

APPENDIX

DEED BEFORE CREED

I think it is funny that Adler starts the second chapter of *Religion of Duty* by positing a movement in which members are “in matter of religious opinion...entirely free to differ” while they all supposedly have a belief “that truth is progressive and may be increased in the world”. And then in the next paragraph he expresses the thought that people should have a definite concept of the meaning of god and if they don't, they are without a robust mind.

Felix Adler - Religion of Duty - Chapter 2 - Changes in the Conception of God

In treating a distinctly religious subject such as that of the present chapter, it is not inexpedient to first point out the fact, that when I consider such themes I express my private views, and commit no one to them but myself. The members of the Ethical Society are bound by nothing but the acceptance of certain elementary moral truths, and are united in the endeavour to add to these, believing that truth is progressive and may be increased in the world, and that there is a duty to try to increase it. Members of an ethical society properly seek to sustain one another in an attempt better to realize in daily living the principles which are accepted by all. On great moral questions they are united; in matters of religious opinion they are entirely free to differ.

What I shall have to say upon a matter of religious opinion may not, then, be construed as a creed, to which the Ethical Society and fellowship shall be committed, but must be regarded as my personal opinion.

Next paragraph

I, for one, feel that indefiniteness is intolerable to a robust mind.

W. Edwin Collier - The Illusion of Spiritual Neutrality, February, 1944

Men's creeds are not their private affairs. I know someone - Whitehead, I think - has said that religion is what a man does with his solitude, which is one of those platitudinous half-truths which do more harm than good. As a matter of fact, creeds are not man's private affairs, because creeds, if they are sincerely held, affect the believers' deeds, and their deeds affect other members of the community. We are all members one of another; mankind is interdependent. We cannot, therefore, be neutral in the matters of creeds which affect moral deeds.

Concept Map

The task went beyond the individual to embrace the whole of life and involved the recognition that each of us serves a vocation committed to the transformation of society by the **consecration**