Mr. Wieman's "The Source of Human Good"

Reviewed by HUSTON SMITH

CHARLES Clayton Morrison identified it with "the true enemy, not only of Christian faith, but of Western culture itself."[1] Others hailed it variously as "an achievement in present-day discussions of value,"[2] "The most thoroughgoing and constructive approach to the resolution of the dichotomy between the sacred and the secular which this reviewer has seen,"[3] "a brilliant and fascinating discussion of the general nature of value and specific kinds of value . . . packed with true insights expressed with skill and power."[4] Truly, what manner of book is Henry Nelson Wieman's "The Source of Human Good?"[5]

Synopsis

Those familiar with Mr. Wieman's conceptions of God, religion, and value will find in "The Source of Human Good" no change in thesis. What they will find is an amplification, in some cases a clarification, and for the most part a more technically philosophic statement of the theory of value which has undergirded his philosophy of religion during the past twenty years.

The message of this book is threeway. First, and at the base, is a world view, or conception of the kind of universe ours fundamentally is. Then comes a general theory of value developed in terms of this world view. Finally, there is an analysis of the human predicament, evil, and specific kinds of value (beauty, truth, knowledge, morals, religion) from the perspective of his value theory. It will be convenient to follow these three topics in presenting this synopsis.

World View. Wieman uses the phrase "newer naturalism" to specify his world view. The newer naturalism is to be contrasted with reductive materialism on the one hand and transcendentalism or supernaturalism on the other. It thus denies both the effort to contract reality to exclude all qualities, leaving only pellets of inanimate matter, and the attempt to expand it to include "transcendental grounds, orders, causes, purposes." This leaves us with a world of events, their qualities, and their relations or structures. Every cause, activity and explanation, all life, history, and value, are to be described in terms of such events.

Value Theory. Wieman's value theory is built around a good which is absolute. As such it opposes the relativism of much contemporary writing on the subject. But this must not be misunderstood. Most discussions of value which are relativistic in tone point out that every element within the value situation is relative to other elements within that situation. This Wieman would speedily acknowledge. The value relativism he attacks is other than this. It is the more deep-seated variety which goes beyond the partial relativism (which might better be called relationism) just mentioned, to claim that there are no objective standards whatever and "nothing is good or bad but thinking makes it so." To pass from relationalism to this complete relativism is, from Wieman's point of view, like arguing that since weight and size are rele-

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[1] *The Christian Century,* November 13, 1946, p. 1376.

[2] Frank V. H. Carthy in *The Living Church,* Dec. 15, 1946, p. 23.

[3] William Clayton Bower in *Religious Education,* March-April, 1947, p. 118.

[4] Lynn Harold Hough in *Christendom,* Winter, 1947, p. 105-106.

[5] Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946, $3.50.

vant to the rate at which bodies will fall—and since one cannot set an absolute rate for all bodies regardless of weight and size—no law pertaining to falling bodies can be established. Just as this relativity of a physical object to other parts of the situation does not preclude judgment regarding the outcome of situations or belief in the constancy of physical laws, so the fact that the worth of one element in a value situation is relative to other elements in that situation does not preclude objective evaluation of alternative situations on the basis of a value theory claimed to be constant. When Wieman speaks of absolute value, it is important to keep in mind that this can be predicated only of total situations, never of any parts of situations taken in isolation. According to his theory we can say that certain types of situations are always good, but we cannot rightly make this claim of physical objects or interests of the responding organism or any other part of the value situation.

The heart of Wieman's value theory lies in the distinction between **created** and **creative** good. It is impossible to over-emphasize the importance of this distinction. Wieman's entire value theory hinges upon it, and unless it is grasped nothing else in the book will be fully understood.

Created good is quality.[6] Quality is any sensation, feeling or emotion: joy, sorrow, pleasure, pain, hope, despair, elation, disappointment, or any other. Quality, or created good, provides what Wieman calls the guiding principle of value. Value does not necessarily increase through amassing physical possessions, nor realizing more satisfactions, nor experiencing more pleasant qualities, nor through augmenting human control over brute matter. Rather, it grows through increasing the extent to which a life is **able** to experience the manifold qualities of the world. The more our lives are able to reach out and absorb all qualities, painful or pleasurable, the more worth our lives take on. It is clear that Wieman's theory is a far cry from the pleasure theory of value. Even if the deepened comprehension which comes from extending awareness leads to anguish, it is still better than superficialness.

Now, the qualities one is able to garner through one's own senses are limited. But here something almost miraculous comes to the rescue and pours into human life a thousand times the quality it would otherwise be able to absorb. This something is meaning. Meaning is a relation between parts of the world whereby something experienced here and now conveys the qualities of happenings distant in time and place. For example the marks on a paper would have meaning if, in the form of a letter from home, they conveyed to me some of the feelings I would have experienced had I been home at the times the letter describes. Again, the noises a friend utters in conversation have meaning if they convey to me qualities beyond the sounds themselves, such as those involved in the experiences he is talking about. When the flood gates of meaning are opened to us, torrents of qualities we could not have experienced on our own pour in. We tap the sensitivities of other people. We feel the qualities of past events. The universe as a whole comes more qualitatively alive, more deeply and pervasively meaningful. In fact so important is meaning in stepping up the quality available to us that Wieman usually uses the phrase qualitative meaning instead of just quality to refer to created good. But (though Mr. Wieman doesn't go into this in this book) quality is still the heart of created good, and meaning its magnifier.

Created good is intrinsically good. But there is another kind of value which is even better, namely creative

[6] I am changing the author's terminology slightly here, but not his meaning.

good. Creative good is a process whereby qualitative meaning is increased. This is why it is better; if there is anything better than qualitative meaning it is more of it, or rather the process which continues to increase it indefinitely. Creative good can be divided for purposes of analysis into four constituent aspects: (1) the emerging of a new idea; (2) the integrating of this idea with the total personality; (3) the expanding of the appreciable world; (4) a deepening sense of community among men. When all four of these things occur we have an instance of the creative event, or creative good in the process of increasing qualitative meaning. The creative event is not instigated by human beings. Men can cooperate with it, but basically the process is beyond human power, as it matures the minds of children and continues the process indefinitely among those who resist it not.

Application of this value theory to the interpretation of the human predicament, the nature of evil, and specific kinds of value.

The Human Predicament. This is the human predicament: man now holds or will soon hold the power to destroy himself. Furthermore he will destroy himself unless he makes the right choices. But the native human value-sense, by which most choices are made, is a precarious guide. Its promptings are distorted by the limited range of human appreciation, the domination of self-interest, and the resistance to the transfiguration of valuations. Consequently men need another guide, very different from the normal human value-sense, to direct their use of power. In the past men have looked to religion for a guide which would save life from self-destruction and bring it to fulfillment. But today religion cannot point the way because its transcendentalism or supernaturalism distracts it from presenting in terms which can guide everyday action what man must do to save himself, and these are the only terms which science and technology can understand. The concept of creative good fulfills the requirement that any proposal must meet before it can hope to be a solution to the modern predicament: it maps the saving way in terms science and technology can understand. Science and technology must primarily serve the demands of creative good and only secondarily the demands of created goods. This means, as we have seen, that they must be used not to obtain what men already want but to transform human wants through facilitating new insights, expanding the scope of human appreciation, and deepening the sense of community among men. Failure to show specifically how technology and science might do these things is a major weakness of the book. Wieman has a real point, but because he has not made concrete, through example and application, his concept of science and technology serving creative good will strike most readers as little more than a verbal solution to the human predicament.

The Nature of Evil. Evil is real. Wieman scorns all attempts, whether by idealist or theist, to soft-pedal it or explain it away.

Wieman's analysis of evil duly reflects, as it should, his world view and his value theory. From his world view comes his conviction that evil is an ultimate metaphysical reality. He cannot, like the absolute idealist, dispel it by claiming that events only appear to be bad from our finite perspectives but are not really so. Nor can he, like those who champion an infinite God, deny evil on the grounds that it is inconsistent with a God who is both all-good and all-powerful. Accurately stemming from his premises, evil is accepted as a solid fact.

His conception of what evil is follows logically from his value theory. Most people, when they think of evil, think first of suffering and pain. But to ac-

cept these as the heart of evil would be to commit oneself to a pleasure theory of value, which Wieman had already rejected. Consequently he must challenge the idea that pain and suffering are necessarily bad. This he does by pointing out three respects in which they are good: (1) they serve as protective danger signals; (2) they stimulate the human organism to energetic and varied action, thus reducing its propensity to sink into routine torpor; (3) in rare instances they catalyze the creative event, deepening the bonds of human sympathy and man's understanding of the world. Thus it is that "human living without suffering always congeals into complacent contentment at the lower levels of the social order and complacent arrogance at the higher."

Evil, then, cannot be defined as pain and suffering. Its rightful meaning comes from its opposition to good, for there is no general principle which characterizes all instances of evil except this negative one of being opposed to the good. Metaphysically evil is parasitical; its existence is contingent upon the good upon which it feeds. And since, in Wieman's analysis, there are two kinds of good, created and creative, so balancing them are two species of evil. Destructive evil ravages created good, tearing away beloved objects or dulling appreciation. Obstructive evil, being the antagonist of the supreme good is even worse; it blocks the creative event. It thus deserves to be called absolute evil, being never good, regardless of circumstances or point of view. This cannot be said of destructive evil.

Evil can be divided another way. There are natural evils over which man has almost no control, and human evils which he can alleviate or aggravate. Wieman subdivides natural evil into "inertias" and "protective hierarchies," and human evils into "sin," "immorality," and "demonry." The latter being the ones which bear upon man's responsibility, we shall restrict this discussion to them.

Sin is "any resistance to creativity for which man is responsible." Anything which man instigates which obstructs the emerging of new perspectives, the expansion of the appreciable world, the deepening of community, is sin. Wieman does not catalogue the attitudes and practices which constitute specific instances of sin, but it is not difficult to conceive what some would be: self-centeredness, cynicism, callousness, frivolity and exclusive absorption in the sensuous would certainly qualify..

There is one sin which is so pernicious that it deserves to be placed in a special category. This is the sin of giving one's ultimate devotion to something or other than that which is most worthy of this devotion. This sin is called demonry, for it is the worship of that which rivals God for man's commitment. The devil in Wieman's system is anything which usurps the place of creative good as the object of man's devotion. In practice this almost invariably turns out to be some appreciation or ideal or purpose which in itself is splendid. Hence the irony of the situation: that which rivals the greatest good must possess a great deal of good in its own right or it could not be a serious rival, yet this goodness is transmuted in its wider setting to the worst form of evil for it is the most powerful device for sidetracking men from the good which is actually supreme. As long as our ideals, plans and loves, then, are held subject to God's will they can be sublime. But the moment we begin to treat them as if they were the ultimate good, denying in practice the need to hold them subject to further perfecting and even drastic revision, we have allowed them to challenge the supremacy of creative good in our lives, and they become the most powerfully obstructive

evils. Thus Wieman concludes: "The devil is the most glorious vision of good that our minds can achieve at any one time when that **vision refuses to hold itself subject to creativity.**"

This completes Part I of Wieman's book which presents his general theory of value. Part II deals with specific kinds of value. Limitations of space require that we skip his chapters on beauty, truth and knowledge and proceed to his discussion of morals and religion, these being of greater interest to readers of this review.

Morals. Creativity does not flourish under any and all conditions. In human life it requires a certain order of interrelatedness among people. These relationships of man to man which are conducive to the functioning of creative good constitute the moral order. Conduct is moral when it fulfills this order, immoral when it violates it. Clearly actions customarily judged to be moral on other grounds (that they satisfy human desire, for example, or are altruistically motivated, or do not violate the mores of the community, or conform to the dictates of conscience, intuition, authority or some categorical imperative, for example) would often appear immoral by Wieman's criterion. He selects four areas of morality in which to illustrate the implications of his concept: communication, sex, Christian love, and morality.

In human life communication is the best catalyst of creative good. It is when men communicate meaningfully with one another that new insights which expand the appreciable world and deepen community most readily occur. So it is that morality, which is concerned to provide conditions favorable to the flourishing of creativity, turns out in Wieman's conception to be in one major aspect concerned with effecting circumstances conducive to effective communication. Effective communication is not realized by mere jabbering. No communication occurs unless ideas and feelings are sufficiently important to augment the discrimination and appreciation of the listener. Thus banal, idle chatter and bland sociability must not be taken for genuine communication. Gayety, suavity and glibness are not necessarily creative; of course neither are timidity and excessive self-consciousness.

Sex is a factor which can either exalt or degrade life tremendously. At best it breaks down the barriers of individuality as nothing else can do and touches life with infinite responsiveness, at first to a single other creature but ultimately through the beloved to all life and existence. At its worst sex by becoming furtive or pervertedly obsessive can severely restrict both the horizon of meaning and capacity for love. Being thus crucial as either aid or barrier to creativity, sex is rightly an object of moral concern. But sex morality ought not to be approached in a negative spirit as if sex were something intrinsically shameful, but rather in the glad realization that here is a tremendous good too precious to be dissipated or perverted through careless lack of ordering. "The real purpose of morals in sex is . . . to guide the sexual impulse into a love so powerful that it shatters and transforms a man's life and brings him into social relations which enrich not only himself and those in his intimate group but also society in its wider ranges." Unfortunately current morals regarding sex do not accomplish this objective. But the solution emphatically does not lie in transgressing existing social mores. The fulfillment of love must relate life more profoundly and intimately to society and the cultural heritage of beauty and devotion so that to break with society in love is necessarily to abort it. The solution must consist in transforming current standards to where they will enable love to serve creativity much more than it now can. Again it is a limitation of the book that it does not spell out what at least the

beginnings of such transformation would be.

Another type of love differing from sexual but also vital to moral life Wieman calls Christian love. Taking its cue from Jesus' admonition that we should love even our enemies, Christian love is the capacity to appreciate even those whose basic patterns of interests differ sharply from our own, those who are different culturally or racially and those whom we hate. Here to appreciate does not mean to approve but to understand. If Christian love meant that we had to approve the perspectives of all those who differ from us it would be evil for it would dissolve all standards of good and bad. But it does not mean this. It means rather the power to get inside the other fellow and understand him sympathetically even though we disapprove his attitudes. Only those whose center is not in themselves, their community or their tradition, but who are committed to the growth of understanding and love as supreme good have this power.

Social morality is summarized in the word justice: "Justice is the distribution of goods and services; the adjudication of claims, rewards, and punishments; the adjustment of the consequences of public action affecting the interests of different people—all these according to a guiding principle." Wieman supplies the guiding principle—creativity. Provisions are just only when they enable all concerned to enter most fully into creative interaction with their fellowmen.

Wieman does not try to hold the plumb-line of justice to all features of our culture. Instead he singles out the one institution which conditions modern society more than any other and discusses it in the light of his standard of justice. This institution is industrial production. If the industrial plant is operated justly it will do more than anything else to insure a just society, for industrialization is the key factor of our times.

Applying the generic definition of justice we may say that the industrial plant is run justly when it provides maximum opportunity for its workers to live creatively. Now two of the key stimuli to creative living are responsibility and common concern. Responsibility is conducive to creative living because its adequate execution requires an understanding of the context in which it is set, so that a man who honestly tries to live up to his responsibility will constantly be alert to his environment, noting how his actions affect it and the demand it makes upon him. Common concern likewise makes for creative living, for the fact that a man is struggling with his fellows for a common objective establishes a rapport in which feelings are shared. Conversely few things so impoverish life as to drain it of responsibility and common concern. Robbed of responsibility one of the prime incentives to advance in understanding is gone and lethargy decrees stagnation. Deprived of common concern antagonism pits life against life.

All this implies that if industry is to be run justly it must be organized to provide maximum responsibility and common concern for all involved. Dictatorship of management over labor must be replaced by industrial democracy. The old style factory in which workers must unquestioningly follow the boss' orders must be replaced by the free industrial plant wherein the workers join with management in cooperative planning and creative interchange of ideas and are given responsibility to exercise their initiative in thinking, planning, and determining together some of the immediate conditions and procedures of their labor. Organized labor must be given power and responsibility to join with management in the conduct of industry. Otherwise there

will be no basic justice in modern society.

d. **Religion.** God, Wieman holds, is the creative event. His reasoning runs something like this: throughout religious history the word God has generically referred to that which was held to be most important for all human living. According to Wieman's world view nothing exists except events, so the most important thing for all human living must be the most worthful event. His analysis of value leads to the conclusion that the creative event is the most worthful one. Therefore the creative event is God.

Although Wieman recognizes that in the past men have not thought of God as the creative event, actually it has been this which has responded to their worship even when they believed it was something else. For unreserved commitment to what they conceived to be a personal, transcendent God established precisely those psycho-emotive conditions which allowed the creative event to enter fully into life. In giving their devotion to something they believed to be metaphysically transcendent — i. e. beyond the world of space and time — religious men were saved from the peril of becoming completely attached to relative created goods. The doctrine of transcendence also established a norm of righteousness far above any actual attainment and with reference to which all men are sinners, thus making it more difficult for "good people" smugly to dissociate themselves from their fellows. In these and other ways worship of what was held to be a transcendent deity provided the conditions required by the creative event. Though men believed in God-transcendent, actually it was God-immanent who responded to their worship. Likewise, although the creative event is not personal, those who in fact committed their lives to it tended to associate personality with it because at the human level it operates almost exclusively in the context of inter-personal communication. The personal aspect of the context thus naturally, though wrongly, came to be associated with the creative event itself.

Christianity is a polyglot of good and bad, but at best it is an historical stream of persons who have passed on from generation to generation, by way of personal contagion; a way of life characterized by its refusal to allow any personal desire to obstruct the increase of love and understanding. This way of life frees man from bondage to any achieved perspective and releases him to turn his faith to the creative source of all good.

If it be asked how this continuum of converted lives originated, the answer lies in a series of historical developments within Judaism culminating in the life and death of Jesus. Hebrew history was one long series of catastrophes. This developed within the Jewish people a remarkable detachment from worldly values: they came to be able to view the collapse of their hopes and achievements time after time without becoming defeated. Meanwhile the great prophets were insisting that the root cause of their difficulties lay in the fact that they had not given their allegiance to the good, namely God and his will. Thus while tragedy was loosening the hold of created good upon these people, the prophets were turning their minds to the source of all good.

But there was one obstructive perspective from which, up to the time of Christ, the Jewish people were never free. This was the conviction that they were a chosen people and therefore the salvation of the world must come through the universalization of their own particular culture. As long as this conviction remained, the creative transformation of their lives was confined within this outlook. Created good was still supreme.

It took the life and death of Jesus to remove this last barrier. To begin with, Jesus was the kind of person through

whom the creative event could work with maximum abundance. His acute sensitivity enabled him to communicate with men with such depth and potency that the personalities of all involved were transformed. The thought and feeling of each got across to the other to the point that there arose within the groups in which he moved an almost miraculous mutual awareness and responsiveness toward the needs and interests of one another. Thus for these people the world took on new meaning and worth, and life came closer to love. The creative event was working its wonders.

Jesus was not God; but he was an agent of God as perhaps no other man has been. He was the divine catalyst in the sense that he inspired in men those conditions which made it possible for God to re-work their lives. It is slight wonder that his disciples identified the catalytic agent with the divine process itself and said that Jesus was God.

The death of Jesus is as important as his life for Christianity; for it was this which broke the last barrier to the full release of creative good. Hebrew history, we have seen, had developed within its people a remarkable responsiveness to creative good, but it remained confined within the conviction that the salvation of the world could come only through the universalization of the Hebrew religious culture. In Jesus, his disciples thought, this dream would be realized. He was the Messiah, the Son of God, who would exalt his people and establish the Kingdom of God on earth.

The crucifixion of Jesus shattered this hope. It brought his disciples to despair. But despair, when it comes from loss of what one holds to be the supreme good but is not, is opportunity, for it makes possible transfer of loyalty to what really is of greatest worth. Thus the crucifixion was of crucial importance, for it broke the last ideal (the Jewish value perspective) which had restricted creativity in the lives of a key group of persons.

What rose from the dead was not the man Jesus but what in Christianity has been called the Living Christ. This, in Wieman's interpretation, is creative good made dominant in the life of man. It rose from the dead in the sense that it was as a direct result of Jesus' death that it was realized in the lives of his disciples. And it continues to live to the degree that this way of life, transmitted from generation to generation by contagion and the help of a religious tradition, is still given right-of-way by men and women today. In this sense lives are still saved through Christ. Wieman believes that Christianity has magnified the workings of creativity in the lives of men more than any other religion, though he recognizes this as a historical judgment in which he may be mistaken.

Evaluation

In evaluating this book four criticisms in order of increasing importance come to mind.

1. Mr. Wieman never does succeed in defining his audience. His book is part philosophy, part poetry, part a devotional affirmation of faith, and part common sense. Is it written for the general public? Parts are much too technical. For philosophers? Taken as a whole the book does not adhere to the plane of technical philosophy; the fact that he added a "Technical Postscript" shows that he was aware of this. Also much of the book is cast in language too theological to be read objectively by many philosophers, which of course is to the discredit of philosophers. Then perhaps the book is for theologians? Again too technically philosophical in spots. The circle is complete. The fact is that Wieman either did not have his reading public in mind at all when he wrote the book, or else it fluctuated as he wrote various passages. This is unfortunate, for it means that very few even of those who might agree with his

ideas will appreciate the book. The general reader will fail to see what he is driving at, the theologian will be thrown off the track by the forays into philosophy, and the philosopher will dismiss the book as apologetics.

2. A second criticism is suggested by Mr. Everett W. Hall in a review which appeared in "The Philosophical Review" of March, 1947: "By answering all these different sorts of problems with the common solution—'the creative good'—Professor Wieman does not render significant aid toward the solution of any one of them. . . . (He) does not undertake the significant practical job of bringing to bear the latest scientific knowledge upon the concrete problems of attaining this or that specific good. . . . If one is interested in setting up conditions that will foster (creative value), it is necessary not to adulate it but to find out what social and psychological conditions are favorable to it." There is partial truth in these words. There are occasions when one might well wish that after proposing that a given problem be solved by providing conditions for the release of the creative event, Mr. Wieman had been more specific as to just what would constitute such conditions and how they might be achieved. A notable exception to this criticism is his analysis of the requirements for justice in the social order where he does just this in a superb way.

3. Wieman is weakest when he is treating the views of others, especially his theological opponents. Even his language at such times loses its normal objectivity and verges on caricature which gives the impression that he is dismissing the position instead of seriously coming to grips with it. Herbert Farmer, an English theologian writing in "The Journal of Religion" of April, 1947, has pointed to several instances of this, as when on page 93 Wieman writes that all views other than his in which evil is an ultimate represent evil as a domesticated animal "kept in a pen by the Almighty to do what the power of good may require of it until the time comes when it shall be slaughtered." Again on page 87 the same problem of evil is dismissed as a pseudo-problem which arises because people are not out "to find the truth but to find some way, by hook or by crook, to hold fast to a belief when evidence is insufficient to support it." These expressions could be excused except for the fact that behind them is an inadequate presentation of the views he rejects. Wieman is inclined to oversimplify differences, drawing them along lines which make the opposition appear unworthy of serious consideration. It is safe to say that none of his opponents would recognize Wieman's accounts as fair descriptions of their positions. Thus in these arguments Wieman is for the most part fighting straw men. The sad part about all this is of course that the really profound and crucial theological differences go untouched.

4. Finally, from the standpoint of philosophy, "The Source of Human Good" is not a solid book. It ventures into the realm of philosophy but never does get very far, no issues being really resolved. The trouble appears to me to be that Wieman has not worked out a thorough-going metaphysics. True, he espouses the newer naturalism which asserts that "there is nothing in reality accessible to the human more basic than events and their qualities and relations," but this is no more than the first step toward closing in on a metaphysics: thus far he could be a positivist, an enlightened mechanist, a physical realist, an emergent evolutionist, a contextualist or several other things. And he never really gets beyond this ambiguous point. Even when he deliberately tries to draw some additional metaphysical lines (especially between his view and contextualism) in the technical postscript to the book one gets the impression that he is simply excusing himself from some of the dif-

ficulties implied by the premises of contextualism without either showing how these difficulties can be escaped in terms of the premises or altering the premises themselves. To take but one example, he solves the problem of identity (a jaw-breaker for contextualism) and the unity of God by asserting that "the infinite multiplicity of creative events displays one single self-identical character or structure running throughout," (p. 299). But what this "identical character or structure" can be or mean apart from a Platonic form I fail to see. Yet this is precisely what it cannot mean, for like contextualism one of the corner stones of Wieman's philosophy is rejection of such forms. I cannot see but that he is disowning contextualism's difficulty without really howing how he is going to get out of it. To me another sign of vagueness in his metaphysics is his contention that "there are several metaphysics, all of which are true." Even after conversation with him on this point I am inclined to disagree, suspecting his tolerance to be due to the fact that his own world view has not been developed to the point where its concepts are sufficiently precise and its implications sufficiently noted to make apparent where it breaks with others.

Also, if it be true that Wieman's metaphysics is not precisely formulated this would account for the fact that many of his derivative concepts, including the creative event, appear somewhat dangling so that one is never quite sure whether he has got good hold of them or not. It would also account for Everett W. Hall's contention that the book "really avoids entirely the truly philosophical analysis of value as such —what it is, in what sense it characterizes the world, etc. etc."

But after the critic has had his full say the inherent worth of this book remains. It is sprinkled with insights which at times are almost breathtaking. His discussion of loneliness as the capacity for love on page 63, of the creative possibilities of silence on page 60, of the ten criteria of maturity on pages 98-100, and of the basic problem of our existence on pages 111-117, come to mind as instances.

But the thing for which "The Source of Human Good," like the rest of Wiemans writings, will be remembered is its basic point, here more substantially developed than in his previous work and its import more fully shown. Goodness increases as understanding grows and the bonds of human love and sympathy widen and deepen. Anything which facilitates these things is good, anything which impedes them is bad. Chief among the evils in life is the human tendency to become so infatuated with current affections, attitudes and purposes that new ones are not given a chance to emerge, like an adolescent who won't date other girls for fear he might fall in love with one of them and so out of love with his current ideal. Therefore men must constantly be alert to the danger of developing stultifying fixations on their present viewpoints or valuations. Who would claim that this is the final account of value? Wieman least of all. But on the other hand who would deny that Wieman, more than anyone else, has helped us to see this basic point of tremendous importance? Whether this is the most adequate and helpful analysis of value available today depends upon whether the world is, in the main, as the author conceives it to be. I do not feel competent to judge this issue.