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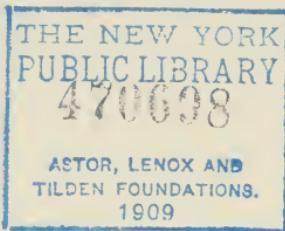
A CREEDLESS GOSPEL
AND -
THE GOSPEL CREED

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THE GOSPEL CREED

BY
HENRY Y. SATTERLEE, D.D.
RECTOR OF CALVARY CHURCH, NEW YORK

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TO
MY WIFE

PREFACE

THE origin and genesis of this book will be found in the event to which it refers on its first page. This event revealed, like a flash of lightning in the darkness, a confusion of thought and a misapprehension in regard to that fundamental truth of the Christian Faith—the Incarnation of Christ—which would have been startling to Christians of any other age than our own. On this occasion most Christians simply contented themselves with echoing what Gamaliel said : “If this counsel or this work be of man, it will come to naught, but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it.”¹

These, however, were the words of an outsider. No member of the Apostolic Church itself would or could have ever spoken thus, for since the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, God has charged Christians with a personal responsibility as witnesses for Him in the world ; witnesses that He is such a Being as Christ alone has revealed Him ; witnesses left in this lower world by the Ascended Christ, Who is now on the throne of glory, to preach the glad tidings of His Incarnation and Death, His mighty Resurrection and glorious Ascension, and of the Coming of the Holy Ghost.

The power of the Holy Ghost is given to those who abide in Christ : He will abide only with those who do His will, and to them alone the promise is given that they shall know of His doctrine. As it is His will that all Christians, clergymen and laymen, shall bear witness

¹ Acts v. 38, 39.

for Him, it follows that those who fail in bearing witness deprive themselves both of the true knowledge of God, as revealed in Christ, and of the power of that Godliness of which they are content merely to profess the form.

To discharge the responsibility resting upon him as one of these witnesses, the author set out with the intention of writing a short article on the Apostles' Creed, but the work grew insensibly on his hands as days and months passed by, until it attained the proportions of this volume. It should be added that the book has not been written for *Unbelievers*. Its sole object is to help in confirming the faith of the faithful : to point out and bring back to the memory of Nineteenth-Century Christians the standard of belief and of life which was set before New Testament Christians by Christ Himself and the Apostles whom He trained.

The author, of course, lays no claim to originality in his treatment of this solemn theme. The older men grow, it has been said, the more they are taught by long experience to doubt the adequacy of their own premises, but in regard to the life and teaching of our Lord there is a certainty of historical fact, a definiteness of doctrine, and a corroboration of faith in the assurance of all Christian experience, which not only leave little room for so-called originality of thought, but compel one to distrust the spirit of any age as a critic and interpreter of the Christian religion.

There is, of course, progress in the apprehension of the truth as the Church is more and more enlightened by the Spirit of truth. But this is a Spirit, Whom, we are expressly told by Christ Himself, "the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him." The progress is made in the Faith of the Gospels, not in the abrogation of it ; and is progress toward Christ. not away from Him.

As this book has been written with the purpose of awakening in believers and communicants of the Church a sense of their responsibility as witnesses for God ; so it has been the privilege of the writer to receive no little assistance and inspiration from some of the members of the Communicants' Union of his own parish. He also takes this opportunity to acknowledge his indebtedness for kindly criticism to the Rev. Professor William Clark, LL.D., of Trinity College, Toronto, and to the Rev. Thomas R. Harris, D.D., of New York ; and for correcting the proofs, in the final revision, to Dr. William C. Rives.

While the last pages of this book are being written there is a sound of rejoicing on the air of the winter night, and, all the world over, human hearts are responding, as at no other time of the year, to the angels' song of peace, good will to men. As all look back to that lowly stable at Bethlehem, in which the Christian revelation began, even those who are far from Christ feel the spell of its sweet, humanizing influences. No marvel that they would claim, even while denying His miraculous birth, so human a Saviour as their own.

But in the vision of the Christian ages that scene has a deeper meaning. The radiance which the old masters reverently loved to paint as emanating from the manger, though invisible to the physical sight, is recognized by the pure in heart who see God ; nor, to the eye of faith, could the vision of the first Christmas night be truthfully portrayed without it, for enshrined in that manger was the Shekinah of God's Own Presence, and the Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. "And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.

He came unto His own, and His own received Him not ; but as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God.” Only in the Light of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, Who came to take our nature upon Him, and Who was, as at this time, born of a pure virgin, can we discover the destiny of man and the progress of the human race. That Light is given us by God Himself to see by, and we are to learn from it, not explain it away.

“ Earth breaks up, time drops away,
In flows Heaven, with its new day
Of endless life, when He Who trod,
Very Man of very God,
This earth in weakness, shame, and pain,
Dying the death—whose signs remain
Up yonder on the accursed tree—
Shall come again, no more to be
Of captivity the thrall,
But the one God, All in all,
King of kings and Lord of lords,
As His servant John received the words,
‘I died, and live forevermore.’”

HENRY Y. SATTERLEE.

CHRISTMAS EVE, 1894 A.D.

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Part First

A CREEDLESS GOSPEL

MAN SEEKING GOD

“WHAT IS TRUTH ?”

“ Life, with all it yields of joy and woe,
And hope and fear—believe the aged friend—
Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love,
How love might be, hath been indeed, and is ;
And that we hold thenceforth to the uttermost
Such prize despite the envy of the world,
And, having gained truth, keep truth : that is all.

I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
All questions in the earth and out of it,
And has so far advanced thee to be wise.
Would'st thou unprove this to re-prove the proved ?
In life's mere minute, with power to use that proof,
Leave knowledge and revert to how it sprung ?
Thou hast it ; use it and forthwith, or die !
For I say, this is death and the sole death,
When a man's loss comes to him from his gain,
Darkness from light, from knowledge ignorance,
And lack of love from love made manifest.”

—“ *A Death in the Desert,*” by ROBERT BROWNING.

CHAPTER I

THE ISSUE

SYNOPSIS

- I. Objections to the Apostles' Creed, on the grounds of (*a*) Uncatholicity ; because it is a barrier to the Union of Religions ;
(*b*) Uncertainty ; because it cannot be proved by the Scientific Method ; (*c*) Unchangeableness ; because it is a hindrance to progress.
- II. Proposed Solution is to strip Christianity of the Supernatural, and reduce it to the plane of Natural Religions. But,
- III. Christianity, as the Self-Revelation of an Unchanging God, must insist on its Supernatural Origin and Character.
- IV. The Issue is thus between the Doctrine of the Apostles' Creed and the demands of the Scientific and Philosophical Methods.

PREVAILING PERPLEXITY OF THOUGHT ABOUT CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

VERY significant of the present conditions of religious thought and life was the way in which the announcement of "The World's First Parliament of Religions at Chicago," was received.¹

By thousands this Congress was hailed as an epoch in the Christian world. No other religious project, probably, has ever called forth so many enthusiastic testimonials from statesmen and historians, poets and essayists, ecclesiastics and foreign missionaries, college presidents

¹ Though this Parliament of Religions is now a thing of the past, and the discussions to which it gave rise are already forgotten, the state of religious opinion which it so clearly and vividly illustrated, remains. This passing reference to that Congress, therefore, as such an illustration, will not, it is hoped, seem out of place.

and prominent men in every walk of life ; and the religious press was no less outspoken in its approval. For months we waited for some qualification of this extremely one-sided expression of opinion, and some fair and temperate statement of the other side, but it never came. With the exception of the refusal of the Archbishop of Canterbury of the invitation to participate, scarcely another voice was raised to show that there *was* another side. Such silence is abnormal, for this question, like every other, has, and must have, two sides, and, generally, a healthy opposition is not only indicative of interest but necessary in bringing out the whole truth. Apart from all questions of expediency as to whether the congress was to be a success or a failure, there was a distinct question of principle involved, as to whether a Christian who believes that the religion of Christ is a revelation from God, and that other religions are not in any such real sense divine revelations, could consistently take part in its proceedings without disloyalty to Christ. And one would have thought that this issue would have been raised and keenly debated. The absence of such opposition in the case of this Congress was most significant. It would have been startling if it meant the *laissez faire* of religious apathy to the principles involved, but the real reason for the silence is even more appalling. It is caused, not by religious indifference, but by religious perplexity, for the religious problem, at the present day, has become so exceedingly complex, that Christians are in doubt as to which side they shall take, or what they ought to believe.

TWO GOSPELS PREACHED.

On the one side, it is argued that if Christianity is the universal religion, it must comprehend what is beautiful, good, and true in other religions, and that all goodness

is essentially Christian. "If it were really possible," writes Canon Fremantle, "that there should be any virtue which is excluded from the Christian ideal, the Christian ideal would cease to be supreme, and would, consequently, cease to be divine. . . . What sometimes appears to be non-Christian virtue is really a stunted, perhaps a perverted, form of Christian virtue. The ideal of life presented by Sakya Muni, or by Mahomet, or again by Plato, or by Marcus Aurelius, or in the later centuries by Lorenzo de' Medici, or by Goethe, must partly be made to combine with our present Christian morality, partly be purified by it, partly be allowed to amplify our idea of what is morally good and Christian. If the Word of God is the light of men everywhere, then it follows that all moral truth is essentially Christian truth and all true goodness Christian goodness."¹ It is argued, furthermore, in the same direction, that if Christianity is the one catholic religion, it must be as catholic as the needs of human nature itself. The Church of Christ, breaking down all false barriers that ecclesiasticism has reared, must obliterate the distinction between the spiritual and the secular life, make art and literature, science and government, trades and manufactures, spiritual interpreters of Christian truth; and then combine all these elements, material, religious, and political, in the comprehensive unity of Christendom.

National unity in Christ is a higher ideal than church unity. The nation will eventually take the place of the church, and it is prophesied that Christianity will be impelled by forces beyond control, to discard all impediments that hold her back from thus keeping pace with civilization, because "the human race is being drawn powerfully together; ideas circulate with constantly increasing rapidity, and the sense of fellowship which is

¹ Fremantle, Bampton Lectures of 1883, pp. 25, 26, 27.

thus engendered, and a certain body of common moral sentiments, are, we may believe, preparing the advent of a fuller unity and more brotherly relations throughout the world.”¹

The unity of civilization will thus precede, inspire, and pave the way for the higher unity of Christendom.

This is the popular thought of the day. Its meaning is very clear, and is as follows : The law of evolution holds good in both natural and spiritual worlds. The physical evolution of nature up to man is being followed by a spiritual evolution of man up to God. And as it proceeds, the revelation of God is continuous. It is at once a revelation through Christ and through the human race, in its search for God, through the good, the beautiful, and the true. The partial revelation through Christ must be interpreted and expanded by this other, and, in some respects, fuller revelation through humanity. The idea of life presented by Mahomet, by Buddha (or Sakya Muni), by Plato and Marcus Aurelius, Lorenzo de' Medici, and Goethe must be made to coalesce with the idea of life presented by Christ.

The test of Christianity, as a universal religion, lies in its power, not of dominating and absorbing these other religions, but of being assimilated by them. This process of assimilation is not to be brought about by preaching the distinctive doctrines of Christianity—the Incarnation, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ—as facts upon which the whole of God's revelation to man depends ; but by preaching the *spirit* of Christ ; by gradual education ; by accommodating the Gospel teachings of Christ to the conditions of human life ; by showing the intellectual influences of Christianity in philosophy, its ethical influence in codes of civilized law, its æsthetical influence in art, its practical influence in business and commerce,

¹ Fremantle's Bampton Lectures, p. 19.

its scientific influence in medicine, mechanics, and manufacture, its social influence in the unity of civilized life ; and, thus, bringing all men in touch with the Gospel.

On the other side it is equally plain that Christianity claims to be an exclusive and absolute religion. As such it can admit of no compromise with other religious faiths, for it stands upon an entirely different basis from them all. While they display the gropings of the human mind for God, Christianity is the revelation of God to man. The radical distinction between all these man-made religions, on the one side, and Christianity on the other, is that the first are human philosophy, or a meditation upon God, while the second is a divine life, wherein Jesus Christ gives to those who believe on His name power to become sons of God.

Christianity, therefore, cannot enter into that kind of alliance which has been described, without sacrificing principles that are essential to its existence as a direct, final, and complete revelation from God. Here, then, are two separate and distinct kinds of Christianity standing over against one another. The former emphasizes the revelation of God through the progress of the human race and accepts Christ as part of this revelation ; the latter preaches that the personal revelation of God is through Christ alone.

The first sounds with its dulcet diapason the prevailing tone of thought vibrating in the intellectual atmosphere about us. It chimes in so harmoniously with all that we read in books and magazines and newspapers ; all that we hear in social converse and current discussion, and with so much that we keep thinking ourselves, that, overborne by the tremendous pressure of public opinion about them, an increasing number of earnest Christian men and women among us are accepting these views as true, and enthusiastically joining in their promulgation.

The second is unpopular, and therefore does not challenge the same enthusiasm. It is a kind of Christianity which in many ways jars discordantly with modern thought. It is theologically and socially above the level of present-day life, as it holds aloof from the spirit of the age, and opposes an insuperable resistance to every attempt to harmonize it with the kind of unity that the world is seeking. While in some respects, therefore, it is in touch with civilization, in others it cannot be assimilated and is at variance with many of the ruling ideas of civilization.

The contrast does not impress us strongly, while we are carried along with the wave of popular thought, but the moment the Christian believer begins to think seriously for himself, striving to discount, not only his own personal bias, but that of the age in which we live, he feels the tremendous appeal to his conscience of the words of the Gospel, and his real conviction comes up to the surface and asserts its response.

In the beginning that conviction may be faint and uncertain, but the longer we ponder, honestly and prayerfully comparing New Testament Christianity with the popular Christianity of the present day, the stronger our consciousness keeps growing that these two kinds of Christianity are wholly irreconcilable with one another ; that no man can serve these two masters ; that if he holds to the one he will despise the other ; and that if the popular Christianity is true, then New Testament Christianity must be false.

ONE REASON FOR THE INCREASE OF UNBELIEF.

Here is an issue of gravest import, and it is an issue which will become more and more painful as time proceeds. If one of these interpretations of Christianity is

right, the other is, and must be, wrong. The attempt to reconcile that which is irreconcilable only makes Christ's religion self-contradictory and inconsistent with its own teachings ; and those, therefore, who strive to stop the spread of infidelity by rendering Christianity as comprehensive as possible, are pouring oil on the very flames they wish to smother. Instead of lessening they increase perplexity, and by their mistaken efforts double the difficulties of belief. Indeed this is perhaps the chief cause for the present increase of unbelief. Where there is so much to be said on both sides, it seems to many that there is only one wise course for them to pursue, and that is to assume the attitude of broad-minded thinkers, who will commit themselves to no dogmas but simply watch the progress of events. Christianity, they plead, has been given its chance in civilized lands and has not succeeded in overcoming sin. Now let the outside world have its say. Let all religions be treated generously and liberally, and with perfect impartiality. The popular cry is imperative. Let the morality of the outside world contribute its quota in rectifying and expanding the ethical teachings of the New Testament and the ordinary Christian interpretation of its meaning. We want more sunshine and air ; we need to open the windows and let in the fresh breezes of heaven ; we want to see what God is doing in the great world beyond the narrow boundaries of the Christian faith. Those believers who have the deepest faith in their religion need have no fear regarding the result. Let all courageously trust the larger hope. No one dreams that the inhabitants of Europe and America will ever go back to the sterile religions of Asia, or become Mahomedans or worshippers of the Grand Lama. Believers in Christianity may have to resign some of their most cherished dogmas, and the Christian religion may have to be radically modified before it

is adapted to the needs of the future; but Christianity, in some form, will be the religion of the future. This is the way in which the increasing number dismiss the difficulties of belief. They get rid of the perplexity by banishing it from their minds, holding aloof from all dogmas and emptying the Christian religion of all its divine reality. And Agnosticism has become the favorite citadel of these men, simply because it affords a safe and convenient refuge from the distractions and discords, the conflicting forces and contending elements that characterize the present religious life of the world.

But there, all the while, the perplexity is, and there it remains in the background, rising like a spectre before all those who honestly and fearlessly face the deeper realities of existence. And, let it be here observed, that this very kind of perplexity was anticipated and foretold by Christ in His description of the latter days. Without attempting to unveil the mysteries of the future or translate the metaphors with which He portrays the consummation of earthly history, there are certain definite warnings in His words, which are too plain to be mistaken. Our Lord Himself enjoined on us to watch the signs of the times as thus indicated by Him, saying, "Behold, I have told you before, and it shall turn to you for a testimony."¹ Among these signs was His prophecy that false prophets and false Christs should arise.

We commonly translate these words as referring to false prophets like Mahomet or Bar Cochba, but the day has probably passed away forever when such a religious leader will arise and dare to proclaim himself as the Christ. It is scarcely possible, at this late age of history and time of general education, that impostors of this sort should succeed in deceiving the world.

Nothing of the kind has occurred in the last thousand

¹ St. Matt. xxiv. 25 ; St. Luke xxi. 13.

years of Christian history ; even in the darkest of the dark ages such an imposture would have been at once detected and exposed, and it would be more than a return to the dark ages were it to succeed in these or coming days.

But, on the other hand, it is in every way possible that a false *idea* of Christ, and the revelation through Christ, should supplant and draw away men from the true Christ of the Gospels. Christian history everywhere shows that false prophets are constantly arising to proclaim this kind of a false Christ, and the danger of such errors is as great to-day as it ever was.

DECEIVING EVEN THE ELECT.

Observe that our Lord Himself speaks of the substitution as though it were very insidious and very deceiving. The imposture will not easily be detected. The false Christs shall be in every way such close imitations of the true as “to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.”¹

“*The very elect.*” If these words mean anything, they foretell that earnest Christian believers of every name—devout communicants and church-workers, leaders of religious thought, zealous and faithful pastors, and bishops themselves—will stand in danger of being carried away by the spirit of the age, and of accepting with enthusiasm the new Christ for the old, without a thought that they are being “deceived.”

Such perplexity is bound to increase with the increase of civilization itself ; for as the world more and more appropriates Christ’s teachings it will be increasingly difficult to distinguish between the world’s form of Christianity and the Christianity of the Gospels.

¹ St. Mark xiii. 22 ; St. Matt. xxiv. 24.

In each succeeding age the world will bestow more cunning workmanship upon its image, taking what it calls "the best of Christ," and incorporating it into its own idea, until, at last, the counterfeit of Christ will be so close that none but His own followers will be able to tell the false from the true.

Our Lord told us to watch the signs of the times; and as in obedience to His command we observe the course of current events, does it not become plainer and plainer that this will be the especial temptation of the last age?

As the kingdom of this world gradually becomes the kingdom of the Lord, and the ruling ideas of Christ's religion become, one by one, the ruling ideas of civilization itself, the secular spirit will more and more quote Scripture, proclaim half truths for whole truths, and preach Christ for its own ends. A century ago the atheists of the French Revolution uprose and promulgated as their own those three primal-truths, of Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality, which, with a different signification, Christianity had been ceaselessly inculcating for eighteen hundred years. The wild violence, grotesque inconsistencies, and rampant atheism of the French Revolution have passed away, it is to be hoped forever; but the same spirit, under different forms, survives. The world will continue to appropriate and make use of Christ's religion in the same way, attributing each advance in ethical culture, each new discovery regarding the pre-eminence of the law of love, and the development of each humanizing influence, to the progress of a Christianized civilization rather than to the overcoming influences of Christ's religion.

In this, as in many other ways, there is a striking similarity between the religious conditions of these times and the state of the Church at the end of the first Christian century. The last surviving apostle of Christ, St.

John, was then living at Ephesus, where the two tides of Asiatic and European thought met ; and, as we read his Epistles, it almost seems as though he were describing and warning Christians against the dangers of the nineteenth century instead of those of a bygone age. Let readers who are wont to peruse his warnings carelessly, listen, for example, to the comment of Bishop Westcott upon that verse : “*Little children, it is the last time : and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists ; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us,*” etc.¹

“The term Antichrist is peculiar to St. John. . . . The word means far more than simply ‘an adversary of Christ.’ As far as the form is concerned it may describe ‘one who takes the place of Christ,’ or ‘one who under the same character opposes Christ.’ . . . It seems to be most consonant to the context to hold that *Αντίχριστος* here describes one who, assuming the guise of Christ, opposes Christ.

“In this sense it embodies an important truth. That hostility is really formidable in which the adversary preserves the semblance of the characteristic excellence which he opposes (2 Cor. xi. 13 ; Apoc. ii. 2). The Antichrist assails Christ by proposing to do or to preserve what He did while denying Him.”

“Under one aspect it may be said that the work of the Incarnation was to reveal the true divine destiny of man in his union with God through Christ ; while the lie of Antichrist was to teach that man is divine apart from God in Christ.”

“The essential character of ‘Antichrist’ lies in the denial of the true humanity of Messiah. This denial involves the complete misunderstanding of Christ’s past and future work, and takes away the knowledge of the Father,

¹ 1 John ii. 18, 19.

which is brought to us by the Incarnate Son. The teaching of Antichrist leaves God and the world still united. The proclamation of the union is the message of the Gospel. . . .”

“‘*They went out from us,*’ etc. (v. 19), they proceeded from our midst. They belonged at first to our outward communion and shared all our privileges. Till the moment of separation they were undistinguishable from the rest of the Christian society. . . . This trait in the Antichrists indicates one ground of their influence. They professed to speak with the voice of the Christian Body.”¹

Again, commenting upon subsequent verses in the same epistle (“*Try the spirits, whether they are of God : because many false prophets are gone out into the world*”),² Bishop Westcott says: “The words evidently refer to external circumstances vividly present to St. John’s mind. They point, as it appears, to the great outbreak of the Gentile pseudo-Christianity which is vaguely spoken of as Gnosticism, the endeavour to separate the ‘ideas’ of the Faith from the facts of the historic Redemption.

“‘*Hereby know ye the Spirit of God : Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God,*’” etc.³

“The test of spirits lies in the witness to the Incarnation.

“The test of the presence of the Divine Spirit is the confession of the Incarnation, or, more exactly, of the Incarnate Saviour. The Gospel centres in a Person and not in any Truth, even the greatest, about the Person.

¹ Commentary on Epistles of St. John, by Bishop Westcott, pp. 70, 71. Edition of 1886.

² 1 John iv. 1.

³ 1 John iv. 2, 3.

The Incarnate Saviour is the pledge of the complete redemption and perfection of man, of the restoration of ‘the body’ to its proper place, as the perfect organ of the spirit. Hence the Divine Spirit must bear witness to Him. The test of spirits is found in the confession of a fact which vindicates the fulness of life. The test of Antichrist was found in the confession of a spiritual truth (ii. 22 f.).”¹

“The denial of the Incarnation is in fact the denial of that which is characteristic of the Christian Faith, the true union of God and man. . . .

“Such a spirit, whatever appearances may be, is not of God.

“The antagonists regarded here are not mere unbelievers but those who knowing Christianity fashion it into a shape of their own.”²

THE DISTINCTION.

In view of all these facts and of the growing perplexity created by the difference between these two kinds of Christianity, the time has come for every loyal follower of Jesus Christ to recognize the issue and not to evade, but meet it fearlessly. Let us state that issue as plainly and clearly as possible.

While it is true that God has revealed Himself indirectly through nature and human nature, or, as St. Paul expresses it, that, “the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead,”³ it is not true that this indirect revelation through nature stands on the same plane with, or can ever become a substitute for, God’s direct revelation of

¹ Commentary on Epistles of St. John, by Bishop Westcott, p. 140.

² Ibid., p. 142.

³ Romans i. 20.

Himself in Jesus Christ. While it is true that Christianity as *a religion* takes its place, side by side, with other human religions in which man seeks God, it is not true that these other religions take their place, side by side, with Christianity as a revelation in which God seeks man, or that they can add one iota to the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. While it is true that Christianity appeals to the love of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True in human nature, and thus bears witness that the whole being of man is created in God's image, it is not true that the love of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True is the same as the love for a personal God as He is revealed in Christianity. While it is, correspondingly, true that Christianity is as catholic as the needs of human nature, and that it can thus spiritualize secular life, with all that is good in its ethics, all that is beautiful in its art, all that is true in its science and philosophy; it is not true that secular ethics, secular art and secular truth will ever be so spiritualized as to become in themselves, apart from personal religion, fountains of spiritual life. Yet the whole trend of popular modern thought is in these untrue directions.

The more the accumulated experience of mankind verifies Christianity, the stronger will be the tendency to substitute the experience of mankind for the revelation of God. The more civilization reveals the comprehensiveness of the Gospel, as the one universal religion in which all other religions must eventually unite, the greater will become the temptation to make the unity of all other religions take the place of the Gospel itself. The more catholic Christianity shows itself to be, in consecrating all the pursuits and occupations of civilized life, the more dominating will be the disposition to regard them as Christian in themselves irrespectively of any confession of Christ.

Or to state the case in still plainer terms : the more convincingly it is proved that Christianity does not conflict with the facts of nature, as revealed in science ; with the facts of reason, as revealed in philosophy, and with the facts of social life as revealed in civilization, the greater will be the number of those who will deliberately substitute the facts of science, of philosophy, and of civilization for the facts of Christianity itself.

Here is the battle-field of the present day, and the scene of the conflict. The revelation of God is in those facts of the Christian religion, which are summed up in the Apostles' Creed. The religion of humanity has no quarrel with the *spirit* of the Gospel. It is perfectly willing to accept Christianity as a revelation from God so long as it is proved by, and revealed in, the facts of science, the facts of philosophy, and the facts of civilization, instead of the facts of the Apostles' Creed. It arrays one kind of fact against another kind of fact, and here it resolutely and defiantly stands at bay. The one common characteristic of those biologists and philosophers and sociologists who form the army that opposes the Church of Christ, is antagonism to the facts of the Apostles' Creed. And this, therefore, becomes the plane of cleavage between a false and the true Gospel.

In the following chapters we shall take up in order (1) The Scientific Basis of Christianity ; (2) The Philosophical Basis of Christianity ; (3) The Ethical Basis of Christianity ; (4) Comparative Religion, and (5) The Social Basis of Christianity, and show how each, by its own limitations, falls far short of proving a revelation of God in the Christian sense (*i.e.*, a revelation of Divine Personality). Then, after passing briefly in review some results of the kind of Christianity which rests upon these false and insufficient foundations we shall show (1) that the religion of Christ is a self-revelation of a Personal

God ; (2) that this revelation must, by the very conditions of the case, be received by faith if it be received at all ; (3) that instead of being based upon the facts of science, or philosophy, or social life, its basis lies in the unique facts of Christ's Incarnation and Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension ; and that, unless we accept these supernatural facts, with a heartwhole conviction of their truth, we shall be shut out from the full realization and knowledge, the power and possession of the divine life of Christ, which is communicated to us through them, and only through them.

The concluding chapters will relate to the practical duties of those who do thus accept Christianity, and the way in which they should take their stand in these times as witnesses for God.

CHAPTER II

THE SCIENTIFIC BASIS OF CHRISTIANITY AND ITS LIMITATIONS

SYNOPSIS

- I. The Success of the Baconian Method Confessedly Great.
Some instances of Advance in the Natural World. (*a*) It has destroyed the Mechanical Theory of the Universe ; (*b*) It has established the Reign of Law ; (*c*) It has proved a Controlling Will ; (*d*) It has enlarged the Conception of Theology ; (*e*) It has made a Scientific Atheist an impossibility.
- II. But its Success does not justify the Use of this Method in the Domain *beyond* Nature. The inability to account for Spiritual Truths is seen in the failure of the Inductive Method to explain ; (*a*) Human Personality ; (*b*) Consciousness (as an integral part of Personality).
- III. Danger to Christianity in Submitting Spiritual Truth to Physical Methods of Investigation.
- IV. True Solution is in the Co-operation of Religion and Science.

THE philosophical method of inquiry, set forth by Lord Bacon, of tracing back from effects to causes has now practically become the method of all scientific investigation adopted by the civilized world. The glowing prophecies of Bacon in the *Instauratio* and the *Novum Organum*, which must have seemed like fairy-tales to his contemporaries, have been eclipsed by the reality itself, and the Baconian or Aristotelian method has, within the last three hundred years, been rewarded by such unexpected and astonishing results in the unfolding of nature's laws and forces, and the development of modern science that the tendency has become wellnigh irresist-

ble to regard it as the key to all knowledge, human and divine.

Trained by *a posteriori* habits of investigation, it has become second nature to many to think that there is no other possible way of reaching truth than by tracing back from known effects to unknown causes.

This is science, *i.e.*, *knowledge*, and the only pathway to certainty, it is said.

The success which has attended this method in the natural world has led men to believe that a similar success will ensue if the same method is pursued in continuing our investigations beyond the domain of nature into that of revelation. Professor Drummond's book on "Natural Law in the Spiritual World" expanded this idea, and at once made its author celebrated, because he was thus expressing the popular thought of the day. Science, it is believed, affords the surest foundation for proving religious truth. We are sure of the discoveries of science in the natural world: we are not as sure of the truths of the spiritual world; therefore, let us verify the latter, as far as possible, by inductive scientific methods, and thus bring spiritual truth down into the region of certainty.

Here is the ruling idea of many Christian thinkers nowadays. It is a form of religious thought which starts out from those things that are beneath, not from what is above; it makes the material the measure and criterion of the spiritual; it begins not at God, but at Nature.

Accepting, as a starting-point, the scientific explanation of the way in which man was created out of the dust of the ground, not by a single act of God, but by a gradual evolution from a lower to a higher type of animal life, it holds that, by a similar process of evolution, the human race will gradually be raised from a natural up to a spir-

itual level of existence, absorbing more and more into itself, as time goes on and its spiritual capacity increases, the power of a divine life. It assumes that the revelations of God to man, as age follows age, are dependent upon the gradual unfolding of man's powers to receive and assimilate them, and that these revelations should be considered not as direct communications from God, made at specified times to the people of any age, but rather as the progressive discoveries of spiritual truth, made by the spiritually minded leaders of each age.

The prevalence and rapid growth of such opinions is patent to all, and there is an aspect of the Christian religion which meets, and was intended to meet, this kind of thought. The Resurrection of Christ, as we shall see farther on, is a fact not only of the spiritual but of the natural world, which challenges scientific analysis and investigation, and which was intended by Christ to create that very kind of certainty, which we feel in resting upon any ascertained fact of nature.

THE DEBT THAT CHRISTIANITY OWES TO SCIENCE.

Every thoughtful believer in the revelation of God made in Jesus Christ should cheerfully and thankfully acknowledge all that science, working from its own side, has done in recent years to help the cause of Christ.

For science has made a very real and perceptible advance toward Christian truth in this century. And it has gone farther than its own advocates dream in bringing Nature and Revelation near to one another.

Hence the Christian world to-day wants to be scientific, and rightly so, for contrasting the present with the past, it discovers that science itself has not only defeated and scattered many old enemies that have for centuries obstinately opposed the truth of Christ, and overthrown

them, like Pharaoh's pursuing host at the Red Sea, forever, but that it has hewn out new pathways for Christian Apologetics. Evolution has broken up the old mechanical conception of the universe so completely that, unless all modern science is an *ignis fatuus*, its return is now an impossibility.¹

Christianity owes a great debt of gratitude to evolution, and the more Christians think and read, the more lasting that debt of gratitude appears.

(1.) It is hard to think ourselves back into the mental atmosphere of past times, yes, even that of science itself, when all nature was looked upon as "a fortuitous concourse of atoms," when the vision of universal law and order which now greets our eyes was yet below the horizon of human knowledge, and there was nothing to oppose, as a scientific reality, to this idea of universal chaos.

The difference between those days and our own is like the contrast between a landscape shrouded in midnight darkness, and the same scene as it appears in the light of the rising sun; like the difference between a Chinese mandarin's, and an Oxford graduate's thought of the world in which he lives:

" Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward, let us range,
Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of change,
Thro' the shadow of the globe we sweep into the younger day;
Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay."

In the dawning light of science the universe about us stands revealed as one vast organism, in which, as tract after tract is disclosed, we behold the silent omnipresent reign of law, and the old materialism is dead and gone.

¹ The author is indebted for this and other points in this chapter to the writings of the lamented Canon Aubrey Moore.

(2.) The existence of organic law, with a correlation of forces that play in perfect harmony with one another, like the music of the spheres, is to-day recognized as a fixed and positive fact. We now know not only that the sun shines, but how and why the sun shines ; and the spectrum analysis shows us besides, that, as is the sun, so is the farthest fixed star that shines in the realms of space.

All this forms a new basis of thought, a new rock of certainty. Standing on that rock we now gaze out beyond that farthest fixed star into the unseen universe where physical force passes into a higher force. The oneness of nature and organic law points irresistibly, conclusively, to one controlling Will and one Lawgiver.

There are no atheists remaining to-day among intelligent men, and, least of all, among scientific men. We look in vain for a modern follower of the schools of Lucretius and Democritus, of Protagoras and Epictetus and the Sophists. The pressure of scientific discovery has driven their philosophy completely out of the world. And the old atheism of the ages is dead and gone.

(3.) A further advance of evolution brings us to biology and the origin of species. At the first blush this new doctrine seemed to give a set-back to Christian apologetics in robbing it of its great argument from design. And Mr. Huxley exultingly proclaimed that "teleology, as commonly understood, had received its death-blow at Mr. Darwin's hands." But there are Christian as well as agnostic evolutionists. And Dr. Asa Gray, looking farther ahead, wrote on the other side : "Let us recognize Darwin's great service to natural science in bringing back to it teleology ; so that, instead of morphology *versus* teleology, we shall have morphology wedded to teleology."¹

¹ Quoted by Rev. Aubrey Moore, in *Science and the Faith*, p. 191.

It is, indeed, true that evolution has done away with Paley's form of the argument from design, but the Christian believer can gladly acquiesce in having his volume of Paley's "Evidences" repose upon the dusty book-shelf, for modern science itself has now brought forward a better, higher, and more satisfactory form of the self-same argument, in which the growth of organic life is substituted for outward contrivance and mere mechanical adjustment. The "much talked-of purpose in nature," as Haeckel calls it, may not appear so plainly at the surface, but it looms up farther back and points even more conclusively to an author. For whereas in the older teleology Nature appears as a carefully constructed machine, finished once for all by a maker from the outside, and then left to perform its task by itself with clock-work regularity, the new teleology of modern science indicates the presence of a living Being, immanent in nature, and inspiring it continuously with life and energy.

This, again, is a great advance for which the Christian world may be unceasingly thankful. Evolution, in thus familiarizing the mind with the actual presence in nature of a God "Who is before all things, and by Whom all things consist," has lifted the world above that form of unbelief and ignorance, once so prevalent and fashionable, wherein God was looked upon as outside of, and infinitely removed from nature; and the hard, dry, lifeless deism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is dead and gone.

(4.) But the greatest debt of all which Christianity owes to evolution is in the moral tone it has infused into scientific research. While it would be going too far to say that nature unveils the moral law of God, it is not going too far to say that physical is a reflection of moral law. Hence, up to a certain point, the study of nature

does produce an undoubted moral effect upon the scientific student.

He discovers everywhere that nature is true. And therefore it inspires within him the desire to be true and exact, as well in accuracy of thought as in clearness of statement.

He discovers that nature, throughout the whole universe, is perfectly obedient to law. And therefore it not only fosters in him a reverence for all law, but also inculcates in him habits of implicit obedience to its dictates. To follow nature with unswerving fidelity is one of the first maxims of inductive science.

He discovers that nature is trustworthy. It never deceives or leads astray the man who spends his life in patient investigation of some branch of science. And therefore, as he studies, the capacity of faith is developed within him. He discovers that nature is more careful of the type than of the individual, and therefore learns the supremacy of social life to the purely selfish and individualistic life. He discovers that nature is progressive, constantly evolving the higher from the lower type of organism. The whole atmosphere of scientific thought is, therefore, charged with a hope which, at times, seems optimistic and the old immoral doctrines of hedonism and pessimism are dying, if not dead and gone.

Looking backward over the history of evolution in this century the Church of to-day recognizes all this and sees how truly science has been a handmaid to religion in thus lifting the world above Materialism, Atheism, Eighteenth-Century Deism, and Hedonistic Thought.

THE DANGERS OF A SCIENTIFIC RELIGION.

Hence, as we have said, the Christian world wants to be scientific. And it is just here that the Church needs to walk with greatest care to avoid error.

It is one thing to welcome and assimilate the truths that science has discovered in the natural world; it is another thing to adopt and push the scientific method of research into the spiritual world. The danger of error comes not from science itself, but from a Christianity which would form a partnership with science. Let us now see where the danger lies.

(1.) If science has the facts of nature before her, Christianity has no less the facts of revelation, and the latter are just as real, just as positive, just as necessary, as the former. Neither can lay claim to the office of Pontifex Maximus and assert that it is the sole high-priest of fact, to the exclusion of the other. If science sets before us one kind of certainty, Christianity brings us face to face with a higher and more satisfying kind of knowledge, based not upon material things but upon the self-revelation of a personal God.

For Christianity to yield this ground, surrendering everything to the dogma of modern science that there are no real facts except those which are proved to be realities by scientific investigation, and that there is no real certainty save that which is created by practical physical demonstration, would be not to secure greater freedom, but to shut herself out from, and lock the door upon the spiritual world.

(2.) Instead of finding liberty she would become the slave of one particular line of thought and philosophical method of inquiry. For the result of applying the Inductive or Baconian system of scientific investigation to religious truth (*i.e.*, tracing back from natural effects to religious causes) is to make the effect the judge of the cause, and the less the measure of the greater.

And when we thus apply to the spiritual world the laws and principles of the natural world, or determine the religious life of man by the conditions of his natural ex-

istence, we are making the physical the test of the spiritual, and this means in the end the inevitable subordination of the spiritual to the physical; for no stream can rise higher than its fountain-head.¹ Thus everything that cannot be expressed in the terms of the natural, or which infringes upon natural law and order, is thrown out as unreal speculation.

(3.) Hence arises that strongly marked characteristic of inductive scientific thought—the dislike for, and suspicion of the supernatural element of the Gospels.² Everywhere in nature men trace the silent reign of law and the sequence of cause and effect, and it is argued that spiritual forces must act in the same way, and with the same regularity, as physical forces. When it is replied that there is a radical distinction between spiritual and physical forces, in that the first emanate from, and only from, personality, whereas the second are purely material, and that the laws of the spiritual life, therefore, are, and must be different *in kind*, from the laws of inanimate matter, the limitations of inductive scientific thought stand forth in all their rigidity.

The investigation of the physical world may reveal more and more distinctly the presence and correlation of physical forces, but it never gets higher than physical

¹ "For neither by nature nor by human conception is it possible for men to know things so great and divine, but by the gift which then descended from above upon the holy men who had no need of rhetorical art, nor of uttering anything in a contentious or quarrelsome manner, but to present themselves pure to the energy of the Divine Spirit, in order that the divine plectrum itself, descending from heaven, and using righteous men as an instrument like a harp or lyre might reveal to us the knowledge of things divine and heavenly."—Justin Martyr: Cohort. ad Graecos, cap. viii.

² We use the term "supernatural" here and elsewhere in its popular signification. We are in full accord with those writers who hold that the division between the natural and supernatural is, from a spiritual stand-point, purely an imaginary line.

force; when it comes to the end of this it comes to a blank wall.

The laws and forces of human personality, as we shall see in the next chapter, utterly defy and escape all methods of scientific research. No dissection of a human body, however careful, can detect the presence of a human soul. Our own human consciousness is the Nemesis of science, and a mystery which it cannot explain.

"On the outside only physical phenomena, on the inside only psychical phenomena. Science, even in the case of the brain, cannot pass from the one kind of phenomena to the other. If she would study the inside she must abandon the outside. If she would study the phenomena of the higher platform she must leave the lower and climb up and stand on the higher. We can never hope, either by observation or experience, to pass beyond the veil. Not the clear-sighted, but the pure-hearted, shall see God in nature."¹

And if this fact holds good of human personality, must it not hold equally good of Divine Personality?

The very reason itself is here made plain why no man by searching in the natural world can ever find out God. It is only by a confusion of thought—nay, might we not even add, by being illogical—that any man should thus expect to find traces of personality in the analysis of inanimate matter. Science may discover in the physical world the presence of law; it may even go so far as to say that this law in itself implies a Law-giver, but it can never find the Presence of that Law-giver unless it forsakes its present method of research. So long, therefore, as men hold to the Baconian method, to the exclusion of all others, and proclaim that it is the *only* pathway to truth and certainty, will they stay imprisoned in

¹ Evolution and Religious Thought, by Professor Joseph Leconte, pp. 315, 317 (condensed).

a material world. They are obliged, in consistency, to deny the positive truths which not only the Christian religion but metaphysical philosophy teaches. They are also obliged, in consistency, to hold that no facts can be regarded as absolutely certain except those which are proved in their own cast-iron way, and that all others must be viewed as mere speculations.

It seems almost grotesque, in the face of all this, to hear the Church charged by such men with dogmatism and narrow-mindedness, simply because from her higher point of view and with her wider horizon she insists that the so-called speculations are facts.

It may fairly be asked, Who are the real dogmatists, those who hold that miracles are possible, if the evidence that supports them is satisfactory, or those who deny the possibility of all miracles, on the purely speculative ground that the Baconian method is the only pathway to knowledge?

And who comprise the narrow-minded class, those who open their minds to receive moral and spiritual, as well as material facts, as truths, or those who reject all facts save those which can be tested and proved by one particular system of *a posteriori* philosophy?

Let no Christian believer be led astray by the present enthusiasm for law with which the narrowness and insufficiency of the method of scientific induction is covered up. Men say that it is to them a higher ideal of God and God's revelation to believe that He can accomplish His end without violating His own settled laws, than by calling in the unnecessary and extraneous aid of the supernatural and miraculous; and they assert that the Christian religion would be broader, more natural, more in harmony with the workings of the Deity everywhere else in the universe, if the supernatural were to be abolished, and the same results were accomplished

through ordinary, non-miraculous channels. Just as some ages have had an appetite for the miraculous and a passion to find the supernatural everywhere, so this age, going to the opposite extreme, has had a passion to get rid of the miraculous in the Christian religion, and find the supernatural nowhere. Hence arises the increasing and ever-recurring desire to eliminate everything from prophecy but the historical perspective ; and to explain away all miracles as natural occurrences.

(4.) Up to a certain point this attitude is helpful to Christianity in correcting the exaggerations of the past on the side of supernaturalism ; up to a certain point the inductive method is destined to bear its own part, and that no minor part, in the better understanding of Christianity.

As the doctrine of evolution has proved of incalculable value in the study of the natural world, and in explaining many phenomena which, without it, would have been wholly inexplicable, so in analyzing the *effects* of Christianity in the world, it will undoubtedly help to correct many false impressions and bring out valuable truths. There is a human side to God's revelation, and in dealing with this the inductive method is on its native heath. It will undoubtedly teach the Christian world to think more accurately, observe more carefully, and gain a truer knowledge of the historic basis of Christianity. But when it attempts to deal with the divine side of God's revelation in the same way, and explain its mysterious facts by the application of the same theorems and corollaries, it reveals its inability to grasp the essential facts. The true sphere of scientific induction is the natural world ; when it passes beyond that sphere into the spiritual world, then its limitations become manifest and its principles fail. It cannot cope with the revelation of God ; the moment it attempts to do so Chris-

tianity ceases to be Christianity—ceases to be a revelation from God, and becomes a mere human religion, with its diviner side left as an insoluble enigma.

It behooves Christian men who are fascinated by this popular mode of thinking, to open their eyes, take a long look ahead, and realize whither the pathway they are so carelessly treading, leads. The direct and logical outcome of these principles is the elimination of every trace of the supernatural from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. No other logical conclusion is possible. Inductive criticism hurries us onward, step by step, through a long lane that knows no turning, and at every succeeding step it becomes more and more difficult to retrace our way. It begins by throwing doubt upon this or that miracle or prophecy ; it ends by proving conclusively (according to its own premises) that all miracles and prophecies are impossible, because they are violations of natural laws. If this is true, therefore, regarding the lesser miracles of the Bible, it is, *a fortiori*, true regarding the greater miracles also. The same law which applies to prophets and apostles applies to Jesus Christ Himself. It holds good not only regarding the miracles which He Himself worked, but also to the supernatural facts of His own life—His conception by the Holy Ghost, His birth of the Virgin Mary, His resurrection from the dead, His ascension into Heaven, His coming again to judge the world on the Day of Judgement.

And what is left of the Christian religion when all this is swept away ? Its whole character as a revelation from God is gone. It is reduced to the level of a man-made religion, in which Christ stands forth only as a human reformer like Buddha, or a human philosopher like Socrates.

The attempt to gauge divine knowledge by human experience, to test the nature of God's revelation to man

by an empirical scientific standard, and thus erect a fabric that will satisfy the religious needs of the human soul, is like trying to build up a nineteenth-century Tower of Babel on solid earthly foundations, that will be high enough to reach heaven, only to find, in the end, that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are God's ways higher than our ways, and His thoughts than our thoughts.

(5.) So far we have been dealing with one side of this great question exclusively, and dwelling upon the destructive attitude of scientific induction toward a miraculous Christianity. When we turn, now, to the constructive side, and ask what science proposes to substitute in the place of the lost religion, we discover that there is no constructive side. Let us, by all means, open our minds generously to welcome the new light thrown by scientific discovery upon the correspondence between nature and revelation—to welcome it for all that it is worth, but not for more than it is worth.

When we ask what new truth, not on the side of nature, but on that of religion itself, has been brought to light, the answer is, *not a single one*. Here the limitations of physical science again appear, only they are now emphasized, if possible, with a more vivid distinctness.

Marvellous as the advances of science have been in the natural world, and in the direction of physical laws and forces, they do not add one iota to our religious knowledge. Neither do they create any ground for religious belief. They leave the world just as they found it—just as it was, far back in the days of Socrates and Plato. They are new lights in the natural world, but not in the spiritual world. Their function, from the Christian point of view, is negative, not positive. They simply clear away some of the false physical theories which once stood in the way of religion, and show that nature

harmonizes with revelation more closely than men formerly believed. There their province ends. And as it has been, so, of necessity, it ever will be.

THE TRUE RELATION OF SCIENCE TO RELIGION.

Evolution does not conflict with theism ; on the contrary, as far as it goes it corroborates the belief in God, but evolution cannot create theism. Evolution knows nothing about the personality of God, or the personality of men, who are made in God's image. Consequently it is silent regarding all the vital facts which flow from those truths—God's self-revelation to man, the existence of a future life, the immortality of the soul and of human society, the nature of sin and salvation from sin, human free-will, conscience, and the whole religious side of man's being. Here is a sphere not only of truth, but of life, distinct and by itself, into which scientific induction cannot penetrate. Kant's acute criticism about the old teleological argument, that it points to an Architect, not a Creator of the universe, may be applied also to the new one of modern science, which fails to prove the existence of a Personal God. Evolution, alone and by itself, leads straight on to Pantheism—a God *in* nature, not *above* nature. It proclaims Elohim, the Almighty, but not Jehovah, I AM. Hence those that commit themselves exclusively to its teachings, push revelation aside, and logically end, like Darwin himself, in Agnosticism.

Evolution leads them so far as to believe that there is a First Cause, but it forsakes them there ; for when it thus comes to the confines of the spiritual world it has reached the end of its journey. An impersonal God is, of course, unknowable, and even Mr. Cotter Morison, who believes that Christianity has had its day, and who would now substitute the "*Service of Man*" for the ser-

vice of God, tells us that "No one wants, no one cares for, an abstract God, an Unknowable, an Absolute, with whom we stand in no human or intelligible relation."¹ Much as we Christians may regret the present prevalence of Agnosticism, it needs no prophet's eye to see that, in the near future, a day is at hand when Agnosticism will be found to have rendered a valuable service to Christianity itself in showing the world that the only religious altar that scientific evolution can raise is one inscribed "To the Unknown God."

The true attitude of the Church in all these matters is to bear fearless and persistent witness to the truth as it is in Jesus, while science proclaims the truth that is in nature. Both have a work for truth to do, and this work cannot be done effectually and lastingly unless each clings to the duties of its own particular sphere. As there were days when science was paralyzed by too much theology, so the days have come in which theology is becoming paralyzed by too much science, and in either case the truth of God is retarded. Science needs theology, and theology needs science for the propagation of the whole truth. There should therefore be a co-operation, but not a commingling, between the two. The Church will gain nothing if she yields to science to-day, only to retrace her steps and confess her mistake to-morrow.

The only wise position for her to assume, and the only one she can assume without danger of error, is to let science work out its own problems in its own way, cheerfully resigning to it all those questions which, while they have a bearing upon religion, really belong to the other domain. Whether the natural world came into existence through special creation or by evolution; whether life comes through spontaneous generation or only from

¹ The Service of Man, p. 36.

previous life ; whether the chronology of the human race is according to Usher or according to Haeckel, whether other religions bear a near or a distant resemblance to Christianity ; whether the history of the outer world accords or disagrees with the accounts of Jewish historians, and whether the Higher Criticism, on the one hand, or Archæology on the other, is right in its diagnosis and arrangement of Biblical documents, are purely and simply questions for experts in the sciences of biology, ethnology, philology, comparative religions, archæology, and literary criticism to settle.

Whichever way such questions are decided is a matter of indifference to the Church. Either way the truth of Christianity remains untouched. If any of these scientific theories is proved to be a fact, though the Church may, in some way, have to accommodate a traditional belief to the new fact, she will, in the end, be the gainer ; and have a new strand woven into the cord which binds man to God. If, on the other hand, the Christian believer yields himself up exclusively to the guidance of scientific thought, accepting as truth only those facts which it ratifies and sanctions, then he must take the consequence ; he must cast down imaginations and powers, bringing every thought into captivity to the scientific method, only to end, where the religion of Evolution brings all its followers—in Agnosticism.

For Evolution receives its theology from impersonal nature, not from a Personal God. Standing on the physical basis of life, it declines to receive as authoritative any teachings which are not first verified by scientific induction, and therefore denies that Christ's religion is a revelation which makes an imperative demand upon our faith. Denying this, the religion of Evolution preaches a false Gospel.

CHAPTER III.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS OF CHRISTIANITY AND ITS LIMITATIONS

SYNOPSIS

- I. Limitations of Inductive Method, a Warning to the Christian World. This Limitation seen especially in the fact of Consciousness. The Dilemma which this fact imposes upon Materialistic Philosophy. Kant's Refutation of Materialism in the Proof that Ideas of Space and Time are innate.
- II. Limitations of the *A Posteriori* only obviated when combined with the *A Priori*. Kant and Pressensé on Conscience, as an Integral Part of Human Nature. The Corollary of the fact of Conscience is the Existence of a Moral Law-Giver.
- III. Kant's Philosophy as developed in Opposites by Fichte and Schelling. Hegel's development of these Opposites into the Unity of all Opposites in God. Thus Philosophy itself reveals a Domain unknown to Science.
- IV. Limitations of Philosophy. Philosophy makes *Ideas* of the Trinity, Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection Necessary Ideas. Logical Result : the attempt to substitute Philosophical Ideas for Revelation itself. Seen in (a) Strauss, with his Mythical Interpretation of the Facts of Christ's Life. (b) Baur, with his denial of these facts. (c) Those who deny the Facts yet cling to the *Spirit* of Christianity.
Thus the attempt to base Religion upon Philosophy succeeds only in reducing Christianity to a plane where it loses its essential Supernatural Character.

WE have seen, in the last chapter, how the popular mind has been colored to the scientific hue simply because it has been taught to believe that there is no certainty except that which is verified by scientific induc-

tion. Of course all things appear blue to one who persists in looking exclusively through blue spectacles. If he would see them in a different light he must take off his glasses. The only way to correct the exaggerations of this popular fallacy about scientific certainty is for thinking men, and especially Christian men, first, to realize that all the while, and behind all their thinking, they are unconsciously committing themselves to one particular and partial system of philosophy; and second, to face the limitations of the Baconian method as they were understood not only by Lord Bacon himself¹ but as far back as Aristotle, nearly four hundred years before Christ. Modern scientific induction cannot overpass those limits without the suppression or evasion or ignoring of facts that are interwoven both with our human existence and the conditions of human thought. None state this more clearly than M. Littré, who tells us that "positive philosophy does not leave us free to think what we please about final causes. It allows us absolutely no liberty in this respect. A man cannot serve two masters at once—the Relative and the Absolute. To conceive of knowledge in the region which philosophical principles assign to the unknown is not to harmonize differences but to bring together incompatibilities."² This is perfectly true. To reconcile the incompatibility we must consider facts which Positivism ignores.³

¹ "Not only fantastical philosophy but heretical religion spring from the absurd mixture of matters divine and human. It is, therefore, most wise to render unto faith the things that are faith's."—Bacon's *Novum Organum*, Bk. I., lxv.

² *Fragments de Philosophie Positive*, p. 283; but cf. quotations from J. Stuart Mill.

³ "The doctrine condemns all theological explanations, and replaces them, or thinks them destined to be replaced, by theories which take no account of anything but an ascertained order of phenomena. It is

SCIENCE CANNOT EXPLAIN HUMAN CONSCIOUSNESS.

The foremost of these facts is human consciousness. Fichte says somewhere that men of science cannot pass

inferred that if this change were completely accomplished, mankind would cease to refer the constitution of Nature to an intelligent will, or to believe at all in a Creator and supreme Governor of the world. This supposition is the more natural, as M. Comte was avowedly of that opinion. . . . He deemed all real knowledge of a commencement inaccessible to us, and the inquiry into it an overpassing of the essential limits of our mental faculties. To this point, however, those who accept his theory of the progressive stages of opinion are not obliged to follow him. The Positive mode of thought is not necessarily a denial of the supernatural; the laws of nature cannot account for their own origin. The Positive Philosopher is free to form his opinion on the subject according to the weight he attaches to the analogies which are called marks of design, and to the general traditions of the human race. The value of these evidences is, indeed, a question for Positive philosophy, but it is not one upon which Positive philosophers must necessarily be agreed. It is one of M. Comte's mistakes that he never allows of open questions. Positive Philosophy maintains that within the existing order of the universe, or rather, of the part of it known to us, the direct determining cause of every phenomenon is not supernatural but natural. It is compatible with this to believe, that the universe was created, and even that it is continuously governed, by an Intelligence, provided we admit that the intelligent Governor adheres to fixed laws, which are only modified or counteracted by other laws of the same dispensation, and are never either capriciously or providentially departed from. Whoever regards all events as part of a constant order, each one being the invariable consequent of some antecedent condition, or combination of conditions, accepts fully the Positivist mode of thought; whether he acknowledges or not an universal antecedent on which the whole system of nature was originally consequent, and whether that universal antecedent is conceived as an Intelligence or not."—Mill's *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, pp. 13, 14, 15.

"It is often said of him (Comte) that he rejects the study of causes. This is not, in the correct acceptation, true, for it is only questions of ultimate origin, and of Efficient as distinguished from what are called Physical causes, that he rejects. The causes that he regards as inaccessible are causes which are not themselves phenomena."—Mill's *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, p. 57.

from one fact of nature to another and group them together without passing through a world whose very existence some of them ignorantly deny. You may observe the facts of nature and draw certain conclusions from them, but how about the observer himself? What will you do with the *ego*?

Locke compared the human consciousness to a *tabula rasa*, or, as we should say, a photographic negative, upon which different objects are impressed; and taught that all knowledge comes to man in this way from the outside; but to make the illustration correct, the *tabula rasa*, or photographic negative, ought to have power, like the human mind, to rearrange and classify the impressions thus made upon it.

David Hume, the leader in whose track Stuart Mill and his school follow so closely, said likewise that all knowledge comes through sensations, and that human experience means simply the succession of these sensations impressing their lessons upon the human consciousness and creating it.

Hume's own illustration is that men are nothing but a bundle or collection of different impressions, and that successive perceptions constitute the mind. Another modern writer of the same school says that the mind has no substance or function. It is but a name or label which we give to the functions of the brain or nerves.

But this does not explain consciousness; one is bound to go further.

In the language of Mr. Footman, we may, nay, we *must*, ask: "This thread or series, is it a thread or series which is conscious of itself *as a series*? And are *you*, who are speaking thus of it, the thread or series? Does this label put itself upon itself? Does this bundle tie itself up? Does a thread or series or bundle of perceptions say, '*We* or *I*?'" If, when you talk of your mind as

'*My Mind*,' you only mean a bundle or series of perceptions, passing and repassing and gliding, then it is quite clear to me that you are using the term Mind to signify something distinct from that connoted by the term '*I*' or '*Self*.' But if, when you speak of your mind as '*My Mind*,' you really mean yourself, your whole self, your simple and identical self, then it seems to me impossible to define your mind as a bundle of perceptions, or as a label put upon anything—function or other thing—with-out talking nonsense ; or, if that be too much to say, without at any rate using a mere figure of speech as if it were a real adequate definition."¹

Herbert Spencer, in adopting the same sensationalistic philosophy, adds to it *the persistence of force* as the element which accounts for consciousness, but this is only to bring a *Deus ex machinâ* upon the stage ; for how can physical force ever become self-conscious force ? This is only a variation of the idea of a "label" putting itself upon itself. Clearly there is a hidden rock in the human consciousness, guarding the entrance to the haven where we would be, upon which *a posteriori* thought makes shipwreck, from whatever side it is approached.

Knowledge, even in its lowest form, is unable to dispense with the aid of *a priori* thought. Without the latter it either turns back upon itself or becomes lost in vagueness and nothingness. The inductive scientific method of tracing up from effect to cause cannot rise above mere physical sensation or reach any of those subjective ideas without which even the solution of a simple sum in arithmetic is an impossibility. "The astronomical knowledge of the brain," says Lange, in his "*History of Materialism*," a book which even Mr. Huxley regards as an authority, "the highest knowledge we can attain, reveals to us nothing but matter in motion.

¹ Footman's *Reassuring Hints*, pp. 63, 64.

But if we suppose that from this knowledge certain intellectual processes or dispositions, as memory, the association of ideas, and so on, might become intelligible, that too is delusion ; we only learn certain conditions of intellectual life, but do not learn how the intellectual life is itself developed from those conditions. What conceivable connection exists between certain movements of certain atoms in my brain, on the one hand, and on the other the to me original and not further definable but undeniable facts : ‘*I* feel pain, feel pleasure ; *I* taste something sweet, smell roses, hear organ sounds, see something red ;’ and the just as immediately resulting certainty, ‘Therefore *I* am ?’. . . It is impossible to see how, from the co-operation of the atoms, consciousness can result. Even if *I* were to attribute consciousness to the atoms, that would neither explain consciousness in general, nor would that in any way help us to understand the unitary consciousness of the individual.”¹

METAPHYSICS STANDS BEHIND PHYSICS.

Nothing would help so much, in these days, to uncloak the insufficient and shallow basis of this sensationalistic philosophy, which modern scientific induction has revamped, as a good popular history, in language that the ordinary mind can comprehend, of that German thought-movement in the last century which began with Kant and culminated in Hegel.

Though the same ground had, practically, been gone over ages before by Aristotle and Plato, the German philosophers worked out the old problems afresh, from their own peculiar stand-point, and in an exhaustive and systematic manner, which, if it does not give them a

¹ History of Materialism, Lange, vol. ii., p. 151. (The author uses the word “astronomical” with a special meaning.)

position side by side with their ancient Greek progenitors will command the respect of the thinking world for years to come. Kant's early history is interesting. He began life with a strong predilection for the scientific study of nature, and in 1755 published a mechanical treatise on the "History of the Universe," in which he broached a theory of its origin, that bears a remarkable resemblance to the Nebular Hypothesis of La Place. This training in the school of science itself, predisposed him for a time to sympathize with Hume and the English school of philosophers. He went even so far as to imitate their style and language, and to the end of his life can be traced this influence, notwithstanding all his efforts to kick against the pricks which had dominated his early career. This explains the qualified subordination of the *a priori* to the *a posteriori* which appears in his later works. But the conclusion to which the English psychologists came, that cause and effect are only phenomena, and that anything might be the cause of anything—was disturbing.

The practical effect of their materialistic philosophy, as it is now seen in our modern Agnostic thought, was anticipated and understood by him a hundred years ago. The human body itself is only an organ. To attribute to its reflex motions, without the operation of thoughtfulness, those mental operations which even ordinary common-sense has been accustomed to attribute to consciousness, is to annihilate being. Materialistic philosophy is no philosophy, and cannot hold its own, for it is self-contradictory, and therefore leads, as M. Pressensé well says, to that pure Agnosticism which is nothing else than absolute skepticism.¹

¹"The human mind has never been able to adhere to it; it is of the very essence of skepticism not to be able to state its position without impugning it, for it has not the right to recognize even doubt. To

Again, there is all the difference in the world, as we have already seen, between the communication of a persistent outward force through the senses to an organism and the state of consciousness. How the one can pass into the other, or be in any way transformed into the other, no materialist can ever explain. A mechanical sensation is one thing, a self-conscious state is a totally distinct thing ; and, on any materialistic hypothesis, the transformation is a miracle as great as any of the miracles worked by the Apostles.

And here are the two horns of the dilemma, upon one or other of which the materialist must be impaled. Either he is obliged to adopt a theory of nescience, which as it ignores the whole science of being, is suicidal, or else to imagine and consent to a miracle, which not only defies all scientific explanation, but breaks the connection between cause and effect, and introduces the supernatural into the natural.

KANT'S DIAGNOSIS OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

Kant goes over this ground so carefully that it is impossible to controvert his conclusions, as far as they reach.

affirm a doubt is to affirm. On the other hand, total negation is impossible ; for in order to deny we must suppose a foregoing affirmation. Absolute negation once reached, mind expires and science is extinct. To attempt to prove skepticism is, moreover, to take reason for granted or to consent to prove nothing. Again, all argument has a purpose in view, it aims to convince ; it carries with it, practically at least, the idea of an end. To take away this, is to abandon the attempt to establish anything whatever. In order to prove that there is no such thing as finality, we imply its existence. Lastly, if materialism is right, what is the use of demonstrating and arguing ? Our system is the result of a fatality ; it depends on the state of our brain : *Stat mole sua.* Thus materialism, which has so often crowned itself king of science, renders science impossible."—Pressensé's Study of Origins, pp. 66, 67.

Experience, he tells us, is something of which we are conscious. Such consciousness, Hume (with his modern successors, Mill, Spencer, and others) defines as a succession of perceptions that come to us through the senses. But Kant, with his closer analysis, shows that there is something besides mere sensuous impressions in our conscious knowledge.

A physical sensation which comes to us through the eyesight or hearing does not bring the power of comparing one object with another and of judging each by that comparison. And it is the most arbitrary dogmatizing to import surreptitiously these mental (or transcendental) powers into mere physical sensations. They are already in the mind itself *before* the perception arrives and lie back of all experience that comes to us through the senses.

Analyzing the action of these mental powers in turn, Kant teaches that *time* and *space* are *a priori* forms for sense — forms of perception. No succession of events in the outside world can create the general idea of time, for time cannot be perceived externally. Similarly, no distance between two objects can convey the idea of universal space.

The fact that we are ceaselessly discovering that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points, or that twice one makes two, does not justify us in affirming positively that a straight line must always, through the whole universe, be the shortest distance between two points. Or that twice one must always, everywhere, make two; and yet we have in ourselves the consciousness that these things must be so.

Human knowledge comes by differentiation or comparison, and by bringing the subjective and objective together. And there must be a subjective notion of time and space in general within us, with which to compare

a succession of outward events, or the size, shape, and distance of various objects, *before* we can reason or generalize about them. The external world is known by all men only through and by means of the internal; the objective only through the subjective as a part of consciousness of which time is the universal form. Similarly the idea of objects in space is an effort of the perceptive imagination wherein one constructs his objects, placing them in the ideal space he has created for them. And thus an *a priori* element is bound up in all our knowledge. For the difference between *a priori* (from cause to effect) and *a posteriori* (from effect to cause) is that the latter method leads to knowledge derived from sensible impressions leading to sensible experience, sensible associations and habits; whereas *a priori* leads to knowledge which is not thus derived, but which comes from the consciousness of that which is universal and necessary. Of course both kinds of knowledge are requisite.

On the one hand, through the *a posteriori*, sensible impressions of the external world are brought to us and we form perceptions. On the other hand, through the *a priori* we judge of these sensible impressions—arrange and classify, compare and modify them and bring them into relation with one another, and thus form conceptions. Classification, generalization, and modification are, therefore, necessarily *a priori* operations of the mind, and Kant groups them into the following well-known table of “Categories :”

- I. Of Quantity : (a) Unity; (b) Plurality; (c) Totality.
- II. Of Quality : (a) Reality; (b) Negation; (c) Limitation.
- III. Of Relation: (a) Substance and Accident; (b) Cause and Effect; (c) Action and Reaction.
- IV. Of Modes: (a) Possibility and Impossibility; (b)

Existence and Non-existence; (c) Necessity and Contingency.

These categories, in Kantian language, are "*forms of thought* :" they are pure *a priori* conceptions of the understanding, inasmuch as they are not originally derived from the senses and the outer world ; but as they are conditioned by, and dependent upon, the senses and the outer world for the power of formulating themselves, somewhat in the manner that the symphony conceived in the brain of the composer is dependent upon the musical instrument to give it both birth and expression, Kant classifies them as a sensibly subjective part of consciousness which reveals to us, and is revealed by, the sensibly objective ; and therefore calls time and space, "forms for sense," and the categories, or pure concepts, "forms for knowledge."

This is Kant's first step. He points out the limitations of the *a posteriori* ; shows us clearly that it must be combined with the *a priori* to attain any kind of knowledge, and thus proves conclusively that the *ego*—our own personality—is not to be imprisoned within the *a posteriori* cage of inductive science. Kant's next step is to point out the similar limitations of the *a priori*. This is done in his "Critique of Pure Reason." It would be going too much into detail to rehearse his arguments here. Suffice to say, that he lays before us, by an exact and logical method, the limitations of reason itself ; shows that reason, alone and by itself, is powerless either to prove or disprove the existence of God ; and thus demonstrates conclusively that the *ego*—our own personality—is not to be imprisoned in the *a priori* (or rather the combined *a priori* and *a posteriori*) cage of logical science.

CONSCIENCE AN INTEGRAL PART OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

Having accomplished this work and freed our personality from these fetters, Kant's next step is to show that there is a third faculty within us—the practical reason, or human will, or ethical part of our nature—which knows no such limitations, but which is able to soar straight from earth up to heaven.¹

But the point to be especially emphasized and kept in mind by the ordinary thinker, is that, in the works which follow "The Critique of Pure Reason," Kant has proved conclusively that conscience is just as much an integral part of human nature, and of the philosophy of Being, as speculative reason itself; and that no definition of Being is correct which does not take in "the will, which is nothing other than the Practical Reason."

"Conscience," as Dr. Pressensé well says, "never abdicates its rights, else we should be deprived of the only organ by which we can know moral truth."² And in thus making room for the "Categorical Imperative," as Kant calls it, and for the full play of the Practical Reason or conscience, in its own sphere, he adds another link, and the strongest link, to the chain of evidence that

¹ "The positive value of the 'Discipline of Pure Reason' consists for him (Kant) in the circumstance, that, by it, it is made forever impossible to close the gate of entrance into this field. Would any adversary seek to close it through demonstration of its non-existence—*i.e.*, by theoretically demonstrating the non-existence of freedom, immortality, and God—the aforesaid discipline at once lays him low. The same difficulties which prevent us from demonstrating theoretically the reality of freedom, immortality, and God, just as effectively debar the denier from any prospect of proving the contrary. Thus there is no obstacle whatever in the way of our building up, through the practical use of reason, 'a rational belief' according to our moral necessities."—Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, by G. S. Morris, Ph.D., pp. 268, 279.

² *Study of Origins*, p. 125.

man is not bound by the shackles of materialism but is Spirit. For the consciousness of duty is as instantaneous and as sweeping as any conception derived through the senses. Indeed, it is even more immediate in human life, and this fact is exemplified everywhere by the psychical conditions of childhood. A child is born into this world with an undeveloped intellect, but evinces a strikingly susceptible conscience as soon as we can communicate with it and discover its thoughts. In its earlier years it feels the appeal to the conscience in a way that it cannot, as yet, feel the appeal to the intellect. It comprehends intuitively and at once the idea of duty. Furthermore, this distinction of moral from intellectual activity is not only evinced by the psychical condition of childhood but by human character in all stages of development. This is a matter of common, daily experience. Conscience stands apart by itself in determining the actions of men. It cannot be the result of inclination or of temperament, for it often lies directly athwart a man's wishes. Neither can it be the same as the analytic reason for some of the most mentally acute have been the most morally obtuse. The moral sense, which generally is so strong in childhood, becomes deadened in later years if it is disused. Only the virtuous man really believes in the power of virtue. The clever thief cannot see the power of honesty, the intelligent selfish man cannot see what Christ meant when he said, "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it;"¹ the intellectual proud man, blinded by his false vision of human greatness, cannot distinguish the real but opposite greatness of humility. Only those who surrender themselves to follow the Moral Law, and are thereby rendered honest-hearted, unselfish and humble-minded, realize its power as higher

¹ St. Matthew x. 39.

truth ; and as these become more and more true in motive and action, the moral reason asserts itself with ever-increasing force, and the still small voice, which at first was a whisper, grows louder and louder until, at last, it thunders in their ears, "This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand or when ye turn to the left." At first one walks and works in the twilight, but as he perseveres the daylight grows clearer and clearer, until the discovery is made that the highest and only lasting satisfaction in life comes from doing one's duty.

Of this power and freedom of the human will, which is the same as the practical reason, Kant himself says :

"Nothing can possibly be conceived in the world, or even out of it, which can be called good without qualification, except a good will. . . . A good will is good not because of what it performs or effects, not by its aptness for the attainment of some proposed end, but simply by virtue of the volition, that is, it is good in itself, and considered by itself is to be esteemed much higher than all that can be brought about by it in favor of any inclination, nay, even of the sum total of all inclinations. Even if it should happen that, owing to a special disfavor of fortune, or the niggardly provision of a step-motherly nature, this will should wholly lack power to accomplish its purpose, if with its greatest efforts it should yet achieve nothing, and there should remain only the good will (not, to be sure, a mere wish, but the summoning of all means in our power), then, like a jewel, it would still shine by its own light as a thing which has its whole value in itself."¹

FREE-WILL A PART OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

And this consciousness of duty carries with it, of necessity, the consciousness of free-will, for duty implies free-

¹ Abbott's translation of Kant's Critique of Practical Reason, pp. 9, 10.

dom to do or not to do ; and free-will bears the indelible stamp of a spirit which owes allegiance to Moral Law ; or, in other words, to a law that is above and beyond the physical world. The imperative of the Practical Reason which commands the surrender of the whole life of the individual to this Moral Law, therefore lifts him above nature ; for if it does not do so it destroys his individuality, and being and manhood become an inexplicable contradiction. This, in itself, is decisive evidence that though man, in some ways, is conditioned by the order of nature, he is also spirit, and thus belongs, at the same time, to an order which is above nature.¹

¹ The manner in which man is thus, by the higher power of the Practical Reason united to a higher part of the universe than this lower visible world of sense in which he lives and moves and has his being is set forth by Kant in this remarkable passage : “ Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and the more steadily we reflect on them : *the starry heavens above and the moral law within.* I have not to search for them and conjecture them as though they were veiled in darkness or were in the transcendent region beyond my horizon. I see them before me and connect them directly with the consciousness of my existence. The former begins from the place I occupy in the external world of sense, and enlarges my connection therein to an unbounded extent with worlds upon worlds, and systems of systems, and, moreover, into limitless times of their periodic motion, beginning and continuance. The second begins from my invisible self, my personality, and exhibits me in a world which has true infinity, but which is traceable only by the understanding, and with which I discern that I am not in a merely contingent but in a universal and necessary connection, as I am also thereby with all those visible worlds. The former view of a countless multitude of worlds annihilates, as it were, my importance as an *animal creature*, which, after it has been for a short time provided with vital power, one knows not how, must again give back the matter of which it was formed to the planet it inhabits (a mere speck in the universe). The second, on the contrary, infinitely elevates my worth as an *intelligence* by my personality, in which the moral law reveals to me a life independent of animality and even of the sensible world—at least, so far as may be inferred from the destination assigned to my existence by this law, a destination not restricted to conditions and limits of this

This vindication of conscience, the moral reason, as an integral part of consciousness itself, and inseparable from it, is an immeasurable advance upon what was taught before.

Des Cartes's famous maxim, "I think, therefore I am," was only a half truth ; for thinking is in reality acting, and the motive for thought lies behind thought itself, determining its character. The level of one man's thoughts is low, the level of another man's thoughts is high, and each is responsible for the direction which his mental activity takes. To say with the Cartesians, "I think, therefore I am," is less accurate than to say, "I act, therefore I am." And this, in turn, is shown by Kantian philosophy to be a partial diagnosis of human consciousness, because actions themselves are determined by that sense of right and wrong—that categorical imperative—which lies back of everything, "I ought, therefore I can," is Kant's great advance upon and substitution for the Cartesian motto.

THIS SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY NECESSITATES A PERSONAL GOD.

And upon this corner-stone of consciousness he bases his theological teachings. If there is the conviction of a moral law present in consciousness, then there must be, of necessity, a moral law-giver, and as a law-giver postulates personality, the Deity must be not merely a first cause but a moral person.

This brings, and was intended to bring, the philosophy of Kant very near to Revelation. "I ought" means literally "I owed."¹ Responsibility signifies the ability

life, but reaching into the infinite."—Kant's Critique of Practical Reason ; translated by T. K. Abbott, p. 260.

¹ Tyndale's Bible, St. Luke vii. 41.

to respond. If we owe our very thoughts and actions as a debt to another, and responsibility, the element of all others, which constitutes the highest, strongest character, is developed by responding to another, then man's own consciousness is the witness of his dependence upon God, the witness that he can only fulfil the law of his own being and attain the ideal of human character by entire self-surrender to God ; the witness, in a word, that human personality is but a fragment of the Divine Personality from which it emanated, and with which it is inseparably connected.

Many will utter the old time-honored war-cry here, which sounds so alarming to superficial thinkers, that this is only disguised anthropomorphism. In reality it is the reverse of anthropomorphism. It is Theomorphism.

Kant is simply translating and expressing here, in philosophical terms, a truth which is as universal in consciousness as the human race itself. That truth is soon and simply stated. The first natural impulse of every mortal man is to think that God is like himself, and this natural thought arises from a profound intellectual and moral intuition.

Men learn truth, as we have said, by differentiation. In comparing ourselves with all that is in the world we find nothing that is higher or greater than ourselves. When we look above and beyond the things and beings of this world to God, we find nothing with which we can compare Him but that which is highest here—ourselves. The rudest savage believes, of course, that God is more than himself, but when savage or civilized man loses the belief that God is, at least, like himself, he leaves the solid ground for mere airy speculations that give no satisfaction. This is the foundation of all the religions of this earth. We, in these days, have got beyond the ma-

terialism of the early ages. Our self-consciousness and self-knowledge have grown. We think more of our minds than of our bodies, and, correspondingly, our ideas of God are elevated. We do not picture Him as possessing a human physical form, but we *do* picture Him as possessing thoughts and affections like our own. We say to ourselves : "God has created me. I know nothing higher or greater in this world than my own manhood. The God of heaven cannot possibly be less than myself the creature He has made. He must be all that I am, and more than I am."

Where the early believers said, in the depths of that profound insight, "He that made the eye, shall He not see ? or He that made the ear, shall He not hear ?" we, using the self-same argument in a higher form, say, "He that made my personality, shall He not be a Person Himself ?"

And now when we turn from ourselves to revelation we discover there not only that the teachings of the Bible corroborate these natural intuitions but reveal a higher truth which explains them. The Bible tells us that instead of thinking that God is like us—putting self first and God second, we should think that we are like God—placing God first and ourselves second. This is, in fact, the truth with which God's revelation to man starts out, when it tells us that man was made in God's own image. The cry of anthropomorphism is, in fact, the expression of human ignorance. The heathen religions, which are held up as its illustrations, were only wrong, as Justin Martyr pointed out seventeen hundred years ago,¹ in be-

¹ " And if any person investigates the subject of images, and inquires on what ground those who first fashioned your gods conceived that they had the forms of men, he will find that this also was derived from the divine history. For seeing that Moses's history, speaking in the person of God, says, ' Let us make man in our image and likeness,' these per-

ginning at the wrong end, and their anthropomorphisms were simply a perversion of the truth that man was made in the image of God. This beginning at the wrong end, moreover, was not their own fault, for they could not begin right, without the aid of revelation and the absolute statement of God Himself that men were created in His likeness.

Many of our modern Christians who are so fascinated by scientific inductive thought would do well to study Kant's philosophy of human consciousness, for while they are thinking on the lower, he has set forth truths of the higher plane of being, which nullify the thoughts and arguments which to them seem so conclusive.

He presents a higher form of teleology, drawn not from the study of nature but of human nature, which becomes convincing in proportion as it is studied and understood.

Instead of conceiving of God as a first cause or a force that is behind all other forces, or even as Matthew Arnold does as a Power which makes for righteousness, Kant shows us, that, from our own consciousness we are obliged to personify him as Ideal Right—Righteousness itself.

FROM KANT TO HEGEL.

Here Kant leaves us. Great as is the work he accomplished it is only partial and incomplete, for these two reasons : First it leads us up to a God Who is the severe

sons, under the impression that this meant that men were like God in form, began thus to fashion their gods, supposing they would make a likeness from a likeness. But why, ye men of Greece, am I now induced to recount these things ? That ye may know that it is not possible to learn the true religion from those who were unable, even on those subjects by which they won the admiration of the heathen, to write anything original, but merely propounded by some allegorical device in their own writings what they had learned from Moses and the other prophets.”—Justin Martyr : Cohort. ad. Graec., cap. xxxiv.

moral Governor and Law-Giver of the universe, Who is only, or at least, chiefly, knowable through that categorical imperative of the conscience that listens to no excuses, but with its severe "Thou oughtest, therefore thou canst," absolutely throws upon ourselves the responsibility of our own deeds; and second, it emphasizes and brings out, with greater distinctness than ever before, the old universally recognized dualism and antagonism between mind and matter, which philosophers from the days of ancient Greece have attempted to reconcile. Hence, as it were by the Nemesis of fate, Fichte and Schelling, following in the footsteps of Kant, and building on his foundation, became respectively the apostles of different sides of this dualism, the one teaching that the *ego* is everything (*Ich ist alles*), and the other that everything is the *ego* (*Alles ist ich*). This one-sidedness of each, in his attempt to express the other in his own terms, gave the opportunity for a new philosopher to step in to complete the work which Kant began, and Hegel, appeared upon the field to proclaim the real unity which lies behind all differences.

Hegel made no attempt to minimize the dualism. On the contrary, he taught that the more strongly it was emphasized, the more adequately each would bring out and enforce its opposite.

HEGEL.

Dealing with the old division of subject and object, he taught that the subject needed the object to make it subjective; and correspondingly, the object needed the subject to make it objective; and that behind "the nest of contradictions," as Kant called it, therefore, there was a higher unity making each necessary to the other. Tracing the same principle through the antinomies of dualistic thought, he showed that sense and understand-

ing, the sensible and the moral self, necessity and freedom, nature and spirit, knowledge and faith each naturally depend upon the existence of the other in the same way. And that, therefore, beneath their seeming antagonism there is a unifying principle which binds them together and thus reconciles them. And also that without this relation, each by itself becomes a mere negation. For every relation, however unconscious of it the thinker may be, implies an underlying unity. A family quarrel, for example, is the bitterest of all quarrels, just because the opponents are bound together by ties of blood, and it is this unity of family life which gives to the battle its bitterness. All difference, whatever it may be, thus grows out of some unity, of which it is the outward expression, and if we only let it express itself fully in its own way, giving it free rein, then the greater its exaggeration and disproportion to the balance of truth, the sooner it will reveal and return to the unity out of which it came.

"Isolate a thing from all its relations and try to assert it by itself: at once you find that you have negated it, as well as its relations. The thing in itself is nothing. The absolute or pure affirmation—just because it is absolute or pure—is its own negation. Referred to itself and itself only, it ceases to be itself; for its definition, that which made it itself, was its relation to that which was not itself. Thus we come upon the apparent paradox, that opposites are distinguished only when they are related, and that if we carry the opposition to the point at which this relation ceases, the distinction ceases at the same time."¹

Following the same principle, and to this point we desire to call especial attention, Hegel taught that the

¹ Philosophical Classics, "Hegel," by Prof. Edward Caird, LL.D., p. 162.

a posteriori and *a priori* methods of thought thus threw light upon one another. Instead of holding the usual distinction that all knowledge is gained either *a posteriori* or *a priori*, he taught that all knowledge is both *a posteriori* and *a priori*, and held that it is *a posteriori* so far as it is *a priori* and *vice versa*. It must be *a posteriori*, for no knowledge can come to us except through experience : even the knowledge of self comes to us through the not-self. But, on the other hand, all knowledge is equally and necessarily *a priori*, for experience itself is only the fuel which sets the mental machinery of the mind in motion. Experience being preceded not only by that consciousness of universals set forth by Kant, but by the additional category of Ideal Unity, through which we are intuitively conscious of the relation between subject and object, the internal and external, nature and spirit, facts and ideas.

SCIENCE DEPENDS UPON PHILOSOPHY.

“The philosophy of nature,” says Hegel, “takes up the matter, which physical science has prepared for it out of experience, at the point where science leaves it, and works it up without looking back to the ground-work of experience for its ultimate verification. Science, therefore, must work into the hands of philosophy, that philosophy in turn may translate the universality of reflection which science has produced for her into the higher universality of the reason : showing meanwhile how the intelligible object evolves itself out of the intelligence as an organic whole, whose necessity is in itself. The philosophical way of presenting things is not a capricious effort, for once in a way, to walk on one’s head as a change from the ordinary method of walking on one’s feet, or to escape the monotony of one’s ordinary face by painting it,

but it is because the manner of science does not finally satisfy the intelligence that we are obliged to go beyond it.”¹

By which Hegel means that the way in which the things of the world appear to the ordinary consciousness, in size and shape, in their relation to other things, or as measured by time, does not satisfy the reason. They must be taken up into the higher consciousness and judged philosophically before their ultimate character and relations can be discerned.

HEGEL AND CHRISTIANITY.

For a long time Hegel himself was dissatisfied and perplexed in working out the problems which his own philosophy created. Firmly as he grasped the idea of the unity of opposites, not by any artificial construction, but as a real opposition which the mind itself first creates and then unifies, he faltered and halted in his effort to account for this principle of ideal unity; but, by and by, the daylight broke. When he passed from the philosophy of nature to the philosophy of spirit the light came from Christianity itself, toward which he had been heretofore more or less in a critical attitude, and it came from that word of Christ, “He that loseth his life shall find it.” “With the rise of this new idea of *spirit* as the unity of all differences,” says Caird, “Hegel’s attitude toward Christianity was completely changed, for in the central moral principle of Christianity, the principle of self-realization through self-sacrifice, he found just that movement through negation to affirmation, through opposition to reconciliation, which he was seeking. Or rather, perhaps, we should say that it was Hegel’s study of Christianity, assisted by the contemporary development of philosophy, which first suggested to him the idea of

¹ Hegel : Naturphilosophie, vii., 18.

that movement. Hence, if we should seek to gather up the Hegelian philosophy in a sentence, as a Frenchman once asked Hegel to do, it would be this, that the words ‘die to live’ express not only the dialectic of morals, but the universal principle of philosophy. For if these words truly express the nature of spiritual life, then in spirit may be found a unity which will account for and overcome all the antagonisms of life and thought.”¹

Dr. Caird illustrates this truth in a practical way by instancing the case of the pleasure-seeker, who, as he says, “is an abstraction ; for just in proportion as we approximate to the state of the pure hunter for pleasures, for whom all objective interest is lost in mere self-seeking, it is demonstrable by the nature of the case, and shown by experience, that for us all pleasure must cease.”²

¹ Caird’s Hegel, pp. 43, 44.

² “What was fatal to the Greek state, and with it to all the political and religious life of the ancient world, was the assertion that man, as a rational and self-conscious being, *is a law and end to himself*. In this it is involved that, ultimately, he can know and obey nothing but himself. Taken in a one-sided and exclusive sense this doctrine is the denial of all relation of the individual either in thought or action, to anything but himself ; but taken in this sense it contains, as we have seen, its own refutation, and passes into its opposite. The truth, however, is to be found by considering what this self-contradiction really means. It means, in the first place, that the opposition is a relative one, and that the self which is opposed to the world, even in such opposition, is essentially related to it. And it means, in the second place, that while the direct and immediate attempt to assert and realize the self as *against* the not-self is suicidal, there is a higher assertion and realization of the self *in and through* the not-self, which, however, is possible only in so far as the first suicidal attempt is abandoned. The way to self-realization is through self-renunciation—*i.e.*, through renunciation of that natural and immediate life of the self in which it is opposed to the not-self. Spiritual life is not like natural life—a direct development and outgoing of energy, which only at its utmost point of expansion meets with death as an external enemy, and in it finds its limit and end. On the contrary, the life of a spiritual being, as such, is, in a true sense, a continual dying. Every step in it is won by a break with the immedi-

Such was the superstructure that Hegel built upon the foundation of Kant. If Kant proved that man is spirit in being morally free, Hegel carried up the truth into a higher region where man's spiritual nature is unfolded, as that of a being who must continuously die to live in order to attain a higher selfhood. And, correspondingly, as Kant was compelled by his philosophy to pass from the moral law in the human consciousness to the Moral Law-giver and Governor of the Universe, so Hegel, by his ate or natural self—the self which is opposed to the not-self; for only as this self dies can the higher self, which is in unity with the not-self, be developed. And, on the other hand, just for this reason, there is for this spiritual self no absolute death. Because it is capable of dying to itself,—because, indeed, as will be more fully shown in the sequel, it cannot live but by some kind of dying to self,—it cannot in any final sense die. As it can make that which most seems to limit it a part of its own life, it has no absolute limit; it takes up death into itself as an element, and does not therefore need to fear it as an enemy.

"Words like these will, no doubt, seem at first to be mystical and metaphorical to those who look at them in an external way. And, indeed, they fairly represent the usual language of Christian mysticism, or rather, we might say more truly, the universal language of the religious life of Christianity wherever that life has reached any real depth of self-consciousness—the language of St. Paul and St. Augustine, of Thomas à Kempis and Martin Luther, as of men like Maurice and Campbell in our own day. Such language, however, though not denied to have a certain truth in its own sphere, is usually kept to that sphere, and not brought down into the region of the ordinary understanding, or weighed against the words and categories which hold good there. What is peculiar to Hegel is, that he brings the two regions together and compares them; that he weighs the vivid poetic utterance of spiritual intuition, and the prose of common-life and of science, together in the same scales; and that he seeks to prove that, as exact and scientific definitions of the reality of things, the former has a higher truth than the latter. To him, therefore, the great aphorism, in which the Christian ethics and theology may be said to be summed up, that "He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life shall save it," is no mere epigrammatic saying, whose self-contradiction is not to be regarded too closely; it is rather the first distinct, though as yet undeveloped, expression of the exact truth as to the nature of spirit."

—Caird's Hegel, pp. 210, 211, 212.

philosophy, was, of necessity, obliged to rise from the ideal unity in human consciousness to the living centre of all spiritual unity in God. And if in Kant we have a near approach to revelation, the approximation in Hegel is nearer still, for to the Ideal Right it adds Ideal Self-sacrifice and Love, and carries us into a region of thought so much higher than that in which scientific induction lives and moves and has its being, that, when we have once climbed up from the lower to the higher level of thought, and learned to grasp the verities set forth by these German philosophers, we wonder how any man can be satisfied with the narrow horizons of the valley which bound the vision ; and how we could ever have regarded as powerful, the difficulties and obstacles which now seem to us so superficial.

For while we cannot, by idealizing nature, or beauty, or force, get higher than the old Pantheism, we can rise higher and come close to Bible teaching itself by idealizing high ethical and personal qualities. We can personify goodness, for God is The Good ; we can with Kant personify right, for God is the Lord (*i.e.*, JEHOVAH) our Righteousness ; we can, with Hegel, personify self-sacrifice, for God is Love.

And here Hegel found the eirenicon between his philosophy and Christian theology.

He meets the doctrine of the Holy Trinity by his doctrine of spirit finding its ideal unity perfected in God Himself. A spirit postulates personality, human persons discover self by the not-self—they become conscious by contact with that which is beyond consciousness. If we were never to come to the limitations of our own being from the outside, we should never become conscious at all.

But God, Who is infinite, cannot at the same time be finite or limited, unless the limits of His own being are in His infinite nature. He must be presented to His

own contemplation. He must be continually confronted by that which is at once Himself and not Himself. The dualism that is in the world must be reflected and united in God's own nature ; subject and object must be both separated and united in Him, or else He cannot be the Highest, or God. The only philosophical resolution of this difficulty is the doctrine of the Trinity, which sets forth that the eternal Son is the express image of the eternal Father—one with God the eternal Father, in the Godhead, yet, Himself, a different Person from the Father ; and which teaches that the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of Oneness, reconciling the finite with the infinite, the particular with the universal.

Similarly, if the principle "die to live" finds its highest manifestation in God Himself, then the doctrine of the Incarnation becomes as much of a philosophical as of a Christian necessity. This point is so self-evident that we do not pause to dwell upon it, but refer those readers who desire a fuller amplification of it to Hegel's own works.

The first effect of all these teachings was almost magical. Theologians believed that, at last, the "faith once delivered to the saints" was translated into philosophical language, which forever would bear the shock of all attacks of unbelief ; systems of dogmatic theology were constructed on this basis, and down to the present day—so powerful has been the influence of Hegel—much of our modern Christian thought is unconsciously Hegelian. And it is true that Christian theology will ever hereafter owe a debt of gratitude to Kant and Hegel, for bringing out and making clear the reasonable basis for the Christian faith.

Both received invaluable aid from Christianity itself—an aid without which their systems could not have been completed.

THE DANGERS OF A PHILOSOPHICAL CHRISTIANITY.

But the result has been different from that which was anticipated, and which everyone of their contemporaries would have naturally expected. Instead of becoming an aid to Christianity, Hegelianism soon became, and is to-day, one of its strongest antagonists. For so well and so thoroughly did Kant and Hegel perform their work, and so strong was the philosophical basis of theism laid down by them, that their disciples soon began to substitute this philosophical basis for Christianity itself; and their supreme effort, henceforth, was not to reconcile philosophy to revelation but revelation to philosophy.

Such was the origin of that subsequent movement in which Strauss and Baur were such prominent figures, and which is continuing with abated force down to the present day.

We give its dominating thought (*i.e.*, the substitution of humanity for Christ) in the words of Strauss himself; there could not be a more accurate or vivid portrayal of its character: "Humanity is the child of the visible Mother and the invisible Father—of Spirit and Nature, it is the Miracle-worker, in so far as, in the course of human history, the spirit becomes ever more perfectly the master of nature in man as well as external to him, which is forced under it as inert material for its activity. It is the sinless, in so far as the process of its development is blameless: defilement cleaves ever only to the individual, but is in the species and its history abolished. It is the One that dies, rises again, and ascends to heaven, in so far as from the negation of its natural there proceeds always a higher spiritual life; from the abolition of its finitude as personal, national, and earthly spirit there issues its union with the infinite Spirit of

Heaven. By faith in this Christ, especially in His death and resurrection, man is justified before God : *i.e.*, the individual becomes participant in the Divine-human life of the species, by having the idea of humanity created and vivified within him. And this happens mainly because the negation of the natural and sensuous, which is itself the negation of spirit, therefore the negation of the negation, is the only way to the true spiritual life for man.”¹

Hegel by proving so conclusively the correlation of nature and spirit, their mutual interdependence and their underlying unity, had given so strong a rational basis for Christianity ; or, to put it the other way, he had shown so clearly from the analysis of human consciousness, the necessity for an incarnation of God, and a crucifixion and resurrection of humanity to unite nature and spirit, that his followers at once began to substitute the idea for the historical fact itself.

The conception of the Word made flesh was broadened so as to cover all humanity, the doctrines of the Apostles’ Creed were held as general truths which found their full realization only in the history of the human race itself, which is the only real Christ who suffered and rose again for us. “If we know,” says Strauss, “the Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection (*the duplex negatio affirmat*) as the eternal circulation, the endless pulsation, always repeating itself, of the divine life, what single fact, which is but a sensuous symbol of this process, can claim eminent importance ? To the idea in the fact, to the species in the individual, our age wishes to be led in Christology. *A theological system which in its doctrine of Christ stands by Him as an individual is no system but a sermon.*²” Thus has arisen the hypothesis that the supernatural facts of Christ’s life were myths in-

¹ Strauss : *Leben Jesu*, vol. ii., p. 735.

² Ibid., p. 738.

vented by the devout imaginations of his followers, to express the pre-existent ideas of an incarnation, death, and resurrection of the race.

Though the tangible shape in which Strauss has clothed this idea is too startling to meet with acceptance, the subtle influence of that Hegelianism which lies behind it is to be detected far and wide, coloring the religious thought of thousands who are supremely unconscious of its genesis. On all sides of us to-day there are Christian men who seem to find no difficulty at all in accepting as doctrines, the Trinity, Incarnation, and Resurrection, but who have great difficulty in accepting the supernatural birth and the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

They can hold to the incarnation of God in man, but not in the man Christ Jesus. In contrast to their easy certainty about the spirit of Christianity, stands their painful uncertainty about the facts of Christianity. They can assimilate the one, they cannot assimilate or see the necessity of the other.

The seductiveness of this line of philosophical thought is very great: its resemblance to Christianity is very close. Hence, the question naturally arises in many minds: "Why should we insist upon this commingling of the certain with the uncertain? Why not sift the wheat from the chaff? We are sure of the *spirit* of Christianity; we rest here on solid ground. Whatever modern criticism may do with the supernatural events of the Gospel is a matter of comparative unconcern to us, so long as we can fall back upon the spirit of Christ's life. No advancement of science or philosophy, no future discoveries regarding the spurious character of Scripture documents can ever take this away from us. Here, at least, we stand firm."

And this is the end to which that philosophical thought-movement, which we have traced from Kant to Hegel,

brings men when they commit themselves unreservedly to its guidance. Philosophical certainty means more, indeed, than scientific certainty, but it does not afford sufficient standing-room for Christian truth. The revelation of God cannot be crowded down upon any such narrow human basis as either science or philosophy would build up for it. In the attempt to erect, from the human side, a secure foundation for the Christian religion both have signally failed and revealed their sharp limitations.

THE TRUE RELATION OF PHILOSOPHY TO RELIGION.

The Church of to-day and the Church of the future may ever be grateful for the work which the great leaders of German thought have done, for they have not only shown, beyond all peradventure, that there is no antagonism between Christianity and philosophy, but they have proved that there is, and have actually worked out, a philosophical basis for the Christian religion. Henceforth if any man proclaims that the fields of scientific thought or philosophic thought are broader than the wide domain of Christian truth, or that the latter is insufficient to cover them, he is simply proclaiming his own ignorance. If, on the other hand, the believer is tempted to affirm that science and philosophy, working in their own spheres, are, in any way, obstacles to the Christian religion, he had better read understandingly the *history* of scientific and philosophic thought before he ventures to express an opinion.

We have shown in the last two chapters, we trust conclusively, that there is a real scientific and a real philosophic basis of Christianity, and that both are valuable in so far as they corroborate and verify, in their own spheres, the great truths of the Gospel. Surely the Church is all the stronger, and Christian truth itself all

the richer, for the aid thus afforded. A *terra ignota* has been explored, and antagonisms, contradictions, obstacles, which were once supposed to exist, are now discovered to have been purely imaginative. It is only when these corroborative evidences of Christianity are taken by men as a substitute for the faith of the Gospels, and for a kind of proof which does away with the necessity of faith, that peril arises. Truth then becomes untruth, and the stepping-stones are changed into stumbling-blocks.

Especially is this the danger with those who surrender themselves unreservedly to the captivating influences of philosophic thought ; influences whose normal power is abnormally enhanced, by the fact that they unconsciously minister, first, to that spirit of intellectual pride which secretly rebels against dependence upon God, and against a revelation which requires faith as well as reason, instead of reason alone ; and, second, to that human spirit of religious indolence, which secretly rebels against the kind of spiritual exertion which faith in God necessitates. Such men may hanker after a certainty in religion which will save them from the effort of walking by faith and not by sight ; but the only substitute that the philosophical basis for Christianity has to offer for Christianity itself is a religion from which supernaturalism has been carefully eliminated ; a religion in which a philosophical is substituted for an historical foundation ; a religion in which ideas are to take the place of facts ; a religion in which God in Humanity takes the place of God in Christ ; a religion in which man's meditation about God usurps the position of God's revelation to man ; a religion in which a cloudy and intangible spirit of Christianity is regarded as "firm and solid ground," while the plain and simple historic facts of the Gospel are dismissed as misty speculations. Let every Christian believer face the true conditions. While Christ's religion welcomes and affords

room for all phases of philosophic thought, no system of Christian philosophy affords room for the whole of Christ's religion. By making the laws of human personality the measure of Christian truth, the latter receives its religion from men, not from God, and is, therefore, obliged to deny that Christianity is a revelation from God, which makes an imperative demand upon our faith. Denying this, philosophical Christianity preaches a false Gospel.

CHAPTER IV

THE ETHICAL BASIS OF CHRISTIANITY AND ITS LIMITATIONS

SYNOPSIS

- I. The cry "*Back to Kant*" has ended in the attempt to construct Christian Theology on a purely ethical foundation. The new method of research instituted by Ritschl, of making conscience the *exclusive* organ of Highest Knowledge, is both Destructive and Constructive. On the *Destructive* side it parts company (a) With Philosophy; (b) With Church dogma because it is philosophical. On the *Constructive* side it sets forth (a) That the Revelation of God centres in the *Moral Character* of the historic Christ; (b) That *Faith in God* springs from moral convictions and becomes supreme; (c) That the *Kingdom of God* (*i.e.*, the society of those who seek the "Chief Good") is to be substituted in place of the *Logos* idea; (d) That Moral Life is the *core* of History.
- II. Reasons for the Popularity of this Method and Rapid Success of Ritschlianism: (a) It appeals forcibly to the moral instinct; (b) It is an *easy* theology, which takes a short cut across the whole field of knowledge to the "Highest Truth;" (c) In this age of perplexity and revolutions it professes to put us at once in possession of certainty; (d) It courts a close alliance with Inductive Science as a *Christian Positivism*; (e) It appeals to the Evangelical sympathies of Protestants.
- III. The True Relation of Ethics to Christianity. Notwithstanding her attitude toward Philosophy the Church has always (a) Held the supremacy of Faith over Reason; (b) Held to the functions of the Conscience as the organ for apprehending Moral Truth.
- IV. The Limitations of the Ethical Basis. (a) While ignoring Metaphysics it *uses* Metaphysics in formulating its system; (b) It bases all Theology upon a particular *theory of Cogni-*

tion and teaches that we cannot know Christ *in Himself* but only as He *appears* to us in History ; (c) In ignoring Reason and Mysticism, and making Ethics supreme in every Department of Inquiry, it arrays the human consciousness *against itself* ; (d) In ignoring Reason and Mysticism, in the larger field of *Revelation*, it cuts us off from the whole subject of the Personality of Christ : His Pre-existence, His Nature, and His Work in Heaven, as well as from inquiring the meaning of the Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension ; (e) By treating Philosophy and Literary Criticism carelessly it makes concessions that imperil its own existence.

FOR a quarter of a century or more the cry "*Back to Kant*" has been echoing more and more loudly through Germany, and the results of that profound thought-movement which it expressed are now manifesting themselves in what is popularly called *Ritschlianism*, from the German theologian, Albrecht Ritschl, who died only five or six years ago. Though the movement is so recent it has already begun to attract attention far and wide. In the words of Professor Flint, of Edinburgh, "This theology has been dominant in Germany during the last fifteen years and is still gaining adherents and growing in influence. In fact, no other German theological school or movement can compare with it in strength and vitality. Hence young men from this country who study theology in Germany almost inevitably come more or less under its influence. It is certainly a force in the theological world which must be reckoned with, and which eminently deserves to be studied. It has got some very noteworthy features. It strives to represent Christian faith as its own sufficient foundation. It seeks to secure for religion a domain within the sphere of feeling and practical judgment into which theoretical reason cannot intrude. It would keep theology independent of philosophy, free from all contamination of metaphysics. It would rest its claim entirely on the Revelation of God in

Christ."¹ Professor Leonhard Stählin, of Bayreuth, gives us a still more graphic description of the movement—a description which is all the more valuable as it is sketched by one who is himself a German.

"Were the question to be asked, What German Protestant divine of the present day has been most successful in securing adherents and forming a school? there could be no hesitation about an answer among those who are acquainted with the position of matters in Germany. No German theologian has a larger following than *Albrecht Ritschl*. In mentioning his name we mention the head of a theological school second to none either in numbers or in influence. Not a few of his former pupils occupy theological chairs at the universities; and a large number of the clergy engaged in practical work may be reckoned among his followers. In the *Theologische Literaturzeitung* (*Journal of Theological Literature*) this school has created an organ which exercises censorship over the theological literature of the present day, and carries on a propaganda for the new theological principles which it represents. It is the Göttingen school at the head of which Ritschl's name stands. In the sphere of *Systematic Theology* this school has effected a revolution that has been received with scarcely less acclamation than that which, more than a generation ago, hailed the theories that emanated from Tübingen. *Then*, it was certain theorems of the Hegelian Philosophy which, with the aid of historical criticism, were applied for the explanation of the rise of Christianity and the origin of the New Testament literature; *now*, it is modern empiricism and Neo-Kantism, the avowed antagonist of all speculative philosophy, which is striving to gain the upper hand of theology, and

¹ Preface to Kaftan's *Truth of the Christian Religion*, by Professor Robert Flint, pp. v, vi.

to remodel Christian Dogmatics according to its principles. The new ideas thus started in connection with Dogmatics are being applied to other branches of theology. Ritschl, moreover, as Wellhausen himself tells us, gave a direct personal impulse to the formation and development of the new school of Old Testament criticism.”¹

This new school of religious thought claims to be more Protestant and Evangelical than the Reformers themselves, and more Christian than the Holy Catholic Church ; it aims to increase personal piety, on the one hand, and the practical activities of the Church, on the other ; it has its Church Historian in Professor Harnack ; its theologians, in Dr. Kaftan, of Berlin, and in Professor Hermann, of Marburg ; its Bible critics in Schulz and Wendt ; and it asserts with enthusiasm that it stands in possession of an entirely new method, whereby it can reach certainty of Christian truth, revolutionize the theology of the ages, and construct a new basis for Christian belief.

This basis is the foundation provided by Kant when he made a place for the Practical Reason (*i.e.*, conscience the categorical imperative, the moral sense, the human will, and sense of responsibility), side by side with the speculative reason ; and taught that while through theoretic reason we can neither prove nor disprove the existence of God, yet through the practical reason we can prove both the being of God and the immortality of man.

Building upon this foundation Schleiermacher had long before these days endeavored to construct a system of theology, but according to the present Neo-Kantian school, Schleiermacher was unfaithful to his own principles in forsaking the path that Kant opened up ; and

¹ L. Stählin : Kant, Lotze, Ritschl, pp. 1, 2.

in teaching that there was a Highest Knowledge of Philosophy, or the Theoretic Reason as well as a "Highest Knowledge" of the practical reason.

The Neo-Kantian School of to-day goes much further than this, it aims at "*the Completion of the Reformation in Protestant Theology*,"¹ by setting forth the principle that the only organ in man for attaining this "Highest Knowledge" is the Practical Reason itself, and that therefore all other kinds of knowledge are of the earth, earthly.

Hence these followers of Kant go far beyond Kant himself. Where he was satisfied with making a place for the practical reason in philosophy, and proving that moral truth can only be apprehended in its fulness and its far consequences by the moral sense of mankind, these Neo-Kantians teach that the practical reason reigns supreme over the *whole* domain of knowledge; that it is to be the ultimate judge of the worth and reality of all kinds of knowledge, and that if philosophy or theoretic reason sets up any counter-claim, that claim is to be set aside.

Neo-Kantism thus introduces a new method of research into all those great problems of existence which philosophy for ages has been pondering. It proclaims that inasmuch as all ancient Greek philosophy ignored the existence in man of the practical reason, therefore its judgments are unsound and it must be ignored itself by those who have discovered the better way.

Having thrown discredit on philosophy, the next step of the Neo-Kantian or Ritschlian theologians is to discredit and throw overboard the whole dogmatic theology of the Church. It is hard here to single out those things which are held by common consent among those who call themselves, and are called by others, Ritschlans,

¹ *The Truth of the Christian Religion*, by Professor Julius Kaftan, vol. i., p. 286.

first, because the whole movement is of such recent origin that we know it only as it were from the outside, and through such prominent spokesmen as Professors Ritschl and Harnack, Kaftan and Hermann ; and second, because these leaders by no means agree among themselves as to what they hold or do not hold : they are all on the pathway of discovery and verification in working out and applying their new method to the principal spheres of theology. And some are farther on than others in treading this pathway. But Dr. Kaftan, who sits in Dorner's seat as Professor of Theology in the University of Berlin, may probably be taken as the most prominent expounder of the movement at the present time. In his "Truth of the Christian Religion"¹ he tells us the reason why he regards with such profound distrust all the dogmas of the Catholic Church.

That reason is as follows : From the second century onward the Christian Church, influenced by the whole thought-movement of the times, undertook to prove the principles of the Christian faith by the philosophical method then in vogue, and thus by looking at Christian truth through the eyes of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, and striving to verify it by the ancient Greek method of analysis, she became unconsciously involved in a false system of thought, and viewed the revelation of God as it was discolored by the hues that philosophy and the theoretic reason gave to it. In the words of Dr. Kaftan : "The influence of philosophy on dogma consists in the fact that theology implicated the Christian faith in that combination of religion, science, and morality which was found ready to hand."²

¹ The Truth of the Christian Religion, by Professor Julius Kaftan, translated by George Ferries, B.D., published by T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh.

² The Truth of the Christian Religion, vol. i., p. 64.

Particularly was this the case with regard to the doctrine of the Logos.

Long before the days of the Christian Church itself, this doctrine had begun to formulate itself among the schools of philosophy.

"Even among the Pre-Socratic systems, viz., in Heraclitus, it appears in the forefront. In the Logos, Heraclitus recognizes the connecting medium that binds together the natural world with its manifold elements. . . . The primary materialistic conception (of Heraclitus) is spiritualized by the Stoics. According to their doctrine the human soul is not merely pervaded, like everything else, by the Universal Reason, but is itself part of the reason of the world. The distinctive nature and the dignity of man consist above all in the fact that he can know things ; that he, on his spiritual side a part of the Logos, can know the things in which the Logos holds sway. But since the Logos is identical with the Godhead, this again has a directly religious significance. The world is full of divine forces, and man in his essence is kindred with God. Thus it is already found among the Stoics that the Logos idea has the sense above noted, viz., that it expresses the correlation of the Godhead, the world, and man. Above all is this the case according to Philo. And then in the form in which we find the idea in Philo, it was appropriated by the Christian theologians. . . . Thus it may be asserted that we find the clearest expression given by him to what afterward became a leaven in ecclesiastical theology. Still the basis of his Logos doctrine is the Stoic idea, but in such wise that it was fused with the Platonic and Aristotelian tradition."¹ Very much to the same effect are the teachings of Professor Harnack regarding Gnosticism.²

¹ The Truth of the Christian Religion, vol. i., pp. 54, 55.

² "The Gnostics were the theologians of the first century, they were

So close, therefore, is the alliance between Church dogma and Greek philosophy, according to the Ritsch-

the first to transform Christianity into a system of doctrines (dogmas); they were the first to treat tradition and the primitive Christian scriptures systematically; they undertook to set forth Christianity as the absolute religion, and they therefore placed it in opposition to the other religions, to that of the Old Testament as well (not alone to Judaism); but the absolute religion, which they coupled with Christ, was to them essentially identical with the results of the philosophy of religion, for which they had now found the basis in a revelation. They were accordingly a class of Christians who essayed through a sharp onset to conquer Christianity for Hellenic culture, and Hellenic culture for Christianity, and they thereby abandoned the Old Testament in order to fitly close up the breach between the two opposing forces. Christianity became an occult theosophy (revealed metaphysics and apparition philosophy, permeated with the Platonic spirit and with Pauline ideas, constructed out of the material of an old cultus-wisdom which was acquired through mysteries and the illumined understanding defined by a keen, and, in part, true criticism of the Old Testament religion and the scant faith of the Church. . . . The Gospel history is not the history of Christ, but a collection of allegorical representations of the great Divine world-history. Christ has in truth no history; his appearance in this world of confusion and delusion is his own act, and the enlightenment of the Spirit, as regards itself, is the effect of this act. This illumination itself is life; but it is dependent upon asceticism and upon a surrender to the mysteries ordained by Christ, in which one comes into communion with a *præsens numen*, and which in a mysterious way gradually free the spirit from the world of sense. . . . Christianity is accordingly a speculative philosophy which redeems the spirit, inasmuch as it enlightens and consecrates it and directs it unto the true way of life. . . . The Church in its contest with Gnosticism learned a great deal from it. The principal points which were under discussion may be briefly summarized as follows (the word 'positive' appended to a Gnostic proposition indicates that the doctrine had a *positive* influence in the development of the Church view and doctrine): (1) Christianity, which is the only true and absolute religion, contains a revealed system of doctrine (pos.); (2) the Revealer is Christ (pos.), but Christ *alone*, and Christ only so far as he was made manifest (*no* Old Testament Christ). This manifestation is itself the redemption—the teaching is the proclamation of this and of the necessary presuppositions (pos.)"—Harnack's History of Dogma, translated by Edwin Knox Mitchell, pp. 60 ff.

lian view, that they stand or fall together, for the entire body of Catholic doctrine centres in the Logos idea; and inasmuch as this was an emanation of limited and one-sided philosophic thought, the whole system of dogmatic teaching which flows from the idea that Christ was the Logos, or Word of God, needs to be recast, and we must view the Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ from an entirely different stand-point than that of Dogmatic Theology. Even the Protestant Reformers were "implicated" in holding false views, regarding the revelation of God in Christ, by the power of the traditional presentation of Christianity.

To-day, on all sides, according to this new theology, we behold the breaking up of the ancient ecclesiastical dogmatic system. The verdict of history is so plain that no one can misread or misunderstand it; and the modern drift of thought away from Revelation and toward Rationalism is the logical consequence and end of a form of Christianity which, in days of yore, made Rationalism its master.¹ Even Hegelianism cannot reanimate the expiring system and bring it back to life. "As a matter of fact what must be understood by the articles regarding the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement, in the sense of the Hegelian philosophy, and what the ecclesiastical doctrine means by them, are two different things. On the basis of that philosophy we cannot reach or justify the latter doctrine in any true, unadulterated sense."²

THE CONSTRUCTION OF A RITSCHLIAN THEOLOGY.

Having demolished the old, the Ritschlians now set about the work of constructing a new Theology, upon the basis of Conscience or the Practical Reason. Though,

¹ *The Truth of the Christian Religion*, vol. i., chapter iv.

² *Ibid.*, p. 312.

as we said before, there are wide differences among them in this constructive work, there seems to be a general agreement upon these four points:

I. The Revelation of God is in the moral character of Jesus Christ.

"Our certainty of God is rooted in the simple fact that in Jesus we meet with a man who must hold His own against the world. For he who experiences such a compulsion through the image of Jesus that he must concede to Him this dignity, receives therewith, at the same time, the thought of a Power over all things which is not otherwise moved than through the disposition from which the life-work of Jesus has proceeded. God gives Himself to us to be recognized as this Power which is in Jesus. But then we are compelled to say that the existence of Jesus in our world is that fact through which God so touches us that He opens up intercourse with us."¹

Thus, according to Professor Hermann, a moral conviction is wrought in us that exceeds all other convictions in depth and intensity. Jesus teaches with the authority of the highest truth, and the eye of the soul recognizes that truth, just as the eye of the body knows the sunlight. The image of Jesus stamps itself upon the soul, obliterating all feebler impressions. This is not only a fact in our own personal experience but in that of myriads of others. Whoever would challenge the reality of the Christian religion must first explain away the historical fact that Jesus Christ has thus laid hold upon the deepest life of men in all ages of the Christian era.

II. Faith in God through Christ. This deep moral conviction produced by Jesus Christ paves the way and prepares the human heart for faith. This same Man,

¹ Der Verkehr des Christen mit Gott, pp. 26, 27, by Professor Hermann.

Christ Jesus, Who reveals a righteousness of God that illumines the conscience, like the light of the sun, and Who, by this power of His personal life, makes the sinner realize his own insecurity, is also the impersonation of a divine love and tenderness that is unequalled. He is not only the Judge and Conscience of men : He is, also, the Friend of sinners. Thus at the same time that by His righteousness He condemns sin, by His love He forgives sin ; thus it becomes certain to the Christian, through the Person of Jesus, that the power of God's goodness at once judges and saves him ; thus, according to Professor Hermann, Christian faith is evoked and constructed;¹ and thus, according to Professor Kaftan, Christianity becomes the religion of the Atonement. The revelation of God is not only a revelation of the Highest Good, the Highest Righteousness, but it contains as a further and essential message the proclamation of the love of God which justifies sinners and reconciles them to Himself.²

III. The kingdom of God. It is on this point, above all others, that Ritschlianism stands arrayed against Catholic theology. We give here Professor Kaftan's own words : " *Through what idea* is the Person of Christ, His appearance in the world, understood and interpreted ? If we consider this point, we light upon the distinction which obtains between the Christian faith and the ecclesiastical system of dogma. For it turns out that this idea which determines one's interpretation of the Person of Christ is different in the two cases : *In the Christian faith it is the idea of the kingdom of God ; in dogma, it is the Logos idea.* The alteration which the Christian religion sustained as the effect of this philosophical or theological revision may consequently be described in this way : *the*

¹ Der Verkehr des Christen mit Gott, pp. 20, 22.

² "The Truth of the Christian Religion," vol. ii., p. 388.

idea of the Kingdom of God was driven from the governing position, and in its place came the non-Christian, and in so far heathen, idea of the Logos.”¹

So far, therefore, as we understand Ritschlianism, the great problems of existence, self, the world and God, and their relations to one another, are to reach a higher, more satisfactory, and more convincing solution than that presented through Catholic dogma, by substituting the kingdom of God for the Logos. This is held up by the Ritschlian theologians as the Purpose of God hidden through the ages, but now revealed in Jesus Christ, and they are now working on the relation of the kingdom of Heaven, to self, the world and God Himself.

IV. History. While Ritschlianism sets its face resolutely against philosophy, it welcomes the historical argument. Indeed it is forced to do so, for if the kingdom of God means the development of a kingdom of the Highest Good among the kingdoms of the world, then the actual historical evolution of that kingdom is a fact that it cannot ignore. Ritschlian theology, however, singles out that which Ritschl himself called “value judgments,” or “worth-judgments,” as determining the advance line of historical progress. “The Christian idea of the kingdom of God is the rational idea of the Chief Good, and the Christian faith is the Highest Knowledge, answering to reason—that knowledge of the First Cause and the Final Purpose of the world that we are in search of.”² These are the determining factors of all real historical progress. “Moral life is the core of history,” and, therefore, the moral judgments of mankind are incorporated in the system of theology which Ritschlianism is constructing.

¹ “The Truth of the Christian Religion,” vol. i., pp. 89, 90.

² Ibid., vol. ii., p. 378.

THE POPULARITY OF THE RITSCHLIAN MOVEMENT.

After this brief and very imperfect sketch of Ritschlian theology, the next point that engages our attention is its rapid success and development. The reasons for this almost unprecedented success will be evident at a glance.

I. Ritschlianism appeals, as philosophy does not, to the moral side of human nature. We instinctively trust our moral intuitions ; we habitually keep weighing most men and most issues in the moral balances, and our experience of life tells us that this is the best way, and oftentimes the shortest way, of arriving at truth. When, therefore, an appeal is made to this moral faculty, and it is set before us as not only the highest of all faculties for reaching truth, but the one to which all others must be subordinated, this new method fascinates us : we stop not to question whether it is an exaggeration. It appeals so strongly to all that is best in us that we yield ourselves to its influence without a thought of its disproportion and its abnormal stimulation of a single faculty.

II. Ritschlian Theology is an *easy* theology to fall back upon. It takes a short cut across the whole field of knowledge, assuring men that by it they are put in possession of all "highest knowledge," without the unnecessary pain and drudgery of looking for corroborative testimony or qualifying considerations in the fields of logical analysis or philosophical study. In fact, philosophy and Church dogmas have only served to make the simple Revelation of God complex and hard to understand. The less the mind of the Christian is entangled in these mere philosophical and traditional explanations of Christianity, the more readily will he be able to comprehend, in its profound simplicity, the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. For such a Christian there is a certainty

of Christian faith which lifts him up into a position of independence where he can calmly dispense with these so-called aids to faith.

III. This is an age of uncertainty and the wildest confusion of religious thought. The progress of modern science is attacking the miraculous element in the Christian Revelation, and, in the minds of thousands, eliminating all traces of its supernatural character ; the higher criticism is unsettling the faith of others in the authenticity, authorship, and integrity of Old and New Testament records ; the different philosophical schools are at war one with another upon the most fundamental questions ; the science of comparative religion is bringing to light the real religious life and faith in God, of those who were formerly classed as ignorant pagans. Which way is the ordinary Christian to turn, what is he to believe?¹ Ritschlianism stands before him with the ready answer, "Turn a deaf ear to the controversies raging round you ; no need is there for you to trouble

¹ "Just at this point Ritschl's Theology clasps hands, so to speak, with ideas that are at the present moment widely current in circles that can by no means be characterized as irreligious. Many of our contemporaries who wish to be religious in their own way, nevertheless regard all statements of a positive kind on religious matters with skepticism. The specific substance of the Christian religion in particular seems to them a mystery, to which their soul maintains a guarded attitude, is recognized as such with a sort of holy awe ; but they treat dogmas and theological investigations as all but impotent attempts to conceive what is inconceivable and to name what is unnamable. Nor ought one to be surprised at the frequency with which religious minds fall into a mood of this kind ; what is it, after all, but the natural result, the precipitate, so to speak, of a long-continued negative occupation with the teaching of Scripture and the Church ? It has been so long critically pulled to pieces and reconstructed, that one has at last to confess inability to say what its true and proper substance is ; in fact, one would be as puzzled to define it as to determine the nature of the Kantian 'thing-in-itself.'"—Kant, Lotze, Ritschl, by Leonhard Stählin. Translated by Professor D. W. Simon, pp. 273, 274.

yourself with any of these perplexing questions, for they are all side issues. Here is the pathway of highest certainty. Trust Jesus Christ as the One in whom God reveals all that is necessary, and, for the rest, let 'conduct' be your guide and ruling thought in everything."

IV. Ritschlian Theology appeals to the multitude by courting a close alliance with science. Its two simple watchwords are "the highest good" and "historic facts." "This judgment as to the chief good, and therefore, as to the highest knowledge, is an *objective* judgment. It is not founded on the subjective needs and the subjective appreciation of the individual human soul, but on what is *characteristic of mankind generally.*"¹

Thus Ritschlian Theology "comes into line with other functions of *positive* science." It has to do with a *given* reality, with the representation and description of it down to the finest veins of thought. The fact that this reality does not belong to the world of sense but to the mental and historical life of humanity does not compromise the claim to the character of a positive science.²

In juxtaposition to the positivism of Comte, this new school teaches a science of Christian positivism. It refuses to go beyond the actual history of Christ's life in looking for the Revelation of God, or beyond the moral experience of mankind in interpreting that Revelation; and it goes without saying that this is another cause for its popularity.

V. It is distinctly a Protestant movement. It aims to carry out the Protestant Theology of the Reformation to its completion. Looking back, it appeals to all that is distinctively Protestant and Evangelical in the historic past for support; looking forward, it is full of the inspiration and enthusiasm of a great creative historic

¹ The Truth of the Christian Religion, vol. ii., p. 378.

² Ibid., p. 410.

movement. It would be strange, indeed, if such a movement did not enlist the generous sympathy of all those to whom the Reformation is the Golden Age of the Christian era.

THE TRUE RELATION OF ETHICS TO RELIGION.

We repeat here what we said in the last chapter in another connection: that the Church of to-day and the Church of the future may ever be grateful for the work which these earnest leaders of the latest German thought are doing. For besides showing the insufficiency of a mere philosophical basis of religion, and thus echoing what the Church herself has unfalteringly proclaimed, they are actually working out an ethical foundation for religion besides.

It is true that there is a close alliance between Catholic dogma and philosophic thought, and we may be glad, indeed, that Ritschianism has brought forward, with such prominence, the reasonableness and logical consistency of the Faith of the Church. The very denunciations which it launches against all philosophy, and this alliance of Christian dogma with philosophy, will open the eyes of many to the strong support which Reason gives to dogma. But it is *not* true that the Catholic Church has thus been implicated in the philosophical method in any such way as to substitute it for the faith of the Gospels. St. Anselm's famous saying, "*Credo, ut intelligam*," nay, the very maxim of the schoolmen themselves, *Fides precedit intellectum*, is an all-sufficient answer to that charge.¹ The facts of the case are so well known to every one familiar either with the language of the fathers or the history of Church dogma that it would be a waste of time to dwell any longer on this point.

¹ See Hampden's Bampton Lectures, p. 80.

The same may be said with regard to the recognition on the part of the Church of the Moral Sense or Practical Reason, as a faculty through which moral truth is apprehended. Though the Church has used the philosophical method in its own sphere and place she has consistently claimed a position for conscience that philosophy itself has never willingly accorded.

From the very first this has been so ; and it has continued thus down through the ages. No Christian believer could read such words of Christ as "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," or, "If any man wills to do His will, he will know of the doctrine," without feeling their force and realizing that here was an eternal truth set forth which neither Plato nor Aristotle, with all their insight, had been able to discover. From time immemorial it has been an understood fact that all philosophy had failed to acknowledge the rights and functions of conscience in the field of "Highest Knowledge;" but not until the days of the philosopher Kant himself, was a place wrought out, in what had hitherto been considered the exclusive domain of philosophy, for the Practical Reason. And the work that Ritschianism is now doing in revealing before the eyes of men the wide realm that this Practical Reason really covers, and in which it reigns supreme, will be a cause for endless gratitude to the Christian world. No longer can men look down upon the Practical Reason as an uncertain guide ; no longer can the conscience, or the moral sense, be classed as "feeling," or spoken of as though it had a closer connection with the emotional part of human nature than with the robust intellectual life. Now that the Practical Reason has been given a place side by side with the Speculative or Theoretic Reason ; now that ethics has been brought to the forefront by some of the greatest thinkers of the age, as a "Positive Science ;"

now that they have actually gone so far as to work out an ethical basis for Christianity and hold it up as a substitute for all Church dogma in such a way as to challenge the thoughtful allegiance of thousands of cultivated scholars and clergymen, the wide world will be the gainer. Hereafter the whole subject of ethics will stand in a different relation to philosophy from that which it has ever occupied before. And so also will the moral and social truths connected with the Ritschlian idea of the kingdom of God.

THE LIMITATIONS OF THE ETHICAL BASIS.

But having said this, on the positive side, we must not blind our eyes to what should also be said on the negative side.

I. This Neo-Kantian Theology, while it professes to be a "Positive Science," is in reality the purest subjectivity. While, like physical science itself, it is loud and bitter in its denunciation of metaphysics, it is all the while metaphysical in the very process it employs to work out its thoughts and formulate its doctrines. No one can read, for example, such a book as Professor Kaftan's "Truth of the Christian Religion" without feeling that, by its intensely subjective thought and language it has made exactly that kind of a demand upon his concentrated attention and closeness of thought that a metaphysical book requires. Indeed it is a question whether any reader who has not had some kind of a metaphysical training would be able to catch or understand the meaning of the writer at all.

II. The whole theological system of Ritschl is based upon a peculiar *theory of cognition*. If that fails the whole falls to the ground. Kant, Lotze, and Ritschl have all endeavored to form in the human consciousness it-

self, apart from the theoretic reason, a basis for positive knowledge, and in this attempt they have all signally failed. What "atoms" are to the man of science, that "things-in-themselves" are to the Ritschlian school; and this is the rock upon which the whole Kantian and Neo-Kantian school makes shipwreck. Drowning men catch at straws, and Ritschl endeavors to save himself from being submerged by leaving Kant and striking out for Lotze.¹

But Lotze's postulate, that things-in-themselves are "souls" cannot save him, and in his attempt to utilize Lotze and employ his hypothesis as a basis for all Christian theology, he loses all hold upon reality. After asserting in a very positive manner that we cannot know "things-in-themselves,"² Ritschl attempts to draw a distinction between "things-in-themselves" and "actual things," which, to any ordinary achromatic vision, is so ethereal as to be as invisible as ether itself. We can understand Kant when he differentiates between a thing-in-itself and its appearance, but we are hopelessly baffled

¹ "We have already remarked in general that Ritschl on this point professes to be a follower of Lotze. Appealing to Lotze he teaches that we know things in their phenomena. This seems a very plausible formula. All the difficulties which arose in the way of the Kantian theory of cognition in consequence of the distinction drawn between the thing-in-itself and phenomena seem to be thus escaped. But how are we to understand this formula? . . . Ritschl has told us that the thing-in-itself is merely a formal conception. At the same time we are also instructed that things ought to be conceived after the analogy of our soul. But if we are to conceive of things as soul-like, that is, as real after the manner of our soul, how can we at the same time hold them to be merely formal conceptions? And if the thing-in-itself is merely a formal conception, what remains that can be said to manifest itself in phenomena, *i.e.*, to appear in appearances? What is the subject that appears? The noumenon or the phenomenon? Are the things we cognize in phenomena nothing but formal conceptions?"—Kant, Lotze, Ritschl, by Leonhard Stählin, pp. 166, 167.

² Theologie und Metaphysik, pp. 33, 34, 35.

in all attempts to understand Ritschl when he points to an invisible something between the two. For there is no *tertium quid* between the *noumenon* and the *phenomenon*—the thing-in-itself and the way in which it appears to us. As a matter of fact it is a distinction without a difference, and when Ritschl speaks, now of the “thing-in-itself” and then of “an actual thing,” he is only calling the same thing by two different names, or, to put it plainly, is talking tautological nonsense.

He has probably introduced this *tertium quid* because he shrinks, on the one hand, from facing Kant’s pitiless conclusion that things-in-themselves are altogether unknowable, and on the other, from confessing outright that we know only the appearance of things. And it is more than strange to hear one who assumes this position, loudly proclaiming that his new theological system is closely allied to scientific positivism.

It is aside from our purpose to go any further into this purely speculative discussion ; our only object in dwelling upon this subject at all, has been to show that the whole religious fabric built up by Ritschlian theologians has for its chief corner-stone a scientific theory of cognition upon which even the experts in philosophical questions, who devote their whole lives to this specialty, are at hopeless variance among themselves. The Ritschlians *apparently* ask us to trust our moral convictions alone, in the domain of “highest truth ;” but when we look below the surface we discover that all the while they are *really* asking us to embrace a new theory of cognition, which in itself is one of the most metaphysical, highly wrought, and speculative hypotheses that ever originated in the human brain.

Let us now see whither this theory of cognition leads us. If we cannot know things-in-themselves, and only cognize them as they appear in their relation to us, then

all human knowledge is restricted to appearances. This limitation of knowledge to phenomena involves the elimination from theology of all the objects of the Christian faith as they are in themselves. We cannot, therefore, even know God in Himself,¹ and this involves further consequences. Starting from Ritschl's own premises it can be conclusively shown that God is not Love, that God is not a Person, that God is not a Reality, at least, as far as any human knowledge is concerned.²

III. Ritschlianism courts the name of a positive science. It breathes the atmosphere, and sometimes uses the very language of Positivism, and, like Positivism, it is *Agnostic*.

It ignores the true function of the reason. It refuses, and that, too, in the most arbitrary manner, to make any compromise with, or tolerate any interference from, the speculative reason. It tells us that the only position of safety is to keep theology strictly nailed down to the ethical basis, co-ordinating and correlating different ethical truths with one another, but never allowing them to form any coalition with the old philosophic or metaphysical method of inquiry. Thus our whole thought is made the slave of conscience, not only in the moral sphere but in every other sphere. This is not only reformation, it is anarchy, it is nihilism, in the field of human consciousness itself. In the language of Professor Orr, "Faith and reason are stretched apart until no point of contact is allowed to remain between them. Religious knowledge is put in one compartment of the mind, theoretic or scientific knowledge in another, and no relations of friendship or agreement are allowed to subsist be-

¹ Kant, Lotze, and Ritschl, by Professor Stählin, p. 186 ff.

² Ibid., pp. 192-204.

tween the two. This is to set up dualism in the house of the soul.”¹

Professing to set us free from the shackles of Catholic dogma and give us true evangelical freedom, this theological school brings us under a far more autocratic and tyrannical form of mental bondage, and there never was more abject slavery. It needs but a moment’s thought to see the falseness of this position. “Ritschl allows us to consider the value of revelation, but not its meaning. But we are intelligent, therefore we cannot desist from asking the meaning.”²

Again, Ritschlianism ignores Mysticism. For mysticism postulates that there is another spiritual way of reaching God than through the faith produced by moral convictions of the “Highest truth,” as it has been revealed once for all in the historic life of Jesus. It is inconsistent and false, according to Ritschl himself, to hold that apart from that completed revelation, there is any spiritual influence of God, acting immediately upon the human soul, through which we enter into spiritual union or communion with Him. It is hard for any devout Christian mind to take in all that this denial means. It cuts away not only the foundation of all sacramental religion, but the reality of most of those influences that belong to the devotional life of the believer, and substitutes nothing in their place, but a cold, colorless, and austere religion founded upon the combination of faith with ethics. It is hard to think ourselves into the position of a consistent Ritschlian, who resigns all that does not square with his theory of Christianity; but the very attempt to do so shows us that it will be as difficult for

¹ Ritschlian Theology, by Professor J. D. Orr, D.D., in *The Thinker*, No. II., vol. ii., pp. 147, 148.

² Professor William Clark, LL.D., of Trinity College, Toronto, *in loc.*

Christians as for pliilosophers thus to deny the instincts of their own human nature.

IV. But if Ritschlianism thus creates an irreconcilable antagonism—a peculiar dualism of its own—in the human consciousness, the slavery of a method which leads to such results becomes intensified when we turn to revelation itself. Ritschlianism has much to say about *the effect* of Christ's Personality upon humanity, but it has little or nothing to say about the Personality *itself*. What will it do with Christ? Who is Christ and what is Christ? Where did He come from? Where did He go after His ascension? What is the *meaning* of those tremendous events in earthly history—the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, the Ascension? How is conscience, alone and by itself, to explain that meaning without aid from revelation and reason? These are questions that Ritschlian theology cannot blink or pass by. The world will not be satisfied until this new theology constructs, from that ethical basis upon which it lays such stress, such an interpretation of Christian truth as will adequately and convincingly answer all these questions. It is well enough to say that the Logos idea has pushed out the idea of the kingdom of God. But even if the new theology works out from the new basis, if that is supposable, the relation of the kingdom of Heaven to self, the world, and God, as completely and thoroughly as the old theology worked out the relation of Christ, as the Logos, to these eternal mysteries of existence, still the question remains, the answer to which has always determined the character of every Christian system of theology: “What think ye of Christ; whose Son is He?” To this question Ritschlianism returns, and *can* return, no answer at all, for by its very theory of cognition we cannot know Christ in *Himself*. It is hopelessly and helplessly shut off from all thought of Christ's life before He

was born in Bethlehem, and from all contemplation of His existence after He disappeared from the eyes of men. We only know Him as a meteoric light from heaven which suddenly flashed out in human history and then vanished in darkness.

This refusal of Ritschlian theology to affirm anything about the nature of Christ places it in a very awkward and untenable position. "According to Ritschl's system Christ had no real existence prior to His human birth. He is not, therefore, the eternally existent One, but One Who has come into existence in time. A God who has come into existence is a self-contradiction ; it is, in fact, a piece of heathen mythology which he has introduced into Christian theology. For how otherwise could the apotheosis of a man, on the part of the believing Church, be regarded than as an act of pagan deification ? Ritschl professes to aim at the extirpation of what he describes as heathen metaphysics from Christian theology, and on this pretence removes a number of elements, apart from which the Christian religion is not what it professes to be—what it has been believed to be. Whilst engaged in this struggle against so-called heathen metaphysics he admits into his own theology an element which exhibits a manifest relapse into heathen notions of the divine.

We, for our part, are unable to discover anything in his Christology that raises it above the level of simple rationalism. And the appending of the title of deity to the picture of Christ which he has drawn, is a pagan procedure for which no justification whatever is offered."¹

Furthermore when we turn from the pre-existence to the post-existence of Christ similar difficulties arise at every step. From this subject Ritschlian theology shuts itself out also ; for, according to its theory of cognition, as we only know Christ in His relations to men, we cannot

¹ Leonhard Stählin : Kant, Lotze, and Ritschl, p. 221.

possibly know anything about Him after those earthly relations ceased. As will be seen at a glance, Ritschl here parts company not only with all Catholic theology but also with all the Epistles of the New Testament.

Compare, for example, the very subordinate place which the Resurrection of Christ occupies in the teachings of the Ritschlian school with the words of St. Paul. As an offset to the assertion of Professor Harnack, that there is no real historic proof that Christ ever rose from the dead, and to the manner in which scores of others explain away His physical resurrection so that there is nothing left of it as an historic fact, St. Paul says clearly and distinctly, "If Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ."¹ And if the Resurrection itself is treated thus, the Ascension of Christ and Coming of the Holy Ghost fall so far into the background as to be almost, if not altogether, invisible in Ritschlian theology. And as they thus recede from view, all that part of New Testament teaching which is grounded on the words of Christ Himself as they are recorded in the last chapters of St. John's Gospel, and also all that part of the teachings of the Epistles which relate to the work of the ascended Christ in heaven, and of the Holy Ghost on earth are abrogated.

Ritschlianism points to the historic Christ, to the earthly life of Christ as it appears on the page of history. It says, "There is the only fact with which we have to deal. There the revelation *begins* and there it *ends*. To go beyond this is to go beyond actual fact." It refuses to be entrapped into the question of the pre-existence of Christ because that is purely "a philosophical question." On the other hand, it refuses to consider any of those

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 14, 15.

great truths that flow from the Resurrection and Ascension, the kind of truths that St. Paul and the writer of the Epistles to the Hebrews emphasize, because these are purely "mystical questions." They relate to the work of Christ as Prophet, Priest, and King *in Heaven*, not on earth, and presuppose a closer union of Christ in heaven with His disciples on earth than that of the historic Christ in the days of His flesh. For Ritschlians to allow this would be fatal, for it opens the door to the whole sacramental teaching of the Catholic Church.

Well may we ask, What is left of Christianity when all this is eliminated; and what has the new theology to substitute in the place of the old theology, which for some strange, unaccountable reason Divine Providence has allowed to hold undisputed sway over the destinies of the Christian Church ever since the second century, (or for nine-tenths of the whole Christian era)? Nothing but a vague, impersonal and unattractive idea of the growth of a kingdom of God on earth out of a seed planted by Jesus Christ, nearly two thousand years ago; the ruling principle of which is a society formed to seek the "chief good," and the ruling force of which is the simple remembrance of the historic Jesus. "All this, of course, is fatal to a Christology that claims to embody objective truth—it becomes an impossibility. Not even the reduced and modified image of Christ set up by Ritschl can hold its ground. According to the principles of his theory of cognition, the few positive Christological elements which he himself endeavors to retain, are deprived of their objective truth and must be treated as expressions of states of religious feeling. The object of Christology, in a word, is resolved into a representation generated in the believing mind by its own religious life."¹ Professor Kaftan tells us that Ritschlianism is

¹ Kant, Lotze, Ritschl, p. 226.

the culmination of Protestant theology, and the carrying out to its ultimate point, of the Protestant Reformation. Are Protestants willing to accept such a spokesman ; willing to give up the pre-existence of Christ as the Son of God, and the post-existence of Christ, Who, as the Head of the Church, is with His disciples "always even to the end of the world ;" willing to say that the ponderings of the ages about the nature of Christ were a foolish loss of time ; willing to affirm that a man may be either a Sabellian or an Arian, an Apollinarian or a Nestorian, and yet be nearer the truth than any orthodox believer ; willing to assert that the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper are meaningless save as mementos of an historic Christ who has had no contact with his Church for eighteen hundred years ; willing to deny that there is a Holy Ghost and that prayer to God has any objective efficacy ?

Last, but not least, is not all this teaching of the Ritschlian school an illustration of the way in which, not only history, but religious thought, repeats itself ? And are we not witnessing now, in the ending of the nineteenth century, a similar thought-movement to that which characterized the ending of the first, and to which St. John so distinctly refers in his Epistles ?

No terms are strong enough for Professor Harnack to use, in animadverting upon Gnosticism as the parent of all the philosophical errors in which Christian theology has been implicated. But when, as a Ritschlian, he proclaims that he and his school possess the key to a higher knowledge (*γνώσις*) than that of Christian theology, is he not, in another way, unconsciously echoing the very ruling idea of the Gnostics themselves ? Certainly the analogy is very striking.

The Gnostic school, from the *philosophical* point of view, claimed to be in possession of a field of knowledge

that lay behind the objective world ; and, applying this knowledge, the Docetists taught that Christ's body could not be like other human bodies. It was only an appearance.

The Ritschlian school, from the *ethical* point of view, claims also to be in possession of a "Highest Knowledge," by which all other kinds of knowledge must be judged ; and to which, all philosophical inquiries, all spiritual or mystical instincts, all physical or sensuous questions, must be strictly subordinated. We have seen that the theory of cognition, upon which this claim is based, necessitates the belief that we cannot know a thing-in-itself ; and that this, in turn, carries with it the conclusion that we cannot know God in Himself, or Christ in Himself, or any of the objects of the Christian faith in themselves. Nothing is, therefore, left but phenomena, and here, at first sight, Nineteenth Century Ritschlianism and First Century Gnosticism *apparently* occupy positions that are directly the reverse of one another : for whereas Docetism proclaims that we cannot know Christ after the flesh, because His flesh was an unreality, Ritschlianism asserts that Christ after the flesh, or the "Historic Christ," is the *only* reality with which we have to do. But the difference is only apparent, it is not real. For, applying the Ritschlian theory of cognition to appearances themselves, it involves the conclusion that we do not know even phenomena.

"Ritschl's own statements regarding sensation, perception, phenomenon, compel him to deny the objective reality of the phenomenon. Consequently phenomena exist not : and things as unities of the phenomenal also have no existence. Neither the one nor the other is a reality. Nothing has real existence but the thing-in-itself, . . . and Ritschl pronounced the thing-in-itself unknowable."¹

¹ Kant, Lotze, Ritschl, by Leonhard Stählin, p. 178.

This conclusion is startling. If it cannot be disproved, then Ritschlianism not only resembles the Docetism it condemns (apart, of course, from its dualistic teachings), but goes far beyond Docetism itself into the regions of vagueness; for whereas Docetism means that we know Christ, not after the flesh, but in a higher, more satisfactory way, Ritschlianism means that we can know Christ in Himself—as an objective reality outside of our consciousness—*in no way at all.*

V. By ignoring philosophy, and stating that it makes not a particle of difference whether Christianity is Pantheistic or Deistic, Metaphysical or Mystical, or anything else; by thus treating lightly, and almost contemptuously, the questions which most minds are pondering at the present day, Ritschlianism, by its indifference, is playing into the hands of the adversaries of the faith, in such a way as to endanger its own life. Especially is this the case with regard to the Higher Criticism. As Dr. Orr well says: “The members of the Ritschlian school are wont to make such concessions in regard to the New Testament as are barely reconcilable with belief in its trustworthiness. They maintain the Gospel narrative in bulk, but allow it to be freely questioned in detail. Sayings and doings of Christ which do not suit them are easily got rid of on critical principles. The presence of legendary and non-historical matter, sometimes in large quantities, is freely admitted. Harnack does not hesitate to affirm that there is no historical proof of the Resurrection. Thus, instead of using their principle of faith as a check against the inroads of destructive criticism—as, if it has any worth, they ought to do—they make concessions to their opponents which practically mean the cutting away of the bough they themselves are sitting on.”¹

¹ Professor J. D. Orr, D.D., in *The Thinker*, No. II., vol. ii., pp. 145, 146.

Bearing all these facts in mind, it is evident that Ritschlianism contains in itself the germs of its own dissolution. Already its recognized leaders are beginning to differ among themselves on important points, and it is only a question of time as to when the bond which holds them together will become a rope of sand.

Meanwhile it is plain that those who are striving to construct an ethical basis of the Gospel in such a way that they will "secure for religion a domain within the sphere of feeling and practical judgment, into which theoretical reason cannot intrude," are obliged to deny all those elements of a supernatural Revelation of God in Christ which cannot be interpreted and directly explained by conscience itself.¹ Denying these, ethical Christianity preaches a false Gospel.

¹ "In looking back upon the vast undertaking of Kant's mighty intellect, one can scarcely at last avoid the feeling of being the witness of a tragedy. Held in the grip of a necessary principle he is driven onward by it upon an inevitable path; but while he supposes himself to be engaged in establishing the principle in all its aspects and bearings, his labor is really spent—unconsciously, unintentionally spent—in demonstrating its futility and exhibiting its untruth. This is nothing else than the tragedy of the modern mind itself in its struggle to assert for itself a false autonomy;—in the very measure in which it seeks to lay in itself its own foundations, in that same measure does it labor at undermining them."—Kant, Lotze, Ritschi, by Leonhard Stählin, pp. 81, 82.

"There can be no more demoralizing and soul-deadening preparation for the study of theology than that which is based on the Critical Philosophy."—Windischmann.

CHAPTER V

NATURAL RELIGION, AS A BASIS FOR CHRISTIANITY, AND ITS LIMITATIONS

SYNOPSIS

- I. The modern effort to unify all the religions of the world. That effort is stimulated by the spirit of *Christian charity*. But this is no New Endeavour. The Divine side of other Religions was recognized ; (a) By the Jewish Prophets ; (b) By the Primitive Church.
- II. The two Primal Truths of Natural Religion are ; (a) The Natural Fatherhood of God ; (b) The Natural Sonship of Man.
- III. But Heathen Monotheism is not Christian Monotheism, for Christ, revealing Immortality, at the same time reveals (a) The *Eternal Fatherhood of God* ; (b) The *Eternal Sonship of Man*.
- IV. The present tendency of Religious Thought to ignore the latter and lay undue emphasis on the former. This leads inevitably to a confusion of Christian thought and empties New Testament Words of their divine meaning.

THE science of comparative religion is of recent origin, yet it is advancing *pari passu* with the growth of knowledge regarding the sacred books and religious customs, the beliefs and traditions, of different countries in the historic past. Though most of its generalizations have not yet emerged from the hypothetical stage into definite premises, and though its hypotheses are being modified, recast, and, in some cases, abandoned, as decade follows decade, it is continuously enlarging the field of our knowledge regarding these ancient religions, and with each forward step there is a general increase of interest

in its work. As the broad mantle of Christian charity spreads itself over the religious life of the past; as our hearts go forth to our pagan forefathers of other days, who knew no brighter light than "the light of Asia," or the religious teachings of Greece, or Persia, or Egypt; as we think of the myriads to-day, bound to us by the common tie of blood, who are blindly worshipping at heathen shrines, the old-time anathemas die on our lips. No longer do we think of the ignorance, the idolatries, the vices of the pagan world; the growing instinct of Christian love has taught us to look for what is divine, not what is devilish, in these religions, and as we strive to separate the good from the evil, we discover that each, in its way, is a Revelation of the highest life of its own race; and that in its gropings for God, it struck some notes that vibrate in unison with the full chord of Christianity. In the writings of Confucius, in the sacred books of Brahmans and Buddhists, and in the Koran of Mohamet, there are passages which bear no distant likeness to the teachings of Christ Himself.

"There is what may be called the internal evidence of the world's religious literature, the intellectual illumination, the high moral precepts, the flashes of spiritual insight which it contains. The proportion of these things has been often exaggerated by detachment of them from their context. They are rare gems in an earthly matrix; dust of gold in a base alloy. But still there they are. The fact of them remains, and must be taken into account. By themselves, indeed, they would hardly convey the inspiration of their utterers or authors to a mind otherwise indisposed to believe it, and might easily be attributed to what is commonly called unassisted or natural reason. But they are parts of a whole, and help to link the lower and more human-seeming creeds, to those of whose divine origination there is other and stronger

proof; thus emphasizing the ultimate unity of religion as well as its universality, and suggesting the presence in its earlier phases of the same Spirit that has guided the mature results.”¹

In every nation we discover devout, self-sacrificing, pure-hearted seekers after God. In every religion, beneath the surface, are manifested the same deep longings after the vision of God and immortal life, the same sense of imperfection and the same reaching out for an unattainable ideal, that exist in the breast of the Christian believer.

In this sense there is not only a unity in the religious life of all seekers after God, but also a unity of the religions in which that life expressed itself: and every unprejudiced Christian will be helped and stimulated in following, step by step, the great work which the science of Comparative Religion is now doing, by tracing out on the one hand the points of agreement and the common characteristics which these religions manifest; and, on the other, their resemblances to Christianity itself.

THE PRIMAL TRUTHS COMMON TO NATURAL AND REVEALED RELIGION.

But it has not been left, as so many suppose, for the nineteenth century to begin this work. It was commenced ages ago by Jewish prophets themselves. Amid all their burning warnings against heathenism, their fierce denunciations of its polluting vices, and their intense hatred of its rank idolatry, their Jewish prejudices did not blind their eyes to the religious instincts of the Gentile world; that recognition grows stronger and stronger as we pass from Moses to Malachi, and the Prophet Haggai even goes so far as to proclaim the

¹ *Bampton Lectures for 1894*, by the Rev. I. R. Illingworth, p. 170.

promised Messiah as the Desire of all Nations.¹ Still more unmistakable is the attitude of Christ's own followers in the primitive Church. To them, the Christ-light, casting its radiance back into the past, made, not only all Judaism, but also all heathenism Christian ground. In almost every pagan cult they distinguished "fore-gleams of Christianity." Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and others have anticipated the inquiries, and many of the discoveries of the Modern Science of Comparative Religion, by fifteen or sixteen centuries, and it is hard to find a more generous recognition of the profound truths which underlie the faiths of the Ancient World, than that which appears on the pages of these old time writers.

Chief among these truths stands out the Universal Fatherhood of God. It is not too much to say that this is the very corner-stone of Christianity itself, and it was set forth as such by Christ, on the threshold of His public ministry, when, in the Sermon on the Mount He appealed to the multitudes as children of God, and then taught them to pray : "Our Father which art in Heaven."² For Christians to deny that a child of Adam is also a child of God, is to deny what Christ Himself taught. There are no "uncovenanted mercies." The more this fundamental truth is understood, emphasized and preached, not only in the Christian world, but by Christian missionaries in meeting the heathen world, the more blessed the results will be ; and the sooner we may look for the conversion of the latter to Christ. So also is it with other truths which Christianity and heathen religions hold in common.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN NATURAL AND REVEALED RELIGION.

But here the danger comes in, and that it is a very real danger, the history of the recent Parliament of Religions

¹ Haggai ii. 7.

² St. Matt. v. 9, 45, 48 ; vi. 4, 8, 9, etc.

most unmistakably shows. The God and Father of the whole human race has revealed Himself in the Person of His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, and the Christian world of to-day can no more go back of that final Revelation, than the Scientific world of to-day can go back of the law of gravitation, to meet men on the ground of Kepler or Copernicus.

It is perfectly true that upon the plane of a science of comparative religion, Christianity must be studied, and must take its place, side by side with the other religions of the world; that it contains elements common to all, and that chief among those elements is the belief in the Fatherhood of God. But while Christianity, as a historic religion, contains all this, it contains, at the same time, infinitely more, and Christian believers cannot meet the followers of other religions on equal terms, without putting themselves in a false position; for Christian Monotheism means something distinctly different from, and much higher than heathen monotheism, and even Judaism. All will, indeed, acquiesce in Professor Kuenen's statement when he says: "What did the Israelitish prophets accomplish? What was the result of their work, and what value are we to assign to it? Ethical monotheism was their creation. They have themselves ascended to the belief in one, only, holy, and righteous God who realizes His will or moral good in the world, and they have, by preaching and writing, made that belief the inalienable property of our race."¹

But no Christian can accept this as a *full* statement of the truth as it now stands out with the Christ-light reflected back upon it. "If the Incarnation is indeed a fact, if God has indeed spoken to us in His Son, if the New Testament is in any degree a faithful record of His teaching and of the teaching of those who re-

¹ Prophets of Israel.

ceived their instruction from His lips, then the divine choice of the nation of Israel to be the object of a special discipline, and the recipient of an unique revelation cannot possibly be called in question. The view which regards the religion of Israel as only ‘one of the principal religions of the world,’ maintaining that between it and all the other forms of religion ‘there exists no specific difference,’ is, to the believing Christian, absolutely untenable. For it assumes that all religions alike are but ‘so many manifestations of the religious spirit of mankind,’ and that there is no such thing as a special divine revelation. Let us fully admit that God *left not Himself without witness* among the heathen nations of antiquity; that many strivings, and very noble strivings, after truth are to be found in other religions than that of Israel; that these too in their appointed way formed part of the divine preparation for the Incarnation; yet from the Christian point of view it is impossible to class them together. Christianity stands apart from all other religions as the final revelation of God to man, and the religion of Israel stands apart from all other pre-Christian religions as the special preparation for that unique event which is the fundamental fact of Christianity.”¹

That God is the universal Father is indeed a fundamental truth which lies at the basis of most if not all religions, Christianity included, but while Christianity comprehends all that natural religion means by this truth, the latter does not comprehend all that the Christian religion means. And for the Christian believer—for the sake of religious unity—to meet the followers of natural religion on their own ground, is not only to sacrifice the higher for the lower, but to place revealed religion on an untrue ground, and create in the minds of those others a false impression regarding it. For the

¹ Kirkpatrick’s Doctrine of the Prophets, pp. 4, 5.

Fatherhood of God means to the Christian world a Father Who has *spoken*, a Father Who has revealed Himself and His own personality in His only begotten Son, Whom He has sent into the world ; a Father Who has disclosed His own nature in that Being Who said “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father ;”¹ a Father Who is known as a Person, *only* in and through Jesus Christ our Lord.

So also is it with the correlative truth of human sonship. While it is perfectly true that there are no uncovenanted mercies,² and that every child of Adam is a child of God, under the Covenant of Nature for this life, it is *not* true that he is a child of God, under the Covenant of Grace, for the life to come. It was not until Jesus Christ appeared that life and immortality were brought to light. The general silence of the Old Testament about the whole subject of immortality, except in a few words of the later prophets, was a fact recognized even by the Sadducees of Christ’s time. It is only to those who are born “not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God,” that Christ gives power “to become the sons of God.”³ Indeed, we are expressly told not only that “Eternal Life is in His Son,” but that “he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”⁴

Religious unity is a consummation that we all devoutly pray for, and the intense desire to show the spirit of Christian charity to all seekers for God, is a longing born out of the very heart of Christianity ; but when, for the sake of such unity, Christians ignore the difference be-

¹ St. John xiv. 9.

² How the idea of “uncovenanted mercies” ever became prevalent after the emphatic and reiterated statements in the Book of Genesis, and especially in the ninth chapter of that book, it is hard to see.

³ St. John i. 12.

⁴ 1 John v. 11, 12.

tween the heathen and the Christian conception of the Fatherhood of God ; or proclaim that one who stands as a child of God for *this* life can also claim to be an immortal child of God for the life to come,¹ they are not only robbing New Testament words of their distinct and definite meaning but are in grave peril of ignoring, obscuring, sacrificing Revelation itself.

To proclaim one aspect of truth while the other and greater is withheld, is to stop at a half truth, and, as we have said again and again, a half truth, alone and by itself, often leads to the most dangerous of errors.

In this case, it promotes the greatest confusion of ideas regarding the verities of the Christian faith, not only in heathen but in Christian lands, and such is the actual effect that we are witnessing to-day in popular religious thought.

THE ERRORS OF PAN-RELIGIONISM.

There are indeed few thinkers who do not admit the superior moral dignity of Jesus Christ to all other men. No one dreams of placing any other Master beside Him who, in the words of John Stuart Mill, was "the greatest Reformer and Martyr to His mission that the world has yet seen." And yet, modern thought in its reason-

¹ We do not enter here at all into the question of the Salvation of the heathen world. It is one thing to proclaim to those who *hear* the Gospel Message, that they must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved : it is quite another thing to affirm that those who have *never heard* the Gospel shall be damned. To state an affirmative does not always mean to deny its opposite. The Church of Christ is bound to deliver a particular message and to work within particular conditions in saving men, but this does not mean that Christ himself is limited by the same restrictions : and Christ, in more than one place, tells us that multitudes shall come from the east and from the west, to sit down in the Kingdom of God while the *children of the kingdom* themselves shall be cast into outer darkness.

ing from Nature to God, is making it more and more the fashion to regard the difference between Christianity and all other religions as only one of degree. The words of a very distinguished clergyman and author, "But if Christ, the Light of the World, was first, Buddha, the light of Asia, was second"—express the opinion of an increasing body of modern religionists.

The distinctive teaching of the New Testament is thus lost sight of and forgotten by the advocates of the new faith. It is driven completely out of mind by the dominating influences of the modern Gospel, and the pressing, impetuous desire for such a religious unity as we have depicted.

Christianity, men say, must be treated just like any other religion. We can only estimate its true value by comparing it, side by side, with other faiths of the world, and if it really stands among them as the only one that is directly from God, then it will reveal its worth by its power of harmonizing all the rest. If, on the one hand, it sets forth higher ethical principles and purer theological truths than they, comprehending all that is good in them ; they, on the other hand, set forth the different ways in which different races, with their racial distinctions, approach God. To these, Christianity must yield, if religious unity is ever to take place. It must sacrifice its peculiar points of difference from them ; and be so modified and adapted to their needs as to embrace and harmonize all those distinctive features which make each national religion a power in that part of the world where it has exerted its sway. The Jew will never yield to the Christian, nor the Buddhist nor Mahomedan forsake his own creed, without some such compromise ; and thousands, to-day, hold that this is the only way in which the world is to be converted to a higher faith. It is prophesied that the time will come when the mission-

ary work of the church in heathen lands will become an anachronism. Indeed, some rebel already against the stigma attached to the words "heathen" and "pagan," as implying that heathen and pagan men are less worshippers of the one true God than Christians themselves; and repudiate, as a relic of the Middle Ages, the idea that these are any farther from Him, or less the recipients of His favor, than those brought up under the shadow of the cross.

God, it is said, is the loving Father of all; in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is "accepted of him." Christians, with their narrow orthodoxy, do not take in or realize the unfathomable depths of the love of God. The exclusiveness of the Church is the brand upon her name, convicting her of a want of Christ's own virtue of charity. Christ, in His far-sightedness, knew better, and lovingly held out His arms to those whom she excommunicates; therefore, while the civilized world enthusiastically accepts Christ Himself, it repudiates and forsakes His Church. This, it is argued, is a potent cause why the Church has lost her hold upon the masses in civilized lands. Christ appeals to the hearts of the people; she does not; she has been weighed in the balances, by the progress of enlightenment, and has been found wanting. Toleration has become the watch-word of the times; yet none are more intolerant of those believers who hold to the old orthodox faith itself, than the very men who shout this shibboleth. And if this is so in Christian lands, it is beginning to be no less so in heathen lands also. The greatest adversaries to the Christian Faith in India, for example, are not Buddhists and Brahmans and outsiders, but those members of the *Brahmo Somaj* and of the *Arya Somaj*, who have, themselves, been tolerated and semi-Christianized. The result of educating them to embrace partially, but not

wholly, the principles of the Christian religion, has been to make them the most intolerant of all their countrymen. Instead of accepting Christianity as the absolute revelation from God to man, they are clamoring, to-day, it is said, to found a new church of their own, in which they can worship an "Oriental Christ," undisturbed by the *European* ideas of the Gospel.

Natural religion, therefore, however ethical it becomes in its search for God, falls infinitely short of the self-revelation of God in the Person of Jesus Christ, and those who express the spiritual in the terms of the natural, instead of contrasting the two and interpreting natural religion in the light of New Testament truth, are preaching a false Gospel.

CHAPTER VI

THE SOCIAL BASIS OF CHRISTIANITY AND ITS LIMITATIONS

SYNOPSIS

- I. Dominating power of Civilization as Society grows more Compact. Thus, already, Christianity is considered, by many, as a *product* of Civilization.
- II. Relation of Christianity to Civilization a very complex question, (a) Because Greek and Roman Civilization *preceded* Christianity ; (b) Because Greek and Roman Civilization were *prolonged by* Christianity ; (c) Because a Christianized Civilization results, which is *different* from Christianity itself.
- III. What is this Christianized Civilization ? Is it an Organism ? No. Mr. Herbert Spencer's Metaphor conveys only a half truth, because, (a) Civilized Society is an organism only in so far as it forms a part of the Organism of Nature ; (b) Civilized Society contains forces that are distinctly supernatural in their origin, and which, in so far as they are present, show it to be *inorganic*.
- IV. Hence arise in Civilized Society, apparently irreconcilable Antagonisms ; (a) Nature and Free-Will ; (b) Individualism and Socialism ; (c) Socialism and Christianity. All these Antagonisms are growing, not decreasing, and apart from Christianity they will never be harmonized.
- V. Attempt of Civilized Society to Secularize Christianity. Visible in, (a) Secularization of Charity ; (b) Secularization of Gospel Teachings ; (c) Substituting Ethical Effects for Spiritual Causes ; (d) Making Human Experience the test of Doctrine.
- VI. The Limitations of Social Christianity. (a) It subordinates the Divine to the Social Standard ; (b) It intensifies the Old Dualism between the Natural and the Spiritual ; (c) When it

will have no further Secular Benefit to gain from Christianity it will be prepared to *reject* Christianity. Signs of this already visible.

IT is evident to everyone that we are now living in a time of great social movements, which have had no counterpart in the whole history of the past, and of which no accurate forecast can be made for the future. From the days of the War of Independence in America, and the French Revolution in Europe, the power of the people has been gradually expanding; classes have been disintegrating, social life has been growing more compact, and social influences have been asserting themselves with ever-increasing distinctness.

The very term Socialist, which in the days of Louis Blanc, Karl Marx, and Ferdinand Lasalle, bore the stigma of opprobrium, is no longer looked upon as a synonym for ignorant fanaticism, but as the sign of an upheaving force which is bound to have its way and which the wise have learned to respect. The popular interest, which a quarter of a century since was riveted upon material science and the study of nature, has now been extended to the study of human nature; of the making of sociological books there is no end; and if the unifying influences of civilization are going to develop in the same ratio in days to come as in days gone by; if the way in which widely separated nations have already been brought together, in these first fifty years after the invention of the railway and telegraph, is any criterion of what will continue to take place in the coming Twentieth Century, then, it needs no prophet's eye to foresee that the study of social science is destined to assume a place of ever-increasing importance; that the power of civilization will more and more monopolize the attention, the interest, and even reverence of men, as the dominating influence

in the making of human history, and that sociology itself, in the end, will threaten to usurp the time-honored pre-eminence of theology as "the Queen of Sciences."

Already, indeed, this tendency has begun to show itself. That word "Civilization," which an hundred years ago was absent from every English dictionary in its present meaning,¹ now rivals, in the mind of untold multitudes, in depth of significance and largeness of meaning, the word Christianity itself. In place of regarding civilization as a product of Christianity, men are coming more and more to look upon Christianity as a product of civilization, and not a few are even going so far as to consider it a religion, which, when its work is accomplished, is destined to be absorbed and lost in the progress of mankind.

In other words, while some, as we have seen in preceding chapters, are unwilling to accept a Christianity which does not square with scientific induction, or cannot be tested by scientific methods ; and while others demand that it must rest upon a philosophical basis and be tested by the principles of a rational psychology before it can be received, others still, taking their stand upon its social basis, declare that they will accept only that part of the religion of Christ which has been thoroughly tested by the experience of mankind and proved to have been useful to civilization itself.

This practically becomes the highest authority which they acknowledge, and it is an authority which puts civilization first, the revelation of God second. A new question is thus forced upon our attention ; the relation of civilization to Christianity, and the respective claim of

¹ "Civilisation," as defined in Johnson's Dictionary of 1755, is "a law, act of justice or judgment, which renders a criminal process civil ; which is performed by turning our information into an inquest, or the contrary."

each upon our conscience. And it is a question so involved and intricate in its nature, and so new to apologetic thought, that its solution is by no means easy.

In one sense, Christianity and civilization are not rivals to one another, and cannot be separated. It is a matter of common observation that the geographical boundaries of the one are coterminous with those of the other; it is a twice-told tale that where Christianity goes, civilization follows, and that there has been a widespread tendency of late among unchristianized nations (of which Japan is a striking example) to enter into the great family of Christian nations and accept their religion, not for any spiritual reason, but simply because it seems necessary for men to be Christianized before they can be toned up to the high pitch of civilized life; and Mr. Lecky has shown, very forcibly, in his "History of European Morals," how largely the life of Europe has been inspired, influenced, and moulded by the ruling ideas of the Christian religion.

And yet, on the other hand, it would be going too far to say that civilization is the result of Christianity.

CIVILIZATION OLDER THAN CHRISTIANITY.

Society existed long before the Christian religion. Developing, through its own natural and dominant influences, to which Judaism contributed little or no share, human society had already attained a matured civilization before Christianity was born. Three hundred years previous to Christ, Aristotle, the tutor of Alexander the Great, taught that man was formed for social life, and that human society is evolved as a kind of moral organism, which can only attain its fullest and freest development, when it is founded upon a community which recognizes the distinction between right and wrong, good

and evil, and endeavors to do that which is just and right.¹ Following the same principle, he went so far as to teach that municipal government and political law are simply the outward expression of this moral and social organism ; the centrifugal and centripetal forces which give to the body politic its poise and social equilibrium ; and the description thus given by Aristotle, over two thousand years ago, is as striking to-day as when it was first penned.

Plato, expressing not only his own principles, but those which he had imbibed from Socrates as well, rose higher and gave, in his "Republic," the ideal of the state ; Cicero, among the Romans, did the same ; and in the days of Christ, both Greece and Rome had developed a highly organized society, which formed a permanent basis of law and order for the vast structure of modern civilization.

Tracing the history of the ancient Greek civilization we discover that it had run its course, attained its highest development, and had already begun to decay, before the days of Christ.

The crowning ambition of the greatest and wisest of Greek statesmen had been to make the state the expression of the highest life of the individual in politics and art, and even in religion. The amount of intelligence and acute reason which they concentrated upon this work is remarkable. They covered the field so completely that their efforts have influenced the whole after-history of civilization. Indeed it is a grave question whether any subsequent ages have manifested the same acute reasoning power or reached the same high plane of intellectual ability.²

¹ Aristotle : Politics, Book I., 10 ; II., 6. Ethics, I., 5.

² "During the nineteenth century the opening up of many widely different branches of research has brought a crowd of workers in vari-

Hegel himself, in his earlier days, was so strongly influenced by the Greek spirit, that for the time being it

ous departments into close contact with the intellectual life of the Greeks. The representatives of different spheres of thought as to the high average standard of intellectual development reached by this remarkable people is very striking. It is not only that the mental calibre of isolated minds like Socrates, Aristotle, Plato, or Phidias appears so great when carefully measured, and the state of knowledge and the circumstances of the time taken into account. It is rather that the mental average of the whole of the people should have been so unmistakably high. In both respects the Greeks seem to have surpassed us.

"Mr. Lecky regards it as one of the anomalies of history which we can only imperfectly explain, that within the narrow limits and scanty population of the Greek States should have arisen men who, in almost every conceivable form of genius, in philosophy, in epic, dramatic, and lyric poetry, in written and spoken eloquence, in statesmanship, in sculpture, in painting, and probably also in music, should have attained almost or altogether the highest limits of human perfection.

"Similar views expressed forcibly, though withal temperately, and in well-weighed words, may be found scattered up and down throughout European literature at the present time. Yet it is not from what may be called the literary and philosophical section of the workers who have attempted to estimate the capacity of the Greek intellect that the most striking testimony comes. Those who may fairly claim to speak with authority in the name of science, do so with even more emphasis and directness. Mr. Galton, whose anthropological investigations, and statistical and other measurements of human faculties, physical and mental, under a wide range of circumstances, give him a peculiar right to be heard, is of opinion that 'the ablest race of whom history bears record is unquestionably the ancient Greeks, partly because their masterpieces in the principal departments of intellectual activity are still unsurpassed, and partly because the population which gave birth to the creators of these masterpieces was very small.' He asserts that we have no men to put by the side of Socrates and Phidias, and that 'the millions of all Europe, breeding as they have done for the subsequent two thousand years, have never produced their equals.' He also considers that our average intellectual development is far below that of the Greeks as a people. Summarizing a very striking argument, he continues: 'It follows from all this that the average ability of the Athenian race is, on the lowest possible estimate, very nearly two grades higher than our own; that is, about as much as our race is above that of the African negro. This estimate, which may seem prodigious to

made him antagonistic, or, at least, indifferent, to Christianity ; and the vivid, enthusiastic words with which he analyzes and lays bare the Greek ideal as the ruling motive of civilized life, are all the more weighty from the fact that, after tracing it to its source, he completely outgrew it and laid it aside for a higher philosophy of life. Speaking to his students of this ancient civilization he said : “ At the name of Greece the cultivated German feels himself at home. Europeans have their religion (what is transcendent and distant) from a further source, from the East, and especially from Syria ; but what is here, what is present—science and art, all that makes life satisfying and elevates and adorns it—we derive directly or indirectly, from Greece.”¹

And Sir Henry Maine unites with Hegel in affirming that, from a purely intellectual point of view, there is nothing in our modern civilized life which cannot be traced back to this Greek origin.

Yet as we look back upon the historic past and read its suggestive lessons, we find that this intellectual civilization, alone and by itself, could not and did not outlast the brief and brilliant period in which it attained the zenith of its powers.

When St. Paul preached in Athens, the greatest Grecian statesmen, philosophers, poets, and artists were dead and gone : and in the signs of decadence everywhere around him were the proofs how rudely Greece had awakened from her beautiful but chimerical dream. She was now but a province of the Roman empire, overcome some, is confirmed by the quick intelligence and high culture of the Athenian commonalty, before whom literary works were recited, and works of art exhibited, of a far more severe character than could possibly be appreciated by the average of our race, the calibre of whose intellect is easily gauged by a glance at the contents of a railway bookstall.’”—Kidd’s Social Evolution, pp. 252, 253.

¹ Caird’s Hegel, p. 7.

not merely by superior force, but by a superior civilization. Her art had reached the period of self-consciousness and had become theatrical ; her philosophers had deserted the porch and the academy to congregate in the market-place and "spend their time in nothing else but to hear or to tell some new thing ;" Olympus, from being the residence of the gods, had become an ordinary mountain like any other ; the woods were no longer peopled with fauns and nymphs ; poetry had degenerated into comedy, in the ordinary sense of the word ; religion had given place to doubt. Greece was already like a dying nation living upon its past, and was only kept alive by being grafted upon the stronger and more robust civilization of Rome.

Greece excelled in philosophy, art, and poetry ; but Rome stood pre-eminent in her reverence for social law and order. Hence hers was the more dominant and lasting civilization. Greek life, with all its intellectual and aesthetical brilliancy, was self-centred, and therefore selfishly individualistic. Roman life was unceasingly sacrificing the individual to the state, and thus was able to employ higher and wider social influences in organizing the state. Where Grecian statesmen idealized the state as the power which was able to gratify its subjects individually with the fullest enjoyment of life, Roman statesmen looked upon the government as the highest embodiment of law, and raised its emperors to the position of gods in human form, to execute that law.

It is hard to think ourselves back into those old Roman days, in such a way that the spirit of that age enters into us, yet the effort to do so is necessary if we would appreciate the inevitable causes of the downfall of the Roman empire. Imagine yourself a Roman citizen living in the Eternal City in the days of Nero. You, and those about you, accord to Roman law a reverence akin to that with

which the Jews regarded the law of Moses ; besides this, you are called upon by the government itself to worship the emperor, as a man raised up by the gods to execute that law, and as one who is made, by his very station, divine. Wherever you go, these are the things which are taken for granted. This is the ideal which is to challenge your highest enthusiasm, both as a patriotic citizen and a worshipper of the gods, and, at every public ceremony, whether political or religious, this is the creed which all profess. What a mockery the whole thing is ! what a transparent lie both church and state are uttering ! So far from being a god to execute the laws, the emperor himself is the first to bid them defiance and to set the example of vice in every form of crime and profligacy ; so far from rebuking him, the cowardly Roman Senate is subservient to his every whim ; so far from being indignant at these leaders, the Roman people are laughing and shrugging their shoulders.

Such was the awful contradiction which every conscientious Roman citizen had to face in the time of the Cæsars.¹

He had nothing higher than Roman law to satisfy

¹ “I think it may be said with truth that the high ideal of Roman civilization explains its final and complete collapse. A people with a high standard, acted on by the best, recognized by all, cannot be untrue to the standard with impunity ; it not only falls, but falls to a depth proportionate to the height which it once was seeking ; it is stricken with the penalty which follows on hollow words and untrue feelings, on the desertion of light and a high purpose, on the contradiction between law and life. A civilization like that of China, undisturbed by romantic views of man’s nature, and content with a low estimate of his life, may flow on, like one of its great rivers—steady, powerful, useful—unchanged for centuries, and unagitated by that which, more than wars and ambition, is the breaker up of societies, the power of new ideas, of new hopes and aims. But because Roman civilization became false to its principles, there was no reversing its doom.”—Church’s *Gifts of Civilization*, pp. 162, 163.

his ethical aspirations, no Gospel, no Revelation from God to look to, and in this spectacle, this political condition, the Roman civilization reached its climax ! The bubble burst, and Pilate, who was no philosopher but a common politician, was only echoing, parrot-like, the conventional question, when he asked : "What is truth ?" "Thus, then," says Hegel, "the ethical life of the ancient state has disappeared in the legality of Rome, as the religion which idealized that State has vanished in Comedy ; and the despairing self-consciousness is simply the knowledge of all that has been lost. For it, as we have seen, neither the immediate dignity and value of the individual, nor that secondary ideal value which he received from thought, any longer exists.

Trust in the eternal laws of the gods is silenced, like the oracles by which they revealed particular events to men. The statues worshipped in earlier religion are now dead stones, whose inspiring soul has departed, and the hymns of praise that were sung to them are become words in which no one believes. The tables of the gods are without spiritual meat and drink, and from the games and festivals no longer does the spirit of man receive back the joyful sense of his unity with the divine." ¹

The handwriting upon the wall of history reveals that Greek and Roman civilization (in which were wrapped up all the political and religious life of the ancient civilized world) were weighed in the balances and found wanting, because they asserted and were founded upon the principle that man, as a rational or self-conscious being, is a law and end to himself. Will this same verdict be found written large against modern civilization when its history has likewise been completed ?

¹ Hegel's *Phänomologie*, p. 545 (as translated by Dr. Caird).

CHRISTIANITY PRESERVES THE ANCIENT CIVILIZATION.

As Roman civilization thus took up and kept alive the civilization of Greece that preceded it, so, in turn, the Roman empire would itself have gone at once to decay when its downfall began, had it not been for a new power which appeared upon the scene. Christ had told his disciples that Christianity was to be "the salt of the earth," and now that prophecy was fulfilled. Though Christians held aloof from, and took no part in the political affairs of the empire, they carried the sociological principles of Christ's religion with them wherever they went, refusing in their personal life to act on any other. While the people were living the negative life of those who had lost all confidence in anything higher than themselves, Christians were positive in their convictions and impressed the ruling social ideas of Christianity upon the Roman citizens by their irresistible appeal to a moral law of Christ that was higher than the laws of the Roman government, and thus, in the incredibly short period of three centuries, the empire suddenly awoke to find itself Christianized with a Christian monarch at its head. Yet even thus it had but a limited lease of life. The empire which began with Augustus and ended with Augustulus would have had its civilization completely extinguished when the wild irruption of Goths and Vandals, Lombards and Huns swept down from the north and flooded southern Europe, had not the religion of Christ found a way of taming the barbarian. And in the Christianizing of these northern hordes we behold at once the protection and preservation of the old, and the beginnings of our modern civilization.

Civilization is indeed older than Christianity, and yet alone and by itself it would have died, ages ago, without

the preservative salt of Christ's religion ; for in the upward progress of civilization the forces of human nature are continuously expending themselves. After they have reached their climax and culmination they gradually lose their power ; and the civilization they develop would be arrested, were it not continuously assimilating new principles and new power from Christianity. To-day civilization bears the image and superscription of Christ. If St. John or St. Paul were to awaken to life in these times, to see the great cathedrals which lift their spires in every European city, and behold the churches which are to be found almost in every village of far-off America ; if they were to hear of the millions of persons who would be enumerated as Christians, in contradistinction to Jews or Mohammedans, in a government census, and witness the power of Christian ideas in the present social life of the people, they would believe that a millennium had come, in the stupendous contrast between the civilization of to-day and the civilization of that Roman empire with which they were familiar.

But if they remained a year on earth, to become familiar with the life of the people themselves, and see what we see, and know what we know, their first surprise would be equalled, if not surpassed, by their subsequent disappointment. The name of Christian is no criterion of the reality.

The popular distinction that we are accustomed to draw between Christians and " professing Christians " is very significant.

A CHRISTIANIZED CIVILIZATION IS NOT CHRISTIANITY ITSELF.

Notwithstanding the stupendous changes that have taken place, and the close resemblance between the two in outward appearance, the world, beneath the surface,

is as far, or almost as far, from accepting Christ and living the New Testament life, as it was in the days of St. Paul. The Apostle's words to the Greeks, "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called,"¹ are as descriptive of social life to-day as when they were first penned. Everywhere we trace the presence of an iron hand ; and a hard, unyielding purpose of its own, manifests itself in civilized life whenever Christianity attempts to spiritualize it.²

¹ 1 Cor. i. 26.

² This is well described by Dean Church, in his *Gifts of Civilization*, when he says :

"The contrast has often struck observers, and has been drawn out by some of the deepest as well as of the most superficial, between civilization and the religion of the New Testament, and it often makes itself felt secretly and importunately, even where the feeling is not avowed or suffered to come to light. It is true that civilization and religion have worked together, have acted on one another, and produced joint results ; but in their aims and in their nature they are distinct, and may be, as they have been before now in a right cause or a wrong, arrayed in opposition to one another. And it cannot be denied that minds strongly under the influence of the one, and keenly appreciating its vast relations, are apt to fear or shrink from the other. From the religious point of view, and where religious impressions are clear and paramount, it seems often strange—I do not say always as a matter of conscious reflection, but of unexplained distaste and wonder—to see men giving their lives to business, or science, or political life, the pursuits which civilization cherishes and which advance it. We are all of us perforce embarked in it, we all use and enjoy it and profit by it ; and yet uneasy misgivings about it come upon us from time to time ; we are suspicious about its tendencies and jealous of its claims ; and the things we do every day, and feel satisfied that they are right for us to do, we sometimes find it hard to reconcile with the deeper and more uncompromising of the religious views of life. And as civilization grows more powerful and self-sustained, more comprehensive in its aims, more sure of its methods and perfect in its work, we must not be surprised if there grows with it, among those in whom its influence is supreme, distrust and impatience of religion. There have always been religious despisers of civilization, and they have sometimes been

All this is evident at a glance to every intelligent observer. It is a fact that there is no gainsaying. But when we come to analyze the meaning of the fact and trace out the causes for the existing state of things in civilized life, then we become at once involved in such a labyrinth of difficulties and conflicting influences that our first impressions vanish, and we begin to doubt whether any hard and fast line can be really drawn between a Christianized civilization and Christianity itself, and whether the former, after all, is not Christianity in the making.

The problem has been made still more complex to modern thought by sociological theories that are quite generally assumed to be true, but which will not square with the real facts of human existence.

Chief among these is the assumption that civilization is only a higher result of the law of evolution, and that this law determines the conditions of human life and progress.

IS SOCIETY AN ORGANISM?

Aristotle, as we have seen, suggested, ages ago, that human society was, in itself, an organism. This idea has grown very prevalent in recent years; it has been adopted and expanded, now in this direction and now in that; and it is taken for granted in most of the books by writers from the scientific side.

Among these stands Mr. Herbert Spencer, who has its revilers. And there have been, and always will be, those who would raise it to an exclusive supremacy, the substitute for religion, and destined to clear away that which it replaces. But this supposed antagonism is but one of the many reminders to us of our own weakness and narrowness. Civilization and religion have each their own order, and move in their own path. Perhaps the more clearly we keep in view their distinctness the better. They *are* distinct."—Gifts of Civilization, pp. 12-14.

emphasized the idea with so much power that his reasonings have seemed to many conclusive. According to him society is as much an organism as the human body itself. Scientific men are not given to poetic figures, and with him the body politic is no metaphor but a solid reality. "Metaphors are here, more than metaphors in the ordinary sense. They are devices of speech hit upon to suggest a truth, at first dimly perceived, but which grows clearer the more carefully the evidence is examined. That there is a real analogy between an individual organism and a social organism, becomes undeniable when certain necessities determining structures are seen to govern them in common."¹

¹ The passage in which Mr. Spencer traces this analogy is so important, and has such a crucial bearing upon the subject before us that we give it at length in this foot-note. He says: "The limits of the society, as it evolves, fall into different orders of activities, determined by differences in their local conditions or their individual powers; and there slowly result permanent local structures, of which the primary ones become decided while they are being complicated by secondary ones, growing in their turns decided, and so on. . . . The social organism of low type, like the individual organism of low type, has no appliances for combining the actions of its remoter parts. When co-operation of them against an enemy is called for there is nothing but the spread of an alarm from man to man throughout the scattered population; just as in an undeveloped kind of animal there is merely a slow undirected diffusion of stimulus from one point to all others. In either case the evolution of a larger, more complex, more active organism implies an increasingly efficient set of agencies . . . for making the parts co-operate so that the times and amounts of their activities may be kept in fit relations. And this the facts everywhere show us. In the individual organism as it advances to a high structure, no matter of what class, there arises an elaborate system of channels through which the common stock of nutritive matters (here added to by absorption, there changed by secretion, in this place purified by excretion, and in another modified by exchange of gases) is distributed throughout the body for the feeding of the various parts, severally occupied in their special actions; while in the social organism, as it advances to a high structure, no matter of what political type, there develops an extensive and complicated trading organization for the distribution of commodities, which,

The social body, according to Mr. Spencer, is, therefore, merely an extension of the human body. The needs of civilization are simply the needs of the various individuals that compose it, who are associated together in the larger organism only because in this way they can procure food and drink, shelter and raiment, protection and enjoyment, more readily than they could through their isolated and individual exertions.

There is undoubtedly a truth here, which it is impossible to gainsay. As the author says, it is "undeniable." Yet, when we come to examine his analogy more closely, we discover that the truth is, after all, only a half truth. It will be observed that the illustration is purely a physical one. It is drawn from nature; it is *made to apply* to human nature. It is true so far as man, in his humanity is connected with the natural world, but it is utterly untrue, when we reach the conditions of man's unique personality and moral constitution.

sending its heterogeneous currents through the kingdom by channels that end in retailer's shops, bring within reach of each citizen the necessities and luxuries that have been produced by others, while he has been producing his commodity, or small part of a commodity, or performing some other function or small part of a function, beneficial to the rest. Similarly, development of the individual organism, be its class what it may, is always accompanied by development of a nervous system which renders the combined action of the parts prompt and duly proportioned, so making possible the adjustments required for meeting the various contingencies; while, along with development of the social organism there always goes development of directive centres, general and local, with established arrangements for interchanging information and instigation, serving to adjust the rates and kind of activities going on in different parts.

"Now if there exists this fundamental kinship, there can be no rational apprehension of the truths of Sociology until there has been reached a natural apprehension of the truths of Biology. The services of the two sciences are, indeed, reciprocal. . . . The human being is at once the terminal problem of Biology and the initial factor of Sociology."—The Study of Sociology, by Herbert Spencer, pp. 331, 333, 334, 336.

To make his analogy correct, Mr. Spencer is obliged to assume that "certain necessities determining structure govern the physical and social organism in common." This means that human society, human governments, and all human civilization are controlled by the same inexorable physical laws which govern the muscles and tissues of the human body and the nerves of the brain ; and that the development of the social organism is, not relatively, but absolutely determined, by the action of those natural forces which condition the growth of the physical organism.

NATURE AND FREE-WILL.

As will be seen at a glance, this eliminates all traces of human free-will and reduces man to the level of an automaton. It abolishes his whole ethical nature, it relieves him from all sense of political, social, or religious responsibility. It substitutes a physical and far more horrible form of predestination for the predestination of Calvinism. This may be in strict accordance with the author's views, but it is rather startling to the ordinary common-sense of mankind, and those who are not committed to, or biased by, any scientific theory. "Free-will," we are told, "is a venerable illusion ; responsibility, the privilege of being punished ; the idea of a personal God, anthropomorphism. We do not find these things in nature, therefore they cannot be real in man. We turn to Mr. Herbert Spencer's 'Data of Ethics,' or to the far stronger and more vigorous 'Science of Ethics,' by Mr. Leslie Stephen, and we put them down with the feeling that ethical science forced into biological moulds is strangely like biology treated as a department of physics. That society is 'an organism,' is a fruitful metaphor, but it is a metaphor, after all ; and ethics without free-will is like the play of 'Hamlet' with the

part of the Prince of Denmark left out ; and we turn away with the uncomfortable suspicion that a theory, which has to declare illusory the facts which it sets out to explain, cannot be accepted as true.”¹

Notwithstanding all the attempts of sociologists to galvanize the body politic into corporate life, the vital Christian forces now working in the world cannot be transmuted into physical forces. It is true that man is half animal, and, so far as he is physically connected with the natural world, he, and the civilization he creates, belong to the organism of nature ; but the other half of human nature, and the nobler half, is not thus conditioned. It belongs to a higher sphere of existence. Sociology cannot ignore this fact. A half truth is the most dangerous of all errors, just because of its strong semblance to reality, and this is the reason for the fascination and prevalence of the notion that civilization is only an evolution. But the whole truth will, by and by, assert itself and become all the plainer, from the disclosure of the past falsehood.

Human free-will is a disturbing factor that cannot be got rid of, and it will persistently separate man from nature, however strenuously he endeavors to identify himself with it. Human freedom is not wholly conditioned by the physical laws of the universe. The recognition of this truth brings us face to face with two distinct forces that play in our civilization—nature and a human will-power that is above, and often at variance with, nature. That will-power does not always, indeed, exercise itself in living above nature. Oftentimes—most times, alas !—it chooses that which is beneath nature itself. It sides with virtue or vice, education or ignorance, wealth or poverty, order or anarchy, peace or war, in a

¹ Science and the Faith, by the Rev. Aubrey Moore, Introduction, pp. xlv, xlvi.

way that no human foresight can prognosticate. "It is in this marvellous power of men to do wrong, . . . or right, . . . that the impossibility stands of forming scientific calculations of what men will do before the fact, or scientific explanations of what they have done after the fact. If men were consistently selfish, you might analyze their motives ; if they were consistently noble, they would express in their conduct the laws of highest perfection. But so long as two natures are mixed together, and the strange creature which results from the combination is now under one influence and now under another, so long you will make nothing of him, except from the old-fashioned moral—or, if you please, imaginative—point of view. Even the laws of political economy itself cease to guide us when they touch moral government. So long as labor is a chattel to be bought and sold, so long, like other commodities, it follows the conditions of supply and demand. But if, for his misfortune, an employer considers that he stands in human relations toward his workmen ; if he believes, rightly or wrongly, that he is responsible for them ; that in return for their labor he is bound to see that their children are decently taught, and they and their families decently fed and clothed and lodged ; that he ought to care for them in sickness and in old age ; then political economy will no longer direct him, and the relations between himself and his dependents will have to be arranged on quite other principles. So long as he considers only his own material profit, so long supply and demand will settle every difficulty ; but the introduction of a new factor spoils the equation."¹

In saying this we do not deny that the intellect and the ethical and social instincts of men belong to the nat-

¹ Short Studies on Great Subjects, by Mr. James Anthony Froude. The Science of History, pp. 15, 16.

ural man, and, therefore, to the organic life of nature. Of this the ancient Greek and Roman civilization that we have referred to is a proof. That civilization was plainly a natural evolution of human society ; and it was evolved, not only by the physical wants of man, but by his social and intellectual wants as well. And combined with these were those natural ethical instincts, possessed by heathen and Christian alike, which manifest themselves in the four cardinal virtues of Fortitude, Justice, Prudence, and Temperance ; and also those ordinary religious instincts which are grouped under the name of natural religion.

All this we freely grant. The ancient civilization was evolved by the combination of these natural human qualities. Under the free play of human will the social organism kept growing until it reached the zenith of its powers. Then it completely broke down, and it would have failed irretrievably, had it not gained a longer lease of life, through the social, ethical, and spiritual forces of Christianity.¹

¹ "Roman belief in right and law had ended in scepticism whether there was such a thing as goodness and virtue ; Roman public spirit had given place, under the disheartening impression of continual mistakes and disappointments, to a selfish indifference to public scandals and public mischiefs. The great principles of human action were hopelessly confused ; enthusiasm for them was dead. This made vain the efforts of rulers like Trajan and the Antonines, of scientific legislators like Justinian, of heroes like Belisarius ; they could not save a society in which, with so much outward show, the moral tone was so fatally decayed and enfeebled. But over this dreary waste of helplessness and despondency, over these mud-banks and shallows, the tide was coming in and mounting. Slowly, variably, in imperceptible pulsations, or in strange, wild rushes, the great wave was flowing. There had come into the world an enthusiasm, popular, wide-spread, serious, of a new kind ; not for conquest, or knowledge, or riches, but for real, solid goodness. It seems to me that the exultation apparent in early Christian literature, beginning with the Apostolic Epistles, at the prospect now at length disclosed within the bounds of a sober hope, of a great moral revolution in

We readily concede that all that part of our modern civilization which is to be traced back to a Greek and Roman origin belongs to the organism of nature. What we do deny is that those other forces in our modern civilization, to which it owes the prolongation of its life and which emanate from a Christian origin, belong in any way to the organism of nature. These social, ethical, and religious influences came from an outside source. The ruling ideas of the Christian religion which have exercised such sway over the civilized world in recent times—the social law of God as set forth in the ten commandments, the sanctity of family life, the sanctity of human life, the sanctity of marriage, the sanctity of property, the sanctity of character, and the sanctity of the soul (tenth commandment), have made their way into civilization in spite of the continuous protest of the natural man, and only after centuries of blood-bought experience. Civilization has absolutely been coerced against its will into receiving them.

And again, though the four cardinal virtues of Fortitude, Justice, Prudence, and Temperance, were possessed by heathen as well as Christians, the three theological virtues, which the heathen despised—Faith, Hope, and Charity—with the bright, optimistic atmosphere they have generated, the new type of virtues they have created, and the new life they have stimulated, are due directly to the presence of Christian influences and the Christian belief in Christ.¹ No sociologist can possibly

human life—that the rapturous confidence which pervades these Christian ages, that at last the routine of vice and sin has met its match, that a new and astonishing possibility has come within view, that men, not here and there, but on a large scale, might attain to that hitherto hopeless thing to the multitude—goodness—is one of the most singular and solemn things in history.”—Church’s Gifts of Civilization, pp. 182, 183.

¹ “This second spring-tide of the world, this fresh start of mankind in the career of their eventful destiny, was the beginning of many

trace back these recognized forces in our modern civilization to a natural source. They were not evolved out of the natural organism at all.

INDIVIDUALISM AND SOCIALISM.

Bearing these thoughts in mind, we come now to a second pair of conflicting forces, which arise out of these

things ; but what I observe on now is that it was the beginning of new chances, new impulses, and new guarantees for civilized life, in the truest and worthiest sense of the words. It was this, by bringing into society a morality which was serious and powerful, and a morality which would wear and last ; one which could stand the shocks of human passion, the desolating spectacle of successful wickedness, the insidious waste of unconscious degeneracy—one which could go back to its sacred springs and repair its fire and its strength. Such a morality, as Roman greatness was passing away, took possession of the ground. Its beginnings were scarcely felt, scarcely known of, in the vast movement of affairs in the greatest of empires. By and by, its presence, strangely austere, strangely gentle, strangely tender, strangely inflexible, began to be noticed. But its work was long only a work of indirect preparation. Those whom it charmed, those whom it opposed, those whom it tamed, knew not what was being done for the generations which were to follow them. They knew not, while they heard of the household of God, and the universal brotherhood of man, that the most ancient and most familiar institution of their society, one without which they could not conceive its going on—slavery—was receiving the fatal wound of which, though late, too late, it was at last to die. They knew not, when they were touched by the new teaching about forgiveness and mercy, that a new value was being insensibly set on human life, new care and sympathy planted in society for human suffering, a new horror awakened at human bloodshed. They knew not, while they looked on men dying, not for glory or even country, but for convictions and an invisible truth, that a new idea was springing up of the sacredness of conscience, a new reverence beginning for veracity and faithfulness. They knew not that a new measure was being established of the comparative value of riches and all earthly things, while they saw, sometimes with amazement, sometimes with inconsiderate imitativeness, the numbers who gave up the world, and all that was best as well as worst in it, for love of the eternal heritage—in order to keep themselves pure.”—Church’s Gifts of Civilization, pp. 185-188.

conditions of our modern civilization, *i.e.*, the duty which every man owes to himself and the duty that he owes to society. Science dwells upon the first of these. Socialism upon the second. There is truth on both sides, but how to reconcile the two into one harmonious whole is an unsolved problem. Civilization manifests clearly and distinctly the presence of both these forces. Yet no man can tell where to draw the resultant line. We have evidently reached the end of a preliminary stage of civilized life; we are just as evidently drifting onward to another epoch of society, the conditions of which are, to the men of this generation, absolutely unknown; and we have no leader, on the one side or the other, who is able to show in what direction we are moving. "From Mr. Herbert Spencer, in England, who, himself, regards the socialistic tendencies of the times with dislike, if not with alarm, and whose views are thus shared by some and opposed by others of his own followers, to Professor Schäffle, in Germany, who regards the future as belonging to purified Socialism, we have every possible and perplexing variety of opinion. The negative and helpless position of science is fairly exemplified by Professor Huxley, who, in some of his recent writings, has devoted himself to reducing the aims of the two conflicting parties of the day—Individualists and Socialists—to absurdity and impossibility, respectively. These efforts are not, however, to be regarded as preliminary to an attempt to inspire us with any clear idea as to where our duty lies in the circumstances. After this onslaught his own faith in the future grows obscure, and he sends his readers on their way with, for guiding principle, no particular faith or hope in anything."¹

Let us pause now to glance at each of these forces which is so powerful a factor in our modern civilization.

¹ Social Evolution, by Benjamin Kidd, p. 3.

(a.) Individualism.

It would be a twice-told tale to every intelligent reader in these days to rehearse the story of the natural world as it is given by the scientific evolutionist. It is now a generally accepted fact that all life is a struggle for existence, and that progress from a lower to a higher stage of being is only, or, as some say, chiefly, attained through the principle of natural selection and the survival of the fittest, while the weak and unfit are ceaselessly being sacrificed. The scientific student of sociology, grafting his teachings regarding human society on this natural vine, traces the analogy in the higher sphere of life, and shows that the same forces which operate in natural history exercise a controlling influence over human history.

When we look back upon the annals of our race, mark the progressive steps by which man has attained his present position on the earth, and seek out the causes of our modern civilization, we find, in all directions, a corroboration of the explanation of the evolutionist. From the first to the last stages of human progress the principle of rivalry or competition has been the determining factor, as to which individuals, which societies, which nationalities, survive and carry the world onward. The condition of advancement is that every man should develop to the highest point, all the powers of his manhood and concentrate them upon his work ; the stimulus to this excessive exertion is competition with his fellow-men.

The same is true of societies. Trades-unions are frequently spoken of as an illustration of the growing tendencies toward brotherhood. In reality they are inspired by the instinct of self-preservation. The tradesman, finding himself too weak to enter into the strug-

gle single-handed, associates his fellow-tradesmen with him to enforce not only higher prices of labor against the capitalist class, but to restrict the number of apprentices and thus avoid overcrowding and overproduction from the laboring class. And in the battle for supremacy, the association takes the place of the individual on the field of competition.

So also with many other similar schemes. "True Socialism of the German type must be recognized to be ultimately as individualistic and as *anti-social*, as Individualism in its advanced forms. Scientifically, they are both to be considered as the extreme logical expression of rationalistic protest by the individual against the subordination of his interests to the process of progressive development society is undergoing from generation to generation."¹

Yet the evils of the principle of competition are patent. The many are being ceaselessly sacrificed for the few. And the success of the few is only to be attained by the corresponding failure of untold multitudes, with the physical suffering and moral degradation that it brings in its train. It is irrational, and contrary to every human instinct of justice, that many should be debased in order that a handful of favored ones may be exalted, but this has been the necessary condition of progress from the scientific point of view.

"Recent biological researches, and more particularly the investigations and conclusions of Professor Weismann, have tended to greatly develop Darwin's original hypothesis as to the conditions under which progress has been made in the various forms of life. It is now coming to be recognized as a necessarily inherent part of the doctrine of evolution, that if the continual selection which is always going on among the higher forms of life

¹ Social Evolution, by Benjamin Kidd, p. 241.

were to be suspended, these forms would not only possess no tendency to make progress forward, but must actually go backward. *That is to say, if all the individuals of every generation in any species were allowed to equally propagate their kind, the average of each generation would continually tend to fall below the average of the generation that preceded it, and a process of slow but steady degeneration would ensue.* . . . Every successful form must, *of necessity*, multiply beyond the limits which the average conditions of life comfortably provide for. Other things being equal, indeed, the wider the limits of selection, the keener the rivalry, and the more rigid the selection, the greater will be the progress.”¹

When you put the problem to the evolutionist and ask where is the justice or the rationality in this law of progress, he shrugs his shoulders and makes no reply.

(b.) *Socialism.*

The Socialists, espousing the cause of the masses, have reason and justice on their side; and as long as men are looked upon as not mere dumb brutes or “commodities,” as long as the world recognizes, in any sense, the principles of liberty, fraternity, and equality, so long will Socialism continue to oppose, with unanswered and unanswerable arguments, the cruel, selfish doctrine of the survival of the fittest. And whatever science may teach, it is evident to all that the social instincts and tendencies are rapidly developing among all classes along the whole line of modern civilization.

The sanctity of human life has become a ruling idea to which all governments and legislative assemblies bow, and which determines the character of the laws they enact regarding its preservation and protection. In the teeth of the scientific dogma that only the fittest should

¹ Social Evolution, by Benjamin Kidd, pp. 36, 37, 38.

survive, there are scattered over the length and breadth of the civilized world, homes for incurables, hospitals for the sick, almshouses for the poor, charitable associations to care for the shiftless and the drunkard, the tramp and the semi-criminal class ; and this means the survival of the *unfit*.

Another illustration of the growth of the same kindness and tender-heartedness is to be seen in the societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals ; and the extent to which these have multiplied in recent years is very significant of the manner in which the idea of protecting the helpless is becoming a dominating influence in the community. Again, the tendency of all political legislation is toward democracy. When we contrast the political atmosphere of Europe, as it is to-day, with what it was before the Crimean War—in that interval of less than fifty years—a change has taken place which is not only startling in its significance, but in its rapidity of movement. What would Lord Palmerston or Prince Metternich think, if they should arise from their graves to-day, to hear the ordinary questions that are discussed in the cabinets and parliaments of European governments, see the changed attitude of their successors, and that, too, in the Conservative parties themselves ? The whole tendency of modern legislation is to elevate, emancipate, and shield the lower classes, by means of the public funds, so that they may claim equal rights with the higher classes, and be protected against the power and wealth which the latter of necessity wield. In every onward movement it is the interests of the wealthier class, not that of the lower classes, which is sacrificed. Already, in many countries, the latter have all, or nearly all, they want in the direction of political franchise, and now they are aiming for the sphere of equal *social* privileges.

(c.) *The Irrepressible Conflict.*

No one can tell what the outcome of this antagonism between these two rival forces will be ; if either succeeds, alone and by itself, it will be the other's doom. If Individualism gains the day, then the progress of civilization will continue, but at the awful cost of growing suffering to untold masses. To single out one instance from many. With the increase of population and the development of those conditions of selection which are necessary for higher progress will come a corresponding fall of the purchasing power of wages. "It needs no argument to prove that when the price of labor sinks below a certain point, the worker inevitably falls into that condition which the French emphatically call *la misère*—a word for which I do not think there is any exact English equivalent. It is a condition in which the food, warmth, and clothing which are necessary for the mere maintenance of the functions of the body, in their normal state, cannot be obtained; in which men, women, and children are forced to crowd into dens where decency is abolished, and the most ordinary conditions of healthful existence are impossible of attainment; in which the pleasures within reach are reduced to bestiality and drunkenness; in which pains accumulate at compound interest in the shape of starvation, disease, stunted development, and moral degradation; in which the prospect of even steady and honest industry is a life of unsuccessful battling with hunger, rounded by a pauper's grave."¹ If, on the other hand, Socialism gains the day, the emancipation of the masses and the bettering of the condition of the "unfit" will be achieved at the expense of the future progress of

¹ Social Diseases and Worse Remedies, by Professor Huxley, p. 31, (quoted by Mr. Kidd).

the world, and the heavy cost of a material civilization which is brought to a standstill.

"The enormous pressure, capable of being exercised by the competitive system at its best, operating continually to insure the most economic and efficient system of production ; the accompanying tendency of the best men to find the places for which they are best fitted ; the tendency toward the free utilization of the powers of such men to the fullest degree in the direction of invention, discovery, and improvement, coupled with the difficulty of finding (human nature being what it is) any thoroughly efficient stimulus for the whole of the population to exert itself to the highest degree, when the main wants of life were secure ; these are all considerations which would, in an earlier stage, tell enormously against a socialist community, when matched in the general competition of life against other communities, where the stress of life was greater."¹

No one yet has been able to harmonize these two antagonistic elements of modern civilization. There they are before our eyes, but *why* they are there, in two obstinate parallel lines which never meet, neither Individualists nor Socialists can explain on any scientific theory. Indeed, the more they attempt explanations the deeper the gulf between them keeps growing.

If human society is an organism, and the growth of civilization shows the organic unity, then let Mr. Herbert Spencer and his followers tell us what he is going to do with "altruism," what its function is, in what part of the organism it originates, and how its development is to be organically traced? "Even the best of modern civilizations," says Mr. Huxley, "appears to me to exhibit a condition of mankind which neither embodies any worthy ideal nor even possesses the merit of stabil-

¹ Social Evolution, by Benjamin Kidd, p. 211.

ity. I do not hesitate to express the opinion, that, if there is no hope of a large improvement of the condition of the greater part of the human family; if it is true that the increase of knowledge, the winning of a greater dominion over nature, which is its consequence, and the wealth which follows upon that dominion, are to make no difference in the extent and the intensity of Want, with its concomitant physical and moral degradation, among the masses of the people, I should hail the advent of some kindly comet which would sweep the whole affair away, as a desirable consummation."¹ Language like this bears a strange resemblance to the Christian's belief in a coming Day of Judgement which will right all wrongs. But let that pass. Suffice it to say, that it stands before us as an illustration of the helplessness of men of science to solve the riddle of modern civilization.

As Christians, we have an explanation of our own that meets all difficulties and solves all perplexities, but that does not concern us now, and we reserve the consideration of this subject for Chapter XIV. Our purpose here is fulfilled in showing that there are these two irreconcilable elements in our modern civilization, and—to fortify our position—that while they continue irreconcilable modern civilization cannot be called an organism, as Mr. Spencer uses the word.

If scientific reason is on the one side, the moral reason of mankind is on the other. Reason is on both sides. Thus, we awaken into existence, and discover everywhere around us conditions of human life which defy all human attempts at explanation. Apart from Christ, modern civilization is to us all not a *cosmos* but a *chaos*, in which each one in his loneliness finds no higher earthly guide

¹ Government, Anarchy, or Regimentation, Nineteenth Century, May, 1890 [quoted in Kidd's Social Evolution].

than his own sense of personal responsibility. This brings us to the third pair of antagonistic forces in civilization.

SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY ITSELF.

We have seen how the ancient Greek and Roman civilization, out of which our modern civilized life originated, owed its prolongation to the Christian religion, and how the latter, according to Christ's trilogy of prophecies, was the "salt of the earth," which preserved all that was worth preserving in that long-buried past; the "leaven," which has leavened the nations with new aims and higher aspirations; and the "Light of the World," which has shed its beams on the unknown pathway of highest social and material progress. While each nation and community was pursuing its own selfish aim, it was unconsciously, through the leaven of the ruling ideas of Christianity, working out the greatest good for generations yet unborn and even unthought of.

Human society did not, from itself, evolve these forces and influences, it was inspired by them from without, and the source of this inspiration was the direct and indirect power of Christ's religion.¹

¹ "The worst kind of religion is no religion at all; and those men who live in ease and luxury, indulging themselves in the amusement of going without religion, may be thankful that they live in lands where the Gospel they neglect has tamed the beastliness and ferocity of the men who, but for Christianity, might long ago have eaten their bodies like the South Sea Islanders, or cut off their heads and tanned their hides like the monsters of the French Revolution. When the microscopic search of scepticism which has hunted the heavens and sounded the seas to disprove the existence of a Creator, has turned its attention to human society, and has found a place on this planet, ten miles square, where a decent man can live in decency, comfort, and security, supporting and educating his children, unspoiled and unpolluted; a place where age is reverenced, infancy respected, manhood respected, womanhood honored, and human life held in due regard—when sceptics can

While Christ's religion is "not of this world," it has exercised the most powerful political and social influence upon civilized life that the history of the past discloses. If, as Mr. Lecky has said, there is no better criterion of the political genius of a nation than its power to adapt old institutions to new wants, we have the highest instance of such powers of adaptation in the genius of Christianity itself.

Yet the growing tendency of the majority to-day is, as we have said, not only to ignore the debt which civilization owes to the religion of Christ, but to test and gauge the value of the Gospel by secular standards of worth, and hence arises the antagonism of which we have been speaking.

Whatever differences there may be in civilized life between man and man, between class and class, between Individualists and Socialists, all are united in the one aim of making the most out of nature, *i.e.*, the kingdom of this world. On this point, if on no other, there is a very substantial agreement, and hence, when all are brought into contact with a religion which proclaims that it relates to a kingdom not of this world, at once the aim of civilization and its variance with Christianity are manifested.

Civilization relates exclusively to this life; the life to come is beyond its sphere. And all that concerns that

find such a place, ten miles square, on this globe, where the Gospel of Christ has not gone, and cleared the way, and laid the foundations, and made decency and security possible, it will then be in order for the sceptical literati to move thither and ventilate their views. But so long as these very men are dependent upon the religion which they discard for every privilege they enjoy, they may well hesitate a little before they seek to rob the Christian of his hope, and humanity of its faith in that Saviour who alone has given to man that hope of life eternal which makes life tolerable and society possible, and robs death of its terrors and the grave of its gloom."—James Russell Lowell.

life is foreign to its purposes. The aim of civilization is to accumulate all that the matured experience of mankind has proved, and all that the best wisdom of the ages believes to be best for the health and happiness, the prosperity and progress of humanity, on this earth, and it has nothing to do with what lies outside of these objects.

THE SECULARIZATION OF CHRISTIANITY.

This is, therefore, the dominating influence of the times. Civilization has found it necessary to become Christian for utilitarian reasons. And Christianity has only been absorbed by it so far as it will help to civilize the world. Civilization may feed upon—be nourished and stimulated and kept alive by the social forces of Christianity, but through all it has one object; the religion of Christ, another; and all that part of Christ's religion which does not minister to its own welfare, it is obliged, by the aforesaid character of its own aim, to exclude. It seldom thinks of heaven, but if it ever does, the only way in which it can ever picture itself as reaching that ideal state which the Gospel portrays, is by secularizing the spiritual principles of the Gospel, and substituting for the Gospel's kingdom of heaven descending to earth a kingdom of earth raised up to heaven.

A spirit like this is, of course, more or less alien to Christianity. It could not possibly be otherwise; for the present, and all that makes life more worth living in the present, is its sole object and end. What it receives from Christianity, it receives unwillingly, and, as it were, perforce; oftentimes, as we have said, not until after centuries of blood-bought experience. And even after it has received and assimilated into its own life some vital Christian principle, it strives thereafter to detach that principle from Christianity itself.

THE SECULARIZATION OF CHARITY.

We have a striking illustration of this fact in the formation of our modern charitable societies. For eighteen centuries Christianity has been preaching the law of love, and founding hospitals, asylums, and homes for the poor "in the name of the Lord Jesus," while the world looked on with apathy. And of recent years that charge of Christ, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples if ye have love one to another," has come home to the Christian conscience with renewed force. A power like this is irresistible, and it has produced an effect upon civilization itself, which would have been absolutely inconceivable to the world of Charlemagne's day.

It used to be said that "corporations have no souls," but to-day hospitals, asylums, and poorhouses, of various kinds, founded by the state, are to be found in every city of Europe and America.

Civilization has discovered that it is best for the welfare of society to be charitable; and now, when the evils of state charities are beginning to be recognized, voluntary charitable societies are formed to supplement the work of the government itself; and the associations which appeal most strongly to the popular sympathy are those in which charity, the very watchword of Christianity, is not regarded as practical and efficient until it is secularized and divorced from Christian affiliations.

The plea usually given for this is the necessity of ignoring denominational distinctions and sectarian influence, but if the reunion of Christendom should take place to-morrow, the antagonism would still remain, for its root lies in the disposition to regard civilization as practical and useful; Christianity as theoretical and senti-

mental ; civilization as best for this world ; Christianity as not best for this world.

THE SECULARIZATION OF GOSPEL TEACHING.

The contrast between the spirit of civilization and the spirit of Christianity comes out still more sharply in the way in which Christ's teachings, and especially those of the Sermon on the Mount, are generally received. There is no portion of the New Testament regarding which men in general wax so eloquent and enthusiastic. Yet how different are Christ's words themselves from the interpretation that the world gives to them.

Christ, it will be remembered, there tells men that if they are to be His followers their first aim must be to serve God. This law is imperative ; without obedience to it the possession of spiritual life becomes impossible. They are to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, taking no thought (or anxious care) as to what they shall eat, what they shall drink, or wherewithal they shall be clothed.¹ In other words, the normal condition of the Christian is to live unceasingly in the higher consciousness of a kingdom of heaven on earth, and to be so absorbed in carrying out its principles of truth and love, justice and right, as he moves in and out among his fellow-men, that in the presence of these higher ethical thoughts he becomes comparatively unconscious of the body with its physical need of food and shelter.

And Christ's promise is that by the very laws of the higher life, "all these things shall be added to him." This, of necessity, follows : for character is, even to civilization itself, the most valuable of all possessions, and to the man of character positions of responsibility and power always gravitate. The explanation of this

¹ St. Matt. vi. 25.

promise of Christ is to be found in those other words of the Sermon on the Mount: "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again."¹

We have here a high and pure ideal of life which is perfectly comprehensible to a Christian mind, and which is actually fulfilled in myriads of Christian lives; but it is an ideal which soars far above the earth-bound mind of the natural man.

The one exclusive life-aim which almost every father impresses upon the minds of his growing sons as they emerge from school-life, is to seek first how they shall earn their daily bread, and to take no thought (anxious care) about the kingdom of God and His righteousness. Present material wants must be satisfied before distant spiritual needs are thought of. And, correspondingly, the mass of men in civilized lands, living in the absorbing consciousness of what they shall eat, what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed, plus the education of the mind, are comparatively unconscious of that higher life which belongs to the soul and not the body, and which, therefore, ought to be the most real to them of all things.

What men seldom or never think of, by and by they learn to undervalue, and what they undervalue at last passes altogether out of mind. Though Christ distinctly warns his followers, and not without a touch of sarcasm—that this merely material existence is the life "that the Gentiles seek;" and though, in the light of Christ's teaching, it is an ethical heresy to hold that a man's first duty is to earn his daily bread, regardless of the spiritual motive, the majority of those in civilized lands who call

¹ St. Luke vi. 38.

themselves Christians, will not hesitate for one moment to embrace and advocate the heresy.

Though Christ emphasizes His warning with those preliminary words, "No man can serve two masters : *Therefore I say unto you take no thought what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink,*"¹ they at once range themselves on the side of civilization against Christ; from under the banner of this other master, they proclaim that the only possible and practical way of keeping body and soul together is to make their first and only care the providing for material wants in a most luxurious way ; and, consequently, that Christ's charge to act indirectly the opposite way is so utterly unpractical and transcendental, that the words must not be interpreted literally, but as a metaphysical way of speaking suited to the Oriental mind. The same kind of gloss is put upon other sayings of Christ.

Thus arises, what we see everywhere about us, a glaring discrepancy between the Christian life described everywhere in the New Testament, and the Christian life which characterizes these modern times.

Men who profess and call themselves Christians say that it is impossible in these days to live the life of the Sermon on the Mount, or to be what the first Christians were. Civilization teaches one thing, the Gospels another, and the only way to reconcile the two together is to make Christianity conform to civilization by such an interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount and other sayings of Christ, as will not conflict with the experience of all sorts and conditions of men in civilized lands.

In this way an artificial form of Christianity has gradually arisen, which substitutes a popular and conventionalized interpretation of the Gospels for the Gospels themselves. As financial companies water their stock to float it

¹ St. Matt. vi. 24, 25.

over a larger area, so to-day this Christianity of civilization, for the sake of floating Christ's teachings, and accommodating them to the masses, has watered and diluted them with secularizing influences to such a degree, that they bear an entirely different meaning to the people of the Nineteenth Century from that which they bore to the people of the First. Christ's words have thus lost all the sharpness and distinctness of their original meaning. His sayings have become so conventionalized that the moment they are heard they are explained away by the ordinary hearer, as tropes or metaphors. A popularized form of Christ's unpopular religion is foisted upon us as the reality itself, and when confronted with the reality, claims to be the authoritative interpreter of Gospel Truth.

ETHICAL EFFECTS SUBSTITUTED FOR SPIRITUAL CAUSES.

This method of procedure will not bear analysis. It is true that Christ's teachings have produced a marked and perceptible effect upon civilization, and have influenced the lives of myriads, who have never confessed Him in the way that a devout believer and communicant of the Church does. And this indirect effect of Christianity upon ordinary human life, is world wide.

But these practical and indirect effects of Christianity upon the life of civilization are no more Christianity itself, than moonlight is sunlight. As the moon only reflects back upon the darkened earth the sunshine that falls on its surface, so civilization only reflects upon uncivilized nations the effect of the Christ-light upon itself. To say that this Christianity of civilization is the self-same thing as the religion of Christ, is to make the effect not only the judge of the cause, but the cause itself.

And to expect that the effect will be the cause of itself,

that the mere effect of Christianity will act as a substitute for the Christian religion, and that it will keep lifting the world above itself to a higher plane of Christian life, is to expect an impossibility.

If civilization stands upon a plane of ethical life lower than that of the Sermon on the Mount, it is because it is, as yet, only semi-Christianized, not because the Sermon on the Mount is unpractical or unreal. God's work in the world is not completed, it is only half-done; and the part that remains,—that of lifting the world out of its covetousness, its selfishness, its worship of wealth, its coarse, crude, and materialistic ways of thinking, *the part, in a word, which civilization is powerless to effect, is the more important half.*

The advance that has already been made was made not by those who were satisfied, but by those who were dissatisfied, with the prevailing tone of life about them; by men who were in advance of their day, and who were inspired by that same picture of Christian life drawn in the Sermon on the Mount which this world calls "impossible."

While it is true that the ruling ideas of Christian society—the sanctity of the family, the sanctity of human life, the sanctity of married life, the sanctity of property and of character, as set forth in the social law of the ten commandments—have been transferred from the Mosaic tables of stone to the fleshly tables of the human heart; and while it is also true that the standard of respectability in civilized society, thus attained, has substituted a social motive and inspiration for a divine inspiration in the keeping of these laws, civilized society alone and by itself would never have attained this social level.

It may propagate its ethical principles among an increasing number of peoples and nations, and thus elevate the masses to its own present status, but it will

never by itself climb to a higher ethical level than it has already attained; for the correlation of cause and effect itself compels us to the conclusion that society cannot inspire men with a higher social ideal than its best members hold in common. The Christianity of civilization can rise as high as morality, but it stops short of spirituality, nor can it distinguish the difference between the moral and spiritual life because the latter is beyond the limitations of its life. In the Christian religion morality is the effect, spirituality is the cause. Those who recognize nothing higher than the effect are obliged, perforce, to substitute the ethical effect for the spiritual cause, and, to the end of time, will contend that ethical culture and spiritual growth are one and the same thing.

IS HUMAN EXPERIENCE THE SOLE TEST OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE?

Thus also is effect substituted for cause when we pass from the sociological to the theological side of the Christianity of civilization.

This so-called Christianity does not go straight to Christ and draw its inspirations from Him. It contrasts Christ with men, and measures Him exclusively by the human standard. It begins with the effects of Christ's teachings upon the world, and tests Christ by civilization, putting civilization first and Christ second.¹

¹ "It is evident that if a people were left entirely to themselves, their religion, their literature, and their government would be, not the causes of their civilization, but the effect of it. Out of a certain condition of society certain results naturally follow. Those results may, no doubt, be tampered with by some external agency ; but if that is not done, it is impossible that a highly civilized people, accustomed to reason and to doubt, should ever embrace a religion of which the glaring absurdities set reason and doubt at defiance. There are many instances of nations changing their religion, but there is no instance

In other words, the Christianity of civilization acknowledges civilization as its supreme lord and master. Christianity is not the salt of the earth which preserves all that is best in civilization ; but civilization, with its historic continuity, is the salt which preserves all that is best in Christianity. Hence men are growing more and more eloquent in discoursing about "the historic Christ." In one sense this is a phrase that the most earnest Christian will not hesitate to use ; for Christ Himself is the central point of all human history, and the highest doctrines of the Church are embedded in the historic facts of the Apostles' Creed ; but this is not the sense in which the term "the historic Christ" is generally used. The fascination of this phrase in the popular mind arises from the growing exaggeration of the authority of his-

of a progressive country voluntarily adopting a retrogressive religion ; neither is there any example of a declining country ameliorating its religion. It is of course true that a good religion is favorable to civilization, and a bad one unfavorable to it. Unless, however, there is some interference from without no people will ever discover that their religion is bad until their reason tells them so ; but if their reason is inactive, and their knowledge stationary, the discovery will never be made. A country that continues in its old ignorance, will always remain in its old religion. Surely nothing can be plainer than this. A very ignorant people will, by virtue of their ignorance, incline toward a religion full of marvels ; a religion which boasts of innumerable gods, and which ascribes every occurrence to the immediate authority of these gods. On the other hand, a people whose knowledge makes them better judges of evidence, and who are accustomed to that most difficult task, the practice of doubting, will require a religion less marvellous, less obtrusive ; one that taxes their credulity less heavily. But will you, therefore, say, that the badness of the first religion causes the ignorance ; and that the goodness of the second religion causes the knowledge ? Will you say, that when one event precedes another, the one which comes first is the effect, and the one which follows afterward is the cause ? This is not the way in which men reason on the ordinary affairs of life ; and it is difficult to see why they should reason thus respecting the history of past events."—Buckle's History of Civilization in England, vol. i., pp. 232, 233.

tory and signifies a Christ who has stood the historical test.

The statements of the Gospel, the belief of the Church, and the answering voice of the quickened conscience that Christ is the Son of God, make little or no impression upon the minds of this generation ; but when historical criticism accepts Christ, here, at last, is an authority to which all must bow. In popular phrase, the historic Christ means a Christ tested by experience, and proved by human experience to be a Son of God.

“Let an honest effort be made to get at the facts of religious experience and the truth of God will take care of itself,” writes one of the advocates of the Chicago Parliament of Religions, whereas he should have said the exact reverse. Let an honest effort be made to get at the facts of the truth of God and Christian experience will take care of itself. This is induction run wild. Statements like these seem plausible, but they are directly at variance with the teachings of the Gospels themselves. Second-hand knowledge of Christ, a knowledge of the Saviour of the world that comes to us indirectly through some other man’s experience, is not spiritual power, nor can it, without faith, produce any real depth of religious conviction.

THE LIMITATIONS OF SOCIAL CHRISTIANITY.

The Christian life is a superhuman life, and calls upon a man to live at a superhuman level which he cannot possibly attain through the exertion of his will-power and merely human strength. The outward description of that life is given in the Sermon on the Mount. It stands there as a picture drawn by the Master-hand, of the kind of person a real Christian should be. But no analysis of that picture, however brilliant ; no attempt to

copy it, however painstaking and exact ; no efforts like those of Count Tolstoi, however enthusiastic and self-sacrificing, can ever reproduce it. For the character portrayed in the Sermon on the Mount is, itself, an *effect*, not a cause. Mr. Gore has truly shown, in his strong essay on "The Sociological Doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount," that the principles underlying all the vivid illustrations there given by Christ will show themselves by a different kind of an outward sign, by a different kind of form, and necessitate a different kind of outward action in the nineteenth century from what was natural in the first ; but the writer ought to have emphasized the importance, not so much of a new Christian casuistry, as of the spiritual power, of which such casuistry is but the outward expression, and without which it is powerless for good.

St. Paul tells us what the quality is. It soars far above the earthly life of the "natural man." It is not inherent in human nature. It cannot be developed out of the natural character. It is a force infused from without into the life of the Christian. In contradistinction to the righteousness of the law (*i.e.*, morality), it is the *righteousness which cometh by and through the faith of Christ.*¹

To live the life of the Sermon on the Mount one must live the Apostles' Creed. If a man lives in union with the risen Christ, in such a way as to know the fellowship of His sufferings and the power of His Resurrection, then the existence, there described by Christ, becomes the natural, unconscious, and involuntary expression of his allegiance to the Divine Master.

The only way in which power can come to him to live the kind of life described in the New Testament is through the depth of intense *religious* convictions ; the

¹ Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11.

only Being who has power to create such convictions in human nature is Jesus Christ, and the only men in whose breasts they stir are those who go straight to Christ Himself and know him personally as the Son of God.

We shall return to this subject by and by, and simply refer to it here, to draw the contrast between the superhuman life of the Gospels and the merely human existence which the world calls Christian. The former draws its life and inspiration from Christ; the latter takes its inspiration from men. The first depends wholly upon a divine motive; the second substitutes a social motive for the divine, and rises no higher than the social atmosphere in which it was born.

THE OLD DUALISM BETWEEN THE NATURAL AND THE SPIRITUAL.

The question now arises, Can this social motive be gradually purified and spiritualized, until at last it merges into and becomes one with the divine? We have seen how society has been elevated and Christianized in the past; why should not this process go on until civilization stands upon the same spiritual level as the Church of Christ itself?

We answer, Because civilization belongs essentially to the kingdom of this world, and its central aim and purpose is, therefore, necessarily secular. In outward appearance the merely civilized man of to-day stands upon a much higher ethical level than the civilized man of the past. But if he is more social in his instincts, and more charitable and public-spirited in his life, it is not on account of any realization of the spiritual truths of a higher life, but simply because the conditions of his environment have forced the individual to be more charitable and less self-assertive. Remove the environment

and his dominating spirit is selfish still. It has simply been acted upon, by influences beyond its control, to substitute the self-seeking of a corporation or a nation, for the self-seeking of the individual. Society is simply impossible, especially in our crowded cities, unless personal freedom is greatly restrained. The maxim becomes inevitable that every man is only free up to the point where his freedom interferes with another's liberty. In addition to this, many of the social and ethical principles of Christianity have been proved by the experience of mankind to be essential to the best interests of the community. We are born into this world in a Christian era. As we awaken to a consciousness of the life that is about us, we find ourselves in an atmosphere impregnated with Christian influences. The common, accepted standard of social and moral obligations is far above what it was in bygone days ; it approximates more closely to the standard of Christian living than that of any previous era. Christ's law of brotherly love has become a ruling idea of the times, and philanthropy is in the very air we breathe. To be respectable we must conform to this standard ; to fall below it is to sink beneath the code of worldly morals. We look at those who *are* beneath it, and who know not what the social instincts are, and we see there how men act who are not coerced into being moral by the force of public opinion ; we then turn musingly from them to ourselves, and ask ourselves, What is it that really prevents us and the men with whom we habitually associate from being like these outcasts ? Is it Christian principle ? Is it the law of heredity, whereby we are passively conditioned by the virtues of our ancestors ? Or is it the public opinion we so much dread ? I think we must all come to pretty much the same conclusion. All these influences—principle, heredity, society—are undoubtedly, in greater or

less degree, factors in the make-up of our characters, as God intended they should be, but the largest factor of all is the pressure of this public opinion. Thousands of men about us are restrained from following their natural impulses and doing immoral acts, by these salutary social influences. The public conscience is stronger than their own conscience ; they dare not offend against propriety ; they have no dread that is so agonizing as the dread of losing caste. If they have wild impulses in their youth or their college days, the moment they come in contact with real life they see their mistake and are thus coerced into respectability. By and by, as experience of life increases, they become convinced that public opinion is right, not wrong, and, as far as this influence can carry them, they are converted to the world's standard and become men of "principle." But observe : the power that has converted them is the world, not Christ, and no man can serve two masters. The more closely the world approaches the morality of Christ, the more it will take Christ's place. Hence there will be the widest distinction between the inward lives of such men and a Christian's inward life. For they often draw all their inspirations from the society in which they live, not from loyalty to Christ. Their highest authority is not the Gospels, but the opinion of the best men and the most upright men of their acquaintance. And thus, while civilization adopts Christianity, its drift throughout is exclusively secular, and its one crowning desire, to make this life more worth living.

Let us cheerfully grant all that the most enthusiastic admirer of civilization may portray in its favor. Let us even suppose that in the higher progress of the human race the thought of God comes to be regarded as an essential luxury in raising the level of earthly happiness, and that churches will be built by the state, just as art

galleries and public libraries now are, for an educational reason; will this of itself make the aim of civilization any the less secular, any the more spiritual?

It needs but to contrast the life of civilization with the kind of life described in the New Testament, to see that the gulf between the two will never be bridged over (that is from the *world's* side); for the animating spirit of each is essentially different from that of the other. The kingdom of this world is not the kingdom of heaven.

In saying all this we do not stigmatize modern civilization as being unchristian, we only say that it becomes unchristian when it claims to be in any way a substitute for Christianity. As all nature, and all that belongs to nature, is part of the handiwork of God, so the secular life, *in its own place*, is of God. Civilization is full of beneficent influences. It is constantly being elevated to a higher standard of social life. It develops manliness, independence of character, the courage to persevere in failure, self-control in success, self-respect, trustworthiness, the sense of justice, faithfulness in the discharge of responsibilities, energy and industry, a love for work, and a contempt for idleness. It evokes public spirit, patriotism, kindness, and neighborly feeling—all the qualities in fact which characterize a good citizen. For Christianity to ignore all this would be to offend the moral sense of mankind. It must recognize the good that the world recognizes, and instead of miscalling it evil, seek to develop it for all that it is worth. God made man, and the varied occupations of man in civilized life are only the outward expression of the aims of men to make the most, both of their natural gifts and of the spheres in which they labor.

While doing so they have the inward consciousness that they are discharging their duty, and if the religion of Christ did teach otherwise, then such teaching would

stamp it, at once, as narrower than the needs of human nature, and thus less natural than civilization itself.

But while Christianity is and must be as catholic as the needs of human nature as they are seen in civilized life, it by no means follows that the reverse is also true, and that civilization is as catholic as Christianity.

Civilization may develop the qualities that make a good citizen, but here it stops, and the stopping-place is immeasurably short of the responsibilities which belong to a man whose citizenship is in heaven, and the aspirations of a soul that was made in the image of God. And, consequently, when these inner wants of the soul assert themselves, the only answer that the spirit of civilization, by its very limitations, can possibly make to them, is that they must be treated not as realities but as unpractical sentiments.

Every Christian will recognize the fact that while the standard of respectability is a great shield and safeguard to thousands who are coerced by the dread of public opinion into living the life of good citizens, and while it is the most powerful of all earthly influences in lifting those who are below its ethical code and educating them to live at its level ; yet, on the other hand, it is also the most powerful of all earthly influences in keeping men back from striving to reach the higher level of the Christian life. The secular motive will never and can never cease to be secular.

It may absorb and assimilate the influences of Christianity, as the experience of mankind grows, but only so far as is *best for this life*.

The more civilization approximates to the moral standard of Christianity the larger will be the number of those who will advocate the substitution of civilized morality for Christian spirituality ; and, correspondingly, the greater will become the need of asserting the supremacy

of the spiritual above the merely moral life. For nineteen centuries civilization has been absorbing the social forces of Christ's religion into itself. This process cannot go on *ad infinitum*. The day will at last arrive when civilization will come to the end, not of the social influences of Christ, for these in their higher sphere are inexhaustible, but of its own capacity of assimilating any more of the social forces of Christianity, without departing from its central organizing principle, that man is a law and an end to himself. If that day ever does come, civilization will, thereafter, have no further use for Christianity, for there will be nothing left to assimilate and absorb, but the spiritual teaching of the Gospel and that divine life which flows into those who accept Christ as "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." The New Testament itself warns us beforehand that this preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified will ever be foolishness to the world; that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; and consequently when this is all that is left of the religion of Christ for the world to absorb, civilization, as a spirit of this world, will become more or less dead to its influences.

Already, in fact, we see this effect beginning to manifest itself. Civilization is receiving less help from Christianity to-day than it did in bygone times; it is crying more and more loudly that it can do without Christianity; it is becoming more and more Gospel-hardened as it listens to the familiar story of the Cross. The same effect which we behold in the individual, as he gradually grows older, in rejecting the spiritual influences of the Gospel, are manifesting themselves in civilization at large, as it increases in age, and then, at the very end, in both cases, comes death. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." The kingdom of this world can never inherit the kingdom of heaven.

As the human body, at last, must die, so, by the same law, that part of the social organism which so closely resembles it, which is connected by such indissoluble ties with it, must die, while that eternal part which is redeemed by Christ's Incarnation and the spiritual influence of a kingdom that is *not* of this world will survive.

The kingdom of nature is an organism which cannot rise above nature, and therefore, by its own laws, all attempts to secularize the spiritual must inevitably end in failure, and defeat themselves.

Thus the progress of civilization emphasizes and is bringing out with greater distinctness than ever before that dualism between the natural and the spiritual which from time immemorial has perplexed the human mind, and, as long as the world lasts, this dualism will remain. So long as the natural man follows nature he is doing the will of God as it is expressed in nature, and is connected with nature's organism. But he is not conditioned by it. He has a will that is free. It may follow nature or not, as it pleases. It may choose that which is below nature, contrary to nature, and live a life that is lower than the brutes; or it may choose that which is above nature, and unite itself with the life of the spiritual world.

If, on the one hand, it follows that which is lower than nature, it yields to the spirit of lawlessness, and this is what Christianity calls sin. Whatsoever is of sin does not, and cannot, belong to the organism of nature. It is separate and distinct, yet the spirit of lawlessness is a recognized force in modern life. It is plainly an element in our modern civilization, though it stands apart from the organism of nature itself.

On the other hand, if the natural man follows that which is higher than nature, and lives the Christian life, then that life, although it follows the will of God, is

something more than a natural life, and is not conditioned by the organism of nature. The longer it follows the will of God in the higher region of life, the more it resists the slavery of that organism, and evinces the presence of spiritual influences that are stronger than the influences of nature itself. This life also is plainly an element in our modern civilization, though it cannot be secularized or imparted by any conceivable method to the organism of nature.

Human free-will is a power which cannot be coerced by nature on the one hand, and which Christ refuses to coerce on the other. And it is this presence of human free-will which makes it so impossible to tell where to draw the line between natural forces and divine forces in modern civilization. No one can penetrate into the silent secrecy of human motives. No one can tell how human free-will is acting now, or prophesy how it will act in the future. The man who is a secularist to-day may be a Christian to-morrow, and the Christian who is apparently a devout follower of Christ may be, in secret, a secularist at heart.

Civilization is the arena of a secular life into which many men of many minds enter with different motives. It is a field which belongs at once to the kingdom of nature and the kingdom of heaven, and upon which both good seed and bad seed are sown. As we walk upon that field it is impossible for us, as yet, to distinguish between the wheat and the tares. According to Christ's most true prophecy, both must grow together until the harvest.

But while we cannot detect the springs of action in personal life, we can see clearly and distinctly the character of the motive in general; we can comprehend the difference between the social motives that draw their inspiration from civilization, and the divine motives which

are inspired by Christ, and we hope that we have made it plain, in this chapter, that this distinction is vital.

The "Christianity of civilization" receives its religion from men, and not from God. Standing on the social basis of life it declines to receive as authoritative any teachings which are not first sanctioned by the experience of mankind, and therefore takes its place, side by side, with "scientific Christianity" and "philosophical Christianity" in denying that Christ's religion is a revelation which makes an imperative demand upon our faith, in such a way that Christ must be always first and this world second.

Denying this, the Christianity of civilization preaches a false Gospel.

CHAPTER VII

SOME EFFECTS OF A CREEDLESS GOSPEL

SYNOPSIS

- I. The Attempts to establish Christianity upon (1) a Scientific, (2) a Philosophical, (3) an Ethical, (4) a Humanitarian (Natural Religion), (5) a Social Basis, all end in making Christianity something less than a Divine Revelation.
- II. The Three Effects of this Pseudo-Gospel.
 - A. Lowering of Christian Standards to popularize religion and suit the majority.
 - B. Indefiniteness and Uncertainty. Showing itself in (1) Vagueness in dogma and dislike of dogmatics. (2) Vagueness in personal religion and Christian principle. (3) Dislike of definite and sacramental forms of Christianity. (4) Loss of the idea of Worship.
 - C. Disingenuousness.
- III. The growing Antagonism between the Gospel of the Age and the Church.

WE have endeavored to trace out in the last five chapters the efforts of the human mind to find (1) a Scientific, (2) a Philosophical, (3) an Ethical, (4) a Humanitarian, and (5) a Social Basis for Christianity. We have seen that each of these modes of thought covers, in part, Christian ground, in that it contains a half-truth which appeals powerfully to some one Christian principle, and sets forth, in all its prominence, some one phase of the Christian religion. We have seen that Christianity, as a universal religion, is catholic enough to embrace and harmonize all these different methods of thought, without being fettered by them. We have seen how the Revelation of

God in Christ has a scientific side, a philosophical side, an ethical side, a humanitarian side, and a social side, and how it welcomes these bases for Christian thought, provided that each does not, through its defenders, claim in itself to be a sufficient foundation for the supernatural Gospel. Yet this is the very point at which, however they may be at variance with one another, they all unite, in the attempt to undermine the faith of the Gospels. Each one hides under the shadow of Christianity, and claims to have got at the kernel of that of which the old faith was only the outer husk ; and though one calls the husk what another calls the very kernel itself, all are at one in resisting the idea that the Gospel has a distinctly supernatural side which cannot be crowded down upon any scientific, philosophical, ethical, humanitarian, or social basis, that the ingenious mind of man builds up for it.

We have shown, and shown conclusively, we trust, how such efforts have, in each case, ended in a school of thought which teaches that the basis thus built is sufficient of itself to explain Christianity, and that those supernatural facts of the Gospel and those transcendental teachings of Christ which cannot thus be explained and accounted for are either to be held in abeyance until more light is thrown upon them, or else to be banished altogether from the mind.

Perhaps we should describe them rather as five lines than five schools of thought, for they do not appear as separate and distinct ; on the contrary, in the popular thought and life of the day they mingle together, intertwining, like strands of one rope, which stretches from the earth to the skies, at whose lower end humanity is tugging and hauling, to draw Heaven down from its spiritual heights into the natural world and to a level with the secular consciousness.

As they all betray the one common characteristic of regarding Christianity as a religion in which man seeks God, and of narrowing, if they cannot abolish, its claim to be a revelation from God Himself, and as these lines of thought are inseparably, and often indistinguishably, mingled together in their effects, we have felt that it would be wiser to group those effects together in a chapter by themselves, rather than to attempt the intricate, and perhaps impossible, task of classifying them under their several causes.

Enough is it to know that they stand together as signs of a false Gospel; signs of the times and of a common impulse in those men who are yielding to the spirit of the times, to drag down Christianity to the level of mere Humanitarianism, as a religion in which the natural man *can* receive the things of the Spirit of God. And as it is difficult to give a definite name to that, which, barring the common characteristic we have mentioned, is so indefinite and combines so many elements in itself, we shall call it, for convenience sake, and for the want of a better name, the *Gospel of the Age*.

The results of this Gospel are three in number. It has brought about (1) a visible lowering of Christian standards, (2) a vagueness in life and doctrine, and (3) a disingenuousness in the individual. It is our purpose in the present chapter to discuss these results in the order mentioned.

THE LOWERING OF CHRISTIAN STANDARDS.

No thoughtful observer of human nature and of its general attitude toward all religious questions can fail to distinguish one reason—and perhaps the chief reason—why the Gospel of the Age reflects so vividly the spirit of the age, why it has become so popular, and why it has ap-

pealed so widely to all sorts and conditions of men. While a few are honestly influenced by personal study and reflection to embrace this modern gospel, and others enthusiastically believe that they have discovered an eirenicon between science and revelation, the multitudes follow their lead, not through the impulsion of any deep conviction, but simply because the inductive method makes Christianity a religion that is more easily believed, a religion that is more easily practised, and a religion that is more easily assimilated with the present social conditions of civilization than the older Faith. It makes Christianity a religion easier to believe because it demands that we must be fortified by positive scientific knowledge every step of the way, and that everything is to be rejected which has not had this kind of verification. Nothing is to be received on faith, because it is said that faith is not the attitude of mind in which one can make an unprejudiced, accurate, and thoroughly impartial investigation of facts. The truly honest inquirer is one who, first of all, clears his mind of that cloud of uncertainty which faith creates. Doubt is a surer guide than faith, for doubt corrects the aberration of vision which faith produces. By this process of thought Inductive Christianity is swung round to a position exactly the reverse of that emphasized in the New Testament.

The watchword which rings through the writings of St. Paul and the other Apostles is, "We walk by faith and not by sight," whereas that of our modern religionists is, "We walk by sight and not by faith." And let men say what they will about the difficulty of escaping from their Christian environment, in order that their vision may not be distorted by speculative beliefs, the real difficulty is, and always will be, on the other side.

It is easier to walk by sight than to walk by faith. The world feels this intuitively, and hence the multi-

tudes are attracted by a form of the Christian religion in which there is no such continuous and wearisome demand made upon their faith as New Testament Christianity presents. Modern thought, however, is taking here no new position. It is the ancient attitude of those Jews and Greeks themselves, to whom the Gospel was first preached. The Christian religion provoked their hostility everywhere, simply because it made such an imperative demand upon their faith. And St. Paul, who bore the brunt of this opposition, lays bare this fact when he tells us how continuously "the Jews required a sign and the Greeks wisdom."

From the very first, Christianity has been opposed by antagonists who either thus required a sign which would coerce them into receiving it, without the aid of faith ; or by those who, divesting Christianity of the supernatural, would reduce it to the level of a purely natural religion, which can be readily comprehended by the natural man.

"From the earliest days of Christianity to our own the Catholic Church has had to contend with those who denied the great miracles of the Incarnation and the Resurrection of Christ and the Inspiration of Holy Writ, or sought to explain away the great mysteries of Redemption and Atonement and Regeneration. All these denials of the supernatural, all these attempts at getting rid of the mysteries of the Christian faith, are but the efforts of the human mind to attain to absolute certainty, but which seeks to gain it in a demonstration. . . . At this moment we are suffering from a reaction in this direction. The age in which we live is intellectual, self-reliant, sceptical. The human intellect—resenting the long tyranny of tradition and authority in science and in philosophy—is insisting loudly upon its right to be the supreme and only judge of all questions. Religion is experiencing the effect of this revolt against authority.

Men are demanding everywhere that religion, like philosophy or science, shall be received only so far as it can make good its claims at the bar of the intellect. . . . As men once demanded power without wisdom, so now they insist upon wisdom without power. They ask for a religion which shall be purely and entirely human, set forth in a revelation not *to* man, but *of* and *by* man; a Bible which is not inspired; a Christ who is not Incarnate; a Church which has no divine and indwelling Spirit; a Gospel which tells us no truth which we could not have discovered for ourselves, and reveals no wisdom which it did not first derive from us. This is that Gospel of the Age, freed from all the errors of the past, and the remains of Hebrew superstition, from which Jesus of Nazareth did so much to free religion in His day, but of which He left so much for us to free it from in our day. This is that Gospel of Wisdom without power which the age demands and with which so many are endeavoring to supply it.”¹

Again, the Gospel of the Age makes a pleasant religion, in that it upholds the religious character of the secular life; and this is, again, in accord with popular pantheistic tendencies. It tells us that if religion sanctifies the whole nature of man, then there is no taste or capacity implanted by God in man, and no honorable human pursuit or calling, that is not helping on the cause of Christianity.²

The ordinary separation between the religious and the secular life, founded on the idea that religion consists primarily in spiritual development, is, therefore, a pure figment; since art and music, poetry and literature, science and commerce, as well as ethics and devotion are equally factors in the building up of the Faith. It is further-

¹ The Gospel and the Age, by Archbishop Magee, pp. 23, 24.

² Canon Fremantle's Bampton Lectures, pp. 292, 293.

more said, that, as some, in whom the devotional instincts are strong, reach God through Bible reading and Church services, so others, in whom the æsthetical instincts are equally strong, may be sanctified and uplifted to God through their intellectual and æsthetical longings; and that, therefore, the ministry of the public library, the picture-gallery, and the music-hall take their place, side by side, with the ministry of the Church itself, in helping to Christianize the people. We have here the ruling thought which lies at the bottom of many social movements of the present time.

It is true, as we have repeatedly said, that religion sanctifies the whole nature of man, with all those unperverted capacities and tastes which God has implanted in his breast, and that there is no honorable pursuit or calling which cannot be followed as part of the service of God.¹

¹ "Culture and civilization develop in the life of nations in connection with political and social efforts. Civilization may be understood as culture in its application and effects upon the civil community and its arrangements. . . . Its chief blossoms, however, have from of old been found in *art and science*, which do not, as the manifold other tasks of culture, aim at any direct advantage, but whose value is found in themselves. We may, however, speak in an ideal sense of the advantage of art and science. . . . Next to religion and moral goodness there is nothing which is to such a degree capable of developing in us the universal-human, of making us partakers of universal or all-sided humanity, as art and science; nothing which can in like manner set us free from those intellectual restrictions with which we often go through life, as though we had bandages on our eyes, or were hemmed in with mental fences, which make a free look around and free movement towards all sides impossible. It is true that history shows us ages in which a high degree of æsthetic and intellectual culture has accompanied a decay of morality and religion. And hence we might perhaps be induced to conclude that, if men are not the better for them, art and science had better be dispensed with as mere intellectual luxuries. But the periods alluded to with a culture separated from personal life, lacked the noblest element, nay, the very core of human civilization, and were pervaded by inhumanity. Genuine human cultivation is nothing else but culture, determined and animated by the moral and

Because, therefore, the Christian life of faith can sanctify art, literature, and every pursuit of man to God's service, the unthinking multitudes, viewing the effect, hastily take it for granted that this effect can be made a cause, and affirm that they can serve God by pursuing art, literature, and other avocations, without the Christian life of faith. A creed like this, which makes religion pleasant and easy, is, of course, acceptable to the majority; and hence its popularity.

And this brings us, by a natural transition, to another and still more potent reason, why the Gospel of the Age is so popular. A creed, so easy and pleasant to believe, is made still easier by the very fact of its popularity. "Nothing succeeds like success." It is hard for most men to believe that the *vox populi* is not the *vox Dei*, and it is peculiarly hard to stand apart from the masses around us in holding, with the courage of our convictions, to one Creed, while they, with an almost unanimous voice, are loudly proclaiming another. Be-

the morally religious. Culture without morality is without worth, or is at most of very ambiguous worth. But, on the other hand, it must be said that though morality maintains its undoubted worth with but a slight degree of culture, still it is in such a case restrained within bounds which prevent its due and full development. And thus the phenomenon is often repeated, that men who are religious and Christian, but of defective education, manifest not merely want of taste, but also actual narrowness; give their judgment about things which they do not understand, embark in all kinds of undertakings for the reformation of the world, or at all events, of their own nation; in short, in tasks which are above their capacity. In these observations and arguments the middle terms are always wanting, a sure mark of the uneducated. They forget that to bring the kingdom of God into effective relation with the world it is not sufficient to know the kingdom of God, but that it is also necessary to know the world and human nature, in which this kingdom is to be planted. It is, however, by means of a right use of art and science that we take possession, in an ideal manner, of the world and its manifold life."—Martensen's Christian Ethics, translated by Sophia Taylor, pp. 242, 243.

sides this, the influence of the majority to-day is stronger than ever before ; and it has been enormously developed through the desire for unity which is now manifesting itself everywhere over the civilized world. When a network of railways is spreading its meshes over our great continents, and steamships are making a highway through the waste of waters, and the telegraph wire is bringing those in the uttermost parts of the earth within speaking distance of the centres of civilization, bonds of unity are rapidly formed. The social motive grows before our eyes and, as it grows, the power of the majority becomes greater.

In the political world, a bloodless revolution has taken place within the last half-century, whereby the seat of power has silently been transferred from king and nobility to the people themselves, who are now becoming more and more the real governing class. In the complex social world, the habit is becoming more and more ingrained of referring all great questions to the bar of public opinion, and of reverencing the decisions of this Court of Appeal as the ultimate authority to which all must eventually bow. In the religious world, by a similar trend of thought, the seat of authority lies no longer in an infallible Bible, or in an infallible Church, but in an infallible voice of the people. And public sentiment is now the God to whom all are tempted to bow the knee.¹

¹ A grotesque story of a Westerner, as bearing upon this point, here comes to mind. The man had been brought up far away from any church or Christian influence, and was but slightly acquainted with the claims of Christianity. He happened one day, however, when further east than usual, to be drawn into a church by the sound of singing coming through its open doors, and was soon paying earnest attention to all the preacher was saying. The sermon was of the old-fashioned kind on the old-fashioned Hell. At the close of the service the man went to the minister, and asked him whether he really believed all he had preached.

“ *Certainly,*” was the reply.

The man shrugged his shoulders. “ *People won’t stand it!*”

We do not say that this will always be so, or that earnest and resolute seekers after truth, whether on the side of science or of the Gospel, are thus influenced. We are simply pointing out one of those reasons why the Gospel of the Age has become so *popular*.

Few persons realize how their own opinions are formed, and it needs but a moment's reflection to see that this consciousness of the religious opinions and the sympathy of the majority is a very large factor in determining the belief of the ordinary run of men. We hear much at the present day about the personal bias of the theologian, little or nothing about that of this other class.

The social motive, by which we mean the opinions of the majority, has become so masterful and so much a part of our daily life that those who are influenced by it, unconscious of its presence, do not realize how rapidly, under its entralling spell, the social aspects of Christianity are crowding out of sight its diviner side.

Religion, with them, is coming to mean the greatest good to the greatest number, without regard to any qualifying considerations. The laity are constantly gauging the worth of the Church by this false standard, and measuring the relative value of her different doctrines by their attractive power over the masses ; and the ministry itself is falling into a line behind them. It is the old story of "Like people, like priest," and the results are now everywhere visible in the history of those Christian Denominations which have adopted this principle.

They have let down the bars and broadened their doctrines to reach and satisfy as many souls as possible ; they have sacrificed the truth of Christ and lowered their standard of belief to attract the greatest number ; they have vied with one another in their endeavor to popularize Christianity and bring out its social side ; and the

outcome of all this has been that, instead of spiritualizing the world, the world has secularized them. Their efforts have served only to cheapen religion and take from it the power that it formerly exerted over human hearts. They have given a false impression to the multitudes, that, with them, numbers are ever the first consideration and the truth of the Gospel the second. They have laid themselves open to the charge that the foremost aim in each particular sect is to increase its own numbers by proselyting from some other sect, if in no other way. They have helped to propagate the growing suspicion, already latent in thousands of hearts, that the waning spiritual power of the religion of Christ needs to be thus fortified by secularizing influences, and that the Church herself does not really believe in the doctrine she preaches. Every succeeding day this result is becoming more manifest.

Disclaim, as such Christians will, the false interpretation thus put upon their motives ; explain how they may, that their one crowning desire has been to bring all men into the fold of Christ, they cannot now undo the evil they themselves have done by putting human souls first and Christ second.

The impression has gone abroad that the majority rule, and that the religion of Christ must be changed and adapted to the ever-changing conditions of the times, or it will lose its hold upon the masses ; while the masses themselves are so hardened and so impregnated by false ideas of religion, that they are beyond the reach of any ordinary spiritual influence. They see nothing but a conventionalized form of godliness without any spiritual power behind it. They cry that there is "more truth in honest doubt than in half the creeds," and the average man, who seldom or never looks above the social conditions that surround him, accepting as truth the unreal

estimate of his own worth which Christian believers themselves, by their exaggerated efforts to make him "a professing Christian," have created in his mind, complacently folds his arms and holds aloof from all Christian bodies, as though it were an actual favor to God on his part to join any one of them. And this is the result, this is all that the Church has gained by trying to be more merciful than her Master.

VAGUENESS IN LIFE AND DOCTRINE.

The Gospel of the Age has much to answer for here, as its influence is seen operating in at least four directions, all destructive and hostile to positive Christianity. These are as follows : Dislike of dogma, decay of Personal Religion, disregard of institutional Christianity, and neglect of Common Worship.

(a) Dislike of Dogma.

After men have grown accustomed to consider the religion of Christ, not as a fixed and unalterable revelation from God to man, but as a spiritual evolution in which, by a continuous upward movement man is seeking God, the old foundations of the Christian faith are swept away.

The process is a gradual one and, in the transition, few realize the nature of those onward steps by which the old faith is being supplanted by the new ; but all the while the changes are taking place, under the name of "broad and generous religious views," and as, by degrees, religious thought systematizes itself and becomes used to looking at the religious problem from the new stand-point, the cardinal doctrines of Christianity lie outside the range of its perspective and loom up as the creations of a distorted vision.

Everywhere about us we behold, in consequence, a growing dislike of dogma, and the principal reason for this dislike is jealousy of any interference with the chain of inductive reasoning.

As men are unwilling to accept anything as positive which cannot be verified by this process, and as in the supernatural side of Christianity no upward sequence from effect to cause can be traced, certainty ends where the supernatural begins, and the natural takes the place of the supernatural along the whole line.

Dogma, men say, asserts the positive existence of spiritual facts which have not yet been tested by the inductive method, therefore dogma must go. Speculation can never take the place of positive proof. In the higher region of Christian truth, consequently, uncertainty is step by step crowding out certainty, and thus, even the sharp, clear-cut facts of the Apostles' Creed lose their sharpness, are emptied of all their spiritual meaning, and imperceptibly melt away before the eyes into pious human speculations which may or may not be true.¹

How far this trend of modern thought has already carried us may be judged by the way in which Christians are now discussing this subject. Says the Rev. S. D. McConnell : "From all that one can see, Christianity, in some form, is likely to remain the religion of the enlightened world. *Christianity in some form*; but in what form? . . . It is clear, in the first place, that Christianity has already broken out of the bounds which have long contained it. It has broken out of the old bounds of doctrine; out of the Church ; and will no longer submit to conventional 'experiences.'

The leadership of science and art is already almost en-

¹ "We have not only given up burning men for their opinions, but we have also given up thinking that there are any opinions worth burning or being burnt for."—Archbishop Magee of York.

tirely in the hands of men who have broken with organized Christianity. They are the guides and pioneers in political and social reforms. They are a large minority—promising soon to be a majority—in the management of charitable and reformatory institutions.

They are the professors in colleges, and the teachers in normal schools. They are kind husbands, faithful wives, good sons, daughters, and friends. What is their relation to Christianity?

The answer is : *They are Christians in fact ; but they are waiting for Christianity to pass into a new phase which will include them in form. . . .* Facts, all pointing in the same direction, might be multiplied indefinitely. But to what do they point ? To this : Christianity has passed through the phases of dogmatism, ecclesiasticism, and experimentalism, and is now about to show itself in the region of *conduct*.¹

So again, in *The New World* of December, 1893, Professor Alfred Momerie, writing from London, says : "There is then no creed, no single sentence of a creed, which we are bound unhesitatingly to accept. Dogmatism would exact from us a submission to which it has no right. It is therefore an impertinence. There is no creed, no single sentence of a creed, which we ought not, before accepting, very carefully to investigate. Dogmatism would dissuade us from our duty. It is therefore a crime."

And in the same issue Mr. Richard A. Armstrong writes concerning the orthodoxy of the teachers in the Andover Theological Seminary : "An American friend, himself a distinguished exponent of the New Theology, gives me to understand that the essay of the Andover professors on the Divinity of Jesus Christ is intended to

¹ The Next Step in Christianity. *The New World*, June, 1892, p. 281 ff.

ward off from themselves and their Seminary the suspicion of affording a favorable atmosphere for the propagation of the *bacilli* of Unitarianism. Shall I be forgiven if I confess that almost the only differentiation which I can discover between the enunciations of these excellent men and a Unitarian confession lies in a certain gentle timidity of expression and an inaptitude for the attachment of clear and definite meanings to theological terms? Translate what they seem to mean into unambiguous English, and it would appear to be a simple and devout Unitarianism. It is only by a large admixture of 'haze' in their atmosphere that their theology bears an orthodox semblance or is likely to satisfy decriers of heresy."

Again, Mr. J. G. Schurman, President of Cornell University, says in this connection: "The religion of creed lays stress on belief in dogma as essential to salvation; but it rejoices in the use of symbols, and it assumes, though not very consciously or explicitly, that a sound faith and a correct ritual will issue in a pious, God-fearing life. Now, in the final development of religion, it will be explicitly recognized that its primary and constitutive element is neither cult nor creed, but what I may call the soul's entire attitude toward the Invisible—an attitude which in its highest attainment embraces the creature's sense of dependence upon the Creator, the child's loving and reverent trust in the Father, and the man's fellowship with the Divine Companion who alone can satisfy the boundless and immortal yearnings of the human spirit."¹

Another clergyman writes: "There is an unmistakable feeling abroad—one which cannot be blinked—that the clergy are impostors, by teaching what they do not believe, and by undertaking work which they do not per-

¹ The Future of Liberal Religion in America. The New World, March, 1892.

form. How many of the educated clergy believe in ‘original’ (that is, inherited) sin? believe that ‘in Adam’s fall we sinned all?’ How many believe in everlasting punishment? in predestination? in total depravity? in the inerrancy of the Bible? If our pulpit would frankly discard these unbelievable dogmas, it would gain at once that influence and power which honesty alone can command. . . . What is the doctrine of ‘original sin’ but bald materialism?”¹

Another, and a very prominent Episcopal clergyman writes: “I believe, of course, in the article of the Creed regarding the Second Coming of Christ, otherwise I could not and would not repeat it, but I do not put a carnal interpretation upon it. The essence of personality is, in my judgement, spirit and not matter, and to affirm that the Advent of our Lord, to be personal must be physical, shows to what an extent even the Christian consciousness is influenced by the materialistic temper of the age.”

The very fact that Christian teachers can publicly and privately utter such sentiments as these which we have quoted reveals how completely our modern Christian society is honey-combed with these new ideas, and how far it has already insensibly fallen away from the Christianity of the New Testament. While the time-honoured doctrines of Christianity, based upon the facts of Christ’s life are classed as speculations yet to be proved, and are called “unsatisfactory and vague,”² a diffused spirit of Christ spreading itself over civilized society is looked upon as the spiritual force that is to regenerate the world.

On which side is the *real* vagueness? On that of these plain facts of Christ’s life, and the dogmas based thereon,

¹ Rev. G. Monroe Royce, in *The Decline of the American Pulpit*. Forum, January, 1894.

² See Canon Fremantle’s Bampton Lectures, pp. 289, 363, 366.

or on the side of this modern gospel, whose evangel is that Christ's disciples must be broad enough to spread the mantle of Christianity over all the religions of the world, to look upon the spiritual influence of Jesus as the only thing certain in religion, and to consider every man born of woman a member of the Church, and every father and mother who faithfully obeys the parental instinct as a fellow-Christian?

If one asks where the line is to be drawn between what is Christian and what is not Christian, or between those who *are* and those who are *not* disciples of Christ, such thinkers would be puzzled to answer. Indeed, no satisfactory reply can be given, for nothing is fixed or positive. Modern Christian thought is largely dominated by the inductive method; and this method, which when applied to the physical world is so definite, when it reaches out into the spiritual world has exactly the opposite effect; it evaporates into sheer transcendentalism and has nothing more tangible to present to us than the "Over-soul" of Emerson. The doctrine of evolution, when carried up to its highest point, fails, as we said before, to reach a personal God, and the only religious alternative is Pantheism.¹

¹ "In conceiving of God, the choice before a Pantheist lies between alternatives from which no genius has as yet devised a real escape. God, the Pantheist must assert, is literally everything; God is the whole material and spiritual universe; He is humanity in all its manifestations; He is by inclusion every moral and immoral agent; and every form and exaggeration of moral evil, no less than every variety of moral excellence and beauty, is part of the all-pervading all-comprehending movement of His Universal life. If this revolting blasphemy be declined, then the God of Pantheism must be the barest abstraction of abstract being; He must, as with the Alexandrian thinkers, be so exaggerated an abstraction as to transcend existence itself; He must be conceived of as utterly unreal, lifeless, non-existent; while the only real beings are these finite and determinate forms of existence whereof 'nature' is composed. This dilemma haunts all the historical trans-

(b) *Vagueness in Personal Religion.*

Thus also is it with personal religion itself. If there is any definite bulwark of character it is Christian formations of Pantheism, in Europe as in the East, to-day as two thousand years ago. . . . Does the Incarnation of God, as taught by the Christian doctrine, expose Christian thought to this dilemma? . . . Now, not merely is there no ground for this apprehension; but the Christian doctrine of an Incarnate God is our most solid protection against the inroads of pantheistic error.

"The strength of pantheistic systems lies in that craving both of the intellect and of the heart for union with the Absolute Being, which is the most legitimate and the noblest instinct of our nature. This craving is satisfied by the Christian's union with the Incarnate Son. . . . Against the dogma of an Incarnate God . . . the waves of pantheistic thought may surge and lash themselves and break in vain. For the Incarnation presupposes that master truth which Pantheism most passionately denies. It presupposes the truth that between the finite and the Infinite, between the Creator and the Cosmos, between God and man, there is of necessity a measureless abyss. . . . The Christian creed spans this gulf . . . by proclaiming that the Everlasting Son has taken our nature upon Him. In His Person a Created Nature is joined to the Uncreated, by a union which is forever indissoluble. But what is that truth which underlies this transcendent mystery? What sustains it, what even enhances it, what forbids it to melt away in our thought into a chaotic confusion out of which neither the Divine nor the Human could struggle forth into the light for distinct recognition? It is, I reply, the truth that the Natures thus united in the Person of Jesus are radically, by their essence, and forever, distinct. It is by reason of this ineffaceable distinctness that the union of the Godhead and Manhood in Jesus is such an object of wondering and thankful contemplation to Christians. . . . Christian intellect, so long as it is Christian, can never be betrayed into the admission that God is the universe; Christian faith can never be reduced to the extremity of choosing between a denial of moral distinctions and an assertion that God is the parent of all immoral action, or to the desperate endeavour to escape this alternative by volatilizing God into non-existence. And yet Christian love . . . cannot for one moment doubt that it enfolds and possesses and is united to its Divine Object. But this intellectual safeguard and this moral satisfaction alike vanish, if the real Deity of Jesus be denied or obscured; since it is the Deity of

ciple, but it is customary in these days to speak of Christian principle as "sentiment," and we often hear even those who profess to be followers of Christ using this term : by which men mean that they do not acknowledge any kind of *obligation* to live a Christian life or do a distinctively Christian act, but simply choose it as a matter of preference.

Few pause to analyze their own motives in assuming such an attitude, or probe the real reason why they are so reluctant to confess themselves in conscience bound to obey Christ ; but, at the bottom, can be traced the same pantheistic tendencies. There is a growing disposition to hold that man owes no gratitude, no confession of sin, no spiritual obligation to a personal God, he is simply to be loyal to the highest, purest, dictates of his own nature, without acknowledging any higher authority than this in the practical conduct of life. Would any educated Pantheist express different views ?

"In its later forms Pantheism is, speaking historically, a reaction from and a protest against the older Rationalistic Deism. It often represents a noble plea that God shall not be banished by modern thought from all real contact with humanity ; nay, it would fain essay to do in its way what the Divine Incarnation has actually done ; it would make men partakers of the Divine Nature. And this, its religious aim, is beyond question a main secret of its power."¹

Few, as yet, would, indeed, go so far as those disciples of Ethical Culture who preach that there is no place in the religious life for prayer or gratitude to an unknow-

our truly human Lord which satisfies the Christian heart, while it protects the Christian intellect against fatal aberrations."—Liddon's Bampton Lectures, pp. 448 ff. Our Lord's Divinity as Safeguard against Pantheism.

¹ Liddon, in Some Elements of Religion, p. 62.

able deity who is as far as possible removed from human thought, and who never interferes with the settled order of nature ; but many are travelling the high road toward that goal, and the number of those who in actual practice if not in creed, proclaim the same thing, who disbelieve in answered prayer, who look suspiciously upon the very word " Providence," and over whose life the thought of a personal God exercises no perceptible influence, is ever increasing.

The real reason why the Church is losing her hold upon so many in this generation is not a want of charity or Christian activity, for she has never been more zealous in her efforts to reach the masses than she is to-day, but it is because men are antagonized by the Church's persistent effort to bring them to a *Personal God*, and by those definite features of Christianity, positive doctrine, sacramental grace, public worship, and personal sanctification through Christ, which she keeps emphasizing. Inductive thought can never assimilate these elements of Christ's religion with its own method, and, therefore, it is alienated from the Church.

And when we hear Christian writers like Canon Fremantle and Professor Drummond ("who is nothing if not an earnest Christian Missionary") holding up the vision of a City without a Church¹ as the triumphant consummation toward which the evolution of Christianity is moving, we have another illustration how strongly even Christian leaders themselves are being carried away by the surging current of modern opinion.

(c) *Dislike of the Outward Forms of Christianity.*

Here again we behold the same influences at work in the present reaction against all kinds of Christian observance.

¹Drummond's City Without a Church, Fremantle's Bampton Lectures, pp. 322, 336.

"Institutional Christianity" as it is called, does not commend itself to the popular mind. The whole sacramental system of the Church is looked upon as a cumbersome and useless system of rites and ceremonies, invented and kept alive by a priestly caste, whose interest it is to perpetuate their power by binding men with these spiritual obligations.

And so much of a ruling thought has this become, even among many Christian men, that whenever a Christian minister is heard urging the importance of a sacrament, they secretly discount what they hold to be his *personal bias*. They have no consciousness of any authority above that of a priestly caste; and the Gospel statement that these sacraments were expressly ordained by Jesus Christ Himself to be observed in remembrance of Him is forgotten. Even the authority of Christ's own words is not enough to make men alter their explanation of the human origin of the sacraments, because there is another authority, adverse to Christ's teachings, which claims their allegiance and biases them against belief in all spiritual channels of communication between God and man. The sacramental system of the Church is founded upon the idea of a Personal God, and his spiritual union with man through the risen and ascended Christ. The sacraments cement this bond of union. They are the covenants of grace between Christ and heaven and each individual soul. And, therefore, when the consciousness of a Personal God is obliterated, these sacraments, of course, are regarded as meaningless rites and ceremonies. Spiritual communion with God, it is held, is bound down and conditioned by no such fetters as institutional Christianity imposes upon the conscience. It is free as the air we breathe. Again the indefinite is here found crowding out the definite.

(d) Neglect of Common Worship.

Once more, witness the way in which the whole question of worship is treated nowadays. In past times this was one of the most prominent features of the personal religious life of Christian believers. From the days when the early Christian martyrs and confessors met together in the catacombs to praise God, when even the Roman writer, Pliny, describes these gatherings before daylight as one of the distinctive marks of the Christian religion, down to the times when the Puritans of New England erected their house of worship in the backwoods, almost as soon as they built their log-cabin dwellings, the instinct of worship was dominant. It was a necessity of their religious life, and a voice within them demanded expression. But, to-day, all this is changed, and public worship is popularly looked upon as a phase of the religious life which is fast passing away with the ecclesiasticism in which, according to the common supposition, it originated. Multitudes point to the religious conditions of the times—to our half-filled churches on Sundays and to the small number of men who are present, in comparison with the women and children—as a proof of the truth of their assertion. On all sides we hear the opinion expressed that busy men have something better to do, and higher and nobler ways of serving God, than wasting their time by attending a round of religious services; and that even in their hours of leisure they are more profited by taking down from their library shelves some religious work by a great author, than by listening to the trite exhortations of a commonplace Christian preacher about repentance and conversion.

They say that the ordinary pulpit themes have ceased to interest them, and that the feeling of irritation and

impatience evoked within them while they sit in church on Sundays, when their sole motive in coming is to pay respect to a useless and obsolescent custom, only antagonizes them against all religion, and that, therefore, it is better for them to stay away. Then some newspaper reporter goes about, counts the attendants at each church on a Sunday morning, and estimates the whole value of the service by the numbers of men, women, and children who are present.

No one detects the real meaning of all this. Men have eyes, but they see not; ears, but they hear not, neither do they understand. They are so absorbed in gazing upon this whole subject from a utilitarian standpoint, gauging the value of public worship by its power to interest a lukewarm audience, and measuring its worth by the size of the congregation, that they fail to see the real influence at work beneath the surface. The one reason why our churches are empty and why worship is thus looked upon as an obsolescent custom, is that men have lost the consciousness of the Presence of God. The last presence thought of when men and women look about them in the church and listen to the words of praise and prayer, is the silent Presence of Him who has promised to be wherever two or three are gathered together in His Name. *And His Presence is not felt, because the consciousness of the Personality of God is fast disappearing from our modern life.* If God's Personality were intensely realized, then worship would be no perfunctory duty. As in the days of yore, it would be a necessity of the spiritual life. Prayer and praise would become "the Christian's vital breath, the Christian's native air."

"More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day;

For what are men better than sheep or goats,
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend !
For so the whole round world is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God."

The devout believer, who is accustomed to come to God as a Living Person, is impelled by a spiritual drawing he cannot resist, not only to pray without ceasing, but to join as a member of the Communion of Saints in social worship with his brethren. And if the impulsion of that force is not felt, it is a sure indication that pantheistic tendencies are eliminating the consciousness of a Personal God, and substituting the indefinite for the definite.

DISINGENUOUSNESS OF THIS MODERN GOSPEL.

We come now to the effects of the Gospel of the Age upon the moral life of believers. They are most serious in their nature. No earnest-minded Christian can help being startled when he faces them. This Gospel has not the clear, true ring of sincerity.

It is the boast of this age that it is nothing if not truthful. It is claimed that the inductive method has been a great moral influence in teaching men the value of facts, in educating them to observe accurately, and in giving them a wholesome dislike for overstatement and want of precision.

All this we cheerfully grant. It is a recognized fact that the men of this age have a deeper reverence for truthfulness than the men of the past.

But when we apply this same method of scientific induction to Christianity we behold, once more, exactly the opposite result. As that which was so definite in

the natural becomes indefinite in the spiritual world, so in the same transition its truthfulness becomes untruthfulness.

And that untruthfulness arises in this way: The *facts* of Christianity, as we have already said, present an insuperable obstacle to those who deny their supernatural character. In dealing with them we must either acknowledge them boldly, or else deny them outright. The only outcome of the effort to explain them and make them square with inductive thought, is to explain them away. Now there are many, at the present day, who do not wish to part company with the Christian religion. They recognize its historic continuity and the connecting links between Christianity and civilization. They see the lasting debt that the latter owes to the former. They feel the elevating influences of Christ's religion in promoting a high ethical standard, and inspiring a life of self-sacrifice and pure devotion to God. They feel its irresistible appeal to all that is pure and God-like within them, and are frank to confess that the greatest reformers of the past, and the long line of those men of whom the world was not worthy, were men who lived by faith in the supernatural revelation of God.

But there, on the other side, stands the pitiless, inexorable logic of the inductive method, which is carrying the world onward without any regard to the Christian religion.

Neither can they part company with this, for it appeals to their strongest intellectual convictions. The only alternative is to reconcile the two, by adapting Christianity to modern scientific methods.

Many earnest Christian writers are now engaged upon this work, and the outcome is very plausible. No one can read, for example, such a book as Dr. Lyman Abbott's "Evolution of Christianity" without feeling the influence

of that Christian spirit which breathes on every page. No one can question the loyalty to Christ which inspires the author. Thus also is it with other writers whose works are now being widely read. The Christianity they teach bears so close a resemblance to the Christianity of the Gospels that it seems to be, in very truth, what Dr. Abbott himself calls it, the old faith under new forms, "which are more rational and more consistent with modern methods of thought." "The New Theology," we are told, "does not tend toward unbelief :" it is, on the contrary, "an endeavour to maintain faith by expressing it in terms which are more intelligible and credible." Yet, when we discover that many followers of this new Theology regard the doctrine of the Trinity as one of these old forms that needs to be recast ; that they cannot repeat the Apostles' Creed without many mental reservations ; that some can go no further than to say Christ was born "of the *so-called* Virgin Mary ;" that others do not regard His physical resurrection from the dead as a necessary article of faith ; that others still await more light regarding His ascension into heaven ; that they have no settled conviction about His coming again to judge the quick and dead ; that they have grave doubts whether the prophecy of the Judgement Day is not, after all, an oriental metaphor, describing events that are all the while taking place ; and that belief in the Holy Ghost, as the Third Person of the Trinity, has no place whatever in their New Theology, it looks very much as though this theology were a mere negation, which, under the mask of Christianity, is denying the principal and essential facts of Christianity.

We speak in no want of charity for those who are its adherents, but out of deep conviction regarding that which the Church has always held to be the truth of the Gospel.

We ask whether it is a true position, to use the language of Christianity while denying these primal facts? and whether the Gospel of the Age, if it *forces* men into that position, does not lead to disingenuousness?

It shows a perilous tendency when people come to believe that it is unnecessary for them to hold any belief positively, and it is no marvel that they who have such views about faith—the most sacred power of the human soul—by and by lose their capacity for believing. No other tendency is more destructive to force of character, purity of motive, or real depth of religious conviction than this. One cannot with impunity play fast and loose with the highest of all truth. Every error about God, or Christ, Who reveals God, warps the powers of the soul.

It is one of the gravest signs of the times that Christian men are thus losing their positiveness of belief regarding Him who is the Way the Truth and the Life, and learning to hesitate more and more before they commit themselves to a fixed and definite belief in the supernatural facts of His life. This is not accuracy of thought, it is looseness of thought; and it seems as though, at the bottom, its purpose is to evade the issue between Christianity and modern ideas. We can already see the result of its immoral tendency, and how its influence is percolating down through all classes of men and women, by the way in which several modern societies which call themselves Christians and profess to have a Christian bond of union, are now receiving Jews, Theosophists and Agnostics, as their members. The only way in which they can thus swell their numbers is by eliminating everything from their creed but the belief in Jesus Christ as a divinely inspired Man, and receiving as "Christians" those who will sign their constitution on these terms. Is this a *bona fide* bond of union? Even

John Stuart Mill himself could join a society like that!¹
So could Cerinthus and Marcion and Mahomet.

¹ "About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of insight, which, if we abandon the idle expectation of finding scientific precision where something very different was aimed at, must place the prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in his inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life.

"When to this we add that, to the conception of the rational sceptic, it remains a possibility that Christ actually was what he supposed himself to be—not God, for he never made the smallest pretension to that character, and would probably have thought such a pretension as blasphemous as it seemed to the men who condemned him—but a man charged with a special, express, and unique commission from God to lead mankind to truth and virtue; we may well conclude that the influences of religion on the character which will remain after rational criticism has done its utmost against the evidences of religion, are all worth preserving, and that what they lack in direct strength as compared with those of a firmer belief, is more than compensated by the greater truth and rectitude of the morality they sanction.

"Impressions such as these, though not in themselves amounting to what can properly be called a religion, seem to me excellently fitted to aid and fortify that real, though purely human, religion, which sometimes calls itself the Religion of Humanity, and sometimes that of Duty. To the other inducements for cultivating a religious devotion to the welfare of our fellow-creatures as an obligatory limit to every selfish aim, and an end for the direct promotion of which no sacrifice can be too great, it superadds the feeling that in making this the rule of our life, we may be co-operating with the unseen being to whom we owe all that is enjoyable in life. One elevated feeling this form of religious life admits of, which is not open to those who believe in the omnipotence of the good principle in the universe, the feeling of helping God—of requiting the good he has given by a voluntary co-operation which he, not being omnipotent, really needs, and by which a somewhat nearer approach may be made to the fulfilment of his purposes."—*Three Essays on Religion*, John Stuart Mill, pp. 254, 255, 256.

Imagine how St. John and St. Paul, St. Athanasius, St. Augustine and St. Chrysostom, Luther and Cranmer, and the long line of martyrs who, in eighteen hundred years, have shed their blood for Christ, would speak out were they brought face to face with this kind of Christianity.

Times may have changed, indeed, since St. Paul and St. John and those early martyrs lived, and the "evolution of Christianity" may make things right which to them seemed wrong, but one thing remains the same, honesty is still honesty. And this double-mindedness is fast bearing its own fruit in a growing spirit of untruth.

Witness the way in which an attitude antagonistic to Christianity is respected. The reverence formerly accorded to the life of faith is now transferred to the life of doubt. The doubter is the hero even of the popular novel, and challenges enthusiasm as the bold thinker who is not afraid to stand alone, even though the whole Christian world is against him; when, as a matter of fact, he is supported by the secret consciousness that he is in the majority, with the world on his side. Indeed the "heretic" and the "orthodox Christian" have changed places. Formerly the heretic was burnt at the stake while the orthodox escaped. Now, it is the latter who bears the stigma, while the former wears the halo. It requires far more courage and moral force, in these days, to stand out as a "narrow-minded" orthodox believer than to be called a "broad-minded heretic," yet the latter, in the popular estimation, is the lion-hearted martyr to his opinions. Is this the spirit of truth? We are reluctant to adduce this kind of illustration. We do not bring it forward to fortify our position, but simply to show, by an example from common, every-day life, how men are unconsciously fascinated by untruthfulness. And if this be called the *argumentum ad hominem*, we reply that it is only applying to the men of the present day

those principles of the higher criticism that critics are wont to apply to the men of Bible times.

The *argumentum ad hominem*, in these last times, is taking its place as one of the most searching tests of truthfulness, if not of truth itself, and this is in accordance with Christ's own words regarding false prophets : "By their fruits ye shall know them."

THE FUTURE CONFLICT OF THE CHURCH.

The lesson to be learned from all these facts is one to be pondered earnestly, deeply, prayerfully, by every devout Christian mind. The outlook, of course, is bright. Christ is conquering the world, but not in the way that men think. The glow on the horizon of the future is not that kind of brightness which the Gospel of the Age so enthusiastically depicts ; on the contrary, it needs no prophet's eye to foresee that the Church of Christ has a conflict before her as great as, if not greater than, any in her past history. For this same Gospel of the Age is destined to be the hardest and most relentless of all task-masters in its dictates as to how much we must believe and how much we must ignore of the teachings of Christ, not only on their sociological but also on their theological side. And the "Progress of Civilization" is becoming a cry as imperious and as tyrannical as any which the world has yet heard.

The progress of civilization has shown how much real intrinsic good there is in the religions of Baal and Osiris, of Buddha and Mahomet ; the progress of civilization demands that Christianity shall give place to these various religions, so far as they deserve recognition. The progress of civilization demands the abolition of all creeds that fetter the freedom of human thought, and proclaims that the ultimate test of Christianity, as of all

other religions, will be by the analysis of human experience through the methods of modern thought. The progress of civilization demands the unification of the human race. The progress of civilization demands that no man shall be called a pagan or heathen, whatever his religious beliefs, who will help to civilize the world.

The progress of civilization demands that nothing shall interfere with the growing bonds of union formed between nations for the purpose of enlarging their mutual commercial and business interests.

The progress of civilization demands that everything which conduces to the building up of the commonwealth and increasing its resources is to be welcomed, while everything which cannot be thus utilized is to be discarded.

Christ's disciples have not, as yet, felt called upon to draw together and present a united front in the way of this so-called progress of civilization, or to oppose as wrong what civilization encourages as right ; but if that day ever does come, it will witness as autocratic and relentless, though of course not as cruel and bloody, a proscription of Christ's followers as that decreed by the imperious Roman Empire itself in the days of yore.

Part Second

THE GOSPEL CREED

GOD SEEKING MAN

WHAT IS THE CREED ?

" GOD BE THANKED THAT . . . YE BECAME OBEDIENT FROM THE HEART TO THAT FORM OF TEACHING WHEREUNTO YE WERE DELIVERED."—Rom. vi. 17, R. V.

" 'To which we have been delivered ;' it is a most startling phrase ; yet this is literally what St. Paul says when he speaks of the Christian Creed. He does not write, 'Ye obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you'—that is but a small part of the truth—but 'that form of doctrine whereunto ye were delivered.' The phrase is as startling as it is openly true. Our Creed, whatever it really is, is our sovereign master, or rather our inspiring power. It calls out our energies. It directs their application. It exacts our service. We can have no escape from its dominion, no rest from its influence. 'We are delivered to it :' perhaps as the unconscious victims of a degrading thraldom, perhaps as the eager servants of that which we have gladly recognized to be a Divine Will."—The Historic Faith, by Bishop Westcott, p. 27.

Thou, Kyng of glorye, Crist,
Thou art the endeles Sone of the Fader,
Thou wert noȝt skoymes to take the maydenes wombe for to deliver
mankynde.
Whanne Thou haddest overcome the Scharpnesse of deth, Thou
Opendedest the Kyngedomes of heuens to hem that byleueden in
The.
Thou sittest on Goddes riȝt Syde into the glorie of the Fader.
Therefore we byseche The, help thy Servaunts that thou has bought
with thy precious blode
Make hem to be rewarded with thy Seyntes in endeles blisse.

In The, Lord, I haue hoped : latte me noȝt be schent, withouten end.

—*The Prymer Version of the Te Deum,*
Appendix, Maskell's Monumenta Ritualia.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SELF-REVELATION OF GOD IN RELATION TO FAITH

SYNOPSIS

- I. The *Way of God* is the way of Faith, Hope, and Love. It is the only Way to *Eternal Life* and Knowledge, because Christianity is the *only Religion* in which *God seeks Man*.
- II. This Revelation is not *against* reason, but *above* and *beyond* reason : hence faith must precede knowledge. This is not irrational. By the constitution of human nature men are *obliged* to have faith in the Existence of Self, the World, and God.
- III. Such Instinctive Faith in God is the natural Witness of our Sonship. All the Religions of the World grow out of Humanity's search for a Father in Heaven, and Christianity reveals that Father.
- IV. Christianity is, therefore, a Revelation of God's own *Personality*. This is the central truth of the Bible. Personality must reveal *Itself*, if revealed at all, and this Personal Revelation must be accepted by *Faith*, if accepted at all.
- V. Such a Revelation to Faith discloses an antithesis. Not between Faith and *Reason*, but between Faith and *Doubt*. This antithesis is a necessary one. The Bias for or against Revelation is a matter of the *Will*, therefore the responsibility is our own ; *and he that believeth not is condemned already*.
- VI. Uncertainty comes from belief in Self, or the World, rather than God. *Certainty* results from *belief in God* rather than in Self or the World.
- VII. The Certainty of Faith brings Spiritual Knowledge, for God is a Spirit and a Person. Personal knowledge is the highest kind of knowledge. Through Christ we do not learn *about* God, but *we know God himself* : we know God and God knows us. This is Life Eternal.

- VIII. In comparison with this knowledge all physical and philosophical proofs are of secondary importance. For this reason such evidences of Christianity are *instinctively* and universally *felt* to be unsatisfactory.
- IX. Christianity, as the Self-revelation of God, is Complete, Absolute, and Final. Therefore the Final Facts of the Spiritual World are open to the Christian.

IN passing from a Creedless Gospel to the Gospel Creed the whole atmosphere of thought changes at once. It is like the awakening from dreams to realities. Like the transition from the "Everlasting No" to the "Yea and Amen;" from uncertainties to certainty, from darkness to light, from night to day.

In vivid contrast to the dark shadows and gathering storm-clouds of the last chapter, the mists now rise and disclose a vision of sunshine and peace. The gloom is gone and we behold the same earthly scene radiant in the light of the Sun of Righteousness and transfigured into the Kingdom of God and His Christ.

The pathway of faith which we have now begun to tread, is a sure pathway to heaven itself. On every step of the road we see before us the footprints of that Son of God Who humbled Himself to be born of a virgin, and overcame the sharpness of death; Who, now, sitting on the right hand of God, in the glory of the Father, has opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.

That pathway has its difficulties, but through *His* Power every stumbling-block becomes a stepping-stone. All He asks of us is to trust Him more than we trust ourselves. "All things," He tells us, "are possible to Him that believeth;" and if we surrender ourselves up to His guidance, with the sublime courage of faith, then present faith will lead us on, step by step, to that knowledge of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ, which is life eternal.¹

¹ 1 St. John xvii. 3.

The earliest name for Christianity was "THE WAY."¹ It was a simple word, coined in pentecostal days by simple-hearted, earnest, childlike men, who felt that Christ, and Christ only, had the Words of Life. Yet it may be doubted if any subsequent name for Christ's religion is so full of life, so comprehensive of all truth, and so universal in meeting the needs of all mankind. For Christ Himself is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; and while Christ's Gospel of Salvation is so plain and homely that the most ignorant can comprehend its meaning, and the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein, it is, at the same time, so far-reaching in its truth that it not only solves all the problems of existence, which the philosophers of ages have pondered, but shows us the heavenly horizons beyond; and a future day, when, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, God will gather together in One all things in Christ.

It is our purpose in the second part of this book to indicate some of the ways in which the supernatural facts of Christ's life, rehearsed in the Creed, meet those great problems of the ages, and as the Creed takes its name from its first word, "*Credo—I believe,*" the question that greets us upon the very threshold of our subject is the reason why the Gospel of Christ makes such an imperative demand upon our faith. The answer to that question is of crucial importance, determining all that comes after.

GOD SEEKING MAN.

We have heretofore been considering the ways in which man seeks God. The distinctive mark of Christianity is that it begins at the other end and stands as a religion in which God seeks man. It is not an evolution in which man gradually discovers God by studying nat-

¹ Acts ix. 2, xix. 9, 23, xxii. 4, xxiv. 14.

ure from without and his own self-consciousness from within. It is a revelation of truths about God which are not to be found either in nature or human nature ; truths that humanity would never have known, either in the past or the future, if God had not directly communicated them to man.

God's revelation of Himself is transcendental, and not empirical ; and by transcendental we mean that it transcends all human experience ;¹ that it transcends in its origin, both *a priori* and *a posteriori* methods of thinking, that it transcends, in fact, all the categories of thought. We mean that coming thus from an outside world, and being a communication from an infinite to a finite being, it must be received by faith if it be received at all.

This revelation does not conflict with reason because it is transcendental. It transcends reason because it is more than reason and above reason. Philosophy itself has proved how reasonable it is, and yet, after men like Kant and Hegel had completed their remarkable work, and showed from the constitution of nature and human nature the need of just such a Revelation, the Revelation of God itself remains as transcendental as ever, refusing to be imprisoned in any human moulds. All human efforts thus to confine it are the story, told over again, of St. Augustine's vision of a little child upon the seashore,

¹ "Reason enables man to recognize God when He makes Himself known ; to receive a revelation from Him in virtue of His affinity to the Divine Word ; but it does not enable the creature to derive from within the knowledge for which it longs."

"Human nature is not in itself competent in any way to seek God and find Him without the help of Him who is sought ; nay, of Him who is *found* by those who confess, after they have done all in their power, that they yet have need of Him."

"Philosophy seeks for the truth, and the nature of things ; and this is the truth of which the Lord said, '*I am the Truth.*'"—Origen, quoted by Bishop Westcott, Religious Thought in the West, p. 240.

striving to pour the vast ocean into the hole he has scooped in the sand. Yet reason has its function in receiving the truths of revelation.

"Whatever we know certainly of the being of God must be known by God's disclosure of Himself. We cannot, by searching, find out God. On the other hand, if men are made in God's image, if man's reason represents the divine reason, we must expect that even mysteries will be rational. . . . The right claim for reason in respect to mysteries seems to me to be admirably expressed in the following proposition of Herman Lotze : 'If reason,' he says, 'is not of itself capable of finding the highest truth ; but on the contrary stands in need of a revelation, still, reason must be able to understand the revealed truth at least so far as to recognize in it the satisfying and convincing conclusion of those upward soaring trains of thought which reason itself began, led by its own needs, but was not able to bring to an end.'"¹

THE NECESSITY OF FAITH.

Here, therefore, reason must be supplemented, or rather led, by faith, and when we reflect a moment we shall see that this is not only a perfectly reasonable faith, but that there is no way of evading the demand for faith. For faith is absolutely necessary as a primary condition of existence, both in the man who depends upon his reason and the man who depends upon God. Without faith in *something* we either commit moral and intellectual suicide, or reach the condition of complete paralysis of all our faculties. Certainty comes to us through contact with the outer world, and the contrast between that which is *self* and that which is *not self*.

None of us can say : "I am, or I am an independent

¹ Canon Gore's Bampton Lectures, p. 145.

being, whether outside things exist or not," for no man can prove his own existence. Men take their own existence for granted in all that they say or do. They have faith without knowing that they have faith. And when they are asked why they have this faith they are thrown back upon themselves, in distress, and can only answer, "Because I am *obliged* thus to believe in my own existence and in that of the outside world."

"In this matter the belief in God stands upon the same level with the belief in objective reality. Both have been explained away by philosophers. Neither can be proved but by a circular argument. Both persist in the consciousness of mankind. Both have been purified and rationalized by the growth of knowledge. But the moment reason attempts to start without assumptions, and claims exclusive sovereignty over the man, paralysis of thought results. There have been philosophers before now who professed to begin at the beginning, and accept nothing until it was proved, and the result was a pure Pyrrhonism. They could not prove the existence of an external world. . . . There were people in John Locke's day who professed to doubt their own existence. And he was content to answer them according to their folly. 'If any one,' he says, 'pretends to be so skeptical as to deny his own existence (for really to doubt it is manifestly impossible) let him, for me, enjoy his beloved happiness of being nothing, until hunger or some other pain convinces him of the contrary.'"¹

The same instinct of faith which impels us to believe in the existence of self and the outer world impels us to believe in the existence of God. But here a difficulty arises. Dependence upon an unseen God brings up to the surface the faith that we unconsciously use in the common things of every-day life, and at once we become

¹ Canon Aubrey Moore, in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 105, 106.

conscious of a truth which heretofore has been undetected. When we place confidence in outside things or in the word of our fellow-man, it is an *involuntary* act of trust, whereas when we transfer that confidence to the Word of God, we recognize the presence of faith, and, at once, begin analyzing that which will not bear analysis.

For faith has its roots in the depths of our being. No attempt to view it separate from ourselves, and hold it up before our eyes as something that we can rationalize about has ever succeeded, for it cannot thus be separated. Faith is a part of ourselves ; nay, it *is* ourselves. The moment we become conscious of it, it loses part of its reality, for the very attempt to analyze it betokens the presence of a doubt, which subtracts just so much from it.

THE NATURALNESS OF FAITH.

All this is very strikingly seen in the contrast between the faith of a little child and the faith of a grown man ; and, also, between the promptness of New Testament believers and the hesitation of Nineteenth-Century believers, in accepting Revelation. The latter are self-conscious, they pause to analyze their faith before listening to Revelation, and the more this self-consciousness grows within them, the more it blots out the consciousness of God.

This analysis of faith is a side issue, which, after all is said and done, belongs to philosophy rather than to practical life. We grant that there is a difficulty, but it is only because, as we have already said, Revelation brings out in us the consciousness of a human condition of dependence of which we are generally unconscious, or only partly conscious. The same difficulty exists, without our realizing it, in all that we say or do in this life. If we should pause to analyze our faith in common things

as we do our faith in God—to question, for example, our belief that the world is round, or our confidence in the engineer of the railway train on which we are travelling, or in the architects and builders of the houses in which we live, or in the market-men who supply us with unpoisoned food, or in the apothecary who sells us drugs, and so on, all life would come to a standstill.

In practical life, after using all reasonable precautions, we are obliged to take the risk of trusting the words and actions of our fellow-men, who, every day, hold our lives in their hands, without stopping every moment to analyze the why and wherefore of our faith. In practical life we cut the Gordian knot of such questionings, at once, with the sword of common-sense, saying to ourselves that whether we will or not, we have got to have this faith, if we are to do our work in the world; and that we have no time for useless philosophical speculations which will amount to nothing in the end.

Christianity has also to do with practical life. It is a religion which concerns not merely philosophers and metaphysicians, but all sorts and conditions of men, high and low, educated and ignorant. If its primal doctrine is true that God is the Father of every man, then every man, educated and uneducated, ought to have in himself the capacity of *recognizing* his Father; otherwise God is a respecter of persons, and consequently unjust. Christianity only asks us, after having exercised the same reasonable precautions and common-sense that we put forth in the ordinary affairs of life, to give a different direction to our faith and to trust the word of God our Father, more than we trust the words of our fellow-men.

FAITH THE WITNESS OF SONSHIP.

And the proof that this is no unreasonable demand upon our faith is that there is a voice within us uprising

to respond to the Father's voice without, and witnessing that we are His children.

" We stand, by the necessities of our existence, in the relationship of sons to a Father, who has poured out into us, and still pours, the vigour of His own life. This is the one basis of all faith. Unless this relationship actually exists there could be no faith ; if it exists, then faith is its essential corollary ; it is bound to appear. Our faith is simply the witness to this inner bond of being. That bond, which is the secret of our entire existence, accounting for all that we are, or do, or feel, or think, or say, must become capable of recognition by a being that is, in any sense, free, intelligent, conscious ; and this recognition by us, of the source from whence we derive, is what we mean by faith.

" Faith is the sense in us that we are Another's creature, Another's making. Even as we not only feel, but feel that we feel ; not only think, but know that we think ; not only choose, but determine to choose ; so, below and within all our willing, and thinking, and feeling, we are conscious of Another, whose mind and will alone make possible both the feeling that we feel, and also the capacity to feel it ; both the thought that we think, and also the capacity to know it ; both the will that we put forth, as well as the power to determine it.

" Every act, every desire, every motive of ours, is dependent on the source out of sight : we hang on Another's will ; we are alive in Another's life. All our life is a discovery, a disclosure of this secret. We find it out only by living. As we put out powers that seem to be our own, still, even in and by the very act of putting them out, we reveal them to be not our own ; we discover that we are always drawing on unseen resources. We are sons ; that is the root-law of our entire self. And faith is the active instinct of that inner sonship ; it

is the point at which that essential sonship emerges into consciousness ; it is the disclosure to the self of its own vital secret ; it is the thrill of our inherent childhood, as it makes itself felt within the central recesses of the life ; it is the flame that shoots into consciousness at the recognition of the touch of our divine fatherhood ; it is the immediate response of the sonship in us to its discovered origin.”¹

Faith is, therefore, the witness of our own consciousness to an actual *fact*, and that fact is our relationship, our sonship, to God. Faith, without Revelation, works as an instinct, searching and groping for—it knows not what. The foundling child knows that it has, and must have, a father somewhere, but this idea of a father is no substitute for the reality itself ; the consciousness of having a father is not like gazing upon the father’s face, listening to the father’s voice. The orphaned child of God, as all the higher philosophy and all the religious poetry of this world show, has, deep down under all other longings, the one life-long, passionate desire to see his Father’s face. Without Revelation he is like

“ An infant crying in the night ;
An infant crying for the light ;
And with no language but a cry.”

But with Revelation to aid and expand it, Faith has found the object for which it has been groping and springs up at once into newness of being ; the orphaned child, at last, hears his Father’s voice, deep calleth unto deep, like meets like, recognition begets recognition, personality meets Personality.

¹ Rev. H. Scott Holland, in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 14, 15.

PERSONALITY MUST REVEAL ITSELF IF REVEALED AT ALL.

The law of all personality is that it must reveal itself. It is only partially disclosed by outside things. This silent law reveals its presence even in the relationship of home life, where parents and children are bound together by the closest ties of blood ; and, *a fortiori*, it is, and must be, the law of that higher relationship in which men are bound to a Father in heaven. If objectors call this Anthropomorphism let them object. We are not to be frightened by a name, though the truth is exactly the reverse. It is not Anthropomorphism but Theomorphism. If, therefore, this bond of union exists at all, it must be the most personal of all bonds.

Accordingly we discover that the foremost characteristic of revelation is Personality. It is God's own revelation of *Himself* to His earthly children. In it He discloses Himself, not only as the Creator and Moral Governor of the Universe, but as the Universal Father, Whose love passeth understanding. Revelation does not create the Universal Fatherhood of God. It simply reveals a truth that has always existed—a truth that men could never have discovered by themselves, but which they instantly recognize the moment it is unveiled. This is, in fact, the central, we might almost say, the exclusive, purpose of the Written Word of God. Holy Scripture is not to be used, in the way that many Christians formerly imagined, as a text-book and authority for determining all sorts of questions concerning natural science or human history. All this is aside from its real purpose. Natural science and human history only appear so far as they are needed to disclose the Personality of God, and no farther.¹

¹ God has left His earthly children to discover for themselves all that they can discover by the exercise of their reason and intelligence, and

And if this be the central purpose of the Written Word, that purpose becomes even more intensified and concentrated when God speaks to us through that *Living Word*, Who is “the true Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”¹ In Christ the Revelation of God’s Personality becomes complete.

WHY THE GOSPEL REQUIRES FAITH.

Faith in this Revelation—which means faith in Him—must be absolute, entire, and as generous as the Revelation itself. And God must win this faith from us at all costs, *for our sakes*. He could, by some stupendous miracle or sign, such as the Jews asked, or by a display of wisdom and an appeal to our reason, as the Greeks asked, have given all men such an instantaneous and convincing proof of the truth of His Revelation, that the whole world would, in a moment of time, have been intellectually convinced.

But this would be to coerce our will and thus dwarf our personality. This is not God’s way. It is the heart of a child, not that of a slave, that He wants. Hence His love is paralyzed and rendered inoperative without the response of our faith, and when He obtains our faith, if He is still the same loving Father, He must employ every means to develop it, strengthen it, fan it to a brighter flame ; for every increase of faith brings with it a corresponding increase of the capacities of intercourse and intimacy between Father and son.

this is implied in the very charge given to the first man created in the image of God : “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it ; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth ” (Gen. i. 28). Could civilization possibly have a more comprehensive charter than this ?

¹ St. John i. 8.

It was for this reason that Christ laid such earnest emphasis upon faith and the necessity of faith in all His dealings with men. And it was for this reason that *He did not make His Gospel plainer to the world.*

Faith, with Him, was the prerequisite of the higher life. As He went in and out among the people, His attention was chiefly directed to their capacity for believing in God. Remove from the Gospels all those teachings and miracles of Christ, of which faith is the end and purpose, and you eliminate almost the whole Gospel history. Christ seldom or never argued about God ; He took it for granted that men had already in themselves a germ of faith in God that needed developing, and the result was that the multitudes listened to Him as to One "Who taught with authority and not as the scribes ;" while the officers sent to take Him came back saying, "Never man spake like this Man."

In contradistinction to that celebrated Socratic method, in which the greatest master of Greek thought drew out the convictions of his hearers in an appeal to their reason, this was Christ's method in which He drew out and appealed to their dormant faith.

DOES SUCH FAITH CREATE A BIAS ?

The objection will doubtless here occur to many that this appeal to faith begins by creating a bias in the mind, which forecloses every question, places the hearer in a position where his reason is fettered, and thus renders him helpless. It is said that a biassed mind which has prejudged the case is one which is no longer open to impartial investigation of truth. This is not a fair or accurate statement of the difficulty, yet it misleads so many minds at the present day that we pause a moment to point out its inaccuracy.

There is no real antithesis between faith and reason, for the two move upon separate planes. As we said before, Revelation calls for faith, not because it is against reason, but because it is *above* and *beyond* reason.

The real antithesis is between faith and doubt, and here a bias on the one side or the other is inevitable. In receiving the Revelation of God we must assume one of two moral attitudes; either that of a believer or of a disbeliever. And this determines the subsequent intellectual attitude of inquiring how *much* we are to believe or to disbelieve.

As an English writer well states it: "By bias we mean that condition of the will which prepares a man to make proper use of the evidence before him. And we have called this a bias because in relation to our present subject it takes the form of a readiness to admit the existence of God, or the Incarnation. The mind will never be compelled in spite of itself to accept such truths as these, as it may be compelled in the region of pure mathematics or logic. But it will be satisfied, and that not in the least degree in an unscientific manner, if it recognizes the special conditions of theological speculation and approaches them in an attitude of readiness to follow their leading. It will be led always, never compelled. The condition of will which we have here called bias is a moral state, and like all other such states it admits of only one alternative. Between the bias for and the bias against there is no half-way house, just as there is no alternative between right and wrong at the bar of conscience. The condition of suspended judgement is only possible permanently in those matters where the mind justly expects to be compelled to have its assent wrung out of it by sheer force. Where this is not the case the decision turns on the presence or absence of a certain moral condition, and this must be

either there or not there. The evidence is admittedly insufficient to force the assent ; but it can never be estimated at its real value, if the mind, consciously or unconsciously, is either disposed to insist upon compulsory evidence, or incline to hope that the evidence may not carry the conclusion.

These facts, we are persuaded, have not received adequate attention at the hands of philosophers. It has been readily assumed that the one hope of a trustworthy decision in these matters lies in the possession of a balanced mind—a mind in perfect equilibrium, without any color of prejudice or prepossession or natural tendency. Such a condition of mind, we venture to assert roundly, “exists nowhere under the sun. . . . All education shuts the mind out of certain positions which it might otherwise assume. The scientist gets to know, as he goes on, more and more of what is possible in nature ; and his mind becomes, therefore, by degrees, biassed against the very possibility of things which the uneducated mind would think quite likely.”¹ And as it is with the education of science so also is it with the education of faith. The more one treads that pathway of faith to which Christ points, the more strongly he sees and feels the reasonableness of those things which to an unbeliever appear unlikely.

THE NECESSITY OF A MORAL BIAS.

The necessity of having this moral bias of which we have been speaking has been clearly set forth by Christ Himself, as the prerequisite of knowing the truths of Revelation, in those oft-quoted words : “If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”²

¹ Strong’s Manual of Theology, pp. 7, 8, 9.

² St. John vii. 17.

God has taken the initiative in revealing His will plainly and unmistakably to those who are willing to receive it. Yet plain and reasonable as the Revelation is to men of good will, it cannot be made plain to a man of bad will, for the latter has a personal bias against God, and in favor of self, which fetters not only his faith but his reason also, and thus prevents his learning what others learn.

THE ALTERNATIVE.

While, therefore, no man is forced to embrace the "doctrine," of which Christ speaks, every one to whom it comes as a Revelation of God's Personality is forced either to accept or *reject* it. He becomes responsible thereafter for his choice, and his bias for or against the Revelation.¹

Again, he is not forced to have faith, but if he *refuses* to have faith he must take the consequences, and remain ignorant of the inner meaning of the Revelation. He will never really "know of the doctrine."

The alternative is before him of having faith in himself or faith in God. If, on the one hand, he believes more in himself than he does in God, he is, at once, shut

¹ "In these words we have a direct statement of what is so often implied by Christian writers, and yet so little faced or understood by modern rationalists; that there is a *faculty for religious knowledge* in the human mind which becomes atrophied by disuse, or paralyzed by the attitude of passive suspense; that *knowledge* and *action* are in some sense indissolubly connected; that in the very act of saying '*I can't know*,' we may make it impossible to know; that, conversely, in the very effort to reach the highest we can see, and to grasp the truth we suspect to exist, sight becomes clearer, and suspicion is changed to certainty. And if this is so, the doubter has no right to proclaim that there is no ground for reasonable certainty, because *in the very act of doubting* he may have damaged his own capacity for recognizing that ground."—Review of Hettinger and Döllinger's Natural Religion, the Spectator, 1890.

out from being a learner, for he has a doctrine of his own which he substitutes for the doctrine of God, and his reason is circumscribed to a narrow circle of which self is the centre. If, on the other hand, he has more faith in God than in himself, he is not thus conditioned. He is in a receptive position to absorb higher truth, which *comprehends* the lower; and his reason is lifted up to move in the wider circle of which God is the centre.¹

The only possible way of reaching the higher knowledge is to give up our independence and to surrender ourselves up to God's guidance, by substituting the higher will of God, as it is revealed in Christ, for our own wills. In other words, we must choose between being the slave of self or the slave of Jesus Christ, *i.e.*, being our own master or having Christ for our Master. Christ does not evade this issue; on the contrary He emphasizes it on every page of the Gospel. Instead of minimizing He magnifies it, He calls it nothing less than the crisis between death and life.

Belief in self and belief in Him cannot coexist in the same heart; it must be one thing or the other.

These three existences stand before every soul to whom

¹ "There are *three* several and distinct goods for man—*spiritual good*, or personal union with God; *moral good*, or voluntary obedience to His law; and *natural good*, or the completion and satisfaction of his nature, and the realization and enjoyment of himself. . . . Each lower good is included in each higher, and each higher in each lower, *where they all exist*. That is to say, not only is my moral perfection an integral part of my natural good, as a moral being; but my natural good, so far as it depends upon me, is an integral part of my duty or moral perfection. And again, although natural and moral good might both conceivably exist without religion or spiritual relationship with God, yet where this latter is constituted by our nature to exist, the two former are incomplete without it, and it includes them. So inseparable are the three in our own case that very frequently they coincide in an act, which is materially only one, and which yet is, at once, our happiness, our duty and the grace of God in us."—The Soteriology of the New Testament, by Rev. Professor Du Bose, p. 7. [The italics are ours.]

His Revelation comes : Self, the World, and God. If men are unwilling to take the risk of believing in Christ as the Son of God and the Revealer of God's will, more than they believe in self or the world, then they declare themselves unworthy of the kingdom of heaven, and must suffer eternal loss ; if, on the contrary, they do believe in this self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ, then they have passed from death into life.

The whole New Testament rings with the message set forth in those words : "God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life ; he that believeth on Him is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God."¹

GREATER CERTAINTY OF GOD THAN OF SELF.

Here we are on familiar ground. This is the old, old story, told every Sunday from ten thousand pulpits for nineteen centuries. And approach the Revelation of God from whatever side we will, we always come back to the same point. There stands the issue before us ; and there is no more possibility of hiding from or evading it than there is of escaping the law of gravitation.

The Christian then, begins by throwing himself on Christ. Unless he has more faith in Christ than he has in self or in the world, he is shut out from reaching certainty regarding those things about which the whole world is uncertain ; and, therefore, he looks up to Christ as the only One Who KNOWS.²

¹ St. John iii. 16-18.

² Perhaps a practical illustration will help to make this faith plainer. I, as a Christian, am more sure of the knowledge of Christ than I am of the knowledge of other men. Whatever A, B, and C may teach, my

This places the ground of certainty not within us but outside of us ; and when we thus begin to be more sure of God than we are of ourselves ; more sure of His knowledge than of our own knowledge ; more sure of His love to us than of our love to Him, we enter upon a new pathway of freedom and knowledge. It is a pathway of freedom, for it frees us from the slavery of self. In times gone by I had, every now and then, my unclouded days when I gazed straight into heaven and seemed morally and mentally certain of God's existence, but, alas ! these were followed by other days—long weeks and months perhaps—that were overcast with one unbroken leaden sky of doubt, and at these times I was as uncertain, as before I was certain, of God. Certainty was thus intermingled with so much uncertainty that I could be sure of nothing. But the moment I rise to that higher plane of belief, on which I become more sure of God than I am of myself, I am freed from my former vicissitudes. I no longer am depressed by clouded days, for I know that God is there behind the cloud. He is the same sun, the same Father of lights, with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning ; however much I may change, or my earthly atmosphere be overcast by storms and rain-clouds, I no longer think that my doubts are able to unseat the Ruler of the universe from His throne ; where once I doubted Him, now I doubt my doubts. In other

trust in their words does not equal my trust in Christ's promises. Correspondingly, A, B, and C—if they are Christians—have more faith in Christ than they have in me ; placing *me* in the same category in which I place them.

Reflecting upon this truth I see a deep lesson here. We all believe in Christ more than we believe in one another ; only each leaves out one person—*himself*. The truer and wiser course, therefore, is for each to look at himself in comparison with Christ just as he sees the others, and say, “I have more trust in Christ not only than I have in all other men, but in myself (as a man among men) included.”

words, my faith in God has lifted me out of myself, and above myself, into a region of life from which I can look down upon my former self with the joyful consciousness that I am no longer fettered and conditioned as I once was.

And this is also the pathway of knowledge, for it leads me up to that profound truth enunciated by St. John, "We love God *because* He first loved us." In those same bygone days I used to be troubled and perplexed that I did not feel, or in any way experience, that love of God which is the keynote of Revelation, and therefore became doubtful of its existence. But now that I allow my faith to go forth in such a way that I doubt *myself* instead of doubting His love, I see, at once, wherein my former difficulty lay. I was all the while dwelling upon *my* love for God, not God's love for me, and was thus beginning at self instead of God. I now recognize my former mistake. It is not necessary that I should feel, or in any way experience, the love of God ; for He loves me just the same, whatever my changeful moods and inward experiences are. And this consciousness of being loved by Him is all that I really need. By faith I *know* the love that I cannot feel, or realize, and can therefore do without the feeling. I cannot force myself to love God ; that is altogether beyond my power, but I *can* force myself to contemplate and appropriate God's love for me ; for it is revealed in Christ, as something that belongs to me.

Thus there comes to me a new kind of consciousness —a life that is above self ; a capacity of looking down upon myself from the outside as the object of God's love.

Living in this higher consciousness, that God knows us and loves us, we can forego the lower consciousness, that we know and love Him. And when we thus substitute God for self, we find in God a higher selfhood.

The experience that we have foregone comes back to us in a higher form. Love begets love, as fire kindles fire. In response to God's love for us, a new, undreamed-of love is kindled in our own breasts. Not the former crude, emotional, desultory thing that we once looked for, but a calm, divine, abiding thing; a sense of being cared for and protected, lying beneath all that we say or do, in hours of earthly gloom and anxiety, as well as in those of earthly happiness, and bringing with it more and more of a peace that passeth understanding.

The knowledge that thus comes to us is not new knowledge, but old knowledge transfigured and intensified. We read the same Gospel words that we have always read, but they are now illumined with new meaning; our faith in Christ as the Son of God has opened our eyes so that we now see truths that were hidden before.

THE TWOFOLD RECOGNITION.

This new knowledge is personal knowledge of a personal Christ. Perhaps it is best expressed by the word Recognition; we know Christ and Christ knows us. We know Christ as we know no human being, not even the most intimate of earthly friends or the dearest members of our own immediate families. We have in ourselves the corroboration of Christ's words, "I am the Good Shepherd, and know Mine own, and Mine own know Me. Even as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father."¹ This double recognition means spiritual insight, which brings with it a higher, more absolute kind of certainty than that of the senses or even of the reason. For personal knowledge differs from and surpasses all other kinds of knowledge. And thus to know Christ means to know the Father also. Christ's own assurance, "He

¹ St. John x. 14, 15. Revised Version.

that hath seen Me hath seen the Father,"¹ comes home to the soul of the believer almost like a truism, for he has the witness in himself that thus it must be. Where once he wondered how anyone could be certain of God, now he wonders how anyone can be uncertain, for he can imagine no higher, more perfect *life* than that which he recognizes in Christ. If the unseen Father is exactly what Christ is, if the Father's life is like Christ's life, the Father's love like Christ's love, the Father's Personality like Christ's Personality, then the self-revelation of God in Christ is bewildering in its completeness. Instead of being in any way, unknowable, God is *more* knowable than all that is in the created world. Nothing else brings the kind of certainty that His revealed presence inspires.²

NOT MYSTICISM BUT CERTAINTY.

This may be called mysticism by the critical mind, but it is not so. It is simply the portrayal of the common Christian experience of all sorts and conditions of Christian men in all ages of the world; as it is also only a telling over again, in different words, the truths set forth in the writings of St. John, St. Paul, and St. Peter.

The word "mystic,"³ as thus used, implies that this is a side of Christianity which appeals to intuitional or mystical minds alone, and to none other. This would

¹ St. John xiv. 9.

² St. John's epistles are full of this truth, and for this reason he was justly called "The Divine" by the early Church, for in them he descends to greater theological depths even than St. Paul. His repetitions of the same truth in the same words are not meaningless. This does not mean tautology or paucity of expression, it signifies the deep and varying spiritual import of his statements.

³ Mysticism is a word that we are sometimes obliged to use in dealing with a certain class of Christian truths when contrasting them with other truths; and we have so employed it in our description of Ritschianism.

carry with it the dreadful implication that the truths which are emphasized in the New Testament, not only as of highest importance but of universal Christian experience, are those which can only be apprehended and appreciated by a few. Hence the term is an expression for unbelievers not for believers to use, and the more frequently it is heard the more painfully it indicates a decay of belief in the spiritual knowledge of God. No one who can say with St. Paul, "I know Whom I have believed" would ever think of labelling himself "a Mystic." His very certainty impels him to declare that this knowledge of God is and must be the necessary and universal result of believing in God, and to spurn a name which substitutes a self-consciousness for his God-consciousness. The certainty is the highest of all forms of human certainty because it has wrought conviction to the highest and holiest part of his being. The Revelation of God has been a revelation to his conscience, and conscience means, as Martensen says, *to know together with God.*

This certainty, therefore, belongs to the Church of Christ as her heritage. She knows God more convincingly than she knows anything else in this lower world. No proof that the progress of science may, in future, bring forth regarding the laws of nature, no evidences that the human race will, in future, discover, in studying its own history or the physical world, will ever make this highest certainty more certain. They may verify the truth of Revelation on the lower plane, but not on the higher. They could not add anything to the faith of believers like St. John, St. Paul, or St. Peter. For with such Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever; and the Self-Revelation of God in Jesus Christ is complete and absolute and final.

FIRST THINGS FIRST.

This is a truth that thinkers like Professor Drummond lose sight of and ignore, when they strive to make scientific proof a substitute for spiritual proof. And it is an evidence of an alarming increase of a pseudo-Christianity that "Natural Law in the Spiritual World" has become so popular. It betokens an uncertainty which would bolster up its dying faith by a lower kind of proof, which the whole Christian experience of the ages pronounces unsatisfactory.

The Christian knows God; he does not know nature; the final facts of the spiritual world are before him, the final facts of the natural world are yet to be discovered. The first contain a Revelation of spiritual truth which humanity never could have discovered by itself in past, present, or future time. The second are discoveries of material truth which is ceaselessly being made by human effort. The first are personal, spiritual, divine; the second are physical and material. To make, as Professor Drummond does,¹ the material the measure of the spiritual, would be

¹ "Professor Drummond has an admirable sentence toward the end of his Preface. He says: 'As the contribution of science to religion is the vindication of the naturalness of the supernatural, so the gift of religion to science is the demonstration of the supernaturalness of the natural' (p. xxii.). But it is the last, not the first, which our age needs, 'the vindication of the supernaturalness of the natural,' in other words, the vindication of the truth that all natural law is moral, and finds its explanation only as part of a great moral unity. And Professor Drummond's whole argument tends in the opposite direction. He looks forward to the day when 'in the impersonal authority of law men everywhere will recognize the authority of God.' He does not see that, if men are logical and religious, it must be an impersonal God; while, if they are logical and not religious, the alternative is the denial of God. If Professor Drummond's method is true, Pantheism is the result for religious men, and Materialism for those who do not wish to worship.

to make the less the criterion of the greater and to turn the whole world upside down.

We do not for one moment suggest that Professor Drummond is pantheistic, still less materialistic. We are simply looking at his method and its logical result. It may be well here to point out exactly how we differ from Professor Drummond and those who adopt his method. Professor Drummond says, 'The greatest among the theological laws are the laws of nature in disguise' (p. 52). We maintain—and the difference is by no means a verbal difference—that the greatest among the natural laws are the laws of theology in disguise. Professor Drummond says the natural laws are 'continuous through the spiritual sphere, not changed in any way to meet the new circumstances, but continuous as they stand' (p. 37). We maintain that the theological laws are continuous through the natural world, though, without theology, we cannot see their full meaning, but must stop at the barren conception of 'observed uniformities.' Professor Drummond says the higher or moral world is for us as yet a chaos, while nature, the lower, is a cosmos. We maintain that Christian theology is a cosmos, and science is just beginning to find traces of the same unity running through the phenomena of nature. Professor Drummond holds that 'the truth as it is in nature' (Preface, p. xxii.) interprets and illuminates revelation for us; we hold that 'the truth as it is in Jesus' can alone interpret and give a rational unity to the laws of the natural world. Professor Drummond speaks of the unseen universe as 'that great duplicate' (p. 55); we maintain, and so does Professor Drummond in his more Platonic moods, that earth is 'but a shadow of heaven.' Finally, Professor Drummond argues from the more known to the less known. So do we; but we begin at the other end."—Science and the Faith, by Canon Aubrey Moore, pp. 13, 14.

CHAPTER IX

THE INCARNATION IN RELATION TO THE PROBLEMS OF EXISTENCE

SYNOPSIS

- I. Existence is full of Antitheses. Christianity did not create these Antitheses, yet it must reconcile them.
- II. The Incarnation is Christianity's Answer to the Problems of Existence. It reconciles all apparent Contradictions of Existence in a World of (a) Matter ; (b) Thought ; (c) Spirit. It reconciles the greatest of Contradictions, *i.e.*, Man with himself, by pointing out how Man finds himself in God.
- III. All this possible because Christ is one with (a) Nature ; (b) Man ; (c) God.
- IV. Difficulties of maintaining the Doctrine of the Incarnation since the Church is obliged to claim Common Ground with Science and Philosophy. Necessity of maintaining it.

WE come now to consider the Incarnation of God in the Person of Jesus Christ.

While the self-revelation of God in Christ is not, as we have said, a revelation which discloses the facts of natural science and human history, it must, of course, set forth God's personal relation to the world that He has created, so that the correspondence between creation and its Creator will be seen and felt.

"A religion can only be understood when it is studied in relation to the facts, and the circumstances, and the experiences with which it corresponds. This is true of all religions, and in the largest sense of Christianity. Christianity, of which Christian doctrine is the intellectual expression, is, like every other religion, an answer to

questions which are necessarily suggested by human life. It does not introduce fresh mysteries into the world ; it meets mysteries which already exist. . . . As men, we are so constituted as to recognize three final existences which sum up for us all being : *Self*, the *World*, and *God*. . . . We become first conscious of the reality of these existences through experience, through life.”¹

These three existences—*Self*, the *World*, *God*—create and have created from time immemorial a variety of problems, of perplexing antagonisms, of truths and counter-truths, which demand explanation and reconciliation. And the whole religious history of the past has been occupied with the questions growing out of these problems. There is at the outset (1) the antithesis of the subjective and objective, their inter-dependence, and the false existence that is led, if one is separated from the other. There is (2) the antithesis between matter and spirit, the evident supremacy of the spiritual over the merely physical existence, yet the absolute impossibility of making the latter conform to spiritual conditions. Out of this arose the doctrine of Dualism, which characterizes so many Oriental religions, and the idea that matter is, and must be, inherently evil. There is (3) the antithesis between the two conceptions of God as *in* nature, and God as *above* and *apart from*, nature; ideas that are mutually exclusive. All the religions of this world have been either Pantheistic or Deistic, as they followed one or other of these two different lines of thought,—the immanence of God on the one hand, or the transcendence of God on the other. There is (4) the antithesis between the finite and the infinite, also mutually exclusive—an antithesis which gave rise to the Gnostic conception of an innumerable variety of mediators, as æons, thrones and dominions, principali-

¹ Westcott’s Gospel of Life, pp. 1, 2.

ties and powers, connecting God in Heaven with man on earth.

Lastly, there is (5) the greatest antithesis of all—on the one hand, an instinctive feeling in the hearts of all noble men that the life that is in them is and must be immortal ; and, on the other, that stern reality of death, shutting out the future and proclaiming that the grave is the end of all things.

Men cannot rid themselves of the consciousness of Self, the World, and God ; neither can they escape the difficulties caused by the inter-relation of these three existences. “Christianity did not introduce these problems into life ; it did not even first reveal them. They are, and always will be, while time is.”¹

But Christianity, whatever modern Neo-Kantism may teach, must meet them, and, in some measure, account for them, if it is really the self-revelation of God to His earthly children.

The coming of the long-promised Messiah as the “Desire of all nations”² was God’s answer to the age-long prayer of humanity.

Just as the light of Christ’s life, illuminating the past of Jewish history, made the whole of the Old Testament dispensation Christian ground, so, flinging its radiance back upon the darkness of heathenism, it revealed all the religions of the pagan world as foregleams of Christianity itself. In this sense Justin Martyr could even go so far as to claim Socrates, with enthusiasm, as a Christian.

God’s Self-Revelation in Jesus Christ explained the antithesis between subjective and objective by being in itself both subjective and objective ; the antithesis between spirit and matter by being both spiritual and material ; the antithesis between pantheistic immanence and deistic transcendence by containing all the true elements of

¹ Westcott’s Gospel of Life, p. 19.

² Haggai ii. 7.

Pantheism and Deism ; the antithesis between finite and infinite by being at once finite and infinite combined ; the antithesis between life and death by revealing that man must die to live.

But the way in which the answer came was as unexpected to the heathen world as it was to the Jews themselves.

Whatever has been said about the anticipations of the primal doctrines of Christianity in heathen philosophy and mythology, they all fall far short of the truth set forth by St. John in the first chapter of his Gospel, by St. Paul in the Epistle to the Colossians, and by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.¹

¹ Compare together the following passages, and the very remarkable language used in them by authors who wrote *within seventy years of Christ's death.*

ST. JOHN i. 1-5, 10-14.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him ; and without Him was not anything made that was made.

In Him was Life ; and the Life was the Light of men. And the Light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name : which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.

COLOSSIANS i. 12-20.

Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light : Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son : in Whom we have redemption, through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins ; Who is the Image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature : for by Him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers : all things were created by Him, and for Him : and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist : And He is the head of the body, the Church, Who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead : that in all things He might have the pre-eminence.

For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell ; and having made peace through the blood of His Cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself ; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

HEBREWS i. 1-5, 10-12.

God, Who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by His Son, Whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom also He made the worlds ; Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express Image of His Person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent Name than they.

For unto which of the angels said He at any time, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee?" And "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth ; and the heavens are the work of Thine hands. They shall perish, but Thou remainest ; and they shall all wax old as doth a garment ; and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed ; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail ?"

The centralizing and unifying truth held by the early Church is that the Son of God, by Whom all things were made, is revealed through His Incarnation, as (1) one with nature (*i.e.*, the world) ; (2) one with man ; and (3) one with God ; and in the unfaltering steadfastness with which primitive Christianity held to this doctrine we have the key to the history of the first three Christian centuries.

CHRIST'S ONENESS WITH NATURE.

(1) Christ is revealed as one with nature by virtue of His birth into the natural order ; this solves all the problems that arise out of man's contemplation of the physical world.

And if the first Christians held to this doctrine as the only key of those ancient problems, an increased importance is given to it by the discoveries of modern science. The scientific doctrine of evolution is now generally accepted as the *modus operandi* in the creation of the world. Though it is far from being proved in all its parts, it has, in the main, passed beyond the region of hypothesis into that of ascertained fact ; there is no question that the past history of man is, in some way, connected with that of the animal creation beneath him. And it is probable that the missing links in the chain of life will sooner or later be found. If so, they will only add new force to the unity of Christ with nature. For if it can be eventually proved that God created the physical body, *apart from the soul of man*, out of the dust of the ground, not by an instantaneous act, but by a gradual process of development occupying untold ages ; if, from the very lowest forms of invertebrate life higher forms were successively evolved until, at last, the climax was reached in man ; if the fact that the human embryo in the womb passes successively through changes, closely similar to

those that take place in lower organisms, before it attains its complete growth, is an evidence of development from lower types, then science itself unveils the indissoluble union existing between nature and human nature, and, therefore, between all nature and Him in Whom human nature attains the measure of the stature of perfect manhood. All this, if true, throws a fuller meaning upon those passages of the New Testament to which we have referred.

The Word of God, "by Whom the worlds were created," "by Whom all things consist," and "without Whom was not anything made that was made," is there declared to be the Lord of Nature and the Power behind Nature—the Being Who upholds Nature as an organism and inspires it with organic life. As the ages roll by He evolves out of primordial matter, first, the animal world, then the human race, and then that human body which is to be His own earthly Tabernacle or Temple.¹ Thus, in the fulness of time, the "mystery hidden from the foundation of the world" is revealed; all nature comes to a blossom and flowers out in the Babe of Bethlehem, and the Power that is *behind* nature at last appears *in* nature in a visible and physical form.

And thus all the pantheistic and other kindred problems of human religion are met and more than satisfied; God and Nature are no longer separated. They are revealed as one. In place of a chain of mediators, æons, intelligences, of "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers," Christ appears as the one Mediator between God and man, as well in the natural as in the spiritual world. And the very miracles which He wrought, against which our modern thought is clashing, are signs of the unity of Nature and the Supernatural.

¹ Such is the depth of meaning in our Lord's words when He speaks of His body as a "Temple."

No longer are matter and spirit divorced from one another : in Christ's Incarnation they are welded together as a harmonious whole, for the God of nature and the God of the Bible are revealed as one, in the Person of the Word made flesh.

And here we have the profound truth which not only lies at the basis of all the sacramental teachings of the Gospel, but which stands as the corrective of all those one-sided and ultra-spiritualistic teachings, whose tendency is to make Christianity a purely subjective and introspective religion.

CHRIST'S ONENESS WITH MAN.

(2) In His Incarnation Christ the Son of God becomes one with man. He is conditioned in every way as we are by the flesh, sin only excepted. When He willed to become one with man, He put it out of His own power to live a life in any way different from man, as far as the limitations of human existence are concerned. This is not the place to enter into a prolonged discussion of the *Kenōsis*, or voluntary humiliation of the Son of God : it will suffice to point out that Christ grew in grace, in wisdom, and in stature, and in favour with God and man ; and that while He was constantly working miracles for others, He never wrought a single one for Self.¹ Indeed, Christ was more burdened than we, by fleshly limitations, because of His unique Personality ; yet,

¹ The miracles of the genuine Gospels here stand out in marked contrast to those of the spurious Gospels, which are full of wonders wrought by Christ to save himself, even when in so doing He injured others. The charge is frequently made that the miraculous element of the Gospels is the work of human imagination or tradition. If we would see the kind of miracles that human imagination would thus create, here we behold those which it has actually fabricated and that, too, in the first few centuries.

through those very limitations He conquered for man a higher life. For in Him we see God's Image not only restored to humanity, but perfected. He is infinitely more than Adam (had he continued sinless) could have been in Paradise. In Christ we behold human nature carried up to a height which is utterly beyond the reach of humanity itself. Yet, so far from separating Him from His brethren, this excellence makes Christ more human than all the rest of mankind. He fulfils, at once, the ideal of perfect manhood and perfect womanhood. His existence is the most many-sided that was ever lived on this earth. He lives our myriad lives in one. In Him each discovers a counterpart. Something is there in His character, His history, His example, His Words, which goes home to every heart, and draws Him nearer than any other being: a unique bond of sympathy under which each exclaims, "others may misunderstand me, but Christ knows."

In the phrase of Maurice, "Christ is the Head of every man." It is a fact of Christian history, to be recognized wherever the banner of the Cross has been carried, that individuals, classes, denominations, peoples, races, which cannot possibly understand one another, and which, oftentimes, are hopelessly at variance with one another, all understand Christ, and feel the touch of Christ upon their own lives.

In all this we see the hold that Christ has laid upon the heart of humanity; yet, while in Him we behold every virtue perfected, it is never, as in the case of other reformers, exaggerated, never distorted.

His life is a life of perfect, unaffected simplicity. When He walks as an itinerant missionary through the towns and villages of Galilee, the peasants receive Him as the carpenter's Son, and as One, Who though a Rabbi, is like themselves. When He is greeted with hosannas,

and hailed as King David's Son, He is not elated by the enthusiasm of the multitudes, neither does He repress their joy. It is as natural for Him to be a King as a Galilean peasant. When He stands before Pilate as a condemned traitor and blasphemer, instead of retorting with the vehemence of a misrepresented man, He calmly says, "every one that is of the truth, heareth My voice." In His whole mien and bearing we see a combination of exhaustless energy with inward repose, of sympathy with the multitudes, without one wish for their praise : of poverty without shame, of royalty without pride, of self-sacrifice without waste, of humility without shrinking or fear, of authority without imperiousness.

As He comes and stands beside us, each feels his own littleness in contrast with His greatness ; each finds in Christ the revelation of the ideal of his own life, with every godlike quality and diviner instinct that he recognizes in himself interpreted and satisfied and realized in completion. So close is the union of Christ with man that all discover in Him the capacities and possibilities of *self*, and find in Him a higher self-hood.

But the revelation does not stop here ; Christ meets men at the very point where they say despairingly that this ideal of their own manhood is beyond their reach, and tells them how they may reach it.

Christ is, indeed, bound to us by the closest ties of flesh and blood, but there is a closer bond of union still. Christ is the second Adam, Who was born, not in the ordinary way, but born of God. The Son of God becomes the Son of Man, that sons of men may become sons of God.

This is the message with which the whole New Testament rings. On the very threshold of St. John's Gospel we are told that "to as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become sons of God, even to them

that believe on His name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”¹

He is the progenitor of a new race, who, through Him, are born again into a higher existence, with new hopes, new aspirations, new capacities, newness of life. He infuses into that word, *life*, a meaning it never had before, so that men feel that they have never begun really to live until they live in Him. Because He lives they live also. He comes that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly. He that hath the Son of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. And, through their union with Christ, men become partakers of the universal life of Heaven.²

¹ 1 St. John i. 12, 13.

² “The Gospel carries this thought of unity into a higher region. Just as man appears to be a representative of the visible creation, so the visible creation appears to represent the whole finite order. When therefore the *Word became flesh* He fulfilled the purpose of the Father to sum up all things in Christ (*ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ*), the things in the heavens and the things upon the earth (Eph. i. 10). And, more than this, in consequence of the ravages wrought by sin, it was the good pleasure of the Father through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross, through Him, whether things upon the earth or things in the heavens (Col. i. 19 f.). Thus we are taught that by the Incarnation all orders of finite being are brought to their consummation in a divine harmony (compare Rom. xi. 36; 1 Cor. iii. 21 ff.; 2 Cor. v. 17 f.; Eph. iii. 9, iv. 10; Phil. iii. 21; 1 Cor. xv. 27 f.).

“It is obvious that these passages of Holy Scripture open before us a prospect of mysteries which we cannot distinctly realize. In this recognition of the permanent connection of man with nature, and of the consequences which flow from it, we have once again an example of those anticipations in the Bible of later thoughts which bring home to us the conception of its inspiration. It is not too much to say that the language of St. Paul could not have been understood as we understand it, till our own generation. In the slow advance of experience great questionings are shaped, and then in due time we find that we can read the answer to them in the apostolic interpretation of facts which are felt to be fuller and richer in their applications as our knowledge of the conditions of our being becomes more complete.

“Christianity which reaches in this way to all finite being, claims also

CHRIST'S ONENESS WITH GOD.

(3) The New Testament writers taught that in the Person of Jesus Christ the self-revelation of the one true God reached its climax. If Christ had been less than God, or other than Jehovah Himself, the revelation would have been less than the revelation of God's own Personality. The divine meaning and efficacy of those facts of Christ's life which are summed up in the Creed depend upon the truth that Christ is not only in spirit but in His Godhead one with the Father, and, therefore, in accordance with an irresistible gravitation of Christian religious conviction, this truth appears, in all its prominence, in the first apostolic writings of the Christian Church.

The epistles of the New Testament are not treatises on systematic divinity, they are documents that relate to the life of the early believers, and dogma only appears in them, as it were, incidentally, and as affecting and shaping that higher life to which they had been called and of which they had become already partakers before these letters were written. The epistles were penned not to make men Christians, but they were sent to men who were *already* Christians; and the very way in which Christ is ceaselessly referred to by St. Paul, St. John, to be a final revelation, to endure through all time and to 'be' beyond time. There can be no addition to that which is implicitly included in the facts of the Gospel. We can conceive nothing beyond the unity which they imply. . . . It (Christianity) claims to bring a perfect unity of the whole sum without destroying the personality of each man. . . . It claims to complete the circle of existence, and show how all things come from God and go to God (Rom. xi. 36; 1 Cor. xv. 28). . . . In this then lies the main idea of Christianity, that it presents the redemption, the perfection, the consummation of all finite being in union with God."—Gospel of Life, by Bishop Westcott, p. 250 ff.

and St. Peter, shows that His Godhead and manhood were taken for granted by all the believers of the early Church. It was the very basis of their Christian belief and Christian living. By and by the time came when the early Church had to defend this truth against the outside world, and show how it solved all the problems that had been pondered for ages in the philosophical schools of Greece, and how it had mastered the intricacies of Alexandrine and Asiatic religious thought.

Already we see traces of this friction between philosophic thought and Christian belief in the writings of the apostles themselves. Even in the Gospel of St. John it distinctly appears. The Fourth Gospel is both Asiatic and European in its character. The writer had evidently become familiar with the whole tone of Grecian and Alexandrine thought before he took up his pen.¹

¹ When St. John at Ephesus came in contact with the educated and cultivated Hellenist Jews he found that the work of assimilating what was best in the religious thought of Asia, and in the Platonic and Stoic philosophy of Greece, had already been a long-traversed ground. The doctrine of a *Logos* had been brought to a high point of perfection by philosophers themselves. It grew out of that Gnosticism which was a combination of Platonism, Stoicism, Magism, etc., and was widely accepted even before the days of Philo. Philo himself, beginning with the foundation laid in the Book of Proverbs, in which Wisdom is set forth as the eternal representation of God ("When He prepared the heavens, I was there," Proverbs viii. 27 ff.), developed his peculiar form of the Logos doctrine in which He taught, from the side of Greek philosophy, that the word of God is the intelligible world, the idea of ideas, the reason of reasons, the mind of God expressing itself in action. While on the Hebrew side he taught that the Word of God was the Shekinah or effulgence of God's glory, the Shadow of God, the Reflected Image of the Person, the Creator, the King's Architect, the Son, the Eldest Son, the First-born of God, the Monad, the Second God. In all this the teaching of Philo bears a strong likeness to that of St. John and the apostles, yet when we examine more closely, the two are radically distinct, the former shadowing forth only a half truth while the latter embraces the whole.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DOCTRINE.

And this process of development of Christian doctrine in regard to the Personality of Christ, of which we see the first beginnings in the New Testament itself, went on for the next few centuries.

"From the very outset, all Christian sects baptized and pronounced the benediction in the Triple Name, even those who could not understand did not venture to abjure this authoritative formula, and the problems agitated, serious as they undoubtedly were, turned solely upon the manner of its explanation. Some, like the author of the *Homilies* and the Gnostics generally, tried to fit it on, by the most violent methods, to opinions derived from external sources. Others endeavoured to reconcile the One with the Three, by what is known as emanationism. The Son, the Holy Spirit, were occasional expansions of the Divine Nature, shooting forth like rays from a torch and again absorbed into the parent flame. Others again regarded the Three Names as three phases or manifestations of the One Divine activity. But the main body of the Church asserted the Deity and Personality of the Son, and, though with less unanimity, that also of the Holy Ghost, and spoke of the Three as united in power and in spirit."¹

The Church never faltered in her loyalty to the primitive belief called by St. Jude, "the Faith once delivered to the Saints," but she could not at first realize what the doctrine of the Incarnation meant, in relation to the problems and facts of existence. She had not, as yet, seen it in its historical setting and its philosophical aspects, and could not give a clear cut and definite expression of what

¹ Bigg's Bampton Lectures on the Christian Platonists of Alexandria, p. 59.

the faith of the Gospels really meant, until its character and limitations had been clearly defined by the actual contact with the thought and belief of the outer world.

THE PROBLEM BEFORE THE CHURCH.

While therefore the belief in the Incarnation of Christ as the Son of God was held from the very first, the exact statement of that belief was gradually unfolded. His real relation to God, on the one hand, and His real relation to man and the world on the other, had to be thought out carefully in connection with all the counter-truths and the apparently opposing facts of existence. The Church made the most astounding claim for Christ when she proclaimed that He was in the highest as well as in the most literal and realistic sense the God-Man. She bore witness that a new Being, different from all other beings, either in ages past or ages to be, had come into this world. She was naturally, yes, inevitably, challenged by the whole world to prove that her witness was true ; she had to face opposers, who came from all quarters of the civilized world, and show that her Fact was greater than their facts ; and that it harmonized with all that the human intellect had discovered, all that human reason taught, and all that human experience had proved as true. In meeting these antagonists, hers was the greatest task that had ever been imposed on human effort, for she could not meet men on their own ground ; she could not face philosophers with only philosophical proof, or men of science with only scientific proof in return, for her Truth was *above* their truths. It could not be proved in the ordinary way, for while it was both philosophical and reasonable, it was, at the same time, higher than philosophy, higher than reason. It was *Revelation*. It had to be accepted, first of all, on a rational faith, and

then shown to be not in conflict with the teachings of philosophy, reason, and human experience. Taking her stand on *faith* she could not assume the burden of proof; she was obliged to throw the burden of disproof on them and challenge them to bear it. Again the difficulty was enhanced still further by the fact that religion and human experience could not be separated. While the Church could not meet men on their own ground, she was obliged to maintain that their ground was *her* ground as well. While science and philosophy did not reach as high as the Person of the God-Man, in Whom God's self-revelation was consummated, Christianity reached down and covered the whole field that science and philosophy called their own. Christ's relation to nature, man, and God gave a new meaning to all scientific and philosophical facts,¹ and the Church was thus obliged to travel over a new and unexplored ground in showing and interpreting that relation. "The scientific man deals for the most part with facts which the senses can verify. His questions of fact are settled by further observation. His theoretical questions, often the most important of all, arise over the explanation of his facts —that is, their place and importance in his system. But the theologian deals with facts that the senses do not and cannot verify, with facts which underlie the created order as a permanent condition, which are always there and can never be completely left out of account with success. And this is why his facts require a new method. If the life of God and the spiritual world could be separated from the facts of physical nature and considered alone, it would form a province of science by itself, in which the usual ways of experiment and observation

¹ This is the real solution of a difficulty which is constantly arising as we contemplate the connection between Christianity and civilization, science, philosophy, etc.

would be valid. Theologian and scientist would pursue each his own way, each using the regular method in his own field. But this cannot be. The theologian has not only to deal with a class of facts of his own, but he has also to look at the facts of the scientist from his own special point of view. He looks for his facts in the same world as the scientist, and he sees the same facts. But he believes them to rest on a condition which his senses cannot verify, and therefore the proper method for him is to show the cohesion of the whole system of things with this condition, if it be assumed. Thus he finds the spiritual world in his conclusion only so far as he has assumed it in his premisses."¹ And what is here said regarding Christianity and science is equally true regarding Christianity and civilization, Christianity and philosophy.

¹ Manual of Theology, by the Rev. T. B. Strong, p. 6.

CHAPTER X

THE INCARNATION IN RELATION TO CHURCH DOGMA

SYNOPSIS

- I. Creeds of the Church the necessary result of conflict with outside thought. This conflict most violent about the relation of Christ to God and Man. Hence, prominence of Doctrine of the Trinity. This lasted for three centuries. The Church finally justified her defence of the Doctrine by proving that it solved all the problems of Divine and Human Existence.
- II. The primary questions to be decided regarding the Person and Nature of Christ are Four in number. These gave occasion to Four Heresies : (a) The Arian ; (b) The Apollinarian ; (c) The Nestorian ; (d) The Eutychian.
- III. These questions were handled by the Early Church with philosophic insight and scientific exactness. The result is embodied in the Nicene Creed. This Creed is called "The Faith" because it is the Objective expression of the belief of the Church. Such an expression involves another question, viz., the Authority of the Church in relation to Private Judgement. There is no necessary antagonism between (a) Authority and Faith, since faith receives its facts from the Church ; (b) Scripture and Reason, since, when conflict arises it is the plain duty of the individual to prefer the *common judgement of the many* to the private judgement of one individual.
- IV. The Nicene Creed contains all the authoritative utterances of the Church which are to be accepted as *de fide*.

THUS it was in the friction between the Belief of the Church and the thought of the world that the dogmas of the Church gradually formulated themselves. They would never have been formulated at all if the Church

had not been obliged to give a rational account of her belief ; they were simply the outgrowth of that method which she was forced to adopt in harmonizing her faith in Revelation, up to a certain point, with the truths of nature and philosophy, and protecting it beyond the point where it transcends both. The central truth of the whole system of theology, which she thus built up, was the Incarnation. In the building period the doctrine of the Trinity comes prominently to the forefront, but (as the history of the times conclusively shows) only as the rational expression of one side of the Incarnation —the reality of Christ's Godhead. Contemporaneous with this, and long after this point was settled, the equally difficult question of Christ's true humanity was as keenly examined and debated.

As we look back upon that age of the formation of dogma, we see that a long period elapsed before the Church was able to make an exact statement of her belief regarding Christ's divinity. From a superficial point of view, it is held up as an objection to the doctrine of the Trinity that three centuries had passed away before it was enunciated by the universal voice of the Church ; but from a higher and truer point of view, the lapse of time, so far from being an objection, is the exact reverse. It evinces the thoroughness and care with which the Church formulated her belief, and is a proof that she waited to weigh and give full time to the investigation of every counter-truth before committing herself to an exact definition. And we may believe, from the result, that in this course she was under Divine guidance.

In this sense the doctrine of the Trinity was gradually formulated. It was not, as is so often represented, a piece of mosaic in which all the Gospel statements regarding the Person of Christ were carefully fitted together. It was the result of the conflict of Christian

belief with all shades of religious thought and philosophic teachings. It was discovered in the end to be the supreme and only doctrine which at once (1) rightly interpreted Christ's life ; (2) gave the real worth of the facts of the Incarnation ; (3) reconciled together all the Bible statements about the Person of Christ ; (4) met all the requirements of religious thought in the world ; (5) solved the problems of existence when man contemplates God ; and (6) harmonized all the conflicting elements of philosophic thought regarding divine existence.

These philosophic antagonisms are constantly reappearing. They will last as long as the world lasts. They are often revived in a new shape, as though they were directly *created* by the doctrine of the Trinity, whereas they antedated that doctrine and belong to philosophy itself—to existence itself. And the only thing that has ever brought them together and reconciled their differences, is this higher truth of divine Existence, this comprehensive, all-inclusive, doctrine of the Being of God.

Ritschlianism tells us that this doctrine, in fact, was an accommodation of Christian Truth to Greek philosophy, but "we may now dismiss as untenable the notion that the doctrine of the Trinity was borrowed either from Plato or any other ethnic source. It was implicit in the Christian Creed. That Creed could not be thought out without reaching it. And it became explicit in the Christian consciousness under the double necessity for explaining the Creed to philosophic minds and defending its integrity against philosophic opposition. But the men who conducted the process of this development were trained in the philosophy of Alexandria and Athens. . . . In this sense the doctrine of the Trinity was the synthesis and summary of all that was highest in the Hebrew and Hellenic conceptions of

God fused into union by the electric touch of the Incarnation. Now the doctrine of the Trinity, as dogmatically elaborated, is, in fact, the most philosophical attempt to conceive of God as Personal. Not that it arose from any processes of thinking. These, as we have seen, all stopped short of it. It was suggested by the Incarnation, considered as a new revelation about God, and thought out upon lines indicated in the New Testament. Upon this the evidence of the fathers is plain. They felt that they were in the presence of a fact which so far from being the creation of any theory of the day, was a mystery—a thing which could be apprehended when revealed but could be neither comprehended nor discovered; and their reasoning upon the subject is always qualified by a profound sense of this mysteriousness.”¹

Let us now pass on to the actual historic process of formation.

CHRISTIANITY AND HEATHEN THOUGHT.

A natural result of the first contact of Christianity with the outer world, as it drew in disciples from all sides, was that a large number of these were not Christianized but semi-Christianized. As the faith of the Gospels was a religion which contained all the true elements of other religions, the members of each heathen cult came into the Church accepting and emphasizing involuntarily those points in which Christianity harmonized most closely with the pagan religious sect to which they had belonged from the days of their childhood. Thus arose an effect which we can readily understand. The first group of heresies which appear in Church history were half-Christian, half-heathen. They were

¹ Personality, Human and Divine, by the Rev. I. R. Illingworth, p. 68.

Gnostic in character, and Gnosticism was a species of eclecticism which gathered into one the typical thought of Greece and the Orient. Then came another onward step. The false systems of the semi-heathen religious sects were vanquished, but the philosophical ideas which underlay, and the religious problems which gave rise to, those systems remained, consequently the questionings of the day began to centre more and more in the nature of the Personality of Jesus Christ.¹

¹ A TABLE SHOWING THE ACTION AND REACTION OF RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY REGARDING THE PERSONALITY OF CHRIST IN THE FIRST FOUR CENTURIES.

DENIAL OF THE HUMANITY.

The first Gnostics, believing that Christ was an *Aeon* and not Man, denied the reality of His flesh.

1.

The Docetæ (Valentinians, etc.) accepted Christ's Divinity but denied that His flesh was other than an appearance.

3.

In opposition to the Ebionites the Sabellians taught that Christ was One with the Father, but denied that He was other than a temporary Manifestation of the Father.

5.

In opposition to the Arians, the Apollinarians taught that Christ was of the same substance with the Father, but denied the perfection of His human Nature.

7.

In opposition to the Nestorians the Eutychians accepted the One Personality of Christ but denied that His Human Nature was distinct from His Divine Nature.

THE CATHOLIC FAITH.

I believe in One God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth and of all things, visible and invisible. And in One LORD Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, Begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten not Made. Being of One Substance with the Father, by Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our Salvation, came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary. And was made Man, Whose Kingdom shall have no end.

DENIAL OF THE DIVINITY.

The first Gnostics, believing that Christ was an *Aeon* and not God, denied the reality of His Union with God.

2.

In opposition to the Doceteæ the Ebionites accepted Christ as a Human Teacher but denied His Divine Origin.

4.

In opposition to the Sabellians the Arians held that Christ was the Word of God, but denied that He was eternally generated, and of the same substance with the Father.

6.

In opposition to the Apollinarians, the Nestorians accepted the two Natures of Christ, but denied that the Person of the Man Jesus was identical with the Person of the Logos.

8.

In opposition to the Eutychians, the Monothelites accepted the distinction between the Divine and Human Natures of Christ, but denied that there was any distinction between His Divine and Human Will.

Upon this central mystery the mind of the Church was concentrated for centuries, and the pendulum of Christian thought kept swinging between exaggerations of truth, now on one side now on the other, until it finally came to a rest in the doctrine of the Person of Christ as it was formulated by the Council of Nice. When the early Gnostic heresies had subsided, Sabellius arose to teach that there was one God and three manifestations of God, and the extreme form of this doctrine appeared in the sect of the Patripassians, who held that the Person Who suffered on the cross was the everlasting Father Himself.

ARIANISM.

Then came the rebound against Sabellianism, and Arius led the counter-movement, arguing that if Christ were the Son of God he must have had not only a *derived* but a created existence, and that, therefore, there must have been a time when the Father was, and the Son was not.

High was the position which the Arians accorded to Christ. Many among them were even willing to go so far as to say He was of *like* substance with the Father, provided they were not required to say that He was of the *same* substance, and the careless multitude, looking on, and regarding this as a mere question of words, cared not an “*iota*” (*homoiousion* and *homoousion*) about the controversy.

But the Church held inflexibly to its ground, distinguishing clearly that a principle was involved here which was vital to the integrity of the faith of the Gospel.

Athanasius and others charged the Arians with being idolaters, in teaching that there were two Gods instead of one, and worshipping, by their own confession, a being who was merely a creature. Many as were the proof

texts which the Arians quoted, the champions of the ancient faith showed not only that the whole tenor of Scripture was against them, but that the essential principles of God's Revelation was against them also, and that the Arians were applying to God those notions of time which belong not to divine but to human existence.

And all subsequent Christian thought has revealed the greatness of the issue for which the Church then contended. If she had yielded to the Arians, the whole after history of Christianity would have been involved in inextricable theological and philosophical difficulties, not the least of which would have been the renunciation of the belief that God is eternal love. For eternal love demands an eternal object of love. If there were a time when there was not a Son of God Who was worthy of being the object of eternal love and of returning that love, then, in that time, a solitary God must have expended His infinite love upon Himself; and this is a conception of God which is not only contrary to God's self-revelation in Christ, but is contrary to reason itself.

APOLLINARIANISM.

In the reaction against Arianism, Apollinaris, with his followers, maintained that if Christ were one in the God-head with the Father, He could not be truly *Man*. His flesh could not be ordinary human flesh, with its taint of sin, but must have been divine in its nature. Not a human substance, but the divine substance converted into flesh. This, as will be seen, is less extreme than the former Gnostic and Docetic heresies, yet none the less it destroys the reality of the Incarnation. And so the Church had once more to reverse her attitude of defence, and hold up the shield with which she just had warded off the attacks of Arius, against one of her own followers on the other side.

Her answer to the very real difficulty set forth by the Apollinarians, was the virgin birth of our Lord, in which the entail of corruption was broken off and the sinless Son of God was able to accept the conditions of human existence without accepting that of a predisposition to sin, or of a body contaminated by hereditary sin.¹

And it should be remembered, in these days, when so many are tempted to regard the birth of Christ of a pure virgin, more in the light of an apostolic tradition than as a necessary truth of the Incarnation, that this truth is the only solution of those grave theological perplexities that have been felt so deeply by earnest-minded Apollinarians and others. The Gospel itself assures us that that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. Christ, when He assumed our physical nature, could not and did not assume with it the taint of original sin. He came into this world as the second Adam. He came in a new way. He was born from above, and became the progenitor of a new race, which was born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

NESTORIANISM.

The controversy about the reality of the divine nature and the reality of the human nature of Christ was now becoming more clearly defined. While, to outward appearance, the issue seemed more metaphysical and intangible, it was really being narrowed down to the point where it would cease to perplex the mind of the Church. The reaction against Apollinarianism was Nestorianism.

The result of the previous controversies was the general acceptance of the reality of two natures in Christ,

¹ This subject is dwelt upon more fully in the chapter on the Ascension.

but nothing, as yet, had been said about their union in one Personality. And here Nestorius arose to defend a sermon of one of his presbyters, in which it was stated that the title God-bearer (*θεοτόκος*) could not rightfully be given to the Virgin Mary, because the Divinity of our Lord was unchangeable and incapable of suffering. She was the mother of the Man Jesus, but not of the Christ, the Son of God. If there were two natures there must be also two Persons. Soon a body of earnest Christians rallied to his side, who found themselves logically driven (according to their views) to maintain that in Christ there were temporally, but not eternally, united two distinct Personalities: first the Personality of the Divine Word and Second the Personality of Jesus, the Son of Man. Out of this grew many perplexing problems, which we have not time to dwell upon now—problems which have an intimate bearing not only upon the integrity of the truth of the Incarnation, but upon the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord. In this important controversy, the Church vindicated for all time the truth that though there were two distinct natures of Christ, they were united forever in the one Personality of the God-Man, Christ Jesus.

EUTYCHIANISM.

But the end was not yet. In the reaction against Nestorianism arose Eutychianism, named from the monk Eutyches, who was so convinced of the oneness of Christ's Personality, that he fell back again into the other extreme of denying the essential principles of Christ's humanity, if not the humanity itself. So strong was his conviction of the one Personality of Christ, that he lost sight of the reality of the distinction between the manhood and Divinity of Christ. If there were but one Personality, the

lower nature must become merged in the higher nature. The less, with him, was swallowed up by the greater. It was not extinguished, but taken up into that which was higher than itself. It was lost as a drop of the water of life in the vast ocean of God's being.

This confusion of the two natures of Christ was fatal to the reality of the Incarnation, and the condemnation of Eutychianism at the Council of Chalcedon has been justified by the Christian conviction of all subsequent ages.

MONOTHELITISM.

The last controversy upon this subject with which we have to do may be described as a lingering echo of Eutychian thought, rather than a reaction against it. It emanated from the same impulse which gave rise to Eutychianism, the desire to protect the truth of the one Personality of Christ.

The source of personality is the will, and the Monothelites, pressing this argument home, maintained that if Christ were one and not two persons, He must necessarily have but one, and not two wills. And here Catholic thought had to take its last stand in "rightly dividing the word of truth." The human will is the most sacred element of humanity. It is a necessary factor in conversion and regeneration, and if it be destroyed *in Christ*, the link between Christ and humanity is broken. Metaphysical and harmless, therefore, as the Monothelite doctrine appears at first sight, it was necessary that it should be met and controverted, as firmly as the preceding heresies had been, for the maintenance of the truth of the Incarnation in its integrity. And when it had been vanquished, the air was cleared. No further reaction took place; the faith of the Church in Jesus Christ, as one with God in His Divine Nature, and one with man in His hu-

man nature, had been vindicated for all time. And, henceforth, whatever future controversies might arise in the Church, those about the Personality of Christ Himself were a thing of the past.

THE NICENE CREED NOT OBSOLETE.

In this brief review of early Christian history we see how thoroughly the doctrine of the Incarnation was tested, and tried by the facts of life and the principles of philosophic thought. People, in these times, take little interest in these so-called discussions of metaphysical points. It is the fashion of the day to regard them as so much useless and unprofitable speculation regarding matters which can never be proved: and as a kind of controversy in which a by-gone age might find delight, but which is an anachronism in a practical era that has to deal with facts and not theories.

Assertions like these are something more than the expression of ignorance; they are misrepresentations of the truth, and an unconscious falsification of actual history. In the Nicene age philosophic thought was just as intense, just as profound, just as accurate as scientific thought is to-day, and it soared to a much nobler level, in that it studied the laws of *Personality*, whereas modern science studies the laws of material *things*. There are men everywhere about us, to-day, who are honestly, but ignorantly, Sabellians, Arians, Apollinarians, Nestorians, Eutychians, Monophysites and Monotheletes, who think that, at some future time, the Church will outgrow its present form of belief in the doctrines of the Trinity and other dogmas of a bygone age, and come to see things out of their eyes; and who are supremely unconscious that the very thing which they now hold as the highest truth, has been taught, discussed, dissected, and anal-

yzed—perhaps for a whole century ;—studied from every possible standpoint by many men of many minds ; investigated with that same painstaking thoroughness which men now give to scientific research ; compared with every counter truth, and finally abandoned. The only remaining monument kept by the Church of that long and earnest controversy, is a sentence or a word in the Nicene Creed, placed there, fifteen hundred years ago, to warn men not to mistake as a highway of knowledge that which the accumulated experience of the Church has discovered to be a byway of ignorance.¹

THE NECESSITY OF DOGMA.

Taking now a retrospective glance over the ground that we have traversed, we see that a great advance has been made in the clearer apprehension of Christian truth ; on

¹ “Now undoubtedly it must be admitted that a creed is a fence, and that it does in a sense limit the exercise of private judgement. A creed deals in definitions, and a definition implies boundaries. Let us look again at the illustration of a common. There was a time when the commons of England were all unfenced. People could roam over them without let or hindrance, no one forbidding them, and no fence obstructing them. But in process of time men began to encroach upon the common land. A man here, and a man there, took a piece of land and fenced it round, and appropriated it to his own use, and the common became smaller and smaller, till at last it disappeared altogether, and the people at large were thus deprived of their common property. In this way a great many of the commons of England have been lost, to the great detriment of the population in general. And therefore, to prevent further depredations, it became necessary to put fences round commons that were in danger of spoliation ; not, of course, for the purpose of narrowing their area, but in order to guard their latitude ; not for the purpose of driving any one out who had a right to be in, but in order to guard the general freedom and enjoyment of all those to whom the common belonged. There you see as in a parable the historical explanation of the formation of the creeds of Christendom.”—Christianity in Relation to Science and Morality, by Canon Malcolm MacColl, p. 6 ff.

the one hand, many new points have been brought out regarding the faith once delivered to the saints, making the Personality of Christ and the place of His Incarnation in the world more definite, distinct, and intelligible. While the faith remains the same that it was in the beginning, new corroborative evidences have been discovered of its divine reality and truth.

On the other hand, the faith which in the beginning was subjective, has found expression in an objective form. That expression "the Faith of the Saints," which once meant the faith *felt* by the saints, has now come to mean also the faith *held* by the saints of several centuries. The appeal, which was necessarily limited, at first, to the self-consciousness of the individual man, is now to the collective self-consciousness of the Church, or body of Christian men, as well. Where, before, it was to personal experience almost exclusively, it is now, in the natural progress of Christian history, to individual experience *plus* the experience of the Church. In other words personal faith is, in later times, expressed outwardly by an objective form of faith, and this formula of faith grows out of the accumulated experiences of Christian men who are guided by prayer, by the Holy Scriptures, and by the Holy Ghost, leading them into "all truth" by co-operating with their own intelligence and memory.

Thus new authorities arise in the nature of things to supplement that which was first received. And this brings up before us the place and position of the authority of the Christian Church and of the Christian Scriptures in relation to our own private judgement. We pause for a moment to consider these points.

In the last chapter, after showing the reasonableness of faith in Christ, we dwelt upon the personal proof that comes home to the reason and conscience of the man of faith, that, in Christ, God's self-revelation is consum-

mated. To many, this kind of proof is all-sufficient. They need nothing more to supplement their faith. They believe, and they believe because they have the witness in themselves and in their own moral convictions, that Christ is one with God. In the first centuries (after the days of miracles had practically passed away, removing the kind of evidence that the senses could verify) the early Christians were satisfied with the proof that appealed to their moral convictions, they wanted and needed no more than those facts of Christ's life which are rehearsed in the Apostles' Creed. But by and by when Christianity came in conflict with the reason and philosophy of the outer world, the Church had to prove the scripturalness, reasonableness, and philosophical truth of her belief.

All Scripture was examined and compared with those Gospel facts, to bring out the analogy of the faith. All philosophy was examined and compared with the same facts to bring out the analogy of reason, and the result was that after an experience of three centuries, the Church at her council of Nicaea, 325 A.D., and of Constantinople in 381 A.D., found it necessary to expand the simple statements of the Apostles' Creed into that somewhat larger form which is popularly known to-day as the Nicene symbol.

We have, therefore, since the fourth century, two additional fountains of authority to supplement that of the first century,—making three in all.

There is first the authority of the individual reason and conscience, setting its corroborative seal upon faith in Christ's teachings, Christ's life, Christ Himself as the Son of God.

There is, second, the authority of the New Testament Scriptures, which contain the records of Christ's life, and which have now been brought together in canonical form,

analyzed and tested, compared and collated by the Church.

There is, third, the authority of the Church, or the Christian experience of the ages, uttering in the Creed the massed conviction of the congregation of the faithful, regarding the meaning of the facts of Christ's life.

AUTHORITY AND FAITH.

Neither of these sources of authority, be it remembered, can be, or was ever intended to be, a substitute for *faith*. They occupy a subordinate place. They prepare the evidence for faith, form a basis for faith, influence faith beforehand and also corroborate, support, and direct faith afterward. But they cannot create faith ; they cannot coerce faith in Christ. Faith in logic, faith in the Bible, and faith in Church authority are all of them important in their own spheres, but each falls far short of that supreme act of self-giving, self-surrender, which we call faith in the Son of God. Such faith is a personal act whereby the union between the soul and God is cemented, and, as such, it is the direct channel of communication between God and man. It is the gift of God. It is an energizing spiritual power which rises and asserts itself above all kinds of extraneous authority. God calls and we hear His voice. This is the primal condition of all spiritual life ; and just because it is instinctively felt to be so by every spiritually minded man, there is a popular Christian prejudice against any assertion of the authority of reason, Bible, or Church.

There is, however, no real mutual interference between the rights of conscience and those other kinds of authority, and the jealousy with which the latter are regarded arises wholly from a confusion of thought regarding the relative positions of faith and authority. The instinctive protest is not against authority, but against an exaggerated and

illegitimate use of authority. But in its proper place authority is necessary. Faith cannot stand alone. Faith in Christ may be real, but it may be intermingled with much that is untrue and unreal, and it is the part of a true man to have it separated as soon as possible from these false notions and unreal accretions. "He that doeth truth," our Lord said, "cometh to the light,"¹ and these authorities are a light to reveal those points in which faith needs to be educated and disentangled from what is false. Their function is simply corrective.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT AND REASON.

The first aid that faith receives is from the light of conscience and reason. These, therefore, constitute the primal source of authority. Our faith in Christ must not be an immoral faith, neither must it be an unreasonable faith.

But conscience and reason are not enough alone and by themselves, to keep us in the right path. They need the additional light of the Holy Scriptures, in which the revelation of God is contained, to illumine them and correct them when they are liable to err.

If a Christian discovers that his ideas of Christ differ from the actual records of Christ's life that are found in the Gospel, it is more likely that he is wrong than that the Gospel is wrong. But even here there is a loop-hole. He may give a private interpretation to the words of the Gospel to suit his own views, or else he may dispute the authenticity of the Gospel records. And in either case he may, in the exercise of his private judgement do this conscientiously, though mistakenly. The natural recourse in this emergency is to turn to what other Christian men have thought and held from the beginning.

If he finds that the early Christians felt just as he

¹ St. John iii. 21.

does about the authenticity of New Testament documents ; that they viewed with suspicion the very epistles and books and passages that he views with suspicion ; that they unanimously declared in favour of some few books, while they unanimously discarded many others ; that there was a middle class of writings about which there were strong differences of opinion, and that it was only after the most painstaking analysis and prolonged discussion that the Canon of Scripture was formed, here are historical facts to which he will give due weight. The methods of Bible criticism followed then, might not have been the particular methods that are followed now, but they were none the less searching and exact in character. The men who lived just after the days when many of those records were written had especial opportunities for investigation, and contemporaneous evidences were at their command which are closed to us to-day. It was not necessary that they should be so exact in minute points, therefore, or so earnest in following the methods of the Higher Criticism as men are now, for they had, in every way, the advantage over us in determining what Scriptures were authentic and what were not.

If our own modern critics themselves, with all their trained habits and impartial methods, could be transported back to live in the second, third, and fourth centuries, and see and know what Irenæus and Hippolytus, Eusebius, and Jerome saw and knew ; without discarding the Nineteenth Century apparatus of criticism, they would lay greater stress on the more convincing and satisfactory *modus operandi* of those early times, when the Church felt the strong pressure of the responsibility laid upon her as "the keeper of Holy Writ," in supervising the formation of the Canon of the New Testament.¹

¹The formation of the Canon of Holy Scripture was, then, a live question, in a much graver sense than it is now. The Church, as the

This is the ultimate point to which the Higher Criticism must, in the end, gravitate, in determining all questions regarding the history of Biblical documents. We would not, and should not, place one obstacle in the way of those honest and fearless seekers for truth who follow these new methods. Let them learn and discover all that they can by investigating the integrity, the authenticity, the credibility, and style of each Scripture document. The Christian world will have nothing to lose and much to gain from such a searching analysis. But we know the end from the beginning. Where we have not the originals before us, we are compelled to follow the critics of fifteen hundred years ago, who have preceded us in the same work; and who did it as faithfully in their day as we are doing it in ours.

As faithful witnesses they have reported to us the results of their labours, and we, at this late date, cannot go back of that report. Whatever minor discrepancies may be found in the documents, these will not weigh for one

keeper of Holy Writ, had the responsibility thrown directly upon her of selecting from the mass of Christian writings in her possession those that were genuine and inspired productions of the Apostles themselves. She had to exercise, not only her critical skill and historic knowledge, but her spiritual discernment on these points; and so careful was she in the work, that every kind of writing that could be called Christian was subjected to the most jealous scrutiny. The list of those that were thus scrutinized has come down to us, and it is probably complete. Every lost manuscript now discovered only brings to light a document whose general character we already know, almost every criticism made upon the new discovery has already been anticipated in the writings of the fathers. We only repeat to-day what they said fifteen to sixteen hundred years ago. There are still many lost writings (whose names are already known) which may be recovered. But it is in the highest degree improbable—it is, in fact, almost an impossibility—that a new Gospel or a new Epistle of the Apostles themselves, unknown to the fathers, will ever be found. Irenæus himself (who lived A.D. 177) says that no more and no less than four genuine Gospels were *ever heard of* in the Church of Christ.

moment against the testimony of the Fathers, and the corroborative decision of the Primitive Church.

In the end, when the work of the Higher Criticism is completed and both sides are summed up, the question of the authenticity and integrity of Scripture documents will be, and must be, determined by Church authority. For this is the highest kind of authority. It is not the arbitrary dictum or assertion of any man or body of men. It is the responsible *witness* of those who preceded us, regarding Christian truth as it was held in their day and generation.

THE RELATION OF PRIVATE JUDGEMENT TO AUTHORITY.

So, also, is it with the authority of the universal Church in matters of doctrine. Of course private judgement, as far as any individual is concerned, lies behind this and all other questions. It is so of necessity. To ask a man to forego his private judgement and accept any kind of authority whatever in its place, is like asking him to see without his eyes. Even if he does accept Church authority, it is because his private judgement tells him that Church authority is more trustworthy than his own personal opinions.

The popular discussions upon this subject, therefore, that we so often hear, are aside from the purpose. They are founded upon an antithesis that is not real, but purely imaginary. Every honest man knows that his own private judgement is liable to err, not in instincts of truth, but in its interpretation of truth, and the more thoughtful he grows, the more plainly he will recognize the fact.

A true man will, therefore, treat every recognized authority with respect. If he has faith in his own integrity, he will have faith also in the integrity of other good

men. If he has not the time or the opportunity to investigate, to the bottom, difficult questions, he will depend upon the decisions of others who have done the work which he cannot do, and will learn the true worth and value of a precedent. The more he reveres truth, the more self-respecting and cautious he will become regarding the use of his private judgement. Where it conflicts plainly with a decision that a body of equally honest, equally intelligent, equally learned men have made, after a long and careful investigation, his own common sense will tell him that the probability of error or mistake is on his side, not theirs. If he *undervalues* his private judgement, he will recklessly cling to his personal opinions regardless of truth or what any authority may say regarding it. But if he reverences his private judgement, and is pained at the thought of making any false decision, he will accord to every kind of authority the full measure of confidence and consideration that it deserves.¹

¹ "As a matter of fact, authority has a very great influence upon the conscience, as it has upon everything else ; as it has upon man's whole nature, morally, intellectually, physically. Who does not know that his own moral sense (if I may use the expression), his own moral nature, is to a great extent made up from the influences acting upon it from his earliest days to the last moments of his life ? What is the reason why one man's conscience differs widely from another's ?—I do not say the whole reason—what is one reason of it but this, that these men have been differently taught, that these men have been differently influenced, that these men have seen different examples of good and evil, of righteousness and unrighteousness. What is this but authority ? What is this but moral power that he received before he understood it ? I receive it before I understand it. I receive it before I can examine it, and so we have here the conscience as the result of the authority which bears upon the intelligence, upon the heart and soul. You see the greatest diversities of conscience, not merely between men of different nationalities, not merely between men of different religions, not merely between men separated by creed, climate, and a hundred other characteristics, but we find the widest differences between those of the same nationality, the same religion, holding the same faith, ac-

Now, there is no kind of authority in the whole outside world which is comparable with that of the Church itself, when it pronounces its decision regarding those matters which are most surely believed among us.

Though the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church has existed for nearly twenty centuries, she has seldom opened her mouth to speak. But when she does speak, the trumpet gives no uncertain sound. All that she has said authoritatively is contained in the Nicene Creed. This creed was, as we have seen, the product of three centuries of close Christian thought. Instead of being a sudden creation it was a gradual growth, and in the process of development every error was sifted out and eliminated. It was not until a definite consensus of Christian convic-

cepting the same theology, and in all outward respects identical. This is clearly due to authority, acting upon the heart, acting upon the conscience, acting upon the will. But here is the danger of a false inference being drawn. Men may say, if that is the case, there is no such thing as conscience, it is the result of education, not to say that there are persons without conscience. If we consider for a moment when we speak of conscience being formed by authority, we are only saying of conscience, what we say of habits, of reason itself. Let a man grow up without education, without the influence of other human beings upon him, and he will grow up more like a brute than a man. Yet we say that reason is a part of the human constitution. We know that even though it needs education it is there. So, with regard to conscience. Although it is true that there are men who are almost destitute of conscience, yet were there not a conscience in a man he could not be educated morally. And here again we remark, that while all these conditions exist, there is in almost all men a primary sense of right and wrong, and not only so, but when the conscience is once educated, as when reason is once educated, so the conscience discerns almost infallibly the difference between right and wrong, proving that those powers were natural, and only needed to be educated and developed. Authority and conscience act and react. Authority teaches, conscience recognizes and accepts. Authority could not teach if there were no conscience to accept, and when conscience has once accepted it has almost forgotten the authority upon which it received the truth."—Address of Rev. Professor William Clark, LL.D., at the Detroit Church Congress, pp. 52, 53.

tion had been reached, in a Church that had become co-extensive with the Roman Empire, that this declaration of belief became possible; and after it was once made, it obtained universal recognition as expressing the mind of the Church.¹ For the subsequent fifteen hundred years it has been received by East and West, the Greek and Roman, Anglican and Scandinavian churches, and all the evangelical bodies of Protestantism. To-day it is accepted as the standard of belief by nineteen-twentieths of Christendom.

The very fact that the subsequent introduction of one word into that creed (*filioque*), and that, too, on appeal to Scripture itself, has been enough to sever the East from the West, is, in itself, an evidence of the way in which the *ipsissima verba* of the Creed are cherished and reverenced by the Universal Church.²

We hear much adverse criticism to-day upon the dogmas set forth by Church authority. This criticism is founded upon the belief that the authoritative declarations of the Church are manifold and minute, making a cumbrous body of divinity and fettering the intellect and conscience of men in matters regarding which there is an allowable difference of opinion.

¹ Though the Baptismal or Apostles' Creed, *in its present form*, is traditional, and cannot be historically traced back to the primitive Church, the resemblances of all the creeds of Christendom to it are unmistakable. "Some form of sound words," very like the Apostles' Creed, has evidently been used, with local variations, from the very first. The authoritative Nicene (Nicene-Constantinopolitan) Creed was set forth by the Universal Church in A.D. 381; yet, on its very face it shows that it is simply an expansion of the ordinary Baptismal Creed.

² These words "and from the Son" (*filioque*) were first introduced into the Creed by King Reccared at the Fourth Council of Toledo in Spain, A.D. 589, but they have never been authorized or adopted by the Church in any canon or definition of any General Council.

See "The Church's Creed or the Crown's Creed," by the Rev. Edmund S. Ffoulkes, p. 16 ff.

As a matter of fact, the dogmas which the universal Church has set forth and claims to announce with authority, are so few that they can be all summed up and rehearsed literally in one moment of time.

The Apostles' Creed contains the facts that are to be believed and accepted. The Nicene Creed is the Church's interpretation of those facts, and sums up all that she has pronounced authoritatively regarding them.

Whatever doubt or uncertainty may have gathered around this subject in past times is now dispelled, at least for the Anglican Communion, by the declaration of its bishops at the last Pan-Anglican Council, assembled at Lambeth, not as legislators for the Church, but as witnesses of the primitive faith, as it is now actually held in the Anglican Church throughout the world. Those bishops declared that the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds were "*a sufficient statement of belief,*" and would be accepted as such by their Church, in the coming reunion of Christendom. And the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States not only formally ratified and accepted the Chicago-Lambeth basis for reunion in the last General Convention, but at the preceding convention it made the use of the Nicene Creed obligatory in the services of the Church, on all the greater festivals of the Christian year.

That phrase "*a sufficient statement of belief,*" is, it will be observed, very carefully worded. There are many points regarding which Christian writers have uttered their voice, which are not contained in the Nicene Creed. There is a general consensus in the teachings of the Fathers of the primitive Church, and this has been echoed by the learned doctors and theologians of subsequent centuries.

Thus we have a stream of Catholic tendency running through the ages, and uniting them one with another,

which cannot but command the reverence, and influence the opinions, of every intelligent seeker for truth.

But however high the position we may accord to this teaching it is not to be placed on a level, for one moment, with the Nicene Creed.

The one only creates a stream of tendency, the other is an authoritative statement of belief. The one is the expression of the common judgement of individual men, the other is the commanding voice of the universal Church, witnessing for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. The one has no clearly defined limits, and no mortal man can say exactly what its boundaries are, or where they end ; the other is brief, concise, and pointed. The one is constantly growing, the other is fixed and stationary ; the one relates to points regarding which there may be allowable differences of opinion, the other to truths in which there can be no differences of opinion without impairing the integrity of the faith. The one is a commentary on the Creed, which no one is bound to accept ; the other is the Creed itself, which every one is bound to accept.

The Nicene Creed, therefore, stands as the Church's unfaltering witness that the Gospel of Christ is a Gospel of fact, and, as such, it is the sharp, two-edged sword by which believers in Christ can sever Christian truth from falsehood, and the touchstone by which they can try the spirits whether they be of God.

The fact of the Incarnation is thus proved by the Church of the Ages to be in its many-sidedness the only solution of the problem of existence in relation to self, the world, and God. And the Church of Christ has committed herself irrevocably and irretrievably to the belief that the self-revelation of God is in the historical events of Christ's life, not merely in the spirit of Christ's life, nor the moral character of the Gospels. If we go back of

this we must face the tremendous alternative of regarding the whole history, thought, movement, and spiritual life of the Catholic Church as founded upon a delusion, and of leaving the whole problem of existence just where it was in the days of Gnosticism and Neo-Platonism.

CHAPTER XI

THE CRUCIFIXION IN RELATION TO THE PROBLEMS OF SIN AND EVIL

SYNOPSIS

- I. Christianity does not *create* consciousness of sin. The fact that it always existed in man's heart is proved by the (*a*) Sacrificial element which is found in all religions; (*b*) Universal belief in the dualism between good and evil.
- II. Christianity *explains* the fact of sin by teaching that sin is not inherent in matter, but that it entered the world through the *opposition of a human will* to God's will. Sin is therefore a matter of the will and is "*lawlessness*."
- III. Christianity reveals the true character of sin by unveiling its opposite—God's Holiness. It shows (*a*) Our powerlessness under sin; (*b*) That sin gains strength as we yield to it; (*c*) That we must yield if unaided. It reveals the needed aid in the Incarnation through the union which the twofold Nature of Christ effects between God and man. The bond of a common humanity with Christ is strengthened by (*a*) Christ's temptation; (*b*) Christ's sufferings.
- IV. The solidarity of the race involves the oneness of sin. The sin of Adam was the sin of the race. Christ's death the penalty for our sins and the means of remission.
- V. To become one with Christ we must surrender our wills to God's will: doing this (*a*) We have no longer the consciousness of unforgiven sin; (*b*) We do not attempt to pay the penalty for sin.
- VI. Such entire surrender is not immoral for (*a*) It develops, not annihilates, the will; (*b*) It secures true freedom to the will by releasing it from the bondage of sin; (*c*) Such freedom, however, does not mean freedom from committing sins. Christ delivers us from the spirit of sin by uniting our wills with God's will; (*d*) Liability to temptation is a necessary factor in spiritual growth; (*e*) Help against these sins is

found in the Sacraments which are effectual through Christ's intercession in Heaven; (*f*) Weakness which has resulted to Protestantism in neglecting these two facts.

IN previous chapters we have dwelt upon the Incarnation at considerable length, for it is the key to the whole Christian position. Meeting and solving, as it does, all the great problems of existence, by unveiling Christ's relation to self, the world, and God, it covers the whole ground and anticipates, and includes, the doctrines of the Trinity, the redemption of man through the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, and all that is contained in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. But the full meaning and purpose of the Incarnation will not be brought out and understood by us, unless we see the bearing of each event of Christ's life upon the special problems which it interprets. Our next step, therefore, will be to take up those articles of the Creed which set forth the Passion and Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

So far we have not dealt with that dark word—so awful in its import—*sin*. But unless our human sin, with the problems it creates, is met and mastered, the revelation of God only leaves us in a worse plight than before. For sin exists, nay, it is a part of our own existence that we cannot escape. Christianity did not create the consciousness of sin. It is there, down at the bottom of the hearts of all men, and it has been there from the beginning.

Of this, the institution of sacrifices in almost all the religions of the world, is a visible proof. There is no other way of interpreting and accounting for such sacrifices than as an outward expression of a universal consciousness of sin against God. It is true that there is no confession of sin and, correspondingly, no prescribed sacrifices for sin in the sacred books of Confucius and of Taoism in China, and that these wide-spread religions,

therefore, seem at first sight an exception to the rule ; but on looking closer we find the usual sacrifices in their popular worship, notwithstanding the silence of their own sacred books. It is noteworthy that these sects were obliged to supply a lack and meet a popular demand, by restoring the ancient custom which they had ignored. The exception proves the rule.

Another evidence of the same consciousness of sin is before us, in the belief in two rival forces of good and evil, which dominates most of the ancient religions of Asia. Dualism may have found its fullest expression in the Magianism of Persia, but its latent influence is seen far and wide, and it was one of the most persistent forces in all those Gnostic heresies of the Orient which were so prevalent in the days of the early Church. In all of these a principle of evil is not only recognized but abnormally emphasized. Evil is regarded as an entity in itself. It is a god, or an order of "thrones, principalities, and powers," co-existing with the power or powers of goodness, and opposing the kingdom of right with a kingdom of wrong. All matter is looked upon as inherently and eternally evil, and, therefore, there is an eternal antagonism between the spiritual soul and the material body.

In doctrines like these we behold the upheavals of human thought in its efforts to master and explain the problem of evil ; and have here the outward record (written by the human imagination on the skies and the fair face of nature) of the inward strivings of generations of human souls to account for the mystery not only of their suffering but of their human sin. And all this, be it remembered, is the voice of human nature itself apart from any teaching or influence directly derived from the Revelation of God.

THE BIBLICAL EXPLANATION OF SIN.

But if revelation did not originate the consciousness of sin, it explains it. It proclaims on its very first page monotheism instead of dualism, and declares that matter, which owes its origin to a beneficent Creator, cannot be inherently evil. On the contrary, at every stage of the creation of the world, God, looking upon His work, regarded it as "good" and when the whole, including man, was completed, "and God saw everything that He had made, behold it was very good." There is no trace of dualism here. Sin does not come in until the first man breaks the law of God, and then, when he has deliberately set up his own human will against God's divine will, the sinful consciousness for the first time appears. When he hears the voice of the Lord God he goes and hides himself.

From that day onward, though human sin is the unending theme which the Bible is ceaselessly dwelling upon, evil is never exaggerated or distorted, as in the old dualistic religions of Asia. It is never represented as natural, but always as unnatural.

If there is one clear note of revelation which keeps ringing like a trumpet blast through the ages, with no uncertain sound, it is that men, however conditioned they may be by class sins, hereditary sins, and weaknesses of their own nature, are *responsible* for their sins.

Where other religions, as well as much of the scientific teaching of the present day, places the *nidus* of sin in the human body, the revelation of God places it in the human *will*. In other words, instead of being a physical it is a moral infirmity. And if we desire an exact definition of the nature of this moral infirmity, we have it in the words of St. John the Divine: ἡ ἀμαρτία ἐστὶν ἡ

avouia—“*sin is lawlessness.*”¹ Sin, from the Christian standpoint, is not an entity in itself. It does not exist in nature apart from man. It does not exist in man himself apart from his *will*. Blot out the human will and sin becomes literally nothing.

SCIENCE CANNOT EXPLAIN SIN.

All else in this world is according to nature. The life of the animal and vegetable worlds, the changes brought about by decay and death are all in obedience to the laws of God as they are revealed in the natural world; the human life of man, with its bodily and intellectual needs, its æsthetical and spiritual aims as they are shown in civilized life, are all natural and normal in themselves, and they would never become otherwise were it not for this unnatural spirit of lawlessness in man which we call sin.²

Almost every human vice when traced to its source, is found to be a distorted or perverted virtue; and acts which, in themselves, are virtuous, are rendered vicious by a perversion of their use, through this spirit of disorder, and if the spirit itself be eliminated, man would, at once, be restored into full harmony with the universe and with God. But the spirit cannot be eliminated by any possible effort of the human will. As far back as we can go in the historic past, we discover that men have tried in vain to rid themselves of this tendency to lawlessness, with its corresponding consciousness of sin. There have been those who, to escape it, have fled, like Gautama, from the world and the companionship of their brother men, to the desert and cave of the hermit. There

¹ St. John iii. 4.

² The reader is referred for a fuller treatment of this subject to a Sermon on the Nature of Sin, by Canon Charles Gore, in the appendix to the last edition of *Lux Mundi*.

have been Buddhists and Brahmans and Gnostics, who have fasted and kept silence for years, to gain freedom. No exertion of will power, in fact, has ever been so heroic, so persistent, so strained, as that put forth, from time immemorial, in this single direction ; the religious annals of the world are teeming with the history of this one struggle, all ending in the one result of failure.

In these latter days, this long chapter of human history is passed over for more interesting reading. The world is so monopolized and absorbed in tracing the upward evolution of the human race, through the workings of natural laws, that it has completely forgotten the other record written upon human consciousness itself, that *human* nature is persistently unnatural.

Christianity, as we have seen, explains this consciousness as the recognition of an unnatural spirit of lawlessness by a nature, made in the *image of God* ; but how does modern philosophy account for it ? Under what scientific category is it to be ranged ? What is its office and function ? Everywhere else in nature there is a correspondence between an instinct and its function ; what natural purpose does this sense of being unnatural subserve ? Why should a race which has been evolved according to the laws of nature, have, by nature, this persistent conviction of inborn lawlessness ? Science offers and can offer no explanation of this fact, which Christianity makes so clear.

THE REVELATION OF GOD IS A DISCLOSURE OF SELF.

But Christianity not only explains "sin," it intensifies the human consciousness of its lawless presence. If this consciousness appears, apart from revelation, when men look at themselves in relation to the laws of nature and recognize their attitude to the will of God as thus indi-

rectly revealed, it is of course proportionately increased when they meet with the will of God as it is directly revealed in Jesus Christ.

We men learn truth by differentiation—by contrast; and the very presence of One Who, standing among men, does the will of God on earth as it is done in heaven, brings out into the clear light of day the contrary spirit so that all may know it. The primary effect of the self-revelation of a personal God in Christ, is the disclosure of the real nature of sin as the spirit of lawlessness. Christ Himself emphasizes this in those memorable words, “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin ; but now they have no cloak for their sin.”¹ Observe that it is the actual presence of Christ, as God Incarnate, which produces this result. No message from heaven, no appeal from God to the senses, or to the reason, alone and by itself, would create the same indelible impression ; still less would the selection of some good and holy man to be the inspired exemplar to the world of divine morality. The revelation is not merely one of morality but of divine Personality. The God in Whose image we are made, must stand among us in the power of His personal life and personal holiness, to bring out plainly the awfulness of that spirit of lawlessness which we call sin.

The vision of Christ, the Son of God, brings with it by comparison the true vision of self. If we see the truth about God we must, at the same time, see the truth about ourselves. If we come to the light to find God, we must have that same light falling full upon the darkness of our own souls. If we would have the blessedness of knowing God, we must not shrink from the agony of knowing self.

And such is the fact which Christ Himself emphasizes, in those words of profound meaning : “This is the con-

¹ St. John xv. 22.

demnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.”¹ Men dread the vision of self for the same reason that they dread the certain knowledge of a physical disease from which they are suffering, perhaps dying. And this is one of the most prevalent causes of unbelief in Christ. The doubt originates not in an intellectual, but in a moral source. In some it is, of course, the deliberate blindness of men who disbelieve in virtue and hate the light because their deeds are evil and because they love sin more than they love God. But in others it is cowardice, despair, disbelief. It is the stoicism of those who cannot believe that there is any power, human or divine, which can alter their present condition; who hold that the only peace for them is in forgetfulness of the realities of their own existence and in submission to the inevitable.²

¹ St. John iii. 19, 20.

² “The Stoic independence of thought, passing through the movement of scepticism, finds its true meaning revealed in a consciousness—which is at the same time a despair—of self. To this despairing self-consciousness is revealed the hollowness both of the real claims vindicated for the abstract person in Roman Law, and also of the ideal claims vindicated for the thinking self in Stoicism. It has learnt that the claims so vindicated are, in truth, entirely lost; that the self so asserted is rather absolutely estranged from itself. Its despair, therefore, may be regarded as the counterpart and completion of that triumphant joy with which the spirit of Comedy in Aristophanes rejoices in itself, looking down upon the annihilation of all that which is *not the self*. For while in this comic consciousness all objective reality is alienated from itself and emptied of substantial worth in relation to the self; the despair that follows upon scepticism is the tragic fate which immediately falls upon the self which thus in its isolation has raised itself to the absolute. It is the consciousness of the loss of all reality in the assurance of the self, and again of the loss of this last assurance, and it is the agony of desertion which expresses itself in the hard saying that *God is dead*.”—Hegel’s *Phänomenologie*, p. 544.

CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE ATONEMENT A RELIGION OF DESPAIR.

Men will not come to the light which reveals them to themselves, because the vision of self means a vision of lawlessness ; and the consciousness of lawlessness or sin means the consciousness of an incurable moral disease. The light of Christ's life falling full upon the seat of the trouble—a diseased will—forces them to see themselves as God sees them.

The light of Christ's example and teachings, showing how we are to do God's will on earth as it is done in Heaven, is a revelation of impossible holiness. Though it appeals to every diviner instinct in the human breast, and though every one beholds here the only ideal life that will ever satisfy his own human longings as a being made in the image of God, nevertheless the kind of existence which Jesus Christ holds up before us in the Sermon on the Mount and in His other teachings, is, in every way, a superhuman life. The portrayal not only deepens the sense of our own utter unworthiness, but it brings out the paralyzing conviction of our own absolute powerlessness.

When St. Peter, in his first interview with Christ on the shore of Galilee, fell down at the feet of Jesus, crying "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," he was expressing the innermost feeling of every man who realizes what Christ is, and what His presence is as God on earth. St. Paul traces this conviction of powerlessness under sin, with a remarkable skill in diagnosis, in the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, ending with the words, "To *will* is present with me, but how to *perform* that which is good I find not." ¹

¹ Romans vii. 10, 11, 15-23.

If, therefore, Christianity brought to man no more than this consciousness of what God is, and stopped short at this point, it would only deepen and broaden the impassable gulf between God and man—the Divine life and the human life,—and become inevitably the religion of despair. Indeed this is, oftentimes, the very effect that it produces, when its inner meaning is first realized; as we see in the case of John Bunyan and multitudes of others.

The portrayal of Bunyan's own spiritual experience, so vividly delineated in “The Pilgrim's Progress,” is the picture of a kind of crisis which not only is constantly recurring in the lives of men, but has characterized the inner history of some of the greatest saints of God. The persistence with which the allegory keeps its place as a religious classic is a witness of the dramatic power with which it holds up before the soul the throes of human nature when it is brought face to face with God.¹

The agony is so great because we have two kinds of consciousness warring together within us: on the one hand there is the consciousness that we are sons of God, and that Christ is appealing to every Godlike instinct in us, as God's children; and on the other hand, the consciousness that we are hopelessly separated from God by the guilt and the dominating power of sin. The latter consciousness is as strong and persistent as the former. Its very persistency betokens that it is a deep-seated disease. Spiritual ailments, in their very nature, are more incurable than physical infirmities, and all our self-knowledge and observation of human nature go to prove that nothing is so hopelessly incurable as a diseased will.

¹ If Christianity brought to man no more than this consciousness of what God is, these pangs would be veritable death throes of the spiritual life: the presence of God would become a consuming fire, and earth itself would be transformed into a hell.

From whatever side we approach the subject this is always the ultimate diagnosis of sin.

It is a spirit of lawlessness, which gradually honeycombs the moral life, rendering us less and less able, as we yield to it, to do the right and refuse the wrong. Sin thus becomes the separator. It creates, and keeps increasing, an eternal, irrevocable separation between the divine life and the human life, and the more our knowledge of God and Self increases, the more plainly the reality of our condition stands revealed.

If, therefore, the consciousness of lawlessness drives us not *to*, but *from* God, and every fresh revelation of God only serves to make the state of separation more vivid and plain, there must be something more than a revelation from the outside to overcome the obstacle.

The *separation itself* must be abolished; the diseased will must be cured; the seat of the disease is in the soul, and a corruptible soul can no more inherit incorruption than a corruptible body. The spirit of lawlessness must be killed in us, and the consciousness of sin must be lost in the conscious possession of a sinless life—or, at least, the germs of a sinless life—which is not separate from God, but in union with God. There is no natural way in which the sinful human life can become sinless divine life, for the change necessitates infusion into the soul of a power that is above nature. “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for His seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”¹

Nothing less than a new life which lifts us above ourselves and the constitution of our own human nature, can restore the broken unity which sin creates. To inherit the kingdom of heaven a man must be “born from above.”²

¹ See 1 John iii. 9.

² St. John iii. 3.

CHRIST'S UNION WITH MAN.

How, then, is the restoration ever to be effected? Christianity gives the wonderful answer: It is accomplished through the twofold nature of Christ.

Christ is perfect Man as well as perfect God. Christ identifies Himself with us as closely as He is identified with the Father. He is not only the representative of God to man, but the representative of man to God. He is one with us as truly as He is One with God. Our sin may separate us from the divine life but it does not separate us from Him who shares our human life.

All this is not merely theological language, in a technical sense; it is the language of eternal reality and the description of the only way in which our union with God can possibly be effected. It is sin, and sin only, which makes the distinction between the two natures of Christ, upon which theology dwells with such persistent emphasis, seem artificial.

Men are wont to speak of the tie of blood as the strongest of all bonds of union, but the full strength, even of this tie, is not realized until Christ, the God man, stands before us as a blood relative. In the Incarnate Christ, the union between God and man is revealed so that the human mind can grasp it.

The Tie of Temptation.

1. This bond of union is brought out by temptation. The very consciousness of sin which separates us from God, unites us with the man Christ Jesus. Christ shares all our experiences of sin, except that of actually yielding to sin. This exception seems to many to erect a barrier between the sinless Jesus and the sinning soul, but only at first sight. The barrier has no foundation whatever except in a mistaken idea.

It is not necessary, as this world is so prone to think, that to know sin one must first commit sin. The truth is exactly the reverse. To know sin it is necessary to be tempted, but not necessary to yield. The man who is tempted, and who steadfastly resists the temptation, knows far more about the real nature of sin than the man who yields, for the latter ceases to realize the strength and awfulness of sin from the moment of yielding. The strength of the tide is not felt until we row against it ; and it is not until we begin to exert our will-power against sin, that we become conscious of its terrible slavery. The more perfectly, therefore, we do God's will, the more fully we comprehend the lawlessness of self-will. Because Christ was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin, His sinlessness enables Him to know sin more profoundly than the whole world knows it and, therefore, creates a bond of sympathy between Him and every sinful heart, which could not have existed had He yielded to a single temptation. This union between Christ and ourselves is, therefore, further cemented by the tie of temptation. As a matter of fact, Christ, as a man, was not only tempted as we are, but infinitely more than we are. He was tempted as a poor man and tempted as a king ; tempted as possessing nothing, and yet, as possessing all things. If, in His unique Personality, He lived, as we have said, our myriad lives in one, it necessarily follows, from the very conditions of His existence, as the perfect Man, that He bore the many-sided temptations of those myriad lives. As Canon Gore truly says: "The humanity of Christ and the humanity of the greatest criminal are consubstantial with one another. All that the criminal sins with belongs to Christ's nature ; He has all the faculties that are used for sin. 'He could sin, if He could *will* to sin,' the Fathers tell us ; 'but God forbid that we could think

of His willing it !' What is disordered, ungoverned, in the criminal, is in Christ perfectly subordinated to a will, itself controlled in loving harmony with the Divine Spirit."¹

The Tie of Suffering.

(2) In addition to this, Christ is united to us by the tie of suffering. He was pre-eminently a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The witness of the Christian ages unites with and corroborates the prophetic testimony of Isaiah, that "His visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men."²

As we view Him in the temptation of the wilderness, and the agony of Gethsemane, and the death throes of the crucifixion, we behold One who, physically, mentally, and spiritually, descended into lower depths of the *via dolorosa* than were ever trodden by any other human foot. He meets, in His own Person, every kind of suffering occasioned by sin, and every form of trial that crushes the manhood of men. That dark problem of sorrow, which is so baffling to all human inquiry, is faced by Christ in His own checkered earthly experience as no other man has ever faced it.

In proportion as a nature is true will it quiver under the charge and stigma of falsehood ; and He knew the torture of misrepresentation and ingratitude more than any man. From the beginning to the ending of His earthly career, Christ's life was a fulfilment of that old-time prophecy : "He was despised and rejected of men." He was reviled and called an ignorant man, a demagogue, a wine-bibber and a glutton, a liar, a blasphemer of God, a man possessed by a devil. He was pointed at as a native of Galilee, out of which no

¹ Appendix ii., last edition of Lux Mundi.

² Isaiah lii. 14.

prophet could rise, and a dweller in Nazareth, from which no good could come. His followers were excommunicated by the rulers. He was, at last, condemned as a malefactor more worthy of death than Barabbas, the murderer; and, at the very moment when He stood before Pilate as the witness to eternal truth, He was under sentence of the Sanhedrim as a traitor to God, Who had uttered eternal falsehood.

Every sufferer finds in Him One who has suffered more; every reformer, One who has been more cruelly persecuted; every martyr for truth, One who was more grossly falsified.

Suffering always creates a bond of union between man and man, yet Christ comes nearer to the heart of humanity than any other reformer or martyr, as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Hence, there is no sympathizer like Him, for sympathy means *to suffer with*, and Christ, in His life, stands out pre-eminently as The Sufferer of the human race. He is united to us in His Incarnation, in an indissoluble union, not only through the tie of blood, but through the tie of suffering.

Let us pass on now to the consideration of another truth.

THE ONENESS OF SIN.

Sin, or the spirit of lawlessness, is *one* spirit, howsoever, whosoever, and wheresoever it manifests itself. In the light of time, men may be separated from one another by the different ages, the different countries, the different circumstances in which they live; but in the light of eternity, all who are animated by the same spirit of sin, are blighted by the same curse, participate in one another's acts, and share the same condemnation. If I, living in the nineteenth century, inwardly yield to a motive which is the exact counterpart of that to which Adam

yielded in paradise, when he ate the fruit of the forbidden tree, then, when we both stand side by side at the Judgement Day, I shall be held as guilty of the same sin by an all-just God. Christ Himself points to this unity of sin when He says to the Jews : “ Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites ! because ye build the tombs of the prophets and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses to yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets and wise men and Scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and crucify ; and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues and persecute them from city to city ; that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation.”¹ This mysterious oneness of sin forms a communion of sinners, that stands over against the communion of saints ; and binds together, in one spirit of antagonism to holiness, one tie of sympathy in lawlessness, and one aim in persecuting the righteous, those who otherwise would be at variance among themselves. This is shown in the plainest and most unmistakable manner in the history of our Lord’s Passion and death.

Though the Pharisees and Sadducees were at bitter enmity with each other,² and though both regarded the Herodians as traitors to their country, who were truckling and selling God’s people to the detested power of Rome, they forgot their fierce religious and political ani-

¹ St. Matt. xxiii. 29-36.

² See Acts xxiii. 6-10.

mosities in their mutual hatred of Christ, and conspired together to accomplish His ruin, on the last day that He was found in the temple.¹

The day after, these conspirators against His life gained a sudden and unexpected accession to their ranks from the apostolic band itself, when Judas, from the Christian side, joined them.

Thus, the power of one spirit of sin had drawn together Annas and the high-priestly faction, the Herodians, Sadducees, Pharisees, and Judas; but the reigning royal family of Herod and the government of Rome still held aloof.

On the morning of the crucifixion this last gap was filled and by a gravitation of sin-power that was irresistible, these outside rulers were drawn into the circle, and after the condemnation of Christ, Pilate, the Roman governor, and Herod, the provincial king, who had previously been at enmity with one another, became friends.²

Thus, the representatives of all these different forms of power were united in the oneness of sin and arrayed against Christ. His cross and Passion bring out this latent unity of sin in a startling way that all may recognize.

On the one hand, Christ stands forth as the champion of all righteousness, and the representative of all the righteous men on this earth from Abel to Stephen, from Stephen to the last Reformer who shall suffer for truth's and righteousness' sake. On the other hand, because He thus represented all virtue, the whole united sin-power of the world was launched against His soul. All the individual sins, the class sins, the national sins, that, in any age, create a spirit of persecution, were actively represented here, in this persecution of Christ. And, thus, He was crucified, not merely by the Jews at Jerusalem

¹ St. Mark xi. 27 to xii. 34.

² St. Luke xxiii. 12, 13, 14.

in A.D. 33, but by the whole world. If we, who are living in A.D. 1895, are animated by the self-same spirit of sin or lawlessness, which filled their hearts, then, in the sight of Eternal Justice, the accidents of time and place are forgotten. We have only to change places with them, and they would be living the identical kind of life that we live ; while we should be the ones who cry "Crucify, Crucify!"

THE CROSS REVEALS SIN.

Now this brings two eternal facts before us.

Christ died first BY our sins, and second FOR our sins.

He suffered *by* our sins not only as man but as God ; for it was the Power of His sinless Personality, as He translated God's life into human words and human actions, and as He lived on earth under new conditions the very life He had always lived in Heaven, that drew out and concentrated the latent hatred of human hearts.

Christ Himself emphasized this fact over and over again. "He that hateth Me," He said, "hateth My Father also." . . . "But now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father."¹

The sin that crucified Christ, therefore, stands revealed as hatred against God. God in Heaven cannot be reached, but God in Christ is condemned to death and crucified ! Such is the awful revelation of the nature of sin brought out by the fact of the crucifixion. Again, we repeat, it would never have thus been brought out had it not been for the fact. Christ's death upon the cross means that sin has wreaked its curse, its purpose, its vengeance, upon the Son of God Himself.

¹ St. John xv. 23-24, seq.

THE CROSS REVEALS GOD.

The second eternal fact is that Christ died FOR our sins.

The cross is the revealer of the love of God. We should never have known the length or breadth, the height or depth, of the love of God, had it not been for Christ's death upon the cross. Without the cross, we should have continued guessing and speculating upon the nature and the limitations of divine love, mistranslating divine love, disbelieving, notwithstanding all revelations to the contrary, the fulness of divine love; never dreaming of the depths of its divine self-sacrifice.

But there hangs that crucified form, as the manifestation of divine love; unseen love precipitated into a visible deed; crystallized in the sight of the ages into an act, witnessed, for all time and all eternity, by an historical fact. Whichever way we turn that cross stands before us; doubt as we will, we cannot obliterate that historical fact; sin as we may, we cannot shut out this vision of the crucified. Crushed as I may be by the consciousness of a sin that I cannot escape, and the agonizing sense of separation from God which ensues, there is the revelation of the way in which my eternal union with God is effected.

THE ATONEMENT.

To interpret that revelation, the word At-one-ment has been coined, because at the cross, God and man become at one. For if sin or lawlessness is an offence against a law-giver, and the consciousness of sin means the sense of personal responsibility to, and separation from, that law-giver; then, when the Law-Giver Himself assumes the burden, pays the debt, suffers the shame and

sorrow, is branded with the curse, and takes the death penalty of our sin, what is there *left*? The sin itself is wiped out.

To retain the consciousness of unforgiven guilt after this; to keep thinking of a debt that has been paid, of a responsibility that has been discharged, of a state of separation which does not exist, is to substitute fiction for fact, an imaginary law-giver for the real law-giver, and, thus, to be living under a delusion of our own brain. It is like a freedman, emancipated in the sight of the whole world, and protected in his freedom by the law of the whole land, imagining himself still to be a slave.

The prodigal son, when he first came to himself, said, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." But when the father's arm was around his neck, and the father's voice sounding in his ears, saying, "this my son was dead, and is alive again," the dawn of a higher consciousness came back to the prodigal's heart, and he forgot all that he had meant to say about being taken back as a servant. It was the consciousness that he was not a *servant* but a *son*. He had to do, not with a law-giver, but a father. The royal blood was in his veins; what had been so freely forgiven it was for him as freely to receive. To cling to a past that had been blotted out were now dishonour, degradation, ingratitude, a want of appreciation of that father's love. The instinct of true nobility was to think of his father's greatness instead of his own littleness, and, hence, he was following a divine consciousness which lies deeper than the consciousness of sin, when he looked up with a feeling of fully restored confidence into his father's face and only said, "I am no more worthy to be

called thy son.” In this parable Christ indicates the kind of repentance which must be the first step toward restored union with God.

The last refuge that the spirit of self-will or lawlessness takes in us, is in the desire to pay a debt to God that we can never pay. Most of the arguments that we hear against the atonement, and the pleas that are put forth about the impossibility of Christ’s assuming the penalty of our own sins, and the eternal injustice of such a doctrine, are grounded on the idea of the possibility of our making a just recompense ourselves. They are but the excuses put forth by a spirit of self, which does not want to give up self. But this spirit of self-will is the very spirit of sin or lawlessness which causes the whole separation. It must be killed before union can be restored. It is this assertion of self which crowds out the life of God from our hearts ; the two cannot co-exist in the same soul. It is only where self ends that God begins.

A man must surrender his spirit of independence, and become completely dependent on God, if he would rise above his sin ; for the spirit of self-dependence and the spirit of sin are one and the same thing.

“For sin,” to quote the words of Bishop Westcott, “in its ultimate form is selfishness, the setting up of itself by the finite against the Infinite. And the possibility of this is, of necessity, included in the idea of finite self. Self carries with it the potentiality of isolation. In that isolation, when it first becomes a fact, there is the fertilized germ of sin.”¹

HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY NOT DESTROYED.

A very real difficulty arises here, and as it is the seat of the strongest and most persistent objections to the

¹ Gospel of Life, p. 219.

doctrine of the atonement that we so frequently hear, it demands careful consideration.

It is said that in thus abandoning ourselves to a redemption, not wrought within us, but outside of us by another, we are violating the fundamental laws of our being; that this complete surrender of our human will means not only the destruction of all sense of responsibility for sin within us, but of our human personality itself; and that, as long as the propensity to sin remains in human nature, causing it again and again to yield, however unwillingly, to sinful acts and sinful thoughts, the very instinct of truthfulness—the very dread of being untrue—will prevent a truth-loving nature from shirking the personal responsibility of those sinful acts and thoughts. Let us briefly consider the answer to these and other objections.

1. The self-surrender of the human will does not mean its annihilation, it means its development. When Christ said in Gethsemane : "Not my will but Thine be done," He did not ask that His human will should be obliterated. The words, it should be borne in mind, were uttered in prayer, and this, in itself, is the proof that He wanted to have His will uplifted, strengthened to do God's will; it was a prayer that His human will might not shrink back, succumb, fail, in the awful ordeal that was before Him, but rise to the emergency and grasp God's will with unfaltering steadfastness. In His triumphant death upon the cross we behold one human will that had made God's will perfectly its own. Hereafter, then, we need look no further than Christ Himself. As He looked up to the Father so we look up to Him and say, "Thy will, not Mine, be done."

Those ties between Christ and ourselves of blood, of sympathy, temptation, and suffering, which we have dwelt upon before, are now surpassed by another bond

of union, than which there can be nothing closer or more spiritual—the tie of a common will. As Christ's human will in His crucifixion becomes completely co-ordinated with the Father's will;¹ and as we, by willing to do what Christ wills, become one with Him in His humanity, the gulf that intervenes between us and God is closed up. By our union with Christ *in will*, we become one with Christ crucified, instead of being one with the power which crucified Him; we are on the side of Christ and of God against the sin of our own hearts; we are nearer to Christ than we are to our own bodies—with their sinful lusts of the flesh.

Hence, there is no longer any separation between God and ourselves; for “the finite self which carries with it the potentiality of isolation” has, by its own free act, ceased to be isolated. It has, through a human Christ, united its finite will to the Infinite will. It has voluntarily surrendered, not its power of willing, but its sinful attitude of independence, for one of dependence upon the will of God. So far from this being an annihilation of human personality (as it appears so often to the sinful consciousness), it is precisely the reverse. For the finite self thus fulfils the law of its own life. To will to do Christ's will is the very highest reach of activity of which a human being, made in the image of God, is capable. But it is more than this. Instead of thus losing his freedom, the Christian, by this act, gains it. For he passes out of that state of isolation, in which he is a “slave to sin” and “dying in sins,” into a state of liberty in Christ.²

¹ This is dwelt upon more in detail in the Chapter on the Ascension, to which the reader is referred.

² The reader is here referred to that remarkable passage in the Gospels (St. John viii. 24–36) where this whole subject is explained by Christ Himself.

It is only by a figment of his own imagination that the careless sinner regards himself as free. What he looks upon as independence is really a condition of slavery in sin. The very fact that he is unconscious, or but partly conscious, of this slavery is a proof of his degradation. And if he refuses to accept freedom through Christ, then there is no promise of immortal life in Heaven for him. He is in a state of isolation, and of independence of God that cannot last. Even the little freedom that he possesses temporarily is slowly being taken away from him. He is all the while "dying in his sins."

He who clings to sin, or the spirit of lawlessness, is clinging to that which "passeth away." "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world, and the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof;"¹ and he himself will pass away with it. Only he "that doeth the will of God abideth forever," and the sole chance of escape for the sinner from the conditions of servitude to sin, and the state of dying in sin, is to unite his human will with the will of the strong Son of God.

" Our wills are ours, we know not how ;
Our wills are ours, *to make them Thine.*"

ONE WITH CHRIST.

2. By thus making our will one with Christ's will, we do not only become one with Christ, we put ourselves in a state in which He can become one with us. This is the answer to those objections about accepting a redemption wrought outside of us. Through the spiritual union of our wills with Christ's will, Christ's life passes into us, and the redemption is wrought not outside of us but

¹ 1 John ii. 16, 17.

within us. We become crucified with Christ to the world ; and the old dead self rises in Christ, to a higher selfhood. In the dawn of the new consciousness which sooner or later comes to us, we learn what the possession of freedom in Christ means. We cannot attain it by any effort of our own. We must simply accept it, and after accepting it we find that it is the only practical basis for Christian faith and action.

We must begin with the consciousness of union with, not separation from, Christ. Otherwise we are completely paralyzed, for without Him we can do nothing.¹ All Christian experience shows that to grow in grace we must work not *to* but *from* the Cross.

SIN AND *Sins.*

3. But freedom from the spirit of lawlessness or sin does not mean freedom from *acts* of sin. I may renounce, declare war against, hate sin, as the accursed thing which God hates and which killed Christ ; yet through the weakness of my mortal nature not be able to follow Christ. “For,” to quote again the words of St. Paul, “to *will* is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not, for the good that I would, I do not, but the evil which I would not that I do.”² The same truth is expressed in the ninth of the Thirty-nine Articles in the words : “This infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated ; whereby the lust of the flesh, called in Greek, *φρόνημα σαρκὸς* (which some do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some the affection, some the desire, of the flesh), is not subject to the Law of God.”

Does this consciousness of sin, therefore, bring back the state of isolation or separation from Christ ? No,

¹ St. John xv. 5.

² Romans vii. 18, 19.

not if the will is free and is continuously exercising itself in willing to do what Christ wills. For our wills are on the side of Christ against sin, even though the lust of the flesh is on the side of sin against Christ. This explains the important distinction drawn by St. John between SIN and sins.

In speaking of SIN (*i.e.*, the principle of sin, the spirit of lawlessness itself), he says, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”¹ That phrase, “Whosoever is born of God,” signifies literally *He that hath been born and still remains* (*ο γεγεννημένος*) a child of God. The same truth is expressed in those other words, “whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not; whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him neither known Him.”²

This is a moral truth. The man who believes in Christ, who knows Christ and who wills to do Christ’s will, cannot but hate the spirit of lawlessness and be on the side of Christ against it. As Bishop Westcott well says, “The ideas of divine sonship and sin are mutually exclusive. As long as the relationship with God is real, sinful acts are but accidents. They do not touch the essence of the man’s being. The impossibility of sinning in such a case lies in the moral nature of things.”³

On the other hand, in speaking of sins (*i.e.*, sinful acts), St. John says: “If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”⁴

To sin (that is to will to sin) is one thing; to have sin (that is to possess a nature prone to sin) is another thing. Here St. John himself voices the very objection of those

¹ 1 John iii. 9.

² 1 John iii. 6.

³ First Epistle of St. John, p. 105.

⁴ 1 John i. 8, 9.

who deny that any truth-loving man can throw the responsibility of his sinful acts upon Christ without violating his instincts of truthfulness. The apostle himself distinctly affirms that if we deny that we have sin, *the truth is not in us.*

But to use the well-chosen phrase of Bishop Westcott, these sinful actions are but "accidents" in the life of him who wills to do the will of God. He hates the spirit which causes them; He resolves against them before they are committed, He repents of them after they have been committed; His whole life is a perpetual warfare against them. And this fact in itself is a proof that the human will is left sacredly free by God after the believer is accepted in Christ.

THE DISCIPLINE OF TEMPTATION.

In this warfare there are two classes of temptations to resist, first, those that originate in the hereditary sins of our ancestors and the guilt of our own past life; and second those that arise out of our outward circumstances. Why the former class continue to assail the ransomed soul is a mystery. This whole subject baffles human inquiry simply because it relates to that problem of predestination and free-will which in all its phases transcends the limitations of human thought.

But regarding the second class there is more light, and an explanation at hand that is as comforting as it is satisfactory. If our human will-power had no obstacles to overcome it would have nothing to exercise itself upon. Its education would consequently cease, and, with it, all opportunities for moral growth. Men would pass out of this life into the higher life of heaven in that crude, undeveloped condition in which they were at the time when they first gave themselves to God. Their union with

Christ would be incomplete. Without temptation, instead of having their wills more and more closely conformed to Christ's will by a continuous daily effort to make Christ first and all other things second in their lives, they would be rescued—arrested—before they had been given time for development. They would not know what it is to bear Christ's reproach, or to continue with Him in His temptations, or to enter into the fellowship of His sufferings. That whole experience of the Christian life which is so unspeakably precious to believers after they have passed through it, would be an unknown world to them. The heroic, self-denying, and resolute side of the Christian character would be wanting, and the peculiar knowledge that comes through perseverance and patient doing of God's will through manifold temptations would be lost.

Reason enough is there in all this to explain why Christ, when He rescues us from the spirit of sin, does not go further, and save us at the same time from temptations. The conquest of these must be gradual, and it is only brought about by the patient co-operation of our wills with the will of Christ. Our SIN is, indeed, forgiven, when we renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil, and we are, therefore, baptized "for the remission of sins" at the outset of our Christian career: but to be saved from our *sins*, we must fight a lifelong battle, making use of all the sacramental and other helps that Christ holds out to us.

And the more closely the Christian believer lives in union with God, with a realized sense of God's loving forgiveness, the more strenuous becomes his daily battle with those lusts of the flesh which crucified his Lord and Master. As he grows in grace, he grows in the consciousness of his own fickleness and in the strength of realized weakness. And the harder he strives to purify himself

as Christ is pure, the more grievous the remembrance and the more intolerable the burden of his sins becomes. It is to cleanse us from these sins that the sacrament of the Lord's supper was ordained. The Christian must not only be in a *continuous* state of repenting and resolving to live a new life, but he stands in continual need of those new supplies of grace and those influences of the Spirit of Truth which are pledged to him in the sacrament of Christ's body and blood.

The whole teaching of the New Testament emphasizes this truth, viz., that the At-one-ment which was begun through that blood shed upon the cross was not completed until Christ rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven. This truth is never to be forgotten. If it is lost sight of, as it has been so largely in prevalent religious thought, the crucifixion at once loses its relation to the other events of Christ's life and the important doctrinal truths that they unveil.

Very instructive in this respect is the history of many of those religious movements which were developed by, and grew out of, the Protestant Reformation.

A ONE-SIDED THEOLOGY, AND ITS EVILS.

A disproportionate emphasis has been laid upon the crucifixion by many Protestant teachers; it was made to carry more than the gospels ever taught that it carried. "Jesus Christ and Him crucified," was the one theme preached, almost to the exclusion of every other doctrine of the Incarnation, and the results of this disproportionate teaching have manifested themselves not in one, but in many different directions. It is thus that the misinterpretation of the New Testament expressions about the efficacy of the Blood of Christ, and such phrases as "The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from

all sin," have given rise to all the errors of perfectionism and solifidianism. It is thus that the sacredness of human free-will was ignored by the very Protestant teachers who were espousing the cause of men's individuality and the necessity of personal religion, against the so-called undue influences of the Church, or social Christianity. It is thus that the strong reaction against the doctrine of the atonement has arisen, wherein the very name is associated with unreal theological systems. It is thus that all sacramental teachings of the Gospels have been ignored and popularly looked upon as unnecessary and unscriptural addenda to the faith once delivered to the saints. It is thus that the present High Priestly work of Christ Himself in Heaven, upon which the Epistle to the Hebrews lays such earnest stress, has dropped completely out of sight. And beyond all this,—when we turn from the realm of Christian theology to that of nature itself,—it is thus that all those aspects of the Atonement, which lie beyond the range of human frailty—which relate not to the problem of sin but to the problem of pain and suffering—have been forgotten.

THE PROBLEM OF UNMERITED SUFFERING.

All suffering does not come from sin. Much of the suffering in this world would still exist, even were human sin and all its results, direct and indirect, swept out of existence. Christ Himself recognized this fact, and taught it most plainly,¹ and Christ Himself, in His death upon the Cross, not only suffered for the sins of the whole world, but for the pain of the whole world. Very mysterious to our human eyes is that insoluble problem of pain and evil which darkens the face of God's creation.

As we gaze upon Christ we behold that problem trans-

¹ St. John ix. 1-5.

ferred from all nature and human nature to His own human life as the Son of man. The Word of God, by Whom the worlds were made, is, Himself, the greatest sufferer of the human race, and all forms of human pain are visited upon Him. Henceforth the load of perplexity is lifted, even if its reason is not wholly explained; for God allowed His only-begotten Son to suffer all that we suffer. Henceforth, one apostle of Christ is able to say: "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope: because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"¹

While another apostle is able to write regarding that feeling of strangeness which always accompanies unmerited suffering: "Beloved, think it not *strange* concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."²

As Canon Gore has well said: "Jesus Christ did not satisfy our minds with arguments, He did not solve objections, or show us why pain and sacrifice are necessary throughout creation; nay, He did not even declare God's love as a dogma, and prove it by miracles. The Gospel lies in His Person. He took upon Himself all that tells against divine love, all that has ever wrung from men's hearts the bitter words of unbelief, or the more chastened cry of agonizing inquiry, 'My God, my God, why hast

¹ Romans viii. 20, 21, 32. But see the whole of this remarkable chapter.

² 1 Peter iv. 12, 13.

Thou forsaken me?’ He took all this upon Himself, and as the Man of sorrows, made it, in His bitter passion and death upon the Cross, the very occasion for expressing the depth of divine self-sacrifice. Thus, the satisfaction that He gives us lies in His proving to us, out of the very heart of all that might seem to speak against such a conclusion, that behind all the groaning and travailing of creation lies the love of God, and beyond it all, the victory of God.”¹

¹ *The Incarnation*, by the Rev. Charles Gore, p. 131.

CHAPTER XII

THE RESURRECTION IN RELATION TO HISTORIC EVIDENCE

SYNOPSIS

- I. Difference between the Religious Issues of the Nicene Age and those of to-day.
- II. The Task of the Church to-day is to prove the historical basis of Christianity.
- III. The Church admits that historical evidence cannot prove her central fact—the Divinity of Christ—yet she recognizes that the historical character of the Incarnation, Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension must be established.
- IV. The Church proves the Resurrection, and so the possibility of all Miracles, through those Pauline Epistles, admitted to be genuine by all.
- V. If Science now *refuses* to accept historical evidence of *any* miracle, the case is closed.
- VI. For those who do not thus refuse, the Church then supplements historical proof by showing that her own existence, from the beginning, has been dependent upon and a continuous witness of the truth of Christ's Resurrection : and furthermore, that the power of the Christian life is inexplicable unless based upon this fact.
- VII. The Church holds that there are some truths too great to be proved by scientific and philosophic reasoning alone, and that the Resurrection is one of these. The Resurrection extends beyond the domain of nature and *lifts up* Reason to the sphere of Revelation.

THERE is a marked distinction observable between the religious issues of the Nicene period and those of the present day. The Christian controversies of that age

had a larger circumference ; the thought of the world was occupied, as we have already seen, with the whole subject of life, and the Church of Christ was challenged on all sides to show how "the Word made Flesh" fulfilled all the conditions of Divine and human existence. And she met the thought of that age so thoroughly, and proved her point so satisfactorily, that whenever we consider the relation of Christianity to those deeper questions which underlie all other problems, we find no literature so helpful for their solution as the writings of the early Fathers. Subsequent Christian apologists there are whose line of thought and style of expression harmonize more closely with modern times, but these only build upon a foundation that has been already laid.

The controversies of the present do not go so far down below the surface. They are less comprehensive and profound, but more practical in character. They relate less to underlying principles and more to details ; less to the Personality of God and more to nature and the natural order ; less to *a priori* and more to *a posteriori* thought ; and, as will be seen at a glance, not the whole field of inquiry, but only a small portion of that field, comes thus under investigation ; nevertheless, in their own limited sphère, the controversies of to-day are just as real and important as those of days gone by.

THE POSITION OF SCIENCE.

The modern challenge to the Church is to prove the historical basis of the Christian religion. Science, from whom the challenge comes, cares little about the religious, philosophical, or metaphysical problems with which Christianity has to deal, but it cares much about the question of historical fact. It has no quarrel with the ethical teachings of the Gospel, but it launches the whole

concentrated force of its criticism against the miracles of the Gospel. And it does this because the Gospel narrative and scientific investigation at this point run across one another's paths.

Science, in its study of nature, finds everywhere, as far back as it can trace, the omnipresent reign of law and order. In the myriads of years the world has existed, it does not come across a single miracle or interruption of nature's laws, and, therefore, it adopts Hume's dictum, that where on the one side we have all human experience and observation testifying against miracles, and on the other only a few writers of the Bible testifying in favor of miracles, it is infinitely more probable that these Bible writings are wrong than that the whole world is wrong.

Science is perfectly willing to acquiesce in Christianity if its miracles are left out; and if a new, expurgated edition of the Gospel could be adopted, from which every trace of the miraculous element has been eliminated, it would sheath its sword, proclaim a truce, and leave the Christian world undisturbed in promulgating its tenets.

But these are terms that no Christian believer can ever accept, for they mean nothing less than a complete surrender of the whole position.

Christianity stands or falls as an historical religion. The miraculous is not only interwoven with the warp and woof of Gospel history, but it is necessarily present as a "sign" that Jesus Christ was the Word made Flesh. As Dr. Salmon well says, "If that be once conceded, or even admitted as possible, which our faith asserts, namely, that our blessed Lord was a unique Person, distinct in nature from ordinary men, all difficulties about the admission of what would otherwise be accounted supernatural facts at once disappear."¹ But as this faith "in our

¹ Non-miraculous Christianity, by Dr. G. Salmon, p. 18.

blessed Lord as a unique Person, distinct in nature from ordinary men," rests partly upon a historical foundation; as Christ was a historic Christ, and as miracles were one of the signs of His divine origin, the Church must be prepared to submit these miracles to any historic test that science can bring to bear upon them, and maintain their authenticity and genuineness as historic facts against all opposition. This is no easy task, at this far-distant date from the time of their occurrence.

THE CHURCH'S ANSWER.

The line of argument adopted by the Church is that indicated in the Gospel itself, in which the word "sign" is used ten times where the word "miracle" appears once.

The Church points (1) to the high ethical character of these signs, and shows that they are all miracles of blessing, not of cursing; not one is unworthy of that Son of Man who is the greatest reformer of this world.

(2) In answer to the objection that they are human inventions and creations of a pious imagination, she points to the actual creations of pious imaginations in the post-apostolic age, and holds up in contrast with the miracles of the true Gospel, which appeal to the moral sense of mankind, the fanciful stories and puerile miracles of the pseudo-gospels, which offend the moral sense of mankind.

(3) She shows that they are all signs and lessons in object-teaching, that reveal the character of God and stand as witnesses of Christ's union with the Father.

(4) She points to the fact that they are signs that the God of nature and God in Christ are one; that, without these preternatural, superhuman signs of Christ's origin, the full meaning of His Incarnation would never have been grasped by men.

(5) In response to the objection that the Gospel miracles are legends wherein natural facts have gradually been expanded into supernatural ones, she points out how, at the very commencement of Christ's public ministry (and, of course, long before any Gospel records were thought of), when the messengers of the imprisoned John the Baptist appeared, asking in the name of their master, "Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?" Our Lord made answer, "Go and show John again the things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached unto them. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me."¹

Here is Christ's own judgement regarding His miracles and the value He placed upon them as evidences of his Messianic character.²

(6) The Church points back to all the early documents of Christianity and shows how the miraculous element runs through them all. Not only do they, by a common consensus, contain the same type of signs, but even where one records a miracle that the others omit, that miracle is of the same ethical and spiritual character as all the rest.

The force of these arguments, with which the Church defends the genuineness of the signs, is irresistible. From the ethical and theological stand-point the position is absolutely impregnable, but not from the scientific stand-point. And this is the issue of the present day. Ethi-

¹ St. Matt. xi. 3-6.

² The function of these miracles was not to *coerce* faith in Him as the Son of God, but simply to attest to believers His Messianic character. In no sense did they take the place of the great miracle of His resurrection, neither were they the kind of sign from heaven for which the Jews asked. The reader is referred to the chapter on the Ascension for a fuller discussion of this subject.

cal evidence is not scientific evidence. These signs are abundant, from the believer's position, to fortify and confirm his belief, but they are not sufficient to form a basis for faith in the mind of the *unbeliever* or scientific investigator.

The contention of science is, that all this array of moral evidence which the Church adduces in support of these miraculous signs falls short of real scientific proof, and that, if supernatural Christianity claims, in any sense, to be a historic religion with a historic Christ as its Founder, it must establish its supernatural facts in the ordinary way, by unassailable historic demonstration.

HOW THE CHURCH MEETS THE DEMAND OF SCIENCE.

The Church both disagrees and agrees with this verdict of modern science.

She disagrees with it in looking upon scientific proof as the only kind of evidence that is required. She proclaims, with unfaltering voice, that even the strongest, most convincing historic proof of the genuineness of these miraculous signs would be inadequate to establish her claim that Christ is the Son of God, without the aid of that ethical and spiritual proof that she brings forth.

Yet, on the other hand, she agrees with science regarding the value of ordinary historical evidence. The moral argument may be greater, but it belongs to a different sphere. However overwhelming it may be in its appeal to the conscience, it is always more or less indefinite in verifying a historic fact.

It is cumulative in its nature ; it is corroborative and most helpful if it rests upon the foundation of ascertained fact, but the corner-stone of fact must first be laid before the superstructure can be reared. And unless it

is securely laid, the philosophical Christianity of Strauss will inevitably crowd out the Christianity of the Man of Nazareth, *i.e.*, the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of humanity will take the place of the Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.

Therefore the Church takes her place side by side with science in declaring the necessity of historical evidence. She welcomes science here as fighting her own battle against a different kind of adversary, and affirms that historical proof, as one link in the chain of evidence, is, in its own sphere, absolutely essential in establishing the historical character of the Christian religion.

And she is fully prepared to attest that character on science's own ground.

In meeting the issue, it is true that she has to fall back upon one single fact, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, but this is all-sufficient for the purpose.¹

Christians need feel no alarm in thus retiring to this sign, for they are only leaving temporarily the outworks to retreat into a central impregnable citadel, from which they can recapture and better defend those very positions.

To quote again the words of Professor Salmon : "There is in Christianity but one miracle, the appearance in the world of a supernatural Person. We may believe most thoroughly in the uniformity of nature, and be fully persuaded that from like antecedents like consequences will follow ; but if the antecedents be not like, we shall not expect uniformity of result. It is contrary

¹ It is instructive to note, in this connection, that Christ himself prophetically indicated this very line of action. When the Scribes and Sadducees came to Him, tempting Him and desiring a sign from heaven, His answer was, "There shall no sign be given to this generation but the sign of the prophet Jonah," and with these words He left them.

to experience that a man should be able to give sight to the blind, that at his word the dead should return to life, that he himself should die and be buried, and rise again the third day. But if he of whom these things are asserted be more than man, our experience has nothing to say. Once on a time it was received as a proposition universally true that all metals are heavy, and a man who should report that he had seen a metal floating in water might be regarded as asserting what was contrary to experience ; but if he explained that his assertion did not relate to any of the known metals, but to one unlike them in character and properties, his announcement, though surprising, ceased to have any opposing experience to encounter. Thus the Christian miracles form a connected system ; it is idle to reject one unless you reject the whole. If one be admitted all the rest are credible. If the proof of one be unassailable, it avails nothing to raise difficulties about the others. If, for instance, it be not denied that Jesus rose from the dead, it is but time wasted to attempt to show that the story of the miraculous conception is later in date. If in His death He was not subject to the ordinary laws of mortality, it is quite as likely as not that He differed from the other men in the manner of His birth.”¹

THE HISTORICAL PROOF OF THE RESURRECTION.

Providentially the Church has at her command the means of authenticating this one miracle of the Gospels, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, by all the laws of direct evidence. The character of the proof is the same in kind as that which supports any other historical event of ancient times. The records that attest

¹ Non-miraculous Christianity, by Dr. G. Salmon, pp. 18, 19.

it are unimpeachable, and so thoroughly trustworthy that one cannot deny them without violating the very code of criticism by which most other events of pre-Christian times are tried and tested and judged to be authentic.¹

These records are not the four Gospels, for the contention of modern adverse criticism is that those writings, in their present form, were compilations from earlier records made in the first part of the second century, and that this interval of eighty or one hundred years was sufficient for the growth of a belief in the supernatural Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Though the Church does not, of course, hold this belief in the late date of the present Gospels, she has not, as yet, sufficient scientific evidence at hand to disprove it positively.² There are, however, four New Testament documents that

¹ See Sir G. C. Lewis's work on the Credibility of Early Roman History. We can here give only the outlines of the argument, and for a more detailed account we must refer the reader to the many books now published in which the whole subject is more fully expounded. "It seems to be often believed, and at all events it is perpetually assumed in practice, that historical evidence is different in its nature from other sorts of evidence. Until this error is effectually extirpated, all historical researches must lead to uncertain results. Historical evidence, like judicial evidence, is founded on the testimony of credible witnesses. Unless these witnesses had personal and immediate perception of the facts which they report, unless they saw and heard what they undertake to relate as having happened, their evidence is not entitled to credit. As all original witnesses must be contemporary with the events which they attest, it is a necessary condition for the credibility of a witness that he be a contemporary. . . . Unless, therefore, a historical account can be traced, by probable proof, to the testimony of contemporaries, the first condition of historical credibility fails."

² "All three Gospels—not only the older documents out of which they are composed, but our present Gospels as we have them—lie under the shadow of the Fall of Jerusalem. . . . Of this, then, I think we may rest assured, that the whole process of the composition of our first three Gospels, . . . must be comprised within limits of which the furthest is not later than the year 80 A.D."—Prof. Sanday, Bampton Lectures for 1893, pp. 293, 294.

are now universally received by all critics, including the Tübingen School, and even by Dr. Ferdinand Baur himself (who certainly is an unprejudiced witness if ever there was one), as genuine works of St. Paul the Apostle, written within twenty-eight years after the Crucifixion of Christ. And these contain exactly the kind of evidence which modern criticism holds to be most valuable and trustworthy, in throwing light upon the events of contemporaneous history, for they are not annals written for a purpose and with any definite historical object in view, but personal letters to friends in which the references to such events are indirect and incidental.

If the letters of Cicero are our greatest authority in determining the exact character of Roman history in his times, these letters of St. Paul, whose moral character and active missionary labours made him the most prominent figure of the whole Christian Church in the year 60 A.D., are even more valuable.

The four letters which have thus received the unqualified endorsement of all modern criticism as authentic, are the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, and the two Epistles to the Corinthians. To gain the right historical perspective, we have to remember that these letters were written within a period not so long after the Crucifixion as that which has elapsed between this present year, 1894, and the death of Abraham Lincoln in 1865; that most of the actual witnesses of the Resurrection of Christ were living, and that any false or exaggerated statements made by so responsible and prominent a leader as St. Paul, would, then and there, have been challenged and controverted had they been untrue. At the very least, their inaccuracy would have been corrected by other responsible leaders in the Church; unless all were banded together, with common consent, in foisting a deliberate falsehood upon the Christian world, and this

is a supposition which even the most adverse modern criticism has now given up as manifestly and absolutely untenable.

Let us now turn to the actual facts bearing upon the Resurrection which these four epistles disclose.

(1) St. Paul, in his first public letter to the Church of Corinth, says: "I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures; and that He was seen of Cephas, then of the Twelve; after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, He was seen of James; then of all the apostles, and last of all He was seen of me, also, as of one born out of due time."¹ Here are six different appearances of the risen Jesus, at different times. The witnesses are numbered by hundreds, and most of them are alive to corroborate St. Paul's words at the time of writing. Any hearer who disbelieves St. Paul's statements has here an abundant authority to which to appeal, and among those hearers are personal friends at least of St. James and St. Peter.

(2) But the Apostle goes further. He says that he delivered the account of the facts to them just as he had directly received it *himself*, and states how he had received it. In the Epistle to the Galatians he tells us of his own personal interviews with some of these very witnesses. Three years after his conversion he went up to Jerusalem and saw there St. Peter, with whom he abode fifteen days, and also St. James, the Lord's brother, who was then Bishop of Jerusalem.² Though he does

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 3-8.

² Gal. i. 18, 19.

not directly state that the Resurrection of Christ was a theme of conversation between them, it is incredible that an event of such transcendent importance should have been passed over by three leaders of the Church. Fourteen years after this he went up again to Jerusalem, and then saw, of the twelve apostles, at least, St. Peter, St. James, and St. John, who gave to him the right hand of fellowship.¹

These personal interviews, the earliest of which occurred three years after St. Paul's conversion, or, at the very latest, thirteen years after Christ's Resurrection, bring us very near the event itself. If, as many critics believe, the conversion of St. Paul took place five or six years earlier, it carries back the date of these interviews to eight years after Christ rose from the dead. It is to be remembered that this is an autobiographical account of a man who adds to his own words the strong asseveration, "Now the things which I write unto you, behold, before God, I lie not."²

(3) The two Epistles to the Corinthians show that the Church of Corinth was at that time convulsed and divided by party spirit. There was an Apollos faction, a Petrine faction, and a Pauline faction. The adherents of one of these opposing sects denied the authority of St. Paul, on the ground that he was not one of the original twelve apostles.

The way in which he meets these antagonists is very noteworthy. He appeals to the fact that if other apostles

¹ Gal. ii. 9. If the critics would allow us to quote the Book of Acts as an authority, we could show that this was the General Council of the whole Church at Jerusalem (Acts xv.) at which other apostles, and perhaps all the apostles, were present, with many elders and brethren besides; and this would multiply the personal interviews of St. Paul with the actual witnesses of Christ's Resurrection, tenfold.

² Gal. i. 20.

were witnesses of Christ's Resurrection, he was a witness also. Though born out of due time into the apostolic band, he had *seen the Lord* as well as they, and, therefore, was by Christ's direct choice and revelation placed on an equality with the rest.¹ We do not enter here into the question of the reality of the appearance of the risen Christ to St. Paul, we simply point out that he claims to have had the same privilege that the twelve had, of seeing Christ after His Resurrection. If there were any of the Corinthians who denied that the twelve had thus seen Christ, themselves, St. Paul would have anticipated their objection and would not have made use of such an argument. The very fact that he adduces it shows, that here was a point upon which he and all his adversaries were in perfect agreement. There could have been no Christians in the Corinthian Church at that day, who were not in their own minds convinced that the other Apostles had seen the Lord.

(4) But there is a still stronger proof that there was not then a shadow of a doubt regarding Christ's Resurrection, in the Corinthian Church, and it is this: Some of the members of that Church had been preaching that there was no general resurrection at the last day.

¹ If it is objected that St. Paul's vision of Christ is not a historical proof, we are not now prepared to argue this point, as we should have to quote from the Acts of the Apostles to prove it, and this is aside from the kind of proof we are adducing. But, to those who accept the Book of Acts as genuine, we would point out that when Christ appeared to St. Paul there was a light above the brightness of the sun seen by the whole band that accompanied him; that the appearance of Christ produced a physical effect upon the eyesight of St. Paul which made him temporarily blind; that after this he had great trouble with his eyes, which he called a "temptation in the flesh" (Gal. iv. 13-16); that this was, perhaps, the same as the "thorn in the flesh" to which he afterward refers (2 Cor. xii. 7), and that he speaks of this infirmity as "the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Gal. vi. 17). Surely this must have been a standing proof to himself and to all men of the reality of the vision.

These St. Paul meets squarely by pointing to the resurrection of Christ Himself.

“Now if Christ be preached that He rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ; whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not,”¹ etc.

The whole force of the Apostle’s argument lies in an appeal to a fact which all held in common. Without this his argument is not only worthless, but his words meaningless. The Corinthian Church must have been completely convinced of Christ’s Resurrection before such an appeal could be made to them. And, as may be readily seen, the first conviction could have been no easy task. For the members of that Church were Europeans, not Asiatics. They were men who were wont to call all foreigners “barbarians.” They had no prepossessions or expectations at all regarding the idea of a resurrection; on the contrary, the whole tendency of Greek philosophy was in the opposite direction. It is incredible that they could have been converted by a foreigner like St. Paul into the belief that a carpenter’s son, of an alien race and a despised foreign religion, had risen from the dead as the Son of God, Who had power to raise all other men from the dead, unless the statement were fortified by the strongest kind of proof regarding the fact itself.

(5) The same thing may be said of the Church of Galatia. This was composed of still another race. Galatia is a province of Asia Minor that was settled by emigrants from Gaul or France. Its people were, therefore, dis-

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 12-15.

tinct from both Jews and Greeks. There were, indeed, Hellenic Jews among them, who exercised a large influence over their thought, but the latter were everywhere antagonistic to Christianity. And the men who had done the most to alienate St. Paul's converts were not the Jews, but the Judaizing Christians. At the time he wrote his Epistle there were great disorders consequently, in the Church. In one thing, however, they continued steadfast—their belief in Christ and His Resurrection was unshaken ; they still clung to that, however far they might be alienated from St. Paul to "another gospel" in other ways. Here, then, we have a second Church, of a remote province, as far removed from Greece as it was from Jerusalem itself, in which, twenty-eight years after the Crucifixion, the Resurrection of Christ was an accepted fact.

(6) We come now to the Epistle to the Romans. At the time of his writing it St. Paul had never been to Rome. The Church there had been founded long before, by Christians, whose very names are unknown to us now. And as the city of Rome was then the centre of the whole civilized world, St. Paul's keen, prophetic eye recognized, even at that early day, the influence which a strong, firmly planted Church in this metropolis, was destined to exercise over the future history of Christianity. Already there were intelligent Christians in Rome. The Epistle to the Romans was not written to ignorant men. It is the most theological and doctrinal of all the letters of St. Paul which have come down to us, and it presupposes a thoughtful community that had grasped the inner principles of the Faith of Christ.

When trained theologians of to-day find their highest and best thought brought out by St. Paul's words, we cannot suppose that the persons to whom these difficult words were in the first instance addressed, were ignorant

or uneducated men. The soil must have been already prepared for St. Paul's doctrinal statements as to the meaning of the facts of the Faith once delivered to the saints, before he could write a letter like this. That the Resurrection of Christ from the dead was thus accepted by the Church of Rome as an indisputable historical fact, is made evident in the Epistle itself. This is shown in the words with which it opens. St. Paul there describes himself as an Apostle of Christ Jesus, Who is "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, *by the Resurrection from the dead.*"¹ He writes "to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints," and says, "First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the world."²

The strength and orthodoxy of the Church had already attracted the attention of all the other Christian Churches, and this is undoubtedly the reason why the Apostle feels free to speak to its members about things which other Christian communities would find it hard to understand. He does not deem it necessary to prove the Resurrection of Christ. On the contrary, he plainly takes it for granted that this is a fact unanimously accepted among them, and goes on to build upon that fact, by emphasizing certain doctrinal truths that follow from the Resurrection. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall also be in the likeness of His Resurrection. . . . Knowing that Christ

¹ Romans i. 4.

² Ibid. 7, 8.

being raised from the dead dieth no more ; death hath no more dominion over Him.”¹

Words like these are much stronger than detailed proof itself, revealing as they do the positive faith of the Roman Church in Christ’s Resurrection. If St. Paul had endeavoured to prove the Resurrection, it would have shown that the Roman Christians needed to be convinced of its truth. But taking it for granted, as he does, and urging them, by all the earnestness he can throw into words, to lay hold upon the *power* that the fact of the Resurrection infuses into the moral and spiritual life of believers, he gives us the clearest kind of evidence that this far-off Church of Rome had already, within twenty-eight years of the Crucifixion, accepted the Resurrection of Christ as an undisputed part of Gospel history.

(7) Coming back now to the First Epistle to the Corinthians, we find another kind of evidence. St. Paul writes to the Christians of Corinth, “Christ our Passover, is sacrificed for us ; therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness ; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”²

To what feast does he refer ? Is it to the Jewish Passover ? The words “Christ our Passover” forbid this interpretation. Is it, then, to the anniversary of Christ’s Crucifixion ? This also is excluded, for it is absolutely inconceivable that the time which the whole Christian Church for eighteen centuries has looked upon as the one greatest day of the year for fasting and humiliation, should be called by an apostle himself “The Feast.” The reference is undoubtedly and unmistakably to the Christian Passover, or Christ’s Resurrection, as a spiritual feast ; and if, in addition to this, we may go even fur-

¹ Romans vi. 3, 4, 5, 9.

² 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

ther, and take St. Paul's words as referring to the *anniversary* of the Christian passover (in contradistinction to that of the Jewish Passover which, of course, occurred on a particular day of each year), it becomes stronger still.

A question has been raised as to whether the passage 1 Cor. v. 7, 8, is to be interpreted literally or figuratively. Was St. Paul, writing at the time of the Passover, speaking of a spiritual festival, which men were to keep every day of their lives ; or had the Church already established an actual Easter Feast ?

While the majority of New Testament critics hold to the figurative interpretation, yet at the same time the words have often been taken, by those whose decisions are of weight, as fixing the date and time of the year at which the Epistle was written. We do not wish to weaken our proof by laying too great a stress upon this point ; yet, as part of a cumulative argument, it has its place and weight ; and when we remember that the first day of the week was generally kept at this time as a weekly anniversary of our Lord's Resurrection, the point is too important to be omitted altogether ; for the same impulse which would move the early Christians to keep the weekly festivals, would move them to keep also the yearly one.¹

These facts, gathered from the Epistles which all critics accept as genuine writings of St. Paul, are sufficient to prove the Resurrection of Christ as an historical event. The evidence is equal to that which supports any other

¹ Other New Testament documents show us that the first day of the week was kept instead of the Jewish Sabbath, and we should adduce this change in a popular observance, as another proof, were the dates of the other Epistles and the Book of Acts ascertained. The reference to 1 Cor. xvi. 2, will be to the point here, although it cannot be adduced as further proof.

historical event of the first Christian century, and the character, trustworthiness, and truthfulness of the witnesses who attest, is unimpeachable.

SCIENCE SHIFTS ITS GROUND.

If Christ's Resurrection were a natural instead of a supernatural event, and if its miraculous character were eliminated, it would be accepted at once and without a question on the strength of such testimony.

But now the men of science shift their position, and say that they want something more than simple historical evidence, to prove a miraculous event. This is unfair. They challenge the Church to bring forth ordinary scientific evidence, and, when she meets them on their own ground and gives them as full and satisfactory proof as historians can desire; when she submits her proof to be tried by any and all of the rules of historic criticism; when she places her historic evidence beside their historic evidence, her fact beside their facts, then they retreat from their first position, and say that *no* historic evidence can prove a miracle.

When objectors assume this position, it is necessary that they make their own thought clear, so that Christians can understand it.

If the critic means that a miracle is inconceivable to him; that he regards it as an impossible violation of the laws of nature; that it is to his mind as much a contradiction as the assertion that God had done an immoral act, or that twice one makes three, then the case is closed. No kind of evidence can convince him, for the scientific (shall we not much rather say *unscientific*) bias of his mind against all supernatural religion, makes him a prejudiced judge. He has reached an *a priori* conclusion and will consent to receive no proof whatsoever.

THE INSUFFICIENCY OF EVEN SCIENTIFIC PROOF.

But if the critic simply says that no scientific evidence or historical proof is sufficient to establish so stupendous a miracle as the resurrection of Christ from the dead, unless it be supplemented by other kinds of proof that are even more convincing ; then, he is only saying what the Church itself has always persistently affirmed, and has reached the very point at which the Christian thought of the world arrived, ages ago.

The scientific proof of Christ's Resurrection as an historic fact is invincible. In establishing the historic basis of Christianity as a supernatural religion, it goes as far as any natural or scientific proof can go. But all the scientific proof in the world is insufficient to convince men of so unique a fact in human history as Christ's resurrection from the dead.

If a great pyramid, as large as that of Cheops in Egypt, had been erected by order of the Roman Senate over Joseph of Arimathea's new-hewn sepulchre, marking the spot at which, on a specified day and hour, Christ rose from the dead ; and if this senatorial enactment had been engraven on stone tablets sent to every great city of the Roman Empire, to be inserted in the walls of all religious temples, the historical evidence, though cumulative, would neither be clearer than it is now, nor would it be more conclusive. The objections made against the inconclusive witness of the early Church would only, in that case, be transferred to the inconclusive witness of the Roman Senate.

The proof of an occurrence like this is not to be gained or fortified by any monuments of stone ; it depends entirely upon the character and credibility of the actual witnesses.

THE WITNESS OF THE CHURCH GREATER THAN SCIENTIFIC PROOF.

Therefore, God has written the record, not upon marble, but upon the fleshly tablets of the human heart. Therefore, Christ did not choose such uncertain, inaccurate, careless witnesses as the sybarite Tiberius, with his Roman Senators, but those who were educated to be truthful as no men ever were before.

Observe with what care Christ selects those who are to be the actual witnesses of His Resurrection. His whole ministry may be described as a training of the eleven Apostles for this work.

The very doubt and agony of mind through which they passed at the time of the Crucifixion was the climax of that training. He apparently deserted them, left them to themselves—left them to be a prey to their agonizing doubts for three days, to prepare them for what was coming. Whatever date we may assign to the Gospels, there is no possibility of counterfeit in the truthfulness of the description there given of the Apostles' state of mind. We see before us honest, truthful men who had given way to abject despair. The more that adverse criticism dwells upon the uncritical character of the early believers, the stronger it makes that description stand out, for how could unskilled, uncritical, inaccurate, untruthful minds fabricate, either consciously or unconsciously, such a skilled, critical, accurate, and truthful picture of human despair?

Indeed, so awful was the cloud of doubt and uncertainty hanging over the apostles' minds, when they heard, and then saw, that Christ had risen, that they actually anticipated all the modern explanations of His Resurrection. They thought it was an "idle tale;" they believed

it an apparition ; they refused to look upon his body as the same body that had been crucified ; one of them even insisted upon actual physical proof to eye and ear and even hand, that Christ was risen indeed.

Previous to the Crucifixion the whole attitude of the Apostles was that of believing men ; after the Resurrection it was that of doubting men. Then, when they had been entirely convinced, a revulsion took place, and the conviction became the ruling thought of their lives. The greatest privilege accorded to mortal man had been granted to them. They had seen the risen Christ, and this was more to them than anything the whole world could give. They went forth with the consciousness that they had beheld the greatest and most stupendous miracle of all nature and earthly history.

Through that consciousness the power of Christ's Resurrection entered into them. St. Peter, St. John, and the rest are different men from what they had ever been before. They are now a band of leaders with a great responsibility resting upon them. They have been sent forth by Christ as "witnesses of His Resurrection,"¹ and wherever they go, this is the first news they have to proclaim. Though they soon learn by experience that the message will be received by the majority of their hearers, Jews and Gentiles, not only with incredulity, but with scoffing and ridicule, they never falter. Though one of the twelve became an apostate, even under Christ's own eye, there is, after the Resurrection, no second traitor, no member of the Apostolic company, who forsakes the despised band of Nazarenes and joins the world. Though they were continuously at variance among themselves, before Christ left them, as to which of them should be the

¹ St. Luke xxiv. 48 ; St. John xv. 27 ; xx. 30, 31 ; Acts i. 8, 21, 22 ; ii. 32 ; iii. 15 ; iv. 20, 33 ; v. 32 ; x. 39 ; xiii. 31 ; 1 Peter v. 1 ; 2 Peter i. 16 ; 1 John i. 1, etc.

greatest, after His Resurrection we hear no more of such disputes. This is remarkable. In the case of Alexander the Great and other leaders who created empires, the ambition of followers asserts itself, and the era of internal dissensions begins, at the death of the master. With the followers of Christ it is the exact reverse; after He leaves them they become, at once, of one mind, and continue thus, though widely separated from one another, to the end of their days. The only explanation of this fact is the tremendous influence which the events of Christ's Resurrection and Ascension exerted upon their lives. Indeed, so much greater and more satisfying was the knowledge of Christ after, than before, His Resurrection, that St. Paul actually is able to say, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know we Him so no more."

THE ADDITIONAL PROOF FROM CHURCH HISTORY.

Passing now from the Apostles themselves, we find the same kind of moral and spiritual proof running through the whole history of the early Church.

(1) The primitive Christians were willing to stand beside the twelve Apostles as witnesses for the truth of Christ's Resurrection. Nothing less than the courage which came from the certainty of a fact, could have brought to them the cheerful willingness to face persecution and death, in the way that thousands of them were obliged to do. The confession of the Christian faith brought untold suffering in its train. The confessor often became an outcast from his family, an object of suspicion to all his acquaintances, and even a branded man to the officers of the government. Not only was he shut out from every pathway to political and social ad-

vancement, but his religion brought him no worldly compensation. He had to substitute a crucified for a satisfied ambition, and to live, for the sake of the cross, a life of perpetual anxiety and unrest. Instead of gaining anything by a belief in the Resurrection, from a worldly point of view, the early Christians had everything to lose, and when they openly confessed that belief they took their lives in their hands. This gives an exceptional value to their testimony as witnesses. They showed their truthfulness by their sufferings and sealed their testimony with their own blood.

(2) The natural effect of all this would be a religion of despondency and gloom. And such Christianity would inevitably have been if the Gospel history had ended with the Crucifixion. The terms Christian and pessimist would have become synonymous. The moral of the Cross would have been that the noblest and truest life ever lived on this earth had ended in failure.

But the picture of the early Church, as given in the Acts of the Apostles and elsewhere, is the reverse of pessimistic. Notwithstanding their life of continuous hardship and suffering, the crowning characteristic of the New Testament Christians is joyousness. The persecuted are happier than their persecutors. The Acts of the Apostles give us the outward history of the Church: their epistles disclose its internal history, and both combine in showing that they were continuously breathing the exhilarating atmosphere of love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. Christianity was a fountain of youth to those who embraced it, and there is nothing so inspiring and stimulating in all the literature of the world, as those New Testament writings in which this life is described. Even if the Gospel records of the Resurrection had all been lost, we should have had in the joyousness of the epistles

the evidence that it must have occurred ; for nothing less than such a convincing proof of the victory of the Crucified, could have changed Christ's followers from pessimists into such optimists.

(3) But there is a higher proof still, and that is the doctrine of the Resurrection as it is set forth in the epistles. The rising of Christ from the grave is not merely accepted as an historical fact ; it is linked in with all the previous history of the Son of man. It is studied just as a scientific man studies a new fact of science. It occupies the same kind of position in theology that the law of gravitation, since the days of Sir Isaac Newton, has done in astronomy. It is shown to be a moral necessity that follows inevitably all that has gone before. It is dwelt upon as the necessary complement of the Incarnation and the Crucifixion, and becomes the key which unlocks the meaning of previous facts ; explaining that which would otherwise be inexplicable, not only as regards Christ Himself, but as regards his followers.

When St. Paul says : "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable,"¹ he is only echoing that which every Christian feels instinctively, who takes up his cross, honestly and sincerely, to live the kind of life which Christ lived. The life of the Christian is simply an impossible life without the belief in the historical fact of Christ's Resurrection and its sustaining power. Eliminate that fact and Christianity, as a system of philosophy, may survive, but Christianity as a life and revelation from God will cease.

(4) The whole history of the Christian Church is a witness to the Resurrection of Christ, for it grows and shapes itself out of that fact as the oak grows from the acorn.

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 19.

And Christians have for eighteen hundred years religiously kept the first day of the week sacred in memory of that event. While all other anniversaries have their day and cease to be, this one survives from age to age. The conviction of Christ's Resurrection has been the inspiration of the Christian ages. Through the power of Christ's Resurrection the saints of all ages resemble one another. Though they belong to different nations and different centuries and are separated, as far as the east is from the west, they all manifest a peculiar conformity to type, and this unmistakable likeness is produced by their unity of faith in the risen Christ. Their characters are shaped by the power of one ruling idea. They have been stimulated to live as the New Testament characters lived, by the consciousness that they are risen with Him. They have been able to put forth efforts that were beyond their own will power; and to do what the rest of the world is utterly unable to do, by the power of His Resurrection.

To affirm that the Resurrection, out of which all this history and combination of high spiritual influences has grown, was an appearance or a pious delusion of devout minds is not only to make a delusion the origin of the greatest moral force and the most persistent power of holiness this world has ever seen, but to destroy the value of moral evidence, and even of scientific reasoning itself.

THE DILEMMA OF THOSE WHO DENY CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

Those who deny the miracle of the Resurrection on the plea that it is a violation of physical law, are driven, as the only alternative, to face another violation of law which, to all truth-loving minds, is even more inconceiv-

able. They see before them a religion which has brought the highest blessings of civilization in its train, founded upon a falsehood, and deriving all its power of propagating holy living from a false belief. To deny the Resurrection and accept this alternative is not only the Nemesis of faith, but of the moral law of cause and effect.

Professor Weiss, of Berlin, who was himself trained in the Tübingen School of Theology, calls our attention to this fact with great emphasis. He says, "The greatest critic of our century (Baur) has acknowledged that, for the disciples, Jesus' Resurrection had become a firm and incontestable certainty; and that for them, this fact of their consciousness had all the reality of an historical event; but the same critic has had to renounce any hope of explaining the phenomenon. Historical inquiry, however, cannot rest content with this. The history of Christendom cannot begin with an insoluble enigma . . . either indisputable facts must be left unexplained, or else the historical inquirers, who care nothing for this philosophical dogma, *which declares miracle to be impossible*, must be permitted to attempt *their* explanation, even when that cannot be done without the assumption of a unique divine miracle."¹

Here, in the history of Christendom, are facts which must be admitted by all as indisputable. The only rational explanation of these facts is that the Resurrection of Christ is a real historical event and a genuine miracle. If science denies this on the purely dogmatic ground that all miracles are impossible, then it must leave indisputable historical facts unexplained and must face the dilemma of either retiring from a field to which it has claimed an exclusive right, or else surrender its pet philosophical dogma.

¹ Weiss' Life of Christ, vol. iii., p. 383.

For the Church claims the same field that science does; she holds her position there entrenched in a fortress which for eighteen centuries has proved itself impregnable, nor will she retreat from her stronghold until she is forced back by demonstrable scientific proof that Christ did *not* arise from the dead.

Christianity claims reason, and nothing could be stronger than the way in which she fortifies and upholds that claim. But while doing this she makes room for something else beside reason, she shows that scientific and philosophical proofs have their circumscribed limits, and that they must be supplemented by another kind of evidence that is satisfactory to the conscience and religious intuitions of mankind.

The Resurrection of Christ is a stupendous fact, that is too many sided to be grasped by reason alone. It demands the assent of the whole nature of man—not only of his senses and intellect, but of his moral and spiritual convictions. And when men are faithful to the law of their highest life and open themselves generously to receive moral and spiritual, as well as scientific and philosophical truth, then the Resurrection of Christ receives the unanimous assent of these combined faculties. It commends itself at once to reason, and conscience, and faith in a personal God.

THE RESURRECTION CREATED A NEW GROUND FOR CERTAINTY.

Receiving such an assent from all that is highest and truest in human nature, this fact of the Gospel stands before us in an absolutely unique position. Instead of being less certain, we become more certain of Christ's Resurrection, than of any other event of human history.

Looking backward, this sign becomes the seal and corroborative proof of all His other Gospel Miracles. Looking forward, it becomes the corroborative proof of His Ascension into Heaven, and His coming again to judge the quick and dead.

The ground of certainty in all this does not lie inside but outside of us. It does not lie in science, or in philosophy, or in human consciousness, but in an exterior fact of Revelation, which lies half within and half beyond the fields of science and philosophy and human consciousness.

The Resurrection of Christ surpasses our human thought, and when it enters into our whole being as a certainty, then reason itself is lifted up by this new fact to a different sphere of activity. It is no longer confined to the lower field of scientific or philosophical investigation, it ascends to a higher plane of existence, where the boundless horizons of the spiritual world stretch far and wide around it, where its eyes become opened to other new facts, and where it becomes conscious of spiritual forces which are as real as the force of gravitation.

As it gazes upon the Incarnation and Crucifixion, the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, it sees the correlation and follows out the consequences of these facts ; and draws new conclusions with the same powers of observation and logic which it displays in the lower sphere of the natural world.

Revelation does not stultify reason, it sanctifies reason. When St. Paul tells us that we are “risen with Christ from the dead,” and ascended with Christ “into the heavenly places,” he is simply tracing out the spiritual laws of cause and effect in a higher world, after the same manner that the scientific man does in the physical world. Christian theology is just as much of a science as any of those other branches of knowledge that are

more popularly called by this name. Only it is more worthy of the designation, because it moves in the higher sphere of spiritual certainties, whereas those others are confined to the cloudland of earthly uncertainty and change.¹

And the more one studies the cardinal facts of Christian theology as they are set forth in the New Testament and the Nicene Creed, the more he will find, as his knowledge increases and his reasoning faculties are trained to accurate thought, that his mind gravitates back into the old paths that prophets, apostles, and Christian theologians have travelled before him.

RESURRECTION CREATES.

We have striven to show the relation in which the Resurrection of Christ stands to modern science. It meets science on its own ground, and proves the historic character of the Christian religion. It shows us that the appeal of Revelation to the reason is just as strong as to the conscience, when its truth is spiritually discerned. It discloses the true function and place of reason in the plan of redemption. It establishes for the Christian believer an impregnable historical basis among the things that are seen and temporal, for his faith in those things that are unseen and eternal.

To quote the helpful words of Bishop Westcott :

“The Gospel of the Resurrection harmonizes in itself the objective and subjective elements of religion. On the one hand it reposes on a fact which, however unique, yet claims to belong to the circle of human experience. On the other hand, the fact is such that its personal appropriation offers the widest scope for the energies of

¹ Heb. i. 10, 11, 12; Heb. xii. 26, 27, 28; St. Matt. xxiv. 35.

spiritual life. The Resurrection is sufficiently definite to take religion out of the domain of caprice and rest its hopes upon a foundation external to the believer ; and it is so far-reaching in its ultimate significance as to present itself to every age and every soul with fresh power. It gives faith a firm standing-ground on history, and at the same time opens a boundless vision of the future development of our present powers. . . . It stands, so to speak, midway between the seen and the unseen, it belongs equally to the spiritual and to the material order, and it reconciles both.”¹

¹ *The Gospel of the Resurrection*, p. 10.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ASCENSION IN RELATION TO THE PROBLEM OF THE DESTINY OF MAN

SYNOPSIS

- I. Christ's work in its completeness not fully recognized. Some would end at the Cross. But then the Cross would be the symbol of failure. Others hold that the Resurrection was the consummation of all Christ's work. Apparent support which the full accounts of the Passion and Resurrection, in comparison with the brief mention of the Ascension, give to these views. But from the nature of the case but little could be said about the Ascension. The actual facts only are given, to be interpreted by the spiritually-minded. The meaning of the Ascension is found in St. John xiii.-xvii.
- II. Christ's work is continuous. It was not ended by His Ascension, much less by His Resurrection or Crucifixion.
- III. Christ's work was marked by one unifying principle, the subjection of His will to His Father's will. The temptation was a means of testing the completeness of that subjection. The temptation appealed to him in three ways as, (a) The Human Priest; (b) The Human Prophet; (c) The Human King. As Son of God, Christ could at any moment have rescued Himself, but this would have annihilated His human will. This self-restraint was lifelong; because as *Man* He conquered, as *Man* He ascended and became the Victorious Prophet, Priest, and King.
- IV. That Christ's work was not finished at the Ascension is prefigured in the Jewish sacrifices. (a) These were necessarily imperfect; (b) Christ unites and fulfils all types; (c) Christ's Blood is something more than the symbol of Christ's death; (d) The Blood of Christ represents the Life that passed through death.

THERE are many Christians who believe that Christ's work was practically consummated, when He cried upon the Cross, "It is finished;" and who, consequently, look upon all that follows the Crucifixion, as little more than an appendix to the Gospel history.

How false this view is, we showed in the last chapter. The Cross becomes the symbol of failure, instead of victory, without the Resurrection of Christ from the dead. It is only through the power of the Resurrection, that sinful men gain the courage to enter into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings and be made "conformable to His death."¹

With others, and perhaps a still larger number, the Resurrection marks the completion of Christ's work, and the basis of their theology ends at that point where the risen Christ sent forth His disciples to go and baptize all nations. With these, the Resurrection and Ascension go together. If the first is proved, the second, not only follows, as a matter of course, but is nothing save the natural conclusion to the work of redemption. When Christ's earthly task is over, He goes back to His everlasting home in the heavens, there to remain and rest from His labours, until the Second Advent.

THE REASONS FOR THE GOSPEL'S RETICENCE.

And the emphasis that is laid in the Gospels themselves upon the story of the Passion, in comparison with the small portion of the narrative devoted to the Resurrection and the exceedingly brief mention of the Ascension, lends apparent support to such views.

But the reason of this reticence is manifest at a glance. If there is little recorded it is because there was little to record. As Christ gradually withdraws from the seen

¹ Phil. iii. 10.

unto the unseen world, and as the sphere of His work becomes less earthly and more heavenly, it cannot be described in earthly language. It is just as real but less comprehensible to those who are of this world.

When we read of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, that they did not, at first, recognize the risen Jesus, because "their eyes were holden that they should not know Him,"¹ we have here a plain intimation of the reason why all the events attending the Resurrection and the Ascension are recorded with such brevity and spiritual reserve. While they are protected as historical facts by "infallible proofs"² which will stand the fire of adverse criticism to the end of time, each New Testament writer is plainly filled with awe as he takes up his pen; his hand is holden as he writes about them. He dares not enlarge upon the description.

The very portion of Christ's life regarding which there will always be the greatest worldly curiosity and interest, and which an ordinary historian would have dilated upon with most graphic and minute detail, is thus passed over by the New Testament writers with a bare record of the events. And this extreme reverence and reserve on the part of Christ's followers is, in itself, to all Christian minds, a moral and spiritual proof of their sublime character.

If the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ really mean what the apostles hold them up as meaning, in their New Testament epistles, the historical events themselves could not have been recorded by devout witnesses in any other way.

The actual facts are given without human note or comment, for the information of the world at large, but the spiritual power of those facts is passed over, to be communicated afterward to those spiritually minded be-

¹ St. Luke xxiv. 16.

² Acts i. 3.

lievers in the apostolic churches, who are capable of appreciating that which the world cannot comprehend.

CHRIST'S TEACHINGS REGARDING THE ASCENSION.

Especially is this true regarding the last historic event of Christ's earthly life. When, as Son of man, He was about to leave this lower world and ascend to the unseen heavens, the real ultimate meaning of the Ascension is given to us by Christ Himself, in words which could not but have awakened the deepest awe in those who first heard them, after their mysterious import had been translated and made plain by the event itself. Those words are recorded in the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapters of St. John's Gospel.

They were spoken, not to the outer world but to the apostles, privately, in the upper room, on the night before the Crucifixion, and perhaps we have, in this fact, the clew to the apostles' reticence about the Ascension. They were simply following out Christ's own method.

It will be observed that in this discourse Christ treats the Resurrection as though it were already an event of the past.

"Now is the Son of man glorified," He says, plainly intimating that His coming death upon the Cross, His burial in the grave, and His rising from the dead, are all part of His glorification. "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek Me, and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go ye cannot come; so now I say to you."¹ Then He goes on to say, "In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."² "Yet a little while and the world seeth Me no more, but ye

¹ St. John xiii. 31, 33.

² Ibid. xiv. 2.

see Me; because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father and ye in Me, and I in you.”¹ “If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father, for my Father is greater than I.”² “Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.”³ “It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send Him unto you.”⁴

Indeed it is impossible to read these chapters consecutively without seeing that the plain reference throughout is not to Christ’s Resurrection, as is so frequently supposed, but to His Ascension. And the strongest proof of all appears when we come to the seventeenth chapter, the meaning of which is unnecessarily obscured in the authorized version, but when we read the original Greek, or the new and more literal translation of the original as it is given in the Revised Version, it is as though we were listening to the very prayer that Christ is addressing to the Father, not only subsequent to the Resurrection, but after the Ascension itself, when the whole of His earthly life has sunk back into the past.

By a true instinct, the Church of the Ages has always looked upon this as the High Priestly Prayer, in which, as the period of His glorification begins, the Son of man offers up by anticipation the whole of His earthly work as one full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. In all this we have, from Christ’s own lips, the real meaning of the Ascension as it was present to the minds of the apostles, when the Holy Ghost brought back to their remembrance all things that Christ had said unto them regarding it.

¹ St. John xiv. 19, 20.

² Ibid. xiv. 28.

³ Ibid. xv. 4.

⁴ Ibid. xvi. 7.

While, from an earthly point of view the work of Christ becomes less and less important after the Passion itself is over, in the vision of the Apostles, it *grows* in spiritual power, and comprehensiveness of meaning and eternal importance. It is one continuous work, in which each event ushers in a greater event that follows; making possible what was impossible before. As the Crucifixion leads up to the Resurrection, so the Resurrection leads up to the Ascension, and all together form one unbroken chain of life, as the Man of Nazareth passes out of the natural world up into the spiritual world, to the place at the right hand of God, which He has attained by His merits in glorifying God on earth as the ideal Man.

Let us reverently pause here to inquire how it was that Christ glorified God on earth in His humanity, and what that work was which leads to this sublime culmination of His destiny as Man.

THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN FREE-WILL IN CHRIST'S OWN LIFE.

The connecting link which gives the meaning to these different events is found in the manhood of Jesus Christ, and the essential condition of all manhood, is freedom of will to obey or disobey God's law. This is the profound depth of meaning in that narrative on the first page of the Bible with which the Revelation of God begins. Immediately following the statement that "God created man in His own image" we find Adam placed in Paradise as a free agent, to sin or not, as he pleased.

God might have created him with no capacity to sin, or He might have set him in a garden of Eden, in which there was no tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and thus have removed all temptation to sin; or He might have placed the cherubim with a flaming sword, that

stood before the tree of life, before this other tree of knowledge, and, thus, forcibly restrained him from sin. But, in any case, his free-will would have been destroyed, and with it his human personality also, for, as Dr. Dorner truly says, when a man loses his freedom of will he may become some other kind of a being, about which we know nothing, but he ceases to be a human being like ourselves.

Now, when Christ took our nature upon Him, He assumed the condition of Adam in Paradise *before sinning*. For this reason He was born of a pure Virgin ; it was that He might be free from the inherited taint of Original Sin. His miraculous birth was absolutely necessary that he might possess the kind of freedom of will that Adam possessed in Paradise ; for every descendant of Adam who is "born of flesh and blood" and "by the will of man" is conditioned by the defective will and hereditary sin of his ancestry, and, therefore, is absolutely unable to live a perfectly sinless life.

He comes into this world predestined to evil. If Christ had been born in the ordinary way He would not have possessed Adam's equipoise of will. There would not only have been in Him a liability to be tempted to sin, but also the same irresistible *bias* toward sin that there is in us, and to counteract this a constant interposition of Providence and grace would have become necessary to restrain Him from sin. Without the miraculous generation by which the link of sinful entail was broken off, and through which Christ became the Second Adam, there must, therefore, have been a greater miracle of spiritual power to keep Him sinless, and this, of itself, would have destroyed His perfect humanity.

We read of no such miracle as this in the New Testament, in the case either of Christ or of other men. Physical miracles there are in abundance, but we find no

moral or spiritual miracles that interfere with the freedom of the human will. Those who refuse to accept the miracle of Christ's immaculate birth have, therefore, to face the dilemma of either presupposing a greater miracle, different in character from any that the Bible records, or else of denying the perfect sinlessness of Christ. In escaping one kind of difficulty, they find themselves, when they come to the question of a tempted but sinless Christ, encompassed by overwhelming difficulties of another kind, far harder to understand.

It was through the exercise of His human free-will in doing God's will on earth as it is done in Heaven, that Christ became the Ideal Man, revealing to us the boundless possibilities of human nature; and the Old Testament prophecies foretold that the coming Messiah, in doing this work, would not only fulfil the hopes of the Jews but become "the Desire of all nations"¹ as the Prophet, Priest, and King of the whole human race.

Consequently, when Christ emerged from the seclusion of Nazareth, this was the work before Him. While He was bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, one with tempted, struggling humanity, He was to raise our manhood up to God by fulfilling this threefold ideal.

We do not propose to discuss here the possibility of Christ's *yielding* to temptation, for this carries us, as all experience proves, beyond the limits of human thought. The reconciliation of God's Divine will and purpose with human free-will, is a problem which has always baffled inquiry, and the problem becomes still more insoluble when it is not the human race but the Christ Himself—the God-Man, the Word made flesh—that is the subject of the inquiry.

¹ Haggai ii. 7.

WHAT CHRIST'S TEMPTATION REALLY MEANS.

On the very threshold of His ministry He was led up of the Spirit of God into the wilderness, there to be tempted by the same Spirit of Evil who had come to the first Adam in the Garden of Eden. And it is instructive to note the comprehensiveness and many-sided aspects of the three temptations that then assailed Him.

They bear more than a passing resemblance to the threefold influence to which Adam succumbed, *i.e.*, (1) The tree "was good for food, and (2) pleasant to the eyes, and (3) a tree to be desired to make one wise ;" as they also cover St. John's analysis of the power which caused his fall : "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world, and the world passeth away, and the lust thereof." ¹ The coincidence of these, furthermore, will be observed, with those three sources of evil, which, under other names, the Christian, from time immemorial, has promised to renounce in his baptism : the flesh, the world, and the devil, (*i.e.*, the evil of self, the evil of others, and the Evil One); and these temptations assault man severally in his physical, intellectual, and moral nature. But in the case of Christ Himself the threefold temptation in the wilderness had a deadlier and more malignant purpose, for it had a special reference to the work that was before Him as *the Prophet, Priest, and King, of humanity*.

Let us look into these temptations a little more closely, as illustrating this truth. (1) The tempter came with the suggestion, "Command that these stones be made bread." Its burden was, "If Thou art the Son of God, use Thy divine power of working miracles to help Thy-

¹ St. John ii. 16, 17.

self as Son of Man ; use Thy free-will as Man, to save Thyself from the fleshly restraints and limitations of Thy human nature, and thus escape Thy voluntary humiliation as the Son of God."

The full meaning of this temptation does not come out until we look back upon it from the Cross at the foot of which the Scribes and Pharisees are crying : "He saved others, Himself He cannot save."

It was an assault upon His priestly life of self-sacrifice.

The tempter believed, the tempter knew, that Christ was the Son of God, and that if He only *willed* to do so, He could break through the self-imposed barrier that lay between His divine and human nature. Christ did not deny the fact. The temptation becomes meaningless, if He had not the power *as the Son of God*, to relieve His own physical want *as Son of Man*. And in the way that He resisted this temptation, at the outset, we have a glimpse of the kind of self-restraint that He was ceaselessly putting upon Himself, until at last He cried, "It is finished."

If Christ had yielded to the temptation to change stones into bread for His own use, He would have nullified His life-work ; for His meat was to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work,¹ and therefore, His response to the tempter was, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."² His work was to *give*, not to receive bread ; and if He had used His miraculous power to save Himself here, He could never afterward have said : "I am the living bread which came down from Heaven : if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever : and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."³

And when the Jews murmured, saying, "How can this

¹ St. John iv. 34.

² St. Matt. iv. 4.

³ St. John vi. 51.

man give us His flesh to eat?" it is noteworthy that Christ pointed forward to His Ascension, as the time when that, which was now so hard to understand, would be made plain: "Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?"¹

The second temptation appears to have assailed Christ in His prophetic character.

In His coming ministry, the Jews would be perpetually asking from Him a sign from Heaven that would prove at once, incontrovertibly to both eyesight and reason, that He was "The Prophet."²

Therefore, the tempter took Christ up to the most public and conspicuous point of the whole Jewish world, the pinnacle of the Temple, and whispered, "If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down." The temptation meant—"If Thou be the Son of God, prove to all those priests and Levites, those Scribes and Pharisees that are thronging the Temple courts below, and to the crowds that are walking through the streets of the Holy City, and to the multitudes of spectators which will behold from the hills that stand like an amphitheatre round about Jerusalem, that Thou art the Son of God. Give them this sign from Heaven that Thou art The Prophet." Our Lord's answer was, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."³

¹ St. John vi. 61, 62.

² St. John i. 21-25; St. John vi. 30. St. Matt. xvi. 1, seq.

³ The three quotations from the Book of Deuteronomy, with which our Lord met and responded to the three temptations of Satan in the wilderness, are all, as we find in studying the context, most apposite. But this one is peculiarly so. The children of Israel were murmuring against Moses and Aaron, (1) because of the destruction of the false prophets, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and (2) because there was no water. In answer to these murmurings, God told His Prophet to speak to the rock, and the waters would flow. But Moses was angered at the comparison between him and the false prophets. The children of Israel

If Christ had yielded and descended to the Temple courts with a protecting band of angels around Him, He would have come suddenly to His Temple, not as the Son of Man, but as the triumphant Son of God, His work as a human prophet would have been abrogated, the Gospel history would never have been written, His Cross and Passion would never have been heard of; for not only the Jews, but the whole human race, would have greeted Him, at once, as the Son of God.

It is noteworthy, that all through His ministry Christ resolutely refused to give a sign that would coerce the world, either by eyesight or reason, into receiving Him as the Teacher sent from Heaven. When the Jews, in those same Temple courts, afterward said unto Him, "What sign shovest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things?" His answer was, "Destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up."¹ When the Sadducees and Pharisees came to Him in Galilee, tempting Him and desiring "a sign from Heaven," His answer was, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas."²

harassed him by their unbelief, and by their clamor for an unmistakable sign of his prophetic office, and he resolved to give them such a sign. He therefore struck the rock with his memorable rod, instead of simply speaking to it. His sin was (1) the sin of yielding to the people's craving for an immediate, visible sign of his prophetic office, and tempting God, therefore, to compromise with the spirit of unbelief, by affording such an unnecessary sign; (2) personal unbelief and impatience at the slow and tedious way in which God was vindicating His own work in the eyes of a murmuring multitude; (3) a sin of presumption, in expecting and calling upon God to do something different from that which He had directly promised to do.

It is a significant fact, that on account of this very sin, Moses, who was a type of Christ, in the prophetic office (see Deut. xviii. 18) was not allowed by God to lead the children of Israel *into the Promised Land*.

¹ St. John ii. 18, 19.

² St. Matthew xvi. 1-4.

The one sign to which, in both of these cases, He points is His Resurrection from the dead, as *Man*. Instead of "casting Himself down" as the Son of God, He rises from the grave as the Son of Man.

The third temptation bears on its face a direct reference to Christ's kingly office, and, therefore, needs but little comment. The tempter, taking Christ up into a high mountain and showing Him all the kingdoms of the world, said unto Him : "All this power will I give thee, *and the glory of them*, if thou wilt worship me."¹ The temptation meant : "Thine is the Messianic kingdom ? Then make the kingdom Thine own at once, by coming down to the world's ideas, by substituting the world's conception of power and glory for Thine Own. Intermingle expediency with principle, policy with righteousness. Make room for the god of pride that this world worships, beside the God of Heaven, and at once all the kingdoms of the world will be at Thy feet."

It is noteworthy that in neither St. Matthew's nor St. Luke's narrative is this temptation prefaced with the words, "If Thou be the Son of God;" Christ had met the other temptations as the Son of Man, and now, as Son of Man He is tempted to gain His power as King over His brother men by accommodating Himself to human ideas of power and glory. When Christ refused, the other alternative became inevitable, and our Lord knew it to be so. The only earthly throne, henceforth, before Him was the Cross with the superscription written over it, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews ;" and this temptation to set up the Kingdom by force instead of by the Cross was life-long,² as it was also, probably, the chief cause of the agony in the garden.

¹ St. Luke iv. 6, 7.

² See St. Matthew xvi. 21, 22, 23, *i.e.*, the same answer as in the Wilderness.

THE HUMILIATION OF THE MAN CHRIST JESUS.

This threefold temptation Christ met and conquered as *Man*. And this was essential. Christ, when He became Man, submitted to the conditions of human existence. But, at no time, was He helplessly bound by those conditions. At any moment He could have suspended them and asserted His power as the Son of God. And Christ Himself points to this fact when He said to the Jews regarding His life: "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again."¹

All through His earthly life He was continuously exercising His human free will, not to exert His power on earth as the Son of God but to live as the Son of Man. Though "He saved others" by the display of a more than human power at times, yet He could not, in the same manner, "save Himself," or come down from the Cross, without destroying the reality of His Manhood, the reality of His temptations, the reality of the work He came to do. Thus, while He was tempted in all points like as we are, He was, at the same time, *tempted infinitely more than we are*.

And this brings up an apparent contradiction which is part of the mystery of our Lord's earthly life. In a former chapter we dwelt upon the way in which God reveals Himself in Christ, and pointed out how Christ, in that earthly life, showed us the Father. His words to St. Philip are conclusive on this point: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father."²

¹ St. John x. 17, 18.

² St. John xiv. 9.

Thus, in the most real sense, Christ's life on earth was the life of the Son of God. Indeed, it must have been so, if God's Revelation of Himself is consummated in Christ. But in this chapter we have been emphasizing the opposite reality, that Christ's earthly life was just as truly the life of the Son of Man.

The reconciliation of these apparently conflicting truths is given in a passage of St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians which, from time immemorial, has been looked upon as an inspired interpretation of the voluntary humiliation of Christ, and, from this passage, the word *Kenōsis*, descriptive of that humiliation, originated. In it St. Paul states that Christ, Who was in the form of God, emptied (*ἐκένωσε*) Himself, taking the form of a servant. The juxtaposition of those two phrases, "the form of God" and "the form of a servant" is as significant as it is bold. They borrow reality from each other. The Son of God became really the Son of Man by a *Kenōsis*. He *emptied* Himself of His glory as the Son of God¹ that He might glorify God as the Son of Man.²

¹ Phil. ii. 6-11.

² "The subject of the whole paragraph is the historical Christ, rising to glory through humiliation. But that this humiliation should take place, that there indeed should be room for renunciation, it was certainly necessary that Christ should have been already, in Himself, and by nature, of a higher condition. This original state the Apostle indicates in the words, *ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων*, which form the most exalted metaphysical definition ever given by Paul to the Person of Christ. They express a substantial relation to God, a relation that the expressions *ἴκανος καὶ δόξα τοῦ Θεοῦ* (2 Cor. iv. 6), which are sometimes adduced as a parallel, do not involve. Paul has said of man, in his present condition, that he is the image and glory of God (1 Cor. xi. 7); he would never have said of us, as of Christ, *ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχοντες*. . . . Christ is no more able than we are to go beyond Himself, to exceed the limits of His nature. His development only makes manifest what was inherent in Him in principle, and the goal, which is the *Divine state*, implies for a starting-point, a Divine *nature and virtue*. These two phases of development are related to each other very much as *potentia* is to

THE EXALTATION OF THE MAN CHRIST JESUS.

The man Christ Jesus lived the common life of ordinary men and was tempted in all points like as we are, but while doing so, He subordinated His human will so *action*. Christ was *potentially* from the first, that which He finally became *in actuality*. Thus the child, being by its very nature ἐν μορφῇ ἀνθράπου, finally attains full humanity. The μορφὴ Θεοῦ, therefore, indicates the general form of Christ's being; but is, if I may so speak, an empty form which has to be filled—that is to say, spiritually realized. There was in Him the *capacity* to receive and contain all the plenitude of the Divine life (*πλήρωμα θεότητος*). . . . Christ, who was by the order of His being (genere essendi) of Divine nature, renounces the Divine form of His essence, and annihilates His personal will in the presence of the Father's will. In a word, He sacrifices Himself. This annihilation is not a *metaphysical transubstantiation*, which is an impossible conception; it is a *moral act*, analogous to that which every spiritual being is called upon to perform, in order that he may become truly himself and fulfil his destiny. The words ἐκένωσε ἑαυτὸν are explained by the three participles which follow, in well-marked gradation: μορφὴν δούλου λαβὼν—Christ, who was by nature ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ, took upon Him the μορφὴν δούλου, that He might develop Himself in this lower condition; He sacrificed His dignity, He became like men; and, finally, was found as a mere man. The two remaining clauses, εν δμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος, εὑρεθὲν ὡς ἄνθρωπος, are only the explanation, the objective realization of the μορφὴ δούλου. The third stage, rising upon and above the other two, is the obedience (*γενόμενος ὑπήκοος*), an obedience which found its goal and consummation in the death on the cross. This development, therefore, is simply an ever-deepening humiliation. But this humiliation is at the same time an exaltation; and it is here that the great law of the moral life is manifested. In His constant self-renunciation Christ actualized the virtualities of His nature. Every sacrifice left Him ennobled and enriched. Reaching the lowest depth of His humiliation, in His death on the Cross, He attained the very height of His glory. Thus Jesus fulfilled His original destiny, and arrived at last at a condition of complete and actual Divine royalty. ‘Therefore,’ as Paul has so finely said, ‘God has supremely exalted Him, and given Him a name above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven, upon earth, and under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.’”—The Apostle Paul, Sabatier, pp. 259–262.

completely to God's will, that He was able to live on earth the very life of heaven itself, yes, of God Himself, and thus translated God's life into human actions. Though He was from the first "in the Form of God" His supreme effort was to live a human life in the Form of a Servant, on this earth, until by perfect obedience He could take His Manhood up to God. And so perfect and successful was the effort to make His human will one with the will of God, that He could say at the end, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." God and man are one in Him; He lived on earth *both* the life of the Son of God and the life of the Son of Man. "Wherefore," St. Paul says, "God also hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."¹

The name of Jesus is Christ's human name given to Him at His birth, and this name is here emphasized with a profound meaning. It is the *Man* Christ Jesus Who rises from the grave saying, "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth."²

It is the *Man* Christ Jesus Who ascends to heaven to sit on the right hand of God. He ascends to be "where He was before," not only as the *Logos*, the everlasting Son of God, but in a new character. He is henceforth not only the Son of God, but the Son of Man.

It is the *Man* Christ Jesus, Who now reigns as "King of kings and Lord of lords," because He was faithful and true," and because He was "clothed with a vesture dipped in blood."³

In those remarkable words, therefore, "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven and

¹ Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11. ² St. Matt. xxviii. 18. ³ Revelation xix. 13.

things on earth," St. Paul shows how Christ, by His voluntary humiliation and "His obedience unto death—even the death of the cross," became the King. The day of His Ascension was His Coronation Day. At the very time when His disciples, by a true spiritual instinct, were asking, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore the kingdom?"¹ He assumed the sceptre, and He is now reigning, not from a throne on earth, but from a throne in heaven.

As St. Paul traces out for us the kingship of Christ, so in like manner the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews shows us, how this same continuous self-restraint and voluntary humiliation perfected Him for His office as High Priest of the human race, and gave to His human priesthood its reality and its power.²

¹ Acts i. 6.

² When he (the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews) speaks of Christ as perfected for His office, he adduces the proof of His perfection thus: "In that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted. [Heb. ii. 18.] Nor is this faculty of help connected with personal experience of temptation in a merely casual way, as if it would have made little difference though the experience had been dispensed with. On the contrary, a curriculum of temptation is represented as indispensable, by way of training for office. 'Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and trustworthy High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.' [Heb. ii. 17.]

It seems a very legitimate inference that "being made perfect" (Heb. ii. 10) means perfected in the virtue of obedience. . . . Christ's obedience to His Father is regarded as a quality which fits Him for receiving in turn the obedience of others, and for being the author of eternal salvation to all them that do obey Him. And this obedience of His is spoken of as something *learned*. And, reading backward, we find that the learning was by no means easy, but was very irksome indeed, to flesh and blood. Thus we get the thought that, in order to perfect fitness for the office of Saviour, as a Royal Priest, Jesus, in the days of His flesh, in the school days of His earthly life, underwent a process of moral training, whose end was to perfect Him in the virtue of obedience, and

In doing this, the writer of that Epistle leads us along a sacred pathway which no devout Christian mind would dare to explore, save under the shadow and protection of his inspired authority ; yet so clear are his statements, so fearless, yet reverent, is his leading, so firm is his foot-hold, as he passes on from step to step, and so strong is his grasp upon the meaning of the Ascension of Christ, that the different spiritual truths culminating in that Ascension have to be but stated and interpreted by him, to be seen and felt at once by the mind of Christendom. That such an advanced development of Christian doctrine

which was adapted to that end by the tremendous severity of the tasks prescribed and the trials proposed. The official perfecting thus embraces within it a process of moral perfecting which leaves the subject thereof in a higher moral state at the end than it found him at the beginning. And this idea of a moral growth is by no means slurred over by the writer (of the Epistle to the Hebrews) ; on the contrary, he employs all his powers of eloquence to give it the greatest possible breadth and vividness. Starting from the general principle that no right-minded man taketh to himself offices of honor and high responsibility, above all such an office as that of the priesthood, but only in obedience to a divine call [Heb. v. 4], he applies it to the case of Christ, by the remark ; " So also Christ glorified not Himself to be made a High Priest." [Heb. v. 5.] Then, to show how utterly remote such a thought was from the Saviour's mind, how utterly innocent He was of the spirit of self-glorification, in connection with the office to which He was called by the voice of God in Scripture, the writer goes on to describe the agony in Gethsemane, endured by the Great Priest, just before He passed through the rent veil of His flesh, to make an offering for the sin of the world. [Heb. v. 17.] It is as if he had said : " Jesus took this honor of the priesthood on Himself ? Ah, no ! there was no temptation to that, in connection with an office in which the Priest had to be, at the same time, *victim*. Let the agony in the garden bear witness that Jesus was in no mood to arrogate to Himself the sacerdotal dignity. That agony was an awfully earnest, utterly sincere, while perfectly sinless, NOLO PONTIFEX FIERI on the part of one who realized the tremendous responsibilities of the post to which He was summoned, and who was unable for the moment to find any comfort in the thought of its honors and prospective joys."—The Humiliation of Christ, by Dr. A. B. Bruce, pp. 276, 277, 278.

should have taken place in the days of the apostles themselves, and before the destruction of Jerusalem, is a proof of the influence and illuminating power of the Pentecostal Spirit's workings.¹

The writer quotes as the crowning purpose of Christ's life, that old-time prophecy: "In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come, (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God."² And then adds, "By the which *Will* we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins ; but this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God."³

In this "one sacrifice" Christ stands forth as both the sacrificing Priest and the Lamb that is slain ; and the power of His priesthood becomes the power of *self-sacrifice*. As the human *Priest* He enters into an eternal oneness with His Father in Heaven ; on the other hand, as the human Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, He enters into a closer oneness with men on earth. All other priesthoods are "shadows," and not "the very image of the things they typify," compared with Christ's Priesthood ; and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews shows how Christ not only merges into Himself the priesthood of Aaron, but also appears in Heaven as the royal High-Priest after the more ancient order of that Melchisedec, whose very name means King of Righteousness. Again, all other *sacrifices* are but shadows, and not the very image of the thing they typify, compared with the sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

¹ It is to be proved, almost conclusively, from its own internal evidence, that the Epistle to the Hebrews antedates the destruction of Jerusalem.

² Heb. x. 6, 7.

³ Heb. x. 10, 11, 12.

THE BLOOD OF CHRIST MEANS THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

And here we must pause to guard against a modern misconception as to the meaning of that phrase, "the Blood of Christ"—a misconception which prevents many Christians from grasping the full meaning and importance of Christ's Ascension. "The Blood of Christ" is taken as signifying exclusively the *death* of Christ: and through this mistaken interpretation, as we have said before (Chapter X.), most of those false and distorted views of the Atonement have arisen, which have perplexed so many minds in recent years. In the words of Bishop Westcott: "The interpretation of the passages in the New Testament which refer to the blessings obtained by the 'Blood' of Christ must rest finally upon the interpretation given to the use of blood in the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. Our own natural associations with blood tend, if not to mislead, at least to obscure the ideas which it suggested to a Jew."¹

¹ The explanation of this point by Bishop Westcott is so important that we give his own words: "The place occupied by blood in the Jewish sacrifices was connected with the general conception attached to it throughout the Pentateuch. The blood is the seat of life in such a sense that it can be spoken of directly as the life itself (Gen. ix. 4; Deut. xii. 23). More exactly, the life is said to be 'in the blood' (Lev. xvii. 11). Hence it was forbidden to eat flesh with the blood (Gen. ix. 4; Lev. vii. 26 f., xvii. 11 ff.; Deut. xii. 23 f.). A man might not use another's life for the support of his physical life. For it must be observed that by the outpouring of the blood, the life which was in it was not destroyed, though it was separated from the organism which it had before quickened (Gen. iv. 10; comp. Heb. xii. 24; Apoc. vi. 10). This prohibition of the use of blood as food gave occasion for the clearest declaration of its significance in sacrifice (Lev. xvii. 11), *I will even set My face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among the people. For the soul-life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls-lives; for the blood, it atones through the soul-life, i.e., its atoning virtue*

CHRIST FULFILS ALL THE JEWISH TYPES.

The ruling idea of all the Jewish sacrifices was that the blood of the sacrifice was the life of the sacrifice, not only before, but after it was slain. The people were for-

lies not in its material substance but in the life of which it is the ‘vehicle.’ Moreover, the blood already shed is distinctly treated as living. When it is sprinkled upon the altar it makes atonement in virtue of the life which is in it. Thus, two distinct ideas were included in the sacrifice of a victim, the death of the victim by the shedding of its blood, and the liberation, so to speak, of the principle of life by which it had been animated, so that this life became available for another end. The ritual of sacrifice took account of both these moments in the symbolic act. The slaughtering of the victim, which was properly the work of the offerer, was sharply separated from the sprinkling of the blood, which was the exclusive work of the priest. The death was inflicted by him who, in his representative, acknowledged the due punishment of his sin ; the bringing near to God of the life so rendered up was the office of the appointed mediators between God and men. Death and life were both exhibited, death as the consequence of sin, and life made by the divine appointment of a source of life, and it is worthy of notice that these two thoughts of the shedding and of the sprinkling of the blood, which embrace the two elements in the conception of atonement, were equally expressed by the one word, *αίματεκχύσια, Sanguinis effusio, outpouring of blood* (Heb. ix. 22). Thus the life was first surrendered and then united with God.

“ So far the thoughts suggested by the Jewish animal sacrifices seem to be clear ; but they were necessarily imperfect and transitional. The union between the offerers and the offering was conventional and not real. The victim was irrational, so that there could be no true fellowship between it and the offender. Its death was involuntary, so that it could not embody in the highest form surrender to the divine will. All that was foreshadowed by the Mosaic sacrificial system, all that was, from the nature of the case wanting in it, Christ supplied. With Him, the Son of man, all men are made capable of vital union ; in Him, all men find their true life. His sacrifice of Himself, through life and through death, was, in every part, a reasonable service. He endured the Cross at the hands of men. He was at once ‘ offered ’ and ‘ offered Himself ’ (Heb. ix. 14, 28) ; and by His own blood He entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us (Heb.

bidden to eat blood, because the blood represents the energy of the physical life as it is, and as such was it given upon the altar to make an atonement for men's souls. The offerer of the sacrifice slew the lamb with his own hands for his own sins. Then the blood that was released—representing the life that was liberated, and thus made available for another end—was offered by the priest upon the altar, and thus symbolically united with God.

Great truths were typified here, but the types were very imperfect, because (1) the offerer did not die for his own sins ; he slaughtered a lamb to die for him ; (2) the lamb did not die willingly, intelligently, for the sins for which it was sacrificed. There was no self-surrender here. (3) The human priest was separate and distinct, both from the sinful offerer on the one hand, and the sacrifice for sins on the other. His connection with each was not a living union, but only through an outward and official act. (4) The energetic life of the sacrifice departed when

ix. 12). Thus, in accordance with the typical teaching of the Levitical ordinances, the Blood of Christ represents Christ's Life (1) as rendered in free self-sacrifice to God for men, and (2) as brought into perfect fellowship with God, having been set free by death. The Blood of Christ is, as shed, the Life of Christ given for men, the Life which is the Spring of their life (John xii. 24). In each case the efficacy of the Life of Christ depends, from man's side, on the incorporation of the believer 'in Christ.' It will be evident from what has been said that while the thought of Christ's Blood (as shed) included all that is involved in Christ's Death, the Death of Christ, on the other hand, expresses only a part, the initial part, of the whole conception of Christ's Blood. The blood always includes the thought of the life preserved and active beyond death. This conception of the Blood of Christ is brought out in the fundamental passage, St. John vi. 53-56. Participation in Christ's Blood is participation in His life (ver. 56). But at the same time it is implied throughout that it is only through His Death—His violent Death—that His Blood can be made available for men."—The Epistles of St. John, by Bishop Westcott. Additional note on 1 John i. 7, pp. 34-36.

it was slain. It was not life itself, but only a symbol of life that was symbolically united to God.

In Christ, however, all these separated features of sacrifice are united in one Life, and the type becomes a living and reasonable reality.

(1) In Christ the offerer and the victim are united. The man Christ Jesus is slain by sinful men, and at the same time He offers Himself as a willing sacrifice for their sins.

(2) In Christ the two distinct parts of the sacrifice are united, *i.e.*, the shedding of the life-blood in death for sin, and then the offering and the sprinkling of the blood, as a principle of life. For the victim that was slain lives through death; the life that was poured out in death continues in energy and being; the Lamb that was slain is alive forevermore.

(3) In Christ the victim and the Priest are united: the life-blood that was poured out is *in the Priest* and becomes a vital force which He infuses through the power of the Holy Ghost and the sacraments of the Church into those who come to Him to be ransomed from sin. When, therefore, Christ, as both Priest and Lamb, ascended into Heaven, "by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place."¹

"It will be evident from what has been said that while (through the union of Priest and Lamb in one life) the thought of Christ's Blood (as shed) included all that is involved in Christ's Death; the Death of Christ, on the other hand, expresses only a part—the initial part, of the whole conception of Christ's Blood. The blood always includes the thought of the life preserved and active *beyond* death."

Christ Himself says: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His

¹ Heb. ix. 12.

blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”¹

“Participation in Christ’s blood is participation in His life. But at the same time it is implied that it is only through His death—His violent death—that His blood can be made available for men.”

The life-blood that was poured out in death was in Him; in Him it is offered at the altar of heaven and presented to God; in Him it is the life-power which is imparted to believers; from Him it flows down into His Church as newness of life.

The blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth from all sin² signifies, therefore, something more than the death of Christ; it means the “life which has willingly passed through death”³ to the power of the Resurrection and Ascension. It is the life of Him Who was dead and Who now liveth to make intercession for us as the King and High-Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec.

¹ St. John vi. 53.

² 1 John i. 7.

³ The Resurrection of our Lord, by Dr. Milligan, p. 278.

CHAPTER XIV

THE HOLY GHOST IN RELATION TO SPIRITUAL POWER

SYNOPSIS

- I. The Ascended Christ is still the Son of Man. He *continues* in Heaven the work *begun* here. This explains the brevity of His earthly career.
- II. The Ascended Christ did not leave His Disciples orphans. He sent them another Comforter, the Holy Ghost.
- III. The Holy Ghost has always been present on the earth, but never in such fulness as at Pentecost and since.
- IV. The Holy Ghost could thus fully be revealed as a Person only when Christ had been glorified by His Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension.
- V. The Holy Ghost unites with the Church on Earth, her glorified Head in Heaven, as : (a) Prophet ; (b) Priest ; (c) King.
 - (a) The Holy Ghost unites the *Prophet in Heaven* with His Church on earth. It is the Mission of the Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to complete Christ's prophetic teaching. The Holy Ghost in guiding the Church does not utter new truth, but only throws light upon the contents of truth already revealed. The revelation of truth was once for all.
 - (b) The Holy Ghost unites the *High-Priest in Heaven* with His Church on earth. Our Lord's priestly work is of a threefold character : (1) He makes constant intercession there for His Church ; (2) He presents the prayers of His people to God ; (3) He brings His people with Him into the Holy of Holies in His Blood. The Holy Ghost thus effects a Union which is closer than that of the Vine and its branches. The Church on earth is the extension of the Incarnation. Thus her members are in Christ in Heaven as He is in them on earth.

(c) The Holy Ghost unites the *King in Heaven* with His Church on earth. If the Church would win dominion, she must win it as her Lord did, by giving herself up to do the Will of God on earth as it is done in Heaven. She must renounce all selfishness, ambition, and pride.

JESUS CHRIST is in Heaven. But though now He is glorified and all power is given to Him in Heaven and on earth, He is still the Son of man : Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.

The work that was begun here is continued *there*. This is the real explanation of the shortness of His earthly ministry. The Gospels give but the beginning of the wondrous story. They chronicle the way in which He *prepared* Himself to be the Prophet, Priest, and King, but they do not follow Him into the higher sphere of His greatest activities.

But though Christ, in human Presence, bids farewell to this lower world, He provides a way in which from His throne in the Unseen Heavens He shall continue to be as near as ever—nay, nearer than He ever has been before—to His disciples on earth. “I will not leave you orphans,” He said to them before His departure ; “I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth Me no more ; but ye see Me ; because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.”¹ And then and there He told them of the coming of another Comforter.

This union between Christ on His throne in Heaven and His disciples on earth was to be cemented by that Comforter, and ten days after His Ascension the Holy Ghost was sent down (1) as the sign that Christ in heaven was remembering them, and (2) as the fulfilment of His Promise that they should “be endued with power from on high.”²

¹ St. John xiv. 18, 19, 20.

² St. Luke xxiv. 49.

THE PERSONAL REVELATION OF THE HOLY GHOST.

The Holy Ghost had, indeed, always been present in the world. "The Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father"¹ had brooded over the waters of the creation, and had striven with man² from the beginning. Long before Christ's coming He is spoken of in the Old Testament, and recognized as a pervading influence. The recognition may be partial and indistinct, but it is positive so far as it goes.

Again, He had inspired holy men of old to prophesy ; had consecrated John the Baptist even from his mother's womb ; and had come upon the Virgin Mary, overshadowing her with the power of the Highest, so that that holy thing which was born of her was called the Son of God.

But He had never come to humanity itself with that fulness of power with which He was sent down by Christ at Pentecost. The Gospels everywhere indicate that the Pentecostal gift of the Spirit was a new gift, dependent upon Christ's Ascension. Our Lord Himself says, "It is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you."³

St. John, in a previous chapter, writes : "The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified."⁴ The Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, was in the world before Pentecost, as Christ, the Word of God, was in the world before the Incarnation, but neither was personally revealed. And just as the Word was made flesh and dwelt in human nature, so the Spirit of God was sent by Christ, and revealed by Christ as One Who

¹ St. John xv. 26.

² Gen. vi. 3.

³ St. John xvi. 7.

⁴ Ibid. vii. 39.

would convert the band of disciples He left on earth into an organism, into the mystical body of Christ, into the Temple of the Holy Ghost ; and would dwell in this organism perpetually, making it a living thing, giving life to its members, and distributing among them the divine gifts of truth and love and power. But the Spirit of Truth could not descend upon the Church until Jesus Christ was manifested as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Christ was the One Mediator between God and man, both as regards the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Though the Father had always been a Father to the sons of men, through Christ's mediatorial work He became, in a new and higher sense, a Father to the Christian believer.

So, though the Holy Spirit had always been the Spirit of God to the sons of men, through the same mediatorial work of Christ He also became, in a new and higher sense, a personal Presence to the members of Christ's Church. "Before His Ascension our Lord was not in a position to bestow the gift of the 'Holy Spirit.' It was only then that He Himself was perfected. Until that time He had been confined by the limitations and sinless infirmities of His pre-resurrection state. During His life on earth He had, by a constant exercise of His own will, maintained that condition of humiliation which St. Paul describes as an 'emptying of Himself.' He had constantly exercised a self-restraining power. He had not reached that complete development of His own Person which, in the economy of redemption, was the appointed end and issue of all He was to do."¹

It was necessary therefore that Jesus should be "glorified" by His Cross and Passion, His precious Death and Burial, His glorious Resurrection and Ascension, before, as Man, He became so completely one with the Spirit in

¹ The Ascension of our Lord, by William Milligan, D.D., p. 211.

divine life, that the Spirit could become completely one with Him in His glorified human life. But when Jesus was on the throne and had raised our manhood up to God, then the Spirit of Truth was His to send. The Pharisees had asked Him for a sign from heaven in His earthly life, and He had said that the only sign He would give the outer world was the sign of His Resurrection ; but now to *His Church* (not the outer world) He does lovingly vouchsafe this sign from heaven. He had risen from the dead saying, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth,"¹ and now He endues His Church "with Power from on High"²—the Power of the Holy Ghost Himself.³ And the emphasis which Christ, and His apostles after Him, lay upon this "Power" in connection with our Lord's Ascension, shows that it is a personal Presence corresponding in greatness and character with God's gift of His only-begotten Son.

Henceforth, therefore, the Holy Spirit of Truth becomes the Spirit of Christ in His Church, and He is recognized and spoken of as such by the apostles in their New Testament writings.⁴ His office, when He descends upon the Church at Pentecost, is to unite that Church on earth in the closest possible union with her glorified Head in heaven.

Without the Holy Ghost, Christ is an absent Lord and Saviour to the Church as well as to the outer world, and His disciples must look back to His earthly life as it is recorded in the Gospels, for inspiration and guidance.

With the Holy Ghost, the Church is brought in direct, personal and present contact with Christ in *His glorified state*, and is immediately influenced by what He is now doing for her, as her Prophet, Priest, and King, in Heaven. This is the assurance that Christ gave to His apostles

¹ St. Matt. xxviii. 18.

² S. Luke xxiv. 49.

³ Acts i. 8.

⁴ Gal. iv. 6; Phil. i. 19, etc.

when He pointed forward to the time after His Ascension and said: "When the Comforter is come, Whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me."¹ "When He, the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you."² And that Christ refers here, not to His life on earth, but by anticipation to His ascended life in Heaven, when "all power" shall be given to Him, is clearly indicated by the words that follow: "All things that the Father hath are mine; *therefore*, said I, that He shall take of mine and shall show it unto you."³

Let us now consider all this in connection with Christ's present work as Prophet, Priest, and King, in Heaven.

CHRIST, OUR PROPHET IN HEAVEN.

I. Through the Holy Ghost the Church on earth is brought in contact with Christ as Prophet.

The prophetic teaching of Christ was not completed when He was in this lower world. This our Lord plainly intimated on the night before His Crucifixion. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now,"⁴ He said, and then a little afterward He added, "These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs, but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father."⁵

The full meaning not only of Christ's teachings, but of His Life, of His Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension,

¹ St. John xv. 26.

² Ibid. xvi. 13, 14.

³ Ibid. xvi. 15.

⁴ Ibid. xvi. 12.

⁵ Ibid. xvi. 25.

could not be grasped by His followers until the period of His humiliation was overpast and He sat down in His glorified humanity at the right hand of God.

But the glorification was not complete until Christ had left this earth and was separated from His followers. The only way, therefore, in which He could speak to them and show them plainly of the Father, was through the Holy Ghost. That same Holy Spirit Who spake by the prophets, now, in a higher and more exalted sense, spake *through* the glorified humanity of Christ, and spake *for* Christ in Heaven, "testifying of Him," "bringing all things to their remembrance that Christ had said to them;" "teaching them all things" and "guiding them into all truth." Yet, through all, it is not the Holy Ghost Himself who is the Prophet, but Christ. For the Spirit of Truth does not come to "speak for Himself." Our Lord had distinctly said, "Whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak." His whole message is to glorify Christ. He discloses nothing new. He does not add to the revelation already given.¹

¹ As Dr. Milligan truly says, "Our Lord undoubtedly speaks of the Spirit's guiding the disciples 'into all the truth,' and showing them the 'things that are to come.' But it is of the utmost importance to observe that the truths thus referred to are not really new. They are old truths made new, expanded, unfolded, illuminated by history. When history is read in the spirit of Christian insight, trust, and hope, there will not be in them one revelation, strictly so called, that was not in the Person or the teaching of Jesus Himself; but their ever greater depths will be seen as the relations of the Church and the world become more complex. It has been so in the past; it will be so in the future. The treasure in the words of Christ will never be exhausted. According to the seeming paradox of the apostle, it contains 'what we are to know,' although it 'passeth knowledge.' But no revelation given by the Spirit may go beyond the revelation given us in Christ, or supersede the necessity of our seeing that its contents are involved in what He was or is. The Spirit which we receive is the Spirit of Christ, bestowed by Him, descending upon us from Him, and so flowing as a new life-blood, but still the blood of Christ, through the veins and arteries

He is thus the Interpreter of Christ's earthly life and the Revealer of what Christ is now in Heaven. The old truths are made new by the new light which the Spirit throws upon their inner meaning ; by the new life which the Spirit draws out of them ; by the fresh inspirations which, through the guidance of the Spirit, they are ceaselessly outpouring ; by the wondrous adaptation, which the Spirit reveals in them, to the ever-changing, ever-progressive conditions of the Church's life as she gathers a Christian or semi-Christianized civilization

of our spiritual frame, that we shall be 'new creatures,' yet new creatures not in the Spirit, but 'in Christ Jesus.' To look at the matter in any other light not only opens the door to the follies and fanaticisms which, in connection with the doctrine of the Spirit, have defaced the history of the Christian Church, but overturns the rational character of the Christian faith, eliminates the immediateness of that human element in the application of redemption which is essential to real mediation between God and man, leads to an undervaluing of those instrumentalities—the word, the sacraments, and the ministry—which have been appointed by Divine wisdom for our edification and comfort, and deprives the Christian life of that stability by which alone the aberrations of individual zeal can be corrected. Nay, more. To separate the function of the Spirit from the historical Redeemer is nothing less than 'to substitute the Holy Ghost in the place of the Son,' or rather to maintain that, whereas the work of man's government and salvation was at one time discharged by God under the name of Christ, at a later period there was a new title adopted, and the same Being reappeared under the name of the 'Holy Ghost.' The fundamental principle of the New Testament, that the whole Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—co-operate in the work of our redemption, thus disappears, and the doctrine of the Trinity itself is in danger of becoming a metaphysical speculation, without any practical bearing upon our life and character. It seems only necessary to add that, in speaking of the historical Christ, we are not to think simply of our Lord as He was on earth. It is the glorified Christ whom it is the peculiar function of the Spirit—that is, of the Spirit of Christ as glorified—to reveal within us. To Himself as glorified, our Lord obviously refers when, speaking of the aspect of the Spirit's work now before us, He says, in words already quoted, 'What He shall *hear* that shall He speak.' 'He shall glorify *Me.*'"—The Ascension of our Lord, pp. 200, 201, 202.

about her. But the revelation itself remains unchanged. It centres in the Person and work of Jesus Christ—the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, and reveals the life of Christ as a fountain that is perpetually flowing, perpetually giving out fresh streams of life and inspiration to every age. “He that believeth on *Me*,” said Christ, “shall never thirst.”¹

The importance of this fact cannot be over-estimated. The experience of the Christian ages shows us plainly that those who have looked for and taught a further revelation of the Spirit, supplementing the previous revelation of Christ, have lost the reasonableness, the definiteness, and the proportion of the faith as it is set forth in the Catholic Creeds. They have been led into all kinds of extravagances and exaggerations, which have no foundation in the facts of the Christian religion, and in consequence the Risen and Ascended Christ Himself has been lost sight of and forgotten. The truths involved in these facts have been obscured, and the sacraments ordained by Christ Himself have been ignored. If the Church does not keep her eyes fixed intently upon Her ascended Lord, the consciousness of His continuous work and Presence will be lost, and the connecting links that unite His life with her own will be broken.²

CHRIST, THE HIGH-PRIEST IN HEAVEN.

II. Our ascended Lord in His present office as High-Priest, is united to His Church on earth through the power of the Holy Ghost.

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, writing by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, shows us that this priestly work of Christ in heaven is continuous.

¹ St. John vi. 35.

² The writer is indebted to Dr. Milligan for some of these thoughts.

It is true that the humiliation and suffering of Christ are passed. In this sense Christ has offered one sacrifice for sins forever. There is no repetition of the agony and bloody sweat, of the Cross and Passion—and the writer dwells upon this truth with greatest emphasis.¹ But Christ, as our great High-Priest, has a work to do for us, there, in the holy place made without hands, that will never end until He comes again.

This work, as described in the Epistle to the Hebrews, is threefold.

(1) Our Lord ever liveth to make intercession for His Church on earth, and is able to save to the uttermost those that come to Him as their great High-Priest (Heb. vii. 25, 27, ix. 24–26).

(2) Our Lord brings the prayers of His people to God (Heb. xiii. 15).

(3) Our Lord brings His people with Him into the holy of holies, where He is, *in His blood*, that is, in His continuous life, at once the Sacrificing Priest and the Lamb “that liveth and was dead.”²

Let us briefly consider these three points.

(a) Our Lord, then, is perpetually interceding for His Church, and if the High-Priestly prayer that He offered up the night before His Crucifixion may be taken as the type of the prayer that He is continuously offering up in Heaven for His disciples, then we behold a length and breadth of meaning in that word “Intercession,” which covers the whole life, and energy, and history of the Church on earth.

Christ, as the Saviour of men and the Revealer of God, has “finished the work that God gave Him to do.” He has “glorified God on the earth.” He has “manifested God’s Name to His disciples,” and now He is “no more”

¹ Heb. vii. 27, ix. 24–26, x. 11–18.

² See Westcott’s Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 229 (additional note.)

in the lower world of sin and shame. As our great High-Priest He has ascended to the Temple made without hands, where He ever liveth to make intercession for us.¹

That this intercession is not directly for the outer world but for His Church and "those who come to God through Him," seems to be indicated by that High-Priestly prayer before His Crucifixion, for at the same time that He said, "I am no more in the world," He also said, "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me; for they are Thine, and all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine; and I am glorified in them."²

Indeed, it is difficult to see how it could be otherwise, for, after His Resurrection, Christ's contact with the unbelieving world is over. Henceforth Jesus is "no more in this world." In the forty days that He remains on this earth, He appears to the disciples only: the words that He speaks are personal charges to them about the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.³ And when He, at last, ascends to Heaven, it is in their sight alone, not in that of the outer world, that He ascends. No one can read the account of those hallowed Resurrection days, without being solemnly impressed with the silence of Christ about the Jews and Romans—those who denied Him and those who crucified Him; and the great gulf that now seems to lie between Him and all unbelievers. The contrast between Christ as He was in the days of His ministry and Christ as He is now, is very marked. Our Lord had shown, in that past, His great passion to seek and save the lost. No man ever loved the poor, the outcast, the depraved, as Jesus loved them. On the very cross He had prayed for His murderers: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." Now he leaves the Cross to tell its story. For all time that Cross of

¹ Romans viii. 34; Heb. vii. 25, ix. 24; 1 John ii. 1, 2.

² St. John xvii. 9, 10.

³ Acts i. 3.

Christ will stand before the eyes of men as the proof that “God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”¹ Hereby they may perceive His love because He laid down His life for them.²

But after that stupendous sacrifice Christ is “no more in the world.” He is separate henceforth from the unbelieving, the worldly-minded, the careless and indifferent. If they listen not to the message that comes from the Cross ; if they come not to the Cross to have their sins forgiven ; if they refuse to believe in a Saviour Who is nailed to that Cross for them, then they cannot follow Christ through the grave and gate of death to His joyful Resurrection and glorious Ascension. After the Cross, with its one full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, there is no more sacrifice for sins. But in Heaven, Christ “is able also to save them to the uttermost *that come unto God by Him*, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” There is a sacredness about Christ’s high priestly work in Heaven that we dare not intrude upon with human surmisings, but from all this it would seem that His only connection with an *unbelieving* world, after He rises from the dead, is through the Church.³

One thing, however, is sure. We know that Christ as the great High Priest of His Church does pray in Heaven for them that believe in Him. Here is light, here is reality, here is peace. Those who leave the outer darkness of the outer world and “come unto God by Him,” come under the shadow of Christ’s protection, and are shielded by the prayers of our great High Priest in Heaven.

¹ St. John iii. 16.

² 1 John iii. 16.

³ Heb. vii. 25. But behind this there is, perhaps, another truth in the shadowy background. See St. John x. 16. “So far the thought of the priestly work of the Ascended Christ is expressed under the images

We have spoken before of the exhaustless meaning in that word Intercession, as it stands interpreted by Christ's high priestly prayer in the seventeenth chapter of St. John's Gospel. It covers the whole of the believer's personal life, with its joys and sorrows, its aspirations for holiness, and its broken resolves. Nothing is forgotten in His sight, by Whom the very hairs of our head are all numbered. It covers also the life of the Church, as age after age passes by ; its trials and persecutions ; its throes and perplexities ; its periods of temptation and back-sliding, its times of revival and reformation.

It covers also the future of the Church ; its development in the world ; its missionary work and home work ; its longings for unity, and for the advent of that day when, through the oneness of the Church and the reunion of Christendom, the world will believe that the Father hath sent Him.

(b) Christ in Heaven presents the prayers of the faithful to God. This appears to be the ultimate meaning of that oft-repeated phrase of the Gospel : " Whatsoever ye shall ask *in My Name*," as it also interprets for us that sentence with which so many of the Collects of the Prayer Book end "*Through Jesus Christ our Lord*."

We know not what we should pray for as we ought, but Christ, our Advocate at the throne of God, *distinguishes between the words and inner spirit of each prayer*. As our human Priest, who has shared all our human experience, He understands and rightly translates

of the Levitical Covenant as He works for 'the people' (*ἡ ἐκκλησία*) ; but He has yet another work as 'priest after the order of Melchizedek' for humanity. He does not lay aside this wider relation in completely fulfilling the narrower. Rather it is through the fulfilment of His work for the Church—the first fruits—that He moves towards the fulfilment of His work for the world. We have no power to pursue the development of this truth, but it is necessary to remember it."—Westcott on the Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 230.

our true spiritual desires, and presents them before the throne. Thus, while we are praying, we are not alone. Two streams of prayer are intermingled—Christ's intercession for us, and our prayers for ourselves. And St. Paul adds, "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities," and "maketh intercession for us."¹

(c) But the most blessed part of Christ's priestly work in Heaven is that which the author of the Epistle dwells upon in those words : " Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh, and having a high priest over the house of God ; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith."²

We have dwelt before upon the distinction that is to be ceaselessly borne in mind between the *shedding* of blood for the remission of sins, and the *sprinkling* of blood as the communication of a principle of life, giving to the sinner power to overcome sin ; we have shown how, while Christ shed His life-blood on the cross to atone for all sin, salvation comes from the power of His life now communicated to us, through that Holy Ghost Who unites Christ in heaven with Christians on earth.

This union is of the closest kind. Christ referred to it on the night before His crucifixion, when He said, "Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit ; for without Me ye can do nothing."³

Christ could not before His death explain all that this figure meant, but after He had risen from the dead and ascended into Heaven—after the Holy Ghost came down

¹ Romans viii. 26.

² Heb. x. 19, 20, 21.

³ St. John xv. 4, 5.

bringing to the apostles' memory all that He had said unto them about their union with Him through His flesh,¹ His body, and His blood²—then the deeper truth was revealed to their minds.

Believers are not only united to Him as the branches are to the vine, but as the members of a human body are to the head ; not only as by the sap that flows from the vine into the branch, but by the blood of Jesus that flows into them from Him.

The Church is the body of Jesus Christ on this earth. The life-blood that was poured out, *i.e.*, the *Divine-Human Life*, which was released from the human body of our Lord on the cross, after His Resurrection and Ascension, became available to all believers, through the power of the Holy Ghost, and henceforth Jesus Christ became incarnated in His Church. St. Paul lays the greatest emphasis upon the fact that the Church is the body of Christ. He dwells upon it again and again.³ It is a ruling thought which appears in most of his greater epistles ; it is a central truth from which he draws first one kind of lesson, and then another ; he makes it the corner-stone of all his sacramental teaching. By baptism, he tells us, we are all made members of one body. The cup of blessing becomes to us the communion of the blood of Christ, the bread which we break becomes the communion of the body of Christ. Those who receive this communion are incorporated in Christ. “For we being many, are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread.”⁴

This close and intimate union with Christ, whereby the Church on earth, as His body, becomes the continuation of His Incarnation, explains many words and say-

¹ St. John vi. 51.

² St. Matt. xxvi. 28.

³ Romans xii. 5 ; 1 Cor. xii. 13, 27 ; Col. i. 18 ; Ephes. iv. 4, 15, 16, seq.

⁴ 1 Cor. x. 17.

ings, not only of the New Testament writers, but of our Lord Himself which otherwise might seem vague and mystical.

Christ is IN US. How often do we meet this phrase, and how perplexing it is to those who do not grasp the central truth, to reconcile the thought of the Son of Man, at one and the same time, in Heaven sitting at the right hand of the Father, yet present "wher-
ever two or three are gathered together in His Name."

They have no unifying thought which connects the twofold Presence—His Presence in Heaven and His Presence on earth—with one another. But when we look up to Him as "the Head of the body, the Church"¹ all becomes harmonious at once.

Again, we are IN CHRIST. This is another phrase, even more difficult to apprehend, if we do not rise to the Apostle's thought. St. Paul tells us that "we are buried with Him by Baptism,"² "risen with Christ,"³ to newness of life; that we are ascended with Christ, and that "God hath made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."⁴

To affirm that the members of the Church on earth are crucified with Christ, dead and buried with Christ, risen with Christ, and ascended to Heaven with Christ, seems a daring reach of metaphorical language to the outer world. And to those Christians who substitute the "spirit of Christ" or the "character of Christ" for the supernatural facts of Christ's actual history, there can be no real meaning in, and no justification of, St. Paul's strong expressions;—there is no room for St. Paul's teaching in their Christianity. If a modern writer were to use these expressions for the first time he would doubtless be censured by such thinkers, as guilty not only of very exag-

¹ Col. i. 18.

² Rom. vi. 4.

³ Col. iii. 1.

⁴ Eph. ii. 6.

gerated and imaginative language, but even of irreverence. But when we follow "the Life that willingly passed through death" up to the Father's throne; when we realize, as the apostles did, the nature of Christ's Priesthood in Heaven, and His union as Priest and Lamb with His Church on earth; when we behold the consequences that flow from Christ's Ascension and entrance, by His own blood (*i.e.*, His own glorified human nature) into the Holy of Holies; when we understand the nature of that vital union between Christ in Heaven and His Church on earth, which is effected through the power of the Holy Ghost, Whom He sends down; when we grasp the truth that Christ has joined our human nature with His own, by His own blood, and "*by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil—that is to say, His flesh,*"¹ then, we begin to comprehend that Christ and His Church are so completely one, that the members of His Church are *in Christ* as truly in Heaven, as He is *in them* on earth. And the more we reflect upon the underlying realities expressed by that phrase the "*Body of Christ,*" as applied to the Church, the more we find ourselves *irresistibly drawn on to adopt the very kind of language used by St. Paul in his epistles.*

CHRIST, THE KING IN HEAVEN.

III. Christ in Heaven is our King, and through the Holy Ghost, He is now ruling, governing, and shaping the destinies of His kingdom on earth. And the way in which He thus influences and controls His universal empire on earth is plain. Though now He is King, He is "*Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever.*" The principles by which He rules are those that governed Him in His whole earthly ministry,

¹ Heb. x. 20.

and which brought Him to that cross upon which the title was affixed "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews."

As Son of Man on earth, Christ refused to propagate His kingdom by any other power than the power of a human will which gave itself up to doing God's will on earth as it is done in heaven. For this He cried in Gethsemane, "Thy will not Mine be done." For this He suffered under Pontius Pilate; for this He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; for this He submitted to the loss of all things, until, at last, even His human body was taken from Him and given to others; yet He died with an unconquered will, and because that human will of His was thus stronger than death itself in keeping its union with the sinless, immortal will of God, therefore, He was able to rise from the dead saying, as Son of Man, "All power is given to Me in Heaven and on earth," and to promise His disciples that they should be endued with power from on high after that the Holy Ghost had come upon them. This promise was fulfilled at Pentecost.

But the Church must live the same kind of life that Christ Himself lived on earth, if she would possess His power. The kind of power that Christ rejected while in this world, He rejects still; the power of selfishness and ambition, the power of human pride, wealth, or station. All these are of the earth and earthly. And Christ refuses, now, in His glorified state, as before, in the days of His humiliation, to advance His kingdom by using those things which this world calls great. The *vox populi* is nothing to Him Who wields supreme power over all.

The power of the Church of Christ is a patent fact recognized by all. The gates of hell can never prevail against her, yet it is strangely unlike all earthly forms of

power. When the Christian Church has been forced by trial and persecution to cling most closely to her Lord, then it is that her influence becomes most evident and her progress most rapid. But when she allies herself, as she has so often done in her times of prosperity, to the strong arm of the state, or yields to the seductions of wealth, then internal divisions arise and her life becomes paralyzed.

The secret of the Church's progress is to be like Christ. She can only hope to prevail by rejecting those things which Christ Himself rejected. She must take up her cross and follow Him. She must now pray to *Christ* as He prayed to His Father, "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

Whether we look upon the Church as Christ's Universal Empire on earth, or as a Spiritual Temple in which we are built as living stones, or as the Body of Christ of which He is the Head, or as the Bride of Christ, she must grow up to Him in all things, until by doing the will of Christ on earth she attains to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. The only power from on high that she can expect from that King to whom now all power is given, is the power to live as He lived, the power to conquer as He conquered, the power to perpetuate His life on earth, by virtue of her spiritual union with Him.

CHAPTER XV

THE CHURCH IN RELATION TO SOCIETY

SYNOPSIS

- I. The Christian Church is a Theocracy whose King is Christ and whose Origin is of God.
- II. The Christian Church is an Organism. This is proved by the titles : (a) Body of Christ ; (b) Family of God ; (c) Kingdom of Heaven :
 - (a) As the Body of Christ, she is comparable with the human body, which is the most perfect organism in Nature. The Body of Christ is of *most comprehensive character*, "*filling all things*."
 - (b) As the Family of God, she possesses all the marks of the earthly family but in a *more perfect degree*, including within herself *all the members of renewed humanity*.
 - (c) As the Kingdom of Heaven, the analogy is not with the Kingdom of men but with Nature. Baptism is therefore the token of admission into an organism higher than nature and is not a rite of naturalization. This Kingdom is *of widest possible extent, universal in its scope*.
- III. The Christian Church is the only Social Organism that can reconcile the antagonistic forces at play in the Civilized World. She reconciles the antagonism between the
 - (a) Secular and Religious life by *assimilating* the Secular and *spiritualizing* it. It is a mistake to suppose the reverse process possible.
 - (b) Individualism and Socialism by :
 - (1) Making *spiritual* and not natural progress the aim of the Individual ; and
 - (2) Teaching men to be Altruistic and not Egoistic.
- IV. The true Relation between Church and State.
- V. Christianity and Civilization. Moral progress is in Advance

of Civilization, which would be less moral, if it dared. The progress of Civilization is, therefore, toward the Moral Standards of Christianity *and toward the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.*

- VI. The Christian Church is the continuation of the Incarnation. Therefore, she centres in herself the natural and spiritual, as Christ was the Bond of Union between the human and the divine.

In contradistinction to all forms of human government the Church of Christ is a Theocracy. In contradistinction to all that is of the earth, earthly, it is a Kingdom of Heaven. It originates not in the natural world but in the spiritual world. It starts not from beneath but from above. Its growth is not upward from nature, but downward into nature. Its King is the God-Man, Jesus Christ. The whole Church first existed *in* Christ and then drew its life *from* Christ. It did not exist apart from (*i.e.*, exterior to) Christ Himself, until He ascended to His throne in Heaven, as the Prophet, Priest, and King, to Whom all power is given in Heaven and on earth. Then from Heaven he sent down "power from on high" to His Kingdom of Heaven on earth, and on Pentecost the Church was born, as an organism, developed by the power of the Holy Ghost out of the life of the God-Man, Who was born of the Virgin Mary, and crucified under Pontius Pilate, Who rose again the third day from the dead, and ascended to Heaven.

And the three names by which the Church is most frequently described in the New Testament—the Body of Christ, the Family of God, and the Kingdom of Heaven—unite in setting forth this organic life in the plainest and most unmistakable manner.

These terms are expressly used to convey the idea that the Church is an organism. This is the central truth to which they all refer and without it they are meaningless.

The language applied by Mr. Herbert Spencer to the social organism is exactly descriptive of these figures : "Metaphors are here more than metaphors in the ordinary sense. They are devices of speech hit upon to suggest a truth, at first dimly perceived, but which grows clearer the more carefully the evidence is examined."¹ The Gospels, after Christ's Ascension, do not end with the foundation of a school of philosophy like those of Athens, or a school of prophets to promulgate religious and ethical ideas, in a propagandist way ; they end with the announcement of a life that is to be perpetuated in other lives, by a power that comes from on high, and that is to be a dominating influence *in men's souls* and bodies, claiming singleness of aim, self-sacrifice in action, time, means, strength, courage, suffering, co-operation, unity of purpose, martyrdom itself.

And the character and functions of this organism which Christ called into being when He left the earth, are very distinctly set forth in those three terms to which we have referred.²

I. The Church is the Body of Christ. The analogy here is with the human body, and the latter is the highest and most perfect form of organic life to be found in all nature. As Adam was the father of all flesh and blood, from whom we trace descent by physical generation, so

¹ The Study of Sociology, by Herbert Spencer, p. 330.

² It is with especial reference to the three classes of privileges herein set forth, that the Catechism describes every child that is brought to baptism as one who is therein made *a member of Christ, the Child of God, and an inheritor (citizen) of the Kingdom of Heaven*. The Church is called by other names in the New Testament. She is named as "*the Bride of Christ*," "*the House of God*," "*the Household of Faith*," "*the General Assembly and Church of the First-born*," etc. ; but these are merely other expressions that are identical in meaning, and which convey the same threefold conception. The central idea of an organism underlies them all.

Christ is the Second Adam, from whom every son of God traces his descent by spiritual generation. As the human frame is the most wonderfully complicated piece of mechanism, in the correlation, adjustment, and unity of its various parts, that is known to man; as its various members are animated, held together, and enabled to perform their different functions by a single soul; and as no scientific research has ever been able to tell where the soul ends and the body begins, so is the Church the Body of Christ. St. Paul not only tells us that "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body,"¹ but he dwells upon the analogy, he recurs to it again and again in different epistles, and he expands it, with such a minuteness of detail, as could have been traced only by one who had made this analogy a ruling thought of his theology, which satisfied all the conditions of an organic spiritual society.

Indeed it is hard to imagine how, at that early day, when the Church was not yet thirty years old, any Christian mind could have described so accurately the unchanging and permanent characteristics of that spiritual society, amid the changing times, and used an analogy, the force, correctness and exactness of which become more and more apparent with the growth of centuries. This is something more than a stroke of genius. It can be nothing less than the Inspiration of God. And the description becomes all the more remarkable, when we remember that it is only within recent times that the full meaning of St. Paul's words is beginning to be appreciated. Whether Mr. Herbert Spencer borrowed his idea from the New Testament, when he describes all human society as a vast organism closely resembling the human body in its structure, or whether it dawned upon his mind after independent scientific investigation and syn-

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 13.

thesis, the result in either case is the same. The very fact that he and a multitude of other scientific thinkers hold a conception of civilization which so closely resembles St. Paul's description of Christian society, reveals a striking parallel between sociological and apostolic thought, and shows how they are impressed by the analogy.

Again, thousands of ordinary thinkers to-day, who are neither scientific men nor Christian theologians, appreciate its value so fully that they are applying it not to the Church of Christ but to humanity itself. Without stopping to think of the inconsistencies and contradictions involved in their assertion, or of the glaring discrepancy between their own and St. Paul's use of the figure, they enthusiastically proclaim that the whole human race is the body of Christ and that all men, through His Incarnation, are united spiritually as well as naturally, to God. Could we have a more striking example of the appropriateness of the New Testament metaphor than the trend of modern thought affords?

Before passing on, it is to be observed that this organic body, founded by Christ in the lower world, is to comprehend the highest life of humanity; to bear all the characteristics of a complete and universal social organism and to be immortalized in Heaven itself. The Church is to "grow up unto Him in all things which is the Head, even Christ;" "till we all come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."¹

II. The Church is the Family of God. As in the natural world the family exists amid and beneath all forms of social government as the only institution which, growing out of nature itself, can trace its origin directly

¹ Ephes. iv. 15, 13.

to God ; as it was created by God and not man ; as sons and daughters are united together, not by the tie of confederation but by that of blood, and as their bond of union is descent from a common father, so is it with the family of God. Indeed, the natural here is but the earthly, transitory type of the heavenly, eternal reality.

As Adam is the progenitor of the natural race, so was Christ, the Second Adam, the head of a spiritual race which are “born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”¹ As Adam was the son of God, so, in a higher and eternal way was Christ the Son of God. Again, an earthly father is but a feeble, imperfect representative of the everlasting Father in Heaven. The tie of blood, which to the world seems so strong, is weak in comparison with that spiritual bond of union and sympathy expressed by the phrase, “The Communion of saints.” The home on earth fades from view in contrast with the eternal home which Christ has gone to prepare for us in our Father’s House of many mansions, and, as the Christian child of God outgrows the protection of an earthly home and the fostering care of an earthly father, he finds awaiting him the eternal relationship of which the earthly home was but a feeble and transitory symbol ; he is encompassed by the loving care of One Who, through all eternity, will be His Father in Heaven, and Christ, Who has brought life and immortality to light, and “of Whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named,”² has revealed to us that this Fatherhood of God is the reverse of a metaphor—that it is as organic as it is real, as universal as it is eternal.

III. The Church is the kingdom of Heaven on earth. It is not a mere kingdom of ideas and spiritual influences.

¹ St. John i. 13.

² Ephes. iii. 15.

Neither is it an invisible kingdom of souls. It is true that this notion might be gained from those passages of the Gospel that relate to the utterances of Christ, *before the Church was formed*, and before Christ spoke as *King*; but His work before the Crucifixion was only preparatory to the revelations that were to follow after His triumphal resurrection from death. It was then, after "He showed Himself alive after His passion, by many infallible proofs," that He taught the apostles more distinctly and definitely "of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God."¹ And at the very time when, as King, He said, "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth," He also said, "Go ye, *therefore*, and make disciples [see margin] of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."²

In order to grasp the full meaning of this "Great Commission," as it is called, we must bear distinctly in view that the Kingdom of Heaven is not like the kingdoms of this world. The analogy, present in so many minds, between the kingdom of Christ and such human organizations as the Roman Empire, is false and misleading. The real analogy is not with any form of human government whatever, but between the kingdom of Heaven and the kingdom of *Nature*. Hence Christ's own explanation of Baptism, the Magna Charta of His kingdom, refers not to any rite of naturalization, but to a new birth into a higher organism than that of nature.

And when Nicodemus murmured at the statement that a man must be born again (*i.e., born from above*), Christ explained His former words by saying, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the

¹ Acts i. 3.

² St. Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”¹

Nothing could be plainer than that Baptism stands here as the entrance into a realm that is above and beyond nature. The Christian is first born, and then born again “from above.” He is first born of the flesh, and then born of water and of the Spirit. The kingdom of Heaven here appears, therefore, as a higher spiritual organism overshadowing, and including, the kingdom of nature.

Before the death of our Lord it appears as the kingdom of Heaven *on earth*, but after His Resurrection its real proportions begin to manifest themselves. Christ, then and there, declares that “all power is given to Him in Heaven and on earth.” And then, as He ascends to the throne in Heaven itself, the bewildering truth bursts upon the apostles’ mind that this realm of Christ is not merely a kingdom of God on earth, but an empire as vast as the universe itself, and that in the dispensation of the fulness of times God will “gather together in one all

¹ St. John iii. 5, 6. Since the Reformation this text has been translated by some as referring not to Baptism, but to conversion; but for the previous fifteen hundred years it was universally interpreted by all Christians as meaning Baptism itself, as no less an authority than Hooker himself points out. (Baptismal Regeneration, vol. ii., p. 263.) Nor would any other translation have been given to the words, had not Protestant Theology, in its reaction against the corruptions of mediæval Romanism, and the exaggerated stress that had been laid upon the outward form, to the neglect of the inward life, gone to the other extreme of dwelling upon the inward life to the neglect of the outward form. This gave the reformers a strong bias; they approached the words of Christ with a personal prepossession and prejudice in their minds, and interpreted them to square with a theory. Many Christians are still under the dominion of this prejudice, and therefore are blind to the fact that their mistranslation destroys the connection between Baptism and the principle of the Incarnation itself.

things in Christ, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth.”¹

Bearing in mind this principle of the *universality* and comprehensiveness of the Church as the Family of God, the Body of Christ, and the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, let us now turn our attention to the relation of this Church of Christ to modern civilization, and inquire how it meets and reconciles those antagonistic forces, which, as we have seen (Chapter VI.), manifest their presence so plainly in the progress of the civilized world, and which neither science nor socialism can harmonize.²

DUALISM OF NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL.

The first of these antagonisms to be considered is that between the secular and the religious life, or, in other words, that dualism between the natural and the spiritual, which has been recognized, from time immemorial, in the philosophic thought of the world. The Church, as the kingdom of Heaven on earth, cannot conflict with the kingdom of nature, for *both are of God*, and consequently both organisms must be recognized as obedient to divine laws. There can be no real antagonism, therefore, between the two; the higher must comprehend the lower, and the kingdom of Heaven must harmonize with the kingdom of nature. The Church must be both natural and supernatural, both rational and super-rational, both ethical and super-ethical, both social and individual, both human and divine. Indeed, one cannot read the Gospels, or study the religious past, without seeing that Christianity is both theological and sociological.

¹ Ephes. i. 10.

² The reader, it is hoped, will forgive some repetition of thoughts previously expressed. The repetition is necessary for the sake of plainness.

The spiritual was intended to plant its roots deep down into the natural. It sanctifies every relation of life, every need and aspiration of human nature.

But, on the other hand, the natural does not and cannot comprehend the spiritual. The secular man never rises above the secular consciousness, and the reason for this is truly given by Hegel, when he says, "No one is aware of a limit or defect until he rises above it." The natural belongs to the natural alone. The spiritual comprehends both. Hence, the dualism exists from the side of nature, but not from the side of the Church. The kingdom of Heaven can spiritualize the natural, but the natural can never spiritualize itself. Hence arises that popular confusion of thought regarding the relation between the secular and the spiritual, which is so constantly manifesting itself in human intercourse. The secular man and the spiritual man look at the same issue out of different eyes.

When, for example, the common question is asked, "Can the secular ever be spiritualized?" The spiritual man at once responds, "Yes, for the religion of Christ must be as catholic as the needs of human nature, and we can consecrate whatsoever we do, in word or deed, to the service of Christ." And this statement is, and must be, eternally true. The conventional and nominal Christian also responds in the affirmative. He replies, "Yes, for in the progress of civilization the secular life is being continuously elevated to a higher ethical level. Christianity is an evolution of the higher instincts of man, in which the natural is gradually becoming the spiritual," a statement which is not only grossly inaccurate, but eternally false. It is just here that the danger comes in of substituting a false for a true Christianity. Science and philosophy, art and literature, music and poetry, are not, in themselves, unchristian, but they be-

come unchristian when they are made, in any way, a substitute for the spiritual life itself. All that belongs to the natural life of man is divine, so long as it is confined to its own sphere, but when it usurps the place of the spiritual and resists the higher life it becomes an evil. It is not nature itself that is evil, for nature is an organism formed by God. *The spirit of sin or lawlessness is nowhere to be found in nature.* It does not exist apart from man, and the evil, therefore, is not in nature but in human nature.

This brings up the question of human personality in its relation to the objective world, and the *Summum Bonum.*

There are three "Goods," the *Natural*, the *Moral*, and the *Spiritual*. (1) If man knew nothing higher than natural good, he would find his fullest life and happiness in obeying the laws of nature. But (2) every man has a moral sense; this brings him in contact with a higher world than that of physical nature, and, under these conditions, his fullest life and happiness come from obedience to both moral and natural laws. (3) Man is also a self-conscious person, created in the image of God. His personality is a reflection of God's personality, and ever since God has revealed Himself to His earthly children, man's highest life is not realized until he lives in union with God. This union with God brings him in union also with everything that God has made. Under normal conditions, every higher good comprehends every lower, and, therefore, by living in union with God, man receives, at once, spiritual good, moral good, and natural good. *But no man is compelled thus to live.* Freedom of choice is an essential characteristic of that human nature which was created in the image of God, and here sin comes in. "*Sin is lawlessness,*" it is the spirit of self-will which sets itself up against God's will, substituting self

for God, and human independence for dependence on Him.¹

If man refuses thus to live in union with God he entails upon himself the following consequences: 1. He isolates himself from God, for sin necessarily involves a state of separation from God, in which he not only loses his right relation to God but his true relation to both natural and spiritual worlds. 2. He loses the highest, *i.e.*, the spiritual good, which is only to be gained by living in union with God. 3. Losing this, he is obliged to make a lower good take the place of, and stand as a substitute for, the highest good; and in thus placing the natural *above* the spiritual he adds to his sin, by *misusing* nature itself. 4. He violates the law of his own being, for after having been made in the image of God, he refuses to be God-like. The personal religious life of the believer is the highest fulfilment of man's being, because it is a self-fulfilment by oneself, in reaching out for that which is highest through union with God. Sin is, therefore, the worst contradiction of nature because it is the double contradiction of oneself, *by oneself*, and the result is bondage—the slavery of one's will to that which is not himself and which is contrary to self.² This is the very worst form of slavery conceivable, and as Christ Himself has told us, it ends in *death*.³ Here, then, we have contrasted, the true and the untrue relation of man to the objective world and the *Summum Bonum*. If, on the one hand, he wills to do God's will, he becomes one with God, one with the Kingdom of Heaven, and one with nature; if, on the other hand, he chooses sin, he thereby not only

¹ "In the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as God knowing good and evil."—Gen. iii. 5, R. V.

²The Soteriology of the New Testament, by the Rev. Professor DuBose, p. 12 *seq.*

³St. John, viii. 24 *seq.*

separates himself from God but violates the laws of both natural and spiritual worlds.

And now that we have eliminated the element of Free-will (and thus saved human personality) from his comparison, we can safely and helpfully use, for all that it is worth, Mr. Herbert Spencer's analogy between human society as an organism and the human body, for in the way that Christianity deals with the body we have an indication of the true Christian line of action with regard to human society.

The human body was never regarded by the Church as, in itself, evil. The powerful heresy of Manichæism, great as its influence once was, never gained a foothold in the Church of Christ; on the contrary, she unswervingly maintained that that organism which was portrayed in the Bible as the climax of the creation recorded in Genesis, and which was pronounced by God Himself to be "good" cannot be evil; and here, not only the Christian Church, but the whole of Holy Scripture also, accord with the teachings of science. The sacredness of human life is one of the ruling ideas of the Christian religion, and Christ Himself says that the very hairs of our head are all numbered.

The body with its needs is to be cared for, protected, "cherished." In making its wants and appetites known to us it is only fulfilling the law of its own animal life, as an organism framed by God, and that life is to be consequently respected as God-given.

But when the wants and appetites of the body rise up to conflict with, or assert in any way, a supremacy over the higher life of the soul, then it is the duty of every Christian "to keep his body under," and thus arises a constant warfare. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other."¹

¹ Gal. v. 17.

So, also, is it with human society as an organism. There are many factors in our modern civilization which are, in no sense, the product of nature's laws. All that part of civilization which is directly traceable to original sin, and also to human free-will—on the one side, exercising itself *against* nature in compromising with the influences of sin or lawlessness, and, on the other, exercising itself *above* nature in following the higher influences of Christianity—stands outside of the natural organism. But when this is eliminated, what is left in civilization may rightly be looked upon as conditioned by the law of evolution, which science traces everywhere in the natural world; and if in this sense, "the human being is, at once, the terminal problem of biology and the initial factor of sociology," then civilization is simply obeying the law of its life in moving along its own lines. It is useless to hope that it will ever move upon any other lines. We must neither expect impossibilities, nor condemn it for being faithful to the law of its own being. The kingdom of Heaven cannot possibly conflict with anything that is *natural*—anything in human society that really owes its origin and development to God; the conflict is only with what is *unnatural* in human society, and to conquer what is thus unnatural the Christian must not hold aloof from his fellow-men, but strive in every way, through word and example, to influence them against the spirit of lawlessness, show them the contrast between the lower and the higher life, and, if possible, lift them up from the lower to the higher, without interfering with the lower, except in the matter of *sin*.

Hence Jesus Christ Himself when He came into this world, did not wait for men to come to Him, He went to them in their homes, and blessed them in their occupations, and taught that His religion—as it did not, in any

way, belong to the kingdom of this world—could not possibly interfere with any duty that men really owed to others in family, social, or political life.

Thus, also, was it with St. Paul. He preached Christianity, not only in the villages, but in the crowded cities, where social life was compact and highly organized, and even went so far as to persuade a slave to go back to his master.

Again, it was through the influence of Christians working together with one common aim in every walk of life—as soldiers in the army, as jailors in the prisons, as members of Cæsar's household in the palace, as buyers and sellers in the streets—that the whole empire at last became converted to Christ. On the other hand, if there is any lesson stamped as a warning upon the church history of the past, it is that the hermits of the early days, and those who subsequently retired to convents and monasteries for the exclusive purpose of cultivating their spiritual life, lived a useless, selfish, isolated existence that was plainly at variance with the spirit of the Gospel.

For the desire to be useful is the test of Christian character; as it is also the first impulse of the man into whose heart the Spirit of Christ really enters.

In contradistinction to what this world calls manliness, which is little more than the selfish spirit of self-assertion, *Christian* manhood means the ability to be useful and to bear the burdens of others.

In contradistinction to the world's idea of robustness, Christian courage signifies the willingness to meet and conquer the individual and the class temptations to sin that belong to every sphere of action.

In contradistinction to the common, worldly notion, that one can perform his work efficiently only when he is filled with the spirit of civilization, the Christian is to show that every work can be done better and every re-

sponsibility can be discharged more punctually and faithfully, when a man does all "in the name of the Lord Jesus." These are truths to be constantly impressed by the power of living examples upon the minds of men. In no other way can a follower of Christ stand out as a witness for God so well, as by meeting men on their own ground, and showing them in the common walks of every-day life—in law and politics, in science and art, in commerce and trade, at home and in social intercourse—how to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. His religion thus becomes what Christ described it as being, the salt of the earth, whose antiseptic properties preserve all that is good in civilization, and the leaven which leavens the whole lump with christianizing influences. But while Christianity thus meets all the needs of the social organism as they reveal themselves in civilized life, and while the Christian believer, as a member of that organism himself, shares and sympathizes with the life of every good citizen, the latter by no means shares and sympathizes with the life of the Christian. His highest aim is far below the Christian's highest. As we have said before, civilization may develop the qualities which make a good citizen, but here it stops, and the stopping-place is immeasurably short of the responsibilities which belong to a man whose "citizenship is in Heaven,"¹ or the aspirations of a soul conscious

¹ "We are met at the outset by two widely differing conceptions of the mode and direction in which Christianity acts as a regenerating influence on the life of mankind. On the one side Christianity is identified with civilization, and the function of the Church is regarded as simply the gathering up, from age to age, of the higher aspirations of mankind ; her call is to enter into, to sympathize with and to perpetuate whatever is pure, noble, and of good report in laws and institutions, in art, music, and poetry ; in industry and commerce as well as in the moral and religious usages and beliefs of mankind.

"Christianity is thus not a higher order standing over against and

that it has been made in the image of God ; and, consequently, when these inner wants of the soul assert themselves, the only answer that the spirit of civilization, by its very limitations, can possibly make to them, is that they must be treated, not as realities, but as unpractical sentiments.

Here, then, the conflict with the flesh renews itself on a larger scale. In place of the individual lusts of the flesh, it is now the social body which lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh ; and the only course for the Christian to pursue is still to observe the old rule of “keeping the body under,” for as surely as the fleshly lusts of civilization gain the upper hand over the spiritual life of Christianity, so surely will the followers of Christ become slaves of the body.

The principle is the same whether we are dealing with the physical organism itself, or its extension in the social organism. The desires and appetites of civilization, which are normal and lawful in their own limited and lawful sphere, are to be kept down to that sphere and never to be allowed to usurp the possession of the higher sphere. What is immoral in the one case is immoral in the other ; if the spirit of civilization rises up to interpret

correcting a lower, but is itself the product, or rather the natural out-growth, of the progressive moral consciousness of mankind. The value of this mode of thought is in emphasizing the sacredness of secular interests and duties and in its protest against dividing the field of conscience and assigning to the one part a greater sanctity than to the other. . . . Its weakness lies in its not sufficiently recognizing one decisive fact of human nature—the fact of sin. No one, as it seems to us, looking at human nature, in himself or others, with clear, open, unprejudiced eyes, can doubt the existence of sin, its corrupting influence on the whole nature, yet its fundamental unnaturalness.

“But if states and societies are as the individuals who compose them, then any theory of society must rest on a theory of man ; and the theory of man is imperfect unless it recognizes the fact of sin.”—*Lux Mundi*, p. 437.

or modify, or, in any way to exert supremacy over the spirit of the New Testament, it means that the natural is placed above the spiritual, the earthly above the heavenly life.

Here, then, we have the real explanation of the conflict between civilization and Christianity, and it is noteworthy that the New Testament itself is constantly referring to it as a *fleshy* conflict.¹

The same difficulty which the Christian has in his private life in knowing where to draw the line between those needs of the body which he is bound to respect and those whose gratification would work injury to his spiritual life here reappears on the larger scale.

All this involves an interminable struggle on the part of the disciples of Christ, in which a man is often set at variance against his own father and the daughter against her mother, and when his greatest foes are those of his own household. But this kind of conflict is as Christ Himself prophesied, the normal condition of Christian living. And the whole Gospel rings with the charge that whatever betide, nothing must be allowed to interfere with the purity and the freedom of the spiritual aim.

As to how far the Christian shall participate in the social life about him, no hard and fast line can be drawn. The question is largely, if not altogether, a relative one, depending upon the proportionate importance of conflicting religious and social responsibilities. Some men are conditioned in such a way by the duties and cares of their earthly callings, that it is almost impossible to limit the demands that these are ceaselessly making upon the time and strength and means that ought to be devoted to God. In such cases, if there is no other way of restraining these demands, one ought to exercise the same care for

¹ Eph. ii. 3; Gal. v. 16-25; Mark xiv. 38; Rom. viii. 4-7; 1 Pet. ii. 11.

the needs of the soul that common sense would dictate in attending to those of the body, and retire from the position. And it should never be forgotten that the loss of usefulness in the worldly sphere, thus entailed, will be more than compensated by the gain of a man's spiritual influence, if he is seen devoting himself with the same zeal to some kind of work for God. Just as in times past, multitudes felt it their duty to God to withdraw from a cloistered existence and occupations that were distinctively religious, for the sake of emphasizing the sacredness of secular life and showing that every honest and honorable calling might be made a sphere of Christian usefulness, so it may be in times to come, that for the sake of asserting the supremacy of the spiritual aim, Christians, in increasing numbers, will be obliged to take an opposite course—to devote themselves more exclusively to spiritual matters and to withdraw from the engrossing cares of worldly life. No rule of life is laid down in the New Testament about these matters, and no rule can be ever prescribed, for the correlation between secular and spiritual duties is constantly varying. It not only differs with different persons, temperaments, opportunities, and spheres of activity, but it changes from age to age.

The Christian line of action must, in every case, be decided by the individual conscience, and in the last analysis, everything depends upon the personal motive.

We pass now to some of those problems which, as we have seen, are arising in the progress of modern civilization to perplex the minds of men.

INDIVIDUALISM AND SOCIALISM.

Mr. Benjamin Kidd has shown, with masterly power, that the growing tendency to assert the rights of the in-

dividual, in making the best use of his capacities, on the one hand, and on the other, the increasing necessity for the subordination of individual interests to those of the social organism, are two conditions present in civilization which modern sociological thinkers are unable to harmonize,¹ and without Christianity it is a question whether any reconciliation between them will ever take place ; for the difficulty is not lessening, it keeps increasing as society grows more compact and definitely organized. Even in the United States, where universal suffrage prevails and where the public land is not yet taken up, it is making itself more and more widely felt. But *with* Christianity the difficulty completely disappears, and for the following reasons :

(1) The chief aim of the Christian is not material but spiritual advancement. His highest aim soars far beyond the world's highest. Above the natural instinct to survive with the fittest, there leaps up the unquenchable ambition to do *right* as a child of God, and let all lesser things adjust themselves to this reigning motive. Christ's command is "Take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? . . . but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."² To the follower of Christ, any lowering of this aim (which appeals to his

¹ "That social systems are endowed with a definite principle of life seems to be taken for granted. Yet, what is this principle ? Where has it its seat ? What are the laws which control the development and decline of those so-called organic growths ? Nay, more : What is the social organism itself ? Is it the political organization of which we form a part ? Or is it the race to which we belong ? Is it our civilization in general ? or, is it, as some writers would seem to imply, the whole human family in process of evolution ? It must be confessed that the literature of our time furnishes no satisfactory answers to a large class of questions of this kind."—Kidd's Social Evolution, p. 98.

² St. Matt. vi. 31, 33.

deepest ethical and spiritual instincts) is not only less than the ideal of Christian life, but a sinful lack of faith in the word of the Son of God. The highest earthly success to him would be no compensation for the sacrifice of that divine ideal.

(2) The Christian, in following his aim, never stops to weigh the relative proportion of the duties that he owes to himself and the duties that he owes to others. Whether he ought to love himself better than his neighbor, or "to love his neighbor as himself"¹ is, for him, a Jewish not a Christian question ; for Christ has introduced a new factor which spoils the equation. Christ's new commandment makes the old one obsolete, by presenting a higher and stronger aim than either the individualistic or "altruistic" one. We are neither to love ourselves better than our neighbors, nor to love our neighbors better than ourselves, *but to love others as Christ has loved us*. "By this," said Christ, "shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye love one another as I have loved you."² The division, therefore, between individualism and socialism appears in the kingdom of nature, but it disappears in the higher kingdom of Heaven on earth ; for a personal Christ (who is also the Lord of nature) is the centre of the spiritual organism from whom all power radiates ; and personal loyalty and love for Christ reconcile all differences. In Him both the individual and the society attain their highest perfection. In love for Him the "fittest" finds a higher stimulus to activity and progress than the mere spirit of rivalry and competition. In love for Him the "unfit" discover a life power, a peace and satisfaction that more than compensate for earthly inequalities ; for He is no respecter of persons. Thus, in the higher organism *all* classes are bound together in a harmonious whole. There is no division of interests.

¹ See Lev. xix. 18.

² St John xiii. 34, 35.

By a correlation of spiritual forces, if "one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it."¹ The omnipresent law of gravitation in the spiritual realm is love from Christ and love for Christ, and under the influence of this law the exaltation of every individual brings with it at the same time the exaltation of all others. Each makes the most of those powers God has given him, not for his own sake, but for the sake of the rest; while his brethren in lower stations gladly co-operate in his advancement, knowing that they are sharers, step by step, in his upward progress; and all, living under the shadow of Christ's will, in their effort to establish a kingdom of Heaven on earth, have in their own experience a realization of that ideal life of Paradise, so vividly and almost prophetically portrayed by the poet Dante :

" 'Tell me, ye who in this place are happy,
 Are you desirous of a higher place,
 To see more or to make yourselves more friends ? '
 First with those other shades she smiled a little,
 Thereafter answered me so full of gladness,
 She seemed to burn in the first fire of love ;
 ' Brother, our will is quieted by virtue
 Of charity, that makes us wish alone
 For what we have, nor gives us thirst for more.
 If to be more exalted we aspired,
 Discordant would our aspirations be
 Unto the will of Him who here secludes us ;
 Which thou shalt see finds no place in these circles,
 If being in charity is needful here,
 And if thou lookest well into its nature ;
 Nay, 'tis essential to this blest existence
 To keep itself within the will divine,
 Whereby our very wishes are made one ;
 So that, as we are station above station
 Throughout this realm, to all the realm 'tis pleasing,

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 26.

As to the King, who makes His will our will,
And His will is our peace ; this is the sea
To which is moving onward whatsoever
It doth create, and all that nature makes.' " ¹

CHURCH AND STATE.

The next problem which engages our attention in modern civilization is the relation of the Church of Christ to civil society. In order to understand this we must first ask, what is the basis of human governments? Upon what authority do they rest? If all forms of civil society were abolished, on what principles would fresh governments of necessity be created?

The ancient idea of Aristotle, that civil government originated in the family, and that from this origin it expanded first into the patriarchal or tribal form of social life, and then, by degrees, into kingdoms and empires, is now generally discarded by political economists; and in its place, the social compact theory is rapidly gaining ground. It would be out of place here to trace the modern growth of this hypothesis from Hobbes and Grotius to Locke, Warburton, and a host of other writers. Suffice it to say, that it sets forth the underlying principle which rests at the basis of all civil society.

It is true that the historical genesis of the state, as the story appears in the annals of the past, does not accord with the social compact theory. Outwardly, the governments of the ancient world were paternal in form, and the principle was taken for granted, almost universally, that the individual existed for the sake of the state. But, as a matter of fact, the state itself existed, all the while, through the consent of the governed, and the history of every country, without an exception, shows that

¹ Dante's Paradiso, Canto iii. 64-87, Longfellow's Translation.

in all great emergencies the people, time and again, arose to take the law into their hands, to right their political wrongs, and to substitute a new dynasty for the old. The *S. P. Q. R.* emblazoned on the standards of the greatest and most influential republic of the ancient world, is an evidence that this truth was, even then, present in human thought. The text that was thus carried by the Roman legions into every town and village of the vast empire, preached its own deep lesson to myriads of thinking minds, and told all that the strongest military organization of the world derived its authority from the power of the people.

The principle, however, was but feebly recognized in those early ages, even in Rome itself. It was an era when the common people were regarded and treated as little better than slaves, when a large part of the population was actually in the condition of slavery, and when even the women and children of the upper classes were looked upon more in the light of property than as human beings who had any inalienable rights of their own. It was only in great emergencies that the masses became conscious of their inherent power, and when circumstances ceased to call for action, they sank back into their former lethargic condition. But under the influences of Christianity, a change has gradually been taking place. The sanctity of human life has become a ruling idea in all civilized society ; the appeal of Christ to men, as children of God, made in His own image, has kindled the flame of self-respect and ambition. The care which Christ and His followers always exercised not to fetter or trespass upon the freedom of the human will, the democratic tendencies which the Church has not only stimulated but manifested,¹ in preaching the

¹ "If the Hierarchy drew too imperiously, too sternly, too deeply the line of demarcation between the hallowed and unhallowed castes of

true liberty, fraternity, and equality of citizens of the kingdom of Heaven ; all this has had a subtle, incalculable influence in emphasizing the sacredness of human personality and the power of individuality. And, under its spell, the old ideas of paternal government, the organic character of the state, and the divine right of kings, are gradually giving place to the truer idea that the government really exists through the consent of the governed.

Every one, in these days, must see that the whole tendency of modern civilization is toward democratic government and universal suffrage ; but few are aware of the causes which lie at the bottom of the movement. It is largely on account of this ceaseless appeal of Christianity to the individual, that the people are becoming more and more conscious of their personal rights and privileges as human beings. If personal freedom is becoming an ever-increasing factor in the growth of civilization, it is simply because men are recognizing themselves in the light in which Christ portrayed them. And, as the truth grows clearer, the notion that civil society is, mankind, it had the inestimable merit of asserting the absolute spiritual equality of all not in sacred orders. On the floor of the Church, before the Priest, before God (however, there might be some and not always unwise distinction in place and in the homage to rank), the king and the serf, in all essential points, stood on the same level. The same sacraments were the common right of all. They were baptized in the same font, heard the same masses, might listen to the same sermons, were married by the same rites, knelt at the same altar before the throne of the same God, received the body and blood of the same Redeemer, were even buried (though with very different pomp of funeral) in ground equally consecrated. The only distinction was excommunication or non-excommunication. The only outlaw was, it was believed, self-outlawed by wandering beyond the pale of the Church. The faithful were one people. Who shall estimate the value, the influence, the blessing of this perpetual assertion, this visible manifestation, of the only true Christian doctrine of equality—equality before God ?”—Milman's Latin Christianity, vol. vi., pp. 383, 384.

in itself, an organism, will be dispelled. The confusion of thought that still exists upon this subject, and which is so prevalent, even among intelligent thinkers, arises from the exaggeration of a half truth. Civilization is organic, so far as it is connected with the organism of nature, but not a step farther. In all other aspects it is an association, a confederacy, a club, in which some men are following nature, others resisting nature, and others, still, aiming for that which is above nature.

The government simply *reflects* the average moral tone of the community; its laws are the expression of a public opinion that has been already formed, and, as the majority have no higher object in life than their own secular welfare, the whole tendency of modern political movements is toward the secularization of the state. Apparently, therefore, the very power of free-will which Christianity has fostered and stimulated, is exerting itself against Christianity. Yet so far from this being an abnormal result, it seems to be the very end that Christ contemplated and foresaw, when He contrasted His Church with the kingdoms of this world, for the only organism that He recognizes outside of the kingdom of Heaven is the kingdom of nature. Of course it would be a blessed consummation, if, under the influences of Christianity, all men would will to do God's will on earth as it is done in Heaven; but if they choose otherwise—even if the majority exercise their will power in deciding against the spiritual life—it is better that the choice should be purely voluntary than that it should be coerced into external conformity. It is only to our human eyes that the secularization of the state seems to militate against the progress of Christianity. In the end, all that is contrary to the will of God in our modern civilization, all that is allied to the spirit of *original sin* or lawlessness, all that has been created, in any way, by

actual sin, all that is, in a word, *anti-Christian*, will disappear as belonging neither to the natural nor to the heavenly order. The kingdom of Heaven is a theocracy, an absolute monarchy, a universal empire. The kingdoms of this earth are associations of men, founded largely on the principles of earthly policy and expediency.

And this we hold to be the true explanation of Christ's answer to the Herodians, when they came to Him asking whether it was lawful to give tribute to Cæsar or not. Christ simply ignored the distinctions which His adversaries made. In reply to their question, He could not say that it was wrong to pay tribute; first, because in so far as the Roman government represented the physical and social, ethical and political, instincts of man, it belonged to the organism of nature and was of God; and, second, because in so far as the "powers that be" represented the *freedom* of the human will, they were of God. Yet, on the other hand, in so far as the Roman government was the product of a human will that resisted God's will, of the human tendency to compromise with sin, of human ambition and tyranny and lust for power, it was *not* of God. Hence Christ's answer was, "Render, therefore, unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."¹ That reply became the guide to the early Christians, as they spread abroad through the Roman Empire. It clearly defined their line of duty, in the very difficult part they had to play, and it was such a steady beacon light that, widely separated as they were from one another, by all the circumstances of life, they became absolutely one in principle and action.

And if the Church had preserved the same attitude toward the civil government that the primitive Christians

¹ St. Matt. xxii. 21.

took in the first three centuries, the whole after history of Christianity would have been changed. The true line of action, as here set forth by Christ, is for the Church to ignore the state and form no coalition with it whatever. The kingdom of Christ is essentially distinct from the kingdoms of this world, and each must act independently of the other. "The movement by which Christianity was formulated was, in a certain sense, the opposite of that which elaborated civil society. The latter began with the individual, that is, from below; the former began from above. The latter rests upon the consent of men; the former rests upon the command of God. The latter depends upon a social compact between equals; the former depends on loyalty to a personal Lawgiver and King. The state, or civil society, is not theocratic in any sense. The Church is theocratic, and is the only theocracy. This contradistinction constitutes the essential separateness of Church and State, and renders any attempt to unite, or combine, or formally to ally them, an embarrassment and a profound wrong to both. Uncombined and unallied, left free to act and react on each other, the relation may be mutually helpful. The moment constraint enters into this relation it becomes hurtful. Here, then, are our two terms of relation—a theocratic Church which is wholly non-political, and a social compact state, which is wholly secular."¹

The failure to recognize this principle is, we believe, the key which unlocks the inner history of many a sad, dark chapter of the past, many a disappointment in the breasts of religious and political reformers, many a revolution in the annals of Europe. By a logical retribution the Church has lost her spiritual supremacy in grasping at temporal power, and the state, in allying itself with

¹ *The Relation of Christianity to Civil Society*, by Bishop Harris, pp. 31, 32.

the Church, has alienated the people, not only from the government, but from God Himself. On the one hand, the Church cannot form a healthful copartnership with any government which rules by force, or exercises an authority that coerces free will, or compromises with sin, or reflects public opinion, or rests upon the consent of the governed. Such a coalition, as all history proves, compels the Church to lower her high ideal to the level of popular thought ; and to employ a kind of power in advancing her interests which Christ rejected. It dwarfs her spiritual standard and fetters her liberty.

On the other hand, if the state forms a partnership with the Church, it enforces a spiritual ideal that is above the level of the people, commits them to dogmas which many of them are not prepared to accept, interferes with the freedom of the human conscience, and, instead of creating a Christian unity, evokes bitter antagonism and the spirit of rebellion.

The only real *modus vivendi* between the two is the complete and acknowledged recognition of the freedom of the human will, on both sides. If civil government rests on the consent of the governed, then the more unrestrained the governed become (of course within rational limits) to exercise their liberty of choice, the stronger the state will be. If the Church's whole appeal, in advancing Christianity, is to the individual conscience ; if, by the law of Christ, every man must be left perfectly untrammelled in his choice as to whether or not he will live as a citizen of the kingdom of Heaven on earth, then no coercion is ever to be attempted, and no other motive can ever take the place of that personal love and loyalty to Christ which is the central principle of the Church's organic life. To appeal to any other motive than this is to introduce an influence that is foreign to the life of the organism itself, and the result always has

been—nay always *must* be—friction, antagonism, and religious unreality.

The more complete and irrevocable therefore, the divorce between Church and State becomes, the greater will grow the freedom of the Church in accomplishing those very ends in the reform of social and political life that every patriotic Christian desires. If the community recognize that she stands aloof from all political organizations, not only from expediency but from *principle*, that she has no favours to ask and no rewards to gain from the state ; that she resolutely refuses to use her enormous moral and spiritual power in coercing the independence of the citizen ; that her influence is wholly moral ; that she recognizes virtue and utters her loud protest against vice, without any respect of persons or of social and political class bias, then the Church will exercise an authority over the multitudes that will be irresistible in the higher progress of civilization.

So far from becoming alienated from secular life and interests, she will become more closely identified with them, through the one channel through which she can legitimately work. *That channel is the individual.* The only connection which the organism of the kingdom of Heaven has with the organism of the state is through the individual, who is at once a citizen of this world and a citizen of the kingdom of Heaven. And it is through the personal conscience and personal influence that the Church works. Every devout follower of Christ represents a power for good in the community about him. His presence creates a healthful moral atmosphere. The very fact that he stands among men as a citizen of the kingdom of Heaven, makes him a good citizen and a man of weight in secular life. By seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, he not only becomes a man of inflexible principle, but one who is skilful in in-

terpreting the rule of right; and because his ceaseless prayer is "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," he takes a keen and active interest in every reform movement of the community. He is not only a good citizen, but a useful citizen. He becomes not only a leader in his own sphere, but an unselfish leader. While all recognize his power, none are antagonized by it, for it is the power, not of selfishness, but of self-sacrifice.

CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILIZATION.

A strange spectacle now presents itself to our gaze. The whole tone of community life in these days is above the moral level of the majority that compose that community.

While the citizens of Heaven are ceaselessly aiming for a higher standard, they are but a handful among the teeming masses. Among the latter there are thousands who, if they could express their secret thoughts, would be satisfied with a much lower code of morals. But they dare not offend against respectability. Each one is free to go to Africa or the South Sea Islands if he likes, and there break all the ten commandments at once with perfect impunity, but, if he remains at home, he must conform, at least outwardly, to a social code that inwardly galls him, and to an ethical standard of civilized life which is not only permeated with the ruling ideas of Christianity, but which, through the example and efforts of Christian reformers, is ceaselessly being elevated to a still higher plane of organized social existence.

Thus, while this moral progress, in one sense, takes place only through the consent of the governed, it is, in reality, advancing along a line that is directly at variance with the secret inclinations of many. Over and over again, the spirit of lawlessness or sin uprises to oppose and

thwart that progress ; the Christian reformer's part is always one that evokes ridicule, misunderstanding, and opposition. But, in the end, his efforts are, in one way or another, generally victorious ; 1, because, when a real moral issue is made, no prominent social leaders or political party dare declare themselves openly on the side of immorality ; 2, because the whole experience of the civilized world has proved the real worth of every moral advance to the welfare of the community at large and has shown clearly that those who oppose it are governed by selfish and private considerations ; 3, because the citizen of Heaven is always, in the highest and truest sense, a citizen of the world at large. Something is there in the universal, comprehensive character of his aims which evokes a general sympathy ; something is there in the unselfish quality of his life which commands the reverence of men who are widely separated by private interests or mutual jealousies and who find no other leader upon whom they can unite.

On their guard against one another, they are ashamed to be on their guard against him. Public opinion is on his side, not on theirs ; his life is an epistle known and read of all men, and they must "truckle to public sentiment" in spite of themselves. It is thus that the Church works through the individual. It is thus that she is all the while accomplishing her great reforms in social life and civil government.

We see, therefore, that a different kind of "progress of civilization" is all the while taking place from that which the world itself imagines. It is a progress not away from but toward Christianity. It is a progress of civil society, which takes place through the consent of the governed, yet which is against their inward protest, and in the teeth of all the opposition they dare make openly. *It is the growth of a higher social organism that*

exists, apart from the vast majority of the individuals who apparently compose it.

This is unmistakable. Modern civilization bears all the marks of organic life. It has a unity of functions and of purpose, a continuous, orderly, and steady growth, and a correlation of forces, that are self-evident to every careful observer. And its oneness resembles the unity of nature so closely that to many minds this developing civilization is nothing but a higher evolution of natural forces in the life of humanity itself.

What is this organism? It cannot be nature, because, as we have seen, the progress of modern civilization is due to influences which, while they interpenetrate society, come continuously from an outside source. It cannot be civil government, because, as we have likewise seen, this is not in itself an organism, but an association of many men of many minds exercising a will power that is sometimes in accordance with nature, sometimes above it, and sometimes against it.

There is only one alternative left. Modern civilization comes from *the growth of the kingdom of Heaven on earth.* The organic growth of the Church as the body of Christ comprehends both the spiritual and the natural worlds. Though—even in the two natures of Christ Himself—the divine and the human are eternally distinct, nevertheless in the life of Christ they are eternally harmonized, for Christ is at once the Lord of nature and the Lord of the Church. By Him were all things made.¹ “By Him all things consist (or are preserved) and He is the Head of the body, the Church.”² He is at once the Alpha and Omega—the origin and the culmination, the beginning and the climax of the life both of the spiritual world and the natural world. And the Church is the continuation of His Incarnation. Working

¹ St. John i. 3; Heb. i. 2; Col. i. 16.

² Col. i. 17, 18.

through human nature, as the instrument of the higher organism, Christ is stimulating, using, and developing the lower organism of nature for heavenly purposes. Thus, the two organisms of the spiritual and natural worlds are mutually reacting upon and influencing one another, as both grow up unto Christ, the Head. In Him they are unified. And this is in accordance, not only with all Christ's prophecies regarding the development of His kingdom on earth ; but also with those attributes of *universality* which are inseparably associated, in the New Testament, with the Church as the Body of Christ, the family of God, and the kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Those who are IN CHRIST, co-operate with Him in this work.¹ By giving their wills to Him they gain for themselves both a spiritual and a natural (or human) immortality. By their union with Him, they become His instruments in spiritualizing the natural. By the very kind of impulse that comes from Him into their souls and the infusion of His divine-human life, they are compelled to love men as He loved them, to save not only souls but society, to sanctify and develop all that is of God in human society, to consecrate all that is useful and beneficent in science or manufacture ; all that is good and beautiful and true in literature or art, to the service of Christ.

¹ "No book exhibits so profound a contempt for majorities, so startling a refusal to consider the conditions of success on the average, as the New Testament. Jesus Christ makes His appeal to the best ; upon the selected disciples He spends His efforts ; for them He prays ; them He trains in His own school as the nucleus of a redeemed humanity, to act upon the world as 'salt' or 'light,' or as a 'city set upon a hill ;' that is, as a body acts, the savour or appearance of which is distinct, emphatic, unmistakable. So the Christian Church in the world is to be a body coherent, based upon distinctive principles, exhibiting a striking and emphatic ideal. It is to be in the world, and not of it; making its impression by its very distinctness."—Bampton Lectures, Gore, p. 225.

In doing this work, they live and labour side by side with men of other aims and other motives who are *without Christ*.

The latter breathe the same social atmosphere, are subjected outwardly to the same influences, and receive the benefits of the civilization which Christianity has thus created, yet are without any comprehension of its origin, or of the character of its present development, or of its ultimate destiny.

The dualism which from the Christian side completely disappears through the divine-human life of Christ, ceaselessly uprises from the natural side. Without Christ, it looms up as an insurmountable obstacle, separating the natural from the spiritual world.

For the secular man never rises or *can* rise above the secular consciousness. He knows no greater reality than that of the natural world, and the consciousness of the latter is so strong, that, in comparison, the spiritual life appears to him as a probability, not as a certainty. His horizons are narrowed to the earthly existence. By his refusal to do the will of God as Christ unfolded it, he is shut out from the knowledge of the higher life,¹ and is fettered by the limitations of his own natural but unspiritual existence. He has eyes but he sees not, ears but he hears not, what is really taking place around him. He is constantly attributing every fresh advance in the progress of civilization to the action of natural forces, and when it is shown to him that there are antagonistic forces and irreconcilable contradictions developing themselves with increasing distinctness in modern life, which can be accounted for on no scientific or socialistic hypothesis, and which stand out obstinately against all theories of the unity of the natural organism, he still clings to his opinions; though in so doing he is

¹ See St. John vii. 17.

obliged to acknowledge that nature is an unexplained, insoluble enigma.

Nor will the natural man ever be able to find the solution. He is precluded from thinking and judging otherwise, for his mind is as incapable of comprehending the things of the spiritual world, as the physical senses are of detecting the so-called fourth dimension of space.

Though he lives in the midst of a growing kingdom of Heaven on earth, he will never see any further than the natural side of the progress. By the limitations of his nature, he is obliged to maintain that the development of modern civilization is due solely to secular causes, and on the Judgement Day itself, when the Archangel of God is about to proclaim that the kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of God, and of His Christ, the majority of those living in civilized lands will be asseverating more loudly than ever before that Christianity has failed.

That "the kingdom of God cometh not with observation,"¹ is Christ's own prophecy. Christ's spoken words proclaim the power that is overcoming and assimilating, by a correlation of spiritual forces, that play in that unseen universe, all the physical forces of the natural world, all the intellectual and social forces of humanity, in spite of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Those who do the will of God on earth as it is done in Heaven, are hastening the coming of His kingdom, and are themselves incorporated into its organic life. Those who refuse to do the will of God on earth as it is done in Heaven, though they may retard the coming of the kingdom, cannot offend or prevent the ultimate issue. And when the process is complete, all that emanates from the spirit of lawlessness, and all who have identified themselves with the spirit of lawlessness, will be swept away.

¹ St. Luke xvii, 20.

The world of unbelief will discover in the end, by the terrible irony of fate, that it has as little to do with civilization, which it has falsely called its own, as with the kingdom of Heaven itself. "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."¹

¹ 1 John ii. 16, 17.

CHAPTER XVI

THE JUDGEMENT IN RELATION TO THE PROBLEM OF JUSTICE

SYNOPSIS

- I. One cause for Dualism was the co-existence of a universal sense of *justice* with a universal consciousness of actual *injustice*.
- II. The Jews were saved from this Dualism by the hope of the Messiah. Yet their prophecies foretold (1) a suffering Messiah, and (2) a reigning Messiah. Hence they believed in two Messiahs. The Christian interpretation of these Messianic prophecies : *not two Christs*, but *two Advents of one Christ*. In Christ's first Advent the Revelation of God's Justice and Love was complete, and was made plain to men of *good will* to whom Christ was both Saviour and Judge, but not to men of *bad will* who are wilfully blind. A plainer revelation of judgement to these is impossible, because there would be then no opportunity (or time of probation) in which to exercise their free-will in faith.
- III. This Revelation that God is Love is accepted by the Christian world, yet the world misinterprets it by (a) substituting a half-truth for the whole ; (b) proclaiming universal pardon ; and (c) denying the necessity of a Second Advent. This misinterpretation is encouraged by the teachings of scientific evolution. Under the influence of this teaching many Christians now hold that the Second Advent means only : (a) an Invisible and Spiritual Coming ; (b) that the Christian Era is itself the Judgement Day in which Christ judges and saves the world.
- IV. Consequences of this view : (a) It removes the opportunity of choice. (b) It proclaims benevolence *without* justice. (c) It substitutes a new God for the God whom Christ revealed. (d) It eliminates the fact of Sin from human consciousness and makes the Atonement unnecessary. The Final Judgement is

foreshadowed by the judgement which the world pronounces upon itself in denouncing the social evils of the present, while it ignores the true cause—Sin.

- V. The Second Advent is emphasized by *Christ Himself*. (a) He compels attention to the *Permanent* Character of His Words ; (b) He uses the language of, and sets His seal upon, the ancient *Prophecies* ; (c) He tells us what history corroborates, that the world will grow both *better* and *worse* at the same time. A crisis is inevitable ; (d) He warns us that His Second Coming will be *sudden* ; (e) He tells us that it will be a *Sight* Revelation.
- VI. The Second Advent thus fulfils the great principles of *Christ's Incarnation*. (a) Like the first it will be Spiritual and Physical, Subjective and Objective, outward and inward ; (b) Christ must at last appear enthroned above all Nature and all Human Nature.

The sense of justice is one of the strongest and most deeply rooted instincts of human nature, and it is as universal as it is strong. Whether we speak to a chieftain of the South Sea Islands, or a Chinese mandarin, or the professor of a European university ; whether we read about the Medes and Persians, or the Roman soldiers, or the Puritans, we can trace the same inborn love of justice in every breast. And if one could look straight down into each human heart and see its inmost thoughts, he would find that the heaviest trial of many a noble life is the consciousness of perpetual injustice. Indeed, one can scarcely take up an autobiographical sketch of ancient or modern days, or the history of any country written by one of its own citizens, in which this burning consciousness is not uttered by a flaming tongue. That divine instinct within us is ceaselessly being wounded, injustice meets us at every turn. Moses, Jeremiah, and the long line of Jewish prophets felt it in their day ; we feel it in ours ; and the more the idea of justice is developed by education, the more keenly the stab of pain is felt.

Not only have almost all reformers, religious, political, and social, been doomed to a life of persecution and contempt, but even the laws of nature itself seem oftentimes against us. Nature cruelly destroys the innocent child or kills the just man before his work is done; while, quite as often, it leaves the unjust and profligate to live on and propagate their evil.

THE ORIGIN OF DUALISM.

It was this sense of the injustice and imperfection of all earthly things which was the origin in so many ancient oriental religions of the belief that the Deity Himself must be imperfect or limited; and this was one of the causes which gave rise to that dualism of which we have spoken in other connections. The injustice was explained by the supposition that two sets of gods were always warring together, and that benign deities were being constantly thwarted and hampered by malign ones.

We are accustomed to look upon dualism as a phase of theistic philosophy belonging to a bygone age, but it is a significant fact that one of the greatest among the modern disbelievers in Christianity, Mr. John Stuart Mill, should have reached the conclusion, after a lifetime of pondering, that the Creator of the universe was either not strong enough, or not wise enough, to make a perfect world.

"There is not a shadow of justice," writes Mr. Mill, "in the general arrangements of nature; and what imperfect realization it obtains in any human society (most imperfect as yet) is the work of man himself, struggling upward against immense natural difficulties, into civilization, and making to himself a second nature far better and more unselfish than that he was created with."

"These then are the net results of Natural Theology on the question of divine attributes. A being of great but

limited power, how or by what limited we cannot even conjecture ; of great and perhaps unlimited intelligence, but perhaps also, more narrowly limited than his power ; who desires and pays some regard to the happiness of his creatures, but who seems to have other motives of action which he cares more for, and who can hardly be supposed to have created the universe for that purpose alone. Such is the Deity whom Natural Religion points to, and any idea of God more captivating than this comes only from human wishes, or from the teaching of either real or imaginary revelation.”¹

If this escapes the dualism of the ancient Oriental religions, it comes so close to it that the similarity of thought is unmistakable, and it reveals how the human mind, when, after a lapse of two thousand years, it gives up Revelation, is logically driven to travel in the same old, well-worn groove. And if, through the spread of Western civilization in India and Persia, the characteristic, long-forgotten thought of Asia is once more brought up to the surface, we shall see in the West a revival of those early Gnostic heresies which disturbed the peace of the primitive Church.

THE JEWS SAVED BY HOPE.

The ancient Jews were rescued from the despair of the heathen world, by the hope that when their Messiah came He would right all wrongs. In His time, the Golden Age would dawn : He would “judge the people according unto right and defend the poor ;” He would “keep the simple folks by their right.” “The very mountains would bring forth peace and the little hills righteousness unto the people.”²

¹ Three Essays on Religion, by John Stuart Mill, pp. 194, 195.

² Psalm lxxii.

This vision of Ideal Justice was the mainstay of the Jewish nation. Side by side with the bitter cry of their prophets regarding the wrongs of their own times, we find this hope persistently reasserting itself, and underlying all their dark utterances. It is not too much to say that this was the real bond of union which kept the nation together in those sad days when Jerusalem was successively trodden under foot by the great nations of this earth. In process of time the later prophecies about the Messiah became more definite, and divided themselves into two separate groups. In the first of these, the Messiah is represented as a Saviour, Who will come "to save His people from their sins, and suffer for their iniquities;" Who will be "despised and rejected of men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" Who will be "led as a lamb to the slaughter and make His grave with the wicked."¹ In the second group, He is represented as a Judge, who will "break the nations in pieces like a potter's vessel, and rule His enemies with a rod of iron."²

And it is glowingly foretold that the day of His coming "will burn like an oven, and all the proud and all that do wickedly will be as stubble, and it will burn them up leaving them neither root nor branch."³

The ancient Jews recognized this discrepancy between these two groups of prophecies, and to reconcile them, they interpreted them as referring to two different Messiahs, the one the Son of Joseph and the other the Son of Judah; a Messiah Who comes to suffer and to save; and a Messiah Who comes to judge and reign. It was not until the long-promised Son of David Himself appeared on this earth that the true meaning of these mysterious and apparently contradictory prophecies was revealed. The Christ-light, when it dawned, made every-

¹ Isaiah liii.

² Ps. ii. 9.

³ Mal. iv. 1.

thing simple and plain. Instead of two different Messiahs, there were to be two different advents of one Messiah.

THE CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION OF MESSIANIC PROPHECY.

When Christ was born, the first group of prophecies was literally fulfilled, and the fulfilment utterly eclipsed all anticipations. Instead of raising up a human prince, God sent down His only begotten, everlasting Son, in the likeness of human flesh.¹ Instead of saving the Jewish nation for all time, this Messiah came to save the whole human race for all eternity;² instead of suffering as man alone for the sins of His people, He died on the cross “as the Son of God Who loved them and gave Himself for them.”³

From beginning to end, His coming was a revelation of divine love that passes all understanding. But through all, the Messiah Himself kept pointing forward to a second revelation, which would be necessary to complete the first, and fulfil all that the ancient prophecies had foretold. In other words, the full Revelation of divine love and justice will not be consummated until that day arrives, when the same Messiah Who appeared as a Saviour will appear again as a Judge.

Christ nowhere claims that His first Advent is sufficient in itself to make manifest the whole counsel of God. Yet, though hidden from the outer world, this counsel is sufficiently revealed to, and understood by, His own disciples, through the teaching of that Spirit of Truth whom the world cannot receive.⁴ With Christ's followers, the two Advents are not only so intimately connected that the first involves and necessitates the second, but in

¹ St. John i. 14.

² St. John iii. 14-18.

³ Gal. ii. 20.

⁴ St. John xiv. 17.

the first He already foreshadows the second, already stands before them as a dying Saviour and an everlasting Judge ; already claims their allegiance as One Who has conquered, by suffering the death of the cross ; established, by His resurrection, a kingdom of Heaven on earth ; and, by His ascension, become their triumphant King to whom all power in Heaven and on earth is given. To them, the second Advent only consummates and establishes in the eyes of a disobedient and unbelieving world that everlasting reign of glory which began at Pentecost.

When, after the lapse of ages, the angels of God descended from Heaven to announce to a weary world the Advent of the long promised Messiah, their proclamation was “ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good-will ;¹ and all Christian experience, from that day to this, is a fulfilment of this angelic prophecy.

To all men of good-will—that is, to all men who are one with Christ in surrendering their human wills to God’s will—that peace of God which passeth all understanding has come. It is a twofold peace. First, Christ, through the power of the Holy Ghost, fulfils their highest aspirations for God’s love, reveals depths on depths of divine love that surpass knowledge, assures them, notwithstanding their deep-dyed sins, of God’s personal love for themselves ; and, thus, *they abide in the peace of His Love*. Second, Christ answers their highest aspirations for divine justice. He speaks with authority. He appeals to their conscience with a matchless power. His word is “ quick and powerful, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” They stand in His Presence

¹ St. Luke ii. 14. The Revised Version renders the phrase “ Peace among men in whom He is well pleased.” The Vulgate has *Bonae Voluntatis*.

convinced, by the power of the Holy Ghost, of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement. They judge themselves before they are judged of the Lord ; and, thus, acquitted by their conscience—notwithstanding their sinful weaknesses and perpetual backslidings—of deliberate disloyalty to Him, *they abide in the peace of His Justice.* Thus, they look forward to His second Advent, not with dread but with joyful eagerness, in the spirit of those who are ceaselessly praying “Thy kingdom come ;” and as they gaze upon the outer world and contemplate the lives of those who reject Christ, they have the feeling so vividly expressed by St. Paul, when he said : “Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come Who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then shall every man have praise of God.”¹ To such men the course of this world is so peaceably ordered by God’s governance that they can joyfully serve Him in all godly quietness. Watching, as Christ told them to watch, the signs of the times, they see how the whole Christian era is a history of the way in which Christ is judging the world by the law of His love, overcoming evil with good, conquering the nations amidst their ceaseless opposition, and preparing this whole wide world for His Second Advent.

They see that the rays of the Sun of Righteousness act, in the spiritual world, like those of the material sun in the natural world—scattering darkness, purifying the atmosphere, rendering innocuous the fetid, poisonous vapors of the night, and quickening and germinating the seeds of life. To a believer’s eye, the whole Christian era stretches out as a map of universal history in which Christianity has been making continued progress in uplifting mankind. The advance that has been achieved from the condition of the Roman Empire at the birth of

¹ 1 Cor. iv. 5.

Christ to that of modern civilized Europe or America, has been toward ever-increasing peace and prosperity through the observance of those divine laws which Christ emphasized. The experience of the world is gained by His judgements. Ever since Christ appeared evil has been retreating. In each successive age the standard of social morality grows higher, and the folly of wrong-doing becomes more plainly seen ; what is thus manifest in the past will become still more manifest in the future ; the philosophy of each century becomes the common-sense of the next ; and, thus, the world is constantly approaching the ethical standard of Christ, which is the final morality of the world.¹

On the other hand, the full counsel of God is not and *cannot* be revealed in the same way to men of bad or rebellious will ; and Christ Himself indicated the reason for this in the plainest manner.

When, in response to the Jews, He said, “My doctrine is not Mine, but His that sent Me ; if any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching whether it be of God,”² He unveiled the profound truth

¹ “This aspect of Christ’s coming, the trustful and reverent recognition of His manifestation in history and in society, is of the highest moment to us now. . . . But it does not include the whole view of the truth of our Creed. The reality and the meaning of these comings are clear to faith, but like the Presence of Christ Himself, they are hidden from the world. None but believers saw the Risen Christ during the forty days ; none but believers see Christ in the great changes of human affairs. But beyond all these preparatory Comings there is a day when ‘every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him.’

“In that Coming, that manifestation, that presence, the first coming on earth and the later comings in history shall be shown in their full import. Then all things, our actions and ourselves, shall be seen as they are, seen by ourselves and seen by others. Then the whole course of life, the life of creation, of humanity, of men, will be laid open, and *that vision* will be a Judgement beyond controversy, and beyond appeal.”—Westcott, *Historic Faith*.

² St. John vii. 16, 17. R. V.

that the human will is not only the largest factor in man for acquiring spiritual life, but the principal organ for acquiring spiritual *knowledge*. Indeed, in another place, Christ goes farther and tells us that spiritual knowledge and spiritual life are one and inseparable. To know God and Jesus Christ, Whom He hath sent, is life eternal.¹

In the Christian religion everything depends upon the attitude of the will, and the spiritual truths which become self-evident to the men of good-will are necessarily hidden from the men of bad-will. The whole Christian dispensation, therefore, bears a different meaning to those who are separated from God, from that which it bears to those who are united to Him ; for the former do not believe in the unerring justice of God's love. They do not acknowledge Christ as the Supreme Judge of their innermost life, to Whom they stand as responsible already ; and how can such disbelievers in the kind of judgement that Christ has already revealed against sin ever know what a believer knows ?

But there are other reasons equally cogent : (1) Christ has spoken as plainly as He could possibly speak to spiritually minded men. If He had gone one step further and made His revelation just as clear and distinct to men of bad-will as it is to men of good-will, the whole character of the Gospel, as an appeal to faith and the divine instincts of human nature, would have been altered. It is quite conceivable that, at His first coming, Christ might have appeared, at once, as a suffering Saviour and an almighty Judge. Or, when He ascended in the clouds of Heaven He might, then and there, have seated Himself, in the eyes of a terror-stricken world, on the "great white throne," as Judge of the quick and dead, and thus have given to the human race such a proof of God's unerring justice and judgement upon sin, that

¹ St. John xvii. 3.

the whole wide world would have no more thought of doubting it than of disbelieving in sunshine. But, if the whole truth had been thus revealed at once, the opportunity of choosing between right and wrong, the high privilege of living a life of faith in the right, amid ceaseless temptations to do the wrong, and the growth in grace and Christian heroism of life that comes from battling for right against wrong, would be closed forever.

(2) The rebellious world is not wholly given over to evil. In it there are myriads of human souls who are in a state of alienation from God, through ignorance or thoughtlessness, hereditary bias, the conditions of their environment, and numberless other causes for which they are either not responsible, or only partly responsible. These lost souls Christ came to seek and save, by a manifestation of a love which passeth understanding. Divine love must be given time to make its matchless appeal to the heart and the conscience of all. The free-will which rejects it to-day may accept it to-morrow. Love must do its perfect work in the effort to rescue each sinning soul, and the full judgement of God upon sin is, therefore, held in suspense until the whole sinful world has been given the fullest and freest opportunity to turn from its sin to God.

(3) There is still another reason for this postponement of the final judgement. The delay is not only for the sake of the unbelieving; it is also for that of the faithful disciples; for, in this work of everlasting love, Christ associates His followers with Himself. They are not only to co-operate with Him in the conversion of the world, but they are to continue with Him in His temptations,¹ to suffer with Him at the hands of sinners, and thus "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for His body's sake, which is the Church."²

¹ St. Luke xxii. 28.

² Col. i. 24.

It is not a token of severity on the part of the great Head of the Church, that the Apostles were martyred, that Christian reformers have had to suffer, and that, from the very beginning down to the present day, Christ's disciples have had to bear His reproach ; on the contrary, it is an indication of the most loving tenderness. For there is no higher privilege accorded to mortal men than to know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, to be crucified with Christ to the world, and to have their human lives so closely associated with His blessed life, that together they stand in the most vivid object-teaching before the gaze of the world, as a manifestation of the long suffering of divine love on the one hand, and the hatred of God toward sin on the other.

Thus the just must suffer for the unjust, that through the influence of Christian heroism and love, the Gospel may be brought straight home to the hearts of those who, from ignorance or waywardness, or helplessness by reason of sinful environment, are far from God.

The witness, not only of Christ Himself, but of the Christian ages, to the reality of Divine love, must be clear and distinct to all men of good-will ; faith must be made almost perfect in sight ; the good must continue to suffer with Christ for the sake of the evil, until every son of man has been given every possible chance to enter heaven, and if he fails, he does so through his own deliberate choice of evil in place of good, of darkness instead of light.

THE GOSPEL OF LOVE RECOGNIZED BUT MISINTERPRETED.

The world at large is now beginning to recognize this manifestation of God's love in Christ and His followers, as the crowning characteristic of the Gospels. Indeed, it could not well do otherwise.

With the history of nineteen Christian centuries and of a civilization that has been chiefly created by the ruling ideas of Christianity, before their eyes to-day, and with the unmistakable influence, over human hearts, that the love of Christ is ceaselessly exhibiting on every side of them, men cannot but acknowledge the irresistible power of that divine love which the Gospel discloses.

But the outer world recognizes it only to misinterpret it. It is said that Christianity, from beginning to end, is a religion of mercy which rejoiceth against judgement ; that there is no such thing as being lost from Heaven or the great heart of God ; that the glad tidings of Christ are a message of universal salvation ; that even unbelief itself is no obstacle to the love of God ; and that there is no future punishment, therefore, for those who reject the Gospel ; that men who look forward to a coming Day of Judgement and retribution, when Christ shall appear in the clouds of heaven to separate the wicked from the good, the just from the unjust, are reading *into* the Gospel things that the Gospel itself does not contain ; that the pictorial language of Christ which apparently countenances such an interpretation is only a parable, in which, to the untutored minds of an ignorant age, He clothed His warnings against the kind of retribution that is being continuously visited, in this world, upon sin and wickedness ; and that if the Gospel is really to be taken literally, the God of the Bible is so much less a God of love than the Deity whom this nineteenth century reveres, that the mass of intelligent thinkers would be driven into disbelief of Christianity itself.

The attitude of those who express such views is not a little strengthened by the whole course of scientific thought.

They can imagine no such an overwhelming disturb-

ance of the settled order of the universe as the Day of Judgement would inevitably entail, and it is inconceivable to them that, at the blast of the archangel's trumpet, the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the clouds of heaven and the whole human race shall be swept out of existence, the round world over, in a single day.

The time has not yet arrived when we read this pronunciamento in the popular books of the day, but it is coming fast, and the whole trend of modern thought is hastening it. Nor, from the scientific point of view, is such a catastrophe as a Day of Judgement necessary for the elevation of mankind. Minor catastrophes have occurred in the past physical history of the world, but these only come in as stepping-stones to the general development. Evolution rises above and makes use of them all, in the progress of the human race.

Science surpasses Christianity in its earthly optimism. It grafts its teachings on the glowing promises of Scripture, and makes the most of them, but it has no place for the austere warnings of the Bible regarding the end of the world.

On the contrary, it is radiant with hope for the future of humanity. It sees advancement in the past, civilization in the present, and a higher destiny of man in the future.

Influenced by this tone of thought, the Christians of to-day are insensibly reposing more confidence in the teachings of the nineteenth century than in those of Christ and His Apostles. There is a growing tendency to empty the definite words of our Lord of all their meaning by treating and translating them as mere Oriental metaphors ; and when we hear, not only from the outside world, but from Christian pulpits, and even a Bampton Lecturer, the oft-repeated assertion that we are in the midst of the Judgement Day at present, that the whole

history of the world is a fulfilment of Christ's prophecy, and that there could be no greater assize at the end than that which is continuously taking place, we see how fast even the Christian world itself is drifting into a state of disbelief in a Judgement Day.

A FALSE IDEA OF GOD.

The proper balance and correlation between divine love and divine justice are becoming more and more obscure to the popular mind. The God who is so widely worshipped in Christian lands to-day is almost exclusively a God of mercy *in contradistinction* to a God of justice, and people are never tired of pointing to the great advance that has been made in the Christianity of the present over the Christianity of the past, when Roman Catholics threw heretics into the dungeons of the Inquisition and Protestant Puritans burnt witches at the stake. A great advance has, indeed, been made, and a side of Christianity has been brought prominently forward that was well-nigh forgotten in some of the periods of the past. But it has attained an exaggerated prominence. If the pendulum once swung too far to one extreme, it is swinging to-day just as far to the other. If the thought of God's mercy was once lost in the contemplation of God's justice, the opposite result is now manifesting itself. The world has become more "Christian" than the Gospels themselves. It goes far beyond the Founder of Christianity in its teachings about divine mercy and universal salvation. It proclaims that the Creed of the ages must be reconstructed and accommodated to the new Gospel of the nineteenth century. The old religion which, in past days, was stigmatized by unbelievers as an unreal optimism, is now, from this new standpoint, regarded as an unreal pessimism.

The question that arises at this juncture is a vital one. Is the God of mercy, Who is now the object of popular worship, the same God of love Whom Christ revealed nineteen hundred years ago?

It is a well-known fact that a man's character is shaped by that of the deity he worships, and in whom is enshrined his highest ideals of ethical life. The whole history of Greek and Roman mythology shows how disastrous was the effect upon pagan morality produced by the worship of gods who practised themselves the vices which the human conscience condemns. And as we now read the inner history of these mythological tales, they appear simply as crude anthropomorphisms in which men not only created gods who were like themselves, but created them as frail and sinful beings who would not, and could not, deal otherwise than leniently with human vices to which they themselves, as gods, were addicted.

We see a somewhat similar tendency manifesting itself in the history of the Christian Church. Though it appears in a greatly modified and purified form, its genesis is unmistakable.

The cultus of the blessed Virgin Mary arose, in large measure, from the sinful human shrinkings from ideal justice, and the demand for a mediator who would be less strict than Christ Himself. It was felt that the mother of our Lord occupied this position ; that she would be more human in her sympathy with the failings of mankind than her divine Son ; that sin could not offend her in the same way that it offends God, and that, through her womanly tenderness and intercession, a pardon could be obtained that otherwise it would be hopeless to expect. Thus, the standard of the highest and purest Christian life has been insensibly lowered in those countries where the worship of the Virgin is prevalent ; banditti and assassins have been known to kneel at her shrines while

pursuing their unlawful callings ; and human nature, taking advantage of the reprieve from strict justice, has made God to serve with its sins.¹

Here is a leaf from Christian history that we should do well to ponder before taking another false step in the same direction.

The attempt on the part of the Church herself to be more merciful than Christ and to bring in another mediator between the eternal Judge and the human soul, has borne unmistakable fruit in a type of Christian life in which immorality hides itself under the cloak of religion.

The self-same tendency is now reappearing in a different form. In the Middle Ages, amid all the moral aberrations that grew up under the cultus of the Virgin Mary, the people were saved from false views of God Himself. They did not attempt to alter or explain away Gospel words. They recognized in Christ, One Who is both the eternal Saviour and the eternal Judge.

But to-day a graver peril faces us. Many are putting Christ Himself in the place that the Virgin Mary occupied in mediaeval times, and this is an error far more deadly in character, for it distorts the revelation of God ; it dwells exclusively upon the idea of Christ as a Saviour, while it obliterates or falsifies the equally plain idea of Christ as a Judge ; and it can only end in substituting the worship of a false Christ for that of the true Christ of the Gospels. A heresy like this tampers with the very foundations of the Christian faith, for it alters the whole position of Jesus Christ as the one Mediator between God and man.

MODERN ANTINOMIANISM.

The inevitable result of this alteration is to eliminate sin from the human consciousness. This is an unmistak-

¹ See Dr. Salmon's Sermon on Nonmiraculous Christianity.

able sign of the revival of the old spirit of antinomianism, that was so wide-spread in the first century, and already we begin to see its fruits in prevalent ideas about the nature of sin. Whatever exaggerations may have been rife in the past regarding the mysterious doctrine of the Atonement, they are more than counterbalanced to-day by the way in which that doctrine is being ignored. According to popular, modern ways of thinking, there is no necessity for any Atonement whatever. God's love for sinners is so exhaustless that it overleaps all obstacles ; no sacrifice for sin is needed to bring any repentant offender back to a state of acceptance with Him. So also with that article of the Creed, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." It has lost its old-time influence upon the lives of men. The joy of deliverance from sin, which was once accounted as the most blissful experience in the earthly life of a believer, is a lost experience. It is looked upon merely as an unreal sentiment which came to men through belief in a false system of theology. God's forgiveness, men say, is as infinite as His inexhaustible love. Nothing can stay it, nothing can thwart it. It naturally follows from all this that sin ceases to be sin, and its true nature will be more and more ignored in the theological thinking of the times. But sin continues to exist, however we may ignore it or attempt to explain it away.

Many progressive changes have, indeed, taken place in the apprehension of the power of Christianity as a religion of love. Many victories have been gained for good, since we have learned to appreciate the fact that love and not fear, trust and not distrust of human nature, are the great moving influences of the Gospel. But amid all the advances made, the stern and ugly reality stares us in the face that sin remains. It may not be so open and blatant as it was in the days of the old Roman

Empire, but, as we shall see further on, it has assumed new phases, in which it stands as unyielding and as much in antagonism to the spirit of the Gospel as it has ever been, while unbelief itself was never so pronounced and outspoken as it is to-day.

Another result is becoming more and more evident as year follows year. While one class of men are preaching upon the housetops a false Christianity, a religion of mercy without justice, which they say is conquering everything in this lower world, sin included, another and larger class of men, beholding the actual sin that is thus glossed over and forgotten, are going to the opposite extreme and proclaiming that Christianity, as a religion of love, has failed to redress the wrongs of mankind. They point to the class sins as well as the individual sins that defy the law of Christ, to the selfishness and lust for power, to the covetousness and greed for gain that are increasing instead of diminishing, to the formalism in the churches themselves, and the double dealing of Christians who, on Sundays profess one thing and on week days practise another. With these (who, be it remembered, are not men of good-will but of bad-will) the Christian religion is looked upon as a fetter to the progress of mankind. Instead of smothering, it has increased their sense of injustice ; for they say that it has beckoned the world onward, alluring it with false hopes of peace and happiness, of liberty, fraternity, and equality, that have never as yet been fulfilled.

Coming to men with the promise of justice upon its lips, it has not been able to rectify the inequalities or right the wrongs of civilized society, and therefore has been weighed in the balances of history itself and has been found wanting.

And thus it happens that the most dissatisfied nations of this earth to-day are the so-called Christian nations ;

and, if we should suddenly hear to-morrow of a great outbreak of anarchy or socialism, our first involuntary glance would be directed, not to China or India, but to the continents of Europe and America. Scientific sociologists are ready with their plausible explanations of these conditions, but the real cause lies deeper down in the constitution of modern social life than the knife of any scientific analyzer can probe. It stands in the fact that, while the masses are crying aloud against the social wrongs of civilized life, sin as sin and as a spirit of lawlessness that defies God, *is ignored*.

THE WORLD, BLINDED BY SIN, IS UNREASONABLE.

The voices that are so loud in proclaiming the failure of Christianity to bring peace and happiness, liberty, fraternity, and equality to the civilized world, would be hushed to silence if the truth were once clearly recognized, that the burning injustice and incurable wrongs which disgrace civilization are due, not to the failure of Christianity, but to the human sin which opposes Christianity. We hear no such complaints from the disciples of Christ, for these know and understand the real source of the evil. Taught by Christ, and looking at this lower world out of Christ's eyes, they see facts and real conditions to which the outer world is blind.

It is human character itself that is at fault. It is there that all the evil begins. The injustice and wrong originate not with God, but with man, and until character is reformed the injustice and wrong will continue to exist and propagate themselves. Even Christ Himself, so long as He refuses to coerce the freedom of the human will, cannot cure the evil. Remove that one factor of sin, or the spirit of lawlessness : let all men become men of good-will, striving to do God's will on earth as it is

done in heaven, and God's kingdom will come, bringing with it the golden age of highest peace and happiness, of the most lasting liberty, fraternity, and equality.

It is only to those who thus ignore the reality of sin, even while they are blindly denouncing the outward *effects* of sin, that Christianity appears as a weak and powerless religion. When they say, as the unthinking multitudes are so prone to do, that, with all its excellences, it is destitute of the kind of authority and force which ought to be present in a universal religion, and which challenge the respect of the world; when they affirm, as they are so fond of affirming, that a universal religion should be universally embraced by mankind; that it should attract, not antagonize, the masses, and that it should not, like Christianity, be despised and rejected by men, it is their own perspective that is wrong. The actual facts of Christian history are distorted because they observe them from beneath, not from above. Losing from their consciousness the fact of human sin, they have lost the clew which explains all these apparently contradictory facts.

To those Christians who watch the signs of the times, this attitude of a world which rejects Christ, stands out as almost prophetic. At the very time when it is becoming more and more blind to the reality of sin as sin, the world is sending out a bitter, vengeful cry for judgement, and branding the Christian religion as a failure, because it has been unable to convict and punish at the bar of God the injustice and wrong that sin creates. In all this, is not a sinful world unconsciously forestalling a coming day of retribution by judging itself before it is judged of the Lord, and pronouncing against itself the sentence of its own doom?

CHRIST'S OWN DESCRIPTION OF HIS SECOND COMING.

After Divine Love has done its perfect work, the long-expected, long-deferred end will come ; and, in the climax and winding up of all earthly history, at the last Judgement, every wrong shall be righted, every age-long perplexity will be solved, every enemy of God and Christ shall be rendered speechless, every soul that has suffered for truth and righteousness sake shall be eternally vindicated. Every cloud of darkness will be dispelled by the joyous, full-orbed splendour of the Sun of Righteousness.

The earnest and continued emphasis that Christ lays on the Second Advent and the description that He gives of its glories, show that it will be, in every way, the full and *perfect complement* of the First. It will not only fulfil all human expectations, but will utterly surpass them. The frequency with which Christ, in His teachings has recurred to this subject, as though He would brand His warnings upon the hearts of the whole Christian world, is to be noted by every thoughtful reader of the Gospels; and the vividness and exactness with which He clothes His description of the Judgement Day are most significant facts. No teachings in the whole Gospel are more strongly marked than these ; and when we come to consider the description more closely, we discover that there are four features in it which stand out very prominently.

(a) *Christ's Prophecy of the Judgement Day.*

Our Lord calls our attention—nay, He rivets our attention—upon the permanent character of His words, and warns His disciples against the tendency to explain them away.

In the face of that modern thought which treats them as imaginative or highly wrought descriptions, clothed in the tropical language suited to the Oriental mind, but never intended to be taken literally, Christ tells us distinctly :

“Behold, I have foretold you all things.” “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but MY WORDS shall not pass away.”¹ The reason of this warning is clear. The words of Christ regarding the Second Advent occupy a unique position.

In the revelation of divine love the Church has before her as an objective reality a historic Christ, Who after being crucified, arose from the dead and ascended to Heaven. But in the full revelation of divine justice, she has no such objective reality to fall back upon, and is obliged to rest her belief in a future Day of Judgement solely on the word of Christ. But this is enough. Christ’s word is no ordinary word.

Its credibility is guaranteed by the historic revelation of the past. It comes to us as an austere warning from Him, Whose whole earthly life was a manifestation of Divine love, mercy, and forgiveness, and it derives an awful solemnity and importance from that contrast. It issues from the very lips that cried on the cross, “Father, forgive them, they know not what they do;” which came from the grave, saying, “All power is given to Me in Heaven and on earth;” and which were parted in blessing as Christ ascended to Heaven.

(b) Christ and the Old Testament Prophets.

Christ sets His seal upon all those predictions of the ancient prophets which foretold His coming to judge and reign. He not only tells us that His own word shall not pass away, but also says, “Till heaven and earth pass,

¹ St. Matt. xxiv. 25, 35 ; St. Mark xiii. 23, 30 ; St. Luke xxi. 13, 33.

one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law until all be fulfilled.”¹

This is very noteworthy. Casting our eye back upon those prophecies, we observe one familiar characteristic that runs through almost all of them. They are wont to speak of some near, impending crisis, that looms up on the world’s horizon, as though it were the very Judgment Day itself.

The traditional explanation of this anomaly is that God gave the impending national judgement as a lesson in object-teaching, a prophetic type and pledge of the last great Day of Judgement.

Against this stands the more naturalistic explanation of our modern Higher Criticism, that the Jewish prophets had only what is called the historical perspective; that they were simply far-seeing men, who discerned the signs of the times, and whose vision was filled with the horrors of the approaching catastrophe.

Both explanations are probably true. Inductive criticism, in approaching Old Testament records from the purely human side, is throwing a great light upon many hitherto inexplicable passages of Bible History. The ancient prophets like Elijah “were men of like passions as we are,” and all the help that we can gain from the examination and critical analysis of their characters, their environment, and their unmistakable method of writing, will be so much gain. But after modern criticism has said its last word, it will be found inadequate to explain all the facts without the aid of the traditional explanation.² This is becoming more and more evident

¹ St. Matt. v. 18.

² “Another proof that the prophets were not the victims of hallucination is supplied by the *extraordinary consistency of their language* in regard to themselves and their mission. If one prophet here and another prophet there had supposed themselves to be sent by God and to have words put in their mouths by Him, it would not have been so

as time advances, and we can "with patience possess our souls" while the Higher Criticism does its work.

Among the indications that those prophets saw further than an impending national crisis, is the exaggerated language which they unanimously use regarding the character of that crisis.

Their very words show that they looked *through* the present catastrophe as through semi-transparent glass, and saw partly reflected and partly typified there, the great catastrophe at the end. Thus, when Isaiah says that, at the fall of Babylon, the stars of heaven shall not give their light, and the sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the whole world shall be punished for its evil;¹ when Ezekiel uses the same language regarding the fall of Egypt,² and Joel regarding the fall of Jerusalem,³ the language itself is out of correspondence altogether with the actual event. It plainly refers to something beyond the event which the prophet's eye *plainly* saw.

It is possible he might have believed that the fall of Babylon, or Egypt, or Jerusalem, would synchronize with the end of the world, for Christ plainly assures us that of "that day and that hour knoweth no man." But the question of time is of secondary importance.

The point to be observed is that the present historical catastrophe was lost sight of in the terrific sublimity of

surprising. But, as it is, we find the whole line of prophets, stretching over a succession of centuries, from Amos, from Nathan, from Samuel, from Moses, to Malachi, all make the same assumption. The formulae which they use are the same : 'Thus saith the Lord ;' 'the word of the Lord came ;' 'Hear ye the word of the Lord.' Such an identity of language implies an identity of psychological fact behind it ; but, if an individual may be subject to delusions, it is another thing to say that a class so long extended would be subject to them—and to delusions with so much of method about them."—Sanday's Bampton Lectures, p. 149 f.

¹ Isaiah xiii. 10, 11.

² Ezekiel xxxii. 7.

³ Joel ii. 10.

the final one. The greater obliterated the less. It was the end of the world that filled the prophetic vision.

And this is brought out more clearly when we refer to the words of Christ. He puts Himself in line with the ancient prophets, and when He points forward to the destruction of the world itself, He adopts and echoes the very language they had previously used regarding the destruction of Babylon, Egypt, and Jerusalem. The description, of course, is partly figurative. It could not possibly be otherwise. Metaphor here is absolutely necessary. Picture yourself looking forward over the whole history of the world to the "war of elements, the wrecks of matter, and the crush of worlds" which shall take place at the Day of Judgement. Is there any earthly scene of revolution and bloodshed which will adequately illustrate that catastrophe? Not only every national crisis, but even the events of a whole century, shrivel into insignificance in that sight. The combined types from human history : the Fall of Babylon, Egypt, and Jerusalem, are eclipsed. Nothing but the convulsion of nature itself, falling stars, a darkened sun, a moon reflecting back the blood-red glare of a burning world, can adequately portray it.

The very metaphor itself conveys the idea of a stupendous convulsion, for a metaphor stands for something that corresponds with it. It is chosen to explain and exemplify in object-teaching an analogous reality.

So far from clashing with modern thought, the method adopted by Christ and the old Jewish prophets completely harmonizes with it, so far as it goes. For it is true that the judgement of God is all the while taking place. The downfall of Nineveh, Babylon, Egypt, and Jerusalem, of Ephesus, Antioch, and the great Roman Empire, were all premonitory judgements of God upon men for violating His sacred laws ; and, therefore,

the traditional interpretation of prophecy, that these were types and reminders of the last Judgement, still holds its own. Modern critical thought may supplement it and make clearer the method of the prophets, but it does not interfere with the ancient interpretation.

(c) *The Growing Concentration of Evil.*

In direct contravention to the growing opinion that in the progress of the Christian dispensation evil will gradually disappear, our Lord tells us that it will become more concentrated and aggressive. Instead of prophesying that His religion will triumphantly overcome and blot out sin, He prophesies that, as the last days approach, false prophets shall arise ; and that, “*because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.*”¹ Christianity will seem, then, to have failed in its mission and, therefore, there will be a great backsliding and falling away in Christian lands. That phrase, “The love of many shall wax cold,” is very noteworthy. It does not refer to the outside world. It plainly speaks of those who have been born and bred under Christian influences, and who have outgrown their own or their forefathers’ first love for Christ and enthusiasm for His religion.

Notwithstanding the blessings of civilization which follow in the wake of the Christian religion ; notwithstanding the visible fulfilment of the old time prophecy that “the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad” for its influences, and that “the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose,”² the world will be ungrateful.

“It is observable that the Gospel prophecy of the earthly future of Christianity is hardly what we should have expected it beforehand to be ; there is a great absence of brightness in it ; the sky is overcast with clouds,

¹ St. Matt. xxiv. 12.

² Isaiah xxxv.

and birds of evil omen fly to and fro. . . . Prophecy would fain presage auspiciously, but as soon as she casts her eye forward, her note saddens, and the chords issue in melancholy and sinister cadences. . . . And what is the burden of her strain ? It is this : As soon as ever Christianity is cast into the world to begin its history, that moment there begins a great deception. It is a pervading thought in Gospel prophecy—the extraordinary capacity for deceiving and being deceived that would arise under the Gospel ; it is spoken of as something peculiar in the world. There are to be false Christs and false prophets, false signs and wonders ; many that will come in Christ's name, saying, I am Christ, and deceive many, etc.

“Gospel prophecy goes remarkably in this direction as to what Christianity would do in the world ; that it would not only bring out the truth of human nature, but would, like some powerful alchemy, elicit and extract the falsehood of it ; that it would not only develop what was sincere and sterling in man, but what was counterfeit in him too. Not that Christianity favors falsehood, any more than the Law favored sin because it brought out sin. The Law, as St. Paul says, brought out sin because it was spiritual, and forced sin to be sin against light. So in the case of Christianity.”¹

Corruptio optimi pessima—the blessing misused will be changed into a curse and men will become Gospel-hardened. Whatever interpretation we may put upon Christ's words, their real drift is very clear.

At the very time when “the gospel shall be preached in all the world for a witness to all nations,”² and in those places where Christianity has previously taken root, iniquity shall abound and the love of many shall

¹ Mozley's University Sermons, p. 73 et seq.

² St. Matt. xxiv. 14.

wax cold. And the verification of this strange prophecy of Christ, in actual human history, is remarkable. How little even those civilized lands which have basked in the sunshine of Christian influences for centuries, have availed themselves of the moral advantages thus afforded. It is true that we do not discover the same amount of dirt and filth, of poverty and disease, of open lust and flagrant crime, in Christian as in pagan lands. The restraining power of law and order is everywhere seen in the former. But those forms of vice which law and order are powerless to reach, go on unchecked. They continue unchecked, not because men and women are ignorant of the higher Christian standard of morality, but because, deliberately rejecting that standard, they prefer darkness to light, vice to virtue. Where a pagan sins through sheer ignorance, the civilized man sins through deliberate choice. He knows better and yet refuses to do better. He avoids those crimes which would bring upon him the penalty of law or social ostracism, only to indulge in other acts of wrong-doing where he can escape the power of the law and the eye of detection. As the same sun which softens the wax hardens the clay, so the same benign influences of divine love, which are so irresistible in their power for good over men of goodwill, are productive of the opposite effect in men of bad-will. And the effect is cumulative. The stronger and clearer the light of Christianity grows, the more it intensifies the guilt of the successive generations which sin against the light. As an illustration of the truth of this, contrast the kind of corruption which characterizes the large cities of Europe and America to-day, with that of similar cities of Asia, and the facts speak for themselves. The civilized metropolis presents, in comparison with the other, both a higher type of virtue and a deadlier, more soul-destroying type of sin. If its

powers for good are more conspicuous and numerous, its powers for evil, hidden beneath the surface, are more subtle, more skilful in falsehood, more carefully organized and persistent in opposing all moral reform. Nowhere in heathen lands do we behold such deliberate, intelligent perseverance in espousing the cause of vice against that of virtue.

Throughout the Old and New Testaments there are two distinct classes of prophecies regarding the last days of the world ; the one optimistic and the other sorrowful. The first proclaim the universal spread of the Gospel, and Christ sets His seal upon Isaiah's prediction that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."¹ The second range themselves under that austere prediction from Christ's own lips : "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction and many there be which go in thereat ; for strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it."²

The reconciliation of these seemingly conflicting classes of prophecy has been a perplexing problem to many, from time immemorial ; but is not Christian history itself affording the true interpretation of the contradiction in a manner that is unmistakable ?

The world is to grow *both* better and worse at the same time, and while outwardly a developing civilization is obliged to conform more and more closely to the standard of Christ, adopting and assimilating for its own self-preservation the ruling moral and social ideas of Christianity, the numbers of those who deliberately reject the spiritual and religious side of Christianity will continuously increase.

As we gaze about us, and see what is actually taking place in the world, contrasting the remarkable growth of

¹ Isaiah xi. 9.

² St. Matt. vii. 13, 14.

the Christian Church and especially of Christian missionary work in this century, with the equally remarkable falling away and decay of faith in Christian lands, it seems as though we were looking upon something very much like a fulfilment of Christ's prophetic words.

We would not imply by this that the end itself is near at hand. There is a timelessness about everything pertaining to the spiritual life, and about all Christ's prophecies regarding the future of His kingdom of Heaven on earth, which cannot be measured by any chronological sequence of events.

There is a truth, which in itself is prophetic, in the words of that New Testament writer who tells us that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day."¹

We affirm only that the meaning of Christ's prophecy regarding the characteristic marks of the last time grows clearer and clearer as we watch the "signs of the times" in the development of human history; and that it was never so clear as it is to-day.

If the world is thus, before our very eyes, growing better and worse at the same time, and if, as all things go to prove, each of these tendencies is growing stronger and stronger, then human history itself indicates that, in the end, some great catastrophe must come which will separate the good and the evil.

(d) The Suddenness of Christ's Coming.

Christ plainly tells us that His coming will be sudden.

This is a point that is passed over and forgotten by those who substitute for a Judgement Day a gradual evolution of justice, wherein, through the influence of Christ,

¹ 2 Peter iii. 8.

right slowly manifests its power over wrong, in the progress of the human race. Whatever else may be metaphorical in Christ's words, suddenness can mean nothing else but suddenness. When He said, in language that His own apostles took literally and quoted again and again, that He would come as "a thief in the night," the only possible meaning of His simile is unexpectedness. There is no other point in which Christ and a midnight thief resemble one another. Again, He speaks repeatedly of the day and the hour when He will come. "Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."¹ "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh."²

No one can read the discourse of our Lord on the afternoon when He left the temple for the last time, as it is recorded in the three Synoptic Gospels, and mark the very impressive way in which He kept reiterating the charge to "watch," without seeing that the emphasis throughout is laid upon the unexpectedness of His coming.³ Certainly this was the idea conveyed to the minds of the apostles who heard His words, and consequently, in the epistles of the New Testament, the unexpectedness of the Second Advent is the ever recurring thought. The only way to get rid of these prophecies of Christ about the suddenness of His coming, is to throw doubt upon the authenticity of the record.

¹ St. Matt. xxiv. 42.

² Ibid., xxiv. 44.

³ "In the last time a great and wide-spread apostasy from Christianity will take place and Christendom will become a complete Babylon. . . . Worldly luxury combined with wealth, trade, and extensive commerce exercises a wide-spread dominion. . . . but 'in one hour,' i.e., suddenly, Babylon will fall, a sudden catastrophe will ensue, an overthrow of the social condition of this whole world of culture and civilization, with its sham Christianity."—Christian Ethics, Martensen, p. 352.

(e) *Christ's Coming a Revelation to Sight.*

Christ prophesies that the Christian dispensation will end in a *visible Revelation* of the Judge. "Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of Heaven with power and great glory."¹

Compare with this the account of the trial of Christ before the Sanhedrim on the morning of the crucifixion. He stands before the supreme court of the Jewish Church and nation on the charge of being a blasphemer against God. One witness after another is brought forth to prove his guilt, but no two can be found who agree together in their testimony. Then comes a pause. The case has broken down ; there are no grounds for a trial ; the accused is exculpated before the Sanhedrim itself, as an innocent Person Who has a right to claim His discharge at once and to be set free. But now, as a last resort, the High Priest turns to the prisoner, and says : "I adjure thee by the living God that Thou tell us whether Thou be the Christ, the Son of God ?" Up to this moment Jesus has held His peace, and if He still continues mute, now of all times, He is justified in refusing to answer. No prisoner is expected to criminate himself, and Christ's very silence will speak louder than words in showing the glaring injustice of His accusers ; for a judge, sitting on the bench, has no right to address such a question to any prisoner and compel him to condemn himself. But Caiaphas has carried the case up to a higher court than that of this earth. He has appealed to the bar of God, and Christ, as the future judge of all before him, makes answer : "Thou hast said ; nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of

¹ St. Matt. xxvi. 64.

Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the High Priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now, ye have heard His blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.”¹

Christ was tried, convicted, condemned to death and crucified, not only because He said He was the Son of God, but because He proclaimed that as the Son of Man the members of the Sanhedrim should hereafter see Him sitting on the right hand of power and coming *in the clouds of Heaven*. A few weeks after, the Ascension took place, and while the disciples stood gazing after their Lord, as a cloud received Him out of their sight, suddenly two angels stood by them and said: “Why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into Heaven shall so come *in like manner* as ye have seen Him go into Heaven.”²

And St. John, the last surviving apostle, writing seventy years later, says: “Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him, and all the kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen.”³ Words could not be plainer, and there are no words of the whole New Testament more solemn than these. The second Advent of the Son of Man will be a Sight Revelation in which He will appear in the clouds of Heaven, to judge both the quick and dead. And the only way in which we can get rid of these prophecies of Christ and His Apostles about that Sight Revelation of the Son of Man at the Judgement Day is, again, to doubt the authenticity of the record.

¹ St. Matt. xxvi. 63-66.

² Acts i. 11.

³ Rev. i. 7.

THE SECOND ADVENT AND THE INCARNATION.

We pass now to another reason for such a consummation of all earthly history. This Sight Revelation of the Son of Man as the Judge of quick and dead is necessary to fulfil and complete the work of the Incarnation.

Christ is both Son of God and Son of Man. He brings Heaven and earth, divine life and human life, together. The Incarnation is both subjective and objective, inward and outward, spiritual and physical. St. John tells us that Christ is the Lord of nature : "All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made."¹

This truth has not yet been manifested to the outer world in all its clearness. The Resurrection of Christ is its proof, yet up to this time the Risen Jesus has appeared not to all people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God.² The Resurrection, therefore, is as St. John shows supplemented by a manifestation in the sight of all men of the truth that Christ is the Lord of nature. Not merely by a few miracles which, to-day, derive historic support from the greater miracle of the Resurrection of Christ ; not only by the Resurrection of Christ, which is guaranteed by chosen witnesses, but by a universal manifestation in which all the physical forces of nature will be ultimately revealed as culminating in Him "by whom all things were created that are in Heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible—and by Whom all things consist,"³ can the truth be displayed in its fulness to the eyes of men.

But the Word made Flesh is not only the Power behind Nature "by Whom all things consist," He is also

¹ St. John i. 3.

² Acts x. 41.

³ Col. i. 16, 17.

the “True Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”¹ The principle of the Incarnation not only requires that the Son of Man must be witnessed by the whole human race as enthroned above nature, but enthroned above *human nature* also. As in His first Revelation He satisfied and fulfilled every human instinct of love, so in His second Revelation He must, as the same Son of Man, satisfy and fulfil every human instinct of justice. Such a revelation becomes absolutely necessary now, to satisfy the human reason and intellect. For the human cry for justice is, in itself, a divine cry. It could not be silenced for all eternity, if justice were not done. What humanity needs and calls for, with a cry that cannot be silenced and which grows louder and louder as time advances, is a Revelation from God of the victory of ideal justice, and of the supremacy of good over evil, that will be just as full and inspiring, just as complete and satisfying, down to the smallest particular, as the former Revelation of ideal mercy has been.

To answer and fulfil these qualifications, this Revelation must apply to human motives as well as to human actions, and bring every secret thing to judgement whether it be good or whether it be evil;”² it must be the ultimate court

¹ St. John i. 9.

² “The judgement of Christ, the Son of Man, is the revelation of things as they are. His judgement does not change the judged, it simply shews them. It is not, as far as we can conceive, a conclusion drawn from the balancing of conflicting elements or a verdict upon a general issue. The judgement of God is the perfect manifestation of truth. The punishment of God is the necessary action of the awakened conscience. The judgement is pronounced by the sinner himself, and he inflicts inexorably his own sentence. In our present state a thousand veils hide from us the motives, the thoughts, the conditions which give their real character to men and the conduct of men. We judge others by what we see in them; and what is more perilous still, we are tempted to judge of ourselves by what others can see in us. But in the perfect light of Christ’s Presence everything will be made clear in its essential nature.—The Historic Faith, by Bishop Westcott. p. 96.

of appeal which will reverse all false human judgements, and right all wrongs, not only between man and man, but between class and class, between nation and nation, between one generation and another ; it must give to every soul, every social class, every nation, every generation and age, its true position in the universe ; it must show before the eyes of all men of all ages, just and unjust, that there is no power so supreme as that wielded by Him, Who rose from the dead, saying, “ All power is given to Me in Heaven and on earth.”

Ideal justice requires nothing less than this :—that He Who is the chief Sufferer, Who was despised and rejected of men, and Whose followers, for all the intervening centuries, have suffered His reproach, should become Himself the Supreme Judge Who shall decide the destiny of men.

ALL MUST STAND BEFORE THE JUDGEMENT SEAT.

Must not this vision of eternal justice be witnessed, not only by those who are saved, but by those who are lost ? We have seen that when the kingdom of nature and the kingdom of Heaven are at last revealed as one harmonious realm, by the Second Coming of Him, Who in the dispensation of the fulness of times shall gather together in one all things “ both which are in Heaven and which are on earth,”¹ sin and all connected with sin shall be left out. In what position does this leave human beings who have identified themselves with sin (or the spirit of lawlessness) ? On the one hand, they do not belong to the kingdom of Heaven : on the other hand, they do not belong to the redeemed kingdom of nature, for they have sinned irretrievably against the laws of both. They remain an outside class—beings who once had boundless

¹ Ephes. i. 10.

opportunities before them and possibilities within themselves, but who have lost Heaven and lost their own higher life *through their own deliberate choice*. Are such beings simply to drop out of existence? Is their existence, from the moment of death, to be simply that of Nirvana—the Buddhists' Heaven? Are they to lose eternal life in Christ, without ever *knowing* that they have lost it? Are they to remain in a state of ignorance—of supreme unconsciousness—of all from which they have been shut out? Are they simply to “die in their sins,” without ever witnessing or realizing what this death in sin, this state of separation from God, *means*?

Remember that they were once human beings: they had once a free will of their own, and now they have a human nature *in ruins*. Is it not just *to them*, before all is over, that they should be made to see their own state by contrast with the state that they have lost; to hear the Judge's own sentence against themselves, and to stand in His Presence as self-convicted—judging *themselves*, as unworthy of eternal life—before they depart into that mysterious “outer darkness” to which Christ so frequently refers?

And this, perhaps, is the real explanation—or part of the explanation—of His oft-repeated warnings that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust; and that *all*, whether their deeds be good or evil, must stand before the judgement seat of Christ. The theology of the past, in dwelling upon this part of Revelation, has dwelt almost exclusively upon the thought of the sovereignty of God, but the Revelation stands out just as prominently when we pause to consider and ponder it in its relation to the problem of human free will.

The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which is lost; and, in the outpourings of His unutterable love, He is able now in Heaven to save to the uttermost

them that come unto God by Him, seeing that He “ever liveth to make intercession for them.”¹ He has assured us that, in that Judgement Day, “the first shall be last and the last first;” “that many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of Heaven,” while “the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness;² that when those who have ministered to the hungry and thirsty, the sick and the stranger, shall say, “Lord, when saw we Thee a hungered?” He will answer, “Come, ye blessed of My Father, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, My brethren, ye have done it unto Me.”³ We may be sure, from these, His own promises, that He will never leave a single human soul, until He has used every means that divine wisdom and love can employ to save it. But we must not, as so many in these days are doing, single out the promises and leave out the awful warnings that stand *side by side* with them in the same chapters.⁴

After a soul has deliberately rejected Christ, and lost its sense of responsibility to God, it must face the awful consequences. At that last great day, the Son of Man shall come in His glory, with all His holy angels, and before that great white throne upon which He is seated shall be gathered all nations.⁵ If, then and there, He shall separate them, one from another, as a shepherd divideth His sheep from the goats, we must remember when He sentences those on His left hand to an existence of separation from God, that He is the same Son of Man who once warned the Jews. “If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall *die in your sins*;”⁶ and Who, afterward, said to His own disciples, the night before

¹ Heb. vii. 25. ² St. Matt. viii. 11, 12. ³ Ibid., xxv. 34-40.

⁴ Ibid., viii.; Ibid., xxv., *et al.* ⁵ E.g., St. Matt. xxv. 31, 32.

⁶ St. John viii. 24.

His Crucifixion : "I am the vine, ye are the branches. . . . If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch and men gather them and cast them into the fire and they are burned."¹

What are we obliged to do with the bodies of our nearest and dearest friends when life is over? We commit—we are compelled to commit—their bodies to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. And what is to be done with a soul that has "died in its sins?" If Christ says to the wicked, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,"² it is because there is no alternative left; it *must be* because it is the best thing for them.

Such are some of the manifold lessons in this eschatological fact of the Judgement Day, and it is a Revelation from God intended to educate not only the outer world but the Church of Christ itself. That day is not yet, indeed, revealed as a fact to the eye of sense, but it is revealed, as a future fact, to the eye of faith; and, as such, it has exerted an incalculable influence for good, on the formation of Christian character. The church may not, as yet, fully comprehend its inexhaustible meaning, but it has been made known to us in order that we may learn from it, not explain it away. It is part of the history of the Incarnate Christ. It takes its place, side by side with the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ, as one of the facts of Christ's life; and here, as elsewhere, the Revelation of God's Personality, of God's relation to nature and God's relation to man will be in the fact.

¹ St. John xv. 5, 6.

² St. Matt. xxv. 41.

Part Third

**WITNESSES FOR CHRIST
IN NINETEENTH CENTURY TIMES**

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN ?

"It cannot, so far as I can see, be finally questioned by any student of the apostolic records, that the earliest description of a Christian is '*one who believes on Christ*,' not one who '*believes Christ*,' or, in other words, a Christian is essentially one who throws himself with an absolute trust on a living Lord, and not simply one who endeavours to obey the commands of a dead teacher."—Gospel of the Resurrection by Bishop Westcott, p. viii.

"Truth lies, and must lie, deeper than human certainty. Certainty rests upon truth, not truth upon certainty. Our grasp upon truth can never be worth much; it is the grasp of truth upon us that men are willing to die for."—Hutton's Theological Essays, p. 219.

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know Him that is true and that we are in Him that is true, even in His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."—1 John v. 20.

CHAPTER XVII

THE CHRISTIAN'S COURAGE

SYNOPSIS

- I. All men of *all shades of belief* to-day claim the name of Christian. Hence, perplexity of believers as to where to draw the line between what is true and untrue.
- II. That line of Distinction is between the Acceptance or Rejection of the *Apostles' Creed*. *The Creedless Gospel* holds that the essence of Christianity is found in ; (a) The moral character of Christ ; (b) The Spirit of the Gospels ; (c) Love of humanity. This releases us from faith in supernatural facts of Gospel. The *Gospel Creed* sets forth (a) The Incarnation, Resurrection, and Ascension, as the *Essential Facts* of Christianity ; (b) Faith in these supernatural facts as the *condition* of life in Christ ; and (c) It stands as the Belief to which the Church of the Ages has committed herself irrevocably.
- III. The Spirit of the Age is now attacking other creeds ; these only preliminary skirmishes ; the final assault will be upon the *Apostles' Creed*. Responsibility and work of the Church is *to bear witness to Christ*.
- IV. In bearing such witness, the Church must (a) Put Christ first and the conversion of souls second ; (b) Seek no longer to please the majority. Christ cared not for human majorities ; (c) Relieve believers who are now distressed and scattered by the uncertain witness of the Gospel of the Age, and by being unequally yoked together with unbelievers ; (d) Emphasize the issue as the witness for the *Historic Facts* of Christ's life against a vague *Spirit of the Gospel* and human speculation.

LET us now, gathering together the themes of preceding chapters and summing up their lessons, consider their practical application.

The reaction against materialism, so long foretold, has already begun to set in, and the tide of popular thought is flowing more and more strongly in the direction of Christianity. On all sides of us we behold classes of thinkers who, forty years ago, espoused the cause of unbelief, now ranging themselves on the side of Christ. For the length and breadth of Christ's religion have never been so thoroughly understood as they are to-day. The more other religious systems are studied and compared, the more clearly they are seen to be but dim reflections of the Christ-light, and the recent Parliament of Religions expressed a growing conviction in proclaiming that there is but one religion in which Brahmins and Buddhists, Parsees and Mahomedans, Jews and Christians are brethren, and that, in the universality of the last, all the former will ultimately recognize their own narrowness. Again, political economists are emphasizing the advantages to the state to be derived from religious institutions, and socialists are preaching Christ *versus* the Christian Church. Jewish artists are painting devotional pictures of the Crucifixion. Richard Wagner, the unbeliever, cannot find expression for his highest musical ideals without portraying Parsifal, the hero of his greatest opera, as a Christian knight of the Holy Grail, and employing in vivid dramatic representation the divine sacraments of the Church. Mrs. Humphry Ward, who denies the supernatural in religion and challenges Christians, if they dare, to stand up for that obsolescent symbol of belief, the Apostles' Creed,¹ proclaims that spiritual life comes only from the union with Christ in doing God's will.²

Everywhere a passionate, all-mastering desire is mani-

¹ The Apostles' Creed, by Professor Harnach (with an introduction by Mrs. Humphry Ward) The Nineteenth Century, July, 1893, p. 152.

² Marcella, vol. ii., p. 416.

festing itself among many men of many minds, to wear the livery of Christ, to cover their views and opinions, their beliefs or disbeliefs, with the broad mantle of the Christian name, and those who refuse to extend to them the right hand of fellowship, are looked upon as men who know not the spirit of their own Master. To meet this tone of thought a growing number of Church members and Christian teachers, animated by a generous but mistaken and ignorant desire to make Christianity as comprehensive as possible, are giving a new and false interpretation to the language of the Catholic Faith itself by setting forth half truths as the whole truths of the Gospel. Because all men have in themselves the capacity for life in Christ, it is said that they are, by virtue of their humanity, already in possession of that life. Because it is true that all men are *potentially* members of the Church, it is proclaimed that they are *actually* so. Because all men are created in the image of God and can claim Him as their Father in Heaven, it is asserted that they are sons of God in the same way that Christ was the Son of God. That this is no exaggeration or overstatement of a kind of doctrine that is now being widely taught, will be seen from the following extract from a recent publication : "It will be said that man is not a child of God by 'nature.' Now, that is true if by 'nature' you mean 'custom,' the *habit* of his life, in which sense St. Paul uses the word; but if by 'nature' you mean essential substance, which is the way the word is used in the theology of the Incarnation, then man is by 'nature,' in virtue of his essential humanity, made in the image of God and partaker of the life of the Eternal Word. So that there is a sense in which the words of the Nicene Creed apply to humanity, 'God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, Begotten not made, of one Substance with the Father.' Now, if this

be true, and without it I do not believe the doctrine of the Incarnation can be justified, or at least can have any vital meaning for us, then it follows that every human being is a member of the Church, and that the supreme work of that portion of the human race which is conscious of this truth, and therefore is technically called the Church, is to make it known to all the world.”¹

This is a most startling announcement. It contains a half-truth which makes its error all the more subtle and dangerous. The doctrine that “the soul of man is consubstantial with God” (p. 21) is not, as the writer imagines, a development, but the denial of the Nicene Faith. Carried out to its logical conclusion—however far this might have been from his mind—it is a phase of Pantheism, the doctrine that God is all and all is God, and the deification of humanity. Neither is it a new thought. It represents an old idea, which directly or indirectly appears, now in this phase and then in that, in more than one of the heresies of the Nicene period.² And when we reflect that the words we have quoted appear as the formal theological statement of a clergyman of the Church,

¹ The Theology of Phillips Brooks, by the Rev. Leighton Parks, D.D., pp. 28, 29. (The italics are ours.)

² Strangely enough, though Apollinaris and Dr. Parks approach this subject from different sides, the similarity of their words is unmistakable. “Apollinaris viewed the πνεῦμα or Logos in Christ as the eternal humanity : probably on the ground of His being the archetype of universal humanity. To him the Logos was both God and archetypal man : and that, in the sense of His having become man in an historical form. The Logos thus revealing that which had been latent in His nature from the beginning.” Apollinaris taught that Christ’s humanity was “of one substance with God (*δημούσιος, σύμφυτος*) prior to the birth on earth, yea, prior to the universe, and was the Companion of God.” (The Doctrine of the Person of Christ, by Professor Dorner, Div. I., vol. ii., pp. 372, 373.) Furthermore, though Eutyches himself, approaching the subject from still another side and dwelling only upon the Personality of Christ, distinctly repudiated the doctrine that God and the human soul were consubstantial (Synodicon Actio i., ap. Mansi,

the publication of which was deliberately *requested* by a number of other prominent clergymen, the fact is appalling. If such are the teachings of authorized Christian ministers themselves, what can be expected of the people? Is it any wonder that when the trumpet gives such an uncertain sound there is confusion in the camp of the faithful, that the spirit of doubt is on the increase, and that earnest, straightforward men are asking, "What is truth?" Yet this, in itself, is a temperate statement compared with those of other so-called Christian teachers. It is only one out of many signs of the times, as it is also only one of the many ways in which the very language of the Church is being used against the Church herself. Real catholicity, it is said, is not to be trammeled by theological distinctions, or belief in the supernatural; the Orthodox are the heretics; the Nicene Christian is the sectarian and schismatic; all men, whether their creed be Christian or pagan, are one in Christ Jesus, and the boundaries of His Church are coterminous with those of the human race. Such is the confusion worse confounded which, at the present day, imperils the Faith once delivered to the Saints, and, when there is so much that is Christlike in the present attitude of the world itself, when old words have lost their old meanings, when the genius of the Gospel is so plausibly arrayed against the historic genuineness of the Gospel; when the Church is fought with her own weapons, when the outer world has become more "Christian" than Christianity itself, and the moral standards of unbelief, borrowed from Christianity,¹ are held up as

p. 741), we behold in Dr. Parks's statement the same confusion of thought as to the distinction between the divine and human natures that characterized Eutychianism.

¹ "Yet when we look at them more closely, do not the teachings of Jesus seem thin and abstract beside the fulness and sweep of modern

being higher than those of belief, the perplexity of the most loyal followers of Christ as to where to draw the line between what is Christian, and what is less than Christian, becomes great indeed.¹

"Breadth" has become the watchword of the times. There is no stigma more withering in its contempt than narrowness; no imputation which men resent or are more desirous of escaping than the charge of holding contracted views. In the effort to be broad-minded and liberal in religion, all barriers are being swept away and the most vital distinctions are being ignored.²

life and thought? Has not the world developed a religion and a morality more complex and many-sided than those which Jesus taught? Take, for instance, the general matter of religion. He spoke, as we have seen, of the loving Father. Have we not learned to know God as something more vast than this? Have we not learned to know Him as manifested in the perfect order of the Universe, in the sublime and inflexible law which holds the dust of our streets and star-dust and human souls alike in its grasp? Does not religion demand a recognition of this truth also, and must it not shape itself to its demands? Does the thought of Jesus in truth furnish more than one factor in that greater and more complex whole which we call religion to-day? Have we any right to call this greater and more complex whole by his name?"—C. C. Everett: *The Historic and the Ideal Christ; The New World*, March, 1892.

¹ "To suppose that Christianity, as it at present exists among us, is to supersede all other systems and ideals, would be to narrow fatally the life of mankind. But to believe that the central moral and spiritual principles which spring from the lips of Christ, those which make us conceive of the supreme power as fatherly love and righteousness, and of man's true life as a communion with that righteous and loving power; to believe, I say, that these principles must eventually be recognized as supreme is not only reasonable, but seems to be demanded by experience."—Fremantle's Bampton Lecture, p. 8.

² "We are all so eager to be acquitted of narrowness that we are ready to say there may be a world in which two plus two is not four, and so give up absolute truth altogether. Who knows, says the new man of ideas, what we should think about theft if we were poor? 'Is crime crime,' asks the questioner, from another point of view. Is there not, in fact, want of breadth in assuming any data for decision at all?

Not only the laity but the clergy themselves, who are appointed to be the religious instructors of the people, betray doubt and hesitancy in drawing lines or committing themselves to definite opinions regarding the issues that are now constantly arising. When unbelief takes on the very color of Christian charity and is united so closely, to all outward appearance, with the solid rock of Christian truth, it is hard even for the theologian and Bible student to point out the plane of cleavage between what is true and what is false in modern Christianity, and it requires concentration of mind with the hammer and chisel of individual thought to discover it. But when once seen it becomes clearer and more evident, the more closely it is examined. It is to be found, as we said in the beginning, in the distinction between a creedless Gospel and the Gospel Creed.

We reply that, while most of the problems of hydraulics remain to be solved, still the assumption that water will run up hill marks not breadth of thought, but when it is sincere, incapacity for thinking. And it is so seldom sincere. Of stupidity let no man complain ; for man cannot cure congenital deficiencies ; nor shall we, at least, ever complain of the most determined effort to 'see the other side ;' but there is in so many cases no such effort, but a mere affectation of belief that another side must be. . . . Half the directing classes are talking as if they did not know whether crime should be punished or no ; whether the redistribution of property would be beneficial or not ; whether there can or cannot be anything, even a commandment from heaven, above a popular vote. They would listen to speakers on a platform advocating all sides of those questions, just as the audience did at Chicago, and go away, saying, 'there are two sides even to things like that.' If they thought so, we could only lament the pulpiness of the modern brain ; but they do not think it. . . . We are not half so broad-minded as we pretend to be, and it is a very good thing we are not ; for if we were, we should by and by be unable to add up accounts or sow corn, because, perhaps, addition might involve a radical fallacy, and the expectation of corn from seed was merely an assumption founded on nothing but the long tradition of exceedingly ignorant men."— "The Affectation of Breadth," *The Spectator*, January 20, 1894.

THE CREEDLESS GOSPEL.

These modern teachers are now triumphantly declaring that they have climbed up to a mountain fastness, formed by nature itself, among the everlasting hills, which stands above all man-made creeds and which will survive as an impregnable fortress for the Christian Faith when these human fabrications fall around it, a mass of dilapidated ruins. That fastness is the character of Christ combined with His ethical teachings. We may be thankful for this as far as it goes—thankful, indeed, that this outlying stronghold of the Gospels has been discovered and occupied by the outer world, for it means that ethical evidence is being recognized as a higher ground for certainty than mere physical evidence. This is a most significant change in the attitude of unbelief. When moral proof is regarded as more convincing than all other kinds of proof, it betokens a great and lasting advance in the education of the world. But when this moral proof is triumphantly held up as a substitute for faith, when it is made the *exclusive* ground for certainty, when the moral character of Christ as a religious reformer becomes the sole criterion of the truth of Christianity, irrespective of the supernatural facts of Christ's life, as manifestations of the Son of God, then the Gospel is emptied of its meaning as the Self-Revelation of God to the sons of men. By all means let us welcome the advance in the religious thought of the day for what it is worth, but at the same time, let us remember that what constitutes a progressive movement in the state of heathenism, or Nineteenth Century Judaism, or Ethical Culture, becomes a retrograde movement when it is made a substitute for faith in any evangelical Christian denomination.

For what is the certainty of which they boast? It is a treacherous guide, which while promising to lead us along the pathway of highest truth, really conducts us, not to the Rock of Ages, but to the shifting sands, and leaves us there surrounded by clouds.

When we hear Christian teachers and writers waxing eloquent over the rapid spread of Christianity in these enlightened days, eulogizing the "splendid, manly faith in Christ" that is now manifesting itself everywhere; contrasting the "larger faith" of the times with the "contracted views" of those who are enslaved by "dead creeds and institutional religion," and quietly intimating that they themselves can dispense with the miraculous element in the Gospels so long as the magnificent ethical teachings of the Sermon on the Mount and the unique character of Jesus Christ remain, these disciples of Christ and religious teachers of the Church should pause and reflect upon all that is logically and spiritually involved in these reckless assertions.

Unconscious as they may be, and often are, of the fact, these modern apologists for the "larger faith" that is untrammelled by "dead creeds" are tacitly coming down to the world's level of thought in denying the supernatural facts of Christianity as a Revelation from God of His only begotten Son. We frequently hear Christian ministers say in reply to this: "Personally, I have no difficulty in accepting the Creed. If I did not believe in the miraculous birth, and physical resurrection of Jesus Christ, I could not and would not remain in the ministry of the Church. But I do not see the necessity of forcing this belief on others. There is an allowable difference of opinion in the Church upon these matters. If I have my own personal views they also are entitled to theirs. The age of dogmatizing has gone, the age of toleration has come."

But this is something more than "toleration." It is playing fast and loose with the fundamental principles of the Christian religion. In one breath the speaker tells us that if he could not accept the creed he would leave the ministry of the Christian Church ; tells us, in a word, that if he personally denied the Creed, he could not honestly retain the position of a Christian teacher ; in the very next breath he affirms that those who do not think as he does may stay in the Church, and some will even go so far as to state, with John Stuart Mill,¹ that they *ought* to stay until they are put out. Now what does this mean ? It means that a man has two entirely different standards of Christian belief, one for himself and a second for others. It means that what would be disloyalty to the standards of the Church in his case would not be disloyalty or dishonesty in theirs. Looking deeper, it means that the kind of belief which is essential to his own highest spiritual life and well being is not equally essential to the spiritual welfare of other men's souls. At the surface it seems as though this attitude of toleration were Christlike and generous, but, when we pause to analyze its meaning, it is found to be the reverse of real Christian charity. It is in fact, under a new guise, the old individualistic spirit : "What must *I* do to be saved," regardless of the salvation of others. It is, in a word, the attitude of a man who, as long as he is safe on the side of truth himself, is comparatively indifferent whether others are false or not. But perhaps the speaker will reply to this, "No ; that is not a true statement of my position, I lay no such stress upon the supernatural facts rehearsed in the Apostles' Creed as you imagine, nor do I hold that the highest spiritual life is dependent upon belief in them. I simply hold that my convictions

¹ Twenty-five Years of St. Andrews, by the Rev. A. K. H. Boyd, vol. i., p. 70.

happen to coincide with the traditional belief of the Church, while those of others do not; and that it is not for me to pronounce judgement upon men who have an equal right with myself to their personal opinions." If this means anything, it means that the truth of the facts of the Apostles' Creed is a mere question of opinion. If so, is it not a mere juggling with words to call *an opinion* "a religious conviction" or "belief in the articles of the Christian faith?" Does not the speaker, by his own statement, proclaim his own unconscious disbelief in the supernatural facts of the Gospel? How can any man who honestly and religiously believes in the miraculous Birth, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ, be indifferent as to whether others regard these events as only myths? Is it possible to "tolerate" their belief as on the same level with his own? And does it not stand to reason that the religious teacher who proclaims this kind of toleration is, all the while, undermining other men's faith in the truth of the Gospel? For facts are facts; facts are sacred things. Facts, to a man of science, are worth their weight in gold. We cannot conceive of any truly scientific man being willing or even *able*, to tolerate the opinions or convictions of any other professedly scientific man who denies the force of gravitation. But to a Christian, the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ are facts which, in their relation to Christianity, are infinitely more sacred and important than any fact of nature can possibly be, for they stand before him as the essential facts of God's self-revelation to man.

Furthermore, when men say, as many among our modern Church members are so fond of saying, that if some new Gospel were discovered,¹ proving conclusively that Jesus

¹ This supposition is untenable. Those who are familiar with the formation of the New Testament canon will see at a glance, the impossibility of the existence of any other Gospel than the Four which have

Christ was *not* born of a pure virgin, that He did *not* rise from the dead in His human body and afterward ascend to Heaven, their ground of certainty would remain, while that of the orthodox Christian would be completely swept away from beneath his feet, they are simply "hedging." They stand convicted by their own words as men who are afraid of the progress of modern criticism and are cowardlike seeking, before it is too late, to save themselves a place of refuge from the coming storm, which, (as they think) is going to sweep away all the supernatural elements of the Gospel. The Christianity of such apologists for the faith is not the Christianity of the twelve apostles, or of the confessors and martyrs of the early Church, or of the believers of all ages. Whatever their belief in Christ is, it stands far below the level of the Faith once delivered to the saints, and when tried by the Gospel's own tests it will be found wanting.¹

always been recognized in the Church. Bishop Lightfoot's words on this point are very emphatic.

"All diligent students of early Christian history must have derived the greatest advantage on special points from the conscientious research, and frequently also from the acute analysis, even of writers of the most extreme school. But it is high time that the incubus of fascinating speculations should be shaken off and that Englishmen should learn to exercise their judicial faculty independently. Anyone who will take the pains to read Irenæus through carefully, endeavouring to enter into his historical position in all its bearings, striving to realize what he and his contemporaries actually thought about the writings of the New Testament and what grounds they had for thinking it, and, above all, resisting the temptation to read in modern theories between the lines, will be in a more favourable position for judging rightly of the early history of the canon than if he had studied all the monographs which have issued from the German press during the last half century."—Essays on Supernatural Religion, Bishop Lightfoot, p. 141.

¹ "The *deliberate unbeliever* indeed, assumes that the creeds mean what they say and that the Church understands the creeds. Assuming this he parts company with the Church, because he holds that the statements in her creeds are, in fact, fictitious. But it may surprise us to find that there is another form of this view of the fictitiousness of the creeds, and

THE GOSPEL CREED.

There is a certainty, unknown and inexplicable to the outer world, that comes to the true believer; but the only pathway to this certainty is faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and in those supernatural facts of Christ's life which are rehearsed in the Apostles' Creed.

The Catholic Church of the ages has not been afraid to commit herself irretrievably and irrevocably to this belief, and no man can follow on in the footsteps of the glorious company of the Apostles or the noble army of

that here the critic speaks, not at all in the character of an unbeliever, but rather in that of *an enlightened churchman*. All Christian truth, he says, is true; even the creeds, in a real sense, represent the truth. But the Church's understanding and expression of Christian truth in the creeds, is none the less strictly a misrepresentation of the truth. Though the truth of Christ lies behind the Church's Creeds, yet they have so overlaid, and thereby, in strict speech mis-stated it, that it is only the patience of criticism which, cutting bravely adrift from the authority of traditional interpretation, has succeeded in discriminating between the creeds and the meaning of the creeds, and behind what are practically the fictions of dogmatic Christianity, has re-discovered the germs of Christian truth. Neither the facts of the life of Jesus Christ, nor His teaching, nor His consciousness in regard of Himself, were as we have been taught, but were something different. He never thought nor taught of Himself as personally God, nor did He perform any miracles, nor did He rise on the third day from the dead. Whatever scriptures state these things explicitly are proved by that very fact to be glosses or errors. And yet, all the while, everything is true spiritually. The record of the Incarnate Life is true literally, it may be, at comparatively few points; certainly not the story of the Birth; certainly not the story of the Resurrection; certainly not any incident which involves, or any expression which implies, miracle. But the Birth, the Resurrection, the miracles, every one of them, represent, in the most splendid of imaginative language and portraiture, essential spiritual truths. They are fictions, but vivid representations, in fiction, of fact; splendid truths, therefore, so long as they are understood to be literally fictitious, but perversions of truth, if taken for truth of fact."—The Rev. R. C. Moberly in *Lux Mundi*, pp. 262, 263.

martyrs without making their venture of faith. He must not be afraid to face the consequences of that venture ; he must boldly proclaim to the world that if the supernatural facts of the Gospel fail, then everything fails ; he must have the courage to say, " If Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain, yea, and we are found false witnesses of God because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ. If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins, and they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."¹ He must stand up unfalteringly in the broad sunlight of the Nineteenth Century, and tell the people of this age that, without Christ's Resurrection and Ascension, his religion is gone and Christianity, for him, ceases to be a Revelation from God.

This, as we said at the beginning, is the issue now looming up between the Church and the world, and Christian believers should not shrink from meeting it face to face. The recent attacks upon the Thirty-nine Articles, the Westminster Confession, and other symbols of belief are simply the first skirmishes of the coming war. The ease with which many of these outworks have been stormed and carried has given courage and enthusiasm to the enemy, and, because many of these positions were found, even by Christians themselves, to be indefensible, the cry has gone up that all creeds must yield to the overwhelming pressure of modern thought. Events in these days are following one another with a rapidity that eclipses all expectation ; and before believers themselves are aware of it—indeed, before they have begun to realize the nature of the warfare—the advancing columns of the foe will appear on all sides surrounding the last citadel of the ancient faith. And Christians of every name will find themselves driven to take

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 14, 15, 17, 18.

up arms in defence of the Apostles' Creed itself. He who would surrender this stronghold might as well go over at once to the enemy, for if he has any doubt about the truthfulness of this creed, or its necessity to the integrity of the Christian religion ; if he regards it only as a relic of the past, or a fetter upon human thought, or the expression of a faith which the world is rapidly outgrowing, or an outer husk—an historic envelope—which will be stripped off when the inward germ and kernel of Christian truth has reached maturity, then he has no business to stand side by side in the same citadel with the defenders of the ancient faith, and, to be honest, he should go where he belongs. The day has come when Christianity needs to be rescued, not so much from its enemies as from its friends. There is no neutral ground between those who hold and those who deny that the Apostles' Creed contains the essential truth of the Gospels, and the sooner this plain fact is recognized by all parties the better it will be for the Church and the world. Nothing is to be gained by glossing over and evading the issue that is before us. Christian truth is too sacred a trust to be made the subject of a compromise, and no man has a right to the ancient name of Christian who is not willing to fight loyally for the faith once delivered to the saints as it appears in that ancient confession of the Church. And if it be objected here that we know more even of Christian truth itself than those who lived fifteen hundred years ago ; or that the progress of Christian thought cannot be fettered by any "static creed," we reply that there is the widest distinction between the Apostles' Creed and such confessions as the "Thirty-Nine Articles" or the "Westminster" and "Heidelberg Catechisms." For the first is a statement of the supernatural facts in God's Self Revelation to man ; whereas the latter are only a human rationale or explanation of the

consequences that flow from these facts. Indeed, it is only by a confusion of thought and by a very loose use of language on the part of those who are ignorant of theological or ecclesiastical history that such symbols have ever been called "*creeds*." Certainly this name has never been applied to them in the Christian bodies from which they emanated. They are strictly supplementary to the Creed itself. They are professedly of modern origin, nor has it ever been claimed that they have the sanction of the Universal Church (unless it be in the case of the decrees of the Council of Trent). We freely grant that there may be, nay, that there *must be*, progress in doctrine ; progress in the apprehension of Christian truth ; progress in theology ; but, amid all this progress, the facts of Revelation as set forth in the Apostles' Creed, stand as fixed and changeless as the facts of nature.¹ To tamper with, or attempt to explain away, those facts is to alter the whole character of the Christian religion. And this is the danger that believers must face, in these times, not only with a clear understanding of its meaning, but with a clear consciousness of the responsibility that is resting upon them individually. For "personal belief alone can leaven society. Popular opinion depends for its vitality upon the intensity of individual opinion. And though an opinion that has once found acceptance commonly retains its form, for a time, when its real supports have been removed ; yet, if it be so, the collapse, when it comes, will be more startling and complete. The reflection needs to be laid to heart at the

¹ We do not enter here into the question of the authority of the Nicene Creed. That subject has been briefly touched upon in Chapter X. Important as it is, it would be aside from the purpose of this work to devote more space than what has already been given to that question. Suffice to say here, that the Nicene includes the Apostles' Creed, and that it is simply the authoritative interpretation put upon its facts by the Universal Church.

present time, because there is a growing inclination, on the part of many influential teachers, to represent the morality of Christianity as independent of the theology of Christianity. No judgement can be more at variance with the teachings of history. Our civilization, both in its gentleness and its strength, is due to the Christian Faith, and has been supported by Christian institutions. Whatever we owe to non-Christian sources comes to us through a Christian atmosphere, and is steeped in Christian thought. The form must soon pass into corruption if the spirit be withdrawn. We may then be reasonably stirred to self-questionings, when we observe everywhere a general vagueness in religious thought, an unconscious appropriation of results apart from their conditions. The necessity of analyzing our convictions and of testing the application of them is forced upon us. Our Creed may be a mere vestment cast over a dead figure, and not an inspiring power ; it may be only the ghost of a faith which we have killed.”¹

CONVERSION OF SOULS NOT THE FIRST RESPONSIBILITY OF
THE CHURCH.

The apostles were sent forth by our risen Lord not to proclaim the worth of His moral character as a human reformer or to hold up the ethical value of His moral teachings as an evidence of the truth of Christianity, but to be WITNESSES OF HIS RESURRECTION to the uttermost parts of the earth ; they were to be inspired and directed by the Holy Ghost in doing this especial work, and this is the highest function of the Church. Led by her bishops, she is first of all to bear witness that the Revelation of God centres in the facts of Christ’s life—in His Incarnation and Crucifixion, in His Resurrection and Ascen-

¹ Gospel of Life, by Bishop Westcott, p. 54.

sion, and every other duty she has to perform is subordinate to this paramount duty of witness-bearing.

We are in great danger of losing this thought at the present time. According to the popular idea, the paramount duty of the Church is to convert souls: as a natural result, men put souls first and Christ Himself second, and endeavour to make the strait and narrow path broader and wider than Christ Himself made it. In their zeal to convert as many souls as possible their so-called love for humanity has outstripped their love for God, and made them disloyal to Christ. Is there not a false ring about this enthusiastic modern love for humanity, of which we hear so much, which will not stand the searching test of the Gospel? The truest love for our brother man is to desire that he shall have life eternal by knowing the only true God and Jesus Christ Whom He has sent. We will not help our brother man, nor will the Church convert a single human soul, by hiding the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; for all the most essential facts of Christianity are directly and immediately divine. The apostles went forth, the Holy Ghost bearing them witness, and converted human souls by preaching the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension of Christ. They simply bore witness to Christ and then left the truth of the Gospel to do the work of converting souls. Only the pure Gospel itself can bring divine life to sinful men out of that fountain of perpetual life which is hid with Christ in God.

There may be those who will reply to this, "then, there is no hope for the world, for the world will never receive such teaching. If it be so, then there is no help for it; the Church is not responsible for the saving of the world; she *is* responsible for holding up to the world what is alone a real salvation: if the world will be ignorant let it be ignorant."¹

¹ Milligan on The Ascension of Our Lord, p. 256.

The Church cannot tolerate any rival faith, or compromise, in any degree, with unbelief or human sin. So far from this being an un-Christlike attitude, the Church of Christ in thus standing fearlessly against the time-serving spirit of the age and the power of human majorities, as an unfaltering witness for the truth of God and the righteousness of God, is following closely in the footsteps of Christ Himself ; so far from manifesting in this an unchristian spirit, she is drinking in inspiration from His own fearless and sublime example.

A FORGOTTEN SIDE OF CHRIST'S CHARACTER.

The Gospels show on every page Christ's love for human souls. His passion to save the lost revealed itself even on the cross. Yet our Lord was constantly offending the multitudes by His fearless, uncompromising assertion of the truth : and with those who deliberately clung to their sin and consciously lived untruthful lives, He could have no dealings. This is the real explanation of His silence when He stood before men like Annas and Caiaphas, like Herod and Pontius Pilate. It was no mere self-restraint. He had absolutely nothing in common with these men. The whole atmosphere in which they lived was so false and artificial and foreign to Him, that He *could* not speak.

This is a side of Christ's character which is lost sight of in these days when the world is taking upon itself the office of preaching a Gospel of love. Christ never sacrificed Divine Justice to Divine Mercy.

Where, in all the writings of the Old Testament prophets, do we find warnings more austere than these words of the Sermon on the Mount : " Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees ye shall, in no case, enter into the kingdom of

Heaven ;”¹ or this charge regarding sin : “ If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, for it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire ;”² or this description of the road to Heaven : “ Enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat, because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it ;”³ or these strong statements of theological truth : “ Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God ; ”⁴ “ Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you ; ”⁵ “ If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins.”⁶

It was by such plain, definite, and fearless teachings as these, in which the sharpest distinctions were purposely drawn, that Christ showed the limitations of a Gospel of love, and thus aroused the anger and opposition of the Scribes and Pharisees. His call was imperative ; His religion was absolute ; His service demanded such a complete self-surrender of heart and soul as can be given to God alone. And there was no promise of salvation to those who rejected that call. It mattered not whether the multitude listened or turned away from His message ; with all Christ’s intense passion to save the lost, He paid no attention to human majorities. If it be asked here what, then, becomes of the majority ? the reply is that God Himself will take care of the majority. “ Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ? ”

It is not for the Church to be more merciful than Christ, her Master, was, or to dogmatize where that Master was silent. She has already, as we have said (see

¹ St. Matt. v. 20.

² St. Mark ix. 47.

³ St. Matt. vii. 13, 14.

⁴ St. John iii. 3.

⁵ Ibid. vi. 53.

⁶ Ibid. viii. 24.

Chapter XIV.), acted upon that principle in her ministrations, and has failed ; and every time she renews the attempt she will repeat the failure.

This undue regard for the majority is one of the snares of the times. This continual effort to make Christ's religion liberal enough to embrace all sorts and conditions of men, and attractive enough to please the masses who reject Him, is the bane of modern Christianity. The impression has gone abroad that the majority rule, and that even the religion of Jesus Christ must be changed and adapted to the ever-changing conditions of the world, lest it should lose its hold upon the masses.

“YE ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.”

If ever there was an era when it is needful for the Church to take her stand against the slavery of mere social influences, to show all that her aim is not to please men but to please God, to appear in the eyes of men as a city set on a hill, and as a beacon light, illumining the surrounding darkness with steady and unobstructed radiance, it is in the ending of this nineteenth century.

In an age like this, when the “very elect” are in danger of being deceived,¹ of substituting a false for the true, Christ, and of mistaking an unreal for the real Gospel, it becomes the bounden duty of the Church to dispel this confusion of mind. For these are days which try men’s souls in a most searching way ; when we behold one Christian sect after another going to pieces before our eyes ; when the divisions of Christendom are, in themselves, one of the most fruitful causes of unbelief in the outer world ; and when thousands upon thousands of earnest men are looking for some leading authority

¹ St. Matt. xxiv. 24.

among these *disjecta membra* which, faithfully, unfalteringly, and consistently bears witness to the highest truths of Christ's Religion.

Such an authority is to be found in the witness of the Church, and she must point out the distinction between a Creedless Gospel and the Gospel Creed, and make it so clear that all men may see exactly where and on which side they stand. Of course, in so doing she will set herself in opposition to the whole tone of modern thought. On every hand her members will be told that the spirit of sect-making and division is gone, that in its place a loving spirit of Christian charity which emanates from Christ Himself is spreading over the world, drawing together and unifying not only the dismembered fragments of Christendom, but also the religions of the world.

It is true that the days of sect-making and division are passed and gone, and that the blessed, unifying spirit of charity is accomplishing wonderful results for the cause of Christ; but that spirit is now passing—nay, it has already passed—into an utterly unreal exaggeration, and the sooner the Church utters her protest against that exaggeration, the sooner the clouds that hide the truth of God will be dispelled.

So far from creating a new sect, such action will induce a contrary effect. It will reunite and draw to a common centre, as defenders of the faith, those now dismembered fragments of Christendom. For the old historic Creed is a symbol broad enough and comprehensive enough to embrace all believers in the supernatural Gospel.¹

¹ Already the Nicene Creed is the acknowledged expression of faith in the major part of Christendom, and one can scarcely take up a Christian serial in these days, which expresses the mind of orthodox believers in any evangelical denomination, without finding there the cry for

THE BATTLE-GROUND : FACTS VERSUS SPECULATIONS.

In meeting the issue and proclaiming that no sect or school or religious teachers have a right to the name of Christian who *deny* the supernatural facts of the Gospel,¹ the Church is occupying an impregnable fortress, and her members should realize the strength of their own position. Not only have they the expressed belief of the Apostles and the plain and simple meaning of the New Testament on their side, but they have also the unanimous voice of the Church. For nineteen hundred years the unfaltering testimony of all Christian experience has expressed itself in the same way. The trumpet has never given an uncertain sound, and everyone who has ears to hear will distinguish that same sound rising clear and distinct to-day above all the uncertain and discordant voices that greet our ears in this nineteenth century. Even those who deny the Creed hear it! The very manner and tone of voice with which they approach the defender of the ancient faith—much as they profess to pity his narrowness—show that they accord to him inwardly, not only the stronger position, but the stronger religious

some such action on the part of the defenders of the faith. And it is one of the most significant signs of the times, that devout and earnest Christian believers are becoming more and more impatient of conditions in which they are unequally yoked together with unbelievers, and have to welcome and receive, as of the household of faith, those who preach a different Gospel from that of St. Paul and the Apostles. Every year the tension and strain is growing greater, and the open acknowledgment of irreconcilable differences that really exist, and which no exercise of charity can cover up, will be an inexpressible relief to thousands of Christian men who now feel that they are placed in a false position, where they are obliged to ignore, for charity's sake, the Faith of the Gospels.

¹ "I do not deny that Unitarians may be Christians, but I am sure that Unitarianism is not Christianity."—S. T. Coleridge.

convictions. He is certain ; they are uncertain. Again, the battle is a battle for historic facts against modern theories. These facts are all on the side of the defender of the faith, not on theirs who oppose the historic Gospel ; and the opposers have nothing to set against them but human surmisings about probabilities ; nothing to bring up on the other side but scientific, ethical, and philosophical reasonings which relate to a lower sphere of existence than that of Christ, the Son of God ; nothing to substitute in their place but human speculations.

The issue is one in which the believer in every way occupies the coign of vantage. It is for him an issue in which he has on his side Bible history, Christian history, and all religious experience ; an issue that the simplest and most uneducated can comprehend, and in meeting which he may have the joyous consciousness that the difficult burden of proof—or rather of disproof—lies altogether, through the providence of God, on the opposite side.

WITNESSES FOR CHRIST.

Our Lord was arraigned before the high court of the Sanhedrim, not on account of His ethical teachings or because He stood forth as a human reformer, but because *He claimed to be the Son of God.*¹ And when, tried and condemned to death under this charge, He stood before Pilate and was asked to give an account of Himself, His answer to the Roman governor was, “For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear *witness* to the truth ; every one that is of the truth heareth My voice.”² Then He died and rose again from the dead, showing by this sign, for all time, that He was the Son of God ; and, as we have said before, the Apostles were sent forth and

¹ St. Matt. xxvi. 63 ; St. John xix. 7.

² St. John xviii. 37.

the Christian Church was raised up to be a perpetual witness to the truth of His Resurrection. Before the gaze of the early Christians there stood those never-to-be-forgotten scenes, of Christ Himself facing the whole world in Pilate's Judgement Hall, and dying and rising again as a Witness to God's truth, and then calling upon them to stand at His side. Hence, the whole energy and life of the primitive Church concentrated itself into this one aim of bearing unfaltering witness, and every article of the Creed was promulgated, consecrated, and sealed with the blood of the early martyrs.

The Christian witnesses (*i.e.*, "*martyrs*") of the nineteenth century may not, like those of the first, be required to seal their testimony with their life-blood, but the duty of bearing witness to the primitive faith in the same way that the Apostles and first Christians did, remains and is as needful in these times as it ever was.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CHRISTIAN'S KNOWLEDGE

SYNOPSIS

- I. The need of *Educated* Witnesses becomes an imperative necessity to-day, when the fundamental principles of Christianity are being assailed. This need to be met (*a*) By Catechetical Instruction of the Young ; (*b*) by the *Character* of Pulpit Teachings ; (*c*) by Frequent Meetings for Communicants.
- II. The Value of Communicants' Unions : (*a*) As an opportunity for more effective co-operation between clergy and people ; (*b*) in creating that bond of brotherhood and sympathy between Communicants themselves, that existed in the Primitive Church ; (*c*) in studying how Christian believers may follow the Sociological Teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, in the complex conditions of modern civilized life.

WE have thus far dwelt only upon the attitude of the defender of the faith and the moral courage required of him in these times. There is another need that is equally important. As a witness for Christ the believer should "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh him a reason for the hope that is in him,"¹ and know how to defend his position whenever it is assailed. And here the duty of the clergy themselves comes to the forefront. In these days, no other work that a pastor has to do can, for one moment, vie in importance with the careful and systematic instruction of his people in those principles of the Christian faith that are set forth in the Creed.

In the Episcopal Church perhaps a larger opportuni-

¹ 1 Peter iii. 15.

ity for doing this work is afforded, than is possessed by most other Christian bodies :

First, because the Apostles' Creed is the baptismal Creed—the Faith that is explicitly professed when everyone by baptism is made “a member of Christ, the Child of God, and an inheritor of the Kingdom of Heaven.” This brings the great facts of the Gospel home to every child's heart, and applies them to its own life in the one way of all others that will awaken its strongest interest and attention. The pastor should take advantage of, and utilize, the golden opportunity thus afforded to imprint the teachings of the Church Catechism and these articles of the Creed upon the minds of the young so indelibly that they can never lose sight of them ; to explain them so clearly that Christ's life will ever stand before them as a living, eternal reality ; and to impress upon the consciences of the children the fact that they who, in their baptism, were signed with the Crusaders' sign, are to stand forth in defending this faith “as Christ's faithful soldiers and servants to their life's end.”

Second, because, for the older members of the congregation, this same faith is interwoven with all the teachings of the Christian Year, which, in itself, is nothing less than a series of festivals and fasts commemorating in order the Gospel facts which the Creed enumerates. And, although no fixed rule can be laid down about such matters, it would be well if our pastors, in these days, instead of preaching on Sundays to the unconverted world, would take it for granted, *as the Church service itself does*, that the majority of those present are already Christian believers. Instead of dealing with negations, or endeavouring to accommodate their sermons to the ears of unbelief, they should direct all their efforts to the positive work of strengthening and developing the faith of the faithful. If warnings and denunciations are need-

ful, and they *are* needful in these times, it is better that the preacher should denounce the unbelief and warn against the example of an outside world, than that he should treat those who are with him in the House of God itself as the actual offenders. The latter course would be the more sensational, but surely, except on very rare occasions, it is the less helpful.¹ We are persuaded that if our clergy acted more firmly on this principle of preaching positively the Gospel of certainty through faith in the Facts of Christ life, and spent less time in dwelling upon the difficulties of unbelievers, there would be a helpfulness in their instructions that would not only stimulate the spiritual life of believers themselves, but also come as a genuine message of the Gospel to those unbelievers who are present as outsiders, but who, notwithstanding their habitual outward demeanor and language, are, in their souls, secretly hungering and thirsting for righteousness. But even thus the preacher will be hampered and paralyzed by the consciousness that he is addressing a mixed audience of many men of many minds regarding

¹ Many of our clergy in these days are afraid of the charge of "professionalism," and, to avoid it, are preaching "the layman's Gospel." It used to be said that the Church pulpit is "coward's castle," by which it was meant that the Church clergy there took the opportunity, when no layman could answer them, of making assertions that, in the outside world, every unbeliever would instantly challenge and brand as false. But the Church itself is no place for such arguments. On the contrary, it is the place, of all others, where the clergy are expected to deliver with unfaltering voice Christ's own message to human souls, leaving for the lecture-room, discussions with others about Christian evidences. The Christian pulpit has come to be in these days, in a new and different sense, "coward's castle." The devout and earnest laity expect their pastor to be their courageous religious leader and teacher in things pertaining to God, and if, through fear of newspaper criticisms or the opinions of an outside world, he hesitates to deliver the message, or trims it to suit the popular taste, or speaks with the ever-present consciousness in his mind of the way in which an outside world will receive his words, he is cowardly shirking the very work which Christ gave him to do.

the one thing needful. Indeed, Christ Himself was obliged to exercise a certain reserve and to clothe His spiritual instructions in the form of parables when He was speaking to the careless multitudes. His more spiritual instructions in regard to the inner meaning of the Gospel He imparted to His Apostles privately.¹

In this every pastor should follow Christ's example.

COMMUNICANTS' UNIONS.

The greatest opportunity that he has for strengthening the spiritual life and educating the minds of his parishioners, lies in an instrumentality which should be far more widely and systematically utilized than is now the case ; and that is the Communicants' Union. There should be one of these unions in every parish. Its rules should be so few, so simple and elastic, that all may join it without feeling that there is any greater tax upon their time or means or conscience, than the Gospel itself requires, and yet strict enough to make the Communicants' Union a help and bond of brotherhood to all its members.²

The rules, such as they are, should relate only to general principles of action and those duties which are observed by most conscientious communicants.³

¹ St. Matt. xiii. 10-18.

² Of course there is the temptation to spiritual pride, self-righteousness, and Phariseeism to be guarded against ; and the great danger of drawing a line between communicants *and* communicants is to be ever borne in mind. But so long as the rules do not relate to details about religious acts, almsgiving, attendance upon the Holy Communion, devotional study, etc., there will be little or no opportunity afforded for such pernicious distinctions in the household of faith.

³ In some parishes the following few rules have been found helpful : Every member of the Communicants' Union is expected :

1. To come to the Holy Communion frequently—as often as circumstances permit and the sense of duty calls.

Here, in the Communicants' Union, the pastor has a working body of earnest-minded men and women, in every sphere of life, whose loyalty to Christ is unquestioned, whose sense of the Christian responsibilities of life is developed, who are striving, like the parish priest himself, to follow the pattern of life that is held up in the New Testament, and who share and sympathize with his own hopes and anxieties regarding the spread of Christ's kingdom on earth. There should be regular monthly meetings of this Communicants' Union, and all the communicants of the parish should be invited to attend these gatherings, whether they belong to the Union or not. The parish priest now stands in the midst of his own spiritual family. Those present are the earnest few among the careless, lukewarm masses, who by a process, not of religious election but of religious selection, are most fitted to be witnesses for Christ. The doors are closed, not because these have shut the world out, but because the world has separated from them. The little band of faithful ones within are of one heart and one mind, and in such a presence the pastor feels that he can speak to sympathizing ears and responsive hearts on the subject of loyalty to Christ. Here, then, there is the golden opportunity of forming a trained band of witnesses for the Master. All are willing to work for Him, if the way is only pointed out, anxious to learn more about the definite principles of the Christian faith, filled with the spirit of self-sacrifice for Christ's sake, and glad to bear the reproach of the cross. And in proportion to the greatness of the opportunity is the degree of re-

2. To endeavor to read the Word of God daily.
3. To remember, in daily intercession, the work of the parish, and especially the spiritual influence of the Communicants' Union.
4. To remember every morning, in an act of faith, the responsibility resting upon every communicant as a Witness for Christ.

sponsibility resting upon the pastor himself in conducting these meetings. Of all places this is the very last, either for indulging in vague platitudes and generalities, or for dilating upon unimportant doctrines and minute directions regarding ritual observances. The meetings should be half educational, half devotional. The pastor's instructions should be very carefully and prayerfully thought out and prepared beforehand—very practical in character—and they should be explanatory of the kind of life that a witness for Christ, in these days, should live, especially in defending the faith of his baptismal Creed. This, of course, will necessitate a thorough series of instructions upon the different articles of the Creed, following somewhat the line laid down in the preceding chapters ; showing plainly the supreme importance of these supernatural facts of the Gospels, if Christ's religion is really a revelation from God, and then, setting forth suggestions as to the attitude and actions of those who stand before the world as witnesses for these facts. In this way the communicants of the Church will be gradually led to see for themselves, and gain an intelligent comprehension, of the true position of Christianity in relation to the world, and a helpful consciousness both of what is required of them as its defenders and the way in which they are to meet the world. In the language of Canon Gore, “Jesus Christ undoubtedly intended religious belief to rest upon a double basis. If we watch the method by which, in the Gospels, conviction is represented as being generated in the minds of the Apostles, we find that it includes both inward faith and outward evidence. On the one hand our Lord, more perhaps than any other master, caused His disciples to be educated by external events, ordering circumstances and letting them teach ; and He chose for His apostles men of such sort as are most simply receptive and least

possessed by *à priori* ideas. Christianity in a unique sense is a religion produced by outward facts, and promoted by the witness of those who saw. On the other hand, Jesus Christ deliberately made His appeal to faith, properly so called, and educated in His disciples the faculty of faith, and challenged and welcomed its spontaneous activity, and refused to demonstrate mathematically what He wished men to believe ; nay, rather He appears as giving men loop-holes for escape and not pressing conviction too forcibly upon them. He did not, for example, appear after His resurrection to unbelievers, but to believers ; which means that this crowning miracle was to be used to confirm an existing faith, not to create it where it did not exist.

Jesus Christ then taught by *events*, He made His apostles not so much prophets as witnesses ; but He also postulated a will to believe. It is faith based on evidence that He wishes to generate, but still faith.”¹

A LONG-FELT NEED.

Dean Church in his writings has again and again told us that the Oxford movement of fifty years ago originated in the deep dissatisfaction of its leaders with the low level of modern conventional Christianity, in the sharp and painful contrast that it presents to the kind of life which the New Testament portrays, and which the early Christians lived ; and in their earnest desire to infuse into a lukewarm and backslidden Church somewhat of the spirit of New Testament times.

Those leaders have gone, but the work that they have done lives after them, and however widely men may differ from them on theological questions, never was the purity of their aim so widely appreciated as it is to-day. If

¹ Gore’s Bampton Lectures, pp. 62, 63.

their appeal was understood by but few of the men of their own generation, it has influenced the life of the whole Anglican branch of the Church, not only in England but in America and the colonies, in a succeeding generation, and the contrast which they felt so keenly between the high level of the Christianity of the New Testament and the low level of the Christianity of modern civilization, is now a subject that is being earnestly and prayerfully considered by many thoughtful Christian leaders.

The question to be solved is one of no little difficulty, and the more it is pondered the more perplexing it grows. How can a follower of Christ, in the altered conditions of these days, and amid the constant demands that modern civilized society is making upon his time and means and strength, live such a life as is described in the Sermon on the Mount? It is plain that there should be no lowering of the high aim that is there enjoined by Christ. It is equally plain that when social life has become so complex and the right proportion, not only of conflicting social duties, but of the relation of religious to social duties, has become so difficult a question to decide, that the most earnest Christian believers are often greatly perplexed as to how they shall live consistently with that high aim, without forsaking that state of life in which it has pleased God to call them. It is with them not a question between right and wrong, but between two rights, and what is now needed is a general consensus among conscientious Christian men and communicants of the Church, as to the way in which the principles of the Sermon on the Mount are to be practically applied to the conditions of modern civilized life.

Yet while that life, with its varied obligations, has now become so exceedingly intricate that no one man or class

of men can decide for another, or measure the relative value of conflicting responsibilities which others have to assume, the conviction is becoming stronger and stronger that a higher standard of Christian living is needful, and that there ought to be a more definite line than is now drawn between those whose citizenship is in Heaven and those who are merely citizens of this world.

It is the pressure of this conviction which has given rise to the "Christian Social Unions" of England and America, and the numbers who have joined these unions on both sides of the Atlantic are an evidence as to how widely the need of some such organization is realized. As another step in the same direction, Bishop Westcott, in his recently published book on "Social Christianity," has set forth some very valuable suggestions regarding united social effort on the part of Christians.¹

Again, the Rev. Charles Gore, writing for the Oxford Christian Social Union, goes even further than this, and sketches a more definite plan whereby the Christians of these days may interpret the Sermon on the Mount, and apply its principles to the conditions of life in this century.²

¹ Bishop Westcott's words are too long to be quoted here, but as they are too helpful to be abridged, we have placed them in an appendix, to which the reader is referred. (See Appendix II.)

² "1. We need a careful organization of Christian moral opinion—that is, a new Christian casuistry. The new casuistry will be a formulating in detail of Christian moral duty, with a view to seeing, not how little a Christian need do in order to remain in Church Communion, but how a Christian ought to act. It will need combined labour of experienced men, who are before all things Christians, in the different walks of life. I think it would be possible, perhaps, for the Christian Social Union to form small circles of representative men in each district, where special occupations prevail, or within the area of special professions, to draw up a statement of what is wrong in current practice, and of the principles on which Christians ought to act. A central body would meanwhile be formulating with adequate knowledge the general maxims of

All these suggestions are valuable, and they show unmistakably the way in which the wind of Christian thought is blowing. The kind of organization which they indicate is undoubtedly needed, and those bodies which have been already formed have been blessed in their efforts to unravel the tangled skein of Christian duty, by throwing not a little light upon some of the larger social problems that are now perplexing us. But when it comes to the more practical side of daily Christian life—the life which most Christian men and women are living—these larger organizations, which are formed to deal with more general social questions, afford less help ; and it is quite possible that here, in the Communicants' Union of every parish, may be found the very agency that is needed to produce the most practical and lasting results. For here we have a body of earnest believers taken from every rank of society, and created by no artificial process, but by the normal and natural

Christian living. I do not see why ten years' work should not give us a new Christian casuistry, that is, a general and applied statement of Christian moral principles. To what better work could the Christian Social Union devote itself ? When it was done by private means, it might come under more official sanction.

"2. So far as we have our Christian code now, or are on our way to get it, we shall league ourselves together to observe it. I do desire that the Christian Social Union shall become a widely ramifying league, through all classes, of persons anxious before all else to prove to themselves, and so to others, that they really own Jesus Christ as their moral Master. They would, therefore, be bound to protect one another in cases where loyalty to principle means loss of work. And masters and men anxious to serve Jesus Christ would be drawn together. I believe we under-estimate, not over-estimate, the number of such persons.

"3. We should do again what was done in the early monastic movement, as it is represented in St. Basil's rule. We should draw together to centres, both in town and country, where men can frankly start afresh and live openly the common life of the first Christians."—The Social Doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount, by the Rev. Charles Gore, p. 14 ff.

conditions of parish life. It is composed of men and women who are striving to live the life of the Apostles' Creed, and this is the only way in which Christians can attain that standard of spirituality described in the Sermon on the Mount, for the latter is simply an effect of which faith in the facts of the Creed is the energizing cause. And if, connected with the monthly meetings of these Communicants' Unions, Christian conferences could be held in which these earnest-minded believers, coming with their rich, accumulated experiences in every sphere of life, could consult together regarding the practical line of action which should be taken by those who would consistently live as citizens of the kingdom of Heaven, the effect would be very invigorating upon all who participate in the discussions.¹

¹ Of course there would be an obvious danger in such conferences of a spirit of censoriousness, through force of which, harsh and unkind judgements might be made upon those communicants who are satisfied with the present low standard of conventional Christian living; but no advance movement can ever be made in this world toward any definite good without giving rise to, and becoming the occasion for, correspondingly definite evils. In this instance, the good far outweighs the possible evil ; and for the following reasons : (1) Those who are present are responsible men and women who are loyal in heart and conscience to the law of Christ. (2) However uneducated they may be in worldly ways, they have a cultivated moral sense, and the lessons of their own Christian experience to guide them and keep them from evil speaking. (3) They have a positive aim which, by its very positiveness, will lift them above the contemplation of mere negations ; they have a high ideal of life before them, and the first duty of those who are to be witnesses for Christ is to fulfil His New Command, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another." (4) In the Sermon on the Mount itself the wickedness of judging others is most strongly and earnestly emphasized by Christ. (5) The parish priest, in conducting these meetings, will be keenly alive to the dangers of censoriousness to which they will give rise, in proportion to the definiteness of the discussions regarding the daily actions of men or classes of men, and, therefore, cannot fail to warn those present against lowering their high ideal by yielding to a censorious spirit.

In this way the rectors of parishes could not fail to be brought in closer contact with the inner life and temptations of their people. In this way many side lights would be thrown by many men of many minds upon the difficulties and obstacles, the temptations and misrepresentations, the opportunities and advantages, that arise in different walks of life, in aiming for a higher standard for Christian living. In this way the preacher of the Gospel would gain, from the actual experiences of his own people, many practical and useful hints regarding the true rule of action in following that standard. In this way the attention of the people themselves would be concentrated upon the pre-eminence of Christian duty, upon the importance of their conscious and unconscious influence as communicants of the Church, and upon their responsibilities as citizens of the kingdom of Heaven, in standing forth as witnesses for Christ in that sphere of worldly activity or that state of life in which it has pleased God to call them. In this way those communicants would be able to feel, without any unnatural separation from their earthly environment and friends, that they and the little band of their fellow-communicants are really of one heart and one soul with the Communion of Saints, and belong to that organic body which comprises the glorious Company of the Apostles, the goodly Fellowship of the Prophets, the noble Army of Martyrs, and all who have lived, or are now striving to live, the New Testament life. In this way our modern believers would find the kind of help that the early Christians had, when they met together in caves and catacombs as a little band misunderstood by, and separate from, the outer world. Like those witnesses of the primitive Church, they would gain the inspiration and stimulus which comes from association and concentrated effort in following a high religious aim ; they would be brought face to face,

through the interchange of Christian sympathies, with the realities of Christian discipleship, and not feel that a spiritual atmosphere is so unreal as it seems to the outer world.¹

Last but not least—when we pass beyond the limits of every individual parish, and consider what the effect will be if, in multitudes of parishes, pastors and people together are definitely and systematically, earnestly and perseveringly aiming to live the life of the Apostles' Creed—in this way, and through the accumulated wisdom of so many Christian lives, many practical and helpful suggestions could not fail to be evolved regarding the practical interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount in relation to the needs, the complex conditions, and social demands of the nineteenth century, without in any way lowering its high ideal of Christian duty.

¹ In modern Christian life the Methodist system of "classes" and "class leaders," with all its crudeness, gives us a glimpse of the kind of spiritual influences that accompany such associated Christian efforts in the cause of Christ.

CHAPTER XIX

THE CHRISTIAN'S JOY

SYNOPSIS

- I. Christianity is a Religion of *Optimism*. The Joy of Believing, however, has been dimmed in these latter days, because a Cloud has come between us and the broad sunlight of the Gospel. The reasons for the appearance of this earth-cloud are (*a*) the False Optimism of the world ; (*b*) a one-sided Christianity.
- II. The False Optimism is due to the fact that the World itself is now preaching Divine Love and Human Salvation *in a false way*. The progressive Gospel of the Age, accordingly, charges the old Faith with being Uncatholic, Uncertain, and Unchangeable.

The Church meets the charge of (*a*) *Uncatholicity* by showing that the Gospel of the Age gains a *false* Catholicity by compromising with sin, and that no unrepentant sinner can know either the Peace of God or the Joy of Deliverance ; (*b*) *Uncertainty*, by showing that the real uncertainty is on the side of the world itself, not on that of the Christian believer. If the world preaches the Gospel, it must, perforce, preach a Religion of Uncertainty, and Perplexity is the painful result. This is a sorrow *not* of God ; (*c*) *Unchangeableness*, by showing that the world has substituted the Sovereignty of Man for the *Sovereignty of God*. The result of this is to make the highest truths appear unstable and dependent upon the progress of human knowledge. The Christian believer reposes in the sure confidence that the Self-Revelation of God in Christ can never change. This alone brings Peace.

- III. Modern Christian thought has become *one-sided*. In dwelling, almost exclusively upon the thought of a *Crucified Christ*,

it has lost sight of the *Reigning Christ*. Thus the *Analogy of the Faith* is destroyed. This is seen when we contrast the Gospel of the Age with the Epistles of the New Testament.

IV. Christ is *on the Throne*. The Triumphant Consciousness of this truth makes Joyousness the Crowning Characteristic of the believer's life.

THE Christian's joy—We have left this subject to the very last that it might be presented in all the heavenly light of those eternal truths of God that we have been pondering in preceding chapters. Christianity from beginning to end is a religion of *optimism*. Its sublime evangel is that God is Love, that Christ is the Light of the World, and that the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

The Gospel is "God's Story ;" the Gospel is "Glad Tidings ;" the Gospel has come as good news from Heaven, to high and humble, to rich and poor, to young and old, for nineteen hundred years. This optimism of the Gospel, however, finds but a feeble echo in the breast of the present generation. The triumphant consciousness it should create is a lost experience. Christians of other days breathed an atmosphere of praise and thanksgiving and joy in the Holy Ghost, but the bright sunshine of that atmosphere has somehow gone, and when we contrast the comparatively joyless life of the modern believer, with the typical Christian life described in the New Testament itself, it almost seems as though, in this particular respect, we were passing through one of the "dark ages" of the Christian era. Yet the cloud which has temporarily intervened between us and the open heaven is wholly earth-born and unreal ; and every Christian believer should recognize, and see for himself, the causes which have produced it. Those causes are two : the first is

THE FALSE OPTIMISM OF THE GOSPEL OF THE AGE.

We are living in days when the outer world has caught the inspiration of the Gospel message. It has witnessed the ever-growing power of Christianity, as age follows age. It has seen that this power over human hearts lies in the joyousness of its proclamation, and the world itself, in these latter days, is enthusiastically preaching divine love, universal salvation, and the progress of Christianity, in such a way as to seem to throw the ancient faith into the shade, and make it almost pessimistic.

We said, in the beginning, that the followers of this modern Gospel object to the Church's Creed on the grounds (1) of its *uncatholicity*; (2) of its *uncertainty*; and (3) of its *unchangeableness*; (see Synopsis of the First Chapter) and when orthodox believers are thus charged with a want of charity and appreciation of God's mercy, with substituting mere speculations for eternal realities, and with clinging to a rigid Creed which fetters all development of religious thought, it is no wonder that to the world the old faith appears narrow, austere and sad. *But it is only by contrast with an utterly unreal optimism that it appears to lose its brightness*; for let us examine into these charges.

(a) *The Charge of Uncatholicity.*

If there is one characteristic which, more than all others, shines out in Christ's words and actions, it is His passion to save the lost. He will have all men to be saved. The moment, therefore, any believer becomes filled with the spirit of his Lord, his one supreme, all-mastering desire thereafter is to love others as Christ has loved him, and bring the blessed truth of the Gospel home to every heart. But here, at once, an obstacle

looms up in a spirit of antagonism on the part of the world itself. The Gospel of Christ is catholic, but sin is separation. The world clings to its sin, and no Christian believer can overlook or compromise with human sin; on the contrary, the more he breathes the spirit of Christ the more he realizes the curse and falsehood of sin. It is because the Church echoes the Gospel message of Christ Himself: "*Repent ye for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand*" that she seems uncatholic. Her so-called "narrowness" comes from the fact that she denounces sin and proclaims that the only possible way of escaping sin is through repentance, and faith in a crucified and risen Saviour. The Gospel of the Age, on the contrary, gains a *false catholicity* by completely ignoring the sinfulness of sin, in its proclamation of divine love and universal salvation. Then, when the blackness of sin has been veneered with a gilded glory, and its dark shadows painted out, the Gospel of the Age contrasts its own generous freedom, attractiveness for the people, and hopeful tone, with the older type of religious life, in which repentance, and conversion from sin to the will of God form so prominent a place.

But all the while the sin is *there*, and the consciousness of this sin persists in the heart of humanity. The only peace that can come to a man who denies his sin is the peace of a dead conscience. He shuts himself out from knowing the truth. Ignoring that which separates him from God, he thereby becomes ignorant of a life of union with God, and of the joyous power that comes from conscious deliverance from sin. Here, the limitations of the Gospel of the Age become so sharply defined that we can try its spirit "whether it be of God." While, on the one hand, the Christian's sorrow for sin is portrayed as unreal, and orthodox believers are looked upon as an introspective class, who, from

some defect in constitution or temperament, take unhealthy views of life, and have a morbid, exaggerated sense of wrong-doing, on the other hand, the joys of the Christian life are described as equally unreal. They are regarded by some as the result of a poetic temperament, by others as sentiments that are created by looking too fixedly upon the "mystical," and neglecting the practical side of life, while others still, even go so far as to say that the only real happiness of life comes to those who have learned to outgrow the high ideals of their youth. The believer knows, from his own experience, that the highest, holiest joy of earth comes only to those who live in conscious union with God, by a complete surrender of their wills to Christ, and that the peace which passeth understanding belongs to him alone who is at peace with God. But he cannot explain these realities to men, who, by clinging to their sin, are in a state of separation from God, for it is a law of human nature that no man can comprehend a quality of life that is higher than his own consciousness. On which side, therefore, is the real narrowness? And on which, the real catholicity, the real brightness? Which can most truthfully lay claim to the true optimism—the Gospel of the Age, or the Faith once delivered to the Saints?

(b) *The Charge of Uncertainty.*

The world is imperiously proclaiming to-day that the Orthodox Faith emphasizes as indisputable facts, those things that are merely human speculations about an unknown God. With an exultant pride in human progress, which apes humility, it preaches humanitarianism and loudly asserts that thinking men, if they become Christians, must narrow the circle of their beliefs to a practical basis. To meet this tone of thought, and convert the

world, the Gospel of the Age is holding up "the New Theology," of which we hear so much. This is nothing less than a substitution of an ardent glorification of human wisdom for the sober knowledge of God, and allowing the world to usurp the place of the Church as a Christian teacher. The result might have been foreseen. The world, in its ignorance, knows not God. This is a truth which rings through the New Testament. St. Paul tells us that the true knowledge of God is foolishness to the worldly wise,¹ and Christ Himself warns us that the Holy Ghost is "the Spirit of Truth Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him."² If Agnosticism becomes the popular creed of the world, this is no more than might be expected. It is only a corroboration of what the New Testament itself teaches regarding the conditions of worldly life.

When, therefore, the Gospel of the Age accepts the world's interpretation of Christian truth, it must, amid all its enthusiasm for breadth, paradoxically submit to the narrow limitations of a worldly apprehension of God, and hence arises the modern confusion of religious thought regarding the truths of Revelation.

It stands to reason that if the world preaches Christ and becomes our authoritative teacher as to the verities of the Christian faith, its preaching will be the glorifying of uncertainty. It must, perforce, proclaim uncertainties instead of certainties, and throw the burden of its own ignorance upon the Church of Christ. Such uncertainty may seem to the spirit of the age, in the falseness of its boastful pride, to be satisfying truth, but in reality it means dissatisfaction, perplexity and gloom. And this is the penalty visited upon those who subject themselves to the influences of the Gospel of the Age. So surely as Christian believers yield to its seductive spell, so surely

¹ 1 Cor. i. 18-29.

² St. John xiv. 17.

will they become separated from the realities of the spiritual world and find a dark cloud of perplexity coming between them and the open heavens. That weary, disturbed state of uncertainty regarding revealed truth, which is now so prevalent, is wholly earth-born. As the flame of a candle throws a shadow in the sunshine, so this is the shadow cast back upon Christian ground by an earth light that is interposed between it and the Sun of Righteousness. It is a sorrow that is *not* of God: it belongs to the world itself, not to the Christian life.

There may be, indeed, honest and sincere seekers after God, who are perplexed in mind by the scientific or philosophical speculations of the day, and yet who have never had the opportunity of breathing a clearer atmosphere of religious truth. We should be the very last to condemn such men as "heretics." Even St. Thomas Aquinas, the "Angelic Doctor" of the Roman Church itself, tells us that "if a man is not *pertinacious* in his disbelief, he is, in that case, no heretic, but only a man in error."¹ A "heretic" means "a chooser," and not until one deliberately and knowingly sins against the light, by substituting his own opinion for revealed Truth, as the Scriptures teach and the Church of God has received the same, is he to be classed as such. But all this while the Christian believer is not, for the sake of charity, to come down to the level of those who know not God; he is to be a witness, and, if possible, an instructor to them, of the things pertaining to God, especially as regards the need of faith. The Apostle St. Thomas has become the tutelar saint of the present day, and the way in which a spirit of doubt is now idealized as a spirit of truth confuses many. The doubter is the hero even of the modern sentimental novel. But St. Thomas was rebuked by the risen Christ for his un-

¹ Summa Theologica, Part II., Divis. ii., Q. V. Art. 3.

belief, and the last beatitude of the Gospel, as Bishop Westcott points out, was breathed upon those "who have not seen and yet have believed." And was there not, at that time present, another apostle upon whom this blessing came?

The really heroic life is not that of St. Thomas, but of St. John, who believed in the Resurrection even before our Lord was seen by any human eye.¹ It is the life of faith, not that of doubt, and its heroism is joyous, not sad. For to the eye of faith the risen Christ reveals Himself in the Power of His Resurrection and His divine life. Instead of being, in any way, *unknowable*, God, and Christ as God, are *more* knowable to the Christian believer than any other being or thing in the whole world. This thought runs like a golden thread—a clew to the highest truth—through St. John's Gospel, and it reaches its climax in those words of Christ's High-Priestly prayer: "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, Whom Thou hast sent."²

(c) *The Charge of Unchangeableness.*

The cry of progress is the very watchword of the times. Our whole atmosphere is charged with the electricity of hope, and when the storm-clouds gather, the thunderbolt falls on all kinds of teaching which seem to impede the onward progress of humanity to its goal. Hence narrowness is the invective, of all others, which thunders most loudly against the Creed of the Church. And from the side of unchristian thought it has great apparent force. The world of to-day is, in every way, far in advance of the world of Martin Luther's day, of Athanasius's day, and of St. Paul's day. "Why should

¹ St. John xx. 8.

² Ibid. xvii. 3.

we be trammelled by what men thought of Christ and Christianity in the times of the Cæsars?" is the popular cry; "Inspiration comes not from what men thought and knew centuries ago, but what they think and know now; not in looking backward but forward; the civilization of the present is far in advance of all that bygone ages ever dreamed; their highest flights of fancy did not soar so high as that social state in which we live; why, then, should we be fettered by the religious ideas of a dead and buried past?" Under the pressure of this ruling idea there is not only a present feeling of antagonism against all forms of Church dogma, but even against the belief that Christianity is an unchangeable Revelation of God; and the Apostolic Faith itself is condemned as a "static creed."

Let us pause a moment to see what this means. As we have said before, there are two ways of regarding Christianity. Either it is a religion in which man seeks God, or one in which God seeks man. If it is the former, then the Gospel of the Age is right. It is irrational under such conditions to look any higher than the progress of human thought, for highest truth, for the Revelation of God is *in* the evolution of the human race, and Christianity, like all other things, must keep pace with the changing conditions of human advancement.

But if, on the other hand, Christianity stands before us as the religion in which God seeks man, then it cannot possibly change. It is fixed and unalterable as the laws of nature, for it is the Self-Revelation of the God of Nature. If it occupies this position there can be nothing above it, nothing beyond it. We are to be influenced and governed by the facts of Christ's life just as absolutely as we are by the facts of nature; we are to draw all our highest inspirations from them, and not from the progress of the world, in reaching a solution of all the

religious and ethical, political and social problems of the time; and so far from a fetter, this will be the highest stimulus toward the advancement of civilization. For the Christian feels and responds to the cry of progress as earnestly as those about him; he keeps echoing as he moves onward the very words of St. Paul, "forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before, I press toward the mark;"¹ but the mark is not, as with the world, the evolution of the human race, it is "the high calling of God *in Christ Jesus*;" it is progress, not away from Christ, but *toward* Christ. As Christians, we are to grow up unto Him in all things Who is the Head of the natural and spiritual worlds, and to look forward to the day when, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, God will gather together in one, all things in Christ both which are in Heaven and which are in earth. If our religion is anything less than this; if the Incarnation and Crucifixion, the Resurrection and Ascension, are not to us the mystery hidden from the foundation of the world,² and the steps by which the Man Christ Jesus ascended to His throne in Heaven, then we unseat Him from His throne, and must, perforce, deny the meaning and resign the inspiring power of all these fundamental truths of the Christian religion. Such is the strong, positive, energizing, comprehensive faith in Christ that breathes in the writings of St. Paul and all the apostles,³ and it is altogether different from the temporizing and flaccid kind of belief proclaimed by the Gospel of the Age.

Has not the cry of progress, which is so exhilarating to the multitudes, passed into an exaggeration and an utterly unreal sentiment? Is it not, in that form, a

¹ Phil. iii. 13, 14.

² See Ephes. i.

³ Commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians, by Bishop Lightfoot, p. 124.

mere passing expression of present-day thought, and an enthusiasm generated by the discoveries and inventions of this past century, and by that subtle spirit of pride in the achievements of humanity which they have created? And can such an exaggeration last long? It is true that the desire for progress is a universal instinct, but deep down in the human heart there is another craving that is just as importunate. It is the cry of a soul which longs for rest, for security, for the repose of a life which has found the highest truth. It is the cry of a man who looks up to God and says:

“Change and decay in all around I see,
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.”

It is the cry of him who turns from the successes, the experiences, the shallow enthusiasms, and boasted knowledge of men, with the prayer:

“O God, Who art the Truth, make me one with Thee in everlasting love. I am weary of reading, weary of hearing others. In Thee alone is the sum of my desires. Let the whole world be dumb before Thee, and do Thou only speak to my soul.”

For, amid all its boasted progress, its enthusiasm for humanity, its glorification of the sovereignty of man, this age has lost its hold upon, and its appreciation of, the *sovereignty of God*. Before the majesty of that truth the very heavens and earth shall flee away. It is not obliterated because it has thus dropped out of the consciousness of those about us. The Christian believer, as he recites his Creed, finds comfort in that very unchangeableness which the world stigmatizes. He reposes in the joyous conviction that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever. His only fear is that the rising, fitful mists of an unbelieving age may obscure to his eyes the vision of the eternal throne in heaven;

or that the hoarse shout of the multitude on earth below may drown in his ears that sound of praise from the multitude above, which is rising afar, "as the voice of many waters and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."¹

And this brings us to the second cause for the joylessness of our modern religious life :

A ONE-SIDED CHRISTIANITY.

St. Mark's Cathedral in Venice is popularly regarded as one of the wonders of the world, and thousands are the travellers who now make a pilgrimage to this historic shrine of art and beauty. But there is in St. Mark's a spell that surpasses even its artistic attractions. Its atmosphere is that of the Te Deum itself. As we enter, we behold, on all sides, the Bible written in stone. As we gaze upon the pictured mosaics on walls and roof we are surrounded, everywhere, by the men of whom the world was not worthy. While high above all, amid the molten gold of the domes overhead, stands the Saviour of the world; and, as we pass from porch to altar, we pass under the shadow of His life, and walk with Him from Bethlehem to Calvary. But here comes a surprise. In this duomo of the Middle Ages the Crucifixion scene is not where we should expect to find it, nor where we, with our modern ideas, would place it—in the highest and most conspicuous part of the sanctuary. The Crucifixion and the Resurrection itself are portrayed on the soffit and spandrel of the low bending arch between the domes of the nave, while high up, in the golden sunshine

¹ Rev. xix 6. When this truth of the omnipotence of God in Christ is realized, how utterly strange and unreal seems that kind of faith which is bolstered up by an expression of public opinion ; or by a sentence in praise of Christianity from the lips of an unbeliever !

of the central dome itself, sitting upon the throne of heaven in glory, is the ascended Christ—our reigning Prophet, Priest, and King.

We are wont to look back to the days in which this venerable cathedral was built, as the dark ages of the Church and the world ; and dark they undoubtedly were, in many respects, when compared with the enlightenment of the Post-Reformation era ; but is there not, in this shrine of the olden time, a lesson of faith ; a lesson of triumphant joy ; a lesson regarding the inner meaning of Gospel truth, which Christians, in these days, may well ponder and lay to heart ?

View the contrast between past and present. The Saviour of the world to whom the believer of present times almost exclusively looks is the *dying* Christ. In the most realistic sense he knows nothing in his religious life but Jesus Christ and Him Crucified. There is little or no place either in His theological thinking, or His devotional life, for the Risen and the Ascended Christ.

The Saviour of the world, to whom believers of past times, with St. Paul and the whole Primitive Church looked, was the REIGNING CHRIST,¹ and St. Paul's circu-

¹ The strongest emphasis is laid upon this truth in a work by the Rev. Professor Briggs that has been published since this book was placed in the hands of the printer. We quote here the following striking passage from Dr. Briggs's book : "The Catholic Faith of Christ's Church is expressed in the earliest of the Creeds, that which bears the name of the Apostles. The proportions of that Faith have been destroyed in most of the modern systems of theology, which exaggerate one-third of its clauses and deprecate or neglect two-thirds of them."

... "The faith of the Apostolic Church was fixed upon the Messiah, enthroned at the right hand of God, ruling over the Church, and soon to come in visible presence to reward the faithful and to condemn and punish the unfaithful and the wicked. This is the normal Christian attitude at all times, looking upward to the enthroned Christ and looking forward to His Parousia.

"The Christian Church of Western Europe, under the influence of

lar letter addressed to the different churches¹ in the vicinity of Ephesus, began with the prayer that they might know "what is the hope of God's calling; what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the Saints; what the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe; according to that working of the strength of His might which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him sit at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, . . . and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church."² And second, that they who are *in Christ* might have the eyes of their understanding opened to see and know "how God hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus."³

This conception of the Reigning Christ and the union of the Church on earth with Him, was a dominating consciousness with the Apostolic Church. The New Testament Christians not only lived in the Presence of the King, but they were in daily expectation of His coming again to judge the quick and the dead. And so far from this being a misapprehension of the truth, as it is so often the Augustinian theology, has been looking backward and downward instead of upward and forward. . . . Accordingly, religion has been sad, gloomy, and sour. In the doctrine of Christ it has been living in Passion Week, following the Stations to the Cross, and bowing in penitence before the Crucifix. This is a very inadequate and one-sided Christianity. It is not the Christian faith of the Apostles. It is not that form of Christian theology which is to transform the world."—The Messiah of the Gospels, by the Rev. Charles A. Briggs, D.D., Preface, pp. ix., x.

¹ We have adopted here Bishop Lightfoot's explanation of the Epistle to the Ephesians. See Commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians, *et al.*

² Ephes. i. 19, 20, 21; R. V.

³ Ibid. ii. 5, 6; R. V.

described by our modern critics, it was the exact reverse. For Christ Himself portrayed such watchfulness as the normal condition of mind in His followers. It was the result of Christ's own training, when He was with them on earth. And even after the Ascension itself—after Jerusalem had been destroyed and a half-century or more had passed away—the message sent down from the throne in heaven is the same in character. The last words recorded in the New Testament as having been spoken by the Lord Jesus are: “Yea, I come quickly; Amen!”¹ When St. Paul tells us that the Christian is dead with Christ, risen with Christ, in the “Heavenly places with Christ,” he means not only that the believer has begun on earth the life of heaven² but that he is already surrounded by the issues of eternity, and that these realities will be obscured—falsified—if they are measured by earthly ideas of life and death, or space and time.

This eager anticipation of Christ's speedy coming is characteristic of the Christian life, and he who has it not is sure sooner or later to lose the right perspective, or rather the right relations of natural to spiritual truths. Moreover, that feeling of expectation, it will be observed, was shared in common by all the prophets of the Old Testament and all the Apostles of the New.³ It is, in fact, the only attitude in which we are able to see and apprehend the highest truths of Christ's Kingdom; the only attitude in which we may realize how continuously “the

¹ Revelation xxii. 20.

² See also St. John. iii. 36.

³ It is true that the Apostles eagerly expected Christ's coming, but it is also true, on the other hand, that, taught by Christ Himself, they sadly looked forward to a great backsliding, a falling away from the faith of the Gospels, until the time of the Gentiles should be fulfilled before Christ's Second Advent. The two truths were present side by side in their minds, and we should never forget this. See and compare St. Matt. xxiv. 4-28; St. Luke, xxi. 8-25; Romans xi. 12-28; 2 Thess. ii. 1-9; 2 Tim. iii. 1-14; 2 Peter iii. 1-10.

Lord is at hand" in all that we say or do ; the only attitude in which we can, while walking this earth, live in possession of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and know and feel the highest joy of believing.

THE LIFE OF PRAISE.

Hence, when we read the writings of those men who were taught by Christ Himself, we are lifted up above ourselves and the lower world. We are in the company of those who, on this earth, are breathing the atmosphere of Heaven, and living in the very Presence of the unseen King ; and the Epistles of the New Testament resound from beginning to end as one hymn of thanksgiving, in which is constantly heard the clarion call of Faith, Hope, and Charity. The same note is heard, subsequently, in the writings of the Post-Apostolic Fathers, as, in the second century, they keep looking up to Him "Whom, having not seen, they love, and in Whom, though now they see Him not, yet believing, they rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." And so it continues, on through the Christian ages. When we turn to the Book of Common Prayer, in which the devotions of those ages are crystallized and handed down to us, we find, that though the public services *begin* with the confession of sin, they soon lift us up out of ourselves into an atmosphere that is charged with praise ; while the Communion Office itself—the only service of public worship which traces its origin back to Christ's own institution—is an unending Eucharist and thanksgiving feast.

Here, we have the normal life of real witnesses for God and His Christ ; anything less than this is abnormal, less than the New Testament life, less than the life that the saints of all ages have lived, less than all those have felt who have walked "by faith and not by sight."

The Christian life may have its sorrows and its trials,

but its joys are always more than its sorrows, its victories come from its very defeats ; and the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be (nay, which is *now*) revealed in Christ's disciples. Thus, in the varied fulness of its experiences, its commingled joy and sorrow, glory and suffering, divine strength in the midst of human weakness, divine triumph wrung out of human failures, divine Fellowship in the midst of worldly loneliness—it stands before us as the richest, freshest, most heroic of all lives.

The consciousness of power grows stronger and stronger in the believer's heart. He is ceaselessly discovering that God is right and that the world, when it opposes God, is wrong ; ceaselessly discovering that the horizons of eternity are wider than those of earth, and that he is in possession of "the power of an endless life *now*." This discovery means ever-increasing joy and satisfaction. Anything less than this is, as we have just said, unnatural. The Christian believer soon finds in his own experience that if he would have *true* views of life and duty he must cultivate a joyous and thankful state of mind, for the moment he yields to doubt or gloom his vision becomes distorted and his perspective false. Even his repentance and sorrow for sin are clouds with a silver lining. In the background is always the consciousness of being forgiven, and of living in union with the reigning Christ. He is in *Christ* in the heavenly places. Whatever his human mistakes, shortcomings, perplexities may be, he is being surely led by the Spirit of Truth into all truth ; whatever his sorrows and trials are, he has the indwelling Presence of the Comforter, inspiring him with an unending spirit of thanksgiving and bringing the remembrance of Christ's words of "good cheer"¹ to his heart.

¹ St. John xvi. 33.

Thus, the “ New Song of the Redeemed ”¹ is begun already on the earth by the Church Militant ; and its ringing keynote is sounded by St. Paul, when, as his eye scans the scene of the conflict here, and then the far horizons beyond, he breaks forth in that triumphant outburst of praise : “ We know that *all* things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose. What shall we say then to these things ? If God be for us who can be against us ? He that spared not His Own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not, with Him, also freely give us all things ? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”²

¹ Revelation xiv. 2, 3, 4.

² Romans viii. 28 seq.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

THE APOSTLES' CREED

IN answer to Prof. Harnack's recent pamphlet upon the Apostles' Creed and its late origin, we here append some of the more ancient creeds of Christendom, in order that the reader may see for himself how little foundation there is really for the charge.

The facts enumerated by Prof. Harnack are a twice-told tale to all theologians, but for those who have no time or opportunity to examine the truth for themselves, we would here state that the idea or tradition that the Creed was the actual production of the Apostles themselves, has been rejected, since the Reformation, by all competent scholars. Thomas Cranmer was particularly anxious that this tradition should not gain credence in the English Church. And Nowell's Catechism allows the alternative view that it "*was first received from the Apostles' own mouths, or most faithfully gathered from their writings.*" It has been in accordance with this supposition that the Creed has been received everywhere in recent years. The old traditional name of the Apostles' Creed was retained, (1) because the New Testament shows us that the Apostles actually had some "form of sound words;" and, (2) because every article of the Creed in question can be proved from their own words as recorded in the Gospels, the Book of Acts, and the Epistles of the New Testament. It is a veritable *r  sum  * of New Testament teachings, and, therefore, may fitly retain its ancient name of the Apostles' Creed. One word

more: in comparing this Creed with others that are given below, it will be observed that, though there are verbal variations, the sense is the same, and that the great facts of our Lord's life stand out in all, with the same significant distinctness. The very variations in other respects bring out the unity of faith regarding these great facts.

The comparison, for example, between the Apostles' Creed and the Old Roman Creed, of which Prof. Harnack makes so much, reveals only the following differences: In the Roman Creed (1) the words "*Maker of Heaven and earth*" are omitted. (2) The phrase "*Who was born of the Holy Ghost from the Virgin Mary*" is used, instead of "*Who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary*." (3) The phrase "*Crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried*" is used, instead of "*Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried*." (3) The words "*He descended into Hell*" are omitted altogether. (4) "*in*" is used for "*to*" in the article "*He ascended into Heaven*." (5) "*Sitteth at the right hand of the Father*" is used instead of "*Sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty*." (6) "*And in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Church, the Remission of sins, the Resurrection of the body (carnis)*" is used instead of the articles *I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the Forgiveness of Sins, the Resurrection of the body (carnis), the Life Everlasting.*

The wording of the two may be different, but is there any alteration in meaning? any change in doctrine?

One might as well say that because we render the words *Carnis Resurrectionem* in English as the "*Resurrection of the body*," and say "*And the life everlasting*" instead of "*The life everlasting*," we have a different creed from the Apostles' Creed.

We will now let the creeds speak for themselves. We have here singled out a few, among the large number of professions of belief that have come down to us. It will be observed that all retain the peculiar characteristic model of our Lord's Baptismal formula (S. Matt. xxviii. 19) and of the Apostles' Creed. If the reader desires fuller information, he will find it in "The Creeds of Christendom," by the late Prof. Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D., from which the following forms were taken: in the collection of Mr. Heurtley, in Mr. Swainson's "Nicene and Apostles' Creeds," and in a very excellent little work "On the Apostles' Creed in Relation to Primitive Christianity," by Rev. Dr. Swete, of Cambridge University, England.

THE ORIGIN OF THE CREED.

"Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto Me in Heaven and on earth. Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—S. Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, 20. (*Revised Version.*)

This charge of the Risen Jesus to His Apostles, and this baptismal formula from His own lips, is the nucleus, first, of the baptismal creed, and then, of the larger form of that creed adopted by the Catholic Church.

REFERENCES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT TO SOME EARLY AND APOSTOLIC FORMS OF A CREED.

S. PAUL.

"Thanks be to God that whereas, ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form (*pat-*

tern) of teaching whereunto ye were delivered."—Rom. vi. 17.—*Revised Version.*

Having then gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith (or according to the analogy of the faith *κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως*).—Rom. xii. 6.

"O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee (the deposit, *τὴν παραθήκην* or *παρακαταθήκην*), turning away from the profane babblings and oppositions of the knowledge which is falsely so called; which some professing have erred concerning the Faith."—1 Tim. vi. 20, 21. *Revised Version.*

"Hold fast *the form of sound words*" (or, R. V., "hold the pattern of sound words," *ὑποτύπωσιν ὑγιαινόντων λόγων*) "which thou hast heard of me in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."—2 Tim. i. 13, 14.

THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

"For when, by reason of the time, ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God."—Heb. v. 12. *Revised Version.*

"Having a great High Priest over the House of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in fulness (or full assurance) of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our body washed with pure water; let us hold fast the *confession* of our hope *that it waver not.*"—Heb. x. 21, 22, 23. *Revised Version.*

ST. JOHN.

"Hereby know ye the Spirit of God. Every spirit which confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit which confesseth not Jesus is not of God."—1 John iv. 3. *Revised Version.*

"If any one cometh unto you and bringeth not this teaching (*ταύτην τὴν διδαχὴν*) receive him not unto your house."—2 John x. *Revised Version.*

ST. JUDE.

"I was constrained to write unto you, exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was *once for all delivered unto the Saints.*"—Jude iii. *Revised Version.*

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

"The Eunuch said: See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."—Acts viii. 36, 37.

This verse has been omitted from the Revised Version, and rightly so, because it is not contained in the best uncial MSS.; and is given up by the best critics (e.g., Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford, Westcott and Hort, *et al.*), as an interpolation made to suit the baptismal service of the Early Church. But as it is found even in Irenæus and Cyprian, it is quoted here as showing not only the custom of the Church in the century after the Apostles, but the prevalent belief, at that early date, as to the apostolic origin of a baptismal confession.

IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH. A.D. 107.

EPISTOLA AD TRALLIANOS, CAP. 9.

The following passage is no creed or part of a creed, but it shows what facts of the Gospel history were most prominent in the mind of the famous bishop and martyr Ignatius of Antioch, and the Church of his age, in opposition to the Gnostic heretics, who resolved the birth,

death, and resurrection of CHRIST into an unreal and delusive show or phantom (*δόκησις*, hence Docetae). The parts in brackets are from the longer Greek Recension.

Κωφώθητε οὖν, ὅταν ὑμῖν χωρὶς
Ἰησοῦν Χριστοῦ λαλῇ τις.

[τοῦ νίοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ],
τοῦ ἐκ γένους [γενομένου] Δαβὶδ
τοῦ ἐκ Μαρίας
οὐ ἀληθῶς ἐγεννήθη
[καὶ ἐκ Θεοῦ καὶ ἐκ παρθένου . . .
ἀληθῶς ἀνέλαβε σῶμα ὁ Λόγος
γάρ στὰρξ ἐγένετο καὶ εποιτεύ-
σατο ἄνευ ἀμαρτίας . . .],
ἔφαγεν τε καὶ ἔπιεν [ἀληθῶς],
ἀληθῶς ἐδιώχθη ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλά-
του,
αληθῶς [δε, καὶ οὐ δοκήσει] ἐσταυ-
ρώθη καὶ ἀπέβανεν . . .
οὐ καὶ ἀληθῶς ἡγέρθη ἀπὸ νεκρῶν
[καὶ ἀνέστη διὰ τριῶν ἡμερῶν],
ἐγείροντος αὐτὸν τοῦ Πατρὸς αὐ-
τοῦ . . .
[καὶ τεσσαράκοντα ἡμέρας συνδια-
τρίψας τοὺς Ἀποστόλους,
ἀνελήφθη πρὸς τὸν Πατέρα,
καὶ ἐκάθισεν ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ,
περιμένων ἕως ἂν τεθῶσιν οἱ ἐχθροὶ¹
αὐτοῦ ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αυτοῦ].

Be deaf therefore when any would speak to you apart from (at variance with) Jesus Christ.

[the Son of God],
who was descended from the family of David.
born of Mary,
who truly was born [both of God and of the Virgin truly took a body; for the Word became flesh and dwelt among us without sin . . .],
ate and drank [truly],
truly suffered persecution under Pontius Pilate,
was truly [and not in appearance] crucified and died . . .
who was also truly raised from the dead [and rose after three days],
His Father raising Him up . . .

[and after having spent forty days with the Apostles, was received up to the Father, and sits on His right hand, waiting till his enemies are put under His Feet].

IRENÆUS. A.D. 180.

IRENÆUS was a native of Asia Minor, a pupil of Polycarp of Smyrna (Adv. Hær., Lib. III., cap. 3, § 4; Euseb. H. E., v. 20), and through him a grand-pupil of St. John, the Apostle. He was Bishop of the Church at Lyons

(Lugdunum), in the south of France, in 177, wrote his great work against the Gnostic heresies about 180, while Eleutherus (d. 185) was Bishop of Rome (*Adv. Hær.*, *Lib. III.*, cap. 3, § 3), and died about 202.

FIRST FORM.

(*Contra Hæreses*, *Lib. I.*, cap. 10, § 1, *Opera*, ed. Stieren, Tom. I., p. 119.)

'Η μὲν γὰρ ἐκκλησία, καίπερ καὶ ὅλης τῆς οἰκουμένης ἔως περάτων τῆς γῆς διεσπαρμένη, παρὰ δὲ τῶν Ἀποστόλων καὶ τῶν ἐκείνων μαζητῶν παραλαβοῦσα την [πίστιν]
 εἰς ἓν Θεὸν, Πατέρα παντοκράτορα,
 τὸν πεποιηκότα τὸν οὐρανὸν, καὶ τὴν γῆν,
 καὶ τὰς θαλάσσας, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς, πίστιν·
 καὶ εἰς ἓν Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ,
 τὸν σαρκωθέντα ὑπὲρ τῆς ἡμετέρας σωτηρίας.
 καὶ εἰς Πνεῦμα ἄγιον,
 τὸ διὰ τῶν προφητῶν κεκηρυχός τὰς οἰκονομίας καὶ τὰς ἐλεύσεις [τὴν ἔλευσιν, *adventum*],
 καὶ τὴν ἐκ Παρθένου γέννησιν,
 καὶ τὸ πάθος,
 καὶ τὴν ἔγερσιν ἐκ νεκρῶν,
 καὶ τὴν ἔνσταρκον εἰς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς ἀνάληψιν τοῦ ἡγαπημένου Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν,
 καὶ τὴν ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν ἐν τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ Πατρὸς παρουσίαν αὐτοῦ,
 ἐπὶ τὸ ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι τὰ πάντα,

The Church though scattered through the whole world to the ends of the earth, has received from the Apostles and their disciples the *faith*,

IN ONE GOD, THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,

Who made the Heaven and the earth,

and the seas and all that in them is,

and IN ONE CHRIST JESUS, THE SON OF GOD,

Who became flesh for our salvation;

and IN THE HOLY GHOST,

Who through the prophets preached the dispensations and the advents [advent]

and the birth from the Virgin,

and the passion,

and the resurrection from the dead,

and the bodily assumption into Heaven of the Beloved CHRIST

JESUS, our LORD,

and His appearing from Heaven,

in the glory of the FATHER, to comprehend all things under one head,

καὶ ἀναστῆσαι πᾶσαν σάρκα πάσης
ἀνθρωπότητος,
ίνα Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, τῷ Κυρίῳ ὑμῶν,
καὶ Θεῷ, καὶ Σωτῆρι, καὶ βασιλεῖ,
κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν τοῦ Πατρὸς τοῦ
ἀδοράτου, πᾶν γόνιν κάμψη ἐπου-
ρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθο-
νίων, καὶ πᾶσα γλώσσα ἔξομολο-
γήσηται αὐτῷ, καὶ κρίσιν δικαίαν
ἐν τοῖς πᾶσι ποιήσηται, τὰ μὲν
πνευματικὰ τῆς πονηρίας, καὶ ἀγ-
γέλους παραβεβήκοτας, καὶ ἐν
ἀποστασίᾳ γεγονότας, καὶ τοὺς
ἀσεβεῖς, καὶ ἀδίκους καὶ ἀνόμους
καὶ βλασφήμους τῶν ἀνθρώπων
εἰς τὸ αἰώνιον πῦρ πέμψῃ τοῖς δὲ
δικαίοις, καὶ δούλοις, καὶ τὰς ἐν-
τολὰς αὐτοῦ τετηρηκόσι καὶ ἐν τῇ
ἀγάπῃ αὐτοῦ διαμεμηνηκόσι, τοῖς
ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, τοῖς δὲ ἐκ μετανοίας,
ζωὴν χαρισάμενος, ἀφθαρόιαν
δωρήσηται, καὶ δόξαν αἰώνιαν
περιποιήσῃ.

and to raise up all flesh of all
mankind,
that according to the good
pleasure of the FATHER in-
visible, every knee of those
that are in Heaven and on
the earth and under the earth
should bow before CHRIST JE-
SUS, our LORD and GOD, and
Saviour and King, and that
every tongue should confess
to Him, and that He *may execute righteous judgement over all* ; sending into eternal fire
the spiritual powers of wick-
edness, and the angels who
transgressed and apostatized,
and the godless and unright-
eous and lawless and blas-
phemous among men, and
granting *life* and *immortality*
and *eternal glory* to the right-
eous and holy, who have both
kept the commandments and
continued in His love, some
from the beginning, some
after their conversion.

TERTULLIAN. A.D. 200.

FIRST FORM.

(De Virginibus Velandis, cap. I.)

Regula quidem fidei una omni-
no est, sola, immobilis, et ir-
reformabilis credendi scilicet.

IN UNICUM DEUM OMNIPOTENTEM,
mundi conditorem;
et FILIUM ejus, JESUM CHRIS-
TUM,

The Rule of Faith is altogether
one, sole, immovable, and ir-
reformable—namely, to be-
lieve.

IN ONE GOD ALMIGHTY
the *Maker of the world* ;
and HIS SON JESUS CHRIST,

natum ex Virgine Maria,
crucifixum sub Pontio Pilato,
tertia die resuscitatum a mor-
tuis,
receptum in cœlis,
sedentem nunc ad dexteram
Patris,
venturum judicare vivos et mor-
tuos
per carnis etiam resurrectionem

*born of the Virgin Mary,
crucified under Pontius Pilate
on the third day raised again
from the dead,
received in the Heavens
sitting now at the right hand of
the Father,
coming to judge the quick and the
dead,
also through the resurrection of
the flesh.*

THE PRIVATE CREED OF ARIUS.¹ A.D. 328.

Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἥνα Θεόν,
πατέρα παντοκράτορα·
Καὶ εἰς κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν,
τὸν νίδιον αὐτοῦ,
τὸν ἐξ αὐτοῦ πρὸ πάντων τῶν αἰώ-
νων γεγενηγένον,
ζεὸν λόγον,
δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο, τά τε ἐν
τοῖς οὐρανοῖς καὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς,
τὸν κατελθόντα καὶ σαρκωθέντα,

καὶ παθόντα,
καὶ ἀναστάντα,
καὶ ἀνελθόντα εἰς τὸν οὐρανούς
καὶ πάλιν ἐρχόμενον κρῖναι ζῶντας
καὶ νεκρούς.
Καὶ εἰς τὸ ἄγιον πνεῦμα.
καὶ εἰς σαρκὸς ἀνάστασιν,

καὶ εἰς ζωὴν τοῦ μέλλοντος αἰώνος,
καὶ εἰς βασιλείαν οὐρανῶν,
καὶ εἰς μίαν καυσολικήν ἐκκλησίαν
τοῦ Ζεοῦ, τὴν ἀπὸ περάτων ἔως
περάτων.

We believe in ONE GOD,
the FATHER Almighty;
And in THE LORD JESUS CHRIST,
His Son,
Who was begotten of Him be-
fore all ages,
the Divine Logos,
through Whom all things were
made, both those in the heav-
ens and those on the earth;
Who came down and was made
flesh;
and suffered;
and rose again;
and ascended to the heavens;
and shall come again to judge
the quick and the dead.
And in THE HOLY GHOST;
and in the resurrection of the
flesh;
and in the life of the world to
come;
and in a Kingdom of Heaven;
and in one Catholic Church of
God which extends to the
ends of the earth.

¹ Who was condemned at Nice, A.D. 325.

THE OLD ROMAN AND AFRICAN FORM OF THE APOSTLES'
CREED.

FORMA ROMANA VETUS.

(Before A.D. 341.)

Credo in DEUM PATREM omnipo-tentem.
 Et in JESUM CHRISTUM, Filium
 ejus unicum, Dominum nos-trum ;
 qui natus est de Spiritu Sancto
 et Maria virgine ;
 sub Pontio Pilato crucifixus, et
 sepultus ;
 tertia die resurrexit a mortuis ;
 ascendit in cœlum, sedet ad
 dexteram PATRIS,
 inde venturus judicare vivos et
 mortuos

Et in SPIRITUM SANCTUM ;
 Sanctam Ecclesiam ;
 remissionem peccatorum ;
 carnis resurrectionem.

SYMBOLUM AUGUSTINI (354-430)

HIPPO REGIUS, AFRICA.
 (Circ. 400.)

Credo in DEUM PATREM omnipo-tentem.
 Et in JESUM CHRISTUM, Filium
 ejus unigenitum (unicum)
 Dominum nostrum ;
 qui natus est per Spiritum
 Sanctum ex virgine Maria ;
 sub Pontio Pilato crucifixus
 est, et sepultus ;
 tertia die resurrexit a mortuis ;
 ascendit in cœlum, sedet ad
 dexteram PATRIS,
 inde venturus est judicaturus
 (ad judicandos) vivos et mor-tuos.
 Credo et in SPIRITUM SANCTUM ;
 sanctam ecclesiam ;
 remissionem peccatorum ;
 carnis resurrectionem (? in vi-tam eternam).

THE APOSTLES' CREED ACCORDING TO RUFINUS AND FOR-TUNATUS. A.D. 390-570.

ECCLESIA AQUILEJENSIS.

(Circ. A.D. 390.)

Credo in DEO PATER omnipo-tente [invisibili et im-passibili]

Et in JESU CHRISTO, unico Filio
 ejus, Domino nostro ;
 qui natus est de Spiritu Sancto
 ex Maria Virgine ;

VENANTIUS FORTUNATUS.

(Circ. A.D. 570.)

Credo in DEUM PATREM omnipo-tentem

Et in JESUM CHRISTUM, unicum
 Filium ;
 qui natus est de Spiritu Sancto
 ex Maria virgine ;

crucifixus sub Pontio Pilato, et sepultus ; [descendit in inferna ;] tertia die resurrexit a mortuis ascendit in cœlos ; sedet ad dexteram Patris ; inde venturus est judicare vivos et mortuos ; Et in SPIRITU SANCTO ; sanctam ecclesiam ; remissionem peccatorum ; [hujus] carnis resurrectionem.	crucifixus sub Pontio Pilato ; descendit ad infernum ; tertia die resurrexit ; ascendit in cœlum ; sedet ad dexteram Patris judicaturus vivos et mortuos ; Credo in SANCTO SPIRITU ; sanctam ecclesiam ; remissionem peccatorum ; resurrectionem carnis.
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SYMBOLUM NICÆNO-CONSTANTINOPOLITANUM.¹

THE NICÆNO-CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CREED. A.D. 381.

THE RECEIVED TEXT OF THE
GREEK CHURCH.

Πιστεύομεν εἰς ἓν ΘΕΟΝ ΠΑΤΕΡΑ παντοκράτορα, ποιητὴν οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς, δρατῶν τε πάντων καὶ ἀδράτων

Καὶ εἰς ἓν κύριον ἸΗΣΟΥΝ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΝ, τὸν νίδιον τοῦ Ζεούν τὸν μονογενῆ, τὸν ἐκ τοῦ πατρὸς γεννηθέντα πρὸ πάντων τῶν αἰώνων, φῶς ἐκ φωτός, Ζεὸν ἀληθινὸν ἐκ Ζεοῦ ἀληθινοῦ, γεννηθέντα, οὐ ποιηθέντα δόμοις τοῦ πατρί· δι’ οὐ τὰ πάντα ἐγένετο· τὸν δὲ ἡμᾶς τοὺς ανθρώπους καὶ διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν κατελθόντα ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν καὶ σαρκωθέντα εκ πνεύ-

THE RECEIVED TEXT OF THE
ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Credo in unum DEUM PATREM omnipotentem ; factorem cœli et terræ, visibilium omnium et invisibilium.

Et in unum Dominum JESUM CHRISTUM, Filium Dei, unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula [Deum de Deo], Lumen de Lumine Deum verum de Deo vero, genitum, non factum, consubstantialem Patri, per quem omnia facta sunt ; qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit

¹ This Creed was set forth by the Universal Church in her First General Council, 225 years after the death of St. John, 325 A.D.; amended by the Universal Church at a following General Council, to its present form in 381 A.D., and has ever since been received by the Church *sempor, ubique, ab omnibus*. It is the Creed of the Greek, Roman, Anglican, Oriental, and Scandinavian Churches, and also of all the Evangelical Denominations of Protestantism.

*ματος ἀγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς παρ-
ζένου καὶ ἐναυρωπήσαντα, σταυ-
ρωθέντα τε ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐπὶ Πον-
τίου Πιλάτου, καὶ παζόντα καὶ
ταφέντα, καὶ ἀναστάντα τῇ τρίτῃ
ἡμέρᾳ κατὰ τὰς γραφάς, καὶ ἀνελ-
ζόντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανούς, καὶ καζε-
ζύμενον ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ πατρός, καὶ
πάλιν ἐρχόμενον μετὰ δόξης κρί-
ναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς οὐ τῆς
βασιλείας οὐκ ἔσται τέλος.*

*Καὶ εἰς ΠΝΕΥΜΑ ΤΟῦ ἈΓΙΟΝ, τὸ
κύριον, (καὶ) τὸ ζωοποιόν, τὸ ἐκ
τοῦ πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, τὸ σὺν
πατρὶ καὶ ὑιῷ συν προσκυνούμενον
καὶ συνδοξαζόμενον, τὸ λαλῆσαν
διὰ τῶν προφητῶν· εἰς μίαν,
ἀγίαν, καθολικὴν καὶ ἀποστολικὴν
ἐκκλησίαν· ὅμολογοῦμεν ἐν βάπ-
τισμα εἰς ἄφεσιν ἀμαρτιῶν·
προσδοκῶμεν ἀνάστασιν νεκρῶν,
καὶ ζωὴν τοῦ μέλλοντος αἰώνος.
Ἄμην.*

de cœlis, et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria virgine, et homo factus est; crucifixus etiam pro nobis, sub Pontio Pilato, passus et sepultus est; et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturam; et ascendit in cœlum sedet ad dexteram Patris; et iterum venturus est, cum gloria, judicare vivos et mortuos; cuius regni non erit finis.

Et in SPIRITUM SANCTUM, Dominum et vivificantem, qui ex Patre [Filioque] procedit; qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur; qui locutus est per Prophetas. Et unam, sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam ecclesiam. Confiteor unum baptismum in remissionem peccatorum; et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum, et vitam venturi seculi. Amen.

THE CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CREED.

RECEIVED TEXT OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES.¹

I BELIEVE in one GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY; Maker of Heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one LORD JESUS CHRIST, the only-begotten Son of GOD, begotten of the Father before all worlds [GOD of GOD], Light of Light, very GOD of very GOD, begotten, not made, being of one substance [essence] with the Father; by Whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation, came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under

¹ From the Anglican Book of Common Prayer, with which the text in other Protestant liturgies agrees, with slight variations. . . .

Pontius Pilate ; He suffered and was buried ; and the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures ; and ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the Right Hand of the Father ; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead ; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And [I believe] in the HOLY GHOST, the LORD and Giver of Life ; Who proceedeth from the Father [and the Son] ; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified ; Who spake by the Prophets. And [I believe] in one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins ; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ROMAN CREED AND THE APOSTLES' CREED.

THE ROMAN CREED.

Credo in Deum Patrem omnipo-tentem

Et in Christum Iesum unicum
Filium eius, dominum nos-trum,
qui natus est de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria uirgine,

crucifixus sub Pontio Pilato et
sepultus,

tertia die resurrexit a mortuis,
ascendit in cælos, sedet ad dex-
teram Patris,

inde uenturus est iudicare
uiuos et mortuos

Et in Spiritum Sanctum, sanc-tam ecclesiam, remissionem
peccatorum,

carnis resurrectionem.

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

Credo in Deum Patrem omnipo-tentem

creatorem cœli et terræ.

Et in Iesum Christum Filium
eius unicum, dominum nos-trum,
qui *conceptus* est de Spiritu
Sancto natus ex Maria uir-gine,

passus sub Pontio Pilato, cruci-fixus, *mortuus* et sepultus,
descendit ad inferna,
tertia die resurrexit a mortuis,
ascendit *ad cælos*, sedet ad dex-
teram *Dei* Patris *omnipo-tentis* ;

inde uenturus est iudicare
uiuos et mortuos

Credo in Spiritum Sanctum,
sanctam ecclesiam *catholicam*,
sanctorum communionem, re-missionem peccatorum,
carnis resurrectionem,
uitam æternam.

APPENDIX II

WESTCOTT'S SOCIAL ASPECTS OF CHRISTIANITY (pp. 138-150)

WE turn then to the problems of our own age and country, and ask how we can meet them with the help which we may draw from this teaching of earlier experience. In seeking for an answer, it is something that there is a general agreement as to the source of our characteristic dangers. We are suffering on all sides, and we know that we are suffering, from a tyrannical individualism. This reveals itself in social life by the pursuit of personal pleasure; in commercial life by the admission of the principle of unlimited competition; in our theories of life by the acceptance of material standards of prosperity and progress. Nor is it difficult to see why this should be so. The silent revolution which has taken place within this century in the methods of production and distribution, has terribly intensified the evils which belong to all late forms of civilization. The "great industries" have cheapened luxuries and stimulated the passion for them. They have destroyed the human fellowship of craftsman and chief. They have degraded trade, in a large degree, into speculation. They have deprived labour of its thoughtful freedom and turned men into "hands." They have given capital a power of dominion and growth perilous above all to its possessor.

So it has come to pass that in our fierce conflicts, we are in peril of guiding our conduct by a theory of rights,

and not by a confession of duties ; of losing life in the search for the means of living ; of emptying it, meanwhile, of everything which gives dignity to manhood, though stripped of the accidents of outward dress, and hope to sorrow, though it must be borne in loneliness even to the end. We need, therefore, in order that we may hold our faith erect in our day of trial, to deepen in ourselves the sense of responsibility. We need to show to the world the reality of spiritual power. We need to gain and to exhibit an idea which satisfies the thoughts, the aspirations, the aims of men straining towards the light.

The sense of responsibility, the energy of spiritual force, the power of a divine ideal : how can we gain them ? To this question, which is for us the question of all questions, the past returns no uncertain answer. Each new revelation of Christ among men has hitherto found expression in some social movement, in some form of disciplined life which has embodied and interpreted it. And Christ is revealing Himself through the very needs which trouble us. We can see now, as men could not see in earlier times, how there has been a law in the growth of the race ; how man was taken from himself by the ancient organizations of the state ; how he was taken from the world by the dominant religious communities of the Middle Ages ; how he has been taken from society by the isolating narrowness of many forms of popular Protestantism ; and, seeing this, we can see also, when we let the Incarnation give its perfect message, that he is given back to himself, to the world, to society, in the Risen Christ. This, then, is the revelation which we have to embody ; to embody in the eyes of all by some fellowship which shall strike the imagination ; which shall teach by manifold experience the power of social relationships and social obligations in

commerce, in politics, in religion ; which shall claim for the family and the nation their proper parts in preparing the Kingdom of God on earth, in bringing to redeemed humanity the fulness of its life in Christ.

I do not venture to suggest the rules of the fellowship which I foresee, but I cannot be mistaken as to its main characteristics. The fellowship must be natural. It must not depend for its formation or its permanence on any appeals to morbid or fantastic sentiment. It must accept the facts of life, as seen in the relations of the family, for the ground of its constitution. . . . The fellowship must be comprehensive. It must deal not with opinion, or feeling, or action only, but with the whole sum of life. It must proclaim that God is not to be found more easily in “the wilderness and the solitary place” than in the study, or in the market, or in the workshop, or by the fireside. It must banish the strange delusion by which we suppose that things temporal and spiritual can be separated in human action, or that we can render rightly to Cæsar that which is not, in the very rendering, rendered also to God.

The fellowship must be social. Every member must hold himself pledged to regard his endowments of character, of power, of place, of wealth, as a trust to be administered with resolute and conscious purpose for the good of men ; pledged to spread and deepen the sense of one life, one interest, one hope, one end for all, in the household, in the factory, in the warehouse, in the council-room ; pledged to strive as he has the opportunity, to bring all things that are great and pure and beautiful within the reach of every fellow-worker ; pledged to labour so that to the full extent of his example and his influence toil may be universally honoured as service to the state, literature may be ennobled as the spring and not the substitute of thought, art (too often the minister

of luxury) may be hallowed as the interpreter of the outward signs of God's working.

The fellowship must be open. The uniform of the soldier is at once a symbol and a safeguard. It reminds others of his obligations, and supports him in the endeavour to fulfil them. It makes some grave faults practically impossible. So too a measured and unostentatious simplicity, a simplicity in dress, in life, in establishment, widely adopted by choice and not of necessity, will be an impressive outward witness to the Christian ideal, and it will help toward the attainment of it.

The fellowship must be rational. It must be welcome light from every quarter, as found by those who know that every luminous ray, reflected or refracted a hundred times, comes finally from one source. It must make it clear to Christians, as Christians strive not for victory but for truth, that they, of all men, are least willing to satisfy the soul by mutilating its capacities, or deadening its sensibility.

The fellowship, above all, must be spiritual. It must rest avowedly on the belief that the voice of God is not silent among us, and the vision of God not withdrawn from His people. It must labour in the assurance that the difference of our age from the first age is not the difference of the dull, dim twilight from the noon, but that of common earth, flooded with sunshine, from the solitary mountain-top kindled to a lamp of dawn. It must find occasion for continual praise and thanksgiving in victories of faith, from that of the first martyr, St. Stephen, to that of the last boy in U-Ganda, who knew at least how to die for his Saviour. It must not weary of proclaiming that we—we poor, frail, erring creatures—live, and move, and have our being in God, and that we are surrounded by sacraments of His Presence and of His grace. It must summon its followers, not in the

name of well-being and happiness, but in the name of duty and love, made known to us in their scope and in their efficacy by the Birth and the Passion of Christ. It must bring home to each noblest and each meanest, that he—he, in his great estate, he, in his utter desolation—is a temple, a priest, a sacrifice to a living God.

Such a fellowship of “brethren and sisters of the common hope” may seem to some to be visionary; to others, I think, it will be only the expression of their own deep longings. It is at least, as far as I can judge, nothing more than the translation of our Creed into action according to the conditions of the time. The way to the new and fuller life must still be, as it always has been, through heaven.

And if it seem visionary, I can only say that I have suggested nothing which has not been realized on a large scale, under harder circumstances and with scantier knowledge than our own, by Franciscans, by Moravians, by Quakers. Those societies were not disciplined by that discernment of the laws of national and human growth which has been given to our later years. They were not supported by that catholic sympathy with every energy of man, which has been quickened among us by a large interpretation of nature and history. We have learnt what they could not know. The counsel of God for humanity has been made clear to us, not only in its general character, but also in the mode of its fulfilment. We can estimate fairly the resources of the race. No dark continents, no untried peoples, fill the dim background of our picture of the world with incalculable possibilities. The whole field lies before us. We look upon all the provinces of the Kingdom of God. We can communicate to others the noblest which we have, and save them from the long pains of our discipline. All things are ready.

