had infinite charm, complete devotion to his work and a fine sense of humour, but mentally he was incredibly undisciplined. At least once a week he dashed into my room with some new idea. They were sometimes quite preposterous, but they were always held by him for the moment with burning earnestness.

The charge of indiscipline must not be taken to mean that Kennedy was ill-informed. His brother Maurice suggests that although he may have been undisciplined in the choice of his reading, 'he had a mentality like a vacuum cleaner; it absorbed encyclopaediacally ^{but} but unlike a vacuum cleaner, it rejected the rubbish and stored the worthwhile' (p. 33). Nor will Mozley unreservedly accept the charge that Kennedy was undisciplined with regard to the canons of orthodoxy. Commenting on some of the unorthodox views of Kennedy's published work he cautions that 'it would be a grave mistake to suppose that his inclination lay in that direction, or that he lacked a profound regard for the theological tradition of Catholic Christianity' (p. 38). It appears

3. A.V. Baillie, My First Eighty Years, (London, 1951), p. 142.

that circumstances combined to produce a lively, widely read mind, able to innovate, and to contend for its own ideas.

The effect of Trinity College, Dublin on the development of Kennedy is difficult to estimate. He had the discipline of the classics and divinity schools, in which he acquitted himself well, taking a 1st class honours in both Classics and Divinity, and then after a spell of living in Dublin, 'working long hours, twelve-and-a-half-hours a day,' according to Mozley (p.39) he emerged as a silver medallist. Lacking specific biographical material, it can only be surmised that Trinity provided language form and critical tools for his religious thought, to an extent we can only deduce from later patterns of thinking.

Fortunately Mozley has recorded many of the issues which were thrashed out with Kennedy during protracted nocturnal discussions, at around this time. These issues throw light on the intellectual interests and development of Kennedy. They included the topical crises of the church (pp 38-39):

We did not all know what to make of the 'Higher Criticism': some of the problems which arose in connexion with it were not easily solved. Miracles were, I think, more at the centre of controversy then than now. Mr Blatchford was writing God and My Neighbour. The so-called Crisis in the Church made a storm-centre for ecclesiastical politics. On all such matters Geoffrey and I conversed with a sympathy in outlook which extended to a great measure of unity in opinion.

Such discussions were approached not so much as intellectual difficulties with which Mozley tells us Kennedy was not much beset, as new insights which had to be thrashed out. Maurice Studdert Kennedy puts his finger on one important feature of Geoffrey's motivation in these discussions when he says that 'even then he saw that education is not book-learning but enlightenment' (p.34). One of the problems for which enlightenment was sought was suffering. Mozley indicates that as early as 1903 Kennedy was moving towards his later published views (pp. 42,43):

His view of the right attitude to suffering, which he expressed in the longest of those talks, is of interest when one remembers how great his concern was to be with that very problem as it revealed itself to him during the War. He argued that sorrow when it came into the life of an individual, should not simply be borne but welcomed, since it had its source in the direct act, amounting almost to intervention, on the part of God.

After Trinity College, Dublin, Kennedy taught in a school at West Kirby. It was a period of reading and thought. For example, he was reading George Adam Smith's commentary on Isaiah, later the most quoted of the old testament books in his writings. He also had a significant difference of opinion with Mozley over the question of punishment. Mozley wrote in a review for the Expository Times:⁴

I venture to think that . . . no doctrine of the Atonement which claims to be scriptural can possibly dispense with the conception of punishment as retribution. And I cannot but believe that the admittedly growing dislike of this theory of punishment is of a piece with the present tendency to depreciate the seriousness of sin, and to empty the Atonement of its truest and most life-giving significance.

Kennedy wrote a dissenting reply to the periodical, but, according to Mozley, 'the editor probably considered his reply to be rather too violent for insertion'.(p50) It indicates that when Kennedy writes of his dissatisfaction with ideas of the punitive God and atonement towards the end of the war, it is a mature opinion, and not attributable principally to the effects of war. It was also during this time that Kennedy immersed himself in what were the latest ideas in psychology, including the 'New Psychology'. Mozley and Kennedy heard something about it from an unnamed, but able exponent. This led Kennedy to work out some of the challenges presented by the new ideas. Part of the package of the New Psychology was a clarification of the conscious and unconscious mind, but it was this challenge to sexual ethics from an understanding of the nature of repression in sex, which most caught the Edwardian eye, Kennedy included.

By the end of 1906 Mozley was concerned for his friend as ' he was

4. J.K. Mozley, 'Punishment as Retribution', Expository Times, 18 (1907), p.520.

much alone with his own thoughts about this time and at the end of the year his views showed signs of change as compared with his earlier outlook.' Three features in particular stood out (pp49-50):

A kind of Christian pantheism seemed to be attracting him, also an ethic of Tolstoyan character which made him doubt whether the Gospel ever allowed a man to look for personal pleasure . . . Mr Campbell's New Theology was making a great stir, and the kind of outlook for which it stood was appealing to him.

It is implicit that Mozley finds 'Christian pantheism' repugnant, but it is not necessarily a point of serious heterodoxy. Kennedy's pantheism, as found in his published work, corresponds closely with that of J.R. Illingworth, expressed in 1889, when he defines 'higher pantheism' as:⁵

God's indwelling presence in the things of His creation . . . Whether the term higher Pantheism is happily chosen or not, the thing which it denotes is quite distinct from Pantheism proper with its logical denial of human personality and freedom. It is the name of an emotion rather than a creed; that indescribable mystic emotion which the poet, the artist, the man of science, and all their kindred feel in contemplating the beauty or the wonder of the world.

Nevertheless, it is possible that Kennedy's view of pantheism was cruder in 1907 than after 1917, particularly in view of the gross immanentism found in Leo Tolstoy and R.J. Campbell. The reference to Tolstoy is illuminating of the development of social thought in Kennedy. Tolstoy, reaching his creative powers as Russia was feeling the pressure for social reform, gave up his material comforts for a life of austere simplicity and labour. Under the influence of J-J. Rousseau he was an enthusiast for social reform, anxious to relieve the miseries of the serfs. It is significant, in view of Kennedy's depreciation of atonement, that Tolstoy eschewed such doctrines as the atonement, incarnation and resurrection, and emphasised his social ethic as the central tenet of the Christian message.

5. J.R. Illingworth, 'The Incarnation and Development' in Lux Mundi, edited by Charles Gore, (London, 1889) p. 191.

The key to his ethic is to be found in the sermon on the mount, which can be resolved into five new commandments:⁶

- (1) the suppression of anger, even righteous indignation, and living in peace with all men.
- (2) the complete exclusion of sex relationships outside marriage.
- (3) the wrongfulness of oaths.
- (4) non resistance to evil and the consequent refusal to act as judges or police officers.
- (5) unreserved love of one's enemies.

These, with the increase of love in individuals would do away with the evils of the existing order and lead to the establishment of the Kingdom of God in the world. There remains right through Kennedy's writing this notion that love leads to the kingdom of God on earth, qualified by his religious belief that, mere morality is incompetent to bring about love. However, too much should not be made of an attraction to Tolstoy himself. His ethic was taken up by Edwardians as part of the hope of a new dawn for society. H.G. Wells indicates in Ann Veronica that it was a fashionable thing for the avant-garde; Miss Miniver enthuses about social reform, 'You must let me take you to things - to meetings and things, to conferences and talks. I must take you everywhere. I must take you to the Suffrage people and the Tolstoyans'. It was all part of the dawn of the new age, "everything", Miss Miniver said, was "coming on" - the Higher Thought, the Simple Life, Socialism Humanitarianism. Hitherto in the world's history there had been precursors of this progress . . . But now it was different; now it was dawn, the real dawn.' William Purcell has suggested that Kennedy's interest in Tolstoyan ethic 'falls perfectly into place in the mood of that time.'⁷ That is, the mood of Miss Miniver.

'New Theology' shares the radical, social, and moral initiative,

6. From the article, 'Tolstoy', Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, second edition.

7. William Purcell, Woodbine Willie, (London, 1962) p. 43.

and reduced treatment of the atonement with Tolstoyan ethic, and it is also vulnerable to a charge of pantheism in its severe immanent emphasis. It was a particular incident of modernism which found a brief coherence around the published sermons of R.J. Campbell of the City Temple. Campbell was a preacher, looking for a message that would grip the modern mind and halt the decline of organised Christianity. He found his message in the rearticulation of faith in terms of the immanence of God. There were not a few who were attracted, like Kennedy, by its promise of cutting away the dead wood, so that the authentic message of Christianity could win men to the faith. Campbell puts his case in these pragmatic terms:⁸

What is wanted is freshness and simplicity of statement. The New Theology is only new in the sense that it seeks to substitute simplicity for complexity, and to get down to moral values in its use of religious terms . . . The New Theology is an untrammelled return to Christian sources in the light of modern thought. Its starting point is a re-emphasis of the Christian belief in the Divine immanence in the universe and in mankind. . . It is the immanent God with whom we have to do, and if this obvious fact is once firmly grasped it will simplify all our religious conceptions and give us a working faith.

'New Theology' has its philosophical roots in personal experience. It values that which is of psychological value to the individual. There could be significance in the observation that there are similarities of approach towards doctrine in The New Theology and Food for the Fed-up, written fourteen years later by Kennedy. Both are pragmatic, experiential, and radical. In The New Theology Campbell rejects the historical treatment of atonement in favour of a psychological method:⁹

I do not propose to follow that method, for it does not possess a living interest for the mind of to-day; the psychological should take precedence of the historical. I do not feel called upon to take the doctrine of the Atonement for granted, and then proceed to find a place for it in Christian experience. On the contrary, I prefer to take human nature for granted, and inquire

8. R.J. Campbell, The New Theology, (London, 1907), pp 4,5.

9. R.J. Campbell, p. 113.

whether it needs anything like a doctrine of Atonement.

A comparison of this with Kennedy's rejection of what he sees as the common element in any historical survey of atonement, a remedial theory, shows distinct similarities:¹⁰

This scheme of salvation . . . has become utterly incredible to us. It is not that it has been proved untrue; it is that it has become unreal. It has been murdered, it has died a natural death, it has ceased to grip.[^] It has around it always the atmosphere of a fairy tale; inwardly we feel that it is impossible, it lies right outside the circle of our thought.

It is not suggested that Kennedy derived substantial inspiration from Campbell, grounds for doing so are merely circumstantial. Attention is rather drawn to the extent to which Kennedy's thought marched in step with one who was concerned to reach the minds of men, and one who was condemned as a heretic by his generation. Perhaps this period of Kennedy's development, which gave cause for concern to Mozley, was one of youthful excess. Yet even if the excesses were later moderated, they identify motifs which recur, and, relevant to his reputation as a prophet, they indicate a grounding outside of conventional orthodoxy.

In October 1907 Kennedy went to Ripon Clergy College for theological training. The choice of college is of interest. There is no doubt that Kennedy was at home in the 'high church'. Such was St. Mary's, Quarry Hill; such were his own parishes later: St Paul's, Worcester, and St Edmund's Lombard Street. However, his choice of college in 1907 was a liberal establishment, which was known for its liberty, and had just appointed an up-and-coming 'modernist', H.D.A. Major, as vice-principal. Major appears to be a formative influence on Kennedy. A schoolfriend, then ordained, had recommended Ripon Clergy College to Kennedy because he thought that 'Major would do him good' (p.23). A.T. Woodman-Dowding, a contemporary at the college recalls, 'Some years ago Kennedy confessed to me that the thought of which his life

10. G.A. Studdert Kennedy, Food for the Fed-up, (London, 1921), p. 210.

and services were expressions, and of which his books are illustrations, was in the first instance derived from Dr Major's lectures on the 'Philosophy of Religion' (p. 53). Major was a New Zealand scholar who had not long been in Britain, but was already making a name for himself as a 'modernist'. Later he was to be founder editor of the Modern Churchman (1911). Modernism is a complex and transient phenomenon, it is more an inclination of mind than a set of doctrinal proposals, so it is not apt to attempt an elaborate reconstruction of the features of Major's thought despite the direct indication that Kennedy's thought partly derives from Major. In 1907-8 the features of modernism in which Kennedy might have been immersed are a 'higher critical' attitude towards the scriptures, reinterpretation of credal statements, and attention to the modern findings of the sciences, including psychology. Major would have offered Kennedy the critical tools to reconstruct theology in the light of modern thought for contemporary society. The modernist environment of the college would have further encouraged him in that process, already indicated in the interest in Tolstoy and 'New Theology', whilst his peers might begin to modify imbalance in the development of reconstruction. J. Battersby Harford was the principal of the college. He was an Old Testament scholar who was a supporter of Wellhausen's documentary hypothesis. Thus one can presume that Kennedy would have accepted advanced biblical criticism.

The Bishop of Ripon, William Boyd Carpenter, founder of the college took an active interest, particularly in the sermon class. He had much to contribute on the basis of his reputation as a golden-tongued popular preacher. His method was for a sermon to be read, and then for students and staff to offer their criticism on the composition, on clearly defined lines: structure, diction, lucidity, illustration, and so on. But as Major remarks, 'several at least of the students of those days - notably Mr Studdert Kennedy - have made their mark

as pulpit orators, but orators, like poets, are born, not made.'¹¹

So it was that, contrary to the custom, the bishop offered no specific guidance to Kennedy, as he felt in his case, that it was better for his gifts to develop in their own way. The bishop's doctrinal position had influence in the college, and presumably upon Kennedy. Samuel Bickersteth, later Kennedy's vicar in Leeds, describes Boyd Carpenter:¹²

Doctrinally, the Bishop's mind marched with the Modernists, to use the designation recently coined for what would have been earlier called Broad Churchmen, and he kept pace with them up to the end. . . The Bishop was too much of a born advocate not to belong to some school of thought, nor was he equally able to understand them all. To the end of his life he had congenital sympathy with the Evangelicals, but with High Churchmen it was not so.

Whatever the effect of the bishop and college upon Kennedy it is well to point out that one of the important features of his later religious thought is the synthesis of passionate high-church religiosity with modernist analysis.

As soon as Kennedy reached the parish as curate, he began to demonstrate his abilities. A.V. Baillie, rector of Rugby Parish Church, was particular in his choice of curate:¹³ He writes, 'My aim was to find men of strong individuality. I did not mind to what school of thought they belonged, so long as they were real men who were prepared to throw themselves fully into the work of the parish because they believed in it.'¹³ Kennedy fulfilled the requirements. He threw himself into pastoral work, and gravitated to a slum area. Baillie describes his manner: 'One of his activities was to wander in and out of the public houses and talk to the men. His personality made it easy, and the men would welcome him even in the worst and

11. H.D.A. Major, The Life and Letters of William Boyd Carpenter, (London, 1925), p. 166.

12. H.D.A. Major, p. 314.

13. A.V. Baillie, p. 140.

lowest places.'¹⁴ Dr. Herbert, a fellow curate, later Bishop of Blackburn adds a comment on his success at reaching the poor. (p. 61):

He was entirely at home in the dirtiest of kitchens, and would sit for hours smoking and talking, or watching by a sick-bed. I can see again that small slim figure strolling into the unattractive Public House where his beloved lodging-house tramps were to be found, and standing up in the bar in his cassock to sing 'Nazareth' while half his audience 'felt within a power unfelt before.' They loved him - loved him for his great laugh, the smile that transformed his face, but most of all because of his love for them.

Rugby was thus a context in which Kennedy could find his feet and gain confidence in the exercise of his ministry, a task to which he fell with relish. Dr Herbert picks out the practical nature of his ministry and its relation to an immanental tendency (p. 60):

It was impossible for him to dissociate his thought of God from his love of men. For him the setting of the stage of religion was this world, and his own intense humanness kept his intellectual side harnessed, if not subordinate to, his pastoral work.

Rugby was also a time of discipline. Baillie, who complained of Kennedy's incredible lack of discipline, organised his curates to discipline themselves, by discussion, criticism and mutual support. Dr Herbert suggests it was necessary in Kennedy's case as he 'never seemed in those days to care whether what he said was orthodox or not' (p. 59).

There are three personal notes about A.V. Baillie which it is worth taking into account in the development of Kennedy's thought. Firstly, when Baillie came to Rugby he was racked by doubts concerning what he could or could not believe in the Old and New Testaments, as a result of biblical criticism. During his time in Rugby he regained his confidence in the use of the Bible in a series of immensely popular Bible expositions. Verbal inspiration or not, four hundred men, who came to hear the pentateuch read to them for eight months of the year over a period of eight years, testify to the ability of the Bible to speak to men. This affirmation of scripture is of particular relevance

14. A.V. Baillie, p. 143.

following Ripon Clergy College. Secondly, Baillie also had doubts about the adequacy of his ministry about which he consulted Bishop Gore:¹⁵

I had the feeling that somehow it was not producing in the people the kind of personal religion evident among the best Christians in my younger days. It certainly raised morality: it certainly turned people to Christian observances; it certainly made a great many people do what is called Christian work; it certainly made immense numbers listen to instruction. But were we giving our people the real thing and developing within them the power of true Christianity?

The mutual discussion by the curates of the failure of contemporary ministry with regard to 'developing the power of true Christianity' stands out against some previous contexts of thought which tended to lack the element of the sacred. As for an answer to his question, Baillie had none. Thirdly, Baillie had a social concern for unity both in the church, which had sparring factions of tractarians and evangelicals, and in the town which was in a state of rapid industrialization. Unity between factious partisans, and unity between the diverse members of the church, labourers, managers, those of private means, was a priority in parish strategy.

During his time at Rugby, Kennedy fell under the influence that drew several of his brothers and sisters into Christian Science.

Mozley recalls: (p. 57)

It was during this time at Rugby that Geoffrey was powerfully attracted by ideas which we associate with Christian Science. And if he did not become a Christian Scientist, which was the case with some of his brothers and sisters, that was in no small measure due to the wisdom with which his views were treated. This episode in his life left its mark on his habit of thought even when later experiences inclined him in what might seem a very different direction.

The attraction to Christian Science appears incongruous with the attraction to 'christian pantheism' or immanent theology. Christian Science emphatically denies the reality of the material world.

15. A.V. Baillie p. 148.

Conversely, Kennedy in early leanings and later writings strongly affirms the world. The paradox is instructive. It indicates that Kennedy found a common factor. The most obvious factor is that both are inclined to deny duality. A comparison of Christian Science with extreme immanentism shows several points of similarity although it should be observed that Christian Science is much more extreme in its anti-materialism than Kennedy's immanentist influences in their materialism. Neither can accept a dualistic theology of atonement, there is neither need nor possibility if all reality is good. Both see salvation through the divine Logos. Christian Science looked to the Christ as 'the spiritual or true idea of God'¹⁶ who displays reality. Extreme immanentism might look to Jesus as a moral example in His incarnation, or as the key to the universe. Less obvious common factors with other influences on Kennedy are : the interest in the psychological, the profound motivating charity of Christian Science to provide happiness and well-being for the sick, and to provide a faith to live by for the depressed. One of the most notorious topics of Christian Science is suffering, a topic in which Kennedy had already been interested, and with which he was to deal at length in The Hardest Part. To say that the Christian Scientist believes evil does not exist, and that suffering is an illusion is to miss what that statement is correcting. Mary Baker Eddy crusaded against the Calvinistic notion that all pain is a divine imposition on God's children to teach them resignation. She believed that God is good and whatever is good is God.¹⁷ It was impossible that God should inflict evil on his people. Kennedy in The Hardest Part shares the specific objection to the Calvinistic notion of suffering, and also maintains that God is not responsible for suffering in the world, although he

16. Mary Baker Eddy, Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Fifth edition (Boston, 1934) p. 347.

17. Mary Baker Eddy, p. 113.

takes a very different line in other respects. Perhaps this is an example of the 'mark left on his habit of thought' to which Mozley refers. However, the comparison with other influences points out that Christian Science may not have been as innovative as might appear superficially. The episode can be taken to confirm the direction in which Kennedy's thought was moving.

After four years at Rugby, Kennedy moved back to Leeds as his father's curate at St Mary's, Quarry Hill, although for the sake of supervision arrangements he was regarded as on the staff of the famous Leeds Parish Church under Dr Samuel Bickersteth. Kennedy showed his ability in difficult circumstances. The parish of St Mary's had been run down by a rapid influx of German Jews, controversy over the Christian Science views of his brother, who preceded him as curate, and by the longevity of his father, now in his eighties. However, Dr Bickersteth reports favourably of the effect Kennedy had (p.72)

In less than two years he scored a great success, His pastoral work and personality at once told . . . I remember several occasions when he asked me to come up and speak to his people when some advance in recovery of parochial efficiency had been made. What strikes me most about this test of his character was the loyalty it revealed in him: loyalty to his aged father, still at the vicarage; loyalty to the Bishop, and to me and to the arrangement under which he was working; most of all, loyalty to his own conscientious convictions and ever-deepening sympathy with the under-dog.

It was in Leeds that Kennedy was discovered as an open-air speaker. The Parish church reacted to misrepresentations by atheistic lecturers to crowds who gathered in Victoria Square, by face to face reply by Christian speakers. They had the luminaries such as Michael Sadler, vice-chancellor of Leeds University or W.H. Bragg, Cavendish Professor of Physics, but the curate from St Mary's Quarry Hill also had the occasional innings. 'I can recollect none who more instantly caught the attention of the crowd' recalls Bickersteth (p. 74). Kennedy gained confidence in himself as a communicator as a result of this

experience (p. 74).

If 'they thowt he was only a pup because of his short tail' alluding to his short coat, they also knew he could bark, and if need be bite, never viciously but with vigour. Certainly they would never have accused him of the unpardonable fault of 'swallowing t' cyclopaedia', that was their way of objecting to sesquipedalia verba. I can hear and see him now, speaking in short sharp sentences, sometimes with a good story, always with a good argument, soon leaning forward in the attitude of John Knox as he warmed to his subject.

Nineteen fourteen was a year of transition. Kennedy's father died, he married Emily Catlow, he moved to St Paul's Worcester as vicar.

Two months after his induction at Worcester war broke out.

Kennedy spent eighteen months at St Pauls before being appointed a temporary chaplain to the forces. W. Moore Ede has described his incumbency in glowing terms (pp. 87-111), but there is little that this setting appears to evoke in the development of Kennedy's religious thought. Nevertheless, his priorities in parish strategy are indicative of the state of his thinking. One thing he would never abandon even when overworked, was the celebration of Holy Communion. The sacrament was central in Kennedy's religious life, and no matter how worn out he might be, he would not consent to his people transferring a short distance to the cathedral for even one service. His colleague at St Paul's, John Hunt, reveals another priority in explaining why Kennedy was often exhausted (pp97-98):

The interviews with troubled or inquiring souls afterwards (evensong) often went on for hours and it was true of him as of his Master that he often had little leisure even to eat, or sleep. After some services at St Paul's and elsewhere it was literally true there were 100 people to see him, and many souls were led on to the discovery of the power of God and none were sent empty away. This was often a great burden as anyone who deals with souls knows.

Moore Ede speaks highly of Kennedy as a confessor. 'He was so understanding and so sympathetic with sinners - it would be comparatively easy to talk to him of temptation and trials' (p. 92). The social priority was inseparable from the religious concern.

The hundreds who came to see him, came with their social ailments, as well as religious difficulties. In responding to the needs of the destitute Kennedy earned again the reputation of being a fool with his money. That reputation is a failure to perceive his priorities, as Hunt explains (pp. 93,94):

It was not the fact that he did not know the meaning or value of money: he did, and with a deep understanding of its use and limits which will come as a surprise to many people. He did not develop the 'acquisitive instinct', and this made him shed not only his own money, but his possessions everywhere . . . However, he was studiously careful to see that parochial monies, donations and any gifts entrusted to him were used to the best possible advantage.

War overshadowed much of the period in Worcester. At first Kennedy was inflamed with the crusading spirit. He wrote in St Paul's parish magazine in September 1914 'I cannot say too strongly that I believe every able-bodied man ought to volunteer for service everywhere. There ought to be no shirking of that duty' (p. 99). He felt it part of his task to maintain war morale in his flock: 'It remains for us to keep a brave face, to shed our tears in secret and wear our smiles in public, to be sober and chivalrous in victory, patient and steady in defeat' (p. 100). As soon as he could make provision for a replacement at St Paul's, it was not until December 1915, he went out as a chaplain to the British Expeditionary Forces in France. In the meantime he preached at the occasional cathedral church parade for troops stationed at the Worcester training centre, and held them spellbound.

It was this characteristic of being able to hold men spellbound which created Kennedy's reputation in the army. Initially he was placed at a railway sidings to encourage troops as they passed through. Such was his ability to communicate that it was arranged he should give a series of talks in a local hotel. The result appears incredible. The climax was the subject 'Christ or the Kaiser?' Kennedy presented the

message of the cross for an hour and then sat down. There was a moment of silence. Then, Kennedy wrote home, 'they roared, and their roar was in answer to the call of Christ. . . It sounded strange to hear men cheer Christ . . . There was the awe, the hush the silence, and then the roar, and it meant real homage from men who were, hundreds of them, going to the death' (p. 124). After this his reputation spread by rumour and report. Those talks were later published as chapters of Rough Talks by a Padre.¹⁸ They have not been read and valued as his later writings. They are a challenge to self-dedication, by an orator who appears to have no scruples about being used as a morale booster, and who genuinely believes in the justness of the war. The most formative influence on Kennedy was yet to come. It has to be remembered that as he spoke in the Hotel de Ville at Rouen, neither he nor most of his audience had heard a shot or seen a trench. Kennedy was always quick to put himself into other peoples shoes, and to sympathise with them as confessor or preacher, as he understood the desire to be emboldened for the fight at the Hotel de Ville. It was as he experienced, and put himself into the experience of others, in the horror of combat that his characteristic religious thought emerged. Kennedy brought the resources and abilities we have been considering to bear on the problems of suffering and warfare, and there came forth a man and a message which many hailed as prophetic. The message adapted itself after the war, in particular it was refined and developed, but it did not abandon the essential position reached during the war. That is to say, the war years inspired the industrial, social and psychological thought expressed during the nineteen twenties. Along these lines note that P.T.R. Kirk of the Industrial Christian Fellowship invited Kennedy

18. G.A. Studdert Kennedy, Rough Talks by a Padre, (London, 1918) abbreviation hereafter RT.

to be messenger in 1919 because he had already, at the end of the war, the industrial message that Kirk wanted; and thatⁱⁿ his last major work The Warrior, The Woman and the Christ (1928), a psychological study, there are two war themes, suffering and warfare re clothed as self-sacrifice and struggle.

Fortunately for this study Kennedy has left a record of some of his thoughts, 'the inner ruminations of an incurably religious man under battle conditions'¹⁹ in The Hardest Part. The next four chapters contain an exposition of his convictions. As Kennedy considered the godforsakenness of war he developed a form of agnosticism. Whereas at one time he might argue with Mozley that 'sorrow, when it came into the life of an individual, should not be simply borne but welcomed; since it had its source in the direct act, amounting almost to intervention on the part of God', (p. 43) now he could no longer believe in the mighty God who could intervene in such a way. If God is Almighty and could relieve the suffering of war but he chooses not to do so, then he is not a God in whom Kennedy wishes to believe. The cruel potentate he considers to be a blasphemy. The agnosticism becomes a useful tool in Kennedy's hands for expressing what many others felt during the war. Equally, the emphasis he placed instead upon Jesus Christ, as a suffering God was a mode of belief which was functional for him and many others. God was, therefore, to be interpreted through the revelation of Jesus Christ, as a suffering God. Kennedy unfolded the suffering motif in the course of his writings as further influences drew out different aspects of his thought. He had a ready message for post-war reconstruction. He could create hope with the notion of the onward struggle together with the suffering God

19. G.A. Studdert Kennedy, The Hardest Part, (London, 1918) p. 189. abbreviated hereafter HP.

towards the kingdom. He had a message for industry, to which he could speak of self-sacrificial co-operation. He had a category of thought which could relate current psychology to the religious striving of the mind.

Kennedy died prematurely on March 8th, 1929 at the age of forty six, worn out by travelling and speaking. It was characteristic of the man to be reckless in self-giving. Many mourned the passing of a prophet, visionary and leader.

CHAPTER THREE

THE RELIGIOUS THOUGHT OF G.A. STUDDERT KENNEDY

1. HIS WRITINGS

On the face of it, the scattered and occasional writings of Kennedy are the sort of literary production which one would expect to find internally inconsistent and inherently superficial. Yet Roger Lloyd has written of Kennedy, 'behind all he said there was a profound and coherent system of philosophy'.¹

This chapter reviews Kennedy's writings, as it cannot be assumed that all of his works are widely known, and demonstrates an overall consistency and development. Then, having indicated the nature of the integrity of thought which underlies his writings, it is possible to go on, in chapters four to six, to survey specific themes so as to elucidate particular features of Kennedy's religious thought and further substantiate its coherence.

The Religious Difficulties of the Private Soldier, essay in The Church in the Furnace (1917). This is a book of essays by seventeen chaplains on active service united by the common theme of belief that the church has seen 'the pure metal dropping apart from the dross'² in the furnace of the war, and cannot be content with a return to pre-war conditions again. Kennedy's essay attempts to deal with the nagging religious questions of the soldier, such as: the propriety of war, evil, belief in God, prayer and church reform. The essay attracted a good deal of attention when it was first published. It was suggested that it should be published as a popular pamphlet, but

1. Roger Lloyd, II 15.

2. CF p. ix.

Kennedy edited it and included it, in a more vulgar style, as the last chapter of Rough Talks by a Padre. This essay gave Kennedy a belief in his ability to communicate in print.

Rough Rhymes of a Padre, (1917)³

More Rough Rhymes of a Padre, (1918)³

Peace Rhymes of a Padre, (1920)³

The Sorrows of God and other Poems (1921)³

Songs of Faith and Doubt, (1922)³

The Unutterable Beauty, (1927)³

These are collections of doggerel and rhymes which express in simple language, some in soldier slang, the often inarticulate problems of soldiers and families, workers, and post-war society. The rhymes came about at the initial suggestion of Frederick Macnutt (editor of CF) with whom Kennedy was conducting the National Mission in Boulogne. Macnutt suggested that Kennedy put down the substance of his addresses into 'soldier dialect' verse in the style of Rudyard Kipling. The result was successful and grew to become Rough Rhymes. This work established the name of 'Woodbine Willie', already growing by report of his addresses. Bernard Hancock, writing of the impact of Kennedy's verse testifies of the reception of the book, 'one copy was introduced at Southampton Military Hospital during the war. The patients became so interested in it, it passed through so many hands, was copied out so many times, that at last it had to be added to the casualty list as "dangerously wounded"'.⁴

3. All published at London. Rough Rhymes and More Rough Rhymes published under the pseudonym Woodbine Willie. All references are to the final collected edition, The Unutterable Beauty, abbreviation hereafter UB.

4. Bernard M. Hancock, 'Woodbine Willie', Torch, Journal of the Industrial Christian Fellowship, 1 No 2 (May 1920), 13.

4. Bernard

Hancock goes on to give a valuable contemporary analysis of why the verse was well received. 'He is not only a poet and an orator; but in an exceptional degree he can express the deepest problems in the language understood of the simplest, and his hearers can say of him what was said of others long ago: "We do hear him speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God"'.⁴ Having established success, one volume followed another until a few years after the war when new compositions became infrequent. The verse illustrates poignantly the thought found in Kennedy's contemporary writings, especially The Hardest Part, and Lies! and Food for the Fed-up. The medium of verse allows Kennedy more scope for thinking his thoughts in other's shoes, but verse and prose have the same themes: the suffering God sacrifice, constructive conflict. Without the benefit of the later books for comparison an Expository Times review declares 'the theme which has taken possession of him is the sorrow and suffering of God'.⁵

The Hardest Part, (1918)

This book asks the question 'What is God like?'. Prompted by the difficulty of believing in the providence of the 'Almighty' God in the face of extreme suffering and meaninglessness, Kennedy works through his war-time recollections to his characteristic Christocentric thought. He submits that God is revealed through Jesus Christ as the suffering God, a God who is not almighty in his power to eliminate evil at a stroke. God is not almighty because he wills freedom, rather than coercion. Nevertheless the defeat of evil is the constant struggle of God by the means of freedom. This theodicy turns out to be enormously suggestive. On the one hand it can be used to explain why the Bible is not 'Almighty' in verbal

5. Expository Times, 29 (1917/18) 384.

inspiration, or why the Church is not 'Almighty' in its structure; on the other it acts as a programme for the future. By involving oneself in God's work of struggle against evil, one is involved in the reconstruction of the world.

The book was not well received by some. It was criticised as 'lacking balance', by which, presumably, is meant the disinclination to reconcile the 'Almighty' God with the self-sacrificing Jesus. It was also criticised for the crudeness and brutality of its style. Kennedy acknowledged the latter criticism in his postscript, pointing out that it was written under battle conditions. It appears, however, that Kennedy positively glories in reflecting the blunt speech of the trenches, making no allowance for those on the home front, who might be ill-disposed to such language.⁶

Rough Talks by a Padre, (1918)

This book is composed of a series of lectures delivered in 1916, with the addition of an essay on the right of the church to be involved at the front, and a popular edition of the essay 'The Religious Difficulties of the Private Soldier'. Kennedy's object in the book is summed up in the answer to the question of the first chapter, 'What the ____ is the Church doing here?' He writes 'It is trying to keep the hope of Heaven alive in the midst of a bloody Hell. It is trying to fill the army and to keep it filled with the Spirit of the Cross.' (p. 31). The book excels in hopefulness and spirit.

The main part of the book comprises the lectures which earned Kennedy his reputation as a speaker, in the army. He shows evidence

6. An example of offence is William Temple in BHF p. 207.

of detailed study, in his knowledge of Prussian militarism (pp. 46-52) or in the economics of war (p. 160), yet it is the most superficial of his books. Kennedy jumps rashly on to the bandwagon of boosting morale, and deals with such topics as : the pugnacity of the British, the militarism of the Germans; the British belief in freedom; prostitution, gambling, drink; national unity. In the chapter, 'Shall our dead have died in vain?', he baptises the supreme sacrifice of the soldier with the name of Christ, 'It is a sign (the grave cross) that another soul has joined the army of Redemption and has suffered with his Master to uplift and heal the world' (p. 131). Amongst all these subjects, taken by many of the lesser speakers during the war, are specific instances of the 'suffering God' theme which dominates later composition. Kennedy speaks of God as 'captain of the army of innocent suffering' (p. 129) or of God's suffering in 'slowly making civilization out of savagery, at the cost of His own pain' (p. 194). In both cases, the relatively undeveloped picture of the suffering God forms the basis of the argument of the chapter.

Lies!, (1919)

Kennedy wrote a series of articles about disillusionment and restlessness at the end of the war, which were collected into the book Lies!. William Purcell compares it with Food for the Fed-up, written fifteen months later, and says that it 'lacks its cogency, smacks more of the street corner stand, and therefore has less in it of abiding value.'⁷ He cites as an indication of the lack of abiding value, that the anthology, The Best of Studdert Kennedy⁸ does not

7. W. Purcell p. 167.

8. The Best of G.A. Studdert Kennedy: Selected from His Writings by a Friend, edited by Leonard Cutts, (London, 1947).

quote from Lies!. Even so, Lies! had run to fifteen reprints by 1933, and a recent selection of Kennedy's sermons includes a section from Lies!.⁹ Whilst the nature of the book may be recognised as short articles, held together by a common theme, rather than development the importance of the articles should not be undervalued. 'The Lie in the Industrial Revolution' takes hold of some popular feelings of industrial anarchy, and, exposing fallacies, points to mutual co-operation as a mode of reconstruction. 'Street Corner Lies' similarly, recognises the power of the Marxist argument for radical political and economic change, and again points to mutual co-operation. 'Democracy and Human Sin' exposes human sin as the stumbling block of social reconstruction, and insists that the destruction of sin be put on the programme of reconstruction. Kennedy also addresses himself to the difficulty of belief and recasts some of the material in The Hardest Part : 'what is God like?'; God, the sufferer in history; the Bible not Almighty. Finally, there is a suggestive analysis of post-war society in 'Lies and Drugs'. Kennedy speaks of the drugged society (p. 115), 'The great mass of people are calling out for the common drugs - women, beer and business, and the social reformers are drinking deep the drug of furious action . . . Everyone is really clamouring for more drugs to dope themselves with.' Kennedy's rhetoric leads the reader on to the pain of action, in co-operation with God's struggle for reconstruction.

Food for the Fed-up, (1921)¹⁰

This book is a sustained theological exposition of the creed set in

9. C.E. Fant and W.M. Pinson, 20 Centuries of Great Preaching, 12 vols (Waco, Texas, 1971), IX pp 268-273.

10. G.A. Studdert Kennedy, Food for the Fed-up, (London, 1921) abbreviation hereafter **FF**.

popular style and language. It aims to be religious meat and drink for the modern man who sees the human race in terms of progress, because 'the idea of progress has become so dominant and powerful and so widely spread that we must either think out and express our religion in terms of that idea, or go without one altogether' (p. vii). It was well received, as an important and new kind of book. Kennedy provided Christian apologetic in a spicy, and readable form, deliberately aiming at those dull of hearing, fed-up with religion, war, and post-war society. The means by which the creed is to be religious meat and drink, is not by the inculcation of theological propositions, but by providing a purpose for life, 'we must have a creed, a symbol of our faith in this world's final meaning and purpose, or we shall become 'fed-up' with life.' (p. 24). The symbol which Kennedy consistently applies through the creed is the suffering God, which provides meaning and purpose in the programme of progress against evil. A feature standing out in the book is Kennedy's insistent immanence. He examines each of the credal propositions in terms of their relevance to the present, for instance, resurrection is discussed as present deathlessness. Another feature is the psychological discussion. Doctrine is examined in terms of the ability of the mind to appreciate it. There is also a section dealing with Freudian psychology, which Kennedy equates with freedom in sexual morals.

Democracy and the Dog Collar, (1921)¹¹

The book is set in the form of a dialogue between two men: Mr Organised Labour, a composite picture of Mr Smillie and Mr Thomas with a dash of

11. G.A. Studdert Kennedy, Democracy and the Dog Collar, (London, 1921) abbreviation hereafter DDC.

George Lansbury; and Mr Organised Christianity. The book proceeds to look at questions of the relations between the labour movement and the church and the extent to which co-operation may be fostered. The book first appeared as four articles in Torch,¹² in which they were a challenge to the church to appreciate the essential similarities and differences between the two movements. The form of the book is a suitable medium for Kennedy to attack the inactivity of the church on some important social and economic issues, and at the same time present an apology for its stance. It also allows Kennedy to put forward his own solutions, which are essentially co-operative; co-operation between classes; between management and workers; between labour and church. It is to be an active and constructive co-operation in which the costs of co-operation are compensated by the progress of society. However, the stumbling block to co-operation is human sin, particularly selfishness. Here Kennedy challenges the unions to incorporate the vision of a better people in their hope of progress. The lack of credibility in the challenge to the unions to renounce selfishness, and the cumbrous style of the book combine to relegate it to obscurity. However, Kennedy does develop some important ideas in the course of the book. He points out that capital cannot be separated from humanity and pleads for a more human approach to economics (pp. 69-71). He compares industry to priestly sacrifice, 'I want the miner to feel. . . he is a Priest of God, a Priest of Love, called by God to produce warmth and power for his brothers in the world.' (pp. 98,99). And he hopes that the reform of human nature can come by a psychological 'discipline from within', which is the passion for God replacing selfish passion (pp 159-161).

12. The Torch vol 1 Nos 9-12 (December 1920-March 1921)

The Wicket Gate, (1923)¹³

This book is loosely hung on the framework of the Lord's Prayer. Each chapter considers a section of petition. A contemporary review identifies the object of the book:¹⁴

In the opening chapter a really striking picture of the perplexities of our time is given, under the figure of Bunyan's pilgrim desperately looking hither and thither for some way of escape from the city of Destruction, and dimly perceiving the light which shines above the Wicket Gate. To a generation confused in its religious thinking, and with a strong distaste for dogma, the writer offers plain bread for the wayfaring man.

Kennedy takes up many of the perplexities of the people he met travelling round England. In the foreword he says 'there is scarcely a page of it which is not an attempt to answer questions put to me in conversation after meetings and speeches' (p.9). His familiar themes provide him with a route through such questions. He points the pilgrim to involvement in the programme of suffering progress as the shining light. It is noticeable that Kennedy does not write a great deal about the 'suffering God' in this book. Whilst it may be that his thought was evolving beyond what many considered 'a crude and offensive' expression, it is also the case that the questions being asked were changing. At the height of unemployment Kennedy was dealing with such topics as dreams of reconstruction and realism, employment, disillusionment, rationalism, and a host of other contemporary talking points: Bergson, Marx, Freud, Coué, At one point he makes explicit the relation of religion to the world as he sees it. Speaking of the contemporary fear of the secularization of the church he writes, 'but in our terror lest we secularize the sacred, we must not be turned from our true task

13. G.A. Studdert Kennedy, The Wicket Gate; or, Plain Bread (London, 1923). abbreviation hereafter WG.

14. Expository Times 35 (1923/24) 259.

of sanctifying the secular. . . Spirit is not the opposite of matter; it is its true meaning.' (pp 68,69). In the light of this Kennedy can be seen to engage with many 'secular' problems throughout the book and to reveal its sacred meaning as an answer, an answer which requires a further struggle.

The Word and the Work, (1925)¹⁵

The book is an exposition of the opening verses of John's gospel. The theme is that Jesus Christ as the Logos reveals the nature of reality. Jesus Christ is the plan and the purpose of the world, and furthermore he is inherent in its progress. Kennedy uses this universality of Christ to combat the separation of Christianity from the world. For instance, he denies that science and religion are mutually exclusive. God is in scientific progress no less than in creation. Speaking of the assertion that God made the country and man made the town, Kennedy believes that God is present in man's industrial progress but that 'it will become more and more evident that we can only live in the world as we conform to the Christian standard, and attain to the Christian virtues.' (p. 29). There is an implicit development of theme through the book, it is not apparent whether Kennedy intended it or not. Each chapter considers the achievement of right relationship. Chapter one discusses relationship with the Word; chapter two relationship with the world; chapter three relationship with society; chapter four internal harmony between the intellect and passions; chapter five new life; chapters six and seven, involvement with the plan of the Logos. The discussion of society reveals that Kennedy argues for a sacrificial co-operation. In Democracy and the Dog Collar

15. G.A. Studdert Kennedy, The Word and the Work (London, 1925) abbreviation hereafter W & W.

it was argued from the symbol of the suffering God; in The Word and the Work, from the symbol of the Logos. There is an extensive section in which Kennedy applies Jung's psychological theories to religion. He recognises the emotional nature of man and insists that the emotional nature must be harmonized with the intellect. That harmony is religion, 'In the power of the sublime white hot enthusiasm which is true religion, the lower passions are sublimated' (p. 46). The moral renewal of psychological harmony is an aspect of the new life which is to find expression in the 'life of the cross', the plan of the Logos.

I Pronounce Them, (1927)¹⁶

This book is Kennedy's only novel. He used it as a medium for discussing moral questions connected with marriage. He lacked the ability to articulate his characters credibly, and the plot is heavy going. It comes as a shock, therefore, to discover that the novel was adapted for the stage at the Everyman Theatre.¹⁷ The significance of the book lies in its subject, that Kennedy addressed himself at length to the cries for greater sexual freedom current in the nineteen twenties. His content was modern and licentious. He was frank in revealing subjects which the majority would not bring to their lips: adultery, abortion, the dishonesty of social conventions, the depth of feeling in some illicit love. His solution was reactionary. He considered that the Christian way was to bear the suffering of sacrificing desire for the moral principles which his characters at least, believed in at root. The heroic ending has two characters who long to marry, but because

16. G.A. Studdert Kennedy, I Pronounce Them; A story of Man and Wife (London, 1927) abbreviation hereafter IPT.

17. W. Purcell p. 210.

of a divorce know it means disgrace to do so. They separate tragically and Kennedy concludes 'Behind them both I see the figure of Jesus of Nazareth standing, but His back is turned to me, and I cannot see His face' (p. 316). Some of the elements of other books are here: sacrifice and suffering as a part of progress, progress seen in terms of Jesus, who sheds a tear at its cost.

Religion - A Blessing or a Curse? , (1927)¹⁸

This is a pamphlet (16pp) which argues for a central place for religion in contemporary life. Kennedy argues that religion has a central place in man's emotional nature, but that any other religion leads to animal behaviour. He scoffs at the religion of socialism, or nationalism, or industrialism, pointing out that they are selfish, religions which serve the self. The only religion to take full account of the psychology of man is that of Christ which is self-sacrificing, a religion which serves the world.

Environment, (1928)¹⁹

This pamphlet (32pp) contains a great deal of concentrated argument in a short space. Kennedy argues that man reacts according to the stimulation of his environment. However, because of the limitation of mind and perception, all that man is able to possess is a fantasy of his environment, which may bear little or much resemblance to reality. Life constantly tests and modifies the fantasy as a feature of reality touches a feature of the fantasy. Man cannot live unless he provides himself with a reasonable fantasy or picture to live by. Kennedy argues that Jesus Christ,

18. G.A. Studdert Kennedy, Religion - A Blessing or a Curse? present day papers no. 10. Issued by COPEC Central Committee (London, 1927)
19. G.A. Studdert Kennedy, Environment, Affirmations, God in the Modern World, edited by Percy Dearmer (London, 1928) abbreviation E.

the Logos, is the supreme picture to live by, because he is the picture of reality. Therefore, experience will not prove the picture of reality in Jesus Christ to be dysfunctional. Furthermore, in Jesus Christ is the capacity for the whole man to be involved in the picture of reality; the instincts, and passions as well as the intellect. Therefore, if the whole personality is taken up, man becomes instinctively and passionately involved in reality, that is to say, he is psychologically inclined towards those activities which bring the Kingdom of Jesus Christ into being. Kennedy also dismisses a number of alternatives which are intellectual but not emotional; science or rationalism, or passionate but not intellectual such as Marxism or nationalism. A comment which can be made on Kennedy's use of the 'picture of Jesus Christ' is that he presents it rather as a drama. It is drama which has power over the minds of men. The Logos is the universal drama, seen in the 'redemptive agony of the divine life in man' or the perpetual suffering of God in and for Man' (p. 30). Thus the content of the 'picture of reality' he presents, is that of self-sacrifice, and suffering.

The Warrior, The Woman and the Christ, (1928)²⁰

Kennedy wrote few long books which did not have some kind of structure which broke up the development of thought, such as the creed, the Lord's Prayer or John's prologue. The Warrior The Woman and the Christ is one of the few books without such a structure. There is the impression, reading the book, that Kennedy could not sustain his original thought and that the book falls into three sections.

20. G.A. Studdert Kennedy, The Warrior, The Woman and the Christ: A Study of the Leadership of Christ, (London, 1928) abbreviation hereafter WWC

Kennedy sets himself to look at the relationship between the sexes, with the idea of finding a model in Jesus Christ. He succeeds in presenting a well-informed anthropological review of the roles of men and women in society and concludes that monogamous union is the pinnacle of progress. That leads him to the notion of creative conflict. Men and women are inherently different and their interests in marriage are consequently not the same. This is the conflict. It is creative in that a synthesis of the different interests can be made, the 'bridge of Love' (p. 52). Having established the notion of creative conflict Kennedy discusses the principle with respect to peace, economics, and civilization in the central portion of the book. It has some suggestive material on the mode of relation to others within society. Finally the major section of the book turns to Jesus Christ as the model of creative conflict. Kennedy considers passion in universal terms when he says 'His answer was that the passion and power of desire and the lust of life must neither be destroyed, nor restrained, but consecrated and directed to the creation of the Kingdom of God upon earth. His answer was creative.' (p. 191). The passion of Jesus Christ is the supreme creative conflict which reveals the true nature of God, as the suffering God, and provides a drama which satisfies the whole psychology of man. As in Environment but now with a new expression, creative conflict, Kennedy argues, 'Christ's way of imagining the universe is consistent with the facts and is the only dynamic way of conceiving them which can satisfy and save the soul' (p. 267).

The book starts with the acknowledgement that it 'bites off more than it can chew' (p. 9). If it intends, as the early chapters indicate, to provide an explicit morality of sex for post-war society derived from a study of Jesus Christ, then that judgement is sound.

However, the wider consideration of the mode of relation of the individual to spouse, society, and so on, draws out some suggestive material for the implementation of his recurrent theme of progress through suffering.

The New Man in Christ, (undated material, published posthumously, 1932)²¹

Kennedy led many retreats. After his death his addresses were collected, together with some unpublished articles, and edited by the Dean of Worcester. Despite the undated nature of the material, and marked difference of style and purpose from other writings, the book illustrates well the coherence and breadth of Kennedy's thought. Even when his purpose is the recollection of spirituality in a time set apart from business, the familiar themes appear, often set in different language. He might speak of the 'way of the cross' rather than suffering or self-sacrifice. He rarely spoke of 'progress' but inevitably the retreat would be a challenge to involvement with God in creating a better world. A specific example is in a series of addresses on the beatitudes where he sees meekness as a mode for disarmament and industrial concord (p.46). Kennedy reveals a deep grasp of the psychology of retreats in the course of the collection. At one point he consecrates a discovery of psychology to religious use. Reminding his listeners of Mother Julian's use of 'all shall be well' Kennedy advises that ejaculatory prayer be kept in the foreconscious, on the grounds that it will embed itself in the unconscious 'A truth that comes in through the window of consciousness goes right through all the parts of the mind, runs underneath and comes out again in conduct' (p. 77).

21. The New Man in Christ, by G.A. Studdert Kennedy, edited by W. Moore Ede, (London, 1932). Abbreviation hereafter NM.

There is other, scattered, work by Kennedy. He wrote articles for many periodicals, but particularly for Torch, which carried something by him most months from April 1920 to April 1929. Some articles were distributed as leaflets, such as 'The Sorrow of the Idol'²², which speaks of disenchantment with 'religions' other than Christianity, or 'The Challenge of Easter'²³ which speaks of the venture of uncertainty, the sacrifice of the endeavour for the so-called 'good-things' of life, which provides resurrection life. These scattered writings generally reflect concerns in the contemporary books already considered, although for obvious reasons there is a greater emphasis on economic and industrial matter in the articles for Torch.

Three main areas emerge out of the unity of Kennedy's thought: The suffering of God; the concern for the religion and psychology of the individual; and the reconstruction of society. These are the headings of the next three chapters.

22. Central Committee for Church Crusades, leaflet No 14 (Westminster, 1925)

23. Industrial Christian Fellowship, (Westminster, 1929)

THE RELIGIOUS THOUGHT OF G.A. STUDDERT KENNEDY2. THE SUFFERING GOD

Kennedy himself, tells us in the introduction to The Hardest Part that the nature of God was at the centre of his thought during the war years, 'All my experience has grouped and hinged itself upon the answer to this question, asked me at the beginning "What is God like?" because it appears to me to be the only question that ultimately and really matters and must be answered.'¹ The question was taken up because he considered it to lie behind the apathy towards morality and christianity seen in France. The common soldier, he thought, vaguely believed in God as the 'Almighty Father'. A contradiction between the popular thought of the 'Almighty God' and the godforsakenness of war result in apathy and agnosticism. This contradiction might be articulated by the intellectual but more likely it would be felt as a nagging irritation from which relief was ever illusory:²

The ordinary man despairs of solving it, and takes to drink, or cards, or the cinema, or writing to his girl, or cursing the sergeant-major - takes to anything, in fact, which will save him from thought. But all the time the contradiction is there, a dull, aching pain, the toothache of the soul. Such a man does not declare himself agnostic, he simply lights a "fag", and says that it is a "durned queer business," and that he is "d---d if he knows what to make of it."

There is no shortage of poems from the pen of Kennedy at around this period, 1917, which put the contradiction into words, such as the dialect poem 'Sorrow of God':³

And I'm damned if I really see
'Ow the God, who 'as made such a cruel world
Can 'ave Love in 'Is 'eart for men.

1. HP p. xvi.

2. CF pp. 377,8.

3. UB p. 130.

or the satire on the common understanding of religion, 'A Sermon':⁴

So bow you down and worship Him,
Kneel humbly and adore
This Infinitely Loving God
Who is the Lord of War.

The reconciliation of contradiction to which most of the poems lead, begins with the revelation of God on the cross. An event which Kennedy relates several times, appears to be a formative step in this direction. Two months after becoming a chaplain, he met an officer recuperating in hospital, who asked him, "What is God like?". Kennedy pointed to the crucifix above the bed. The officer was disappointed with the answer and complained that the 'Almighty', 'Maker of heaven and earth', 'Monarch of the world', could not be like the broken, bleeding figure on the cross, 'Jesus I know and admire, but what is God Almighty like? To me He is still the unknown God.'⁵ Kennedy took that challenge to say what God is like very seriously, to judge from the volume and centrality of the topic in his writings. His answer to the officer reveals the essential christocentric nature of his thought. He concurred the 'God Almighty' is indeed unknowable, and if he cannot be known, he cannot be worshipped. It is only through Jesus Christ, and his cross that God can be known and worshipped. Kennedy cites H.G. Wells in The Church in the Furnace, 'After all the real God of the Christians is Christ not God Almighty; a poor, mocked and wounded Christ nailed on a cross of matter.'⁶ And he goes on to say that the centre of the worship has always been Christ and him crucified, 'We have always worshipped a suffering God.'⁶

Kennedy was not novel in his period for putting forward the notion of the 'suffering God'. Clearly, in his earliest work, quoted above, he takes up a suggestion from H.G. Wells. It is a theme which

4. UB p. 37.

5. HP p. xiv.

6. CF p. 381.

had been taken up before the war by a number of theologians, particularly 'modernists', and most strongly perhaps, by C.E. Rolt in The World's Redemption (1908) in England or by Horace Bushnell in America. That is not to deny, however, that there is novelty in the particular presentation of Kennedy. The extensive use of 'suffering God' as a dramatic motif is considered worthy of special study in this respect. This section sets out to identify some of the significance of the drama of the suffering God in such areas as morality and salvation, by indicating features of the 'suffering God' theme as put forward by Kennedy.

There are four features which can conveniently be isolated for study:

1. God cannot be known as 'Almighty'
2. God is worshipped as the 'suffering God'
3. The 'suffering God' is the meaning of the world
4. God pours his suffering spirit into christians.

1. GOD ALMIGHTY?

It is necessary to look carefully at what Kennedy was trying to achieve, and at the terms of his argument. when we find in his writings what appears to be a rejection of God as 'Almighty', or a crude treatment of the problems of evil.

He saw clearly disastrous consequences in the popular belief that God is 'Almighty', in that it encourages submission and indifference. He wished to unmask this misconception to reveal an active God as revealed in Christ:⁷

I have shouted out the negative 'Not Almighty' again and again against the popular conception, because life in Peace and War shouts it out at me. But the negative is only

7. HP pp. 201,2.

important so far as it clears away the clouds that hide the great Positive of the All-conquering God revealed in Christ.

Thus it should be understood that when Kennedy writes of the 'Almighty God' he uses the term in a popular sense. When he rejects 'Almighty God' he is attempting to educate a false image. It does not mean that he denies that God is almighty, as we shall see, there is a sense in which he confirms that character. Kennedy's main object was that man should be morally stimulated by God, something he considered to be signally lacking in a fatalistic belief. The heart of the problem in this respect is the lack of credibility or popular understanding of the distinction between the permitting and effective will of God by Kennedy's audience:⁸

Private Peter would have told you that he believed in a Supreme Being. This Being ordered the details of men's lives and arranged the hour of their deaths. He managed everything, and everything that happened was His will. That was the faith that Peter, on being taxed with it, would probably have professed. But it did not interest him or make any difference to him. In truth he did not really believe it in any living sense. It was not his own faith; it was borrowed. Dimly, I believe, he felt that it was absurd in the face of facts. This Supreme Being (which is the plain man's name for "The Unknown God") was a puzzle which he could not solve.

In the context of the evils of poverty or war Kennedy was irritated by the belief that what God permits, man can do nothing about. It was a common comfort during the war to say that atrocities must be endured because they were the will of God. That is to say, there was a tendency to ascribe that which God allows, to His irresistible effective will:⁹

Christian preaching has very often consisted in pious attempts to make evil good, in order to save God's face . . . Passive resignation to evil as though it were God's will has been exalted into a virtue, and consequently the Christianity which should have turned the world upside-down has been turned into a method of keeping it as it is and meekly accepting its

8. HP p. 150.

9. HP pp. 385,6.

wrong-side-upness as the discipline of Almighty God.

Kennedy's solution to the apparent confusion over the will of God, was to direct attention to what can be known in experience of the almightiness of God, rather than to the question of will.

In The Hardest Part Kennedy examines some of the sources of the revelation of God, and fails to find a God Who is 'Almighty' in the popular sense outlined. History does not reveal 'Almighty' character. At any given time the world is a turbulent place. There are checks and failures which do not correspond to the idea of consistent development to the plan of an 'Almighty' power:¹⁰

The story of this strange world's growth, as I have read it, is the story of a ceaseless war. . . It is the story of many failures, out of which has come success; it is a tale of mysterious obstacles marvellously overcome, and of victory wrung by stupendous effort from the very heart of defeat. Nature is a triumph, a victory over enemies and obstacles the nature of which we cannot comprehend.

Nor does Kennedy find a consistent witness to the 'Almighty God' in the Bible. He traces a changing attitude from Old to New Testament. The Old Testament presents the wrathful, remote 'Almighty' God, whereas the New Testament reveals the love and closeness of the 'suffering God'. There is a shocking superficiality in this exegesis. It does violence to the varieties of thought in both Old and New Testament. It fails to draw on possible sources for the theme of the 'suffering God' in the Old Testament, such as, a contrast of the living God of the Hebrews with the unknown eternal God of the Greeks¹¹ or the 'yearning of God' in Jeremiah 31.20; or Isaiah 63.15.¹² It is pertinent to point out, however, that as an estimate of what the ill-taught might see in the two testaments, namely the wrath of God in the Old, and the love of Jesus in the New, Kennedy was

10. HP pp. 24,5.

11. such as argued by Norman Snaith, in The God that Never Was, (Oxford, 1971).

12. see Kazoh Kitamori, Theology of the Pain of God, first British edition, (London, 1966)

not far off the mark in addressing the understanding of his audience. He suggests to his readers that the height of the revelation of God is in the humiliation and suffering of Jesus Christ, rather than in the pictures of power and wrath in the Old Testament.

Thus in speaking of the way in which God allows such evils as poverty or war, Kennedy suggests it is more appropriate to say God suffers evil than to say he wills it. The word 'Almighty' suggests a God who is passionless and inhuman because he fails to act to prevent the inhumanity of war. The psychological effect of the picture of a God whose will deliberately permits evil is indifference towards religion and morality. It leads to inactivity as, 'the law of death which avoids mental and moral effort . . . servile reverence and submission to the will of an unknown God'¹³ or it leads to the rejection of religion:¹⁴

Practically speaking, men have decided that there is much in the world that is not God's will, but is wrong, and must be abolished. Theoretical religion has lagged behind, and hung on still to the Almighty Monarch to Whom all things do bow and obey. The result is that many of the finest practical people have no use for religion.

However the effect of the picture of a God who suffers evil is quite different, in that it arouses men to devotion and activity.

Even so Kennedy does believe that God is 'Almighty' in an eschatological sense. In his commentary on the creed, Food for the Fed-up he says that the statement 'I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth' is a bet.¹⁵ It is the assertion that you back God with your own moral effort, to win His struggle in the end, 'it is the Church Army's oath of allegiance, and its battle-cry. It is said standing with our faces turned towards God's altar and the dawn of the day whence comes the final victory

13. DDC pp. 95,6.

14. HP pp. 87,8.

15. FF p. 27.

of Light'¹⁶ That is, God is not to be known as finally 'Almighty' in the present, but the belief of that He is to be known as 'Almighty' in the future, is itself a present experience of hope, meaning and succour. The drama of the God who will be 'Almighty' has a satisfying significance with which man has the option of identifying himself.

2. THE SUFFERING GOD

Kennedy's simple answer to the question 'what is God like?' is to point to the cross as the revelation of God. The cross reveals the strife, love, suffering and humiliation of Christ, which is the key to penetrating the otherwise unknowable nature of God. The picture of Christ inspires Kennedy to see the suffering God in nature:¹⁷

One remembers the great words, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father', and there comes a burst of light, and one sees Nature in Christ, and Christ in Nature. One sees in Christ the Revelation of suffering striving, tortured Love which Nature itself would lead us to expect. I can see the face of Jesus Christ staring up at me out of the pages of a scientific text-book which tells me the story of the patient, painful progress of a great plan. I have no fear of Nature's horror chambers; they are just God's Cross, and I know that the Cross is followed by an Empty Tomb, and victory.

or in history:¹⁸

I do not understand how man can fail to see in the history of the world the vision of the suffering God. I do not see how man can ever see in it the vision of a Supreme powerful and easily triumphant God. I do not understand, I say, how any man with an open mind can fail to see the spirit of love, which is the Spirit of God revealed in Christ, struggling and striving to express itself down the ages.

The cost of the resurrection triumph of God in struggle and strife is an important part of that revelation, such that Kennedy can speak

16. CF p. 385.

17. HP p. 28.

18. L. p. 92.

of God's sorrow and pain in creation:¹⁹

The Bible is the history of God's agony in creation and redemption. It shows how painfully and slowly God managed to overcome the obstacles of Man's stupidity and sin, and show him the truth which is eternal life in Christ. The life and death of Christ are the epoch-making events in the great story of Divine patience and pain, and in the light of the Cross all history becomes luminous. In the Cross God gathers up all history into a moment of time, and shows to us the meaning of it. It is the act in time which reveals to us the eternal activity of suffering and redeeming love all down the ages.

It would be misleading to use the term 'patripassian' of Kennedy when we find him using 'suffering God' in this way. There are two grounds for avoiding the term. Firstly, there is J.K. Mozley's warning in the Impassibility of God, 'Language of a liturgical or devotional character must not be pressed into the service of theological theory'²⁰. Secondly, although he contends that the nature of God is known through the revealed nature of Jesus Christ, Kennedy does not embrace that modalistic view of the trinity which is a part of classical patripassianism. Kennedy arrives at the idea of the suffering Father because he considers a non-suffering Father to be practically inappropriate, and not because he is unable to distinguish members of the trinity. The object of focus in Kennedy is the Father, whose nature is seen to be compassionate, through the particular revelation of Jesus Christ in the Bible, and through the natural revelation of nature and history. Then he argues, because the revealed Father is compassionate, the Son suffers, and further, the Spirit of suffering is poured into His people. Or again, we should see that the questioning of 'Almighty' God is, if not prior to, then separate from, the limitations of God implied in the presentation

19. HP pp. 61,2.

20. J.K. Mozley, The Impassibility of God, (London, 1926) p. 6.

of the suffering Jesus Christ. Typically Kennedy sees the two views of God as alternatives: 'The ordinary man was puzzled. The Almighty Caesar God seated on His throne alternated with the suffering figure on the cross'.²¹ He goes on to say that the 'Almighty' God does not make sense to him, but that the suffering God makes every sense. Therefore we are discussing that the nature of God which will make sense to the world, and not, strictly, the participation of the Father in the Son's passion. It is according to Kennedy a suffering God that man needs. It is only such a God that man can understand and love, and in return only such a God can close enough through His humanity to succour and comfort man, as here where Kennedy reveals some of the devotional fulfilment he finds in God.²²

(he, ?
could ?

If it were a choice between that God (Almighty Ruler) and no God, I would be an atheist, But how near the God Whom Christ revealed comes at a time like this; nearer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet, the Father of sorrows and love Who spoke through the crucified Son.

O Christ my God, my only God, so near, so suffering, and so strong, come down into my soul, and into the souls of all my comrades and make us strong to suffer for honour and for right.

So far, we have concentrated on the nature of the suffering God as put forward in The Hardest Part in which the suffering of the evils of war plays a principle part. In general however, suffering is both too limited a term to comprehend all that Jesus Christ reveals of the nature of God, and too limited a term for Kennedy in his later peace-time thought. Most of the usual range of attributes of the incarnate Christ, Kennedy somewhere applies to God. But there are four attributes in particular: suffering, love, self-sacrifice, and strife, which occur repeatedly in his addresses. These four are used with a considerable degree of interchangeability which prompts

21. HP. p. 155.

22. HP. p. 12.

the search for a single word which comprehends the entire usage. Agape is suggestive in the sense of active, costly love, and there is a section in The New Man in Christ, in an address on charity, where love, suffering, and sacrifice are brought together in the word agape:²³

When the Christian saints wanted to find a name for the highest kind of Love, the generous desire to suffer for and help the human race, they invented a new word altogether and called it 'agape', and it was that word which the translators of our New Testament rendered as 'charity'. Charity therefore really means the desire to make men, the finest kind of men and women, and the willingness to sacrifice one's own interests and pleasures to do it.

However, it is not a word which is frequently used by Kennedy. In order to stay close to his prevalent usage, the term, 'suffering God', is used in a technical sense to include the notion of suffering, striving, self-sacrificial love. It is important to grasp the nuances in the concept of the 'suffering God' in order to hold together the different phases of Kennedy's writing. Whilst in the early war works such as, The Church in the Furnace, Rough Talks by a Padre, and The Hardest Part, war-suffering is a major theme, there is in later works what some have seen as a toning down of the patripassian motif, as the word 'suffering' is less frequently used. Self-sacrifice, which is important in the war works, continues to be found, and love, and strife emerge more strongly in the latest works. There is, altogether, no diminishing of the wider theme of suffering, including the four words, although a shift of emphasis with changing conditions is evident. Whilst one of the earliest books, The Hardest Part is a study of the suffering God, the last before he died, The Warrior The Woman and the Christ, is a major study of creative love.

Equally whilst the suffering of the war brought the question of the nature of God into sharper focus, Kennedy had begun to question

23. NM. p. 229.

the nature of God before the war and to consider the revelation of the suffering God:²⁴

The vision of the Suffering God revealed in Jesus Christ, and the necessary Truth of it, first began to dawn on me in the narrow streets and shadowed homes of an English slum. All that War has done is to batter the essential Truth of it deeper in, and cast a fiercer light upon the Cross. A battle-field is more striking, but scarcely more crude and brutal than a slum. Only we have all been suddenly forced to realise war more or less, where it has taken God centuries to make some of us recognise the existence of slums.

3. MAN'S NEED OF GOD

The inquiry into the Nature of God is a search for meaning, and the search for a drama into which man can be caught up. Earlier mention was made of Kennedy's concern about apathy and agnosticism, and the previous sections have illustrated first, that 'Almighty God' is a practically inappropriate concept for Kennedy, and, then, that meaning can be found in the 'suffering God'. The next section looks at the suffering spirit poured into Christians, but first it is necessary to break into the theme of suffering with an examination of what lies behind the search for meaning and drama. Mention has been made of man's devotional need of a God who can be close and succouring in time of war. In later works, particularly in the essay 'Environment', some of the implicit psychological detail of the search for meaning is worked out more rigorously. Kennedy demonstrates how certain dramatic motifs associated with a 'suffering God' may provide a feeling of belonging to reality and motivation, in context of lostness or godforsakenness.

In 'Environment' (p. 14) attention is directed to the distinction between fantasy and reality. The effective environment which

24. HP. pp. 193,4

determines the energy and direction of a person's actions is not the actual environment, but the picture of the environment he carries in his mind. That picture can vary from approximately true to utter unreality, yet the degree of divorce from reality does not matter to a man's action. He will act according to his picture because it appears true to him at the time. Ultimately, however, the picture is tested by reality, according to whether the picture is validated or invalidated by the experience further events offer:²⁵

If then our picture is a true one, we experience an intensified conscious vitality, we have a sensation of power, pleasure, and success. If it be a false one, we feel as though we are butting our heads against a stone wall, we experience a diminished vitality, and we have a sensation of weakness, pain and futility.

Thus the quest for a true picture of reality is essential for man's well-being, but how is the true picture to be found? The scientific method is an excellent testing procedure, but it is no royal road of escape from fantasy because:²⁶

the area of our environment of which we can obtain a reasonably well tested picture is, compared with the whole, extremely small, and there is no time to apply adequate tests, even if we could devise them.

Man has to act in the present with whatever caricature of reality he has. Relation with other people, for instance, is an area of constant reaction where it is treacherously difficult to approach reality. Nowhere are the senses more inadequate and judgement more fallible than in the attempt to grasp the reality of another person. No-one can claim to be a realist because reality is beyond the grasp. Man's endeavour is at best the quest for the most adequate fantasy. Now it has also to be recognised that the picture of reality is influenced by a person's impulses and desires. It is self-deception to suppose that one can escape from one's feelings and passions, and by pure

25. E. p. 15.

26. E. p. 17.

rationality arrive at reality. No-one can escape from the subjective propensities of his own world. Each man has his passions and an adequate picture of the world for him must make allowances for them. It is necessary for him to create a workable unification and harmony of his own passions and lift them to the reality beyond himself:²⁷

That is to say that the tendency of the human mind to dramatize reality is an inevitable and legitimate tendency which must not be despised or sacrificed to pseudo-rationalist demands which are based upon unconscious self-deception.

The function of religion is to provide a passion picture of reality, taking the whole man up into things as they really are. Nevertheless, the passion picture is to be ruthlessly tested against reality by science. Kennedy has confidence in Christianity that 'the Christ-drama supplies a passion picture of the real environment which can and will satisfy every test which can legitimately be applied to it.'²⁸ An adequate picture must have the quality of drama, and thus have an underlying anthropocentric character, 'a picture which is to concentrate, harmonize, and adequately sublimate the passions of humanity cannot be less than human.'²⁸ The drama which Kennedy puts forward as the image of reality is the drama of Jesus Christ:²⁹

He is the LOGOS - the significance or meaning - the real environment, made flesh, that is expressing itself in terms of human personality, the only terms in which that significance could be made intelligible to man.

Kennedy distinguishes acts in the drama of Jesus Christ, such as, birth, resurrection, ascension, or of divine life in man. The details vary, but the essential feature remains that it is the drama of love, which provides the supreme image of reality:³⁰

It is this sublime and transcendently beautiful drama of

27. E. p. 26.

28. E. p. 27.

29. E. p. 29.

30. E. p. 31.

suffering Love which supplies what I believe to be the true passion picture of the real environment. In the light of it I interpret the times in which I live, and the vast changes that are taking place around me. As I sit and write I can almost hear the barriers of race, nation, and class breaking down under the grinding pressure of the environment. . . There is agony, there will be more life. God in Christ is our real environment in whom we live and move and have our being.

The optimism Kennedy reveals in 'I can almost hear the barriers. . . breaking' casts doubt on whether it is actually an image of reality he seeks. Here he writes about an image of hope.

This examination of the more rigorous treatment of drama in 'Environment' brings out undeveloped detail of the search for meaning in The Hardest Part and the other early works. It indicates that the meaning sought in the suffering Father is not just at a rational level. It looks deeper for a story, a myth, which can take up the emotions as well as the mind, in a life relation with God and the world, and incidentally pay out the concrete dividends of being in touch with ultimate reality. As an example of the religious dividends of having 'a true passion picture of the real environment', notice the benefits that accrue in the short passage above: light to interpret the times; security in change; hope; theodicy; devotion. The passion picture has four facets which give meaning and significance to life: the nature of God is seen to be suffering love; Christ worked his purpose through suffering love; the nature of world process is suffering love; and man is in touch with reality as his social and individual morality corresponds to the Logos, suffering love.

4. THE SPIRIT OF LOVE IN MAN

We have seen in Kennedy's thought that the nature of God is considered to be suffering love, so it follows that godliness in man and his world is to share in suffering love. This is the key concept which lies behind the detail of his morality and strategy. There are two points to consider; (a) the means by which man shares in suffering

love; and (b) the effect and implications for individuals and society as suffering love is worked out. These form the subjects of the next two chapters.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RELIGIOUS THOUGHT OF G.A. STUDDERT KENNEDY3. THE RELIGION AND PSYCHOLOGY OF THE INDIVIDUAL

This chapter examines Studdert Kennedy's view of the salvation of the individual. It cannot be separated entirely from the following chapter, in that salvation brings the individual into relation with society and the world. Nevertheless, as Kennedy has remarked, 'there must be an individualistic beginning to the social gospel'.¹ Firstly it is important to consider the view of sin present in the writings of Kennedy before proceeding to deal with salvation, because certain implications of his view of sin become apparent in the solutions for sin he offers.

Kennedy accepts the label 'modernist' in that he has an evolutionary view of evil:²

It is perhaps because I am a modern man, or perhaps because I am a modernist - although I'm blest if I really know what that means - that I find the most helpful way of thinking about evil is the modern way of looking upon it as the remains of the monkey in me. I don't pretend that it is an adequate account of the origin of evil, but then there isn't one. It's just as good an explanation as the Fall - better, because if it is not true, it is founded on facts and not false.

Kennedy takes what John Hick has termed the 'Irenaean' approach to the problem of evil.³ That is, that man has been created immature and lives in a world of mingled good and evil, as a divinely appointed environment for man's development towards the perfection that God purposes for him. This approach had an abundant revival in the nineteenth century. A leading theme of contemporary thought was the conception of evolution, lifted from the geological and biological sphere to be a universal paradigm, bolstered by a generally expansive economy. Kennedy follows the essential lines of well-known works of

1. 'Summary of Devotional Addresses', in The Social Teaching of the Sacraments, Report of the Second Anglican Catholic Summer School of Sociology, edited by M.E. Reckitt (1926).

2. L. p.55.

3. John Hick, Evil and the God of Love (London 1968), Part III.

the late nineteenth century, such as, J.R. Illingworth's essay in *Lux Mundi*⁴ and Henry Drummond's popular Lowell lectures, 'The Ascent of Man'⁵ in seeing the divine creativity still at work in relation to man and drawing him on to a perfection as yet realized.

It is also to the point to note that Kennedy is firm in rejecting the main alternative to the 'Irenaeian' approach to the problem of evil, the 'Augustinian' approach. It is implied in the quotation above that Kennedy finds difficulty in 'the Fall' as an explanation of evil. In particular he considers that not all the evil he sees in the world can be seen as stemming from an act of will:⁶

It is not possible to account for all the hideous misery that has marked the growth of Man as being the consequence of sin - unless you interpret sin in a wider sense than the word can really bear. It must be taken to include ignorance, dullness of imagination, feebleness of mind, and a host of other factors for which man cannot be held wholly responsible either as an individual or as a race. Religion in the past has suffered because it concentrates all its attention on sin as deliberate rebellion against God, and passed over the part that ignorance and feebleness have played in making this age long Calvary. This has been due to the fact that we have separated the Creation of the World from its Redemption, basing our thought upon the doctrine of the Fall and man's free will.

Evil for Kennedy lies in lack of creativity, 'The first and last enemy for God the Creator, is Death, - nothingness, non-existence. That is what evil is in its essence - nothingness'⁷. What is good is that which is created, that which is in process of creation, so Kennedy can say of man, for instance, 'I assume, because the universe compels me to assume, that human personality is the greatest thing on Earth, the supreme achievement of God . . . And in spite of his sin, of his cruelty, and of his ugliness, I maintain that the greatest thing on Earth is a man.'⁸

4. *Lux Mundi*, edited by Charles Gore (London 1889), chapter 5
The Incarnation and Development.

5. *The Ascent of Man*, (London 1894).

6. FF, p. 201,2.

7. FF, p. 202.

8. WG, p. 81.

Conversely evil is that which has not yet reached the height of creation. This does not mean that Kennedy saw the evils of the world as merely not having reached the creative height, he recognised that creation could be negated by sin:⁹

All the evidence, the piled-up heap of evidence, contradicts the idea that the world is merely imperfect; there is crushing proof that it is also diseased. It is not only an infant, it is an unhealthy infant, and therefore needs not merely education and development, but positive healing and redemption - it needs the forgiveness of sins.

Kennedy interprets the disease, sin, as the conscious decision not to go on further in the creative process:¹⁰

Sin, deliberate sin, is conscious refusal to accept the struggle for existence which life must make - conscious refusal to bear the cross. The only cure for sin is Life, more Life. The selfish man is a dying man. His world is small and must grow smaller . . . it ends in death, extinction.

Here Kennedy appears to make use of an idea popularized by, among others, Henry Drummond, that selflessness is the true direction of evolution, and sinful diversion into selfishness, is into a cul-de-sac of extinction. Kennedy also appears to make use of concepts from Henri Bergson.¹¹ Bergson insisted that by virtue of the nature of consciousness, reality should be considered in terms of a movement, a movement which implies novelty and creativity. Reality thus disclosed is a dynamic, creative and continuous coming into being, a vital impetus. In the evolutionary process one can see the positive striving of the vital impetus. Kennedy sees sin as a selfish opting out of this reality and so falling from the 'positive striving of the vital impetus'.

Kennedy described himself as a 'modernist'. It is not to supposed

9. WG, p. 173

10. FF, p. 203

11. Acknowledged by Kennedy in CF, p. 389, WG, p. 177. Henri Bergson Creative Evolution.

from this, as the discussion of his view of sin has brought out, that he held a reduced view of the nature of sin, as did some contemporary 'modernists'. Nor is it to be supposed that he undervalued its seriousness, as was the tendency with the New Theology.¹² Kennedy denigrated the tendency of some of his time to avoid thinking about sin, writing, 'we want to bring back the sense of sin to the world as it is prevalently lacking at present.'¹³ He was at pains to do this in order to point out that neither man nor society could be whole until sin was dealt with.

To summarize this discussion of sin it can be noted that sin is seen not so much as a fall from grace as the failure to be involved in a creative striving towards grace. Sin is that lower part of man, selfishness, which has not awakened to the reality of the world as it will be, revealed in the selfless Christ. The implications of this approach can be seen more clearly as we turn to Kennedy's solutions for sin.

Kennedy did not turn to any doctrine of Atonement as a solution for sin. Quite the contrary, he was particularly unimpressed by the favoured theologians of his day:¹⁴

Dr Dale explained the Atonement to me as a youth and was harder to grasp than the Cross itself. Dr Moberly was worse. I have never read a book on the Atonement that did not puzzle me more than the puzzle.

The doctrines of the atonement fail to satisfy Kennedy for two reasons, firstly, there is the criticism that they are insufficiently relevant to the world, and secondly, the main reasoning which comprehends the

12. For instance R.J. Campbell, *The New Theology*, (London 1907), p. 153 'Sin itself is a quest for God - a blundering quest, but a quest for all that. The man who got dead drunk last night did so because of the barriers of his limitations, to express himself, and to realize more abundant life'.

13. NM, p. 41.

14. FF, p. 192.

first, that they are not compatible with the revelation of the suffering God.

1. ATONEMENT AND LACK OF RELEVANCE TO THE WORLD

Kennedy satirizes a caricature of the doctrine of atonement as the common man might see it to illustrate its irrelevance to him. He imagines the world as God's garden of glorious flowers turned into a ruined wilderness of weeds in which man has to toil and sweat to wring subsistence.¹⁵

Christ comes into the wilderness with an offer of salvation for those who would accept. Unfortunately the terms of the offer do not live up to expectation on examination. The terms mean that the ruin is not retrieved at all, it remains a splendid ruin, and further, it is only a few chosen who are saved, and for even them it is not to be snatched from the ruin, but to be preserved in it for a while, for a life to come after death. The caricature is not just, as there are few presentations of atonement which do not have, at the very least, immanent implications. But it demonstrates well Kennedy's concern for a doctrine of atonement which makes a difference to the world, and his dissatisfaction with a particular kind of theory. Again, in a passage in Rough Talks by a Padre he gives an example of the kind of criticism that was being made to him by soldiers:¹⁶

Christ suffered once upon the Cross to save us from our sins, and then went up to His throne on high, to sit at God's right hand, and wait until He comes again to judge the world. That is what I was taught. He doesn't seem to have saved us from our sins at all, because after two thousand years of Christianity we have a barbarous and brutal war which you say yourself is the result of sin. This plan seems to have gone wrong somehow. It doesn't seem to have worked.

15. FF, p. 28

16. RT, p. 244

The criterion by which Kennedy judges an adequate doctrine of atonement is similar to his criterion for judging 'Almighty God'. Does it make sense of the world as men perceive it? If not, it is of no use, and must be set aside:¹⁷

This scheme of salvation . . . has become utterly incredible to us. It is not that it has been proved untrue; it is that it has become unreal. It has been murdered, it has died a natural death, it has ceased to grip. It has around it always the atmosphere of a fairy tale; inwardly we feel that it is impossible, it lies right outside the circle of our thought.

Not untrue but unreal. His conclusion is that atonement should be quietly disposed of, 'We have suffered many things for these dead symbols. It is time that someone read their funeral service, and they were decently interred in a museum.'¹⁸ Kennedy looks instead for a drama of salvation, a passion picture which can take hold of man, which he can feel to be real and relevant to the world he lives in.

2. ATONEMENT AND THE SUFFERING GOD

Kennedy offers a reason for the lack of relevance of some contemporary theories of atonement, which takes us back to his view of the 'suffering God'. Atonement arises from the confusion of the two Gods of Christianity. On the one hand there is 'Almighty God' seated in sultanic power, and on the other hand the suffering God of love. The proliferation of doctrines arises from the variety of different stories of interaction between the two which can be told. But none of them are satisfying, according to Kennedy, because of the irreconcilable tension of the attempt to hold the two views of God together. Man's desire to worship has made Jesus Christ a mighty potentate in the image of the Father Almighty, instead of appreciating that the incarnate Son is the revelation

17. FF, p. 214

18. FF, p. 194

of the Father. Kennedy's solution is not to tell stories of how love can propitiate the 'Almighty' judge, but to see that the love of Jesus is the revelation of God, 'A thousand mysteries begin to clear away, if we cling persistently to that great Name of God which is given by St. John: "God is Love" - the love that was revealed in Jesus. That is not one of his attributes; that is His very Self. Cling to that Name and use it.'¹⁹ So love is Kennedy's keyword about God the Father. Love clears away confusion, love is able to speak to man. In fact, Kennedy believes that other words, such as , justice and holiness, are not able to speak, are meaningless, to the ordinary man:²⁰

'All the world would, by the law of justice, have been doomed to eternal torment in an everlasting Hell if Jesus had not suffered and saved us from that awful fate. God could not forgive, even if man repented, unless the law of justice were satisfied, and the punishment which sin deserved was borne by man in Christ. You do not understand the awful Holiness of God.' But the man in the street gets frantic here. 'No, I don't,' he says, 'and I don't want to . . . Who is this just God? I do not believe there is such a Being. If there is, He must be the Devil.'

Justice and Punishment were features of atonement which Kennedy had long denied. The conclusion is drawn that Kenney is unable to hold the tension of the ditheism implicit in the process of Atonement. Since he does not see God as 'Almighty' in the simple sense of the word, the need for atonement atrophies. However, there is a plan of salvation implicit in the revelation of God as suffering, forgiving love.

3. SALVATION

Salvation appears primarily as an eschatological alignment. For man that means a psychological renewal. Jesus Christ, the Logos, has revealed the nature of God as suffering love, and that is the direction

19. WG, p. 197.

20. FF, p. 188,189.

of world processes as God suffers with his creation. There is however, for man a choice; to throw his lot in with the world and its evolution towards selflessness, or to remain independent, and thus, being out of step with reality, to face extinction, 'This choice comes to every individual soul, and his salvation here and hereafter depends on how he answers the call. The fate of the world depends upon the social responsibility of the individual, and his power and willingness to bear it.'²¹ Salvation lies in Jesus Christ, because only in Him can reality and the direction of the world process be known. Indeed the environment is complex, and it is salvation in itself to be able to find in Jesus Christ a way of living, a passion picture which can respond properly to the intricacies of society and the world, that is, can respond without experiencing the frustration which an independent course encounters. The frustration is seen as both long term, in that independence leads to extinction, and as short term, in that man has no adequate 'passion picture' to make sense of his experience if he follows an independent course.

Salvation begins with understanding. Kennedy makes the point that man has reached the point of development at which intelligence and understanding occur. That understanding is light which is denied to animals lower down in the evolutionary scale, 'Let us think of Browning's poems in the claws of a chimpanzee . . . Life, but no light, sensation but no intelligence. You behaved like that when you were a baby. The whole world once behaved like that before the world dawned.'²² Intellect alone, however, is not light. The same book of poems can be used intelligently to prop up the leg of an unstable piece of furniture. The crowning ability of man is not such intelligence but his faculty of seeing meaning, 'The

21. W&W, p. 30

22. W&W, p. 35

spiritual vision of the seer. He sees through the material page, and through the ordered symbolic sounds, the world of eternal values, the spiritual world of Beauty, Truth and Goodness, the light of which the printed poem is the shadow.²³ The world is like the poem. Since it was created by the 'word', the meaning, purpose and reason of the 'word' are implicit in the world, and available for apprehension by understanding. Meaning is not to be found in living at a sensual level, nor even at the level of intellectual perception:²⁴

So long as we live on the level of the senses, and the material intellect, we can never discern any meaning in life that will stand the test of time or the self-destructive power of the critical faculty. Mere intellect can do nothing but commit suicide.

It is necessary to have prophetic insight of the 'word' in order to find meaning in the world.

However, the case is not that the lower faculties of sensuality and reasoning are to be lost in favour of understanding. The three are to be integrated into harmony. At the sensual level it cannot be denied that man shares his mental physiology with the animals. The driving force of man's personality is instinct of the same general type as seen in animals. Kennedy cites William McDougall who writes, 'Take away these instinctive dispositions with their powerful impulses and the organism would become incapable of activity of any kind.'²⁵

Equally, reason cannot be divorced from instinctive impulses and the understanding. Pure reason is a fiction. Kennedy instances the blindness of the rationalist, Bertrand Russell:²⁶

Mr Bertrand Russell tells sad truth when he says that we might perchance attain to Peace and turn the Industrial Revolution from a curse into a blessing, if politics could become rational, but at the present there is not the slightest sign of a chance in that direction. What is called political

23. W&W, p. 37

24. W&W, p. 38

25. W&W, p. 40

26. W&W, p. 39

reality is composed of passion and impulse for the most part. Inevitably, reason is directed by the understanding. Each person builds up his own picture of the world according to his environment and his perception of it. But an element of selection operates. Value judgements come into play in assessing what is of interest, because attention cannot, by virtue of the limitations of the human frame, be directed to the whole environment. Such selection is partly instinctive, but also partly derives from the meaning or purpose held to be in events. The mind attends only to what interests it. Thus it is that instincts and understanding operate in the mind prior to reason.

Man is differentiated from the animals in that he has to attain to and achieve internal harmony between these three: sensuality, intelligence, and understanding. Animals, with their lack of intelligence and understanding are born into a harmony that man must strive for. A man who seeks self-expression by giving a free reign to his impulses will end in the hell of disharmony, the disintegration of personality, because he has not first attained internal harmony. Kennedy recognises two powerful impulses towards achieving harmony; reason and religion. Reason works to make a unity of experience. It is prompted into activity by the perception of discord, but 'the effort of our reason to make harmony of our experience will always be futile and unavailing so long as the impulses and passions are themselves disordered.'²⁷ Religion, takes account of passion. Man is always religious in that he always has a 'ruling passion' be it sport, sex, money, social standing, or some other powerful primitive instinct. Religion is whatever enthusiasm consumes a man. The opposite of enthusiasm, the debilitated personality is an indication of the central place of religion, 'where

27. W&W, p. 42

absence of enthusiasm does not disguise a pose, a phantasy or secret enthusiasm, it means that the man has ceased to live and begun to die more or less rapidly.²⁸ A man's religion first unifies in one dominant desire all the primitive instincts, and secondly rationality acts within the religion to clarify discord, although, in that religion and rationality cannot exist without each other, it is preferable to see them as aspects of the same process. For Kennedy, there is only one religion which will not ultimately be denied by rationality. For that reason not just any religion creates harmony. The only true religion is to be found in the 'word':²⁹

You cannot be sane unless you are crazy about Christ and the 'word' . . . In the power of the sublime white hot enthusiasm which is true religion, the lower passions are lifted up, sublimated as the psychologists say. Your interest, and therefore your attention are directed more and more to the Good, the Beautiful, and the True. Your experience improves in quality as you can see things you never saw, and hear things you never heard. Not that they were not there to see and hear, but you were blind and deaf, because you were not interested. Now the task of your reason becomes a possible one, your experience becomes a unity with a meaning, you discern the purpose and value of life, and learn to cry with utter conviction 'In the beginning was the Word', there is reason at the heart of things.

Psychological harmony is sustained by continually keeping the 'word' in the mind. The eucharist is very dear to Kennedy for this purpose, as is prayer. In a retreat address he compares the mind to a machine going rusty for lack of use, because the conscious, foreconscious and unconscious parts of the mind are not used effectively. Particularly, he believes that the unconscious is plastic, and can be 'trained, educated and redeemed' through the appropriate use of the conscious:³⁰

Ejaculatory prayer sets the tone of impressions. A truth that comes in through the window of the consciousness goes right through all the parts of the machinery of the mind, runs underneath and comes out again in conduct . . . The Word, the Christ, the Logos, is what we must put into our machinery.

There is significance in the word 'conduct'. The object of salvation

28. W&W p. 43

29. W&W p. 46

30. NY p. 77

through psychological renewal is the creation of moral force within man. Kennedy has no time for 'mere morality', codes of behaviour, such as the Tolstoyan ethic he toyed with in his youth, because he recognizes that man lacks the will and power to carry out what is expected. He looks instead to Christ to transform the will:³¹

The best way to correct a fault is by looking at its opposite virtue. Thus the man who is constantly giving way to pride will only become humble by looking at an example of humility. The walls of the inner chamber of the mind should be adorned with pictures of Jesus Christ. By spending time gazing at Him we shall grow like Him.

Religion is thus a particular power, not otherwise available, to effect moral intentions. Kennedy discusses the moral struggle against evil in The Wicket Gate. Whilst he applauds the improvers of the world, he castigates their morality, mere morality, as hopeless:³²

God knows how much wasted, ruined life is to be laid at the door of the teaching which glorifies conflict and bids men oppose evil by the force of what they call their will. It is a hopeless conflict . . . the moral struggle; mere morality is always a struggle.

Kennedy identifies moral struggle with St Paul's argument in Romans 7.19; 'the good which I would I do not; but the evil which I would not that I practise.' Without religion morality is powerless to achieve its object. It is a miserable discipline. Religion replies to the despair of morality, 'wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?', with the cry of victory, 'thanks be to God Who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ Our Lord'³³ Kennedy sums up; 'Man is saved not by works, but by faith; he is not saved by morality, but by religion, by actual communion with God. He is saved, in so far as he actually lives in the world where God is.'³⁴ Having seen the salvation of man as achieving an internal harmony which gives

31. Kennedy in Sinclair, p. 61.

32. WG, p. 135.

33. Kennedy, WG, p. 135. Compare Romans 7.25.

34. WG, p. 136.

him a moral will, we can look at Kennedy's treatment of the non-religious man who also possesses a moral will.

Kennedy is willing to see the fellow-traveller, the man who works for the moral kingdom as caught up into the salvation plan, provided his direction is Godward. For instance, 'The Doctor, the Pioneer, the Scientist, are workers with God like the Priest. All good work is God's work, and all good workers do God's will. They are labouring to make a world.'³⁵ Or more specifically, in speaking of whether war victims die in vain, he goes so far as to say those who sacrificed their lives did not realize it was God whom they were serving:³⁶

They learnt in the trenches what they failed to learn in the churches; they learnt from death what life had never taught them, the glory of self-sacrifice, the joy that lies at the heart of sorrow, and the peace that is born of pain. They died with God to save the world - they live to work with him.

Yet it is clear in the remarks that lead up to that idea that there is a tension in Kennedy's thought. Kennedy possesses the inherent inclination of immanentism to baptize the actual as these examples of the incorporation of the fellow traveller into salvation indicate. But Kennedy also wishes to maintain the Christocentric nature of religion and for the self-sacrificing soldier he includes the caveat, 'some maybe He cannot take . . . they hated Him in this life and they hate Him still, and He will have no conscripts in His train.'³⁷ The question for the doctor, the scientist, or the soldier is how far they possess religion, how far they 'actually live in the world where God is', a metaphor for being in touch with reality. It is not a question which Kennedy answers explicitly, although he does call into question whether they have 'the right religion'. At one point he suggests that all that ^uhumanitarian, the man with the Christian ethic but without

35. HP, p. 29.

36. RT, p. 133.

37. RT, p. 132.

the Christian religion can achieve, is revolution, a mere turning over of what already exists, without evolution to what is greater:³⁸

They have already a passion to give what they have; they give time, money, intelligence, labour, but the one thing they have not is spiritual force, redemptive power. That is why all their schemes are futile and barren. Human nature bars the way, bars the way to lasting peace between nations, to real co-operation between the classes, real unison between the sexes, bars the way to the Creator of Man. The honest Socialist breaks his heart because men will not be reformed.

The redemptive power which humanitarianism lacks, is not some power deriving from the supernatural activity of God within the individual, but the ability of the cross to transform the psychology of man. Only the cross has the effective power to transform the individual towards Jesus, God suffering in man, and since the end of the world is to be the completion of God's suffering in the world there is progress in the cross alone. The cross is thus a symbol of faith and hope which humanitarianism cannot possess. There is a lingering ambiguity over the participants of the Kingdom because of Kennedy's secular interest. Religion is for him, not an end in itself, but a means to grasp hold of the whole of secular life. Thus he is loathe to admit that a particular person is sacred to the kingdom of God, and is sceptical of the idea that a man can be saved by a religious department of his life, as is shown in this passage:³⁹

The making of your peace with God is not, and never can be, a mere matter of emotional surrender, however honest and sincere. It must be an act of the whole man, feeling, thinking and doing, in every department of his life . . . A religious department of life is a contradiction in terms, for the very essence of religion is that it is the relation of the living part to the living whole.

To be fair, Kennedy's interest does not lie in delineating the extent of the kingdom, but in exposing its motivating power. It is a power which is found within the personality as the very image of its creator. Any other morality is a sick repression. (Rashly, Kennedy presumes

38. FF, p. 92.

39. WG, pp. 22-3.

that Jungian psychology substantiates something akin to Christ's interpretation of the decalogue as the inherent moral nature of man if he is to have a healthy personality.⁴⁰⁾

There is no salvation in religious knowledge and the right passion picture in themselves. They are static. Salvation is seen in the active strife, love and suffering which stems from that knowledge or passion picture. Equally salvation does not arise from static events of the past, but from dynamic events of the present:⁴¹

The Cross never saved any man, and never could. You are not to be saved by anything that happened in the past, you can only be saved by God acting now in the present . . . Calvary is not past, it is present . . . That Christ Who hung there hangs there still, and calls to you and me; challenging us to take up the struggle of the higher life, bear its burden, endure its shame and win its inward peace.

Salvation from sin is seen in the simple sense of the phrase. The christian, in salvation, recognises in himself something of the spirit of Jesus which corresponds to the character of God. It is the new life of Jesus Christ in the christian resurrection of the inner man. In that experience, the process of salvation from sin is seen as release not from punishment for sin, but from the sinful self, independence, greed, and so on. Salvation is proportional to the degree to which the spirit of God is present in man. In The Wicket Gate Kennedy argues that evil is unreal to God. God did not and could not make anything that is evil, and therefore the man who is in communion with God, finds that in sharing in God evil is unreal. This is the logical obverse of the insistence that reality is only to be found in God. The final goal of salvation is the escape from evil into ultimate reality, the point to which the world struggles under the suffering of God, 'There is no evil in the world in which God lives, and that is the world . . . into which, by God's grace, walking along the way of worship and communion, I have

40. Sorrow of the Idol, p. 4

41. FF, pp. 198-9.

to enter - until I can cry, "It is no longer I that live, but God that liveth in me."⁴²

As we draw together the elements of salvation in Kennedy's writings it is apparent that there are similarities in them to the major features of exemplarist theory, for instance, in the emphasis on the suffering Christ as a supreme example, and that Christ reveals the divine forgiveness through the revelation of God as a God of love. As Hastings Rashdall claimed his exemplarist theory was compatible with modern philosophy, Kennedy claims compatibility for the theory in many other areas, such as psychology, evolutionary science, historical science, social sciences. Kennedy looks for a total compatibility with reality - a theory which can withstand any legitimate test which can be made of it. Whatever criticism there is of the weakness of his construction there are attractive features in the final result. Salvation appears as something which involves and influences the whole cosmos, it is no mere technicality starting and finishing with the individual. It is possible to speak of the redemption of an individual, a social group, or country and ultimately of the salvation of the world, the taking of the entire cosmos into the active life of God. Salvation is a programme of strife and action which can give meaning and purpose to man and his world, and in so far as salvation is incomplete, it is a theodicy. There is no final assurance of salvation in Kennedy, it is a hope or a bet. Nevertheless, salvation is a present experience of victory in that it gives man moral power:⁴³

We see redemption, not as a finished or completed thing, but as a purpose that is being worked out, and is to be completed in the fullness of God's time. So we see it in ourselves, and so we see it in the world. We cannot say of ourselves that we are dead to sin and alive only to goodness; we cannot say that it is no longer we that live, but Christ that liveth in us, that we are new creatures; we cannot say that the Cross in our own hearts is empty, that we are risen

42. WG, p. 137.

43. FF, p. 260.

with Him; but what we can and do say is that we are dying to sin, that Christ is crucified every day, but that He rises again, that in our lives He is suffering, but we are filled with the conviction that He is to be triumphant.

CHAPTER SIX

THE RELIGIOUS THOUGHT OF G.A. STUDDERT KENNEDY4. SOCIETY AND THE WORLD

In one significant passage, Kennedy speaks of the environment of modern civilization, and the ways in which man relates to his environment, 'the very essence of religion is to give to these new relationships their true moral and spiritual meaning, to link up our daily work with our daily worship our common duties with our common faith.'¹ This close involvement of religion with the environment in his thought is an indication of the central place which society and the world occupied. Furthermore, it identifies relationships as a key concern.

From the first of Kennedy's books it is clear that 'relatedness' of man to man, and man to world, is an idea that he wishes to stress over and against what he terms 'the old Victorian individualism'². In The Church in the Furnace, Kennedy writes, 'A completely isolated human personality is an absolute impossibility. We are human, and we progress as human beings because we are one family, and share our evil and our good.'³ He uses the idea to demonstrate the unity of mankind in sharing, through the means of communication both the highest blessings, the treasures of music and art, and the worst curses, war. There are a number of phases in his writings, as Kennedy readapts the religious meaning of relationships to different circumstances.

During the first world war many chaplains discovered in Army regime and in comradeship, a brotherliness which they took to be 'practical Christianity'.⁴ Kennedy addressed himself to the question

1. W&W p. 33.

2. WG p. 17.

3. CF p. 388.

4. Archbishop of Dublin, cited by James Hannay in CF p. 343.

of the relation of true christianity to the 'practical christianity' seen in soldierly comradeship in his essay 'Why aren't all the Best Chaps Christians?'⁵ Kennedy with many others recognised comradeship as a worthy relationship, one which could be baptized as 'practical Christianity'. It is not that comradeship was something to be exhorted in the name of religion, at least during the war, but the supreme achievement of comradeship, self-sacrifice could be, and was, presented as an ideal mode of relation. Kennedy's early talks speak of the redemptive power of the suffering of the innocent:⁶

Who have helped to keep the world's heart sound and win more light to guide us on the upward way? Ask of the ages and the answer comes : These are they who have come through great tribulation, the noble army of martyrs, the men who have suffered torture undeserved for the sake of Truth and Right . . . All great causes have been won through suffering - the suffering of the innocent. To the suffering of slaves we owe our freedom: the tribulations of the poor have gained us better social laws; the torture of the innocent children in the past has won a chance of childhood for our sons.

Self-sacrifice for the sake of the country is thus contextualized as not only an immediate necessity, but as an essential part of progress in history. Kennedy particularly takes hold of the relationship of soldier to his immediate officers as significant. There was a great deal of admiration for some junior officers,⁷ particularly because of the army tradition that the practically unarmed junior officer led his men into any offensive, and was, not unnaturally, more liable to become a casualty. Such uncircumspect leadership was an inspiration to self-sacrifice. Kennedy presents Christ as the model captain to whom the men may relate with admiration and confidence, 'God leads us always and suffers for our disobedience, as all true

5. RT pp. 201-267.

6. RT pp. 124-125.

7. An example in the article 'The Beloved Captain', D. Hankey, I 59-72.

leaders do. That is the meaning of the thorn-crowned king who leads the Army of Redemption through the world.'⁸ In The Hardest Part

Kennedy recognises that suffering is a necessary part of relatedness. The book sees God as suffering and striving within the world. God works in weakness by love and not by the strength of force. Kennedy sees this model in interpersonal relationships, and in so far as any unity has been created between men, it is the work of the suffering God:⁹

The workings of God in history are quite evident and clear. I see the birth of human unity and concord foreshadowed far back in Nature in the union of the mother and the child. I see it spread out into the family, from the family to the clan, and from the clan to the nation, and from the nation to the empire of free nations, and I look forward to the final victory and a united world. This progress is there, and it is the work of God. It has been a broken, slow and painful progress, and it is the work of God, but it bears no trace of being the work of an Almighty God. It has been a broken, slow and painful progress marked by many failures, a Via Dolorosa wet with blood and tears. So far as human unity exists today, it is, like all other good things in the world, the result not only of the power but of the pain of God. We see the God of Love in all the splendid dreams of and efforts after, brotherhood and unity which have marked the course of human history. All of them splendid failures.

During war it was hardly necessary to exhort men to co-operation in the image of the suffering God. Kennedy spoke in glowing terms of the national unity created by the integration of war effort.¹⁰

His fear was relapse into class and party warfare after the war, his hope was to maintain the progress towards unity. Lies! has a similar passage to the one above in The Hardest Part, but there is a signal difference in its use.¹¹ Whereas in The Hardest Part Kennedy argues

for the suffering nature of God as revealed in a study of human

8. RT pp. 128-9.

9. HP pp. 42-3.

10. RT pp. 151-5.

11. L. pp 91-2.

relationships, in the post-war book he goes on to argue for co-operation in the light of that revelation. He concludes:¹²

He (God) is the Creator of co-operation, and history fairly yells at you that as men co-operate, as they learn to love and work together, so, and only so, do they progress . . . Civilization means a world in which men live as citizens of one city, leading a life founded, not upon force, but upon mutual good faith, honour, honesty and truth, and that is the world towards which we are moving.

Co-operation between men based on the vision of a cosmos struggling to the height of concord in the image of the suffering God, is the heart of Kennedy's immediate post-war social thought. Perhaps it is this phase of which Dr Herbert, Bishop of Blackburn, speaks when he says that some of his friends thought 'his social understanding was too limited,'¹³ as there is some naiveté in the hope for co-operation. P.T.R. Kirk of the Industrial Christian Fellowship, however, saw that he had something particular, and relevant to say, 'We were in need of a Messenger; and, after hearing Kennedy speak, I had no doubt that his was the voice, and his the message for which we were waiting.'¹⁴ In Lies! Kennedy considers co-operation on a wide front. He sees co-operation as necessary and possible in industry. The industrial revolution he considers to be progress towards co-operation, 'men and women leave their lonely labour and their isolated tasks, and crowd together for work, and of course new wealth and power are the result, because co-operation is the source of power.'¹⁵ But industrialization fails wherever it fragments into a 'henrun philosophy of life'. Kennedy puts forward a picture of competition as a hen-run in which the hens scratch for worms; as soon as one finds a worm, all the hens go off in pursuit and fight and peck

12. L. p. 92.

13. BHF p. 63.

14. BHF p. 166.

15. L. P. 24.

for a piece of worm. Co-operation works because, 'if that fat-headed fowl had had the sense to spend the time scratching poor old Mother Earth that she spent scratching sister hen, she might have had six fat worms instead of a quarter of one, dusty and full of grit.'¹⁶

Two post-war hens Kennedy wished to reconcile were employers and unions. In the face of the Marxist proposal that employers and capitalists as a class should be abolished, Kennedy argues for the capitalist. The capitalist is necessary for production, and the solution to the glaring ills of inequality is co-operation. Society is to be understood however, not as a co-operation between 'equals' but as the co-operative synthesis of 'unequals'. Men are not made equal, 'one man can produce music that would bring tears to the eyes of an ostrich, and another doesn't know the difference between "God save the King" and "Pop goes the Weasel"'.¹⁷ Thus, Kennedy proposes, within a co-operative society, men relate in different modes. Not all exert equal influence. Policy lies in the hands of the few. However, this arrangement can only work as each member of society commits himself to his role of co-operative service. The war provided an example of co-operative service; leaders of outstanding ability, skilful technicians, ordinary men of pluck were called to service, and surprised the nation by the effectiveness of their corporate endeavour. Moreover, the service rendered for the corporate aim was valued:¹⁸

The lady has scrubbed the floor and waited on the sweep, the sweep has killed Bosches and suffered for the lady, and both have been glad because they knew they served. Service transforms work. We have been learning the joy of service, and have delighted in honouring it, and recognising it as the only title to honour.

The import of Kennedy's religious thought in Lies! is that in Christ

16. L. p. 18.

17. L. p. 41.

18. L. p. 46.

is the vision and the power of co-operative service. Those who submit to the image of Christ are incorporated into the kingdom of co-operation:¹⁹

The men of the vision cannot think of privilege except as another name for responsibility; wealth to them means work for others, and position a chance for wider service. The man-made barriers 'twixt man and man that split us into sections they look at with far-seeing eyes, and find to be absurd.

The problem for society is that men generally do not possess a love of their fellow men, 'the world of men is so huge, its extent so vast that it is intensely hard to work up enthusiasm for it, and moreover the world of men is full of facts which damp and dull any enthusiasm we may manage to arouse within ourselves!²⁰ Kennedy sees a motivating power to love mankind by seeing men as they are in Jesus Christ. A man's attitude is changed when 'you learn to see in Him- Christ crucified - humanity as it is, with a wounded body and pierced hands and feet - and also humanity as it shall be, deathless perfect and victorious.'²¹ Thus the transformation of the individual by the image of Christ is the beginning of co-operation.

Nevertheless, although it is necessary for the individual to be transformed to achieve a co-operative society, Kennedy believes in an inevitable, if difficult, progress towards unity and brotherhood. It is a process in which man finds himself carried unwittingly onwards without, necessarily, an awareness of individual transformation. Kennedy writes of progress towards brotherhood in Food for the Fed-up as the revelation of the nature of God:²²

The process by which the world has come to be what it is must have someone behind it. He may be more than a person, and He

19. L. pp. 127-8.

20. G.A. Studdert Kennedy, 'The White Comrade in Industry', Torch 1. No 4 (July 1920), 8.

21. 'The White Comrade in Industry', 9.

22. FF. p. 49.

can't be less. He appears to be a Being Who has within Himself not merely persons but a unity of persons, a sort of Brotherhood. That is what appears to be working its way out.

He fastens on the development of communications in particular as a revelation of the purpose of brotherhood for man:²³

Speech, writing, art, music, printing, mechanical invention, telegraphy, telephony, wireless communication, etc. - they all seem to have one tendency, they seem to make for unity, they are all means to unity, to the Creation of Man - the united human race . . . And the queer part of it is that seems as if it was being accomplished without our individually fully comprehending what the purpose is. It is as though, to spite our stupidity and selfishness, some great Power were working a purpose out, moulding our blind and selfish efforts to His Will. Under the guidance of this Power we appear to be blundering on towards brotherhood.

There is an apparent inconsistency. Man has blundered towards brotherhood to this point, henceforth he must be transformed by religion to obtain progress. Kennedy's purpose is to recognise the destination of mankind in the purpose of God, so that, through religion, man can head straight for the objective. Elsewhere, in The Wicket Gate, Kennedy no longer believes that progress can blunder on inexorably:²⁴

I agree, because I have got to agree, that there are limits to the defiance which faith can hurl at facts. I agree that there is no inevitable law of progress. I agree that progress, like everything else in human life, is conditional, and depends upon a choice - the choice 'twixt heaven and hell; and, apart from Christ, I see no hope that that choice will be made and made aright.

Kennedy speaks, in 1923, of the shadow side of evolution. He recognises still, as in earlier material, the progressive character of evolution; the development of unity and brotherhood and so on. But he also recognises the conflicting trend of retrogression, false adaptation and 'whole lines of evolution which apparently end in a cul de sac and lead nowhere'.²⁵

23. FF. pp. 50-51.

24. WG. p. 172.

25. WG. p. 174.

He does not allow equality to the two trends. The first is 'reality', and contains an inherent purpose, but retrogression is purely negative. It has no purpose, and no final reality. It is the failure to adapt to things as they are and the disinheritance from things as they are to be. It is but the destructive parasite of progress. Thus Kennedy defines sin in social terms, and acknowledges that the world needs redemption from retrogression:²⁶

All the evidence . . . contradicts the idea that the world is merely imperfect; there is crushing proof that it is also diseased. It is not only an infant, it is an unhealthy infant, and therefore needs not merely education and development, but positive healing and redemption - it needs the forgiveness of sins.

The Wicket Gate has much to say on the forgiveness of sins. It is the regeneration of man by the life of Christ in him. Inherent in the life of Christ is love for man, so forgiveness of sins must always be social in its effects. Furthermore, redemption is mediated through a society in which Christ is actual:²⁷

Throughout the whole course of evolution, it is evident that life in all its forms, from the lowest to the highest, comes, and can only come, to the individual through a community. That appears to be an everlasting law, a final necessity; the parts only grow through their unity with the whole. And it is so with the Eternal Life, and with the redemption or completion that come withit; there is no redemption or completion for the individual apart from the community. From the beginning, there grew out of Christ a new social order, a new community; and only in and through that community and its life could redemption come.

Kennedy insists on seeing redemption in terms of a redemptive community, as the witness of the New Testament. St Paul, who might be supposed the protagonist of individual salvation, is the one who 'sings the song of Charity' which has no meaning outside of community, and he is also the one who agonised over the redemptive communities he created.

26. WG p. 173.

27. WG p. 179.

There is no writer, according to Kennedy, who conceives of individual progress apart from community. The Kingdom of God is found in community life, any attempt to place individuals first is false:²⁸

The idea of individuals as separately existing entities who make a contract with another entity called society and attain to freedom by compromise of rights is a shallow and badly-founded falsehood, from which the inspiration of our Lord protected all New Testament writers.

Kennedy does not wish here to create a definitive, elect community over and against the world. In speaking about the forgiveness of sins and the community, he addresses himself to the world rather than exclusively to the church. He goes on, in the passage quoted above to say:²⁹

The Christian community or Kingdom of God is the ever-present truth about the world, the eternal meaning of all temporal things; and yet, from the human point of view, it is an apparently slow and painful growth, much of which we can actually trace.

The community is society in which Kennedy sees many pointers towards unity, in the co-operation of industry, wider social groupings and communications. The pointers give him a basis for arguing for further unity as part of the purpose he sees in the world. There is no suggestion that the individual is to be absorbed into a unity, with the loss of his own identity. Unity appears to mean a harmonious interdependence to Kennedy:³⁰

We see the true meaning of this vast material unity which is the characteristic of the modern world; it is but the symbol and sacrament of our eternal unity, a sacrament through which God is seeking to inspire us, that His will may be done upon earth as it is in Heaven, and that we may realise that we can only find perfect freedom in proportion as each one of us bears the whole of his world in his heart, and seeks to express it in his own unique and special way.

Whilst Kennedy has a vision of the society that is to come, his

28. WG P. 111.

29. WG p. 111.

30. WG p. 146.

approach is pragmatic. He considers the relation of the individual to the whole, because it is to individuals that he addresses himself. There is a shift in approach and language in the later works. Brotherhood and co-operation tend to be replaced by a consideration of how man is to relate to his environment. At times it seems that 'universal brotherhood' lapsed from Kennedy's vision in the later nineteen twenties and that he was content with providing a means of coping with the modern world. However, progress towards the unity of society underlies his attention to the relationships of the individual. Kennedy presents a number of models by which the individual may relate to his environment, and thus integrate himself into the 'universal society' without necessarily being aware of the activities and characteristics of the unity to which he joins himself. In The Word and the Work the logos is the means of integrating oneself into the meaning of the world. The environment presents a web of complex and delicate relationships to the individual. Christ is the key to adapting to those relationships. The individual is responsible to society for the choice he makes because 'the fate of the world depends upon the social responsibility of the individual, and his power and willingness to bear it'.³¹ Christ is also the key to the responsible society. In an intriguing exegesis of John 1. 14, 'and we beheld his glory', Kennedy claims that Jesus Christ is the 'individual expression of a corporate experience'.³² The glory of Jesus Christ is beheld in 'personal testimony to the reality of a new Social Life.' This exegesis leads to a differentiation of church and society. In saying that a new social life is to be found in Jesus Christ on the one hand, and that the glory of Jesus Christ is to be found in a new social life on the other, there is a distinction made between the new life and the old life.

31. W&W p. 30.

32. W&W p. 61.

Such a contrast is not explicit in a theory of progress. Kennedy writes: 'Always Christ calls men into a company in which they are to find a life different from the life of the world'³². There is the church in which the individual experiences the 'differentness' of new social life in Christ, and there is the world to which the individual relates in a self-sacrificial way after the image of Christ, in discharging his responsibility to the world. It is some way from his comment during the war, 'The Doctor, the Pioneer, the Scientist, are workers with God like the Priest. All good work is God's work, and all good workers do God's will'³³, in which he recognises workers for the progress of society, outside of the new social life of Christ.

The concern about sex morality in the late nineteen twenties brought forth Kennedy's last consideration of the relation of the individual to society. The Warrior, the Woman and the Christ takes up the idea of the relation of male to female within marriage, and discovers a motif, demonstrable in Christ, which can be and is, universalized to all relationships. Kennedy starts with the premise that the objectives of male and female in marriage differ. Anthropology suggests that the matriarchal family is primitive, and that man is naturally a polygamist.³⁴ Therefore there is conflict within the monogamous marriage: the mother is motivated towards the production and care of offspring, and the father towards the sex act and towards wandering. Despite the criticism that the analysis underestimates the variety and complexity of male and female relations, there are reasonable grounds in Freudian psychology for allowing the contention that there is an essential conflict of interest within marriage.

32. W&W p. 61.

33. HP. p. 29.

34. The source of Kennedy's anthropology is not clear, but see the comment on Westermarck; WWC P. 45, on Malinowsky, WWC p. 246.

Kennedy argues that the conflict must be creative:³⁵

It can, and ought to become a creative conflict. Creative conflict is the very nerve centre of life and growth, and the understanding of it is necessary to the understanding of life. A creative conflict is one in which there never can be any victory for the one side or the other. Victory for either means defeat for both. They must remain forever locked in a perpetual conflict out of which arises a growing but never fully completed unity.

Man and wife can find unity in their conflicting objectives which is creative, as they discover the means of mutual satisfaction. This motif brings together Kennedy's concern for unity with his concern for the integrity of the individual personality. Personality is not compromised by this approach to unity, on the contrary it is consummated by it. Kennedy goes on from the sex conflict to the parent-child conflict. The creative possibility of the sex conflict is the school of training for creativity in the parent-child conflict, which in turn indicates the possibility of creativity in all social relationships.

Kennedy sums up:³⁶

As the family emerges it is seen to be the embryo and miniature form of the great society, and it is revealed in its essential nature as being a unity of tensions, a unity with natural and inevitable conflict at its heart. This led us to the enunciation of the great principle of creative conflict as underlying all social and individual development. A creative conflict is one in which there is no possibility of victory or defeat for either side without grievous loss to both, nor any possibility of premature peace short of perfection. Both sides must live in vital and mutually vitalising conflict working out an increasing but never finally completed unity.

Kennedy uses the motif to exhort creativity out of conflict, and to indicate that conflict is a continuing feature of social relationships. For instance, in speaking of class warfare, where he might well be expected to speak of the resolution of conflict through brotherhood,³⁷

35. WWC p. 65.

36. WWC p. 275

37. as in L p. 32 'our greatest enemy is the Class War . . . demands closer co-operation'.

he now sees that continuing conflict is an integral part of creativity. He agrees with Karl Marx that class conflict is a prime factor in social change, but insists that there is no creativity in the triumph of one protagonist.³⁸ Whereas Marx looked to the use of coercion, which naturally has triumph or defeat as an end product, Kennedy looked to the use of love which achieves a genuine synthesis of the concerns of both parties. Love does not mean passive peace. A peace which means the absence of conflict between nations, classes and individuals is the dream of the negation of life. The exercise of love leads to an animated peace:³⁹

No, the only peace there is in reality is the Peace of God, and that is the Peace of the perpetually active creator, and it is a very strenuous thing, much more strenuous than fighting. It is a state of perpetual creative tension maintained without a break.

Thus creative conflict relates to the nature of the 'suffering God', who struggles in constant creativity. In the latter part of The Warrior, the Woman and the Christ, Kennedy integrates creative conflict of the individual with the nature of God and the nature of the world, so as to present the motif as an all-embracing drama which contains the meaning and purpose of existence. It is a bold attempt to provide a basis for Christian living which deserves attention.

Kennedy recognises two problems. Men relate to one another mainly by the exercise of coercion. How then, can coercion be replaced by creative love, and how can creative love be an effective agent in achieving the higher objective of man, unity? The imagination is

38. WWC p. 97.

39. WWC p. 101.

seen as a key to both problems. Influence is exercised by the spread of the right way of imagining the world, the vision of God creatively at work in the world bringing his Kingdom into being:⁴⁰

The universe was a vast bread bowl with dough in it and there was a heaving, a swelling, a rising - a great unseen power at work. Such is the power of God. Jesus felt it all around Him and within Him ceaselessly at work. It was like a fire burning in His heart and driving Him to His destiny. He was the expression of this way of imagining the universe. He lived His vision out. His life was the life of the transforming and creative man because he imagined the universe as the work of a perpetually creative and transforming God.

The components of imagination as seen in Christ are: hope, Kennedy presents the work of God as irrepressible; motivation; and direction. The imagination does not demonstrate the mechanics of how creative love affects a transformation in the world. What it does is to imagine that creative love has transformed the world in Christ, that man can be involved in transformation now, and that ultimately there will be the triumph of unity. The mechanics of how the imagination transforms man himself is through the power of story, as Kennedy explains:⁴¹

Men have an inevitable impulse to dramatize reality, Only as a drama can they conceive it as a vital and vitalizing unity. There are deep reasons for this which space will not allow us to enter into here. It is sufficient to state it as a fact. Men never are stung into action by the universe as a whole until it is presented to them in dramatic form. Only in the form of a drama does the universal become sufficiently concrete to stir men to action of a decisive kind.

The story of creative love is taken up as a drama, which Kennedy separates into four acts and an epilogue, as the different stages of the suffering conflict of Christ with the world:⁴²

40. WWC p. 230.

41. WWC p. 235.

42. WWC p. 232.

Drama of creative loveIncarnation The Birth of Creative Love

ACT I Conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary

Atonement The Agony of Creative Love

ACT II Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried

Resurrection Victory of Creative Love

ACT III The third day He rose again from the dead

Ascension Perfection of Creative Love

ACT IV And ascended into heaven

Epilogue Judgment

He shall come again to judge the quick and the dead

However, whilst the inspirational value of the drama can be recognised in its creative power for art, music, painting, poetry, drama not to mention the devotional fervour with which the church has defended its central possession, there is another drama which Kennedy believes grips the minds of his contemporaries. That is the drama of evolution. Not that men understand or believe in Lyell or Darwin, but that there is a satisfaction in the drama of unbroken progress of the world. This drama replaces the drama of creative love. It is unacceptable to Kennedy's mind because he believes it to be merely an illusion. The evolutionary story is not the full story, it is a collection of isolated observations which viewed 'like a cinematograph film' appears as a developing whole. But despite the gaps and breaks in evolution there is the criticism that it does not contain significance. It is necessary, Kennedy maintains, not only to make inductive generalizations from sectional experiments, but also to use intuition. A faith is necessary as the foundation of scientific endeavour, and it springs from the inspection of the nature of things as disclosed in present experience as the answer

to the question 'why?'. It is a simple matter therefore to integrate evolution with Christianity. Christianity is the meaning of Evolution:⁴³

EVOLUTION		CHRISTIANITY
<p>ACT I <u>The preparation in darkness</u></p> <p>Nothing on the stage but thick heavy night with some immense formless thing moving and growing in it.</p>	MEANS	<p><u>The Advent of the Christ Man</u></p> <p>I look at it with a sense of expectation which fills it with meaning. He is coming.</p>
Evolution	means	Advent
<p>ACT II <u>The coming of Life</u></p> <p>A very dim light in which living forms can be distinguished, many of them grotesque and horrible, others nearer the light bearing some remote likeness to men</p>	MEANS	<p><u>Incarnation</u></p> <p>The Christ is born in a stable amongst the cattle. Even allowing for an element of legend in the Christmas stories, they were created by Christ and reveal His way of imagining the Universe. Very humble and even sordid beginning. A helpless naked mite but it can grow - keep looking forward.</p>
Evolution	means	Christmas
<p>ACT III <u>The coming of Mind</u></p> <p>Prehistoric Man. A quaint confused medley in which we recognise a likeness to ourselves of which we are secretly ashamed.</p>	MEANS	<p><u>Atonement</u></p> <p>The long agony of creation and redemption begins. The lamb is slain. Right in the centre of this queer apparently meaningless confusion I plant the Cross. Stark, straight with its foot in the past and its head in the future, it points upwards and onwards. This confusion does not go round and round to end where it began, it goes on and up. The world is not circular but cruciform. The cross is prepared for the Christ.</p>
Evolution	means	Good Friday

ACT IV The coming of Man

History - a perfectly staggering series of thrilling interest but no clear significance except in the growth of civilization.

MEANS

Redemption - Resurrection and Ascension

The cross still stands in the centre of history with the crowd sitting round the base of it. The agony reaches its climax. The great worker sweats great drops of blood. All the brutality and horror of history is summed and centred in the cross. But it stands stark, straight-forward, sharp, pointing upwards with arms held out embracing the universe, The head of the cross pierces through the shadow of death which hangs over history, and as the shadows roll away I see behind it the empty tomb, and, as the crown and climax of it all - that Figure with wounded hands outstretched to bless ascending -up- up- to His Perfection.

Evolution

means

Easter and Ascension

Epilogue

The future. Mainly composed of new inventions and strange machines. Vast and orderly cities with a background of possible disaster and another darkness

MEANS

Epilogue

Christ through the Spirit re-enacts the whole drama which is the meaning of history. Continually coming to new birth - continually crucified - continually triumphing over death, continually Ascending - and thus Judging and saving the world of men

Evolution

means

Judgement and Salvation

Kennedy's presentation of the drama of creative love and its integration with evolution is arbitrary. It is not necessary to present the work of Christ in those particular divisions.⁴⁴ This more than any other

44. An alternative division of the drama of evolution is given in W&W p. 53.

features gives the passage quoted an affected quality, which might lead one, at first reading, to dismiss the passage. It is the height of Kennedy's imaginative endeavour to present a drama of Christ, both pregnant with motivation and significance and consistent with reality. In that sense it is not arbitrary. Neither is it to be dismissed lightly as a source of significance for the meaning of the world and the relation of man to it. The main feature within the development of the creative conflict motif is the introduction of familiar religious themes; advent, incarnation, atonement, resurrection, ascension, judgement. To return to the question of how creative love may be an effective agent in achieving the objectives of man, there is a mode indicated in the drama. The individual looks for purpose and meaning in the world and his relationships (advent). He finds what he desires in Christ (incarnation). He is reorientated towards the image of Christ (atonement). He lives in the world, working and suffering according to his image of Christ (resurrection and ascension).

Christ is the image of the unity of the world. That is not to say in Christ there is no conflict. It is in Christ that the conflicts of the world are held in tension. As conflicts are held in tension, so they are taken up into the creative purposes of God. The means for man to be able to maintain these tensions is through psychological renewal, which incorporates Christ's vulnerability, his openness to suffering for creation, into man:⁴⁵

The spirit of contradiction is the very nerve of life . . . There is no possibility of abolishing conflict. The only way is to raise the inevitable conflicts up to a consciously creative level, and this is done as moral is substituted for physical force as the weapon with which they are waged, and work takes the place of war as a means to unity. As we substitute leading for driving, inspiration for compulsion education for subjection, confidence for suspicion, faith

for fear and love for force, the inherent conflicts are not abolished but raised to a creative level.

Kennedy addresses himself to social dialectic and finds a resolution in the nature of Christ. The synthesis of the tension of dialectic is creative and redemptive. Thus Kennedy gives meaning to everyday relationships, work and the world, through religion.

Whilst there is development of Kennedy's social thought from brotherhood, self-sacrifice and co-operation to creative conflict, and from the immediate post-war optimism about corporate progress to a more pronounced recognition of the need for the renewal of the individual, there is underlying all, the belief that man relates to society and the world after the image of Christ, which is in self-sacrifice, suffering and struggle.

CHAPTER SEVENTHE RELATION OF KENNEDY'S RELIGIOUS THOUGHT TO ITS CONTEXT1. 'THE SUFFERING GOD'

Having considered some aspects of Kennedy's religious thoughts we come to the question of its relation to its context, and in particular the value of his thought for his generation. There is no doubt that Kennedy's religious thought was highly valued. It is amply clear from the audiences he commanded during and after the war that there was a group of people who heard him willingly. A glance at his crowded itinerary¹ as messenger of the Industrial Christian Fellowship shows that a very great number of people were eager to use Kennedy in their locality. His books sold in edition after edition. Following his death many eminent men spoke of their sense of loss, and of Kennedy's ability. An appeal for a Studdert Kennedy memorial fund under-estimated the response. All this shows that the man's work was valued, but not necessarily that his success may be attributed to his religious thought. Many have attributed his success to other characteristics, such as, Kennedy's personality, his natural ability as a communicator, his humour, his intense compassion. But it seems unlikely that he held the attention of all kinds of audiences for rarely less than an hour by technique alone. The Bishop of Kensington echoes many similar tributes when he describes Kennedy as a prophet:²

He was quite unlike anyone else we ever knew, and combined in his personality so many striking elements that we realized we had in him something entirely original. He was 'a prophet indeed', with all the force and at the same time some of the limitations which attach to the prophetic temperament . . . He brought an insight into perplexed situation and a

1. Printed each month in The Torch.
2. The Torch, VII (1929), No. 4, p. viii.

directness in striking at the heart of the complicated business, which made us feel we were being guided by a fearless leader who knew where he was going and saw far ahead.

On the face of it he is not original. It is arguably true that he presented the 'suffering God' motif to a wider audience than had hitherto been the case, but he did not originate the motif, nor did he use it in a way dissimilar to many others, as J.K. Mozley has demonstrated in his review of the passibility of God.³ Yet his treatment of the 'suffering God' was described as prophetic by Moore Ede in the preface to The Hardest Part:⁴

Some may disapprove of what he has written and dissent from his conclusions, but they will profit by reading the book and learning how an earnest man endeavours to do for the British soldier what the writer of the book of Job and the prophet Isaiah endeavoured to do for their times.

Equally, whilst much of the social thought of Kennedy has its roots in F.D. Maurice, or in Stewart Headlam's attempt 'to get rid, by every possible means, of the existing prejudices, especially on the part of Secularists, against the Church, her sacraments and doctrines, and to endeavour "to justify God to the people".'⁵ Or in Westcott's ideas of the progressive redemption of the world through suffering and conflict,⁶ no less a figure than William Temple says of Kennedy 'soon after the end of the war men knew that there was among us again a prophet of social righteousness in the true succession of Henry Scott Holland.'⁷

This indicates that the attractive power of Kennedy's thought, making due allowance for his ability in presentation, was due to its prophetic relevance to his generation.

3. J.K. Mozley, The Impassibility of God, (London, 1926), pp.157-9.

4. HP, p. x.

5. from the objects of the Guild of St Matthew, founded by Headlam 1877.

6. B.F. Westcott, Christus Consummator, (London, 1836) particularly chapter 2, 'The destiny of men fulfilled by Christ through suffering'

7. B.H.F. p. 209,

Whatever the sources of, and influences upon, Kennedy's synthesis there appears to be an aptness which many men found undeniable. This, and the following two chapters proceed to suggest, in what must necessarily be a speculative manner, possible ways in which Kennedy's religious thought was particularly pertinent to those to whom it was addressed.

THE SUFFERING GOD

Kennedy addressed himself to the soldier during the war. The four war-time books were written specifically for the soldier. It is in those books that Kennedy expressed himself most strongly on the 'suffering God'. They were also popular among non-combatants. The 'suffering God' was a continuing theme in Kennedy's thought after the war. Nevertheless the British Expeditionary Force is the proper context in which to consider the aptness of Kennedy's thought.

The soldier was a man with every reason for disillusionment. The poor organization of Kitchener's Army frequently betrayed the enthusiasm of the enlistee. Heavy casualties experienced purely in maintaining a stalemate dampened the sense of adventure in a war which had been billed at home as a crusade. Yet there was an undeniable cheerfulness in the trenches. The soldiers' favourite chorus was:

What's the use of worrying?
It never was worthwhile!
Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag,
And smile, smile, smile!

This kind of cheerfulness was a flight from reality, an escape mechanism from the inability of the mind to come to grips with the meaning of events. There were attempts to face the reality of death, instinctive, rather than thought out as by 'The Student in Arms', for

few have the ability of sustained thought under conditions of repeated shock. Fate revealed a kind of reality - 'Either a bullet has your name on it, or it doesn't.' Belief in fate was a means of facing death, and doing one's duty. Duty, and the purpose of the task, created a reality in itself. Men willed to win the war, and to play their part in the crusade. It was an adequate reality for periods of action and adventure. Positive good revealed itself at times, the comradeship of the trenches, and the unselfish way in which men looked after their chums. It didn't necessarily make sense of the waste of the war, but it was highly valued. Amongst all these thoughts was a belief in God. Several chaplains, including Geoffrey Gordon, have reported that there was some kind of belief in the men, 'Some sort of a belief in God seems almost universal. The atheism of the nineteenth century was a spent force even before the war.'⁸ It was a belief in God which fostered fatalism, and its corresponding activity, prayer, that 'the next shell won't get me'. As Geoffrey Gordon points out, this kind of religious activity rests on shifting foundations, 'Such a religion, strong in the front line, is apt to grow weaker in support, almost evaporate in billets, and to vanish altogether on a week's leave.'⁹ This prayer, based on fear was regarded as weakness. It was fright and selfishness, it was uncourageous. But it was difficult to see what else one could make of religion. Many of the chaplains did not seem to have a religion which the soldiers could accept. The cleric who preached 'prepare to meet thy God' made little impression because the soldier who had come to terms with shell-fire was not impressed by hell-fire. In any case such religion was a call to worry and anxiety, the very opposite of

8. T.W. Pym and Geoffrey Gordon, Papers from Picardy by two chaplains (London, 1917), p. 185.

9. Pym and Gordon, p. 187.

the instilled value of cheerfulness. Again religion was a call to accept creeds or forms of church government, or dogmatic statements which seemed unreal to the situation. So the soldier was a man searching for meaning, but generally disappointed by religion.

Kennedy addressed himself to the need for meaning with a formulation of religious thought which did not altogether object to the basic emotions of the soldier. Accepting that the soldiers held a basic belief in God, he attacked the misconception that they themselves were unhappy about. Fatalism had value in giving the soldier courage to face the chance of death, but it also had a submissive element. It encouraged passive resignation. Kennedy believed that whilst it was courageous and expedient to adopt a kind of fatalistic attitude in order to get on with one's duty, yet there were negative features. It meant that men were impotent to effect their will through their endeavour, because the issue was already sealed by fate. Secondly, it meant that God, a potential symbol in the mind of the soldier for creating meaning, was alienated from the soldier by being cast into the role of the enemy. It is God who wills war, suffering, distress and death. Therefore God is the enemy. Kennedy remarked, 'It is this fatalistic Christianity which has no appeal to the men.'¹⁰ It is reasonable to suppose that when he attacked this popular conception of Christianity there were many who agreed with him, because whatever was the content of their 'folk religion' view of God, it was not that of tyrant. It was, after all, the tyrant 'Hun' they were fighting against, and despite the prevalent recognition that both sides worshipped and prayed to the same God, it is difficult to imagine the soldier could entertain the idea of God who was the epitome of

10. CF, p. 385.

the evil of the enemy. Kennedy replaced the tyrant God with the 'suffering God'. It was a symbol with which the soldier could identify. He valued comradeship, he valued the act of courage which could sacrifice self for the good of others. These are prime facets of the picture of God which Kennedy presents. Kennedy's Christ is the ideal soldier, notice these soldierly qualities:¹¹

Behold the Man, Who died for Freedom, Honour and Peace.
Behold the Man with the iron body and the iron will; the
Man Who of His own free will lived the life of hardship
and gladly suffered pain. Behold the Man with His tender
pity for all weakness, and His blazing wrath against the
wrong; the Man who lived unbroken and unconquered to the
end.

Kennedy's God is a God at war, fighting an incessant battle against evil. In his rhyme 'Old England' he makes the point that the objective of the soldier is not the vindication of his old country, England, but the renewal of his country. The point seems justified by the literature of reconstruction after the war. In this way, Kennedy takes hold of the goal of the soldiers' effort, which was largely unrecognised in official statements, and suggests that his war is God's war:¹²

What I says is, sink Old England
To the bottom of the sea!
It's new England as I fights for,
It's an England swep' aht clean,
It's an England where we'll get at
Things our eyes 'ave never seen,
Decent wages, justice, mercy,
And a chance for ev'ry man
For to make 'is 'ome an 'eaven
If 'e does the best 'e can.
It's that better, cleaner England,
Made o' better, cleaner men,
It's that England as I fights for,
And I'm game to fight again.
It's the better land o' Blighty
That still shines afore our eyes,
That's the land a soldier fights for,
And for that a soldier dies.

11. RT, p. 93.

12. UB, p. 149.

Kennedy's Christ is one who unites men in love and brotherhood in the fight for renewal. The poem 'Passing the Love of Women' reveals a love for comrades that draws men back to the front from their homes, that Kennedy values as Christ-like. Moreover, the comradeship which was so valued in the trenches is taken by Kennedy to be a peak in the evolutionary purposes of God. 'There is one God Who all through time has been leading the world through war to peace - through discord into harmony' says Kennedy.¹³ God has worked and suffered for peace among men, and now there is a token of that peace. The integrative effect of the war effort eclipsed many differences. Further effort is towards the achievement of a greater degree of peace - the ending of all wars, and peace between social classes in Britain, 'an England swep' aht clean'. Men are not alone in their effort. Kennedy's God is himself a comrade in the fight. He contrasts the utility of the 'almighty God' with the 'suffering God', for the soldier in 'The Comrade God':¹⁴

Thou, O my God, Thou art too great to love me,
 Since Thou dost reign beyond the reach of tears
 Calm and serene as the cruel stars above me,
 High and remote from human hopes and fears.

Only in Him can I find a home to hide me
 Who on the cross was slain to rise again;
 Only with Him, my Comrade God beside me,
 Can I go forth to war with sin and pain.

Christ is one who has shared in suffering, pain and death, and has conquered each one:¹⁵

'E knows the feel uv a bullet, too,
 And 'E's 'ad 'Is touch o' the lead.

Thus the depth of the experience of the soldier is but a reflection of the experience of Christ.

13. RT, p. 193.

14. UB, 'The Sorrow of God', p. 134.

15. UB, 'The Sorrow of God', p. 134.

Kennedy's God also makes sense of death. Christ's death is a picture of the progress that comes through self-sacrifice. Kennedy is able to speak of those killed in action, 'the Army of innocent suffering', as in succession to the martyrs of the church throughout history. They participate in the activity of the cross:¹⁶

The Cross is the power centre of redemption in the world. From the Cross of Christ the army of brave sorrow has borrowed its best strength. Down from the little hill of Calvary the host has marched for years, the host of men and women who by their sorrows undeserved have helped to save the world . . .

Men who died the soldier's death on a thousand known and unknown battlefields of this world war, sailors from the depth of the sea, flying men, whose shattered bodies fell burning from the skies, on they stream in a long procession past you, and every hand is pointing onwards to the Figure at their head Who holds aloft the cup of His own Blood that flowed to save the world.

Thus death is something productive in itself, something with purpose and meaning, and above all, not waste. Equally Kennedy is able to speak of the love of Christ to the individual, and assure the unchurched that death is not separation from the love of Christ as in this scene of the thoughts of a wounded soldier:¹⁷

Ay, there it (the cross) stands,
With its outstretched hands,
I can't 'elp wonderin' why
I can't quite see,
Is 'E lookin' at me?
O Gawd, am I goin' to die!

I can't! Not Yet!
My Gawd, I swear!
There's a mist comin' over my eyes.
Christ, let me be,
Today, with Thee.
You took a thief to Paradise!

In short Kennedy produced a view of God which was a remarkable match for the minds of his soldiers. It has been said of Donald Hankey:¹⁸

16. RT, pp. 125; 144.

17. UB, 'Today thou shalt be with me,' pp. 155,6.

18. K.G. Budd, The Story of Donald Hankey: A Student in Arms, (London, 1931), p. 127.

To love men was the great essential: one could do splendid things with those who knew they were loved and believed in. That was the secret of the popularity of 'A Student in Arms'. How he yearned that all the good deeds, the bravery, the unselfishness that one saw should be laid at the feet of the Lord of all Good Life.

It appears that the same may be said of Kennedy. He believed in the soldiers' intrinsic goodness, and wished to ascribe the goodness he saw to Christ already at work within individuals. Factors of Kennedy's acceptance are that he spoke in terms of the soldiers' categories of experience, and his approach did much to affirm his audience's basic dispositions. More fundamental is the positive utility to the soldier of what Kennedy had to say. Kennedy addressed men who were somewhat disillusioned by the godforsakenness of war. It had become a pointless waste to which they were called to give their all. Cheerfulness hid an inner flight from reality. Kennedy provided a meaning for war which made some sense of destruction, and which brought the soldier back to the point of facing reality. Kennedy's 'meaning' braced their fighting resolve and brought vitality to moral endeavour. Kennedy met what Mircea Eliade has termed man's 'ontological thirst'¹⁹ That is to say, man thirsts for meaningful being because of his terror of nothingness in the world he perceives. The soldier experienced events as disordered and deceiving, and needed some key or symbol in order to relate events to each other in a meaningful pattern. The 'suffering God' is such a symbol. It is a religious symbol which provided the framework for uncovering the 'real world', and gave the potential of living a meaningful existence. It was in that sense the sacralization of life. Kennedy attempted to show that the secular world, experienced as godforsakenness, is not the real world,

19. Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and The Profane, (New York, 1961)

but that the world experienced as God suffering with man is real. The 'secular' world with which Kennedy engages is a sacred world, sacralized by the activity of God.

The war was a particular time at which the soldier might be open to Kennedy's sacred imagery. It was a time of crisis experience, and it is at just such points of depth experience that the language of God attains usefulness. If we consider the possible categories of depth experience, as suggested by Donald Evans,²⁰ it appears that Kennedy provides language for interpreting a number of such experiences coherently. Evans suggests five categories, (a) personal encounter, (b) numinous experience, (c) moral responsibility, (d) radical despair, (e) indignant compassion. Indignant compassion, the depth experience of outrage and revulsion can readily draw on Kennedy's imagery. D.M. Mackinnon has written of how the experience of protest may be an experience of God, 'the man who revolts, determined somehow to affirm in this most desperate situation that God did not so make the world, is met by the mystery of God's own revolt against the world He made.'²¹ That is to say, the experience of suffering may be a crisis experience which encourages belief in a God who suffers. Radical despair has been partially discussed, as it is a depth experience of 'ontological thirst', but as an experience of crisis it is also a revelation. The recognition of meaninglessness exposes a need and concern for meaning in man and the search which leads to the discovery of meaning as a depth experience, is a discovery which may be spoken of as the revelation of God. The experience of moral responsibility is to a lesser extent within Kennedy's imagery.

20. Donald D. Evans, 'Differences between Scientific and Religious Assertions', in Science and Religion, edited by Ian G. Barber (London, 1968), pp 102-7.

21. D.M. Mackinnon Christian Faith and Communist Faith, (London, 1953) pp 247-8.

It is true that he exhibits a strong moral inclination, but his main concern is for the transformation of the will among men whom he considers to be morally apathetic. Nevertheless, the man who as a result of the war has a depth experience of responsibility to fellow men, may find meaningful language about God in Kennedy. God represents the motivation and purpose of morality. Personal encounter is a category which includes something of the others. Kennedy speaks of the revelation of the loving and self-sacrificing God through the profound man to man encounters of brotherhood in the trenches. It is possible that comradeship pointed to something higher. There are other categories, and other ways of categorizing those depth experiences which may be interpreted as God. These four illustrate that Kennedy's language and imagery has the potential for enabling the soldier to interpret his experience as an experience of God.

For the unchurched soldier, who had some kind of belief in God, Kennedy had helpful language. He offered the possibility of interpreting experiences, finding a meaning to war, facing reality. He furthermore provided a purpose and goal to life. There were barriers to cross nevertheless. Much of The Hardest Part is taken up with apologetic. The 'suffering God' motif proves very useful against some contemporary religious difficulties, such as: 'why does God not do something to stop war?'; 'why does God allow evil?'. Kennedy deals with doubts about the Bible by explaining it is not 'Almighty' in every word, but written by men inspired by a God who still strives towards his objective. Similarly the failures of the church are explicable because 'the Church has always been a failure, like Christ; but out of its failure it has won high success. In it we see the God Father whom Christ revealed - struggling, suffering, crucified, but conquering still.'²² It was in his attempt to bypass the inherited doctrines and

structures of the church that no longer had usefulness that he was 'modernist' in character. H.D.A. Major quotes with approval Kennedy's comment that 'It is awful to realise that when one stands up to preach Christ the soldier feels that you are defending a whole ruck of obsolete theories and antiquated muddles.'²³ but he does not continue the citation of Kennedy's religious passion to reveal Christ to men,²³ 'It is all so much barbed wire through which one has to climb before one finds his heart . . . there are many hearts one cannot reach because of the entanglement of absurdities in which to his mind the Gospel of Christ is involved. Christ will satisfy all men's souls if we can show Him to them as He is, but there is a mist of many lies that dims the vision now'. Kennedy was apt for the soldier, not only because he was 'modernist' but also because he was religious.

23. CF, p. 404. Cited by Major in English Modernism (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1927), p. 101.

THE RELATION OF KENNEDY'S RELIGIOUS THOUGHT TO ITS CONTEXT2. THE RELIGION AND PSYCHOLOGY OF THE INDIVIDUAL IN THE POST-WAR ERA

We have seen in chapter five that Kennedy thought of salvation as something subjective, it is an experience within the self, but equally, it is objective, it is commitment to the concrete. With the liberal idealist of his day, he believed that knowledge of God was rooted solely in the religious experience of the individual. He further believed that the objectivity of the picture of God possessed by the individual could be tested.¹ Thus God may be found to conform to 'reality' in as much as the individual's picture is not denied by experience. Kennedy's attempt to consider God as the objective reality appears on closer inspection to be insubstantial. In that his approach is pragmatic it is possible to say no more than God is a reality, a reality which works for him. The attempt to speak of God as 'the reality' in an exclusive sense, appears to stem from a prior belief in Christianity as the absolute religion which alone fulfils the needs of men, and not from pragmatic considerations alone. However, Kennedy made a great play on the reasonableness of belief in God. The nineteen twenties saw the growth of philosophical realism, and a cruder, popular form of realism. This popular realism has various components, the disillusionment with many pre-war ideals combined with the search for what is really secure and 'knowable'; the popularization of the empirical method as the results of many lines of enquiry became better known, and the growth of university places for empirical study. Kennedy responded as did so many other religious thinkers with a thoroughly 'rational' religion. There was a spate of books justifying and modernizing

1. E. p. 27.

Christianity both before and after the war. Kennedy went as far as many 'modernists' in rejecting out-moded accretions. But he did not merely present the old formulae, stripped by the locusts of critical study, he presented a popular reformation of Christian belief for modern man.² The question for this chapter is the aptness of the reformulation for the people of the nineteen twenties to whom he addressed himself.

Kennedy addressed a number of types of audience. By the nature of his work, he addressed the workman. Later he directed some attention to women within society. There is some material which is addressed to the church. Primarily, however, he was interested in the unchurched workman. Therefore when we consider Kennedy's religious thought, it is necessary to consider the context of folk religion, rather than the theology of the church. Conventional religion among the working people was not strong. Charles Mastermann is quoted as reporting that before the war, 'the poor (except the Roman Catholic poor) do not attend service on Sunday, though there are a few churches and missions which gather some, and forlorn groups can be collected by a liberal granting of relief. The working man does not come to church.'³ There was little doubt in the minds of commentators as to why this should be the case. Mastermann, again, complains, 'the uprooting from the country and the transference to the town had caused a general confusion and disorder'.⁴ On the face of it, it seems unlikely that confusion and disorder was extensive as a result of population movements at the beginning of the twentieth century. Although movement was still in progress, it is properly a problem

2. Most obviously in Food for the Fed-up.

3. E.R. Wickham, Church and People in an Industrial City, (London, 1969) p. 175, who refers to The Religious Life of London edited by R. Mudie-Smith, (1904), ch 7.

4. C.F.G. Mastermann, The Condition of England, sixth edition (London, 1909) p. 89.

of the early nineteenth century. Dean Inge suggests that the problem is ideological. The town creates a new situation in which the old perspectives are no longer functional:⁵

I am disposed to think that this sudden transplantation of the countryman, within three or four generations, into the unnatural surroundings of the large town, has more to do with social unrest than is usually supposed. The obsessions of ill-usage which generate the revolutionary temper seem to occur almost exclusively among the town-workers. In material comfort, they are better off than ever before; but they suffer from a chronic malaise which makes them hate all the conditions of their lives.

The town-worker does not consciously recognize the call of the country; he only feels the aching of racial habits, thousands of years old, and now suddenly thwarted.

The Archbishops' Second Committee of Inquiry, stemming from the National Mission for Repentance and Hope, recognised that the ideological tendencies of industry ran counter to the values that worship asserts, and alienates the worker from the church, 'The persistent pressure of its competitive processes generated in the people a spirit and temper alien from the very nature of the Church's worship, which, in its turn divorced from the bitter realities of the people's lives, began to assume in their eyes an artificial character.'⁶ The worker may have felt 'the unconscious call of the country'. Indeed as a soldier he valued poetry which spoke of the hills, the valleys, the rural tranquility of the country, but he continued to revolt against the feudalistic expectations of the countryside, notorious in the hymn:

The rich man in his castle,
The poor man at his gate,
God made them high or lowly,
And ordered their estate.

Perhaps it had once made sense to see God as the one who orders the feudalistic structure, but with the escape to industry it proved to be an escape from God also. An alternative explanation of the divisions

5. W.R. Inge, (1926), p. xi.

6. The Worship of the Church p. 13.

of society now became apparent. The rich man in the new industrial society did not owe his wealth to the arbitrary provision of God in the timeless scheme of things. He owed it to his control of some financial capital which he increased by retaining profits.

For the rich, industry posed no problem of belief. God who ordered the estate prior to industrialization, also rewarded the capital owner for his thrift and energy with profits. But for the poor, God was meaningless. He was a threat to progress. God was for the rich and intended to keep the poor in their place. The rural, feudalistic God stood for the inevitable division of rich and poor at a time when, precisely because of the obvious and relatively fluid capital within industrial society, the working man was beginning to think it was not inevitable he should be poor. Philanthropy was no answer to this situation. The working class might accept the money of the rich, but they could not accept their God or their values. Perhaps it is with some justification that many were suspicious of reformers who wanted to improve the lot of the poor. They suspected it was only so that the rich could continue to be rich. The alienation of the working class from the churches was often no more than a silent belief that religion was 'not for us'. However, it might also inflame into antagonism. The church, and bishops in particular, seemed rich and reactionary, and clergy, who were often far from rich, were still resented as hypocritical, or out of touch. Both the institutions and the representatives of religion became the targets of criticism and sometimes of abuse. The ideology of the oppressed against the oppressors made increasing sense, a system of thought which could scarcely accommodate contemporary religious thought. Marxism was in a stronger position to provide the meaning and purpose which would otherwise have been furnished by religion. This is the so-called secularization of industrial society. The psychological consequence of industry is that the worker says 'there is no god'. David Edwards

illustrates this well:⁷

The African pagan lived in an enchanted forest. It was enchanted because its gods were honorary senior members of his tribe, because his rulers were the friends of those gods, because his whole life was ordered under the gods and the rulers, in a sacred society. Now in the industrial city, life was (to use one of Max Weber's favourite expressions) disenchanted. This was not only because the city was often very ugly, and often very unpleasant. The basic disenchantment came in the worker's realisation that society was a struggle, not an already ordered structure. In the city the rich exploited the poor, and all too often the poor had to compete with each other; and no gods controlled these battles.

The city and the economics of industry had another effect upon religious ideas. The people of England have valued more or less the 'Protestant Work Ethic'. That is, the virtues of the pursuit of individual salvation through hard work, thrift, and competitive struggle. Max Weber has argued that it gave birth to capitalism. Whichever preceded the other it is clear that the 'Protestant Work Ethic' was an attitude which inspired the industrial revolution, and that industrial growth could only sustain itself because people as a whole agreed that hard work, thrift and competition were necessary qualities of behaviour. However, by the beginning of the twentieth century the success of the industrial revolution was beginning to erode its inspiring ethic. Companies were growing in size, and the civil service grew rapidly after the war. Work within a large organization could not be sustained by the same ethic. Hard work is, of course, still expected within the large organization, but the direct motivating power of self-aggrandizement is lost. What is the result of the collier, or the factory supervisor working hard? It is not they who benefit, and the larger the organization in which they work, the more difficult it is for them to feel solidarity with some entity for which they feel it is worth working hard. Within an organization, thrift loses its urgency, as there is always the organization to be thrifty for one. The

7. David L. Edwards, Religion and Change, second edition, (London, 1974) p. 72.

responsibility for waste lies not with the hand who produces the waste, but in some remote managerial sphere. As has been noted in chapter one it went against the grain for older men to accept poor relief during the unemployment of the nineteen twenties, because they expected to be thrifty themselves. Competitive struggle loses its simplicity as industry becomes more collective. It may make sense for a one-man business to compete with the next business, but it does not make sense for one collier to compete with the next. Thus the psychological effect of increasing collectivism during the nineteen twenties was the undermining of a lingering 'religious' attitude towards work. The new situation required a new religious ethic.

Kennedy addressed himself to both of these religious problems. Firstly, his war theme, the 'suffering God' was relevant to the worker who, because he felt himself to be in the disenchanted city said 'there is no god'. David Edwards has spoken of 'two levels in primitive religion . . . the Sky Father and the Earth Mother'.⁸ A religion flourishes when the two are kept in one vision. The 'Sky Father' is the 'high God' who is ruler, creator and judge, the 'Earth Mother' is the source of succour and life experienced in practical and particular ways. Using this analysis the religious crisis for the working man at the beginning of the twentieth century is that the 'high god' has become higher and higher until he appears as the wrathful dispenser of hell-fire, one who is hostile to his creation, whilst the 'Earth Mother', the loving Jesus Christ, has never gained sufficient credibility. Kennedy recognised the value of this analysis. But he did not try to hold the old 'high God' and 'low God' in one vision, because the 'high God' of the working man was dysfunctional. Instead he turned attention to the source of succour and life in Jesus Christ, the suffering God,

8. Edwards, p. 119.

and left implicit within that concept the new higher God; the creative programme and the final purpose. The 'suffering God' is a felicitous religious concept for the worker, as it provides an identity for his own feelings of injustice at the world. The world was unjust to God as well, he was poor, he was a worker, he suffered, and so on. It provides motivation for action against the world, in that the suffering God is one who works to recreate the world. 'The unconscious call of the country' is that sense of beauty and harmony to which the worker strives. Just as the 'suffering God' could provide meaning in the trenches, it could provide 'enchantment' in the work place and in the squalid home. It is enchanted because it is an image of valuation of the poor, which the 'feudalistic God' did not represent. It is enchanted because it motivates the mind to action to create something new and good. It is thus hope, and purpose.

Furthermore, the 'suffering God' motif has the capability of motivating work in the new collective situation. Kennedy recognises the need for motivation in an article for working men, among whom he supposes selfless communal spirit to be tenuous:⁹

There is no question about the fact that the great bulk of the world's work up to now has been done from motives of self interest mainly. The hope of personal gain has spurred men on to labour, and to continue labouring under strain . . . but the rock upon which all our hopes and dreams come to grief is the need of a new motive for production. The clearest thinkers all see that until this new motive is found, there is no hope of running industry on really co-operative lines . . . The community is a very vague and abstract idea to most men, pure public spirit is not common, nor is it easy to see how it can be made well nigh universal, as it must be if the world's work is to be done on it, and universal with an intensity and reality equal to the common and natural motive of self-interest.

The new motive comes from the image of Christ, 'when the Great White comrade really comes and stands by a workman's lathe or a writer's desk, the problem of the motive for production is solved.' Christ is the

9. 'The White Comrade in Industry', The Torch, I (1920), No 4, pp.8-9.

picture of self-sacrifice, of giving oneself for others, it is not a wasted sacrifice because it is redemptive. In Christ there is the hope of the redemption of mankind. Thus the man at the lathe may work for the benefit of the community, firstly, because that is the pattern he sees in Christ, in whom is found meaning and purpose, secondly, that activity of working selflessly, is redemptive in the sense of contributing to the final redemption, the unity of mankind, and thirdly, he shares the compassion of Christ, because his spirit is with him, 'when Christ comes to a man's heart he opens his eyes to see the whole world's sorrow, and opens his ears to hear the whole world laugh.'⁹

The 'suffering God' has several advantages as an inspiration for the collective mind apart from Kennedy's main emphasis on the renewal of man necessary for him to be a social being. Kennedy presents a clear social objective as the work of God among men, the creation of brotherhood and unity. The correspondence of this objective with contemporary inclination may act as a means of integrating social effort by speaking of the purpose of God. It is important that this purpose of God is not fulfilled by coercion. That would place no responsibility on the individual. It is necessary for the individual to work for collectivism, because it will not happen without his co-operation. The 'suffering God' imagery thus values the work of the individual and acts as a means of integration. A point to be considered is that where there are forces of integration towards collectivism among men who hold to a 'high God' who is alienated and removed from the present world, as appears in the first quarter of the twentieth century, then the 'high God' will appear to be alienated against the collective whole, because he cannot be an adequate symbol of the collective experience. Any experience of value in belonging to a group is not totally dissimilar to the experience of the value of the 'Earth Mother' or the gods who are regarded as the 'honorary tribal elders'. It is not that to speak of God to the 'collective' one must speak of a God who

embodies the actuality, succour and so on of collective experience, but that there is a danger of collectivism becoming a competing God in the minds of men, as in the propoganda of Blatchford. Kennedy attempted to interpret collective consciousness as the work of God. Men already co-operate dimly with the God who suffers and strives towards their perfection:¹⁰

One gets the sense of a superior intelligence gradually working out a colossal idea - the idea of Human Brotherhood and Unity - the Creation of Man . . . As then, this purpose of human brotherhood seems to have been working itself out through the process all the time, and as it seems vastly imptobable that it can be doing so by an infinite series of accidents, we come to the conclusion there must be some one behind it, who must at least be a person, and is probably more, and if we are to give Him a name, it is difficult to see what better name we could give than 'Father'.

It now appears why men might accept Kennedy's religious thought as 'reality'. The nineteen twenties were a time when events had moved faster than had the ideology which supports men in change. Perhaps the Victorian and Edwardian outlook had been tottering for some time, but there was, ostensibly, after the war a hunger for a new identity. Change stripped the old symbolic affirmations of reality of their sacredness. However, as Hans Mol has argued, change is the heart of the sacralizing process.¹¹ There was a derangement in society which required the reconstruction of patterns of symbolic reality. Kennedy was able to contribute to that process, It paints only a partial picture if attention is concentrated on the church and its process of sacralization, with the consideration of creeds, church government and theology, as the church is only a section of the whole of society which similarly faces the need of establishing new patterns. Kennedy attempted to be relevant to the whole of society. For this reason he does not fit into the general pattern of 'secularization', the decline in traditional indices of church attachment, belief and practice.

10. FF pp. 52-3.

11. 'Some Thoughts about Dialectic between Religion and Change', in Acts of the International Conference on Sociology of Religion (13th) (Lille, 1975), pp 355-9.

'Secularization', in isolation, is, however, only a useful concept when one starts from a fixed historical point, such as the height of the church's influence in politics, and monitors a decline through various periods. In order to consider secularization as an element of process at a particular period without reference to a fixed point, it has to be considered as in dialectic with sacralization. Sacralization patterns may or may not be 'religious'. Kennedy presented a pattern for resacralization which was religious, and which was functional for changed times to judge from the response of men to his message. He provided the charisma and leadership for which D. H. Lawrence longed. Many churchmen longed for leadership in the same way, and called Kennedy a prophet. His ability to make sense of the times, to provide a new sacred identity for those who longed for meaning and purpose, is a traditional prophetic function. Max Weber has defined the function of the prophet within society:¹²

Prophetic revelation involves for the prophet . . . a unified view of the world derived from a consciously integrated and meaningful attitude toward life. To the prophet, both the life of man and the world, both social and cosmic events, have a certain systematic and coherent meaning. To this meaning the conduct of mankind must be orientated if it is to bring salvation.

The prophet is successful when his message is functional for his audience, that is, he authenticates himself by his message. Kennedy authenticated himself in that he struck the inner chords of many men's hearts, providing patterns of sacralizing their experience, providing answers to questions they were only just beginning to articulate. Men recognised a kind of reality in Kennedy because his preaching met their emotional needs. There is a paradox here, the 'modern mind' of the nineteen twenties was rational, scientific, in some ways godless, yet Kennedy achieved a substantial reputation as a prophet for directing

12. 'The Prophet' in Personality and Religion, edited by W.A. Sadler (London, 1970), p. 101.

attention towards the emotions, the search for meaning. Perhaps it is an indication that the rationalist endeavour was mistaken in supposing it could do without the succour of an 'Earth Mother'

This chapter has suggested some reasons for the popularity of Kennedy after the war. In short, the theme of the 'suffering God' could provide language for fulfilling religious needs, and enable the individual to come to terms with the post war world. His ability to put his finger on the often inarticulate religious and moral problems, and provide a perspective of hope, led to him being hailed as a prophet in an uncertain age which looked for charismatic leadership.

CHAPTER NINETHE RELATION OF KENNEDY'S RELIGIOUS THOUGHT TO ITS CONTEXT3. SOCIETY, THE WORLD, AND THE CHURCH

One of Kennedy's great concerns was the nature of society. He was filled with righteous indignation at the squalor he encountered in Rugby and Leeds before the war. Like many chaplains, he returned to England filled with notions of reconstruction. By the nature of his work with the Industrial Christian Fellowship, he was concerned with the future of industrial society. Though he did speak out as 'a prophet of social righteousness in the true succession of Henry Scott Holland' in the occasional condemnation of some injustice, he was not a political partisan. He did not speak out against the employers from the party line of the employee. The book, Democracy and the Dog Collar, shows that although Kennedy's mind was marching in the same general direction as that of the labour movement, yet he was independent of it. He did not envisage the church becoming labour. He was concerned rather with the whole of society. He had a vision of society in which all were needed. The employee needs the employer to invest his capital so there can be a high level of productivity and the means of subsistence. Unity was a key note of many of his mission addresses. Kennedy's proclamation thus shifted its emphasis from what appears the negative criticism of injustice, in his early years, to the positive vision of a united society. Kennedy studied economic theories thoroughly, according to William Temple,¹ and became convinced that the cure for economic evils was not to be found by tinkering with the economic system, or even by recasting it. He saw that economic revolution alone would never

1. BHF, pp. 210-1.

produce a just and happy world, it is necessary to attack the psychology of the men who support the economic system. Economic conditions are among the forces moulding the moral tendencies of those who are subjected to them, but as Temple relates, 'far more deeply true is it that those conditions themselves are rooted and grounded in a moral state and outlook'. Hence Kennedy's interest in psychology, and in the transformation of the individual by religion. Increasingly the Church came to represent the hope of the world as a society in which relationships were transformed by being grounded in faith. At this point we can consider how this might relate to the working man. Kennedy may well have provided meaning, and a way of speaking about God to the working man, but there is little indication that his ideal of unity was fully acceptable, nor does it seem likely that his view of the church as the hope of society was widely meaningful.

Brotherhood, collectivism, and unity were concepts frequently employed in the nineteen twenties. Increasing state control and peace initiatives are testimony to the extent of their hold on politics. Whilst Kennedy spoke of brotherhood he echoed a mood of the times. He might be understood if he spoke in the language of trench fellowship or the language of the brotherhood of the oppressed labourer, but he desired something else beyond the popular outlook. He wanted a brotherhood which included the politician and the employer. It was not an easy step for the workmen to take, because brotherhood was a societal integration which took place in reaction to the enemy. The enemy of brotherhood had been the Germans, and was the politician and the employer in the nineteen twenties. Kennedy's 'unity' was not a psychologically apt conception for them in that it demanded universal love, and they possessed only a partisan spirit.

Equally to speak of the church was to alienate men's minds because the church stood for privilege and wealth, and the interests of the politician and employer, not to mention 'a whole ruck of obsolete theories

and antiquated muddles'. The church it is true, was reorganizing itself, there were moves in the period to make worship more to the point for ordinary people in the regularization culminating in the 1928 prayer book. But it was ridiculed for being divided in itself and divided against the other denominations, There were leaders of the church who were in the vanguard of the social thought of the nineteen twenties, yet that did not dispel the popular image of the church as being out of touch and irrelevant. Kennedy reports the popular response to COPEC:²

The Christian Churches, as represented at the Conference, have quite effectively made fools of themselves in the eyes of the world, and that wanted doing badly, for from the worldly point of view real Christianity is still foolishness. The leading article in 'The Times' paying lip service to the Christian ideal but denying its practicability, was an adequate expression of the inevitable opinion of the powers-that-be.

Kennedy himself approved the 'foolishness' of the churches' hope of social salvation and proclaimed such a message. Therefore whilst his message of the 'suffering God' in war and peace might have value to the soldier or the workman in expressing their experiences in terms of God, which language provided meaning and purpose, the social message was not something which men might be so psychologically disposed to accept.

Roger Lloyd has suggested that Kennedy became steadily less influential as a propagandist throughout his career.³ There is a certain amount of circumstantial evidence that the popularity based on his military career waned, but in terms of his work load he was as much in demand in 1929 as in 1920. However, what is demonstrable is the increasing tendency to move from a discussion of religion for man in secular society in Lies! (1919) to a discussion of life

2. 'Impressions of the Conference on Christian Politics, Economics and Citizenship', Torch II (1924), p. 81.

3. Lloyd, II, 95.

within the redeemed community in The Wicket Gate, (1923), and The Word and the Work, (1925). If there was a decline in Kennedy's influence then it seems possible that it is partly attributable to his view of the church as representing the hope of secular society which did not fall on psychologically receptive soil.

Kennedy did not easily distinguish between society and church, however. When he spoke of the church, he spoke of a community of love to which he looked forward; when he spoke of society, it was a society to come, united in brotherhood. The two merge into identity in his hope. He is able to speak of the unchurched man sharing in the benefits of the church because of his hope of society. The secular and the sacred do not divide because of the purpose of God for the secular. In that God can be seen at work within the world, the world is a sacrament of God:⁴

The vision of eternal life makes men see life as one. They only know one world and that the eternal world, they only have one life and that eternal life. Behind the material they discern the spiritual. All the earth becomes a sacrament. Every hill-top speaks of heaven, and every flower flames with God. Men with the vision are not indifferent to this world, but are keen to make it perfect with keenness that no worldly man could ever know.

However, whilst Kennedy was not inclined to set society and the church apart, he arrived at the point of stressing the church as the model of future society, partly because of the changing social context. Kennedy believed that salvation is a social experience, the experience of brotherhood, and unity. Immediately after the war there was little difficulty in appealing to a rewarding experience of unity, in the integration of comrades and the whole country for war effort, as a type of the brotherhood and unity of redeemed society. However, that integration dissipated rapidly, and the growing collectivism of the twenties did not have the same fulfilling character to which he could

4. L. p. 127.

appeal. Kennedy turns more in the mid-twenties to the church as a type of redeemed society:⁵

Always Christ calls men into a company in which they are to find a life different from the life of the world. The Christian witness to the world is to be a new quality of social life, and, so far as there has been any real Christian witness, it always has been that and nothing else. Christian Holiness has never been anything but Love, creating a company of men and women which acted as the Body of Christ filled with His Life, sharing his sufferings, participating of his triumph, growing with his growth; a body bearing the marks of the Lord Jesus, born, crucified, risen and ascending with Him. A solitary Christian is a contradiction in terms.

The kind of community life to be found in the church is redemptive.

Firstly it is a visible sign of the new social life to the unbeliever, secondly it possesses the power of communicating its life by sharing it, and thirdly it is only through the sustenance of the community that the individual can continue the new social life.

Kennedy writes of the new social life 'and so it is with Eternal Life, and with the redemption and completion that come with it; there is no redemption or completion for the individual apart from the community, there is no Love of God apart from the love of Man'.⁶

Within the life of the church the eucharist contains the supreme symbol of social life. William Temple has drawn attention to Kennedy's particular emphasis:⁷

While most Catholic doctrine lays all its stress on what the Bread becomes to us, he laid equal stress on what it is to begin with, which enables it to become that other and greater thing. Bread is the common food of men; but it is first the fruit of man's labour upon God's gift. God gave the soil, and the properties of the seed, and the sun and the rain. Man ploughed the land, and sowed the seed and reaped the harvest and ground the corn, and baked the flour.

Kennedy is concerned about the brotherhood of labour which produces the bread. That brotherhood is consecrated to God and distributed

5. W&W p. 61

6. WC, p. 179.

7. BHF, p. 216.

to all as a symbol of unity. The offertory is in a sense the focus of human endeavour, the giving of life to others through one's own labour. That very offertory becomes the bread of not just ordinary life, but the redeeming life, the presence of Jesus Christ, leading the participants into the Body of unity and love. And if the eucharist takes up the labour of man and becomes the supreme symbol of unity, it is to be the inspiration of all men's labour:⁸

The sacrament leads us, not to a localization, but to a deeper sense of the Omnipresence of God . . . He makes Himself known to us in the Breaking of Bread, that He may more truly and consciously be the honoured guest at every meal, and the most living partner in every enterprise whereby we earn our daily bread . . . If Holy Communion does not lead to honest commerce, it fails of its fruit, and 'by their fruits ye shall know them,' Commerce is communion, and it must either be Holy Communion, or a cursed counterfeit which leads not to life but to death.

The emphasis on the place of the eucharist can be identified as apt for the churchman in that it was a developing concern. The Oxford Movement, and the anglocatholics had re-emphasised the eucharist, and by the time of the nineteen thirties it had found a central place in worship through the parish communion movement. To some extent it was also appropriate for the unchurched working man. The chaplains had found that the eucharist was more popular amongst the men, and returned home 'anxious to make this service the main, corporate, family, congregational act of worship and fellowship.'⁹ The high churchmen had shown for some time that sacramental worship might be the way to reach the hearts of the poor. But Kennedy's social message was limited to those who would accept the sacrament, and find religious strength in it. He recognised that many were unable to find in communion a symbol of activity for daily life:¹⁰

8. WG, p. 167.

9. 'The worship of the Church', p. 35.

10. W&W, p. 68.

It is the presence of Christ in common bread and His concern with the way we earn it that the world denies emphatically. They are quite willing, the men of the world, to allow that we may find Him, by an act of faith, in that Bread upon the altar, so long as we do not drag Him into the bread of the common street. Nobody worries about Christ so long as He can be kept shut up in churches, He is quite safe there, but there is always trouble if you try to let Him out.

Thus, although Kennedy did not wish to alienate anyone from the new social life, he effectively did so for many when he presented unchurched men with the sacrament of the church.

The latest of Kennedy's books, however, looks at the question of relating people to each other without resort to the church. After trench comradeship, and the church fellowship, the home is held up as a symbol of redeemed social life. The give and take between husband and wife necessary to create a harmonious relationship is a social unit which reflects the social redemption of Jesus Christ. The differentness of man and woman may mesh to create a unity without compromise of individuality. Furthermore that unity is a training school for child and parent relationships and ultimately for relationships within the whole of society. Kennedy considers the development of monogamous marriage to be the development of Christlikeness. There is little doubt that the home is an unobjectionable image of social life, where home life is found to be attractive. Kennedy has a salient proposition in the idea that many problems would be solved if people interacted as lovingly within society as they do within the home. The neglect of this aspect of Kennedy's social thought is not entirely due to its lack of applicability in his time. A reason for neglect is that the main themes of The Warrior the Woman and the Christ, that Christ is an image of the unity between man and woman, is not adequately demonstrated. The connection between Christ and a marriage is not an obvious one, it is not obvious why a marriage must be a sacrament of evolutionary development towards unity, it is

not the case that love is a characteristic of all homes. Perhaps this is what Kennedy had in mind when he said in the introduction, 'this book bites off more than it can chew'¹¹. It may also be neglected because the book is confused.¹² In spite of the difficulties of the book, the idea is still interesting for the way it relates man to the world. The world is recognized as the place that men are destined to live in, and to be at home in. The new social life, redemption through Jesus Christ, is the fulfilment of what is present. By endorsing civilization as it is, man participates in the evolutionary purposes of God. Kennedy is thus at one with liberal theologians who assert no discontinuity between the world as it is known, and God. There is a certain aptness of this type of belief for the people of the nineteen twenties, when there was a growing confidence in rationalism.

Kennedy also believes that the man or woman in whom Christlikeness is to be found, is also an innovator within society. Creative conflict is God's mode of innovation, and when men or women relate to one another in this way they participate in innovation. There is no force in creative conflict, every participant retains his integrity and contributes to the final synthesis, and in that differentness is held in tension by Christlikeness, a suffering, self-sacrificing character, progress is made towards unity. There is no revolution in Kennedy because he wished to hold the oppressor, or the capitalist in tension with the underprivileged or the worker, as a sacrament of the coming unity. He related to a period in which that seems partly an appropriate message. The nineteen twenties began with hope of reconstruction, and moved without revolution towards that goal. There were some who looked to the Russian experiment and wanted to

11. p. 7.

12. see the review by W. Purcell, Woodbine Willie, pp. 208-9.

put power into the hands of the workers, but they were only a minority. When the T.U.C. called a 'national strike' of sympathy for the miners cause in 1926, it did not prove possible to use the crisis for revolutionary ends, and the general strike went further than public opinion would readily go. There was sympathy for the miners, but even more, a reluctance to undermine democracy and challenge Parliamentary government. The strike is evidence of uneasy tensions within society which the pressure of public opinion repressed from erupting in a revolutionary direction. There were many who would welcome Kennedy's message of innovation, and the progress of society in cleaning out social evils on its way to unity, but there would have been few ready for a message of revolution.

The picture of creative conflict provides a means of integrating partisan spirit where it was difficult for the picture of the church to do so. Creative conflict is a suggestive means of describing the conflict between labour and management. It captures the element of friction which exists between the parties, and yet proposes a productivity in perpetual difference, provided that the parties are able to mesh together in a creative and harmonious way. That is to say, creative conflict builds a model of society which allows for the differentness of the parties which make up society, without allowing that any one of them should have supremacy. It is a mental picture of a high degree of social integration which does not interfere with the patterns of integration that already exist. It might be supposed from Kennedy's early writings that he envisaged a homogenous kind of society in which co-operation, unity and self-sacrifice completely eclipse conflict. Co-operation never eclipses the freedom and individuality of man, but during and immediately after the war, conflict between men was hardly an appropriate notion for the unity of the world. It follows from the nature of the 'suffering God'

that Kennedy cannot envisage a society in which there is utter tranquility, as the 'suffering God' would be absent from that society. The peace he envisages is found in suffering conflict:¹³

Man's Via Crucis never ends,
Earth's Calvaries increase,
The world is full of spears and nails
 But where is Peace?

"Take up Thy Cross and follow Me,
I am the Way, my son,
Via Crucis, Via Pacis,
 Meet and are one.

So it appears that the familiar motif allows Kennedy to recognise conflict within society as part of the work of God, and gives him a basis for speaking on the possibility of productive and creative conflict.

Kennedy has been criticised for failing to balance his message of suffering with hope.¹⁴ That criticism is not borne out by the hope which he offered to men in situations of conflict and suffering. His social proclamation is motivated by his hope, his 'bet' on the final achievement of unity by the suffering of God. Salvation was for him an eschatological alignment with God, hope provided the psychological motivation to engage in the life of self-sacrifice which in turn brought forward the achievement of unity.

This discussion of creative conflict suggests that it may well have had points of contact with contemporary society, had Kennedy lived long enough to expand and expound this line of thought. As it is, it appears that he was relatively less in touch with the ordinary man in pointing to the church as the hope of society, than in his earlier baptism of trench comradeship as the hope of unity for mankind.

13. 'My Peace I Leave With You', UB, p. 87.

14. Horton Davies, Varieties of English Preaching 1900-1960 (London, 1963) P. 114.

CHAPTER TENCONCLUSION

This thesis has identified elements of intellectual and social disorientation during the period of Kennedy's ministry. It was a period when many disciplines had come of age, new discoveries rendered Victorian science out of date, human sciences took great strides, philosophically there was a movement away from Victorian idealism towards pragmatism and realism. But whilst they were exciting times of progress, the end of progress became less clear, because the effect of the intellectual climate was to undermine the old authorities, without being able to provide a new 'absolute'. Everything was relative.

The war broke into those continuing trends of social change which have been variously called secularization, industrialization or urbanization, with a disjunction from normality. To an extent the existing ideologies could sustain and motivate men during the war, but many found their environment was far from their ideal of the crusade. There was a prevalent crisis of meaning. In the face of the apparent meaninglessness of war, men sought out, and held on to whatever could sustain them. They found some tentative support in a flight from reality, reading comics or playing chess, or dreaming of rural England, and some support in fatalism, brotherhood or their task.

At the end of the war an air of demoralization is apparent, presumably because of the disappearance of the integrative effect of the war effort, but more characteristic are the problems associated with the acceleration of the trends of industrialization and secularization. Many industries had received an impetus from the war, particularly new ones. War experience broke down many of the old patterns of moral authority. Thus, if the town worker, as Inge suggests, suffers a 'chronic malaise which makes them hate all the conditions of their lives',

then this must be a period which brings that problem into sharper focus than many other things. General evidence of some kind of ideological void is offered by some of the greatest writing of the period which reveals an ideological thirst and a search for charisma.

The conclusion is drawn that Kennedy worked in a period which required new patterns of meaning to stabilize personality and society in a transformed environment, and a fresh affirmation of being when men were unsure of identity.

Kennedy's development was such as to bring questions of how to grip the mind of modern men before him, and to attempt to resolve what he recognised as their religious difficulties.

A second conclusion is drawn, that, although Kennedy was superficially a lightweight popular preacher and rhymster who made his reputation by Irish wit, eloquence and charm, there is, underlying his written remains, an integrity and coherence of thought. Particularly it has been shown that there is a persistent reinterpretation of faith and experience in terms of a single motif, the 'suffering God'. This motif is Kennedy's key to the renewal of the individual and the progress of the world.

A third conclusion is drawn that Kennedy's religious thought had a specific relevance to his context. The 'suffering God' was a motif which could meet the search for meaning and affirmation of being, in war, or in industrial England. Kennedy needed no external authority to validate his notion of the suffering God. It was presented as an inner light which needed no 'authority'. It validated itself by proving to be effective. Kennedy may be compared to the salesman who has just the goods the market wants at a specific time, and if it is true that as Horton Davies suggests he began to lose his influence in later years, then it is worth noting that the later years were more prosperous and more promising years, than those which preceded.

But it is also pertinent to ask whether any serious reduction of doctrine was necessary in order for Kennedy to provide religious thought for the needs of his generation. Kennedy has been accused of being unbalanced in that he concentrated his attention on the 'suffering God', at the expense of 'Almighty God', ruler and judge.

The question here is whether an almighty character is really absent from Kennedy. As pointed out in chapters four and five, Kennedy suggests that 'Almighty God' is not untrue but unreal. That is, God cannot be readily perceived in current experience as almighty. On the other hand the expression of the almighty nature of God in an eschatological sense is in itself a present experience of hope and meaning which serves to validate its value and hence its truth. God can be more readily perceived as the God who will be almighty. Having adopted an eschatological framework Kennedy then proceeds to identify elements of progress in history towards the final point when God will be almighty, and is able to point to particular aspects of the development of the world in which the coming almighty nature of God in the world is already expressing itself. Therefore Kennedy is willing to recognise signs of the almighty nature of God in the present as well as look to the completed almighty nature of God in the future. The limited nature of God expressed in this approach is a topic for debate, but outside the scope of this work. However what can be tentatively suggested in view of the weight of material in Kennedy's writings which look^S for the transformation of the individual and the world to hasten the revelation of the Almighty God, is that Kennedy is not totally unbalanced in his attention to the suffering God in that the purpose of the suffering of God is the bringing into being of the final state in which God will be the almighty ruler and judge. Kennedy expended much energy that God might be almighty.

A second question arises over the apparent subjective nature of the 'suffering God' who is close to man. Kennedy does not present a fixed

picture of Christ, but one which varies according to the particular world of his audience.

To the soldier:¹

Behold the Man with the iron body and the iron will: the Man Who of his own free will lived the life of hardship and gladly suffered pain.

To the craftsman:²

Close by the careless worker's side,
Still patient stands
The Carpenter of Nazareth,
With pierced hands
Outstretched to plead unceasingly,
His Love's demands.

Longing to pick the hammer up
And strike a blow,
Longing to feel His plane swing out,
Steady and slow,
The fragrant shavings falling down,
Silent as snow.

To the gambler:³

He was a gambler too, my Christ,
He took His life and threw
It for a world redeemed.

It is difficult to see how the God who is relevant and succouring to the individual in a particular way can be other than particular and relative to individual. This raises the question as to how far there is a fixed aspect to the 'suffering God'. Without this fixed aspect Christ can be arbitrarily what men will, merely baptising the actual.

Kennedy was well aware of the difficulty of the search for what has been called the 'historical Jesus'. Instead he believed that a consideration of the life of Jesus holds within it the possibility of perceiving the logos, the universal word of truth and light. He urged men, so far as they had the eyes of faith, to perceive the word and be

1. RT, p. 93

2. UB, p. 111

3. UB, p. 117

altered by it. Kennedy was not ashamed of the distortions of Jesus in their own image that men produce because of the transforming power of the logos within even that distorted picture. Speaking of Renan and Emil Ludwig, Kennedy says, 'And yet, though it was but a little, each of these fellow men of mine told me something of Jesus because they both honestly tried to express Him. It was but a little, but a little of Jesus may go a long way, and that is my hope.'⁴ So Kennedy's approach allows him to encourage men to use their own language of Jesus, so that they may speak of him within their own world and perceive perhaps dimly Christ the word. The nature of the word however as Kennedy develops it, with its eschatological perspective, is not such as to confirm man in his present state, with a statement of the kind, 'Christ is just like you', but such as to confirm the potential for man in the immediate future, with a statement of the kind, 'Christ is how you can become'. Ultimately the word is unifying and in that sense brings a diverse world towards a fixed point.

There is still an unanswered question regarding the indisputability of Kennedy's particular conception of the end point, but it can be concluded that whilst his approach allows him an apparent liberty in adapting Jesus to the image of man, for the sake of finding the 'suffering God', close and alongside man, the adaptation is subject to a fixed Christ of faith.

Finally there are questions to be raised as to whether Kennedy, as a man of his times, speaking to men who still believed in their own power and demanded rationality and the end of superstition, went so far in presenting religion as eminently logical, understandable and possible in psychological terms, as to lose sight of the illogicality of the grace of God, and the unpredictability of the power of the Spirit.

4. WWC, p. 150

Kennedy presents the salvation of the individual as a response of his will to a picture of what he could become. This presupposes the power of man to be attracted by what he is not, and the ability of his will to transform him into what he could become. Doubts can readily arise both as to whether the optimistic reliance upon psychological power is actually sufficient for the transformation of man into the image of Christ, and also as to whether psychological power is an adequate explanation of the experience of christians in the wider history of the church.

The conclusion is drawn that in adopting uncritically a specifically rational thought, making religion entirely explicable in psychological terms, Kennedy lays himself open to the charge of reducing the power of Christ. Whilst there is evidence of the power of Kennedy's thought to provide succour and meaning for his generation, doubt may be cast on the adequacy of his thought to transform his generation.

APPENDIXTHE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SERMON-STYLE OF G.A. STUDDERT KENNEDY

Kennedy has passed into legend as a great popular preacher, he is an essential selection for any review of twentieth century preachers. Indeed, Fant and Pinson go so far as to say, 'Fosdick has been called the "father of modern preaching"; if that is true, then G.A. Studdert Kennedy must be the father of contemporary preaching.'¹ It seems logical therefore to turn to Kennedy as a model for contemporary preaching where it seems to fail in its attempt to reach secular men. Fant and Pinson, again, write of an unfulfilled promise in the study of Kennedy in this respect:²

His sermons seem to suggest secrets for preaching to a secular-minded, non-theological world. But every attempt to understand those secrets is frustrating; every explanation seems unsatisfying and incomplete. The sermons of Studdert Kennedy deserve further study by students and preachers.

This work offers some little further evidence of Kennedy's 'secrets'.

The above writers have suggested that a major technical feature of his style was simplicity of language, particularly in his use of short concrete words:²

In one group of two hundred seven words examined, one hundred forty eight were one syllable words, thirty seven were two syllable, sixteen three syllable, two were four syllable, and only four were five syllable. None of the four or five syllable words were unfamiliar. He emphasized specific, concrete, bold words.

Table 1 on page 175 analyses five talks by Kennedy and compares them with talks by Dick Sheppard and William Temple. It does not appear that Kennedy avoids the use of long words to any significant extent, if anything, he is more willing to use obscure words than Sheppard whose style is more relaxed, informal and conversational. It is pertinent that of the five sermons examined, the one which uses the highest proportion of words with more than one syllable, was delivered to an audience for whom one might suppose

1. Fant and Pinson, p. 245.

2. p. 251.

simplicity to be at a premium, namely, a mixed group of soldiers. Furthermore, it is one of that series of talks which created Kennedy's reputation as a preacher at the beginning of his war career. Thus, the use of short words is not the main 'secret'. After all, short words are not necessarily simple. More relevant is his use of concrete words and images. Table 2 shows that compared with Sheppard and Temple, Kennedy is capable of using a very high proportion of concrete nouns in his addresses. It is significant, for instance, that in a funeral address Kennedy kept his imagery to a high degree in concrete terms. This does not mean that Kennedy always shied away from abstract thought. There are instances of mystical thought in spite of the general observations made. Mention has been made in discussing Kennedy's religious thought of words which have particular significance in preaching, 'pictures', 'dramas', and symbols. There is a substantial use of story in his preaching, not so much to illustrate a point, as to say a point, which accounts for the high use of concrete words. The use of story appears to be inherent in Kennedy's thought. It extends from use in some secondary application of a sermon to the very core of his religious belief, in his story of the 'suffering God'. It is hardly new for the prospective preacher to discover that the use of stories in preaching is important, but there may be a value in the tentative conclusion that the use of a story, a single story which encompasses all others, is a 'secret' of Kennedy's successful preaching.

The use of concrete words, and story does not signify that Kennedy did not intend the mind to be exercised intellectually by his preaching. The Bishop of London testifies of The Word and the Work that 'This book will make people think. It will give them, to use the author's phrase, "A pain in the mind."³ and P.T.R. Kirk

writes of the ultimate purpose of Kennedy's use of wit:⁴

If one of the reasons for his forceful appeal was the almost uncanny way in which he would have his hearers rocking with laughter at one moment and at the point of tears the next, another was the aptitude he had with all this of introducing in the middle of his popular speeches - which rarely lasted much less than an hour - long passages which called for all the intelligence. Once, when he addressed a gathering of students in a theological college, feeling that he was not carrying their minds with him - for he was very sensitive to atmosphere - he told the men they must put on their thinking caps: 'I have taken all this before an audience of working men, and they managed to put up with it, and so must you.'

Kennedy was passionately concerned to transform and renew men intellectually and psychologically through his preaching, by the action of the picture of Christ upon their minds. It follows from this that the use of story in Kennedy's preaching, and, tentatively, as a generalization in preaching, is not primarily for simplification but for effectiveness in transforming the minds. Story is then a particularly effective form of language which enhances communication. It has been suggested already that Kennedy spoke to a generation who were ready for his particular message, which is not to deny that he may have been able, intentionally to discover that for which his generation was ready. It appears to have been story that men needed. Meaning and purpose are metaphysical concepts which traditionally man has grasped through myth and legend. However, rational or 'realistic' people of the nineteen twenties may appear superficially to be, there was a readiness for a new story.

There are technical features of Kennedy's style and content which are worthy of note. He has been remembered by some for his tendency to shock his audience. Horton Davies offers no evidence for his opinion when he says that:⁵

His shock tactics ultimately ceased to shock, like the

4. BHF, p. 175.

5. Varieties of English Preaching, p. 99

man who was always crying "Wolf! Wolf!" His language was too muddled with slang and expletives, which tended not only to distract from his message in drawing attention to the speaker, but was also felt to be passé in the years of peace.

but there is evidence that Kennedy over-reached himself in the attempt to drive his message home by shock. For instance, in one sermon as a chaplain, he preached an apparently blasphemous sermon which reserved the kernel of the message, which explained all, until the final sentence. Many took offence as they missed the crux of his sermon. However, sermons and addresses which remain from the post-war period are noticeably more moderate in their technique.

The desire to hold and speak to his audience always dominated the structure of his sermon, however. He did not begin a sermon by announcing a text, but by speaking to his audience of what they might be thinking. The sermon generally proceeded by a piece of psychological education to show that what his audience actually needed was some picture of Christ which was more suitable. This approach gives rise to a number of familiar types of sermon. It might be devotional, or even mystical in a retreat address, as some aspect of spiritual life is opened to a picture of Christ. It might be evangelistic as Kennedy calls people to realise the inadequacy of their 'passion picture'. It might be prophetic as the picture of Christ challenges some injustice, and always prophetic in the sense of attempting to make sense of the world, showing Christ as the pattern and purpose. Occasionally it might be apologetic as Christ is presented as the hope of the church. Rarely did Kennedy preach expository sermons, the Word and the Work addresses being an exception, in which Kennedy gave a loose exposition of the prologue of John's Gospel on the picture of Christ as the motivation of man. There is even an example of dialogue preaching in Democracy and the Dog Collar.

This again leads to the tentative conclusion, that, if there is a simple secret in Kennedy it is not in the use of any particular type of sermon, but in his use of a picture or story of Christ in addressing men and women in their life situation. This after all appears to be behind the popularity of his Rhymes, which started as an attempt to put the substance of his addresses into soldier dialect verse. He was not a great poet, and cannot be regarded on the same level as Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon, or Isaac Rosenberg, but he did have a gift for assessing the life situation of other people. It is not only that Kennedy used the language people understood, but that he used the inner symbols and feelings and, 'said for the soldiers the things they wanted to say for themselves.'⁶ It was popular because people could identify themselves in the story, and find at the end that both they understood themselves a little better, and that Kennedy had led them to understand themselves in the light of Christ. If contemporary preaching is understood as speaking to the minds of men in their own situation then there is some justification in speaking of Kennedy as an able exponent of, and perhaps even the father of, contemporary preaching, if Fant and Pinson can substantiate his ability compared to other preachers, and his seminal influence.

6. UB. Publishers note to 1941 edition.

TABLE 1.

A Comparison of Word Lengths in Some Sermons of G.A. Studdert Kennedy and Others

Reported as number of words of specific length, per thousand words.

Number of syllables	1	2	3	4	5	6
Kennedy 1 ⁷	701	205	54	34	4	1
Kennedy 2 ⁸	757	162	55	20	5	1
Kennedy 3 ⁹	741	161	76	16	6	0
Kennedy 4 ¹⁰	735	192	54	15	4	0
Kennedy 5 ¹¹	748	175	54	19	4	0
Dick Sheppard ¹²	745	186	49	15	4	1
William Temple ¹³	666	192	87	41	13	1

7. 'What are we fighting for?', RT pp. 35-43, (1916)
8. 'Labour's Strength and Labour's Weakness', The Torch Vol 1 No.1. Preached at St Martins-in-the-Fields, (Feb 12th, 1920)
9. 'Charity', NM, pp. 228-31. (date uncertain)
10. 'If there had been no Christmas', NM, pp. 242-6 (date uncertain)
11. 'The Challenge of Easter' funeral of the organist, St Edmund's Lombard St. (Feb 1929)
12. 'Meeting Troubles Half-Way' in Fant and Pinson, ix 156-158 (1930)
13. 'The Spirit and the World' in William Temple, Fellowship with God, (London, 1920), pp. 118-29.

TABLE 2

A Comparison of the ratio of Abstract to Concrete Nouns in Some Sermons of G.A. Studdert Kennedy and Others

	Abstract/Concrete Nouns
Kennedy 1 ⁷	1.39
Kennedy 2 ⁸	2.81
Kennedy 3 ⁹	3.28
Kennedy 4 ¹⁰	2.21
Kennedy 5 ¹¹	1.75
Dick Sheppard ¹²	3.10
William Temple ¹³	3.67

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