

Holiness Thought and the Moral Image of Man

EDWARD H. MADDEN

Toward the end of the eighteenth century Christianity was at its lowest ebb in the history of the American settlements. Moral repugnance against Old School Calvinism had in large part made deistic views of the Enlightenment an acceptable alternative to our founding fathers. To the mass of people, however, the natural theology of the Enlightenment soon proved to be as unpalatable as Calvinism. So it was that, at the turn of the century, a new brand of evangelical, freewill Trinitarianism began to flourish and attract converts by droves. Barton Stone, Alexander Campbell, Asa Shinn, John Rankin, and Asa Mahan were active ministers on the frontier--that is, Kentucky, Ohio and what is now West Virginia--while Lyman Beecher preached the New Light doctrine in Connecticut and Charles Grandison Finney preached through upper New York State and produced, among others, the great Rochester revival.¹

The freewill Trinitarians, entirely interdenominational, were completely dependent on Thomas Reid and the Scottish realist tradition for their rebuttals of Calvinistic determinism and for their agent causality interpretation of free will (which meant that man is the cause of his own acts and nothing causes him to act the way he does, for motives are not causes). The Americans were mainly influenced by Reid and Dugald Stewart and, shortly after, by Victor Cousin and Théodore Jouffroy, French advocates of much of Reid's thought. We will examine in some detail the Trinitarians' critique of Calvinism and their own concept of agent causality since they constitute the crucial elements of the Reidian moral image of man and hence of the freewill Trinitarians who grounded their views in the Scottish tradition.² Before beginning my detailed examination I need to point out that the Holiness Movement is a sub-class of freewill Trinitarianism. Holiness advocates, to be sure, held the Reidian view of agency, like any other members of the freewill Trinitarian tradition; but not all of the latter, of course, held the holiness view of sanctification. So it follows that everything I say about agency will be true of the whole class.

Edward H. Madden, *Ph.D.*, is professor emeritus of philosophy at the State University of New York at Buffalo. He currently teaches philosophy at The University of Kentucky.

Those aspects of the moral image of man unique to holiness thought we will examine a bit later.

I

Asa Mahan, first president of Oberlin College and deep in the holiness tradition, ardently criticized Old School views; they make moral responsibility impossible and turn God into an unjust tyrant. If men have no power whatever to choose or act differently than in fact they do, then the concepts of merit and demerit, and the consequent propriety of reward and punishment, become meaningless and inapplicable. And God is transformed into a tyrant when he admonishes men to give up their sinful ways since He is demanding of them the impossible. God must be seen on Judgment Day as eternally damning certain souls and saving others when none of the lot supposedly could have done other than they did, and so merit no judgment at all.³ Dr. Emmons' Old School view is the oddest of all since he was an occasionalist and believed that all things considered to have been done by human beings were in fact done by the direct agency of God. Hence God is conceived as punishing men for His divinely instituted acts. Do not all of these strange consequences constitute a *reductio ad absurdum* of old School Calvinism? Mahan answered "yes" unequivocally; but he still needed to show that later Edwardsian efforts to make determinism compatible with freedom and moral responsibility--what has come to be called "soft" determinism in contrast to the "hard" determinism of the Old School--were unsatisfactory and failed to do the job.

According to Jonathan Edwards, freedom means the power or ability to do as one pleases. One is unfree only if he is compelled to do other than he wishes. A man is not responsible for what he is compelled to do, but he is responsible for what he does when he is not coerced. After all, in such cases *he* is the one who does as he pleases and so is responsible. Mahan objected that this argument confuses several senses of the word freedom, a confusion made evident by comparing "freedom" with the concepts of *servitude* and *determinism*. Freedom contrasted with *servitude* means that a man can do as he pleases because he is not in chains or forced by other constraints to do other than he would. Freedom contrasted with *determinism* means that a man can please (or will) to do one thing rather than another; he is under no constraint to will or choose the way he in fact does. Freedom in the second sense is what is required for the ascription of responsibility. Edwards allowed only freedom in the first sense and offered it, irrelevantly, as sufficient grounds for ascribing responsibility. Mahan summed up the point succinctly: determinism is identical

with Fatalism "in its worst form"; they both alike affirm that man can "do as he pleases" and both agree that "man cannot but please to do as he does."⁴

It might be supposed that the defense of free will, as in Mahan's case, would invariably be directed against the Calvinists, and there is much truth in such a supposition. However, some medics, physiologists and chemists occasionally used their scientific determinism against religion, and such scientists as well as the Calvinists had to be dealt with by the New Lights. The defense of free will against scientific determinism fell to the lot of Alexander Campbell in his great debate with Robert Owen.⁵

Owen failed to see, Campbell averred, that the concept of cause is not applicable to human actions. To act as an agent "is quite different from the running of water, the blowing of the wind, or the revolution of a mill wheel." A cause necessarily produces its effect while motives do not, for it is "up to the person" to decide in any given case what motive, among many possible ones, will be chosen and will explain why he acted the way he did. It is in this sense that a person initiates an act, does something that makes the future in part different from what it otherwise would be, and prevents him from being simply a link in an infinite causal chain. Frequently rational motives win out, though that need not be the case. Choosing freely, Campbell wrote, "is sometimes to go with our feelings, and sometimes against them."⁶ But, whatever is chosen, the fact remains that a person is able without any change of character to choose and act differently at different times even though the conditions, except for time, are identical.

Determinists objected that Campbell's view leads to indeterminism and chaos. There would be no reliability in human action if a person could act differently in two identical situations and without a change in character to make the different responses understandable. Campbell was unimpressed by the change-in-character doctrine, part and parcel, as he saw it, of the whole determinist misconception that motives are causes. What specific counter-examples did Campbell have in mind? Something like the following ones are implied by what he said in more general terms. Man is not omniscient; he can misjudge the nature of an act one time and judge correctly another. Or he might act perversely toward moral rules, or even against his own legitimate interests, the second time, say, just to prove, as Dostoevski would have it, that he is not a set of piano keys to be played upon by external forces. Or a person might intentionally allow a selfish motive to rule in one case since sainthood is not demanded of him. He was helpful to the needy last time; this time he passes by the needy and indulges himself. Some people, to be sure, simply refuse to act in

any consistent manner, choosing willy-nilly at the whim of the moment. Other people, it must be emphasized, act perfectly consistently and predictably according to principles which they have chosen to guide their lives.⁷

Campbell would claim that none of these cases leads to indeterminism or chaos but that they are perfectly understandable in the agent causality framework and do not require invoking a change in the agent's nature, the last resort in the determinist's decline.

That the concept of cause is not applicable to human actions is the theme of the whole Scottish tradition. A few writers in the tradition, notably Dr. Gregory, tried to formalize the difference between the cause-effect and motive-action relations, one of the most successful being the conceptual-connection argument, still promulgated in the twentieth century by such able philosophers as A. I. Melden and several of Roderick Chisholm's students.⁸ According to this argument, a cause and effect can be described independently of each other, while a motive and an act cannot be independently described since they are conceptually connected. Motives provide the point of an action, and the action is to be understood by this point--hence the two are conceptually or intentionally related. Not many figures in the early tradition accepted this formal differentia, whatever its merits may be, since it seems to depend upon a Humean view of causality but mainly because Dugald Stewart thought such criteria unnecessary. There is, he thought, a more direct way of making the distinction, which involves knowledge of the Scot's metaphilosophy.

According to Asa Shinn, articulating the work of Reid, the mind of man is not a tabula rasa but has nativistic epistemic import into knowledge claims.⁹ The concept of space, for example, cannot be learned from experience inasmuch as it is a prerequisite for all perceptual knowing and hence must be nativistically basic. The same is true for agency theory. A person is directly aware of acting freely and responsibly. This claim is universal and catholic, and these criteria suggest that this awareness is basic and part of the epistemic input of the intellect itself. Moreover, such a belief is unavoidable in the sense that while one may reject it in his philosophical study he immediately reverts to it in the market place. That Hume and other skeptics admitted this fact speaks highly of their honesty but not their consistency. Now, if a belief is unavoidable it is necessary, but necessities cannot be learned from experience. Hence the belief is part of the original epistemic input of the intellect itself. Kant later called such original epistemic input the transcendental esthetic and the categories of the understanding. Reid, however, being a natural realist, avoided

Kant's distinction between phenomenal and noumenal and hence avoided Kant's skepticism in advance.

It must not be supposed that the advocates of agent causality thought man is always an agent, an initiator of events; far from it. They believed that some human behavior, as distinct from an act, is caused by events over which a person has no control. Thomas Upham, professor of philosophy at Bowdoin College, and a stalwart in the holiness tradition, stressed this point.¹⁰ He was the most psychologically sophisticated member of the Reidian tradition. According to Upham, the McNaghten rule of insanity is pernicious. On this rule, a person is insane if he does not know the difference between right and wrong and cannot reason in the sense of relating means to ends. Upham saw that such a rule was a disaster. He was close to the mark when he insisted that a person can reason in a perfectly acceptable way, adapting means to ends, but that this ability is pointless when it proceeds from crazy premises. Such a person is not responsible and yet, according to the McNaghten *Act*, he can be condemned to death. Moreover, the ascription of insanity and commitment to an asylum is such a serious matter that it must never be undertaken lightly, particularly since morally depraved individuals have endeavored to fasten the charge of insanity upon others in order to control them and their money. Finally, Upham said, compassion toward people with mental problems is essential. It is clearly the moral duty of society to see that those who are legitimately committed are treated humanely.

Let us now sum up the moral image of man that emerges from our discussion. An agent is dynamic and active, is not simply acted upon, but initiates actions, is not epiphenomenal but makes a crucial difference in the world. The agent is not a link in an infinite causal chain but makes a genuine difference in what the future will hold. He produces something new and original in the universe by virtue of his free will. Agency is defined volitionally and existentially; it is "up to a person" to decide what he will do and what sort of person he will become. While one has motives which suggest opposite kinds of acts, one must choose among them; one must decide what will give meaning, whether good or bad, to what one does or to the life one adopts. An agent is spontaneous, and may even act perversely just to prove that he is not a piano key to be played upon. An agent does not act rigidly; but may act differently under identical conditions without chaos or the need of introducing the change-of-character theme. His mind is not a tabula rasa but is itself active and provides, along with releasing occasions, its own explanation of his basic experience of freedom. Finally, the agent is, or should be, compassionate, guarding the unfortunately impaired ones to see that they are treated humanely.

II

Having restored freedom to their satisfaction, the freewill Trinitarians relied again on Reid and Stewart--and Butler, too--to formulate a moral philosophy, something the Old School Calvinists could not do given their "hard determinism." The moral image of man conceived by the Holiness Movement is identical with that of the whole freewill Trinitarian tradition. As we shall see, they all agreed in condemning classical utilitarianism, as well as the Edwards-Finney variant of this doctrine. They generally espoused instead a fitting-relationship and voluntaristic view of moral philosophy. We must wait a bit longer before we discuss those elements of the moral image of man unique to the holiness tradition.

Francis Wayland, president of Brown University, was perhaps the most relentless critic of classical utilitarianism. What follows is only a small sample of his arguments, but even these cannot be evaluated in our time span.¹¹

1. Children are perfectly aware of the differences between right and wrong without being capable of comprehending, let alone calculating, the greatest amount of happiness for all people affected by an act.

2. We are frequently ignorant of what will happen in the future; hence any moral judgment based on the consideration of likely consequences is doomed to fail.

3. Every act has infinite consequences. Where, short of infinity, can the utilitarian draw the line and make his judgment?

4. Crimes sometimes have the happiest results--indeed, given the utilitarian view, "we must award to the treachery of Judas the praise of the greatest virtue."¹²

5. The utilitarian is unable to distinguish between specific virtues; they are all taken up into the single virtue recognized by utilitarians. Most duties depend upon fitting relations among human beings. Gratitude and benefactor fit together, and yet all fitting relationships are wiped out by the utilitarian.

While evangelist C. G. Finney was an ardent critic of Calvinism, he nevertheless, surprisingly, held a moral theory precisely like that of Jonathan Edwards.¹³ He was one of the very few New Lights to accept Reid's agency theory but abandoned the moral theories of the Scottish tradition. As we shall see, Finney wanted his view to be distinguished carefully from all forms of utilitarianism, though it seemed to some of his peers that this was precisely what it amounted to.

Finney distinguished between a right intention and a derivative

right act. He called the latter an "outward act" and said the only reason for doing it is that one intends to promote universal well-being and this act will probably do so. He also called the intention of the agent an act--it is the choice or decision to want to promote universal well-being, and the only reason that justifies this choice is the intrinsic goodness of the end envisioned. This "ultimate act" must not itself be justified by any reference to utility. For Finney that is precisely what utilitarians do--they fallaciously try to justify the ultimate act. The worst "justification," he thought, was Paley's wholly egoistic one to the effect that one should choose to help others in the expectation of reward in the afterlife for doing so!

It is certainly understandable that Finney did not want his view associated with Paley's. However, those commentators on his moral philosophy who called it a form of utilitarianism had no intention of identifying it with Paley's system. The critics realized that Finney's views were not identical with any other view (with the exception of Edwards's) but argued that in the long run all utilitarian or teleological systems have a common core of meaning. They all insist that only one thing is intrinsically valuable--be it pleasure, happiness, or well-being for me, you, or everyone, including God--and that all other acts and events in the world are valuable only insofar as they are conducive to achieving this end.

Finney's most intimate critic--his colleague Asa Mahan--focused on what he took to be the essential point, namely, that there are many basic obligations of life which cannot be reduced to one all-inclusive principle. Obligations, duties and rights depend upon perceiving certain "fitting relationships" in the web of social life. Even Finney realizes, Mahan wrote, that there is a fitting relationship between virtue and happiness. After all, who could deny that Finney believes in the Final Judgment? Thus he must believe that only virtuous people deserve to be happy. But then Finney's single principle of right and wrong is already lost.¹⁴ He has at least one non-teleological sense of moral duty which is incompatible with his general utilitarian views.

Tappan and Mahan claimed that no justification of moral rules is possible--whether utilitarian, Kantian or any other--since they all involve giving a non-moral reason for doing one's duty. We do not give reasons why acting fairly is right; we simply see that it is a fitting relation among all people, or, again, that it is part of a web of social responses that constitutes a shared life, which may be freely accepted and experienced. Just so, a person is free to reject that way of living and, as contemporary advertisements have stressed, "Dare to take it all." Tappan's and Mahan's views, we might say, borrowing from contemporary usage, are existential.

For the import of this word seems to fit precisely the freewill claim that volition defines man, not reason or sensuousness. It must be kept in mind, of course, that the freewill Trinitarians insisted that the reasonable life is the moral life and they highly regarded its control over sensuous motives. However, reason was not coercive for them as it was for the post-Kantians. A man may choose to adopt a reasonable motive, to accept the fitting relationships, or choose a sensuous one to guide his actions; but in either case he is responsible for his choice. He is responsible for the kind of person he is to become.¹⁵

Let us see how the freewill Trinitarians fared on some basic moral issue--and what issue could be more basic than the crime of slavery? We will consider in this context Campbell, Mahan, Wayland, Finney, Fairchild and John Rankin. We will see how the Reidian and utilitarian responses to the issue contrast.

Campbell's case is the saddest. He began as a Reidian in moral philosophy and was actively anti-slavery in his earlier years. Then the abolitionists came along--Weld, Garrison, Rankin, Mahan and Luther Lee--and said that slavery was a sin, that sin cannot be eliminated gradually, and that slavery, therefore, must be done away with at once. Campbell agreed that if slavery were a sin then immediate emancipation was necessary. But he then reasoned on utilitarian grounds that emancipation was fraught with evil, would disrupt the economy of the nation, and perhaps lead to civil war. Hence he felt he must deny the premise and say that slavery was not a sin. But on what grounds to sustain this denial? Campbell decided to drop all philosophical morality and to put in its place a biblical criterion of morality according to which slavery was not a sin since the Bible condones it in several places and nowhere rejects it explicitly as sinful.¹⁶ One might have objected to Campbell's claim and said that slavery seems out of harmony with the whole spirit of the New Testament. Mahan, however, would have none of these piecemeal responses. He considered all attempts at biblical justifications of slavery as so much chaff in the wind. He clearly did not believe that the Bible in any way condones slavery. Mahan went to the heart of the matter when he said that if one could clearly prove that the Bible condoned slavery he would not have shown that slavery is right but that the Bible is wrong.¹⁷

Wayland, sharing Mahan's moral philosophy, went at a slower pace. He was anti-slavery always; but due to the violence of the Dorr Rebellion--which concerned the issue of whether people without property should have voting rights--he became frightened of the abolitionists. However, his disgust with the Mexican War, the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, bleeding Kansas and numerous other events, finally convinced him that slavery had to be done

away with at whatever cost. For a while he supported the abolitionists only by "speaking the truth as he saw it" and becoming active in the Free Soil and Republican parties. Eventually, however, he fed, housed and clothed a runaway slave and sent him safely to freedom. In 1859 he could not even bring himself to condemn John Brown; he admired the "bravery, coolness, and evident sincerity of the old captain."¹⁸

Finney was clearly anti-slavery, preaching, as he did, against slavery and occasionally taking active measures against it. Though he was not necessarily opposed to his abolitionist colleagues, he was by no means their leader. Through the years fewer Oberlin students became professional abolitionist lecturers, many having been dissuaded from the task by Finney, who wanted to push revivalism and regeneration of the soul instead. James H. Fairchild, third president of Oberlin and devoted follower of Finney, was extremely conservative and during his presidency led Oberlin out of the Holiness Movement. He was also orthodox in political matters; e.g., he fought against women's suffrage to the end.

Mahan, ardent abolitionist, was quite different from his cautious colleagues. When Mahan was appointed president of Oberlin in 1835, the tradition started of flouting all fugitive slave laws, whether state or federal. Oberlin was an extremely important part of the underground railroad. Through the years many hundreds of slaves found shelter in Oberlin, some staying indefinitely and others pursuing the journey to Canada. Most of the Oberlin community cooperated with this type of civil disobedience. President Mahan's house was one of those in which runaway slaves were regularly hidden. Mahan is reported to have said that should the authorities attempt to capture the fugitives he and other members of the community would fight until the last. While this report came from Delazon Smith, an unreliable source, there is nevertheless probably a small kernel of truth in it.¹⁹

John Rankin, one of the greatest abolitionists, founded an anti-slavery society in Kentucky at the astoundingly early date of 1818. As late as 1832 the Lane Seminary students in Cincinnati were prohibited from having an abolitionist society. Rankin served two pastorates in Carlisle, Kentucky, and subsequently moved to Ripley, Ohio, not far from Cincinnati, where Rankin was well known to Weld, Mahan and Lyman Beecher. Rankin did more than preach and lecture against slavery. He was not content with only trying to regenerate people's souls so that slavery would eventually disappear; far from it. Rankin was active in the Underground Railroad and was perfectly located at Ripley to receive runaway slaves on their flight to freedom. According to

the National Cyclopedia, "He it was who assisted the colored woman and her child, the originals of Eliza and her boy in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, to escape from slavery."²⁰ There is a John Rankin House State Memorial in Ripley, a fine tribute to the real pioneer among abolitionists.

Intransigence, boldness and volitional autonomy constitute the moral image of man arising from the specific moral commitments of the freewill Trinitarians. The agent absolutely rejects happiness as the summum bonum and commits himself, uncoerced, to the web of fitting relationship that constitutes a shared existence. He emphasizes the fitting relationship between what a person does and his just desserts. We must do our duty even if the consequences are extremely painful. And so Mahan, John Copeland, Calvin Fairbanks, Henry Cowles and Luther Lee, among others in the holiness tradition, boldly opted for abolitionism. Many others in the tradition worked actively in anti-slavery circles even though they were not abolitionists. The agent never tries to *prove* that he should act morally. To try to do so is to step out of the moral realm. However, the agent remains volitionally autonomous. It is "up to him" whether to step into the web or to stay out of it. The agent must decide between conflicting motives; he must decide what kind of person to become. There are no acts without motives, to be sure, but motives are not causes. The agent must decide, sometimes early on, whether to act morally or "dare to take it all."

III

The holiness tradition is extremely complex and does not lend itself to anything like an adequate analysis in a few pages. The complexity is suggested by the variety of names used to describe the tradition: for example, scriptural holiness, Christian perfection, the second blessing, sanctification, the higher life, perfect love, full consecration, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the rest of faith, and the enduement of power.²¹

While some of these expressions have been interpreted in different ways, they have, nevertheless, a common Pentecostal element since they stress the weakness and frailty of human agents and their need for the indwelling Spirit to reach higher spiritual levels. Through the grace of God, the indwelling Spirit is available through deeply earnest and sincere prayers. The results of this Presence are manifold: victory over sin, consolation in affliction, sustainment of heavy burdens, transcendental joy in the presence of God, and an enduement of power to work effectively for Him--to preach beyond one's own natural powers and thereby to be wondrously successful in revivals and conversions in general.

Scriptural holiness, Christian perfection, the second blessing, sanctification, perfect love and full consecration generally referred to victory over sin; baptism of the Holy Ghost and the "rest of faith" to consolation and sustainment; and "the baptism" and the enduement of power to doing God's work beyond one's natural abilities. The latter two expressions are the most strictly Pentecostal referring, as they do, to the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles.²²

Let us pursue in some detail the sanctification, scriptural perfection and full consecration strand in the Holiness Movement. According to these doctrines, in order to achieve victory over sin, the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit must be sincerely prayed for; and the grace of God brings about the indwelling Presence. With the indwelling Spirit one becomes wholly sanctified and is capable of a perfect commitment to follow God's commandments.

It must not be supposed, however, that a sanctified or fully consecrated person necessarily *acts* perfectly. We must distinguish between a sanctified will, which characterizes an agent, and objective rightness or wrongness, which characterize an act. A person is holy or perfect only if he is wholly committed to God's commandments; an act is perfect if, in addition to the agent's sanctified intention, the act itself is just, right or appropriate. That a sanctified will seems attainable is not unlikely, since it would be odd for a Christian knowingly to consecrate himself to God only partially. But no person is able to *act* perfectly since no one except God is infinitely wise. Given one's imperfect knowledge, a person is bound to produce out of ignorance acts that are strangely wrong or unjust even though one's will is genuinely sanctified. However, unjust acts resulting from ignorance *are* sins, and the person's will not sanctified if the requisite knowledge is available.

The distinction between the instantaneous sanctification of the will and the growth in holiness through increased knowledge of the will of God and to increased sensitivity to the casuistic dimensions of morality is an important distinction and helps to clarify a specific point of John Wesley's teaching. Sometimes he wrote as if sanctification were instantaneous while at other times he seemed to think of it as a gradual process.²³ It is not unlikely that Wesley's problem resulted from not first distinguishing between the sanctification of the will and the increase in holiness through increasing knowledge. Sanctification of the will can then be characterized as instantaneous and holiness as gradual, growing as the knowledge of God's will, through the *guidance* of the Spirit, becomes increasingly evident.

Calvinists asked if an allegedly sanctified individual would never

be subject to temptation, which is itself a sin. In response, holiness advocates pointed out that on this reasoning Christ himself would count as a sinner since He was tempted--certainly a *reductio ad absurdum* of the Calvinist thrust. "The fact that Christ was thus tempted, and yet without sin, absolutely implies that mere temptation to sin is not sin in anyone." Only temptation yielded to is sin. "Temptation promptly resisted and overcome implies the purest and brightest virtues known in the universe of God."²⁴

The advocates of holiness, perfection and sanctification had constantly to fend off the criticism that the movement was antinomian in import. The critics thought that the inward presence of the Holy Ghost amounts simply to the supplanting of human agency by divine agency; and hence whatever a person does, since the Spirit of Christ is operative, is right no matter if it contravenes what we ordinarily mean by morality. How is the holiness tradition, they asked, different from Humphrey Noyes's antinomian perfectionism which justified, on the grounds of the inward spirit, such reprehensible practices as "complex marriages." And we can only say that his followers who criticized Noyes did not see the heart of the moral issue when they complained that their leader usually got the most appealing complexes.

The Holiness Movement replied that antinomianism, the displacement of human agency, is completely inapplicable to the concept of sanctification since it denies what the movement insists upon, agent causality, a strong formulation of the freewill doctrine. Man is weak, to be sure, but free agency is involved in all holiness transactions. A person sincerely prays, wholly uncoerced, for a new nature capable of complete dedication to God's commandments. The indwelling Spirit replaces a heart of stone with a heart of flesh, and the agent has a new character for which he freely asks: and, moreover, he is not coerced to keep this nature. Again, keeping it must be of his own free choice. A wisely sanctified believer is continuously watchful and, like the careful sentry, is never for a moment off guard. It must never be forgotten that the advocates of holiness and sanctification, given their volitional outlook, believe that at every moment it is "up to the person" to decide what to do, to choose what kind of person to be, what sort of nature to have.²⁵ They may decide in different ways, but if they choose sanctification it is as freely done as if they had chosen to "dare to take it all."

There are other ways of avoiding the charge of antinomianism. Sanctification, said some people in the movement, results from the united actions of the human agent and the indwelling Spirit. To be sure, man is weak, but not wholly hopeless. Sanctification, rather, can be conceived as a cooperative effort between the human and

divine being: one tries one's best, and the other brings out the best that is possible--and the best that is possible with the Spirit's aid is perfect love and total commitment to God's commandments.

However, other people in the movement, holding even less flattering views of humanity, tried to avoid antinomianism in still another way. Some people in the movement had not rejected the whole of Calvinism but believed that man is not simply weak but is utterly depraved. Anything a human being did in conjunction with the Spirit is bound to fail since corruption of any kind entails falling to sin, not victory over it. The kind of cooperation needed is a more humble one. A baptism of the Holy Ghost occurs only if a person chooses to seek it, decides to ask for its bestowal as a free gift from the grace of God. This much impact man has in the transaction, but not a whit more. According to one commentator, "It is our part, as the revealed condition of receiving the blessings provided for us, to 'inquire of God to do it for us'....By the free assent, and consent, the full choice of our heart of hearts, Christ thus dwells in our hearts."²⁶

There is still a problem on this view in spite of the emphasis on the free and uncoerced supplication to the Spirit. Even if the Spirit enters the heart of a person by devout invitation and supplication, the agency of the person subsequently seems to be supplanted by the agency of the Spirit. The holiness advocates rejected this consequence and in order to avoid it had to introduce a further role for human agency. The agent can always succumb to previous sinful ways and thus lose the Spirit's guidance in life. Our first parents and the fallen angels were once completely pure, or sanctified, and still they were tempted and fell. "So, when we have attained to a similar state, we are subject to the same liabilities, and, without watchfulness and prayer on our part, 'as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so our minds will be corrupted from the simplicity (perfect purity) that is in Christ.'"²⁷

The moral image of man that emerges from the theological commitments of the Holiness Movement is something less flattering than that derived from their philosophical views. Man is weak and feeble and unable to conquer sin, sustain himself in troubled times, do the work of God effectively in parish work or revivals, and so on. According to some members of the tradition, man is not only feeble and weak but utterly depraved. He needs the active support of the Spirit to overcome sin, sustain heavy burdens and to advance God's work beyond his natural abilities. We no longer hear that an agent acts spontaneously, makes things happen, makes a difference in how the future will turn out. There is no longer a reference to nativistic moral input but many references to increased moral knowledge through the Holy Spirit. Is there an incompatibility

between the philosophical views on freedom and moral knowledge and the theological views on the same topics held by the advocates of the holiness tradition? I do not see that the views are strictly incompatible but certainly I see a different emphasis, indeed a strain, between the two contexts. Nevertheless, freedom remains absolutely essential to the Holiness Movement in order to avoid antinomianism. Yes, freedom is still basic but not in its philosophically dramatic form where one initiates actions and helps bring to pass one of several potential futures. Finally, the sources of moral knowledge in the philosophical and theological contexts are quite different; however they need not be incompatible. But has anyone shown what their relation is? No one with whom I am acquainted has successfully explained the relationship.

IV

Mahan, Finney, Upham, W. E. Boardman, Luther Lee, Lucy Stone, John G. Fee, John Copeland and Sallie Cowles, among numerous others, were moral stalwarts in the holiness tradition in America. They rarely seemed guilty of a rationalization to avoid doing their duty. Are the current members of the holiness tradition, and those who are not within it but have great respect for it, as steadfast? Or are they more prone to rationalize away improper behavior? Consider a student at a Wesleyan seminary who appropriates a book from the library on the grounds that he is graduating and will need it much more than anyone else and will use it more effectively than anyone else in his writings, dedicated, as they are, to advancing God's work. There is much rationalization here to avoid calling the act what it really is: stealing.

Some of the older stalwarts in the tradition were radical in a sense which seems to be missing in the tradition currently. For a number of them evil and sin had to be rectified no matter how painful the consequences may have been. There were numerous adamant abolitionists and most others in the tradition were at least anti-slavery.²⁸ Have conditions changed or have people in the tradition changed? I remember distinctly the deeply moving chapel talk of Dr. William Abernathy in which he sensitively traced his journey out of darkness into light, from an early racism to a commitment in his maturity to the welfare of blacks. It remains within the contemporary tradition the best rejection of segregation and espousal of equal opportunity that I know. And we must keep firmly in mind that Dr. Abernathy meant *equal opportunity*, not reverse discrimination. Have we heeded what this fine gentleman had to say? How many black people are there on the faculties of holiness colleges around the country?

We must not lose perspective. There are many stalwarts in the tradition today. And not everyone in the early days of the movement was saint-like. Robert Pearsall Smith's behavior was a severe blow to the tradition. His moral behavior was shabby, to say the least, and was the cause of a number of dropouts from the movement. However, this is an isolated case, and the question still remains, do we measure up to the founders?

Mahan died in poverty, though he managed to edit *Divine Life* until his death. Are there many of us willing, like him, to emulate poor Jesus for the sake of helping others?

Have any in the tradition tried recently to alleviate the tension--though not contradiction--between their philosophical views on agency and their theological views on combatting sin? Or what are the contemporary views?

All of these questions are difficult to answer, but they may be summed up in a final question: would Jesus of Nazareth be saddened by man's use of his gracious gift of freedom? Particularly now?³⁰ Though the answers are difficult and not obvious, it seems the duty of anyone in the tradition, or deeply sympathetic with it, to raise these questions in a spirit of loving care. Finally, I should like to express my admiration and respect for the stalwarts in the tradition today. They carry on the best features of the tradition and are clearly and beautifully filled with the presence of the Holy Spirit. I cannot work these matters into my own metaphysics, but neither can I deny what is evident.

Notes

1. E. H. Madden, "The Scottish Tradition in the West," *The Thoreau Quarterly*, (1985) 17:41-61; *Civil Disobedience and Moral Law* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1968), pp. 3-6.
2. We shall depend particularly on the works of Alexander Campbell, Thomas Upham, Asa Shinn, Asa Mahan, C. G. Finney, Francis Wayland, Barton Stone, Henry Tappan, Victor Cousin and, of course, Thomas Reid and Dugald Stewart.
3. Mahan, *Autobiography: Intellectual, Moral and Spiritual* (London: T. Woolmer, 1882), pp. 204-214.
4. Mahan, *Doctrine of the Will* (New York: Mark Newman, 1845), pp. 75-79, 194-198.
5. Alexander Campbell and Robert Owen, *Debate on the Evidences of Christianity*, 2d ed., two vols. (Cincinnati: Robinson and Fairbank, 1829). Cf. E. H. Madden and Dennis W. Madden, "The Great Debate: Alexander Campbell vs. Robert Owen," *Transactions of the C. S. Peirce Society* (1982), 18:207-226.

6. *Debate on the Evidences of Christianity*, 2:242-243.
7. Thomas Reid believed that there are some acts that have no motives at all, but his followers universally rejected this view.
8. For comments on Gregory, see Dugald Stewart, *Collected Works*, ed. W. Hamilton (Edinburgh: Thomas Constable, 1854-1860), 6:352-353n. Stewart wrote that an agent is equally ignorant of the nature of the connection between motives and acts as he is between causes and effects, 6:351.
9. Asa Shinn, *An Essay on the Plan of Salvation* (Baltimore: Neal, Wills and Cole, 1813). Shinn devotes the first half of the book to Reid's metaphilosophy and metaphysics.
10. Thomas Upham, *The Elements of Mental Philosophy*, two vols. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1841), 1:411-455, 2:369-416; *Abridgement of Mental Philosophy* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1883), pp. 231-257, 451-480; and *Outlines of Imperfect and Disordered Mental Action* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1840).
11. Francis Wayland, *The Elements of Moral Science*, ed. Joseph Blau (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), pp. 26-29, 30-31, 36-41, 367-370.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 370.
13. E. H. Madden and J. E. Hamilton, "Edwards, Finney, and Mahan on the Derivation of Duties," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* (1975) 13:347-360.
14. Mahan, *Science of Moral Philosophy* (Oberlin: J. M. Fitch, 1848, 1884), pp. 102-103. Cf. also pp. 104, 110-112. Finney wrote no separate book on moral philosophy but included the topic in his *Systematic Theology*.
15. Henry Tappan, *The Doctrine of the Will, Determined by an Appeal to Consciousness* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1840). This whole book is relevant to the above issue, but see especially pp. 281-314. Cf. Mahan, *Doctrine of the Will* and Wayland, *The Elements of Moral Science*.
16. H. L. Lunger, *The Political Ethics of Alexander Campbell* (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1954), pp. 202-204, 206-212.
17. Mahan, *Science of Moral Philosophy*, p. 316.
18. J. O. Murray, *Francis Wayland* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1891), p. 145.
19. This report is contained in Delazon Smith's pamphlet "Oberlin Unmasked." "For sale at the Office of the Cleveland Liberalist" appears on the cover.
20. *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, p. 321.

21. These various expressions were used by the leaders in the movement: Fénelon, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Phoebe Palmer, W. E. Boardman, Thomas Upham, Asa Mahan, C. G. Finney, A. M. Hills, William Taylor, Hannah Whitall Smith, Luther Lee, John Guthrie, along with many other equally important leaders.

22. Pentecostalism, as we know it today, must be distinguished from the American Holiness Movement. The latter takes a strong stand, for example, against glossolalia which is associated with contemporary Pentecostalism.

23. John Wesley, "Christian Perfection," "The Scripture Way of Salvation," "Thoughts on Christian Perfection," and "Cautions and Directions Given to the Greatest Professors in The Methodist Societies," in *John Wesley*, ed. A. C. Outler (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 252-305; *The Journal of John Wesley*, abridged by N. Curnock (New York: Capricorn Books, 1963).

24. Mahan, *Autobiography*, pp. 382-386; *Banner of Holiness* (1875), 1:4.

25. The centrality of volition in Reid's thought and in that of his followers was never put more forcefully than by Thomas Upham:

"The will, therefore, is the culminating point in man's spiritual nature. It sits the witness and the arbitress over all the rest. It is essential alike to action and accountability, to freedom and order, to intelligence and virtue. Without this all else is nothing. It is in reference to this, that all other susceptibilities keep their station and perform their functions. They revolve around it as a common centre, attracted by its power, and controlled by its ascendancy." *A Philosophical and Practical Treatise of the Will* (Portland: William Hyde, 1834), p. 72.

26. Mahan, *Autobiography*, pp. 325, 330.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 384.

28. The ardent abolitionists in the Holiness Movement included, among others, Mahan, Lee, John Fee, Lewis Tappan, John Copeland, Calvin Fairbanks, Lyman Beecher (after his daughter wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*), and many of the rank and file of the Wesleyan Methodists and the Free Methodists.

29. E. H. Madden and J. E. Hamilton, *Freedom and Grace: The Life of Asa Mahan* (Metuchen, N. J. and London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1982), pp. 201-202.

30. I should point out that no matter how saddened Jesus of Nazareth might be He would still see free agency as a necessary prerequisite for being a human being. The necessitarian alternative might be less sad in one way but ultimately sadder, since the earth would swarm only with robots.

