

## *In Memoriam*

HENRY NELSON WIEMAN

August 19, 1884–June 19, 1975

Henry Nelson Wieman began helping to shape *Zygon* and to bring it into being in 1949, sixteen years before it materialized. He had been a pioneer, scouting the future paths of civilization since his doctoral dissertation at Harvard in 1917, "The Organization of Interest," and the publication of his *Religious Experience and the Scientific Method* in 1926. In his views of the reality before us, he, like all pioneers and advanced scouts, often had to be alone, even as he tried to communicate them. To get a hearing he often had to compromise his language in order to be understood, and, even so, he was often misunderstood.

Wieman—unlike Teilhard and Whitehead, who with him are considered by many to constitute the three most outstanding pioneers in the first half of the twentieth century to seek to forge some integration of religion and modern science—lived to help give birth to this journal of religion and science and to serve on its editorial advisory board.

He firmly held that man's responses to the religious or God question must not be separated from the kinds of responses that are made in the sciences. In the preface to his *Religious Experience and the Scientific Method* he wrote, "The chief purpose of this book is to show that religious experience is experience of an object, however undefined, which is as truly external to the individual as is any tree or stone he may experience." In a preface to a 1971 reprint of it he wrote: "This book was my first attempt to solve the problem . . . : How can we interpret what operates in human existence to create, sustain, save and transform toward greatest good, so that scientific research and scientific technology can be applied to searching out and providing the conditions—physical, biological, psychological and social—which must be present for its most effective operation? This operative presence in human existence can be called God. . . ."

Although Wieman's teaching at the University of Chicago and elsewhere and his several books and many papers were widely influential, his philosophical theology, like Whitehead's, was neglected in midcentury when earlier trends to religious modernization were diverted into neoorthodoxy and secular humanism. But the decreasing appeal of these and some helpful, new scientific understandings—particularly of the evolved wisdom of traditional religions and their role in human adaptation—are leading to renewed developments closer to Wieman's early insights. It may be that future historians will find Whitehead, Teilhard, and Wieman to be primary markers of the trail to the future.