A year or so after the war, there appeared in The New Republic a critical appraisal by Gilbert Murray of "The Golden Bough." Quite rightly the distinguished Greek scholar declared it one of the finest creations among contemporary letters. He then went on to give it as his opinion that these twelve volumes of Sir James Frazer on magic and primitive religion represented the most devastating attack anyone had made on Christianity since William Godwin.

I have had to sum up Professor Murray's review from memory, for I no longer have it by me; but I do not believe I misrepresent him. His opinion was one which might readily be shared by any liberal mind of his generation. Nor can it be said that the statement I have attributed to him belies "The Golden Bough," for it is a possible, indeed I think the proper, interpretation to put upon the author's purpose.

But if the purpose of Sir James Frazer was to deny to Christianity any special privilege over those other mythical cults which to the anthropologist are strictly comparable to it—unless it be the somewhat dubious one of being the closest to us in time—it is nowhere clearly avowed. It is the reader himself who is allowed to come to that conclusion; but the material is assembled in such a way that he can scarcely come to any other.

The plan of "The Golden Bough" is immense. The author's strategy is conceived with great cunning and carried out with great art. The direction of the attack is for a long time concealed. Sir James Frazer's announced intention is to study, and as far as may be explain, an obscure rite that is
known to have been practiced in a grove of Diana near Nemi well into historical times. There grew a certain tree, by night and day guarded by a man who was both priest and murderer. For he had killed his predecessor and would in turn be killed whenever a stronger or craftier than he arrived. The office of King of the Wood, for so he was called, was thus perilously held. But his assailant could only be a runaway slave and before advancing to his attack he must have torn a branch from the sacred tree. It was the belief of the ancient writers whose word has come down to us that this branch, in some way, represented the Golden Bough which Aeneas, at the Sybil’s bidding, plucked before venturing into the dim underworld of the dead. Such was the condition of the culprit’s attack on one who was both priest and king; if able to slay him, he reigned in his stead.

Why was the succession to the priesthood at Nemi by mortal combat? Why must the aspirant advance bearing not only the sword, but a bough from the sacred tree? These are the two questions which Sir James purports to set himself to answer. There was, apparently, no other cult in the classical world which resembled this; and the explanations which writers of the imperial age pretended to give of it, Sir James at once dismisses as unhistorical. The deadly renewal of the guardian of the tree is clearly a survival of the utmost antiquity. Though in the dark grove of Diana it was still being enacted in their lifetime, the civilized minds of Plutarch and Servius were incapable of understanding it. It may well be that the participants in the rite were without any clear conception of what they were doing. For the custom remains when the myth that gave it meaning has long disappeared. It is with this incident that Sir James Frazer opens "The Golden Bough." We are invited to gaze at the lovely landscape about Nemi, the terraced gardens, the azure lake. But it is only a moment before we find
ourselves looking, terribly, into the backward and most distant stretch of time.

The King of the Wood stood for a god, Virbius, who, dying as a man, at once came to life in the person of another man. So much is known; but the records are fragmentary. The cult at Nemi can be explained, if at all, only by seeking counterparts in other cults on which we possess fuller information. The search will be long and laborious. We shall visit, Sir James warns us, many strange foreign lands, with strange foreign peoples and still stranger customs. We shall indeed. For before we have done with the Golden Bough, we have ranged from Egypt to the Mexico of the Montezuma, from the Creek Indians of our own Northwest to the mild rice-farmers of the island of Bali; and the customs, though often strange beyond all imagining, are even stranger in their familiarity. For however wide we wander, however deep we delve into the records of the past, we are always coming up against one being, the Vegetable God, who as the decapitated Tescatlipoca or the dismembered Osiris is strange, but Who is not strange at all, once our astonished gaze has recognized the likeness, as Jesus.

Christianity is seldom mentioned; there is no need it should be, for Sir James naturally assumes that the main articles of the Christian faith are known to his readers. The argument of "The Golden Bough" is by analogy; one term of the comparison is always the strange rite at Nemi; and one cannot too highly praise the scrupulous care and skill with which cult after cult, the world over, is related to it. One obscure superstition is illumined by comparison with another, until at long last the secret of the sacred grove is disclosed. The culprit who stalks with drawn sword about the tree is none other than the mortal image of that being on whom primitive man sees all life, his own life and fecundity, the fertility of his flocks, and the fruitfulness
of grain, fruit-trees, and vines, depending. He is the god that must die that his vigor be renewed. He is the god that must die in the person of man and come to life again in another man. With Attis, Adonis, and Thammuz, we begin to close about the Christian altar. Behind them, as behind the slave who was King of the Wood, there looms, scarcely named, yet continuously present, the shadow of that other God, who as Son of Man, mocked as King of the Jews, died on the tree. And inescapably we are brought to conclude that Jesus the Christ acquired divinity by assuming the attributes of another deity. He has come violently to death many times before Golgotha, the Son of God, himself very God, dying to appease the God. He has been, like Odin in the mists of the northern forest, sacrificed to Himself. He has been wounded by the boar as Adonis, been emasculated as Attis, been decapitated and His bloody head spitted on a spike as the Maize-God, Texcatlipoca. Always His sufferings, death, and resurrection have been celebrated in appropriate rites.

The lineage of Christ is thus seen to have been very different to that we have hitherto assumed to be His. And it is not only His death and His resurrection that conform to the pattern of the Vegetable God. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the House of Bread, not because the town was associated with David, but because the place had been from time immemorial a seat of Adonis worship. We have come very far from "that distant and domestic prodigy" of which the great Gibbon was, as historian, so rightfully disdainful. And all the attendant circumstances of the virgin birth, the sudden shining star, the gift of myrrh, even, the straw on which the Holy Child was laid, are now seen to have been determined, not as the gospelers in their ignorance and innocence supposed, by Hebraic predictions, but by other more remote and divine precedents. Incidentally,
the Magi's star, whose identity has been sought, with a curious mixture of piety and skepticism, in some extraordinary but not miraculous conjunction of planets, was in all probability, if we may trust Egyptian and Babylonian parallels, merely a star whose reappearance in the sky was eagerly watched for each year. It was not a portent of disturbed nature, but a reassuring sign of returning seasons and the natural rebirth of vegetation, no miracle, but a shining manifestation of the mysterious order in the heavens.

Much of this is not new. The early Fathers of the Church could not ignore the strong resemblances of their faith to some others which, for a time, were even more popular in the late Roman Empire. Even had they wanted to do so, they could not overlook the remarkable coincidences in the deaths and resurrections of these multiple deities. For as late as the fourth century worshipers of Attis were still extant and contemptuously contending that since their god was the older, it was obvious that he was the original and the god of the Christians the counterfeit. The good Christians, says Frazer, easily rebutted this argument by "falling back on the subtlety of Satan, who on so important an occasion has surpassed himself by reversing the usual order of nature." Gibbon was troubled to discover that the patron saint of England, Saint George of Cappadocia, had been in life an unscrupulous scoundrel, of more than ordinary capabilities, but, as far as the record goes, of no morals of any kind. The anthropologist suggests that the true Saint George is not the historical bishop who, as we would say today, turned his office into a racket, but a spirit of vegetation who at some time which we do not know acquired the name of George, sometimes with the appellation Green; his festival carries on, among others, the Roman feast of the Parila. The Blessed Jacques de Voragine,
writing his "Golden Legend" in the thirteenth century, was well aware that many of the saints in his calendar were only lesser pagan deities who somehow had acquired aureoles. But he is not disconcerted by the slightness of their disguise. The old historians of the Church did not find it necessary to hide that it had survived less through the stubbornness of the martyrs than through the suppleness of the bishops, who were more than willing that pagan practices should continue, if only their followers were attached to the true faith. And continue they did. I have myself seen in the streets of Sorrento, since the coming to power of the Fascists, processions which undoubtedly honored the Great Mother of the Gods, though the image borne by her worshipers was simply known as Our Lady.

But "The Golden Bough" does much more than multiply instances of the correspondence between Christianity and the rival religions by which it was surrounded in its infancy. For gradually, in Sir James Frazer's pages, there is revealed what one may in all simplicity call the true religion of mankind. It is older than mankind, but not, as it happens, as old as the race; for though it is possible to trace it very far back, until we come on shapes of gods as rude, terrible, and intricate as Mayan sculptures, beyond these there is still a savage jungle of fear, where every man is a magician and there are no gods and no time. For this religion is, I think we may say, coeval with the conception of time. The gods cannot come to birth until there is knowledge of the revolving year and memory of the seasons' return. It is to them that all legends quite rightly assign the first gifts of civilization, corn and wine. As civilization advances, their spirituality increases. Yet something of this earlier timelessness clings to them in their latest aspect, just as in the minds of their worshipers belief in magic is never entirely abandoned. This religion is not confined to the shores of the
Mediterranean; it has been honored everywhere, changing to conform to climate, but much less than a materialist would have conjectured. Amazed, the Spanish conquerors marching through Mexico found it there, all its essential mysteries and ceremonies preserved. It had scarcely changed in that tropic air. Only the sacrifices were not, as they had long since become in Europe, symbolical. When the gods periodically died, it was in human shapes, and though a certain skepticism seems to have crept in among the Aztec nobles, the altars were still drenched in divine blood. The soldiers of His Catholic Majesty could only regard this religion as a sanguinary and cruel parody on their own.

It is possible to take "The Golden Bough" as a long record of human error and folly. It is so that the author, as he approaches the end, with melancholy regards it. He does not often mention Christianity, but there is at least one occasion when he makes clear what he thinks of it. It was, to begin with, a moral reform, noble in its aspirations, but for the many impossible in practice. Its Founder was scarcely dead before it began, wisely, to modify the faith which, whatever bliss it may have promised its followers in the next world, most effectively destroyed their usefulness in this. Then the Church, as it became more popular, became more debased, acquiring their superstitions with the ignorant, consoling the low and the weak with the same old magic formulas in which they had always believed. In a few years its purity was lost; with the centuries it became a fusion and confusion of cults, some as old as memory on the nearer Asiatic shores, some as ancient and dark as the Northern forests out of which they came.

Certainly one can with no great difficulty believe that "The Golden Bough" was intended by the author as an onslaught on the assumptions of traditional Christianity. And his compatriot, whom I cited at the beginning
of this article, at once seized this and with perfect propriety presented it in his criticism. Such a conception was probably inevitable for an informed and liberal mind of the late nineteenth century. It is not necessarily ours.

II

The preface to the first edition of "The Golden Bough" is dated from London, 1890. Since then another generation has been born, grown up, come to maturity; its approach to the material assembled with such mastery by Sir James Frazer, and added to by his followers and rival anthropologists, must be different from his. There are, to be sure, many who would still follow him to the letter; but their reactions are too like his to demand further comment. It is of the others I wish to speak.

For it is also possible for us, regarding Christianity in the light cast from the sacred tree at Nemi, to find that it has gained as much as it has lost. Since it had already forfeited in our minds any special claims it may once have had as a supernatural revelation, these should be counted an inconsiderable loss. By extending its existence into the dark backward and abyss of time, it has gained, not only the respectability of age, but another authenticity. A religion less than two thousand years old had always troubled us; but now its tradition stretches as far as any imaginable race of man. It is shown as a heritage, not from Judea and Greece only, but from the earth. In uncovering the depth and richness of the past, the anthropologist had disclosed the fears and desires common to mankind. And as in post-Renaissance astronomy the earth became a star among other stars, so now in this knowledge Christ was become a god among other gods. But taking religion as a revelation of human destiny, we must see that He is not less divine because of the company of Adonis, Osiris, and Thammuz. His divinity is to be found in precisely those attributes which He
shares with these and other older incarnate gods.

Christianity has been many things at many times. Yet it is possible, when informed by the anthropological curiosities of "The Golden Bough," to see that its central mystery is the Mass. This, in the last analysis, turns out to be a symbolic presentation of the eternal relation of man to a living and sustaining earth. His dependence is not passive; for, just as the consecrated priest has power to draw the god to the altar, so does the fertility of the earth, its power to bear abundantly in flock and field, demand man's intervention. The French peasant, in a perfectly profane way, has this sense of the land's desire for cultivation, and can eloquently describe the ruin that comes to it when too long allowed to lie fallow; and it is worth remarking that his land, protected by portions of the original forest of northern Europe, is still, after two thousand known years of tillage, productive. This conception comes relatively late; it is an essential condition of man's emergence from savagery. But religion—and this is an important point in its opposition to magic and science, as the latter is commonly accepted in the contemporary world—supposes that the sources of life are ultimately beyond man's control.

To eat the body of the God, to drink His blood, relic though such a communion be of a savage rite, is still to celebrate life. The Mass is a ceremony derived from the immemorial worship of the Vegetable God; but on other occasions we have seen men turn what was originally a form for expressing physical concerns to spiritual ends. If it was fear that first created the gods, as the ancients said, thanks to Frazer that fear could now be particularized: it was fear that life might cease. The Catholic Church has always insisted that the Scriptures were not enough, that the traditions of the Church carried down from its first two centuries were an important part
of its teachings. We see now how right that claim was. It was in these years that the man was made God.

Yet the Church also celebrates death. This is an extremely difficult subject, and though "The Golden Bough" indicates why the worshipers of the god must at certain periods ceremoniously mourn his sufferings and death, concluding of course with joy at his resurrection, we must, I believe, go beyond anthropology to explain that peculiar taint of death which clings to Christianity.

There is an acceptance of death as fulfillment which comes to strong men when life is at the full. It is in Othello's

If it were now to die, 'Twere now to be most happy.

It is in Mozart's most triumphant music, where the consciousness of being close to ceasing is a constant accompaniment to joy. Such an emotion is wholesome and humane. But there is a death-longing which all too often afflicts Christianity and in some centuries seems to pervade it to the exclusion of all else. Asceticism has a long and complicated history. I can here only hazard the opinion that its association is closer to the collapse of the State than to the rise of the Church. The belief in dying as an escape from time and change into the unchanging and timeless has a respectable background in Greek thought; but before this could influence the Fathers of the Church, Greek philosophy had followed the Greek state into decay. It was in this late form that it was received by Christianity, just as the music which the Church made its own, as Gregorian and Ambrosian chant, appears to have been an adaptation of the modal music of the Greeks in a last and most decadent stage. We do not know much about it; but certainly what speaks from that music is nothing so strong as the will to die, but merely a desire not to be. It is this desire and no other which looks out at us.
from the will-less and indeed to me the soulless eyes of Byzantine saints. Into the stones of the Romanesque churches of France was carved the desperation that overtook men at the falling apart of the Carolingian Empire. But in the earliest Gothic churches, life reawakens with fear, but with that fear which recreates the gods. The Last Judgment is over the portals, Christ awfully fulfilling a dream of justice; it is upon that imagined scene that are fixed the dreadful eyes of the prophets who stand in the porches of Chartres. Then, quite suddenly, in the second half of the thirteenth century, all the churches began to blossom in stone. The fearful gaze of the gaunt statues at Chartres becomes the radiant look of the smiling angels at Rheims. And that change is accomplished with the recovery of the active will and the beginnings of a more stable society. From then on, and until the springtide is past, the Mother of God lifts for adoration the body of a child, reborn as god, laments over the body of the god, dying as man.

King Abundance got Him on Innocence; and Wisdom He.
That cognomen sounded best
Considering what wild infancy
Drove horror from His Mother's breast.

III

What we sought, the generation of which I speak, was what men have always sought, to have life and to have it more abundantly. And for those of us who had emerged from the war, that search was made more acute by our recent escape from annihilation in youth. But living means not merely engaging in action, or—what is more likely, as we had learned to our cost—having a number of things happen to one, but an increased awareness of being. And for that a new consciousness was necessary; for in the midst of
an almost intolerable confusion, it was at least clear that the old consciousness would no longer serve.

It may be said that what we sought was a religious consciousness, if religion may be understood to be a lively and communicable sense of the powers superior to man which control the course of nature and of human life. That these powers exist, there is not and has never been a denial. We no longer regard them as supernatural, but they are precisely those to which our ancestors gave names and which they worshiped as divinities. We could hardly escape a scientific account of them as natural forces, which, though we might think it partial, was the best available. What was not so satisfactory was the definition science gave to the relation between them and us.

America was a creation of the Protestant mind. And as Americans we had, regardless of religious convictions, received its impress. Now it can be seen that Protestantism very early exhausted its interest in religion; whatever it had to say on the relation of God to man was soon said. After the great theological controversies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there is little but repetition, and soon not even that. From the very start, it would appear that the partisans of the Reformation had all they wanted to carry on in the practical world. And it was there, one suspects, that the Protestant treasure lay. Mean as may seem the morals of the Protestants, they undoubtedly conduced to commercial conquest; they steadied the pioneer in his advance into the New World.

But from the vantage of the Golden Bough, it will be seen that the Protestants rejected the essential mystery of Christianity. In discarding the Mass, they were depriving Christ of His powers as a God. Without them, he must lose His divinity. And this, as a matter of history, is exactly what did
happen. What is left to the Protestant churches today is not much, and that little is scarcely remarkable as religion; it is, in fact, only with the greatest difficulty to be distinguished from the secular ideals of humanitarianism and social service. Were it not that we can still read seventeenth-century sermons and hear the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, it would be almost impossible to conceive that the Protestant churches had ever been repositories of spiritual wisdom. And it is worth noting that we have in Bach an awareness of all the inquiries which the Counter-Reformation had proposed to the Protestant soul very powerfully combined with the baroque conception of time. It was still not too late for the musician to reconcile the opposing tendencies of Protestantism.

For there is another sphere, comparable to theology, in which the Protestant mind has been continuously brilliant. I mean that of Science. Copernicus could dedicate "De Revolutionibus Orbium Celestium" to the Pope, but it was of necessity a Protestant mind that first analyzed the motions of the stars, devised a cosmogony to replace that which the Catholic Church had inherited from the classical astronomers, and, after a century or two, substituted natural forces for the Deity. John Napier, the mathematician, was devout; and Kepler, having discovered that the squares of the times of the revolutions of any two planets, including the earth, about the sun are proportional to the cubes of their mean distances from the sun, could still exultantly cry: "I will triumph over mankind by honest confession that I have stolen the golden vases of the Egyptians to build a tabernacle for my God, far from the confines of Egypt." The boldest intellect may fail to perceive the implications of its findings. But to us looking back, this diversion of interests is apparent in the Protestant mind from the moment it casts off the authority of a Church whose majesty and wisdom
ultimately reposed on a myth. The two factions are, and have long been, irreconcilable.

Yet it must not be forgotten that the scientific universe rose in opposition to the older Church and was the creation of profoundly religious men. And it is now a commonplace to say that their dogmas were influenced, however contra-rily or unconsciously, by the very dogmas which they sought to displace.

"The Golden Bough" reveals a profound continuity in the human mind. The desire of the body is to continue, the deepest need of the mind is for order. For it is only by perceiving order in those external forces upon which his continuance depends, that man can hope to bring his own being into accord with them. Without that harmony, he suffers, and, so quickly does a carnal predicament become a spiritual distress, his suffering is not limited to his body. He may not only find living difficult; he may even cease to want to live.

After magic, religion; after religion, science: each is a mode of thought; each presents us with its own world of reality. The first two were discarded, as Sir James Frazer tells us, because the control which they pretended to exercise over the more than human powers who determine whether we live or die was incomplete. The conception of order upon which each of them is based is ultimately remote from the multitude; their common method of persuasion is miraculous. And this is no less true of science than of its predecessors, for more people could read Saint Thomas Aquinas in the Latin in the Middle Ages than today can follow the physicists into that mathematical empyrean where their true secrets are disclosed.

"All sciences which have for their end investigations concerning order and measure are related to mathematics. And a proof that it far surpasses
in facility and importance the sciences which depend upon it is that it embraces at once all the objects to which they are devoted and a great many more besides." So Descartes; the universe, though complicated since his day, is still a creation of the mathematical mind. But its high wisdom is inaccessible. We accept the world of the scientist, just as the savage accepted the world of the magician, because each proclaims his power to bend the forces of nature to his will and to our advantage. We believe because we see, and we see that it works. There is this difference, that magic pretends to divert the courses of nature, science only to utilize them. Religion asks not to control, but to placate the heavenly powers. It is easy to see, without the special information which Sir James Frazer has given us on the role of king as god, why religion is associated with an arbitrary rule, with a royal or an aristocratic society. Science and magic both favor democracy. In savages of the lowest scale, like the Australian aborigines, every man makes his own miracles. In the ideal scientific state, all classes will be leveled, since each is deprived of any special function; and in every garage will be two cars. The beginnings of savagery and the end of civilization thus come extraordinarily to resemble one another.

Our faith was given to science in the first instance because, having accepted mathematics as an instrument of exact inquiry, it was able to project a superior order upon the heavens. Its first great triumph was to simplify the movements of the planet Mars, that *inobservabile sidus* of the classical astronomers. It did not, of course, actually simplify them; Mars still pursued its course about the sun exactly as it had done when the Chaldeans first peered at the ruddy wanderer of the skies from their terraces; it merely made them simpler for the mind. It was in that relative simplicity, that more readily appreciable order, that the superiority of
science lay. So far from the common tribulations of mankind was the
direction of its concern. Science has since increased its observations,
improved its instruments. But it does not relate man to these ampler
heavens; nor can it properly do so; for its perfect instruments are not
adapted to this use. Measured on astronomical scales, man's life is
inconsiderably brief and small. The greatness of his heart it cannot
measure; it can only deny it. What compass can circumscribe Hamlet?
What equation, one may ask, corresponds to Coriolanus before Rome? We
have reached the skeptical point where we see the scientific universe as a
projection of our own immortal desire for order, yet realize that it leaves all
our desires, even that desire, unsatisfied.

"The abundance, the solidity, and the splendor of the results already
achieved by science are well fitted to inspire us with a cheerful confidence
in the soundness of its method." So Sir James Frazer could write before the
war, and add: "It is not too much to say that the hope of progress—moral
and intellectual as well as material—in the future is bound up with the
fortunes of science, and that every obstacle placed in the way of scientific
discovery is a wrong to humanity."

Yet soon after this had been written, it began to be suspected that the
great period of activity which began with the Renaissance had conied to a
close. Its glory had been a conquest of space; for the first time man was able
to conceive his earth as one sphere; he had mapped its seas and measured
its continents. His heaven was infinitely more vast than any his ancestors
had known and he had filled it, not with hierarchies of angels, but with his
own knowledge. But for some reason, that knowledge no longer availed
him.

After such knowledge, what forgiveness?
The question was asked and not answered.

In the decade after the war, we saw the capitalists endlessly scheme, and fail, to bring back world trade; we saw the communists endlessly agitate to bring on world revolution, and fail. That conquest of space was accomplished; yet the forces that had brought it about could not come to a stop. We heard as it were a victorious general proclaiming that order was being established everywhere. But we were like a poor and vanquished people, returning to burnt homes and devastated fields. Everywhere we looked was disorder.

For this was the paradox by which we were faced: that pure science has introduced into the world of thought we call the universe a never before known order, but the applications and derivations of scientific thought, not all of them material, had brought into our lives an unparalleled disorder.

Sir James Fraser, writing before the war, was aware as were few living men of the primitive substructure of modern civilization. But what was frightening in the aftermath of the war was not that the conflict shattering the walls had revealed old and almost forgotten foundations; it was that an advancing civilization should so terribly emulate savagery. It was society in its most modern form that had insisted on returning to that democracy in arms of savage tribes. It was the advance in technics that had made troglodytes of armies. If we were dying, it was not from our vices, but from an excess of our virtues. If there was a revolt from reason, it was not against reasoning as an instrument of living, but against the rationalism of the eighteenth century which, after being transformed into the materialism of the nineteenth century, had in our own become dynamism. A faith in progress had become a most unreasonable faith in motion for its own sake. And its works were not good.
The cure, it has been maintained, is more science: if only the methods which the astronomer, the physicist, and their more practical brother, the engineer, have so successfully employed, each in his special field, could be applied to ourselves and the society in which we precariously survive, all would be for the best in the bravest of new worlds. There are two serious objections to this proposal. Order in a living society cannot conceivably be of the mechanic kind. Methods which ultimately derive from the contemplation and measurement of space cannot without peril be applied to beings whose meaning can only be disclosed in time.

Science is not without a concept of time; but it is, as far as one not a mathematician can discern, a corollary of the original conception of order in space. It is not one by which men and women, subject to decay, can live.

It was the triumph of the European mind, in its youth and springtime of thought, that it was able to adapt the Christian myth to its needs and, extending the human drama to include, not merely lives, but conceivable centuries, to endow it with shape and meaning. (May I point out that there is no time in primitive Christianity? The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.) We are still under a tremendous debt to this conception of a higher order dominating and informing the world; it was made possible only through an increase in time. But we must remind ourselves that the order thus introduced into history was expressed in symbols and is therefore one not readily appreciated by the abstract and reasoning mind, and that the divine comedy could not come to completion until eternity had been added to time. Yet, the present theory which attempts to impose a rational order upon human history has also found it necessary to add to the drama an act which as yet has taken place on no earthly stage, an apocalyptic scene, in which Capitalism is transformed into Socialism, Prehistory ends and
History begins.

We are now, I think, in a position to see why myths have suddenly become so important to us. It is because through them we see mankind in time. That enormous impetus imparted to the human spirit at the Renaissance to face the unknown with no comfort but its own courage and despair resulted in an unprecedented conquest of space. If this advance produced a mysticism of its own, to which even the humblest could respond, as is shown, I believe, by the American pioneer, that movement has now spent itself. It lies gasping with its own success, like Alexander when he had trampled Europe, Asia, and Africa. And as Aristotle's one-time pupil, as he went, put the likeliest barbarian youths under Greek pedagogues, so the scientists have converted the earth to their instructions.

I have so far used Sir James Frazer's definition of religion. And it is worth remarking that in his view religion is no ptoxicant distilled for the masses, which priestly cunning and their own folly lead them to drain, in order to support their oppressions, dull their pain, and defer their hopes. On the contrary, it is a conceit of the world so high, so difficult, that few are able to keep it continuously before them. The many, of whatever class, can at best be constrained to conform outwardly to its customs and ceremonies. But religion, it seems to me, may attain an even nobler form than any Frazer has set down—an omission proper enough in a work devoted to its more primitive aspects. There is the religion of Saint Augustine and Dante, in which the gods are no longer to be propitiated save by conformity to their will. Call the gods what you like, provided you believe in them. And you cannot seriously refuse to believe that our lives are at long last dependent upon forces beyond our brief volition. In an age committed to determinism, it is difficult to understand completely what is meant by Saint Augustine's,
"My will purified is God's will, and in God's will is our peace." But even in a deterministic age, we are plagued by the necessity of conforming to our destiny, and the problem remains of according desires with fate.