

THE EROTOGENESIS OF RELIGION:
DEVELOPING A WORKING HYPOTHESIS.

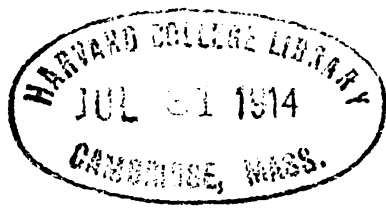
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THE EROTOGENESIS OF RELIGION.

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FROM the times of prehistoric sex-worship to this very hour, sex-mastery, and especially the regulation of other people's sexual affairs, has been probably the most zealously pursued of all the ambitions of priests and religious societies. Once convinced of this the suggestion came to me to inquire as to the how and why of this relationship. The purpose of this essay is to develop a working hypothesis for the study of this subject. Rather than take the readers over all the devious bypaths which originally took me to my goal, I will lead them to my working hypothesis by a better route.

Before going far in the consciously planned part of my investigation, I learned that in so far as my hypothesis involved only the assertion of *some* connection between erotism and *some* religions, it was very far from being original. The aggregate of the materials considered by all those whose opinions can be quoted in support of a connection between religion and sensualism will far exceed my own available materials. Often those opinions are justly entitled to greater weight than my own inductions, or interpretations, because they come from persons who were friendly partisans of the religions of which they wrote, so spontaneously. Furthermore, most of these persons reached their conclusions without any design or thought of questioning the objective verity of their religious beliefs, and without any thought of discrediting the subjective evidences for the truth of religious dogmas. In many cases they were free from suspecting the psychologic import of what they said,

or the support which their utterances might give to such a theory as is herein proposed. These opinions, soon to be quoted, are entitled to great weight, also for the added reason that they come from many intelligent observers, acting unknown to one another, inspired by a great variety of motives, considering very different materials and yet reaching very similar conclusions. Their empirical inductions should be analyzed in order to discover the psychic essence, all of their necessary implications and the elements of their unification. Thus, by successive inductions and inferences, we may arrive at a more inclusive generalization and acquire a well supported working hypothesis. This then will furnish a condensed recapitulation of practically all of my present investigation and of much more besides, and will furnish a working hypothesis better supported than was mine when originally framed.¹

Having now stated why these opinions are being quoted, it becomes desirable to negative some assumptions which the reader might otherwise make in explanation of some omissions. It must be borne in mind that the following opinions are not offered either as conclusive, nor even as the final proof of the truth of the theory which they support. The final proof of the correctness of this theory must depend, not upon these opinions, but upon the facts which underlie and justify them and other facts of the same general character, which will be adduced at another time. It is also desirable to explain at the outset why certain contrary opinions are here omitted from consideration. It is true that eminent men have insisted that such opinions as are hereinafter quoted are unwarranted. Their disapproval demands critical study beyond the space-possibilities of this article. Those various opinions which attempt to explain the existence of religion upon a non-erotic physical basis, need to have their short-comings pointed out. It was necessary to call attention to these omissions lest some

1. For an outline Method for the Study of the Erotogenesis of Religion, see *American Journal of Religious Psychology*, October 1912. This article will give references to other articles of mine upon this same subject.

one might think such matter had been overlooked, or intentionally suppressed. Since the sole purpose of this article is to develop a working hypothesis as to the erotic origin of all religion, it follows that the presumption of probable correctness of the hypothesis and the desirability of further pursuit of the study, depends upon the competence and the number of observers who have noted a casual relation between sex and religion. This, and the bibliographical value, are my justification for having made the quotations so numerous.

Probably the oldest record, showing the recognition of some relation between lust and religion, is found in the code of Romulus (about 470 B. C.) wherein it was provided, "That there should be no night vigils in the temples and no pretending to sacrifice at such unseasonable hours." The vicar at St. Mary's in Nottingham also informs us that: "This was to prevent the meeting together of men and women, by night, who under the pretense of religion, might gratify their lewdness. The like order with this, we find recorded of Diagondas, the Theban, who forbade all night meetings for religion,"² but not other night meetings.

A more specific suggestion that there existed an interdependence between religion and sex, and one almost as old, is that of Pausanias, (A. D. 174) himself an initiate into the Eleusinian mysteries of Greece. Although writing reservedly of the mysteries, he mentions the mixture of the obscene and miraculous, the frequent assignation and "the Proneness of religious Females to Vener-"³

Centuries ago it was observed that even the normal sex stimulus of one in love and conscious of its nature, though without the gratification of sex appetite, would preclude the greater "spiritual" exaltation which we may later believe to be due to religious misinterpretation of sex-feeling. "In the fourteenth century the wise old Knight of the Tower, Landry, tells his daughters that

2. A View of Ancient Laws against Immorality, p. 4. and citations.

3. Requoted from Bishop Lavington's Enthusiasm of Methodists, etc. Part III, p. 387, citing Pausanias, Editio Kuhnii, p. 195, et seq.

that unfeignedness which she did aforesaid. For I have heard it argued by many, who, in their young days have been in love, that, when they are in the church, the condition and the pleasing melancholy in which they found themselves would infallibly set them brooding over all their tender love-sick longings and all their amorous passages, when they should have been attending to the service which was going on at the time. And such is the property of this mystery of love that it is ever at the moment when the priest is holding our Saviour upon the altar that the most enticing emotions come' ".⁴

The reason why a young woman in love cannot serve her God with that unfeignedness she did aforesaid is very easy to uncover. Being in love, she is definitely conscious that the object of her affection is a man, and he the objective stimulus of her emotions. In the presence of this consciousness, the suggestions of the priest do not as readily create the ordinary illusions of a "conviction of sin" and "spiritual regeneration," nor induce the maiden to center her erotic longings on a creature of the imagination.

Cassanova, who was decorated by the Pope, looking at the matter from a very different standpoint, and after referring to "that mingling of mysticism and concupiscence which seethes in a Spanish heart," goes on to say: "I have everywhere observed that devout women are more sensitive than others to carnal pleasures."⁵

In the Historical and Critical Dictionary of the learned Peter Bayle,⁶ I find these observations also indicating, at least, some uniformity of connection between venery and religious enthusiasm.

"It is a truth, confirmed by the experience of all ages, that one of the surest means to draw the female sex, and make them run after men, is to set up fraternities of an austere reformation, and to make a great show of strict devotion to certain conventicles. Those,

4. Ellis' *Studies on the Psychology of Sex, (Modesty)*, p. 232.

5. *Quoted from Studies in the Psychology of Sex, (Modesty)*, p. 233.

6. Second edition, London, 1736. Vol. 3, p. 103-280.

'no young woman in love can ever serve her God with who trace events to their causes, have not forgot to meditate on the reason for this. They divide into two principal classes, those female scholars. Some go to that school out of a good principle; being led by devotion, which is innate to the sex: others have heard a thousand times, that there is a great deal of hypocrisy in these religious founders, and they are men like the rest, and they play the hypocrites, only to make love without scandal, and under the cloak of secrecy.

"This is the reason a woman hopes to find a lucky hour among those pretenders to devotion, and is eager to put herself under their direction, with whom she may lose nothing with regard to pleasure, and get a great deal as to her reputation. Women even hope, that, in case such men should not be hypocrites, they may have the address powerfully and victoriously to tempt them; for, of all vices, none is more untameable and ungovernable than concupiscence. As for the scholars of the other class, they conceive so great a veneration, and even so great an affection for the pretended man of God, that they blind themselves in His favour. If he finds it necessary to persuade them that there is no sin in doing some things, he insensibly turns that way, and at worst, their tenderness does not suffer them to resist his desires. However it be, there was never a head of a sect, nor a founder of a conventicle, let the things practiced there be never so abominable, but found very tractable disciples among the other sex; and when we see how solicitous these men are to draw in women, one must have a great deal of charity not to believe, that the scope of their devotion rather centers in the body, which they have received from nature, than in the salvation of their souls.

"I do not much wonder, that women should have been prevailed upon to prostitute themselves in the ancient Paganism; it was accounted a kind of divine worship; the goddess Venus was honored in that manner: but it is an amazing thing, that in the midst of Christianity, notwithstanding the wise counsels of mothers, and the

pathetical exhortation of preachers, the first hypocrite who comes in their way, should be able to persuade them to a thousand abominations. If he tells one of his devotees, as Saint Aldhelme did, 'lie by me; I desire to know whether you will be so powerful an instrument in the devil's hands, as to make me yield to the temptation,' she will do it. If he tells her, as some heretics did, who were punished by the Inquisition of Toulouse, 'let us be stark naked one by another, one upon another; let us kiss and tickle one another; we shall thereby give proof of our spiritual strength.' He is obeyed. Can there be a greater docility? Would she refuse to proceed farther, if he was willing? Have not many women complied with the order of lying with the first comer, when candles were put out, in the conventicles of the fraternity?"⁷

Another historian, writing upon our theme, uses these vigorous expressions:

"Moreover, religious and erotic emotions, if not generally one and the same thing, are at least, two golden threads spun from the one distaff of the heart's holiest love, and which, in their spinning, ever and anon touch and intertwine with each other. I state it as no quip of levity, but as a simple psychological fact: In the maiden's heart, when God is near, Man is not far off. Once interest a lady in Jesus, and it is not difficult to interest her in Jones. A woman is a woman first, and, if a lady at all, a lady afterwards. It matters not whether she be a countess or a cook; with her there is but one step between Jesus and Jones. I care not whether she be the stately duchess kneeling at the confessional in silk, stiff enough to stand alone, or the 'Hallelujah lass' following the tambourine with a devout hop-step-and-jump, the love of God is synonymous with the desire of Man, and I submit that there is no reason to be ashamed of the fact; but there is much to be ashamed of the advantage which the priesthood take of the fact.*——*

7. Bayle's *Historical and Critical Dictionary* (2nd Ed. 1736) Vol. 3, pp. 103-280 and authorities cited.

It is a fatuous sophistry to urge that the love for Jesus and the love for Jones are generically dissimilar. Woman has but one heart, one avenue of erotic passion. The Church knows this fact and acts upon it. It recognizes that Jesus, the mere abstraction, would utterly fail to excite amatory favor. So it passes on to Jesus the concrete, and envisages him on canvas or in marble, with free-sweeping and symmetrical human limbs and lineaments, and all but in a state of nudity. And the art of the priest is to work up woman to a state of religious hysterics before this all but nude figure of a young and lithesome man. And, the result? The result all experience of sacerdotalism teaches. There is but a step, and a short one, between 'divine love' and human sensuality, and, in all ages of the church, this step has been taken. Human nature is only human nature, and it is more generous to expect too little from human nature than to expect too much. Psychic though love may be, by incontrovertible law its manifestations are organic, and we cannot possibly be divorced from sex. And why should we blush to acknowledge that this is the truth? The fervor of the young and innocent neophyte is spontaneously transferred from the handsome Jesus to the handsome priest. God is an abstraction; but a concrete substitute is found, and for centuries has been found, in his ministering servant. He who acts as proxy to woo a maiden to love another usually succeeds in inducing her to love himself. The priest woos the maiden to give her heart to God; and the aspirations of divinity are dashed in the realization of infamy. 'Luther speaks of a fish-pond of Rome, situated near a convent of nuns, which, having been cleared out by order of Pope Gregory, disclosed at the bottom over six thousand infant skulls; and of a nunnery at Neimburg, in Australia, whose foundations, when searched, disclosed the same relics of celibacy and chastity.'⁸

Ennemoser, in his *History of Magic*, when writing of the *Witch Prosecution of the Hungarians and Servians*,

8. *Woman, Her Glory, Her Shame and Her God*, p. 245, 247, of Vol. I.

and their use of drugs to produce "spiritual" phenomena, records this:

"They rubbed themselves in various parts of the body, with the salve, in which narcotics, garlic, etc., were used; and nymphomania, hysteria, and somnambule visions were the consequences. For behind the curtains of magic and miraculous works lay concealed the unclean spirits of the Natural flesh, which were not restrained. According to Jung Stilling, in 'Theobold, or the Fanatic,' Vol. 1, p. 244, the religious excitement often flows from a very impure source; and he states that a fanatic society appeared in the thirtieth year of the last century, (1730) in which such transports followed the rubbing and kneading of the body in a magnetic manner, and those in whom these took place were said to be new-born. It, therefore, depended entirely upon the explanation whether in these scenes of excited feelings and of the life of the imagination, the result should be held to be a witch-exploit and dealing with the devil, or a vision of holiness."⁹

G. B. Vale, the devout author of a little book on "Fanaticism," written about 1835, shows by it that he was in other matters a most exact and conservative on-looker. Through his intimate knowledge of "Mathias the Prophet," he had good opportunity for observing at first hand the phenomena under consideration, and he wrote:

"We believe there is not a popular clergyman but could triumph over any number of his devotees, could he be base enough to apply the arts of seduction. *——* We believe that these feelings, natural in such circumstances, could be mistaken for divine communications, for even the scripture will admit of a similar interpretation in the cases of Sarah, Elizabeth and Mary."¹⁰

Sha Rocco, a student of ancient sex-worship, expresses this conclusion: "The primitive religion in this early day of adolescent manhood was purely passion

9. Ennemoser, *History of Magic*, Vol. 2, p. 127.

10. *Simple Narrative of Isabella in the Case of Mathias*, part II, p. 124.

consecrated and sanctified—a religion of feeling. It was a physical heaven counterpoised by a physical hell. Promises were sensuous bliss, and punishments were bodily woe.*——* It was based on the dynamics of nerve.”¹¹

Richard Payne Knight, in his “Two Essays on the Worship of Priapus,” shows that cult to have existed all over the world, and among Christians to have found widespread devotion as late as the Middle ages.

Hargrave Jennings, another most scholarly student of Phallic worship, puts the case this wise: “It may be at once asserted as a truth that there is not a religion that does not spring from the sexual distinctions.”¹²

Clifford Howard, another student of Phallic worship, expresses these views: “Love is both the foundation and the pinnacle of religion; the beginning and the end of human thought and aspiration. Religious emotion springs from the animating power of the sexual nature, and through the emotions thus aroused we deify and worship the inspirational source of our spiritual longings. In every sense both physical and spiritual, both material and ideal, love is the animating creative force of the world; the divine immanence of the universe; the actuating source of life, and the indwelling spirit of the soul; the beginning and end of all that is.”¹³

“But as Cousin observes, ‘mysticism is never nearer the senses than when it supposes itself to be very distant from them,’ an opinion wholly confirmed by the testimony of many writers regarding the sensualities practiced by monks and nuns in medieval times.*——*

“These holy vestals and brides of Christ were doubtless devout; but they were frequently sensual by nature, and their very piety was often a perverted mode of expressing sex feeling. Ample testimony could be afforded to prove that the passion of love and the fervour of religion are closely related. The neurotic nun who be-

11. *Ancient Sex-Worship*, p. 49-50, by Sha Rocca.

12. *Phallicism*, page XX of the Introduction, quoted with approval in *Phallic Worship*, by Robert Allen Campbell, St. Louis, 1877, p. 7.

13. *Howard's Sex Worship*, p. 80.

believes that she is embraced by one of the saints, imagines that she has subjugated the instinct of her sex; but in reality her emotions have a sexual origin. In mania, old maids in whom no one but the neuropathist would suspect immodesty, frequently suffer from erotic delusions, suppressed desires leading them to firmly believe that they have been ravished. Such subjects also cause surprise by their evident knowledge of sexual matters, expressed often in the phrases of the street. Notwithstanding, this does not impugn the sincerity of the devotee who vows chastity from a deep sense of the rightness of her sacrifice. Such minds are self-deceived as to the source of much of their pietistic emotion, yet they do not always wilfully deceive others.*——* In more than one of these sects of celibates and spiritual lovers, the flesh has repeatedly triumphed and asserted itself. The sect of 'the Christs' in Russia practice strict continence for prolonged periods; but at religious festivals, when they are aroused to an exalted state of hysterical excitement, men and women tear off their clothes and abandon themselves to sensuality under the belief that what they do is sanctified. The 'holy kiss' of religion has been in numberless instances the prelude to wantonness and license. Hepworth Dixon's 'Spiritual Wives' reveals the failure of such spiritualized fellowship between men and women as commended by the Princeites, and the members of the Agapemone."¹⁴

ALIENISTS AND PHYSICIANS

If there exists a causal relation between lust and religion it would naturally exhibit itself most conspicuously in those mental derangements involving religion and the sexual apparatus. This is necessarily so because in these insanities the normal relation would be exhibited in acute augmentation. We accordingly expect to find alienists even more uniformly than the historian, expressing an observed connection between morbid eroticism and ecstatic religious emotion. In the case of the psychologist we have the added advantage of an observer with special

14. Geoffrey Mortimer, *Chapters of Human Love*, p. 43-52-259.

qualifications for the selection of materials and for their interpretation. Our expectation will not be disappointed, and so we come nearer to the statement of a working hypothesis.

Though others had anticipated him, yet probably Dr. J. G. Millegan (in 1837) made the first lengthy statement concerning the sensual origin of religious ecstatic exaltation.

He says: "No definition of this state can equal that given by St. Theresa of her own feelings. By prayer she had attained what she called a celestial quietude,—a state of union, rapture, and ecstasy.*——* 'It was a voluptuous sensation such as one might experience when expiring in raptures in the bosom of our God.'*——* Zimmerman (in 'Solitude') relates two cases somewhat of a similar kind. Madame M. experienced effusions of divine love of a peculiar nature. She first fell into a state of ecstasy.*——* Suddenly she started up seizing one of her companions, exclaimed: 'Come, haste with me to follow and call love, for I cannot sufficiently call upon his name!'. A French young lady was the second instance of this affection. She also frequently lost the power of speech and all external senses, animated with a love divine, spending whole nights in ecstatic bliss, and rapturously embraced by her mystic lover. It is difficult, perhaps, to separate this amorous feeling from physical temperament; and the following remarks of Virey on the subject of St. Theresa, are most judicious: 'She possessed an ardent and sensitive disposition, transported, no doubt, by terrestrial affection, which she strove to exchange for a more exalted ardour for the Deity; for devotion and love are more or less of a similar character. Theresa was not fired by that adoration which is exclusively due to the infinite and invisible intelligence which rules the universe; but she fancied a sensible and anthropomorphic divinity; so much so, that she not infrequently reproached herself with bitterness that these raptures were not sufficiently unconnected with corporeal pleasures and voluptuous feelings.' "

Continuing, Dr. Millegan asks what other name than mental aberration "can be given to the ecstatic state of the Monks of Mount Athos, who pretended or fancied that they experienced celestial joys when gazing on their umbilics in converse with the Deity?" Another description of religious enthusiasts, our author concludes with these words: "The excesses of these maniacs were at last carried to so fearful an extent, and their religious ceremonies were so debased by obscenities, that the police were obliged to interfere."

After more illustrative discussion Dr. Millegan observes also this: "In Spain and Italy, religious melancholy and that most vexatious species of insanity called erotomania, are most common.*——* The ecstatic exaltation of religion and of love are not dissimilar.*——* Extremes of depravity and contrition do not unfrequently meet.*——* Emasculation was considered as rendering man totally unfit for prophetic revelation, indeed any holy inspiration; and we find in the first Deuteronomy that such subjects [as eunuchs] were not admissible to the service of the temple." 15

Henry Maudsley, the celebrated English alienist, has said much about the "spiritual orgasm," and tempts one to over-indulgence in quotation. He reminds us that contemporaries of St. Theresa "did not fail to discern a marked sensual flavor," in some of her raptures. "Sometimes in a voluptuous ecstasy or orgasm" this saint "felt herself received like St. Catherine of Sienna 'as a veritable spouse into the bosom of her Saviour.'" Maudsley expresses the opinion that such experiences were "little else than vicarious sexual orgasm." 16

When St. Theresa became abbess she saw in hysterical nuns such invasions of sensuality as betray delusion and the work of Satan. Commenting on her effort at differentiation between these two, Maudsley says: "It is a distinction between love and lust which other authorities on like spiritual seizures were compelled, in face of the

15. Millegan's *Curiosities of Medical Experience*, Lond. 1837. See Chapters on Ecstatic Exaltation, Daemonomania, Enthusiasm, Flagellation, etc.

16. *Pathology of Mind*, (Appleton Edit. 1890. pp. 143-144.)

gross lubricity sometimes displayed in them, to make, just as it was necessary to discriminate between the mania which was the result of inspiration, a divine madness, and the mania which was madness. In various parts of the Confessions, St. Augustine's elaborate exposition of the inexpressible delights of heavenly love betray plainly their inspirations in the sensual delights of earthly love."¹⁷

With numerous other illustrations Dr. Maudsley concludes a most interesting discussion, which all should read who are interested in the psychology of religion.

"We find," observed Dr. J. Milner Fothergill, a noted English medical author, "that all religions have engaged and concerned themselves with sexual passion. From the times of Phallic worship, through Romish celibacy down to Mormonism, certain theologies have linked themselves markedly with man's reproductive instincts."¹⁸

To this, Dr. Daniel G. Brinton adds: "The remark is just, and is most conspicuously correct in strongly emotional temperaments.*——* Stimulate the religious sentiment and you arouse the passion of love, which will be directed as the temperament and individual culture prompts. Develop very prominently any one form of love, and by a native affinity it will seize upon and consecrate to its own use whatever religious aspirations the individual has. This is the general law of their relation."¹⁹

The eminent writer on mental disease, Schroeder von der Kolk, when speaking of the forms of melancholy arising from physical conditions remarks: "The patient who is melancholy from disorders of the generative organs, considers himself sinful. His depressed tone of mind passes over into religious melancholy; 'he is forsaken by God, he is lost.' All his afflictions have a religious color." He adds: "I venture to express my conviction that we should rarely err, if, in cases of religious melancholy, we assumed the sexual apparatus to be implicated."²⁰

17. Maudsley's *Causes and Supernatural Seemings*, pp. 249-257.

18. *Journal of Mental Science*, Oct. 1874, p. 198.

19. Brinton's *The Religious Sentiment*, pp. 61-73.

20. *Hand-book von de Pathologie on Therapie der Krankzinnigheit*, (1868, p. 139, of the Eng. Ed. here requested from Havelock Ellis' "Studies in Psychology of Sex," and from "The Religious Sentiment" of Dr. Brinton.

In a similar strain, Dr. Feuchtersleben says: "In the female sex especially, the erotic delusion, unknown to the patient herself, often assumes the color of the religious."²¹

"The unaccomplished sexual design of nature," observes Dr. J. Thomas Dickson, while writing of the effects of the single life, leads to brooding over supposed miseries, which suggest devotion and religious exercise as the nepenthe to soothe the morbid longings."²²

Mr. Havelock Ellis has given us a summary of the conclusions of numerous alienists, from which the following are quoted: "The relationship of the sexual and religious emotions, like so many other of the essential characteristics of human nature, is seen in its nakedest shape by the alienist. Esquirol referred to this relationship, and many years ago, J. B. Friedrich, a German alienist of wide outlook and considerable insight, emphasized the connection between the sexual and the religious emotions, and brought forward illustrative cases."²³

"Regis, in France, lays it down that: 'there exists a close connection between mystic ideas and erotic ideas, and most often those two orders of conception are associated in insanity.'²⁴

"Berthier considered that erotic forms of insanity are those most frequently found in convents. Bevan Lewis points out how frequently religious exaltation occurs at puberty in women, and religious depression at the climacteric, the period of sexual decline."²⁵ 'Religion is very closely allied to love,' remarks Savage, and the love of woman and the worship of God are constantly sources of trouble in unstable youth; it is very interesting to note the frequency with which these two deep feelings are associated."²⁶

21. *Elements of Medical Psychology*, p. 218, quoted from Brinton.

22. *The Science and Practice of Medicine, in relation to mind*, p. 383, (N. Y. 1874) quoted from "The Religious Sentiment," p. 73.

23. Ellis, citing, *System der Gerichtlichen Psychologie*, 1842, pp. 266-68. *Allgemeine Diagnostik der psychischen Krankheiten*, pp. 247-251, Ed. of 1832.

24. Ellis, citing, *Manuel Pratique de Medicine Mentale*, 1892, p. 31.

25. Ellis, citing, *Text Book of Mental Diseases*, p. 393.

26. Ellis, citing, H. P. Savage, *Insanity*, 1886.

“ ‘Closely connected with salacity, particularly in women,’ remarks Conolly Norman when discussing mania, ‘is religious excitement.’²⁷ Ecstasy as we see in acute mental disease is probably always connected with sexual excitement, if not with sexual depravity. The same association is constantly seen in less extreme cases, and one of the commonest features in the conversation of an acutely maniacal woman is the intermingling of erotic and religious ideas.’ Ball, Brouardel, Morselli, C. H. Hughes,²⁸ to mention but a few names among many, have emphasized the same point.”²⁹

Spitzka, one of the foremost American alienists, concurred in these words: “All through the history of insanity the student has occasion to observe the close alliance of sexual and religious ideas, which may be partly accounted for because of the prominence which sexual themes have in most creeds, as illustrated even in ancient times by the Phallus worship of the Egyptians, the ceremonies of the Friga cultus of the Saxons, the frequent and detailed reference to sexual topics in the Koran and several other books of the kind; and which is further illustrated in the performance which, come down to a modern period, characterize the religious revivals and camp meetings, as they tincture their medieval model, the Münster Anabaptist movement.”³⁰

Krafft-Ebing, the renowned Austrian specialist on sexual insanity, deals briefly with the connection between holiness and the sexual emotion, and the special liability of the saints to sexual temptations. He thus states his own conclusions: “Religious and sexual emotional states, at the height of their development, exhibit a harmony in quantity and quality of excitement, and can thus in certain circumstances act vicariously.” “Both,” he adds, “can be converted into cruelty under pathological conditions.”³¹

27. Ellis, citing, Tuke's Dictionary of Psychological Medicine.

28. Erotopathia, in Alienist and Neurologist, Oct. 1893.

29. See also Delire Religieux in Icard's La Femme pendant la periode Menstruelle, p. 211-234. All restated from Psychology of Sex, (Modesty) p. 234.

30. Manual of Insanity, p. 39.

31. Psychopathia Sexualis, pp. 8 and 11, also p., 110 Chaddock's translation of seventh edition.

Dr. James Weir, who so far as I know, has made the only effort in this country toward gathering and publishing evidences bearing upon our theme, reaches the same conclusion. He says: "That there exists a relationship between the cultivated ethical emotions, religious feelings and the essentially natural physio-psychical function, sexual desire or libido, is a fact noticed and commented on by many thinkers and writers. The literature of the subject, is, however, exceedingly fragmentary and disconnected, no author having devoted as much as one thousand words to this very interesting psychical phenomenon. Throughout thousands and thousands of years religious feeling and sexual desire, the component parts of phallic adoration, were intimately associated; finally religiosexuality became an instinct."³²

"The current opinion that woman is religious is equally erroneous. Female mysticism, when it is anything more than mere superstition, is either thinly veiled sexuality (the identification of the Deity and the lover has been frequently discussed, as, for instance, in Maupassant's 'Bel-Ami' or in Hauptmann's 'Hannele's Himmelfahrt') as in numberless spiritualists and theosophists, or it is a mere passive and unconscious acceptance of man's religious views which are clung to the more firmly because of a woman's natural disinclination for them. The lover is transformed into a Saviour; very readily (as is well known to be the case with many nuns) the Saviour becomes the lover. All the great women visionaries known to history were hysterical; the most famous Santa Teresa, was not misnamed 'the patron saint of hysteria.'

"All through Hecker's Epidemics of the Middle Ages one is, by the facts recited, constantly reminded that religious enthusiasm must be most powerful aphrodisiac. He speculates but briefly over the matter, and with these words: 'An overstrained bigotry' says Hecker, 'is, in itself, and considered from a medical point of view, a destructive irritation of the senses, which draws men away from the efficiency of mental freedom, and peculiarly favors

32. *Religion and Lust*, pp. 92-110.

the most injurious emotions. Sensual ebullitions, with strong convulsions of the nerves, appear sooner or later, and insanity, suicidal disgust of life, and incurable nervous disorders, are but too frequently the consequence of a perverse, and indeed, hypocritical zeal, which has ever prevailed, as well in the assemblies of the Maenades and Corybantes of antiquity, as under the semblance of religion among the Christians and Mohammedans.'

"This religious receptivity in early life has been frequently noted by careful observers. It seems as though the agitation caused by a mysterious access of vitality, and the consciousness of physical changes of momentous, though unknown, import, predisposed the troubled mind to seek repose within the sheltering guidance of religion.*-**"

"The above instances fairly establish the fact that widely dissimilar as appear the motives which originate religious emotion and sexual desire, and divergent as may be their psychical operations, there subsists between them an occult yet indissoluble bond. Probably, could we know the secret history of many a rigid adherent to church doctrines and observances, we should find that there is little occasion to scrutinize the records of remote times and places to discover what, there is every reason to believe, exists in our midst."³³

"Murisier, in an able study of the psychology of religious ecstasy, justly protests against too crude an explanation of its nature though at the same time he admits that, 'the passion of the religious ecstatic lacks nothing of what goes to make up sexual love, not even jealousy.'"³⁴

Havelock Ellis, the distinguished English author of "Studies in the Psychology of Sex," whose valuable researches I have made great use of, in a concluding paragraph, uses these words to express his own opinion: "There is certainly, as I have tried to indicate, good reason to think that the action and inter-action between the spheres of sexual and religious emotion are very intimate. The obscure promptings of the organism at

33. Butler's *Love and its Affinities*, p. 74 to 81.

34. *La Sentiment Religieux dans L'Extase*: I requote from *Studies in Psychology of Sex*, (Modesty) 235.

puberty frequently assume, on the psychic side, a wholly religious character; the activity of the religious emotions sometimes tends to pass over into the sexual region; the suppression of the sexual emotions often furnishes a powerful reservoir of energy to the religious emotions; occasionally the suppressed sexual emotions break through all obstacles."⁸⁵

In Italy we find Dr. Paul Mantegazza also asserting the similarity of religious and fleshly love. He says: "According to the temperament of the particular person, Mysticism leads either to a contemplative (melancholia) asceticism, or to a human love. When it teaches that highest exaltation for religion's sake to do good, the ecstasy always assumes the character of mysticism, which it surrounds and guilds with an occult mantle of beauty.*——* Love in its highest degree of intensity resembles nothing so much as religious ecstasy.*——* To the ecstatic woman, God is always her heavenly bridegroom. In this earthly life devotion is the highest form of love. In the religious life devotion is the ordinary form of love which man feels for his God, or the other supernatural beings which his fantasy creates.*——* Devotion almost unavoidably results in prostration which others call the humiliation of the creature before the Creator. This prostration is not only an expression of Christian humiliation but is the natural form of all strong love."⁸⁶

Tarnowsky, the best known Russian specialist in sexual psychology says: "The development of satyriasis is principally attributed to sexual abstinence, particularly under the influence of religious conviction."⁸⁷

No collection of such opinions as this could approximate completeness without adding the convictions of the far-famed Dr. Max Nordau. He says: "Now it is known that certain organic nerve-centers, the sexual centers, namely, in the spinal cord and the medulla oblongata, are frequently malformed, or morbidly irri-

85. *Psychology of Sex*, p. 244. (Modesty).

86. *Die Ekstasen des Menschen*, pp. 75-170-172-179.

87. *The Sexual Instinct and its Morbid Manifestations*, p. 88.

tated among the degenerate. The stimuli proceeding from them therefore awaken, in the brain of patients of this sort, presentations which are more or less remotely connected with the sexual activity. In the consciousness, therefore, of such a subject there always exist among the other presentations which are aroused by the varying stimuli of the external world, presentations of a sexual character, erotic thoughts being associated with every impression of beings and things. In this way he attains to a state of mind in which he divines mysterious relations among all possible objective phenomena, e. g., a railway train, the title of his newspaper, a piano on the one hand, and a woman on the other; and feels emotions of an erotic nature at sights, words, odours, which would produce no such impressions on the mind of a sound person, emotions, which he refers to unknown qualities in those sights, minds, etc. Hence it comes that in most cases mysticism distinctly takes on a decidedly erotic coloring, and the mystic, if he interprets his inchoate liminal presentations, always tends to ascribe to them an erotic import. The mixture of super-sensuousness and sensuality, of religious and amorous rapture which characterizes mystic thought, has been noticed even by those observers who do not understand in what way it is brought about.*——* Mysticism is always accompanied by eroticism, especially in the degenerate, whose emotionalism has its chief source in morbidly excited states of the sexual centers."³⁸

Kirsch, the distinguished German alienist who took up the discussion of Degeneration in reply to Nordau, while writing of the epidemics of the Middle Ages, says: "The religious delusion was, as is commonly the case, connected with states of sexual excitement and of delusion belonging thereto."³⁹

Dr. Steingiesser of Berlin, the author of "Sexuelle Irrwege," writes this: "All through the lives of the saints for the last two thousand years, as a red thread running

38. *Degeneration*, pp. 61 and 188.

39. *Genius and Degeneration*, p. 176.

through all the ascetics, with rare exception, we see evidences of sexual disorder, and with scarce an omission, we find every degree of perversion, from the simplest sexual hyperæstheticism up to sadism, as I have described them in my book on 'Sexuelle Irrwege,' (Berlin 1901.) Only through such knowledge, that which heretofore seemed an insoluble riddle, has now become clear, and only by assuming a perversion, can we dispel the darkness which has hitherto obscured the lives of innumerable ascetics.*——* More interesting and plain the female ascetics and fanatics show all the symptoms which point to a relationship between religion and sex-feeling, and from the ecstatic and hysterical Madame Guyon, the spiritual devotee of Port Royal and contemporary of Pascal, to the hysterical, epileptic Catherine of Siena, we have before us all grades of sexual degenerates, in whose lives we find a more clear and certain verification of my above announced thesis."⁴⁰

Prof. August Forel, a Swiss physician, gives a number of illustrations not elsewhere found of religio-sexual abnormalities. He records one case of ecstasy which seems undoubtedly to describe the religious ecstatic without any religious interpretation or verbiage. "Ein geistes-Kranker bezeichnete in seiner Druckschrift seine pathologischen sexuellen Gefühle als psycho-sexuellen Kontakt per actio in Distanz!" Forel thus generalized his observations: "A large number of religious rites and usages are nothing but the worked-over customs of the sex-life (in its broadest sense) and many dogmas serve only to give these sex-customs a religious foundation, to enhance their authority. Thence they react and work mightily upon our sex-lives and our whole conception of it."⁴¹

Doctors Lauret and Nagour have made an extensive study of the relation of occultism and love. From a hundred pages I take space only to translate two paragraphs. "Without mentioning the cult of the holy prepuce (of Jesus) which is the analogue of the heathenish

40. *Geschlechtsleben der Heiligen*, (Berlin 1902) pp. 8-9.

41. Prof. Aug. Forel's *Die Sexuelle Frage*, pp. 367-377. (Munich, 1906 Ed.)

sacrifice to Priapus, it is undoubted, by those who understand the relation between religious and erotic emotions, that the ethereal passion for the Virgin Mary, as the same is cherished by young priests and even serious theologians, portray only a peculiar effusion of erotomania, and show that a glowing sex passion inspired the writing of these celibates. Knight von Cadenberg, formerly a pupil at the polytechnic school, in his book 'Le monde spirituel et la science chretienne,' informs us of his relations with an incubus, which assumed the form of the Virgin."⁴²

THE ACADEMIC PSYCHOLOGIST

Having now reviewed briefly the opinions of historians and of medical experts, it is fitting to pass on to the opinions of some professional psychologists. Here will be included the opinions of those who have specialized broadly on the subject of psychology as distinguished from those who have specialized upon insanities as an incident to or specialty within the medical profession. Now for the first time I find some conflict of opinion, for such men as the late Prof. James rather flout the idea of a causal relation between sex psychic sensation and religion. These adverse opinions will be critically studied at another time. Here will be presented only the opinions of those psychologists whose views contribute toward the development of a working hypothesis concerning the erotic origin of all religion.

Prof. James H. Leuba, after making a psychological study of a group of Christian Mystics, reached these conclusions: "In renouncing the work of the flesh—as most of the great Christian Mystics have done—they do not give up the passionate enjoyment which it yields. They are still ready, nay, eager, to secure carnal delights, provided it may be obtained otherwise than through the ordinary channels of sexual gratification. One of the greatest attractions of Mystical ecstasy is the presence in it of those voluptuous feelings. Ecstasy is, as we shall see, a love trance, so far as our Mystics are concerned.

42. *Okkultismus und Liebe*, pp. 76-77.

Saint Theresa tells us that she usually enjoyed intoxicating delights in the company of Jesus. Ruysbroek declares that 'the pleasure is greater, more voluptuous, for the body, and for the soul, than all those the world may give.' This experience is not peculiar to one or another of the Christian Mystics; it is a trait common to them all. The voluptuous excitement in which they are at times plunged may be paralleled only by the most passionate physical love. Mme. Guyon, frigid towards her husband, wrote of Jesus Christ, with whom she had contracted a so-called mystical marriage: 'I love Him so that I can love no one but Him. I have lost every other inclination of appetite.' Speaking later on of that period of her life, she said: 'I was like one of those drunkards, or one of those lovers who think only of the object of their passion.'

"For information as to the physical seat of this pleasure, we may go to Saint Theresa herself. She had at times angelic visitors. Once the vision of a very small and very beautiful angel was granted her. He held in his hand a long shaft tipped with fire. Every once in a while he would plunge it into her heart and push it down into the bowels. As he withdrew it, it was, she says: 'As if my bowels would be torn away and I was left burning with the love of God.'

"Take in connection with the preceding, the interesting case quoted by Havelock Ellis, in his *Psychological Study in Auto-Erotism*. A woman physician, a disciple of the Brotherhood of the New Life, founded by T. L. Harris, describes thus one of her religious experiences: 'One morning I awoke with a strange new feeling in the womb, which lasted for a day or two; I was so very happy, but the joy was in my womb, not in my heart.' The difference between these two experiences, so far as the point at issue is concerned, is that the woman physician says womb, and the Spanish saint says bowels.

"The sexual origin of at least the most intense and highest (according to their own valuation) of the divine raptures cannot be denied. They result from the setting

into activity of at least some of the organs of the sexual life, to an extent varying with each person, and always without his knowledge. It is a distinct form of erotomania."⁴³

Dr. Josiah Moses, Ph. D., is the latest psychologist to bear testimony to the connection between religion and lust. I will quote him at some length.

"There is a natural dynamic relationship between religion and sex; the two are inextricably interwoven, so to speak, and influence each other at every turn. In the biographies and autobiographies of saints, both male and female, of monks, nuns and enthusiastic religionists in general we find that sexual disturbances irradiate and produce marked religious disturbances such as erotic trances, visions, hallucinations, mystic experiences, etc. Unable to express itself naturally the sexual impulse finds an outlet in a more or less sensuous love of God, Christ or the Virgin Mary."⁴⁴

In another place the same author adds this: "Likewise the religious impulse, when overwrought, breaks through its natural bonds and spends itself in sexual orgies. In the religious ceremonies of the Christs, for example, a peculiar mystical sect in Russia, after the performance of a series of hysterical acts, such as rapid whirling around on their heels, loud singing and stamping, wild and uncontrolled laughing, yelling, contortions, mutual flagellation, tearing off their clothes, running wildly, throwing themselves on the ground, walking on all fours, sitting on each others' backs, etc., which continued late in the night, they threw themselves pell mell, men and women, on beds, benches, on the ground, and abandoned themselves to indescribable forms of depravity. 'The carnal love which we experience for our sisters 'they say, in justification of their licentiousness,' is sanctified by the presence of the Holy Spirit among us.' Even more degrading are the closing scenes of the ceremonies of another kindred Russian sect, Skoptsy. Similar phenom-

43. *Mind* (of London) for Jan., 1905 p. 16-17.

44. *American Journal of Religious Psychology*, Vol. 1, p. 229.

ena obtained in the festival of Venus, the Bacchanalia, Floralia, Saturnalia, Liberalia and others, not only of the early Greeks and Romans, but also of the European nations until almost recent times.

"Of the influence of sex on religion there are also very many examples. Mme. Guyon, whose married life was loveless and most unhappy, cried, 'I wish the Divine love, the love which puts me in a swoon.' And later, when she had experienced the mystic union with God, she wrote: 'O! my God, if you should make the most sensual persons feel what I feel, they would soon leave their false pleasures to enjoy one so true.' Another mystic, Ruysbroeck, sought and found in God an enjoyment, 'more voluptuous for the body and soul than all other earthly pleasures.' Numerous other erotic mystics, especially the female ones, such as St. Teresa, Catherine of Sienna, and St. Gertrude, who experienced mystical 'marriages with God,' express themselves in similar strains. Of the first, James says, 'In the main, her idea of religion seems to have been that of an endless amatory flirtation—if one may say so without irreverence—between the devotee and the Deity.' And to the last we read, that one day, 'Suffering from a headache, she sought, for the glory of God, to relieve herself by holding certain odoriferous substances in her mouth, when the Lord appeared to her to lean over towards her lovingly, and to find comfort Himself in these odors. After having gently breathed them in, He arose, and said with a gratified air to the saints, as if contented with what he had done: 'See the new present which my betrothed has given me!'

"One day at chapel, she heard supernaturally sung, the words, 'Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus.' The Son of God leaning towards her like a sweet lover, and giving to her soul the softest kiss, said to her at the second Sanctus: 'In this sanctity of my divinity and of my humanity, and let it be to thee a sufficient preparation for the approaching communion table.' And the next Sunday, while she was thanking God for this favor, behold the Son of God, more beautiful than thousands of angels, takes

her in His arms as if He were proud of her, and presents her to God, the Father, in that perfection of sanctity with which He had dowered her. And the Father took such delight in this soul thus presented by His only Son, that, as if unable longer to restrain Himself, He gave her, and the Holy Ghost gave her also, the sanctity attributed to each by His own Sanctus, and thus remained endowed with the plenary fullness of the blessing of Sanctity, bestowed on her by Omnipotence, by Wisdom, and by Love.

“Francis Parkman states that the nuns sent over to America in colonization days were frequently seized with religio-sexual frenzy. ‘She heard,’ he writes of Maria de L’Incarnation, ‘in a trance, a miraculous voice. It was that of Christ, promising to become her spouse. Months and years passed, full of troubled hopes and fears, when again the voice sounded in her ear, with assurance that the promise was fulfilled, and that she was indeed his bride. Now ensued phenomena which are not infrequent among Roman Catholic female devotees when unmarried or married unhappily, and which have their source in the necessities of a woman’s nature. To her excited thought, her divine spouse became a living presence and her language to Him, as recorded by herself, is of intense passion. She went to prayer, agitated and tremulous, as if to a meeting with an earthly lover. ‘Oh my Love!’ She exclaimed, ‘when shall I embrace you? Have You no pity on the torments that I suffer? Alas! my love! my beauty! my life! Instead of healing my pain You take pleasure in it. Come let me embrace You; and die in Your sacred arms!’

“This vital, interdependent relationship between the two impulses is so marked that, with perhaps only one exception, Prof. Wm. J. James, all who have given the matter serious thought have been forcibly impressed by it.”⁴⁵

Pres. G. Stanley Hall of Clark University, has more elaborately studied the parallelisms between religious

45. *Pathological Aspect of Religion*, pp. 15 to 18.

and sexual love; these are condensed for us by Dr. Moses and I therefore requote Pres. Hall's sentiments from Dr. Moses, chiefly in the latter's words: "It is no accidental synchronism of unrelated events that the age of religion and that of sexual maturity coincide, any more than that senescence has its own type of religiosity, nor is religion degraded by the recognition of this intimate relationship, save to those who either think vilely of sex or who lack insight into its real psychic nature and so fail to realize how indissoluble is the bond that God and nature have wrought between religion and love. Perhaps Plato is right, and love of the good, beautiful, and true is only love of sex transfigured and transcendentalized; but the Gospel is better, which makes sex love at the best the type and symbol of love of God and man.*——*

"The attitude of the lover and religionist towards death is the same. The fanatic rushes into the very jaws of death to avenge an insult to his God; the ardent lover does as much for his offended lady love. The mystic yearns for death that he may become one with God; the lover that he may become 'the air that surrounds, the breeze that fans, or the ornament that adorns his beloved.'

"The soul in both is highly sensitive to nature. Both love and religion draw the curtains from the eyes of their votaries and their beauties in nature to which they were previously blind. Jonathan Edwards, the God-intoxicated man of America, tells us that after his conversion, 'the appearance of everything altered; there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, sweet cast or appearance of divine glory in almost everything, God's excellency, his wisdom, His purity, and love seemed to appear in everything—in the sun, moon, stars; in clouds, and blue sky; in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water and all nature, which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon from continuance, and in the day spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God on these things; in the mean

time singing forth, with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer.*——* Before I used to be uncommonly terrified with thunder, and to be struck with terror when I saw a thunderstorm arising; but now, on the contrary it rejoiced me. I felt God, so to speak, at the first appearance of a thunderstorm, and used to take the opportunity at such a time, to fix myself in order to view the clouds and see the lightnings play, and hear the majestic and awful voice of God's thunder, which oftentimes was exceedingly entertaining, leading me to sweet contemplations of my great and glorious God.

"For the amorist too, do the sun, moon and stars, the clouds and blue sky, the flowers, grass and trees, the winds and streams take on a new aspect and meaning, but to him they suggest not so much the glory of God as the rare beauty and sweet qualities of his Dulcinea.

"Love builds and decorates its nests and homes; religion its towers and altars, its shrines, temples and cathedrals.

"Both love and religion are subject to the laws of rhythm. Now the lover is elated with joy, now depressed with sadness; the religionist now despises and scourges himself, and now is ravished with delight because he has received some token of divine favor.

"Music and verse, the song and dance are vehicles of expression for both. 'Music is the language of the feelings as speech is of the intellect, and the theme of by far the most music of the world is either love or religion. The melodies of the one often strangely fit the words of the other, while songs and hymns have always been one of the potent aphrodisiacs of religious affection, and will remain so as long as man is thumic or pectoral and must have emotion.'

"Both have their fetiches—'rings, tresses, handkerchiefs, and every article of dress or ornament, any one of which may and has become the only object capable of arousing genestic states. The very name assigned them, amatory fetiches, is significant. So in the history of religion, men have made idols of almost every object

in nature which has been focused on to arouse crude and perverse religious feelings and sentiments. There is almost nothing that has not been worshipped, and there is a long catalogue of even scatological religious rites. Nearly every act and attitude have somewhere been regarded as worship, and also have elsewhere been used as passional provocatives.'

"Just as man has been made by woman in manifold ways and he in turn has made her, so, too, has man been made by God, and in turn made Him in his own image.

"Both hunger for a larger and fuller life, and the best work of each is to keep the other pure."⁴⁶

"Love is the greatest thing in the world for both the religionist and the amourist. Its praise is in superlatives, for all else is dross. We must love with all our might and strength. Both furnish in their sphere the strongest motive both to assert and to renounce the will to live. They are exalted and degraded together, and the best work of each is to keep the other pure. Religion is at its best when its earthly image is most spotless and untarnished, and love is at its best where religion is purest and most undefiled. Just as this relationship seems to degrade religion only by those whose ideals or cults of love are lower, undeveloped, so those who dispraise religion have not realized how indispensable it is to perfect love. How central this thought was in the mind of Jesus many parables and sayings attest. True piety is earthly love transcendentalized, and the saint is the lover purified, refined and perfected. To have attained this insight, to have organized it into life, cult, and a Church, is the supreme claim of Jesus upon the gratitude, reverence, and awe of the human heart.*——*

"Christianity gives a yet higher interpretation of love—the greatest power of the soul fixed upon the greatest object, God, and next to him, man. Those both pray and serve best who love most. To the Christian, God himself is love, and without the Pauline charity

46. *Pathological Aspect of Religion*, pp. 20 to 22, restating Hall's *Adolescence*, Vol. 2, pp. 295-301.

or love, all is sounding brass or tinkling cymbals. The very end and essence of both moral and religious culture is to conceive and cultivate love in the purest, loftiest, and most all-comprehending way. We saw in Chapter VI how often in fact the sting of sin lies in the sphere of sex, and phallic worship shows how religion itself can grovel. If true love is the religion of the flesh, true religion is the love of the spirit."⁴⁷

IN CONCLUSION.

Here we have the concurring opinion of historians, devout and non-religious, agreeing substantially that the world-over, and without distinction as between different religions, there appears always a concomitance of religious enthusiasm and sensual enthusiasm. The practical universality of such synchrones in themselves are very strong proof of a causal relation between the two.

The alienists and psychologists who have been quoted, have been a little more specific in pointing out how, a sexual longing, abnormally intense, creates an hallucination of the experience longed for, and how a consciousness that the experience is not of the normal physical type, but psychic in character, produces in the attempt at explanation all those mystical verbalisms by which are described those experiences which are usually miscalled "spiritual," or "transcendental." Here there is more or less definitely the recognition that in their essences religious ecstasy and erotic ecstasy are indistinguishable, at least in their respective insanities. In so far as some of these authors have treated this as a peculiarity of the abnormal states, and therefore unrelated to the normal functioning, I believe they have erred. The abnormal manifestations should rather be utilized to aid us in understanding the normal. Not one of the authors who has discussed this question of the interdependence of religion and its sensual co-relate, has claimed the development of these abnormalities to involve even the least change in the nature or relationship of religion and erotism to one another. This strengthens

47. Hall's *Adolescence*, pp. 294-295-314.

the inference that the relationship is absolutely the same in the normal condition as these experts found it to be in the abnormal, although in the latter there is an extravagant augmentation of their importance, relative to other phases of life. We thus confirm in this particular a deduction made from the more general truth that insanity "consists in relative augmentation or diminution of healthy conditions" without any change in essential causal relations. I therefore conclude that whatever is conspicuously true, of the relation of religion and sex, in pathologic cases and in those great enthusiasms which mark the borderland between health and disease, must be equally true, though less conspicuously so, in all cases of perfectly healthy religionists.

Here we must not overlook those numerous clergymen who have assured us of an observed connection between religion and erotism. Among Christian sects the most frequent and the most effective reproach, sought for and always made, against heretical sects or individuals, is that of unorthodoxy of behavior in relation to sex. From what has preceded this result must be expected, not only because a deviation from the normal in the sexual life is to be expected, on the part of those whose religious enthusiasm has become abnormally intense, but also because the religious critic, by very reason of the conditions which make him religious, is predisposed to search for sexual irregularity, as the most probable and at the same time, from his viewpoint of its exaggerated importance, the most damning criticism that could be made. This results from the predisposition of all humans to seek and see most easily, in their opponents, all those sins which they themselves are most tempted to commit, and the repression of which is to them the most difficult. Because the temptation to them the most torturing "virtue" it is to that extent also esteemed to be the one for which they expect most praise, and for ignoring which others are entitled to severest condemnation.

It is a psychologic principle that when a person shows very intense feeling in regard to some one idea, out of all proportion to the relative importance of that idea measured by objective standards, the abnormal intensity is not due to the idea itself but to some unbearable associated idea which the victim is most anxious to conceal. The method quite unconsciously adopted is the old, old one of the thief crying "stop thief"—of concealing an excessive sensualism in one's self by the extravagant denunciation of sexual irregularities in those whom we oppose and an equally irrational overvaluation of the importance of our own sexual orthodoxy and that of our friends. I believe it is by this psychologic law that we must explain the fact that all religions, especially all religious enthusiasts, so extravagantly overestimate both the sacredness and sinfulness of sex. Thus we again conclude that there is not only a concurrence but some causal relation between the sex and religious conditions.

Now I must say a few words about the nature of this relationship, and here let me draw chiefly upon the clergymen.⁴⁸ One says this of rapturous enthusiasms: "It cannot be denied but that the fuel of them is usually natural." Another writes of divine love as self love "touched with some fleshly apprehensions of divine things and excited by them." Another in writing about "a mixture of natural love to the opposite sex, with Christian and divine love" explains it by saying that because the enthusiast finds himself with "more vehement motions of his animal spirits, thinks himself fuller of the spirit of God." Rev. Chas. Chauncey says that "some have been made sensible, their joy was nothing more than a mere sensitive passion." Baring-Gould testifies that "Spiritual exaltation runs naturally inevitably into licentiousness." And yet another divine informs us that when unhallowed men get to expounding scripture there is something "very delicious to the fleshly appetites of men,"

48. See *Religion and Sensualism as connected by Clergymen*, *Am. Jour. of Religions Psychology*, May, 1908. Vol. 3, p. 16.

and goes on to say that true religion does not consist in the "glowing heats of passion though these are often mistaken for it." So it comes that: "'Tis an experimental truth that passion is a great instrument of devotion," and "young converts are apt to ascribe to the operation of the Holy Ghost what is owing to the mechanism of the body."

In these clerical admissions there is a very clear recognition that in the cases observed religious experiences were only sexual ecstasies, not identified as such, and therefore under operation of appropriate suggestion these would be readily transcendentalized, thus interpreting them as the operation of the Holy Ghost, the inward miracle of grace, the testimony of the wee small voice within, certifying to the truth of any accidentally associated theology, moral code, or religious ceremonial. The same isolated facts which these clergymen thus interpreted, our historians have found to exist everywhere as the accompaniment of religion, and some of our alienists have made the same interpretation in the case of religious insanities.

I propose now that the interpretation of the theologian as to the sexual nature of religious enthusiasms; the historian's findings of the geographical universality of similar facts; the alienist's interpretation of religious insanities and the deduction which has been made from these; the facts known about primitive and prehistoric phallic worship which under the well known formula of the law of evolution must be reproduced in condensed recapitulation in the religious life of the individual; all this I propose to combine inductively in one comprehensive generalization. This generalization shall be my working hypothesis for further investigation, and it must be stated somewhat as follows:

All religion, at all times, and everywhere in its differential essence is only a sex ecstasy, seldom recognized to be that, and therefore, the more easily and quite uniformly, misinterpreted as a mysterious and "transcendental," or super-physical, indiscriminating wit-

ness to the inerrancy of all those varying and often contradictory doctrines and ceremonials of superphysical value in the promotion of present ecstatic or post mortem wellbeing and which, in the believing person, happens to be associated with and conceived as attached to the feeling-testimony. Thus it is that all variety of religionists know because they feel and are firmly convinced in proportion as they are strongly agitated. When we have correctly weighed the probative force of these "feelings," as evidence for or against any theologic religious or moral doctrine, and discover their essence, we will have abolished dualism and spiritism, and finally establish as irrefutable the essentials of materialist monism.
