Why I am not a Christian

Why I am not a Christian

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Bertrand

Russell

Why I am not a Christian

And other essays on religion and related subjects

With a new preface by Simon Blackburn

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Preface to the Routledge Classics edition

In London *The Times* reported quiet days at the beginning of March, 1927. In the shires, hunting was only moderate, but in London, following an anonymous telephone call, there was hope that the stolen £20,000 necklace belonging to Mrs Bruce Ismay might be retrieved. For seventy-three pounds and ten shillings the Church Travellers Club would take you to Palestine, Egypt, Athens and Constantinople. There were a lot of advertisements for parlourmaids, but few would be on the Church trip, since the modest-sounding sum represented a good year's wages. Many letters to the Editor concerned a proposed reform to the prayer book; indeed the Bishop of Norwich gave a special meeting about this reform ('Brigadier-General H. R. Adair, who presided, said that what was wanted was not a new prayer book but a book of discipline'). Church events were extensively reported.[1]

[1] Some things do not change. The Foreign Secretary, Sir Austen Chamberlain, declared in Parliament that he had two incontrovertible proofs that the famous Zinoviev letter that had brought his party to power was not a forgery. Unfortunately he was not at liberty to disclose the proofs. This was only natural, since the proofs were provided by the very Foreign Office and security services that had originally leaked the letter, probably after having it forged.

About the only event *The Times* did not announce was the Sunday lecture of the South London Branch of the National Secular Society in Battersea Town Hall on 6 March, and neither did it report it afterwards. The lecture was 'Why I am not a Christian', the most famous and most forthright of Bertrand Russell's many writings about religion.

It has been fashionable to decry Russell's lecture, and subsequent writings on religion, as shallow and unspiritual, inadequate to the depths of the subject. The high-minded patronizing of Russell says, in effect, that if religion were mere superstition, Russell would be relevant, but it is not, and he is not. The first such attack came in August of the same year, from the newly religious T. S. Eliot, in his journal *The Monthly Criterion*.[2] Since Eliot anticipates most subsequent criticism, I shall concentrate on the issues as he raises them.

Eliot seizes upon Russell's words 'I do not think that the real reason why people accept religion is anything to do with argumentation. They accept religion on emotional grounds'. 'What he does not remark explicitly, though I am sure he would admit it', says Eliot, 'is that his own religion also rests entirely upon emotional grounds'. Eliot disdainfully cites the emotional rhetoric with which Russell winds up his lecture, quoting the peroration 'We want to stand upon our own feet and look fair and square at the world . . . Conquer the world by intelligence, and not merely by being slavishly subdued by the terror that comes from it . . .', remarking contemptuously that Russell is very keen on standing up rather than sitting down, and his words will 'stir the hearts of those who employ the same catchwords as himself'.

Eliot's short counterblast goes on through three phases. He agrees with Russell that fear, which Russell sees as the force that propels religion, is generally a bad thing. But he urges that a

[2] *The Monthly Criterion*, vi, August 1927, p. 177.

skilled theologian would distinguish good from bad fear, and insists that a proper fear of God is a very different thing from fear of burglars, insolvency, or snakes. He does not specify any farther, but we can suppose him to have had in mind fear of God as some kind of remedy for existentialist fear, fear of rootlessness, the loss of bearings in an amoral and meaningless world.

Eliot goes on to point out that Russell's arguments are all quite familiar. This is in a sense true, given that we have read Hume or Kant or Feuerbach, although few would claim to remember, as Eliot says he does, that the problem of the regress of causes, that Russell says he learned from Mill, 'was put to me at the age of six, by a devoutly Catholic Irish nursemaid'. But if Eliot is right that Russell's essay is not philosophically original, he is wrong to imply that arguments are any the worse for being familiar, as if they thereby lose their title to control our beliefs.

Finally, and far more importantly, Eliot claims that in these matters Russell ought to agree that it is not what you say, but how you behave, that counts, and hence that 'Atheism is often merely a variety of Christianity'. There are many varieties of Atheism, Eliot says, such as the 'High Church Atheism of Matthew Arnold' or the 'Tin Chapel Atheism of Mr. D. H. Lawrence'. Eliot winds up: 'Just as Mr. Russell's Radicalism in politics is merely a variety of Whiggery, so his non-Christianity is merely a variety of Low Church sentiment. That is why his pamphlet is a curious, and a pathetic, document'. Eliot's polemic may seem perversely beside the point to the many humanists, agnostics, liberals and atheists who have been fortified by Russell's essay for more than seventy-five years. But it deserves attention, not only because it heralds the vicissitudes Russell's essay has had to undergo, but because in a number of respects it takes us closer to the modern world than does Russell. This does not mean that Eliot wins any intellectual argument—far from it—but that he well suggests the cultural atmosphere that would force Russell's Enlightenment

rationalism to struggle for air, and in some peoples' minds would snuff it out for good.

So consider Eliot's popular strategic point that if emotion leads people to religious belief, similarly emotion underlies rejection of it. At first sight this seems a neat rejoinder, hoisting Russell on his own petard. But on a second glance it is not quite as neat as it looks. We all of us believe countless propositions of the kind 'there does not exist any . . .': we believe that there does not exist any tooth-fairy, or any such person as Santa Claus, or Sherlock Holmes. Indeed, a belief in such things would be so outlandish, so contrary to what we take as central to our understandings of the world, to count as a delusion. And then, in the absence of a longer story, perhaps our only way of 'getting inside' the mind of the deluded would be to suppose them gripped by strong emotional forces, unconscious determinants of belief that speak only about the mind of the deluded, and not at all about what there might be in the world. It does not follow, and is not true that the ordinary state of mind, believing that there are no such things as those mentioned, requires a similar emotional explanation. On the contrary, it is entirely and satisfactorily explained by our sensitivity to the way of the world, in which there are no such things.

Although this is right as far as it goes, it does not take us to the heart of the matter. For given a consensus on what is obviously true, we will also find a consensus on whom to diagnose as victims of strange forces: those who believe otherwise. When Christianity was the consensus view, it was atheists who were put down as the victims of strange forces. The text 'the fool hath said in his heart that there is no God' was frequently taken to show that atheism was not so much an intellectually driven state, as a state of corruption, caused by the libertine atheist's desire to escape his conscience.[3] Given no consensus, but a debate

[3] Alan Charles Kors, *Atheism in France, 1650–1729*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990.

between Christians and atheists, each side will advance the mechanism as an explanation of its opponent's blindness. So the introduction of emotional diagnoses cannot advance the debate either way, unless, indeed, one side has what should neutrally be regarded as better diagnoses than the other.

However, Eliot hints at something much more radical. He seems to think that being a Christian is not a question of believing anything at all (that would make it mere superstition). He implies that it is purely a matter of having a certain emotional stance towards the world, and possibly towards some texts. At one point Eliot says of his old teacher at Harvard that 'being a real Atheist (he) is at the same time essentially a most orthodox Christian'. This sounds merely paradoxical, for why not substitute 'Buddhist' or 'Hindu' or 'Shi'ite' or 'Sunni'? Eliot must be talking of some shared emotion, a lowest common denominator of humanity that might be common to just about anyone, of whatever creed they claim to be. It is as if you could say: all religions (and atheism) preach Love, so let us identify them. This soggy ecumenicism is also part of the modern world. It would be nice as a solvent of religious conflict, but apart from anything else, it makes it impossible to understand the history of Christianity, where people cheerfully burned each other over whether there was any such thing as transubstantiation, an identity of substance between God and man, redemption by deeds or predestination.

For Russell it was a fairly simple matter to identify what Christians believe. At the minimum, they believe in God, and immortality, and believe that Christ was the best and wisest of men. It can be run through like a checklist. Where Russell takes pains to say what he means by a Christian, Eliot is wilfully loose about it. Eliot's defence is that not your words, but only your behaviour counts. For Eliot, someone might say that they believe these things, or say that they do not. But the real

question comes next, in seeing what they make of whichever words they choose. Russell, who at the time was certainly sympathetic to the view that a person's mental life was wholly exhibited in their behaviour, is not very well placed to disagree with this. But it opens up the whole problem of interpretation or hermeneutics, for where, in the swirl of a person's linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour, are there fixed points that tell us whether to interpret them as believing something or not? If, in spite of his victim's strenuous denial, Eliot interprets Russell as a Low Churchman, what is to show that he is wrong? Again, a modern chord is struck, as determinate meaning disappears under a welter of conflicting interpretations.

But like the game with emotion, this is a game that two can play. If in turn Russell chooses to interpret Eliot as a card-carrying atheist, who happens to take pleasure in reciting various words or visiting various buildings, what is to show that he is wrong? If indeterminacy rules, we can reverse Eliot's paradox to describe him: like all orthodox Christians, he is at the same time essentially a real atheist.

Russell distinguished three elements in a religion: a Church, a creed or set of doctrines, and religious feeling. It is well known that while he relentlessly attacked the Church as an organization, and maintained that religious creeds were simply unbelievable to any rational person, he himself not only admitted to religious feelings, but at various times of his life made them absolutely central to his sense of the world and his place in it. Well into old age he would lament the distance between what his intellect told him, and what emotionally he desired to believe:

> I have always ardently desired to find some justification for the emotions inspired by certain things that seem to stand outside human life and to deserve feelings of awe. And so my instincts

> go with the humanists, but my emotions violently rebel. In this respect the "consolations of philosophy" are not for me.[4]

Russell wrote of two reasons for which he entered philosophy: 'The desire to find some knowledge that could be accepted as certainly true . . . and the desire to find some satisfaction for religious impulses'.[5] Russell's daughter, Katharine Tait wrote that 'He was by temperament a profoundly religious man'.[6] In his earlier years he wrote to his first wife Alys of his admiration for Spinoza, who preaches a 'rich voluptuous asceticism based on a vast undefined mysticism'.[7]

In admitting to the feelings and their extreme importance, but denying the creed and condemning the organized Church, Russell opens himself to attack on another front. Why should not religious language be the best expression of religious feelings? That is surely what it is for. So the poet and literary critic in Eliot is bound to oppose the separation of feeling and expression that Russell innocently imposes (although that means that Eliot is inconsistent in championing the soggy ecumenicism identified above, since atheists certainly express themselves differently from Christians and the rest).

If feeling and expression are one, religious feelings just are the feelings about life, fate, memory, and loss, that get expressed in the finest religious writings. And if behaviour gives meaning to words, the continued life of those writings is just the life of the Churches which disseminate them and keep and refresh their meaning by investing them with due

[4] 'My Mental Development' in *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell*, edited by Paul Schilpp, London: Cambridge University Press, 1944, p. 19.

[5] 'Why I Took to Philosophy' in *Portraits from Memory and other Essays*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1956.

[6] Katharine Tait, *My Father Bertrand Russell*, London: Harcourt Brace, 1975, p. 184.

[7] Quoted in Kenneth Blackwell, *The Spinozistic Ethics of Bertrand Russell*, London: George, Allen & Unwin, 1985, p. 23.

continuity with the past, due solemnity and ritual. If religion is seen as a seamless practice, Russell's analytic distinctions cannot stand. They betray the essential unity of feeling, words, and rituals that make up a religious stance towards the world. On such a view the words 'I know that my Redeemer liveth' do not so much say anything true or false, but have whatever meaning is invested in singing them, or singing them in church, at Christmas. Neither Russell nor any atheist before him foresaw such an account.[8] However, even if it were a correct account of what religious 'believers' are doing, Russell would still be able to deploy his genuine, and severe, moral reasons for opposing them. The rituals and words are not self-contained expressions of feeling, but also the harbingers of prohibition and persecution.

We can see Eliot's quarrel with Russell as a foretaste of modernity's long problem with the Enlightenment. Russell stands on reason, belief, truth, science, and analysis, with feeling and emotion being only unfortunate, if strangely important, outriders. Russell thinks religious beliefs are simple beliefs, to be tried at the bar of probability, science, logic, and history, and when tried they are to be found wanting. Eliot classes them with poetry, feeling, emotion, expression, and tradition, while rationality and science, analysis, and probability, are exiled to the margins.[9]

The battle over interpretation is still being fought in our own times, as religious ideologies again contest for the minds even of the educated West. One of the glorious things about Russell's lecture is the clarity with which he took up one position on the battleground. Anyone taking a different position has to meet

[8] See especially Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief*, edited by Cyril Barrett, Oxford: Blackwell, 1966.

[9] Or perhaps tried to do so. Virginia Woolf, for one, consistently scoffed at Eliot's Anglo-Catholic posturings.

him head on, which will require better arguments than Eliot managed to muster.

SIMON BLACKBURN
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE, 2003

Editor's Introduction

Bertrand Russell has been a prolific writer all his life and some of his best work is contained in little pamphlets and in articles contributed to various periodicals. This is especially true of his discussions of religion, many of which are little known outside certain Rationalist circles. In the present volume I have collected a number of these essays on religion as well as some other pieces like the articles on 'Freedom and the Colleges' and 'Our Sexual Ethics' which are still of great topical interest.

Although he is most honoured for his contributions to such purely abstract subjects as logic and the theory of knowledge, it is a fair guess that Russell will be equally remembered in years to come as one of the great heretics in morals and religion. He has never been a purely technical philosopher. He has always been deeply concerned with the fundamental questions to which religions have given their respective answers—questions about man's place in the universe and the nature of the good life. He has brought to his treatment of these questions the same incisiveness, wit and eloquence and he has expressed himself in

the same sparkling prose for which his other works are famous. These qualities make the essays included in this book perhaps the most moving and the most graceful presentation of the Freethinker's position since the days of Hume and Voltaire.

A book by Bertrand Russell on religion would be worth publishing at any time. At present, when we are witnessing a campaign for the revival of religion which is carried on with all the slickness of modern advertising techniques, a restatement of the unbeliever's case seems particularly desirable. From every corner and on every level, high, low, and middle-brow, we have for several years been bombarded with theological propaganda. *Life* magazine assures us editorially that 'except for dogmatic materialists and fundamentalists', the war between evolution and Christian belief 'has been over for many years' and that 'science itself . . . discourages the notion that the universe, or life, or man could have evolved by pure chance'. Professor Toynbee, one of the more dignified apologists, tells us that we 'cannot meet the Communist challenge on a secular ground'. Norman Vincent Peale, Monsignor Sheen and other professors of religious psychiatry extol the blessings of faith in columns read by millions, in best-selling books and over nation-wide weekly radio and television programmes. Politicians of all parties, many of whom were not at all noted for piety before they began to compete for public office, make sure that they are known as dutiful churchgoers and never fail to bring God into their learned discourses. Outside the classrooms of the better colleges the negative side of this question is hardly ever presented.

A book such as this, with its uncompromising affirmation of the secularist viewpoint, is all the more called for today because the religious offensive has not been restricted to propaganda on a grand scale. In the United States it has also assumed the shape of numerous attempts, many of them successful, to undermine the separation of Church and State as provided in the Constitution. These attempts are too many to be detailed here;

but perhaps two or three illustrations will sufficiently indicate this disturbing trend which if it remains unchecked will make those who are opposed to traditional religion into second-class citizens. A few months ago, for instance, a sub-committee of the House of Representatives included in a Concurrent Resolution the amazing proposition that 'loyalty to God' is an essential qualification for the best government service. 'Service of *any* person in *any* capacity in or under the government,' the legislators officially asserted, 'should be characterised by devotion to God.' This resolution is not yet law but may soon become so if it is not vigorously opposed. Another resolution making 'In God We Trust' the national motto of the United States has been passed by both Houses and is now the law of the land. Professor George Axtelle, of New York University, one of the few outspoken critics of these and similar moves, appropriately referred to them, in testimony before a Senate committee, as 'tiny but significant erosions' of the principle of church–state separation.

The attempts to inject religion, where the Constitution expressly prohibits it, are by no means confined to Federal legislation. Thus in New York City, to take just one particularly glaring example, the Board of Superintendents of the Board of Education prepared in 1955 a 'Guiding Statement for Supervisors and Teachers' which bluntly stated that 'the public schools encouraged the belief in God, recognising the simple fact that ours is a religious nation', and furthermore that the public schools 'identify God as the ultimate source of natural and moral law'. If this statement had been adopted hardly a subject in the New York City school curriculum would have remained free from theological intrusion. Even such apparently secular studies as science and mathematics were to be taught with religious overtones. 'Scientists and mathematicians,' the statement declared, 'conceive of the universe as a logical, orderly, predictable place. Their consideration of the vastness and the splendour of the heavens, the marvels of the human body and mind, the

beauty of nature, the mystery of photosynthesis, the mathematical structure of the universe or the notion of infinity cannot do other than lead to humbleness before God's handiwork. One can only say "When I consider the Heavens the work of Thy Hands".' So innocent a subject as 'Industrial Arts' was not left alone. 'In industrial arts,' the philosophers of the Board of Superintendents asserted, 'the observation of the wonders of the composition of metals, the grain and the beauty of woods, the ways of electricity and the characteristic properties of the materials used invariably gives rise to speculation about the planning and the orderliness of the natural world and the marvellous working of a Supreme Power.' This report was greeted with such an outburst of indignation from civic and several of the more liberal religious groups that adoption of it by the Board of Education became impossible. A modified version, with the most objectionable passages struck out, was subsequently adopted. Even the revised version, however, contains enough theological language to make a secularist wince, and it is to be hoped that its constitutionality will be challenged in the courts.

There has been amazingly little opposition to most of the encroachments of ecclesiastical interests. One reason for this seems to be the widespread belief that religion is nowadays mild and tolerant and that persecutions are a thing of the past. This is a dangerous illusion. While many religious leaders are undoubtedly genuine friends of freedom and toleration and are furthermore confirmed believers in the separation of Church and State, there are unfortunately many others who would still persecute if they could and who do persecute when they can.

In Great Britain the situation is somewhat different. There are established churches and religious instruction is legally sanctioned in all state schools. Nevertheless, the temper of the country is much more tolerant and men in public life have less hesitation to be openly known as unbelievers. In Great Britain, too, however, vulgar pro-religious propaganda is rampant and

the more aggressive religious groups are doing their best to prevent Freethinkers from stating their case. The recent Beveridge Report for instance, recommended that the B.B.C. should give a hearing to representatives of rationalist opinion. The B.B.C. officially accepted this recommendation but has done next to nothing to implement it. The talks by Margaret Knight on 'Morals without Religion' were one of the very few attempts to present the position of unbelievers on an important topic. Mrs Knight's talks provoked furious outbursts of indignation on the part of assorted bigots which appear to have frightened the B.B.C. into its former subservience to religious interests.

To help dispel complacency on this subject I have added, as an appendix to this book, a very full account of how Bertrand Russell was prevented from becoming Professor of Philosophy at the College of the City of New York. The facts of this case deserve to be more widely known, if only to show the incredible distortions and abuses of power which fanatics are willing to employ when they are out to vanquish an enemy. Those people who succeeded in nullifying Russell's appointment are the same who now would destroy the secular character of the United States. They and their British counterparts are on the whole more powerful today than they were in 1940.

The City College case should be written up in detail also in simple fairness to Bertrand Russell himself, who was viciously maligned at the time both by the judge who heard the petition and in large sections of the press. Russell's views and actions were the subject of unbridled misrepresentation and people unfamiliar with his books must have received a completely erroneous impression of what he stood for. I hope that the story as here recounted, together with the reproduction of some of Russell's actual discussions of the 'offending' topics, will help to set the record straight.

Several of the essays included in this volume are reprinted with the kind permission of their original publishers. In this

connection I should like to thank Messrs Watts and Co. who are the publishers of *Why I am not a Christian* and *Has Religion Made Useful Contributions to Civilisation?*, Messrs Routledge and Kegan Paul who published *What I Believe*, Messrs Hutchinson and Co. who published *Do we Survive Death?*, Messrs Nicholson and Watson who are the original publishers of *The Fate of Thomas Paine*, and the *American Mercury* in whose pages 'Our Sexual Ethics' and 'Freedom and the Colleges' first appeared. I also wish to thank my friends Professor Antony Flew, Ruth Hoffman, Sheila Meyer, and my students Marilyn Charney, Sara Kilian, and John Viscide, who helped me in many ways in the preparation of this book.

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to Bertrand Russell himself who blessed this project from the beginning and whose keen interest all the way was a major source of inspiration.

PAUL EDWARDS
NEW YORK CITY, OCTOBER 1956

Preface

Professor Edwards's republication of various essays of mine concerned with theological subjects is a cause of gratitude to me, especially in view of his admirable prefatory observations. I am particularly glad that this opportunity has occurred for reaffirming my convictions on the subjects with which the various essays deal.

There has been a rumour in recent years to the effect that I have become less opposed to religious orthodoxy than I formerly was. This rumour is totally without foundation. I think all the great religions of the world—Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, and Communism—both untrue and harmful. It is evident as a matter of logic that, since they disagree, not more than one of them can be true. With very few exceptions, the religion which a man accepts is that of the community in which he lives, which makes it obvious that the influence of environment is what has led him to accept the religion in question. It is true that Scholastics invented what professed to be logical arguments proving the existence of God, and that these

upon evidence, and of giving to them only that degree of certainty which the evidence warrants, would, if it became general, cure most of the ills from which the world is suffering. But at present, in most countries, education aims at preventing the growth of such a habit, and men who refuse to profess belief in some system of unfounded dogmas are not considered suitable as teachers of the young.

The above evils are independent of the particular creed in question and exist equally in all creeds which are held dogmatically. But there are also, in most religions, specific ethical tenets which do definite harm. The Catholic condemnation of birth-control, if it could prevail, would make the mitigation of poverty and the abolition of war impossible. The Hindu beliefs that the cow is a sacred animal and that it is wicked for widows to remarry cause quite needless suffering. The Communist belief in the dictatorship of a minority of True Believers has produced a whole crop of abominations.

We are sometimes told that only fanaticism can make a social group effective. I think this is totally contrary to the lessons of history. But, in any case, only those who slavishly worship success can think that effectiveness is admirable without regard to what is effected. For my part, I think it better to do a little good than to do much harm. The world that I should wish to see would be one freed from the virulence of group hostilities and capable of realising that happiness for all is to be derived rather from co-operation than from strife. I should wish to see a world in which education aimed at mental freedom rather than at imprisoning the minds of the young in a rigid armour of dogma calculated to protect them through life against the shafts of impartial evidence. The world needs open hearts and open minds, and it is not through rigid systems, whether old or new, that these can be derived.

BERTRAND RUSSELL

arguments, or others of a similar tenor, have been accepted by many eminent philosophers, but the logic to which these traditional arguments appealed is of an antiquated Aristotelian sort which is now rejected by practically all logicians except such as are Catholics. There is one of these arguments which is not purely logical. I mean the argument from design. This argument, however, was destroyed by Darwin; and, in any case could only be made logically respectable at the cost of abandoning God's omnipotence. Apart from logical cogency, there is to me something a little odd about the ethical valuations of those who think that an omnipotent, omniscient, and benevolent Deity, after preparing the ground by many millions of years of lifeless nebulae, would consider Himself adequately rewarded by the final emergence of Hitler and Stalin and the H-bomb.

The question of the truth of a religion is one thing, but the question of its usefulness is another. I am as firmly convinced that religions do harm as I am that they are untrue.

The harm that is done by a religion is of two sorts, the one depending on the kind of belief which it is thought ought to be given to it, and the other upon the particular tenets believed. As regards the kind of belief: it is thought virtuous to have faith—that is to say, to have a conviction which cannot be shaken by contrary evidence. Or, if contrary evidence might induce doubt, it is held that contrary evidence must be suppressed. On such grounds the young are not allowed to hear arguments, in Russia, in favour of Capitalism, or, in America, in favour of Communism. This keeps the faith of both intact and ready for internecine war. The conviction that it is important to believe this or that, even if a free inquiry would not support the belief, is one which is common to almost all religions and which inspires all systems of state education. The consequence is that the minds of the young are stunted and are filled with fanatical hostility both to those who have other fanaticisms, and, even more virulently, to those who object to all fanaticisms. A habit of basing convictions

1

WHY I AM NOT A CHRISTIAN

This lecture was delivered on March 6, 1927, at Battersea Town Hall, under the auspices of the South London Branch of the National Secular Society.

As your Chairman has told you, the subject about which I am going to speak to you tonight is 'Why I am not a Christian'. Perhaps it would be as well, first of all, to try to make out what one means by the word 'Christian'. It is used these days in a very loose sense by a great many people. Some people mean no more by it than a person who attempts to live a good life. In that sense I suppose there would be Christians in all sects and creeds; but I do not think that that is the proper sense of the word, if only because it would imply that all the people who are not Christians—all the Buddhists, Confucians, Mohammedans, and so on—are not trying to live a good life. I do not mean by a Christian any person who tries to live decently according to his lights. I think that you must have a certain amount of definite belief before you have a right to call yourself a Christian. The word does not have quite such a full-blooded meaning now as it