

EVOLUTION  
AND THE  
IMMANENT GOD

BY

WILLIAM F. ENGLISH, PH. D.



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# EVOLUTION AND THE IMMANENT GOD

*AN ESSAY ON THE NATURAL THEOLOGY  
OF EVOLUTION*



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“Whichever way of creation God may have chosen, in none can the dependence of the universe on Him become slacker, in none be drawn closer.”—LOTZE: *Microcosmus*, Vol. I., p. 374.



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THIS LITTLE VOLUME  
IS INSCRIBED TO MY WIFE,  
WHOSE INTEREST,  
SYMPATHY AND COMPANIONSHIP  
HAVE MADE ITS  
PREPARATION A PLEASURE.

“The Parsonage,” East Windsor, Conn.,  
September, 1894.



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## CHAPTER I.

### A NEW PHASE OF AN OLD CONFLICT.

DR. BUSHNELL observes, in his work entitled "Nature and the Supernatural," that—"from the first moment or birthtime of modern science, if we could fix the moment, it has been clear that Christianity must ultimately come into a grand issue of life and death with it, or with the tendencies embodied in its progress. Not that Christianity has any conflict with the facts of Science, or they with it. On the contrary, since both it and nature have their common root and harmony in God, Christianity is the natural foster-mother of Science, and Science the certain handmaid of Christianity, and both together, when rightly conceived,

must constitute one complete system of knowledge. But the difficulty is here: that we see things only in a partial manner, and that the two great modes of thought, or intellectual methods, that of Christianity in the supernatural development of God's plan, and that of Science in the natural, are so different that a collision is inevitable and a struggle necessary to the final liquidation of the account between them: or, what is the same, necessary to a proper settlement of the conditions of harmony. Thus from the time of Galileo's and Newton's discoveries down to the present moment of discovery and research in geological science, we have seen the Christian teachers stickling for the letter of the Christian documents and alarmed for their safety, fighting, inch by inch, with solemn pertinacity, the plainest, most indisputable or even demonstrable facts. On the other side, the side of Science, multitudes, especially of the mere dilettanti, have been boasting, almost every month, some discovery that was to make a fatal breach upon revealed religion."

However we may regard his interpretation of them, we believe the author quoted has

stated the facts of the case with substantial accuracy, and that he gives a good summary of a considerable part of our controversial literature in this short paragraph.<sup>1</sup>

Science and Religion, or rather, Science and Theology, have, since the time of the German Reformation, when for the first time such a conflict became possible, been continually arrayed, the one against the other.

Indeed, before that time, although their activity was by definition restricted to different and separate spheres, Theology having to do with the higher sphere—the Kingdom of Grace—as distinguished from the lower sphere, the Kingdom of Nature—the proper domain of Science, they frequently came into collision, and Theology often felt constrained to invoke the aid of the Church's anathemas to hinder the circulation and acceptance of teachings of Science which seemed to it to imperil the integrity of the current dogmatic system.

Quite probably this opposition and persecution on the part of Theology exerted a most

<sup>1</sup> Cf. "New Chapters in the Warfare of Science"—*Pop. Sci. Mo.*, 1891.

salutary influence upon the development of Science; in the same way as the early persecutions of the Christian Church contributed without doubt to the advancement of the cause of truth.

Men of science were likely to sift their theories to the bottom and to convince themselves, at least, of their substantial truth, before proclaiming them to a world dominated by the priest and the Inquisition. The very opposition of intellectual darkness and bigotry was calculated to draw out and develop to the uttermost any natural heroism of character, and to make Science more conscious of the responsibility of its moral, as well as intellectual, mission—a condition of things in sad contrast with the arrogance, dogmatism, and dilettantism which pervades and characterizes so much of modern scientific theory and assertion.

With the rise of free investigation and thought, however, Science was quick to resent the former tyranny of Theology, and bitter in its hostility to its old oppressor. With the discovery of new facts and old errors, with the development and general acceptance of an empirical philosophy, and the growing belief in

the universality of law, Science has often seemed to think itself on the eve of overthrowing the whole structure of faith, with the facts of observation and experiment.

Taking its stand upon the basis of the observed facts of the outward world of nature, and believing their logic to be irresistible, it has given scant courtesy to the facts of spiritual experience and belief and the testimony of the human consciousness respecting an inner and spiritual world. It has viewed the many attempts of Theology to build upon such facts a stable and satisfactory structure with an incredulity akin to contempt.

Theology, thrown on the defensive from the first, cumbered with the burden of inherited creeds and dogmatic systems, and feeling bound to maintain their integrity at all hazards and against every foe, has often found itself on the side of error, and been obliged, again and again, to adjust its theories to the facts, and in accordance with the new light furnished it by its supposed enemy.

It has fought this losing battle with great pertinacity, and has many times, mistaking fidelity to the traditional theology for fidelity

to the truths of Revelation, seemed almost on the point of losing prestige with thinking men; and yet, in the end, with wise conservatism, even if a little late, has accepted the truth, and even used it to establish anew and upon a more secure foundation its own system.

Too often both parties in this controversy have been narrow in their views of truth, and only willing to look upon it from one side, and that their own peculiar standpoint; while the one who would effect a reconciliation between them has been suspected by both.

There is, however, a growing belief in the necessary unity of the universe. There may be two revelations, or even more,—their number is largely a matter of definition—but, if these are all from one source, as the theist believes, they must agree, when rightly understood and properly expressed. One should not be considered as naturally and inevitably opposed to the other, or as tending to destroy or discredit its teaching; but in each should be sought explanation and confirmation of the other, and in them both, taken together, one harmonious unity of truth. To discover and establish this unity and consistency has long

been the ambition and endeavor of earnest minds.

The old conflict between Theology and Science has of late entered upon a new phase, and taken a new direction and name. With the discovery of Evolution, and its promulgation as a universal philosophy, having its application and validity in all departments of science and truth, the terms of the conflict were changed ; and we now find Evolution pitted against Theology, the prevailing theory or philosophy of Science taking the place of Science itself in the old controversy.

The theory of Evolution, when first advanced, received scant courtesy, even from the scientific world ; but, after running the gauntlet of ridicule and adverse criticism, it has gradually won its way to acceptance, in one form or another, among the great majority of scientists ; and now furnishes working hypotheses for the main branches of science ; and gives its own distinctive color to the teaching of our chief schools and universities.

Theology has been slow to accept this new doctrine in any form ; indeed, from no other quarter has it met with such persistent and

determined opposition, not to say misrepresentation. It has appeared to many to be the very Anti-Christ of modern scientific thought, destroying all faith in the teachings of Revelation, and even imperilling the very belief in the existence of God.

In the early and extreme form, in which it was urged by some, and with the extravagant claims made for it by many of its advocates, we could hardly expect it to receive any other, or milder, treatment at the hands of that science which it came professedly to supplant and destroy. After considerable discussion and explanation, however, and in a somewhat modified form, with its sphere and limitations well defined, it is now beginning to find favor and acceptance, even in theological circles. The earlier misrepresentation and bitter hostility which characterized its first reception by the theologian, has, in a great measure, ceased or given place to a more judicial frame of mind on his part; and, while the materialistic interpretations and inferences of some of its advocates are opposed as firmly as ever, many accept the doctrine, or philosophy, in one form or another, defend it, and even find in its

teaching aid for the apprehension and elucidation of religious truth.

The doctrine of Evolution may be said to have won for itself, at last, a position where it can be considered strictly on its own merits; and its value in the statement and elucidation of Christian truth can now be estimated.

Toleration and consideration in theological circles is no inconsiderable victory for the theory which lately was denounced without discrimination and stint from so many pulpits, periodicals, and seminaries.

Nor is it a small gain to Christianity itself, that the young men who have come to accept Evolution, as it is implied, if not directly taught, in our colleges and schools, are no longer told that they cannot believe in the doctrine of Evolution and be at the same time Christians.

Several causes have contributed to bring about this great change in the attitude of the religious public toward the doctrine of Evolution. Of these, perhaps the most potent has been a better understanding of the real and essential meaning of the principle, and its necessary bearing upon spiritual truth; while

the names and influence of those, eminent for their piety and scholarship among the churches, who have accepted, explained and defended the theory, has also done much to weaken, if not entirely remove, the prejudice which the advocacy of many pronounced materialists and atheists had engendered among those who valued their Christian faith above aught else, and were not willing to tolerate for a moment, even for consideration, any theory or philosophy that threatened its entirety.

In this connection, the name of Dr. McCosh deserves thankful mention, for his early, courageous and conservative maintenance of the true principles involved.

His "Bedell Lectures" for 1887 are a model of clearness and discrimination in presenting the "Religious Aspect of Evolution;" and his own personality and character give additional weight to his words. His acceptance of the doctrine of Evolution as an established principle is unequivocal. He says,<sup>1</sup>—"That there is such a process as Evolution, whatever that may be, is now settled among naturalists. There is not a scientist under thirty years of

<sup>1</sup> Independent, Oct. 3d, 1889.

age who does not believe in it in some form. Our theologians and religious journalists, who are ignorant of natural history, speak against it less frequently and dogmatically, though they still claim a petty victory when evolutionists quarrel about some subordinate points."

Others also have, in like manner, borne testimony to the value of Evolution and the groundlessness of the fears entertained on its account.

Dr. Munger maintains<sup>1</sup> that, "Evolution, properly considered, not only does not put God at a distance, nor obscure his form behind the order of nature, but draws him nearer, and even goes far towards breaking down the walls of mystery that shut him out from human vision. In other words, in Evolution we see a revelation of God, while in previous theories of creation we had only an assertion of God."

Dr. Hark affirms, and has written a book<sup>2</sup> to show, that, "The truth of the Bible and the truth of Evolution are one, the only conflict is between its several interpreters and exponents."

<sup>1</sup> "Appeal to Life."

<sup>2</sup> "The Unity of the Truth."

Indeed some have gone so far in their acceptance and appreciation of the doctrine of Evolution as to attempt the reconstruction of theology upon the basis of its philosophy; believing that essential modifications of the existing doctrinal systems, if not a "theological revolution," lie involved in and are required by its teaching and implications.

Undoubtedly, the new philosophy will change to a considerable extent the point of view from which all truth is seen. Protestant theology, however, has never had philosophy for its source, nor depended upon it for its facts; only in their statement and elucidation has the aid of philosophy been sought, and here surely the influence of Evolution will be felt, though the expectations of some and fears of many respecting its effect upon Dogmatic Theology are likely to be disappointed.

There are, however, many questions, introductory to theology proper, which depend for their solution quite largely upon philosophy. It is with these that we may expect to find Evolution a more pronounced, direct and determining influence.

Materialism and doubt have been quick to claim the testimony and support of the doctrine of Evolution for themselves, in their conflict against all belief in the supernatural and supersensual, and loud in proclaiming their expected victory over Christianity.

The consensus of scientific opinion seems to be that they have been premature in their rejoicing and unwarranted in their claims.

Prof. Fiske, the leading exponent of the Evolutionary Philosophy in America, bears testimony to the fact that,<sup>1</sup> "One grand result of the enormous progress achieved during the past forty years in the analysis of both physical and psychical phenomena has been the final and irretrievable overthrow of the materialistic hypothesis."

In a recent article<sup>2</sup> the same author indignantly rebukes the dogmatism of those scientists that declare the belief in Evolution to be inconsistent with a belief in the existence of a personal God, maintaining the perfect harmony of the two beliefs.

In an earlier production<sup>3</sup> he tells us how the

<sup>1</sup> Cosmic Philosophy.

<sup>2</sup> Pop. Sci. Mo., Sept., 1891.

<sup>3</sup> Idea of God.

doctrine of Evolution affects his own belief in God,—“When from the dawn of life we see all things working together toward the evolution of the highest spiritual attributes of man, we know, however the words may stumble in which we try to say it, that God is, in the deepest sense, a moral being.”

It would seem, therefore, that the time was now ripe for Christian thinkers to appropriate for their own uses the new light furnished by this promising theory, and to use it, with all the prestige it has gained with thinking men, in the ever-changing battle which they are continually compelled to wage with materialism and doubt, with regard to those questions which meet us on the threshold of all belief.

Let us no longer direct our controversial attacks against the doctrine of Evolution, as though the weight of its testimony and implication were against us; but let us use Evolution itself, or its philosophy, in clearing the ground for the acceptance of the Christian system, and for the upbuilding of the structure of faith upon the one foundation of saints and prophets.

Should it be found to serve for this worthy purpose, it would not be the first time in the history of thought that the Christian Church has received its weapons for overcoming its enemies, ready furnished and prepared by its old accredited foe.

## CHAPTER II.

THE DOCTRINE OF EVOLUTION.—ORIGIN.—DEFINITION.—FACTORS.—PROOFS.—LIMITATIONS.

1. THE early popular idea, that Evolution was the invention of Darwin, and signifies the descent of man from the monkey, is now fast giving place to broader and more satisfactory, if less simple, conceptions.

There is still, however, a tendency to exaggerate the importance and magnify the influence of the later expounders of this doctrine, at the expense of those who as surely deserve recognition for their services in preparing the way and laying the foundations for its subsequent acceptance and development.

Many, even among the most strenuous advocates of Evolution, seem desirous of making out a complete break in the continuity of the development of thought, and insist upon the

modern origin<sup>1</sup> of this doctrine, oblivious of the fact that their own theory demands continuity in philosophy as much as in geology.

Indeed, a consistent and satisfactory history of the origin and development of the doctrine of Evolution, in its broadest sense, has yet to be written ; the current histories of philosophy not having this line of investigation in mind. The idea of development is by no means a modern one. It can be traced back to the earlier Greek philosophers, and often had a place, more or less prominent, in the systems of all periods, though the breadth of the possible application of the principle never received any adequate recognition.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, Dr. James Freeman Clarke asserts,<sup>2</sup> that a belief in the doctrine of Evolution is found among most of the primitive races, a dim prophecy of what modern science has revealed as the actual fact. He finds more or less clear traces of it in the Orphic writings, the laws of Manu, Aristophanes, Hesiod, Ovid, among the Indians of America, in the Eddas

<sup>1</sup> Lectures before the Brooklyn Ethical Association.—  
“The Philosophy of Evolution.”

<sup>2</sup> Ten Great Religions. Vol. II.

of the Teutonic race, and even in the myths of the islands of the Pacific.

The world of the ancients was small, their intellectual horizon limited, the data for comparisons and generalizations in a great measure undiscovered, and hence its methods undeveloped.

The facts of nature, the events of history, and the postulates of philosophy were discerned with an increasing clearness, but, from a lack of perspective, their causes and relations were little apprehended or understood, and the discovery of any universal law of connection and development was not to be expected.

What Professor Fiske<sup>1</sup> observes with regard to historical science and investigation may perhaps be regarded as practically and substantially true in all departments of scientific research,—“Most of the shortcomings of the old method of historical writing resulted from the fact that the world was looked at from a statical point of view, or as if a picture of the world were a series of detached pictures of things at rest. The human race and its terrestrial habitat were tacitly assumed to have

<sup>1</sup> Pop. Sci. Mo., Sept., 1891.

been always very much the same as at present. One age was treated much like another, and when comparisons were made it was after a manner as different from the modern comparative method as alchemy was different from chemistry. As men's studies had not yet been turned in such direction as to enable them to appreciate the immensity of the results that are wrought by the cumulative action of minute causes, they were disposed to attach too much importance to the catastrophic and marvellous."

It is only the breadth of view and scientific method of modern times that have made possible a conception of the universe as a connected whole, and the development of ideas of connection and relation, which have existed in so many minds and found expression in so many philosophical systems, into one comprehensive philosophy or doctrine of Evolution.

The discoveries of Copernicus and Newton in Astronomy did much to enlarge the mental horizon of mankind as regards the element of space; and those of the latter demonstrated the active potency of the forces known to terrestrial physics among the planets as well.

Lyell introduced the new Geology, showing that the same physical causes or forces now in operation were sufficient, when conceived of as acting through long periods of time, to account for the successive changes and periods in the earth's history, without the necessary introduction of new agencies or the supposition of violent catastrophes.

Even before these astronomical and geological discoveries, in 1755, the "Nebular Hypothesis" was promulgated by Immanuel Kant, an evolutionary theory, which, with subsequent modifications and emendations, remains essentially the working hypothesis of to-day.

In the application of the comparative method to other branches of science, as Biology and Philology, results were also obtained that did much to stimulate the growing, though vague, conception of an Evolution where each phase of nature is produced from an antecedent phase through the action of causes now in operation.

Mr. Darwin applied himself to the task of learning the force or cause that could account for the specific changes and variations in plant and animal life, and, as a result of his pro-

tracted and painstaking researches, discovered the now famous law of "Natural Selection," or "The Survival of the Fittest."

Mr. Wallace also solved the same problem in the same way, entirely independent of Mr. Darwin, and shares with him the honor of the discovery.

Mr. Darwin's connection with Evolution was limited to this one line of investigation and discovery; and it is hard to see how he can be properly called the discoverer of the doctrine of Evolution, which was clearly the product of many minds, the induction from the results and facts furnished by many independent investigators, in many different lines of research.

Herbert Spencer, following out perhaps the investigations of Von Baer and the suggestions of the German philosophers, was the first to discover a universal formula of Evolution, and this he did at first quite independently of Mr. Darwin, though in perfect harmony with the results he had obtained, and influenced, no doubt, by the trend of the age.

The doctrine of Evolution is now the heritage of the scientific world, and the working

hypothesis of the many seekers after truth in its various fields.

It has passed in safety and triumph what may be called the preliminary stage of trial and exposition, and, in one form or another, commands general acceptance.

It has now entered upon the more important period of application and verification throughout the whole realm of truth, and among all the phenomena of the outward world, and the world of mind as well. This period seems likely to be a protracted one, for the true nature of Evolution and its exact limits are by no means settled, as yet, and its whole process is still a mystery, which challenges the best thought and most thorough and minute investigations of this and, in all probability, of many generations to come; with good prospect of large and substantial gains for true scientific knowledge.

2. Of the various definitions which have been given of Evolution, perhaps the most widely-known is that of Herbert Spencer, who defines it in general terms, as "an integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion: during which the matter passes from an indefinite,

incoherent homogeneity to a definite, coherent heterogeneity, and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation."

Prof. Le Conte speaks of it, as a "continuous progressive change, according to certain laws, by means of resident forces."

In other words, it is an organized, universal law of causation, by which one thing is developed, or drawn out, of another, the complex from the simple, and the more complex from the less complex.

3. The forces, or factors, entering into this process, and acting to produce these changes, have not as yet been fully determined. On this point there is still considerable difference of opinion among the advocates of Evolution.

There are four factors<sup>1</sup> which have obtained general recognition :—

1. Influence of Environment, which, as it changes, affects function, and function structure ; and the changes thus produced are inherited and integrated throughout successive generations.

2. The increased Use or Disuse of Organs, producing changes in form, structure and size

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Le Conte. *Monist*, April, 1891.

of organs, which changes are also inherited and integrated, as before.

These two factors are Lamarckian, and relate only to changes occurring during individual life, and which it is supposed the offspring inherit unchanged.

3. Natural Selection, or the Survival of the Fittest, occurring among individuals, of those most in accord with their environment in each generation.

4. Sexual Selection ; the female exercising her preference among the male suitors seeking her possession, on the basis of greater strength, beauty, or attractiveness. In these last named, called Darwinian factors, the changes are all in the offspring, while the individual remains unchanged.

Still another factor has been more recently mentioned, called "Segregate Fecundity" by Gulick, and "Homogamy" by Romanes ; the selection of those varieties the individuals of which are fertile among themselves, but sterile, or less fertile, with other varieties, or the parent stock.

These factors, however, seem to many to fail of fully accounting for all the phenomena,

especially when we consider the development of man ; and, hence, we shall be obliged to note several limitations of the doctrine of Evolution, especially relating to this particular.

Whether we may not confidently expect the discovery of some other factor, which will supply this need or lack in such a way as to relieve the main difficulty, and at the same time to obtain for itself general acceptance, is not at present by any means certain.

Professor Le Conte, fully appreciating the difficulty, states the demand for some such factor very clearly, and insists that the above-named factors are not sufficient to explain the facts brought to light in the process of human development, but that in this case we must add to them another factor,—“ The conscious, voluntary co-operation in the work of Evolution (of man himself), conscious striving for the betterment of the individual and of the race. This factor consists essentially in the formation and pursuit of ideals. . . In early stages man developed much as other animals, unconscious and careless whither he tended, and therefore with little or no voluntary effort to attain a higher stage. But this voluntary factor, this

striving toward a goal or ideal, in the individual and in the race, increased more and more until in civilized communities of modern times it has become by far the dominant factor. . . This voluntary, rational factor not only assumes control itself, but transforms all other factors and uses them in a new way and for its own higher purposes. This last is by far the greatest change which has ever occurred in the history of Evolution. In organic evolution nature operates by necessary law without the voluntary co-operation of the thing evolving. In human progress man voluntarily co-operates with nature in the work of evolution, and even assumes to take the process mainly into his own hands. Organic evolution is by necessary law, human progress by free, or at least by freer, law. Organic evolution is by a pushing upward and onward from below and behind, human progress by an aspiration, an attraction toward an ideal—a pulling upward and onward from above and in front. . . Man, contrary to all else in nature, is transformed, not in shape by external environment, but in character by his own ideals.”

This suggestion of Professor Le Conte, though

a valuable one, and one that certainly indicates the direction in which the solution of the difficulties involved in the evolution of the human race must be sought, is only a suggestion or theory of an individual as yet, and the generally-recognized Factors of Evolution are four, or at most five, as mentioned above.

4. It is of course clearly impossible to give any adequate and satisfactory statements of the Proofs of Evolution within the limits of a single paragraph or chapter.

All such attempts<sup>1</sup> are necessarily more suggestive than demonstrative. We will, therefore, content ourselves with the brief mention of a few considerations bearing upon the subject; leaving the one who would thoroughly canvass the multiform array of facts that go to substantiate this theory, to consult the more technical scientific works upon the various branches of the subject. Nor would we be understood to claim that the proofs of Evolution are complete, in the sense that all the stages in the process of development have been clearly traced, or all the links of the chain of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lectures before the Brooklyn Ethical Association.—  
“Proofs of Evolution.”

descent discovered. This could not reasonably be expected at such an early stage in the investigation, if the attainment of such complete knowledge and insight were conceivably possible for man in his present limitations.

It is important to note, however, while making this disclaimer, that the proofs of the doctrine of Evolution do not come from any one branch of science.

It is an induction from many sciences, and a belief in it, as the general method of creation is strengthened and confirmed by the results obtained by these sciences working on entirely independent lines of investigation. Astronomy, Chemistry, Geology, Botany, Biology and Sociology, each and all bring in their concurrent testimony to the validity of the principle ; and, while it is impossible for one who is not a special student of science to thoroughly sift the evidence in each and all its departments, yet we must, if we would credit human testimony at all in regions which we are not able ourselves to explore, accept the conclusion thus reached. We turn to Astronomy and learn of the development of our present planetary system from the primal nebulous vapor.

In Geology we find the record of the gradual development of the earth until it has reached its present state, the early and simple forms of life, the growing complexity and differentiation, and the upward gradation of all forms of life.

When we consider the existing animal organisms and discover in man, and elsewhere, rudimentary organs, inexplicable on any other hypothesis, and a general community of structure among the thousands of species that inhabit the earth; and when, by experiment and observation, we note for ourselves the changes which can be brought about by variations in environment, and which are taking place, for this and other reasons, we feel quite inclined to accept the testimony of those who are qualified to speak, and to consider Evolution as the most probable method of creation.

5. It must not be supposed that the doctrine of Evolution has solved every difficulty; or that it can afford an explanation for every mystery, however extravagant may be the claims made for it by its more enthusiastic advocates. Magnificent as have been its achievements in bringing to light the long

hidden law of the connection and development of the universe, it has penetrated little, if any, within the cloud of mystery which envelops and conceals from our view the ultimate origin of the primal facts of existence. There are still many things the secret of whose being and beginning the scientist has not been able to fathom by any of his methods of observation or experiment, and yet which must be accepted as facts, most important and fundamental to a complete understanding of the universe.

Evolution has its limitations, its mysteries, its uncertainties. To confess this is by no means to discredit the theory or to deny its value and importance.

We have learned from the experience of the past to look with doubt and suspicion upon theologies and scientific theories that have no mysteries, and come to us prepared to offer an adequate explanation of the whole universe of fact or of truth. We have learned to accept the mysterious and unexplainable, even the paradoxical, as a part of the universe of reality.

Arrogance and infallibility in theory and dogma, as in the individual, repel ; while humil-

ity attracts, and confessions of limitation and of mystery are no indication of weakness, only of finiteness, and they give, rather than destroy, confidence.

Evolution leaves the origin of matter, that primal and basal factor in the process of development, as much in the dark as ever. It may trace back the forms of it with which we are familiar, from one degree of complexity to one of more simplicity, but the rudimentary and ultimate molecule, or atom, remains to be accounted for, and Evolution cannot do it.

Light, so essential for the growth and development of plant and animal life, whence its origin and what the explanation of its action? We are told that it consists of vibrations in an ether, but the answer only introduces new elements to embarrass the problem, for they in turn require explanation; and Evolution is obliged to leave the question pretty much where it found it. How shall we account for the beginnings of plant life, with its power of assimilation, growth and reproduction? It is not of the essence of matter, as we know it; and we cannot produce it with any chemical, electric, magnetic, or other

force known to science. Here also Evolution is silent.

Nor is the problem of the origin of animal life, possessing sensation, the power of locomotion, instinct, and a measure of intelligence, any easier of solution.

Indeed the mystery deepens at every step, and reaches its culmination when we try to account for the origin of human life. Man possesses all that was noblest and best in what preceded him, and adds to his endowment even richer acquisitions of moral and spiritual potentiality.

These new powers or forces were introduced at various times in connection with the different stages in the process of Evolution, and, only by assuming their introduction and granting their operation, can we explain the various phenomena of existence. Evolution finds a place for them in its system, and proclaims the universality of law in all their activity, but it utterly fails in all its efforts to produce or account for them. History tells us of a writer who lived some 1,500 years before the beginning of our era, according to the common reckoning, long before the earliest of the

Greek philosophers, and long before the beginnings of scientific investigation. He writes of a preliminary and antecedent period when the earth was without "form and void," no light, no life. He tells us of the introduction of light. He gives us what purports to be a history of the creation in outline, and hints at the introduction of new forces at different periods in the process of the development of the earth and of plant and animal life. Living as he did in the childhood of the race, he may perhaps be excused for his failure to use the latest scientific terminology, when he described with substantial accuracy the order of the development of the universe.

Nor do we feel inclined to censure that childlike faith, which, viewing the development of each period as a whole, unhesitatingly ascribed it, in its entirety, to the divine potency.

Evolution is now busy writing a commentary upon his words, and may yet even come to applaud his faith, as true spiritual insight into the essence of the underlying reality, and accept his explanation of the primal, basal mystery—the primal, or first, cause.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF THE IMMANENT GOD.

THROUGHOUT the entire history of thought, whether expressed in philosophies or theologies, we can trace two prevailing and fundamentally opposed conceptions of God, in His relation to the universe.

The one views Him as transcendent, far removed from the universe of His creation, and ruling and regulating it from without ; the other finds Him immanent, present in power and potency in all created things.

The one views the universe as a gigantic machine, so arranged as to be able to run itself after receiving the primal impulse from the hands of its Maker, subject to His general superintendence, and to any interruption of its courses or processes, or any change in the same, that the

Ruler of the world may deem desirable or expedient from time to time ; the other conceives of the universe as a manifestation of God, views the creation as a continuous process, and the laws of nature as expressions of the will of God.

Closely allied to these more prominent conceptions, and logically dependent upon, if not derived from them, are those of Anthropomorphism and Pantheism ; and these also are in turn entirely incongruous, the one with the other. The anthropomorphic conception of God, which ascribes to the Supreme Being the attributes and characteristics of humanity, is a natural, if not necessary, result or complement of the idea of Him as transcendent.

This conception has generally been found in connection with the conception of God as transcendent ; as though the religious nature of man demanded some compensation for the putting God at a distance, and would postulate likeness in the place of nearness.

Pantheism also, that doctrine which confuses God with the universe of His creation, may be said to naturally and inevitably follow from the conception of God that regards Him as

immanent in the universe, if the necessity of holding to and insisting upon His personality be once forgotten, or if, as in the case of much of the thought of the heathen world, it be not felt to any appreciable extent.

We are, therefore, not surprised to find that in all the thought of heathenism the pantheistic doctrine of God largely preponderates. In most of their conceptions they were inclined to confuse God with the world, though the opposite conceptions are also found, and the baldest and most extreme Anthropomorphism is by no means a stranger to their thought. Grecian philosophy as well, in all its forms and phases, was to a greater or less extent dominated by this same pantheistic tendency. Judaism, on the other hand, was as far on the other side, and, in all its distinctive ideas and conceptions of God, transcendence is the element that obtains recognition and maintains the supremacy. In its doctrine of God its theology may be characterized by transcendence, joined with and tempered by a bold Anthropomorphism. Christian theology, however, while inheriting much from Judaism, and while accepting in its main features the Jewish concep-

tion of the character of God and incorporating it into its own system, was inclined to a very different idea of Him in His relation to the world from that entertained by the old dispensation.

The Incarnation was a new fact, and one of profound meaning and import in this connection.

Moreover, this fact was the central one in their thought and the corner-stone upon which they would build their system of doctrine, as well as their structure of faith. The problem of theology in this period was to find an appropriate place for this transcendent and culminating event; or rather, with the life of God manifest in the flesh filling the horizon of their thought, the bonds of inherited and traditional dogma were broken or loosed to such an extent as no longer to be felt as a restraint, and the Incarnation became the starting-point for and the center of all theological inquiry, while all other truths had to be arranged anew in their order of relation to or dependence upon this transcendent event.

The first chapter of the Gospel of John shows how early and how profoundly this necessity was felt.

There is still another factor which must not be lost sight of in this connection ; and that is, the influence of Greek Philosophy upon the early theologians of the Christian Church.

Judaism, if we except the few feeble and ineffectual attempts made about the time of Christ by the Jewish-Alexandrian school, did not produce any national philosophy. Their intellectual activity was turned in other directions, and their circumstances and mental characteristics as well were not favorable for the production or development of philosophy.

The Greek Philosophy, however, was highly developed and dominant in all intellectual circles throughout the Roman world. Its influence was by no means inconsiderable among the Jews themselves, as the imitative efforts of the Jewish-Alexandrian school, mentioned above, abundantly show. Moreover, the early theologians of the Christian Church were men who, as far as they had received any previous training, had obtained it from the study of the prevailing Greek Philosophy of this period, and often in the schools of philosophy themselves. Their modes and methods of thought were thus in a large measure determined by

this important influence. Their theology, however, is by no means pantheistic; the personality of God is clearly recognized; but, in their conception of the relation of God to the universe, the Jewish idea of transcendence no longer predominates, and the Christian doctrine of the Immanence of God for the first time obtains adequate statement and recognition. This doctrine is distinctively and essentially a Christian doctrine, having much in common with the spirit of the best of the Greek philosophy, but possessing also a recognition of the Divine personality, akin to that found in the Hebrew theology.

This conception of God was developed and expounded by the early Church Fathers, and particularly by Clement, and Origen, and the Fathers of the Greek Church.

Prof. Allen shows, in his exceedingly interesting book, "The Continuity of Christian Thought," how this doctrine dominated the thought of the early theologians of the Church, standing as the corner-stone of many of their systems, before the time came when all theological thought and investigation was controlled and directed by the Hierarchy in

its endeavor to establish and maintain its supremacy in the Christian Church.

This same author also explains the decadence of this doctrine, at one time so prominent in Christian thought, in this struggle, from the necessity of maintaining the conception of a God living far removed from man and inaccessible, that men might be forced to have recourse to the priesthood and Hierarchy as divinely-appointed mediators, and representatives of the Deity as well, among men. We thus find that Latin thought was opposed to the conception of God as immanent, and that all through the middle ages it was held in abeyance, while the doctrine of transcendence was insisted upon and developed by most of the leading theologians; John Scotus Eregina, who went almost to the extent of manifest pantheism in his theological system, and others, here and there, of like or corresponding opinions, being clearly exceptions, and opposed in their thought to the tendency of the age.

Since the emancipation of theology from this enforced slavery to the will and interests of the Hierarchy, the doctrine of the immanence of God has again obtained recognition.

It is now commonly asserted that God is both immanent and transcendent, in order not to sacrifice the idea of His personality to much-feared pantheistic tendencies of thought.

The tendency is, however, as Prof. Allen shows, to revert to the earlier conceptions of the Greek Fathers, and to emphasize anew the Christian doctrine of the Immanent God, as affording the most satisfactory standpoint from which to view theology and to explain the phenomena of nature as well, in their relation to the Divine will.

Henry B. Smith, in his *Systematic Theology*, thus defines the doctrine:—

“God is present everywhere in working, in efficiency. He acts in and through every substance and thing. On the other hand God has also a substantial omnipresence, a presence of His substance or essence everywhere.”

Dr. Munger says :<sup>1</sup> “It is the characteristic thought of God at present that He is immanent in all created things,—immanent yet personal, the Life of all lives, the Power of all powers, the Soul of the universe.”

There can be little doubt but that the dis-

<sup>1</sup>The Freedom of Faith.

coveries of Science have, directly or indirectly, done much to stimulate and strengthen this tendency of thought.

Looking at the question from the side of Science, even such a conservative scientist as Prof. Le Conte is forced to the conclusion that, "either God is far more closely related with nature, and operates it in a more direct way than we have recently been accustomed to think, or else nature operates itself, and needs no God at all. There is no middle ground tenable."

Evolution is by no means necessarily opposed to the Christian doctrine of the Immanent God, indeed it requires some such supplementary conception to afford a basis for the existence of the multiform phenomena which it has brought to light, to explain the possibility of their occurrence, and to account for the intelligence which originated and presides over the whole process of development.

The primal and central teaching of Evolution, and indeed of all science and philosophy as well, is the universality of the reign of law ; a doctrine which receives new and almost daily illustration and confirmation from every fresh observation and experiment.

There are physical laws and there are also laws of mind. In accordance with the requirements of one law, one phenomenon, or class of phenomena, must be explained; and another law gives the reason for another occurrence or class of occurrences; while the law of Evolution accounts for the general development of the whole cosmic universe. Everywhere we find traces of the existence and action of law; its dominion extends as far as the boundaries of our observation; and its behests afford the explanation of all that has occurred and indicate the lines of development and advance in the future.

But what are these laws, so universal and all-powerful in their application and potency that naught can escape from their controlling influence?

In accounting for the existence and development of the universe, is it enough to say that everything has been brought into its present state by the action of universal laws, or, are we not obliged in turn to ask for an explanation of the existence, origin, and potency of the laws themselves?

However misleading certain forms of expres-

sion may be, it is perfectly clear to a sound philosophy that law cannot be conceived of as a force or power in itself to perform all that of which it is urged as the explanation. They explain much, it is true ; but they themselves require an adequate explanation.

Laws are but “ modes of action of omnipotence,” having no power or reality apart from the Divine Being, the expression of whose will they are.

The “ universality of law ” is a doctrine which has been supposed by many, its friends and foes alike, to be destructive of a belief in the Christian religion ; but what is it, after all, but the scientific expression of a well-known doctrine of theology—the omnipresence of the Immanent God? So also, in like manner, the immutability of the laws of nature, a doctrine so often opposed by the theologian as fatal to all religious belief, is but the statement, in scientific language, of a current teaching of theology—the immutability of God.

It is encouraging to see that it is fast becoming evident to the theologian and scientist alike, that the doctrine of Evolution does not, as was feared by some and supposed by others, do

away with the necessity of a God in explaining the facts of the universe; and that the conviction of the necessity of maintaining the harmony of beliefs in Evolution and in the existence of God, conceived of as immanent and yet personal, is a growing one; while we may expect Evolution to furnish us with confirmation and elucidation of a belief most fundamental and important in the Christian system.

Says Professor Fiske: <sup>1</sup>—“The doctrine of Evolution, which affects our thought about all things, brings before us with vividness the conception of an ever-present God—not an absentee God who once manufactured a cosmic machine capable of running itself except for a little jog or poke here and there in the shape of a special providence. The doctrine of Evolution destroys the conception of the world as a machine. It makes God our constant refuge and support, and Nature his true revelation: and when all its religious implications shall have been set forth, it will be seen to be the most potent ally that Christianity has ever had in elevating mankind.”

<sup>1</sup> Pop. Sci. Mo., Sept., 1891.

A recent theological writer<sup>1</sup> also comes to a like conclusion with regard to the influence of Evolution upon our idea of God :—“In the place of a Creator working at the world from the outside, it shows us an inherent, all-pervasive Power, permeating all things, active everywhere, constantly unfolding himself according to the eternal order of his own being. Instead of an arbitrary Lawgiver imposing his decrees upon the world, or himself subject to moral laws existing somewhere or other in the universe, we have a spiritual Substance, whose own constitution and mode of being are the eternal law of both material and spiritual existence, determining the ‘stream of tendency that is ever’ making for righteousness and happiness, moulding all things great and small according to the principles of his own being.

“We have a God whom indeed we cannot picture as seated on a throne, invested with human form and attributes, but whom we can realize as being with us ‘always, even unto the end of the world,’ as immediately present everywhere, as one in whom, in deed and in truth, we can ‘live and move, and have our

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hark: *The Unity of the Truth.*

being;’ a Spirit-principle who can actually live in us, whom we can ‘put on,’ on whom as a foundation we can build up ourselves unto the ideal set before us. A God whom we can trust, because He is ‘the same yesterday, to-day and forevermore,’ ‘in whom is no variability nor shadow of turning,’ the one God blessed forevermore. . . . A God who in the truest sense is our Father, our Friend, and our Saviour.”

It would seem, therefore, that this conception of the Immanent God, so thoroughly in harmony with the prevailing trend of scientific thought, as represented by the doctrine of Evolution; and at the same time in line with the ideas of the earliest Christian thinkers, and in harmony with the current of modern theological development, gives promise of furnishing the long-desired basis of agreement, or union, between Science and Theology.

The doctrine of Evolution is itself still in the process of development, nor do we believe that the doctrines of Theology have attained to their final and most complete statement. Many philosophies have arisen in the past and for a time commanded wide-spread confidence

and given promise of great and permanent usefulness, only to be superseded by later and more satisfactory statements and explanations of truth. This may be the case with the doctrine of Evolution in turn.

And yet it would seem that a doctrine of Evolution which finds its explanation, possibility, and reality in the Immanent God, gives promise of making a nearer approach, than has ever yet been made, to a system of philosophy of universal scope and application.

## CHAPTER IV.

### EVOLUTION AND THE ARGUMENTS FOR THE BEING OF GOD.

FOUR arguments are usually adduced to establish the necessity of the assumption of the existence of God in accounting for the facts of nature and of consciousness. The Ontological; the Cosmological; the Teleological; and the Moral, or Historical.

When the emphasis was put upon the transcendence of God, it was natural, if not necessary, to look to these arguments for demonstrative proof of the being of God; the establishment of a logical and necessary connection between the universe and its extra-mundane Originator. With this end, or requirement, in view, the arguments have been elaborated with great care by different writers, but with varying degrees of success in producing a

general certainty of conviction as to their adequacy, and in answering all objections to their validity.

Man's efforts to demonstrate the being of God from the existence of the world and its phenomena, the infinite from the finite, the eternal from the temporal, could hardly be expected to succeed, from the very nature of the problem. The considerations adduced as proof have value and validity chiefly with those who believe in the existence of God upon other grounds.

The being of God must be considered as a primal truth; logic is as powerless to introduce it within the terms of its formulas, as science is unable to extract it from the crucible of its researches.

1. Says Dr. Mulford :<sup>1</sup>— ‘ Man is conscious of the being of the external world, and lives and acts in this consciousness, and the being of the external world so comes to be apprehended by him. And, further, man is conscious of the being of God, and lives and acts in this consciousness, and the reality of the being of God so comes to him.’ With the conception

<sup>1</sup> The Republic of God.

of God as immanent in the universe, as "the light which lighteth every man coming into the world," the Ontological argument becomes little more than a statement of the fact that the being of God is a truth primitive in human thought and apprehension. Under the influence of this conception, we search no longer for demonstrations of the being of God, but the rather, believing that the being of God is the foundation and life of all things, we look for manifestations and revelations of God, His will and His purposes. We seek knowledge of God, and<sup>1</sup> "the knowledge of God comes through experience. It is the experience of the individual and the family, and the nation in the life of humanity."

We look to these arguments, therefore, for indications of the presence and activity of the Divine Being in the universe. And, when viewed in this light, they have a value and cogency which they did not before possess, and which the doctrine of Evolution increases, rather than diminishes, though at the same time it changes somewhat the form of their statement and broadens the conceptions in-

<sup>1</sup> The Republic of God.

volved in them, especially in the case of the argument from design.

2. The cosmological argument depends upon the principle of causation, and may be stated in the form of a syllogism: Every effect must have an adequate cause. The world is an effect. Therefore the world must have had a cause, adequate to account for its existence.

The aim of this argument is to establish the existence of an eternal and necessary Being, the First Cause.

Prof. Bascom has shown<sup>1</sup> the impossibility of making a transition to the Supreme Being from the physical laws of the universe by the aid of this principle of causation. He finds the law—every effect must have a cause—to involve:—The duality of all facts, each being separated into outward expression and inward force. The exact equivalence of each cause and its corresponding effect. The uniformity of nature as a combination of causes. And, also, the unbroken continuity of causes and effects in their several series.

Such an idea of causation fails utterly of affording any proof of the existence of God.

<sup>1</sup> Natural Theology.

However far back we trace the connection of causes and effects, we shall find no change in the form of the facts, and we shall be no nearer their ultimate explanation. If at any point we arbitrarily suspend the investigation and assume or postulate a First Cause, we destroy the very principle of causation which we have accepted and upon which we depend for our conclusion; and such a First Cause "can be neither less nor more than an expression of all the causes which flow from it." We must entirely fail of finding a Supreme Being.

We are thoroughly persuaded that things are united by causal relations and that every effect involves a sufficient cause, but we are at the same time utterly unable to transcend the physical process in the application of the law of causation and arrive at the being of God. In order to discover the evidences of a mind, presiding over and acting through the universe, we need to look more broadly upon its facts.

If we find them to be concurrent and constructive, if these efficient causes, working under general laws, are busy working out definite and comprehensive ends, we can assert the existence of final causes, and thus, in these

clear manifestations of the action of mind and its prevailing, determining influence, find unmistakable indications of the presence and activity of the Supreme Being. Prof. Bascom asserts<sup>1</sup> that Evolution must exclude all final causes. "Efficient causes, existing as eternal forces, control all things. The energies of the Universe, like those of a torrent, come pouring out of the past and simply spread out and over the future as an open field. Guidance, direction, shaping conditions of all sorts are already within them. They neither call for nor are capable of any modification toward any end whatever." Dr. McCosh, however, does not share in this view, but has said in a recent article<sup>2</sup> that:—"It is generally admitted by evolutionists, by none more fully than Prof. Huxley, that the theory of Evolution does not undermine or interfere in any way with the doctrine of Final Cause." Indeed, it would seem that the doctrine of Evolution was calculated to afford most powerful support to this doctrine, for it endeavors to combine and comprehend all the phenomena of the universe under one conception, in one system. It is a

<sup>1</sup> Natural Theology.

<sup>2</sup> Independent, Oct. 10th, 1889.

system of orderly development, the complex from the simple, along well defined lines, in accordance with universal laws.

Divine action or interference from without may not be required by this theory, but the continual presence of the Divine potency and energy, and the constant direction of the Divine will is a necessary assumption, if we are to understand or account for its progress and processes. Nothing less than the assumption of an Immanent God can explain the orderly development of the universe, the existence of efficient causes, of all-embracing and controlling laws, and their unvarying potency and consistence. Efficient causes and universal laws cannot be considered the final and basal reality of the universe; they in turn require explanation.

No comprehensive and intelligent inquiry into the structure of the universe can fail in the discovery of final causes; Evolution gives abundant evidence of their existence; and they involve a belief in God.

It is a singular fact, however,<sup>1</sup> “that whenever we find out how anything is done, our

<sup>1</sup> Frances Power Cobbe: Darwinism in Morals.

first conclusion seems to be that God did not do it. No matter how wonderful, how beautiful, how infinitely complex and delicate has been the machinery which has worked, perhaps for centuries, perhaps for millions of ages, to bring about some beneficent result,—if we can but catch a glimpse of the wheels, its divine character disappears. The machinery did it all. It would be altogether superfluous to look within.”

3. If we now turn to the details of the argument for the being of God drawn from the evidences of Design in the universe, we shall find that the doctrine of Evolution renders necessary a complete change in the point of view from which the facts which enter into this argument are to be regarded ; and, at the same time, that it largely broadens the scope of the argument and strengthens its validity. With the old view of the immediate and special creation of the various species and forms of life, as found now upon the earth, the argument was based upon the evidences of design seen in each species or individual, looking upon it as a finished and complete product of creative wisdom.

With the new view, the view of Evolution, which often discovers rudimentary organs having no present use, and even dangerous to the health and life of the organism, and which considers no form of structure or life as complete or perfect in itself, but, the rather, a step in or a stage of the process of development, which is still going on and has by no means reached its goal and consummation, and which teaches that these very adaptations of the organs and organism, which have been supposed to afford evidence of design, are themselves, in a measure, at least, due to the influence and effect of the environment upon the organism, surely we must change the form of the argument, if it is to have any longer force or validity. This necessary change, however, instead of destroying the force of the argument, as it was originally presented, greatly broadens its scope and application, and correspondingly strengthens it.

It is now no longer an argument based upon an adaptation of special organs to special requirements of circumstance and environment, thus depending for its convincing power in a great measure upon the suppositions and as-

sumptions of the individual observer, but it depends upon the whole determining web of design and purpose which may be traced through the entire fabric of creation. It is no longer an induction from the special or particular, but it is the convincing and unavoidable conclusion and teaching of the tendency and course of the whole process of development. In other words, Evolution itself is one all-embracing system of design, which requires for its explanation nothing less than the existence of the Immanent God. Evolution, instead of destroying this argument, takes it up out of the region of supposition, assumption and special pleading, and places it upon the secure foundation of universal and all-controlling law.

This fact, and the consequent gain to Christian Theism coming so unexpectedly from this source, is being fully recognized on all sides by Christian thinkers :—

Says Dr McCosh : <sup>1</sup> —“ The proof from design proceeds on the observation of things as adapted one to another to accomplish a good end, and is equally valid whether we suppose adjustment to have been made at once or produced

<sup>1</sup> The Religious Aspect of Evolution.

by a process which has been going on for millions of years. There is proof of a designing mind in the eye as it is now presented to us, with its coats and humors, rods and cones, retina and nerves, all co-operating with each other and with the beams that fall upon them from some millions of miles away. But there is further proof in the agents having been brought into relation by long processes all tending to the one end. I value a gift received from the hand of a father ; but I appreciate it more when I learn that the father has been using many and varied means to earn it for me."

Dr. Munger, in an article upon "Evolution and the Faith,"<sup>1</sup> asserts that,—“Evolution strengthens the argument from design. This argument may be based upon the course of civilization, or on the structure of the eye, or on the working of love. Paley’s argument, as Bishop Temple has well shown, stands, with slight modifications, on as strong a basis as ever. But if we can look at the universe both as a whole and in all its processes and in all ages, and find one principle working every-

<sup>1</sup>Century, vol. 32, page 108.

where, binding together all things, linking one process to another with increasing purpose, and steadily pressing towards a full revelation of God's goodness, we find the argument strengthened by as much as we have enlarged the field of its illustration. But if one part of the universe is abruptly shut off from another, if no stronger bond of unity be assigned to it than that of creative energy, and only the near-lying fields of design are used, then the argument is abridged and may even fall short of an absolute conclusion."

H. W. Beecher, in his sermon on "Divine Providence and Design,"<sup>1</sup> while showing that the argument may sometimes fail when applied to single acts or phenomena, concludes that, "If single acts would evince design, how much more a vast universe, that by inherent laws gradually builded itself, and then created its own plants and animals, a universe so adjusted that it left by the way the poorest things, and steadily wrought toward more complex, ingenious, and beautiful results! Who designed this mighty machine, created matter, gave to it its laws, and impressed upon it that tendency

<sup>1</sup> Evolution and Religion.

which has brought forth the almost infinite results on the globe, and wrought them into a perfect system? Design by wholesale is grander than design by retail.”

4. The Moral Argument depends upon the facts of man's own nature as they are revealed to him in consciousness. The world shows traces of intelligence, but they can only be recognized by an intelligent being, and man is directly conscious of the possession and personification of intelligence within himself.

While the whole course of nature seems bounded by the stern necessity of unchanging law and determined thereby, man is conscious in himself of freedom developed out of, and, at the same time, inhering in, necessity.

Moreover, man also finds in himself a sense of right and wrong, entirely distinct from that which is true, agreeable or expedient; independent of any influence of the intellect or will, and asserting an authority which is unique and which cannot be explained as being derived from himself. These facts of man's nature, indicating as they do the existence of a soul differing in all its distinctive capabilities, aspirations and necessities from the surrounding

world, require for their explanation an intelligent, voluntary and moral Divine Personality, and give evidence of His presence and potency. Viewing man in his relation to the family and the state, this argument has also a historical side.

In these lines we can trace the realization of the moral or ethical idea throughout the development and organization of society. It thus becomes an appeal to the universal consciousness of mankind, as manifested in the establishment and development of human institutions, and, as an unconscious and universal testimony to the presence and power of ethical ideas and ideals, it has great weight and evidences the presence and activity of God in the whole course of human life :<sup>1</sup>—“ This process of the historical world which, in the realization of an ethical life, tends towards righteousness and freedom, must proceed from a force in which subsist qualities of righteousness and freedom. But these are qualities of will. They are the very elements of personality. The energy working in righteousness and towards freedom cannot be an

<sup>1</sup> Mulford : *The Republic of God.*

indeterminate force or thing, and cannot be determined by contingency, as a thing in relation with a thing.”

There is nothing in Evolution to impair the validity of this argument. The doctrine of Evolution does away with no one of the facts of consciousness.

On the contrary, Evolution must accept all these facts and find a place for them in its philosophy.

Evolution alone can account for man's connection with the lower forms of life and subjection to the lowest conditions of earthly existence, while at the same time according him a position representative of the highest forms of life, with the prospect of further development and advance in the line of the moral and the spiritual. Formerly man's superiority over nature was assumed on the basis of the facts of consciousness, and he was supposed to have been the product of a distinct creation, but Evolution regards him as the representative of that type toward which all the processes of creation have been tending, and for whose realization all that preceded has been but the preliminary and preparatory stage.

With the doctrine of Evolution the universe is one ; the course of human history continuous ; while the highest stage of development is the spiritual and moral, and the realization of ethical ideals is the end and aim of the whole process of development.

Evolution thus connects the Moral and Historical Argument with that of Design, giving to the latter a new breadth of meaning and application, and to the former a corresponding debt of significance as indicative of that which is the most essential in the Divine character and purposes—the moral and the spiritual, grounded upon and developed in the voluntary and personal.

The connection of God with the world being no longer merely assumed on the basis of a formal logic ; but accepted as a fact most essential to any understanding or explanation of the being, beginning, development and progress of the universe, both material and spiritual ; we no longer depend upon special and isolated facts to establish the reality of the Divine existence, nor stake our faith upon any conclusions obtained by the processes of human reasoning.

The visible universe—"The Time-vesture of the Eternal;" law and its requirements; life and its potencies; mind, intelligence, morality and personality; and the whole process of development as it advances toward the realization of high and spiritual ideals—these are our evidences of the existence of a supreme and underlying Reality, and in these we would fain see manifestations of the presence and activity of the Immanent God, of whom the apostle said:—

"In Him was life : and the life was the light of men."

## CHAPTER V.

### EVOLUTION AND THE BENEFICENCE OF GOD.

THE question of the beneficence, or goodness, of God ranks in importance with that of His existence, and the one seems inseparably connected with the other.

On the one hand, we may say that a Being, complete in power and wisdom, such as the preceding arguments have revealed to us as present in and presiding over the universe, must also be perfect in goodness, and the logic of our position may seem invincible.

And yet, on the other hand, when we try to take the direct testimony of nature and of human life and experience as to what kind of a Being it is who rules the universe and regulates the course of human life as well, there are many considerations, which, especially when viewed from the standpoint of science, go to cast

doubt upon the benevolence of the Creator and Ruler; and this doubt involves all the evidences of the presence of God in the world in darkness, and its natural result or outcome is nothing short of atheism; the formal deductions of logic having little power to withstand arguments drawn from the observed course of nature and the dark side of human life and experience which appeals so directly and strongly to the sensibilities of the observer."

A recent writer<sup>1</sup> has asked the question,—“Is God good?” and gives, in answering it, a strong statement of the dark side of the problem, that the atheist might not be able longer to say,—“Those who believe in a God of love must close their eyes to the phenomena of life, or garble the universe to suit their theory.”

Nature is found to be “orderly, wise, beautiful, mysterious, terrible, remorseless, cruel,” or, as Stuart Mill has said, “Nature impales men, breaks them as if on the wheel, casts them to be devoured by wild beasts, burns them to death, crushes them with stones like the first Christian martyrs, starves them with hunger, freezes them with cold, poisons

<sup>1</sup> E. S. Phelps: The Struggle for Immortality.

them by the quick or slow venom of her exhalations, and has hundreds of other hideous deaths in reserve, such as the ingenious cruelty of a Nabis or a Domitian never surpassed. All this Nature does with the most supercilious disregard both of mercy and of justice, emptying her shafts upon the best and noblest indifferently with the meanest and the worst."

In the course of human life and the experiences of society, suffering, injustice and oppression are found to largely predominate, and the goodness of God is involved in a darkness of misery and mystery which faith and revelation alone can penetrate.

Without doubt the conclusions of this writer will seem to many to be extreme and based upon only a partial survey of the facts which have a bearing upon the case. It is true, nevertheless, that Natural Theology must ever fail of furnishing a clear and indubitable demonstration of the goodness of God because of the necessary limitations of its view. The mystery of the universe and its working is too deep for the human mind to penetrate, or the human mind itself is at pres-

ent unable to solve the problem. The most that we can presume to ask from science is that it should not involve the problem in greater obscurity, or increase the many and formidable difficulties and objections which must occur to any thoughtful mind, that looks out upon the universe and the workings of society with sympathy for all suffering and indignation for every wrong and injustice, real or imaginary. There seems to be nothing in the doctrine of Evolution calculated to aggravate this difficult problem: on the contrary, while it cannot bring us directly into the presence of the God of love or entirely dissipate the clouds which for the time seem to darken the brightness of the manifestations of His beneficence, and while it is obliged, as all scientific theories and all theologies as well, to leave many problems unsolved, it suggests many considerations alleviating the difficulties, and illustrates in many ways the beneficence of the Creator.

The evolutionist views the world as an unfinished picture: the canvas has been stretched—it is the universe of nature and of human life: the colors, of sunshine and shadow, of

joy and sorrow, of evil and of good, are ready mixed: the plan and general purpose of this stupendous study may be faintly discerned: but there is still much of obscurity and uncertainty, due to the unfinished state of the work: and only he who knows the mind of the great Artist can, even in imagination, discern anything of the details or comprehend the glory of the whole: to all others it is one wilderness of color, one chaos of unintelligible form and feature.

Man himself is in the process of evolution: he stands comparatively at the beginning of a great and far-reaching system and cannot, therefore, be expected to be able to understand the process as a whole.

The development and realization of the moral is but in its incipency, and evils, difficulties, and delays are perhaps characteristic of the early dawn of a day which may soon exhibit great and unexpected gains, unprecedented growth, and overwhelming compensations for all the darkness and coldness of the early morning.

It is true all this is, in a great measure, merely the hope of the future; but it is a well-

grounded hope, built upon the development and the advancement of the past, and in harmony with the evident tendency of the present. If we believe the end of all development to be the moral, we must also admit that man in his present immaturity can hardly be considered a competent critic of comprehensive moral discipline, either in its methods or ends. His ideas of goodness, even while he is discussing the evidence furnished by the universe of the goodness of God, are not always by any means consistent or satisfactory. Suffering and evil are not necessarily synonyms; nor are happiness and joy the only products of that love which is working for moral ends and attainments. Moreover, we ourselves are subject to moral discipline, and that not by our own choice or election, and "all chastening seemeth for the present to be not joyous, but grievous: yet afterward it yieldeth peaceable fruit unto them that have been exercised thereby, even the fruit of righteousness."

Too often we desire pleasure more than virtue, happiness rather than holiness.

In our attempts to understand others and

appreciate their experiences, we are obliged to look on from the outside, seeing only the hard conditions which appeal to our sympathy and compassion, little appreciating the inward need or understanding the true and loving ministry which seeks the development of the good rather than the maintenance of the pleasant, which would establish blessedness in the place of happiness, and lead the object of its attention and care into the assured and permanent joys of the higher life, even at the expense of many of the pleasures of the lower existence.

If we accept the idea of a moral system and moral discipline, we must expect that in the action of moral laws suffering will follow sin as its penalty unavoidably : and such suffering, while evidencing the action of wise and beneficent law which has as its aim the development of holiness, cannot be considered as militating against the goodness of God ; indeed it must be regarded as an indication of the wisdom of His love.

Moreover, it is more than probable that we exaggerate the amount of human suffering, in our conceptions of it, by joining to and predicating of the external states and conditions

of others coming under our observation, our own feeling, or the feelings we imagine we should have in like circumstances. In our own experience we find the internal and the external constantly adjusting themselves to each other, and so producing the maximum of happiness with the minimum of pain. The most intense suffering is produced only by sudden changes in the one before such a harmony or equilibrium is approximated. It is highly probable that the sum of happiness, or of sorrow, in the life of each person living, in each period of history or each stage of civilization, is much nearer equal than we have been accustomed to suppose from the judgment we have been in the habit of making of the lot and experiences of others, on the basis of feelings developed in our own inner lives by our peculiar and personal experiences and environment.

However this may be, it is clear that it would be unfair to assert that the suffering that is incident to the development of righteousness, necessary as a spur for intellectual growth, involved in the realization and consciousness of happiness itself, or indeed that which is incident to life in all its higher and worthier

forms, can, in any way, or to any extent, be opposed to the conception of a beneficent God. On the contrary, it would seem that much of what we account as suffering had clearly its ministry of mercy and blessing, and might be given a place in the plan and administration of the God of love and of grace.

Besides the above-mentioned considerations, mainly preliminary to any direct attempt to adduce proof of the beneficence of God, which are inferred from or strengthened by the doctrine of Evolution, this doctrine is also of value to us as affording direct and positive evidence upon this subject. Evolution is a doctrine of universal, all-embracing law ; and it is clearly an evidence of beneficence that the universe should be governed by law, and that in its unfolding one stage or phase should follow another in the course of an orderly development and progression, rather than that all should be determined by the caprice of chance or the decree of an arbitrary fiat. Surely the method of Evolution is well suited to man and his faculties. Man, gathering experience from the past, looks forward to and provides for the future. If it were not for the uniformity and

consistency of the laws of nature, it would not be possible for him to plan or act ; nor could he maintain his own existence for any considerable period of time.

If there were no uniform laws and invariable methods of procedure in the course of nature, man could not, as now, by putting himself in harmony with them and by taking advantage of their observed methods of working, achieve any success or make any advancement in any line of endeavor, whether physical, mental or moral.

Moreover, the extended interaction and combination of various laws produce as a resultant a chance element which is of the utmost importance in relieving the routine and monotony of existence, and in stimulating mental development as well.

With the consciousness of our own freedom, guaranteed to us by the requirements of the higher and spiritual law, there is no reason why we should fear the tyranny of law, or hesitate in acknowledging its benefits.

If it is regarded by us as the expression of the will of the Immanent God, we must rejoice in its supremacy and prevalence and regard its

workings with confidence. The laws which govern the universe are all constructive, and in their action they express a prevailing benignant purpose. Not that evil and suffering do not follow in the train of law, or rather from its transgression.

But even these untoward results are necessary to call attention to the meaning and scope of the law, that its true purpose may be seen and that man may be able thus intelligently to take advantage of its behests for the attainment of valuable and beneficent results; and the law itself has only reference to order and well-being.

The laws which govern the action of fire, steam and electricity, and which regulate the seasons, admit of much devastation and loss, when transgressed or disregarded, but they are most serviceable to man when properly used, and upon them depends much of the glory of the achievements of our civilization and the productiveness and beauty of the world we inhabit.

It is only under the action of and in harmony with appropriate laws that health and mental and spiritual activity are achieved and

maintained, and thus a vast amount of happiness is enjoyed: while it is the transgression of these same laws that produces sickness, ignorance and vice, and thus occasions so much of the pain and suffering of the world.

As these laws come to be better understood, even as a better comprehension of them is forced upon the human race by the penalties which their transgression exacts, we may expect to see man ever increasingly take advantage of their beneficent intent; a larger resultant physical, mental and moral robustness, and an ever increasing preponderance of happiness and pleasure in the world.

The method of Evolution is also a beneficent one, because it implies a progressive advance. It is true retrogression and failure are sometimes found; but one form of life only fails that it may give place to a better and stronger one; and the general course and tendency of the process has been from the first that of a steady advance. The "survival of the fittest" is the law of this development, and this insures that, while many forms of life shall each have their day and opportunity, the weak and useless shall be left behind, while only the strong and

capable shall remain to carry forward the process of Evolution with ever advancing steps to higher levels of attainment.

The bearing of this doctrine upon the question under consideration depends entirely upon our definition of "the fittest." Fortunately Evolution has itself defined this word for us in the unmistakable terms of fact, and this definition agrees well with the intuitions of our higher natures. The goal of the evolutionary process is not huge proportion, or great physical strength, nor yet superior cunning. These qualities were found in the earlier forms, which were soon forced to give place to other and more enduring species.

No beauty of foliage or flower in the vegetable kingdom; no glory of blended colors in the plumage of the bird; no speed in locomotion, no grace of movement and no strength of bodily organs in the brute could satisfy the demands of the evolutionary process. Man is therefore developed, gifted above all that preceded him with that intelligence which ensures his rule over all nature, animate and inanimate, and continually demonstrates his fitness and ability to survive over all preceding forms of

life. But the process of differentiation and development does not stop here. The sifting process still goes on among humanity itself without cessation or abatement, and many there are, individuals and nations as well, that are left by the way in the onward march of civilization and progress, while others press forward and, with glorious achievements, demonstrate their fitness to survive and give tone and direction to the coming generations. Vice, ignorance and barbarism are the qualities or forces which hinder the onward movement of society and destroy the life and influence of nations and of men ; while virtue and intelligence are the qualities which alone have power to preserve and energize. In the history of the race, whether mankind be considered individually or collectively, it is the wise and good that are found to survive and maintain their power and influence ; they are the fittest.

“ Righteousness exalteth a nation : but sin is a reproach to any people.” This is the teaching of Revelation and of Evolution as well. It would thus seem that the law of the “ survival of the fittest ” is capable of furnishing us most trustworthy evidence that He who

presides over the process of Evolution, and the expression of whose will it is, is beneficent and intends the final triumph of righteousness, and is working throughout every stage of human progress for the consummation of His design and the full manifestation of His plan of love.

And yet, when we look at the animal kingdom, the struggle for existence involved in this beneficent law has another and an exceedingly dark side which many find hard to reconcile with the goodness of God.

This objection or difficulty has been most forcibly stated by a writer quoted by A. R. Wallace in his "Darwinism":—"Pain, grief, disease and death, are these the inventions of a loving God? That no animal shall rise to excellence except by being fatal to the life of others, is this the law of a kind Creator? It is useless to say that pain has its benevolence, and that massacre has its mercy, why is it so ordained that bad should be the raw material of good? Pain is not the less pain because it is useful; murder is not the less murder because it is conducive to development. Here is blood upon the hand still, and all the perfumes

of Arabia will not sweeten it." Mr. Wallace, however, after carefully examining the objection, concludes,—“ That the popular idea of the struggle for existence entailing misery and pain on the animal world is the very reverse of the truth. What it really brings about is, the maximum of life, with the minimum of suffering and pain. Given the necessity of death and reproduction—and without these there could have been no progressive development of the organic world—it is difficult even to imagine a system by which a greater balance of happiness would have been secured.”

Moreover, it is doubtless true that we habitually exaggerate the amount of suffering endured by animals.

With our nervous organism, differing greatly in extent and sensitiveness from any found in the animal kingdom, and to an extent that cannot well be exaggerated from that found in the generality of animals ; even when we attempt to make allowance for these differences, we are likely to magnify, out of all due proportion, the sufferings of animals, judging of them by our own experiences. Animal life is a life of instinct, where stimuli largely take

the place of sensations, and consciousness is a term of no real significance. Thus brute life is free from a very large portion of the suffering incident to the life of man. Intellectual suffering: the anxieties of foresight and the terrors of apprehension must also be foreign to the experience of the animal: and these comprise the greater, or, at least, the most acute and oppressive, part of the sufferings of mankind.

The problem of the world's suffering has never obtained a complete and satisfactory solution.

The old puzzle of Theology and of Philosophy, as to the origin and ministry of evil and suffering, comes to us now in a scientific form, and, while Evolution is not able to remove every difficulty, it does not complicate the problem, and, on the whole, it may be said to powerfully aid and reinforce our conception of an Immanent God whose beneficence is illustrated in the process of development, and will, we believe, become ever increasingly manifest as we come more fully to understand that process, and as its ideals and aims are more fully realized.

As we look upon the universe to catch some reflection of the Divine glory and beneficence, we find that we have neither the breadth of view nor strength and penetration of vision to make out more than the most naked outlines of the manifestation which we believe to lie there reflected:—"For now we see in a mirror, darkly (in a riddle)." But we are glad for what we are permitted to see, for it strengthens our faith and hope and enables us to wait with more confidence for that time when we shall see all reality "face to face."

"For we know in part, and we prophesy in part: but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away."

## CHAPTER VI.

## EVOLUTION AND REVELATION: THE INCARNATION.

ALL Revelation may be said to be included and to find its highest and most complete expression in the Incarnation. In all distinctively Christian thought Christ is the centre and moving power of the universe; the explanation and ground of existence of all things; the source of all life:—

“In the beginning was the Word. . . . All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. . . . There was the true light, even the light which lighteth every man, coming into the world. . . . And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth.”

These words of the Apostle John may be taken as a synopsis of the course of Divine Revelation, or the Divine manifestation in the history of the world.

Looking merely at the Revelation given to us in the Bible, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that, "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son."

The Incarnation may, therefore, be considered as the consummation of Revelation and as inclusive of all Revelation, at least in the sense that the greater includes the less.

The Christian doctrine of the Immanent God also depends upon and finds its highest and clearest expression in the Incarnation: indeed, without this doctrine of the Incarnation, it could hardly be maintained without degenerating into pantheism, and Christianity itself loses its power and coherence, both as a system of thought and as a religion.

It is, therefore, to the relation of the doctrine of Evolution to, or its effect upon, this doctrine and its consequent attitude toward all

Revelation that the Christian thinker looks with the greatest interest, not unmixed with apprehension. It is not so much that we expect Evolution to deal directly with this doctrine, by endeavoring to prove or disprove it, as such a function clearly lies beyond or outside of its sphere.

We have not been in the habit of expecting any special light or help in understanding or explaining the methods of the Divine Revelation from any theory of science based upon deductions from the observed facts of nature, nor, on the other hand, have we been willing to accept any strictures on Revelation or the possibility of its occurrence from this quarter. We have, in general, been content to maintain the inability of empirical science, based upon natural law and the facts of observation, to cope with this problem.

Evolution, however, is being urged as a universal philosophy: it believes the universe to be one: the processes of development throughout this universe to move on the same or on parallel lines: and the general method of all development to be the same, however the details may vary. It is, therefore, an

interesting question as to what view this new philosophy will find itself constrained to take of this central and basal doctrine of Christianity. It is not difficult to discern a likeness or parallelism between the manifestations of God afforded by the Argument from Design and the Cosmological, Moral and Historical Arguments and the two Revelations, the one by the medium of creation, and the other through man's own spiritual nature, mentioned in the passage already quoted from the Gospel of John. In like manner, can we find any place in the system of Evolution for "The Word became flesh"—the doctrine of the Incarnation?

Is this transcendent event in any sense pre-figured in, or suggested by, the earlier stages in the process of Evolution, or can it be conceived of in harmony with the observed methods of the Divine working, which Evolution has made known to us?

If the Incarnation be accepted as a veritable fact, we must admit into our system the introduction of a new force or cause. We thus postulate a new stage in the process of Creation or Evolution, or a new and spiritual

creation. Can Evolution, with its doctrine of the gradual development of all nature, organic and inorganic, and of man up from the lower forms of life, admit of the introduction of a new cause and the possibility of a still higher stage of development? Would not the introduction of such a force or cause break the continuity of the whole process and prove fatal to Evolution itself as a system? An answer to these questions can only be given after noting the requirements of the theory and its necessities of assumption at the different stages of progress or transition, from the inorganic to the organic, from the vegetable to the animal, etc.

If the doctrine of Evolution, beginning with the primal forms of matter, is able, without admitting any new force or cause to account for all the preceding stages of, and transitions in, the process, surely it will be unwilling now to admit of the introduction of any new element.

If, however, at every stage in the development of nature it is obliged to admit new elements or forces to account for the changes observed and the new direction and increase

in breadth and scope of the process, it cannot have now any fundamental objection to the acceptance of any new element which may be capable of explaining a further advance in the process of development, in line with that which has preceded, and otherwise unexplained. Indeed, by all the analogy of what it has had of experience in the past, it will be looking for and expecting some such discovery, some new and higher stage in the process, brought about, as the preceding steps in advance have been, by the introduction of a new element, or the action of a new force.

That the latter supposition is clearly in harmony with the facts of the case is well shown by the statements, or concessions, of Mr. Wallace in his recent volume.<sup>1</sup>

In considering the origin of man, he shows that in the development of the organic world there are at least three distinct stages where we must of necessity assume that some new power or force has been introduced or has come into action :—

“The first stage is the change from inorganic to organic, when the earliest vegetable cell, or

<sup>1</sup> Darwinism.

living protoplasm out of which it arose, first appeared. This is often imputed to a mere increase of complexity of chemical compounds; but increase of complexity, with consequent instability, even if we admit that it may have produced protoplasm as a chemical compound, could certainly not have produced living protoplasm—protoplasm which has the power of growth and of reproduction, and of that continuous process of development which has resulted in the marvellous variety and complex organization of the whole vegetable kingdom. . . . The next stage is still more marvellous, still more completely beyond all possibility of explanation by matter, its laws and forces. It is the introduction of sensation or consciousness, constituting the fundamental distinction between the animal and vegetable kingdoms. Here all idea of mere complication of structure producing the result is out of the question. We feel it to be altogether preposterous to assume that at a certain stage of complexity of atomic constitution and as a necessary result of that complexity alone, an ego should start into existence, a thing that feels, that is conscious of its own existence.

“Here we have the certainty that something new has arisen, a being whose nascent consciousness has gone on increasing in power and definiteness till it has culminated in the higher animals. No verbal explanation or attempt at explanation—such as the statement that life is the result of the molecular forces of the protoplasm, or that the whole existing organic universe from the amœba up to man was latent in the fire-mist from which the solar system was developed, can afford any mental satisfaction, or help us in any way to a solution of the mystery. . . . The third stage is the existence in man of a number of the most characteristic and noblest faculties, those which raise him furthest above the brutes and open up possibilities of almost indefinite advancement. These faculties could not possibly have been developed by means of the same laws which have determined the progressive development of the organic world in general, and also of man’s physical organism.”

It is also interesting to note, in connection with these important concessions or affirmations, that this prominent evolutionist concludes that these “stages of progress from the inor-

ganic world of matter and motion up to man, point clearly to an unseen universe—to a world of spirit to which the world of matter is altogether subordinate.”

Surely, if it is necessary to assume from time to time the introduction of new forces to carry forward and upward the process of development, and if the whole tendency of the movement is in the direction of the spiritual and gives evidence of a higher and dominating world of spirit, it cannot be said to be in any sense in opposition to the teachings or methods of Evolution for us to postulate a new and spiritual element or force, introduced to carry forward the process of development to a still higher stage or plane in the direction of the moral and spiritual : indeed, from the considerations already adduced, it would seem that such a change or advance would be clearly in harmony with the methods of development expressed in the doctrine of Evolution. Evolution has ever a forward look. In its thought nothing is considered as stationary or complete.

The development of the universe could not stop with any organization of matter, however complex or beautiful; under the constraining

impulse of the will of Him who presides over and directs the whole process of Evolution it pressed on to the development of vegetable life, with all its many and varying forms of beauty. No more could it rest satisfied with this attainment: animal life, with enlarged powers and capabilities, must appear, and the earth was inhabited with a vast number of different forms of life. But the brute creation could not be accepted as the end of the creation through Evolution: man, a being of intelligence and will, steps upon the scene, possessing still greater capabilities and potentialities, even the glimmerings of a still higher, a moral and spiritual life. Shall the natural man occupy the place, as the end and consummation of all these creative and developing processes, which has been denied to all that preceded him? Does he bear in his nature and organization the marks of completeness, which clearly indicate that he must be a finality in the evolutionary process? Have we reached the end of the road, or the summit of the mountain-peak, where all further advance is impossible? Are we not the rather bound by all the analogies of the process of Evolu-

tion, and encouraged by the fact that we find in man the beginnings of a new, a moral and a spiritual life, just as we discovered in the animal the beginnings of an intelligent life, to confidently expect the full development of the spiritual man on the basis of the natural, the spiritual following the rational as the rational followed the organic and the organic followed and was developed out of the inorganic?

Such a step in advance in the process of Evolution can only be brought about by the introduction, as in the preceding transition periods, of a new cause or force. Now this is just what the Incarnation does, fully satisfying all the conditions and requirements of the case, and in full harmony with the preceding analogies of the process of development. We thus see in the Incarnation the beginning of the establishment and realization of a new and spiritual kingdom, with Christ as its "first fruits" and determining force, in which potentially all mankind has a place.

The preceding stages of Revelation; the predictions of the prophets; the manifestations of that light "which lighteth every man coming into the world," to be seen in the universal

moral consciousness of mankind, and discerned in many an ancient philosophy and ethnic religion, these were all preparatory and prophetic; even as were also all the preceding stages of that Evolution, which, working throughout countless ages and with infinite pains and continuous adjustment and adaptation, has laid the foundation and prepared the way for the introduction and manifestation of the spiritual.

In the Incarnation the Spiritual Kingdom is at last revealed and made actual.

Long and thorough has been the preparation; many and varied the processes leading up to this event; and most worthy and satisfactory is the consummation and end of all these preparatory steps in the evolutionary process: the corner-stone dignifies and solidifies the whole edifice of creation.

The culmination of the processes of Evolution and the final and most complete manifestation of the Immanent God are both found in the Incarnation of Christ. The final and the permanent, and that which can alone afford explanation of the preparatory and transient is the spiritual; and the end of the ages is the new creation in Christ.

## CHAPTER VII.

### EVOLUTION AND THE SUPERNATURAL: MIRACLES, PROVIDENCE, PRAYER.

RELIGION arises from and depends upon a belief in the Supernatural, which includes in its conception freedom, potentiality and personality, and only personality can afford an appropriate basis for and stimulate the exercise of worship, love and prayer.

Apart from such a belief, no religion has been established, and no system can be maintained with doctrines, worship and fellowship, that can in any measure satisfy the longings and desires of man's spiritual and religious nature.

1. Much of the conflict between Theology and Science has been carried on over the existence of the Supernatural; and in particular concerning the existence of the miraculous, as affording evidence of the Supernatural.

In this controversy Theology has been subject to a great disadvantage in that the miraculous has to a considerable extent been involved in many and gross superstitions, and has also been made the occasion of exceedingly pernicious errors, and has thus fallen into disrepute.

The chief arguments against miracles which have been brought forward by science are purely philosophical presumptions, dealing with the question of the possibility of the occurrence of a miracle from the standpoint of *a priori* opinions, without deigning to adduce facts or weigh evidence, for or against them.

Indeed, it has been commonly asserted that no amount of historical evidence would suffice to establish the occurrence of a miraculous event, even though the evidence adduced in its favor should be far greater than that considered adequate for other occurrences, which are accepted as beyond question or doubt.

Science has so developed and conceived of the idea of the universality and immutability of physical law, which its own investigations are continually establishing upon a firmer basis, and giving a wider scope and application, as

to leave no room in the universe for the action of the supernatural; it is ruled out by definition. We are, however, far from being convinced that physical laws are supreme in the universe; that mind is an empty term and has no existence in reality; and that a spiritual kingdom and spiritual laws are myths.

Nor can we bring ourselves to conceive of God as subject to laws of His own creation, and especially to the laws of matter. We are not willing to call that science which is not ready to accept all the facts of the universe, and which, because of philosophical presuppositions, refuses to consider the evidence for a certain class of facts, or to give any adequate weight to the testimony of the facts of consciousness, which we believe are even more important than those of matter and force, and give evidence of the reality and existence of a world of mind and of spirit.

Evolution, as we understand its necessary implications, does not deny the spiritual and the supernatural. Indeed, as we have already seen, the supernatural is implied in or must be invoked to explain the process itself and to account for the basal principles and elements

with which Evolution has to do, and to explain the introduction of new forces or causes at different stages in the process of development, and that the doctrine of Evolution, by the analogy of its own processes, points to the spiritual as the culmination and end of the natural. It would, therefore, seem almost superfluous to question further the attitude of Evolution toward the Supernatural; but, on the other hand, in view of the prominence of this topic in the controversy between science and theology, a few additional considerations may not be out of place. I presume that many of those who appreciate the significance of the Christian doctrine of the Immanent God, and admire the magnitude of the plan and minuteness of the various processes displayed in the universe, have long before this become weary of a discussion which deals so largely in presuppositions, and the exaggerated prominence given to the exceptional, and are ready to say with Philo,—“But the truly miraculous has become despised through familiarity, the unusual, on the contrary, although in itself insignificant, yet through our love of novelty, transports us with amazement.”

It might suffice to quiet the apprehensions of those who fear that the doctrine of Evolution may destroy all basis for belief in the Supernatural, to say that true science cannot afford to reject veritable facts, and must the rather find a place for them in its system, otherwise it cannot expect for its theories any permanent interest or general acceptance.

But, further, taking as our definition of a miracle,—“A deviation from the known laws of nature,” it is hard to see how the doctrine of Evolution is necessarily opposed to their acceptance.

Have we not on every side intimations and evidences of higher and spiritual laws? Are new combinations of known laws unthinkable? The law regulating the movements of two bodies mutually attracting each other cannot be depended upon to furnish the explanation of the variations produced when these bodies, or even one of them, are also subject to the attraction of a third body. Nevertheless, however complicated and eccentric the resultant movements may be, in the case mentioned, we do not refuse to accept the facts, and we believe that there is a higher law capable of affording

a satisfactory explanation of them, though we may not as yet have discovered it, and are, therefore, not able to state it. The doctrine of Evolution teaches the universality of law, the very principle which science has long urged as necessarily fatal to any belief in miracles, and which many, for this reason, feared and hesitated in accepting. Such fear, however, is due to a misconception of the necessary implications of the principle, or comes from a deistic conception of nature and its laws.

What are these laws which control nature, life, mind, society and all human activity and progress, enabling man to develop and realize his freedom and personality through and on the basis of their unchanging requirements and regulations: how are they ordained: and who gives them their authority and validity?

Do they not require for their explanation nothing less than the presence and potency of the Immanent God, and must we not consider them as the expressions of His will? Prof. Bowne has well said,<sup>1</sup>—"So far as the facts go, we may view Nature as only the orderly form under which a divine purpose is being contin-

<sup>1</sup> Independent, July 31st, 1890.

uously realized by a continuous divine activity. The unity of Nature is the unity of the divine plan. The progress in Nature is but the successive unfolding and realization of divine purpose. The bond of union, the ground of progress, the living force of the whole, are to be found in a Supreme Intellect and Will in which Nature has its source and being."

Indeed one might maintain that God does not work otherwise than through law, and even claim that His direct influence or action upon the human mind which gives it its power and sensibility is also an act under law, and there is little evidence or force of analogy from known facts that would not be found to favor, or be in perfect harmony with such views. We can accept with Evolution the doctrine of the universality of law, and at the same time believe in an all-embracing and all-determining supernatural. Indeed, this doctrine of the universality of law affirms only that the Immanent God, "with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning," manifests His will in an orderly and consistent manner, and discredits only by arbitrary and capricious supernatural.

The suspension or violation of the laws of nature, real or apparent, involved in a miracle, is nothing more than is seen constantly taking place about us.

We find that one law frequently counteracts another: the resultant of two forces follows a path not marked out by either of them, but due to the influence of both: the chemical laws of matter are held in abeyance by the vital force of a living organism: there is hardly a law of nature that man cannot in a measure counteract or direct and modify in its action according to his desires and purposes. If the finite man can, to an ever-increasing extent, as he comes to understand the meaning and scope of the application of the laws of nature, control them and realize his purposes through them, by how much more will the infinite God be able to employ these laws of His own creation in the accomplishment of His plans of love. It is not conceivable that the Immanent God can, in any way, be hindered, conditioned or constrained by these laws of his own establishment, and which are but the methods of his activity.

2. It will readily appear from the con-

siderations already adduced that the doctrine of Evolution cannot be quoted as opposed to that of Providence. Indeed, Evolution furnishes us with a substantial and rational basis for the development of this doctrine, as broad as the facts of the universe and minute enough to include in the sphere of its direction the most insignificant forces and elements. This doctrine of Providence manifested and realized through universal and far-reaching laws will come as a wholesome corrective for many of the loose theories and conceptions of Providence, which have done so much to bring the doctrine into disrepute and contempt among thinking men. Evolution cannot be depended upon to bolster up that trust in Providence, born of presumptuous ignorance, which neglects or refuses to use well-accredited means to ward off disaster or obtain relief from sickness and disease, preferring, with a faith more simple than even childlike, to commit to God that which science and human experience have shown to be dependent upon human agency and the use of appropriate means. Nor will it afford any comfort or support for the hypocrisy and self-conceit of those who ascribe

all the evils experienced by those they do not like, and all occurrences that contribute to their own comfort, convenience and advantage to the direct and special action and intervention of the Divine Will.

The doctrine of Evolution does not establish Fatalism, but it indicates the universality of a law working for the realization and the establishment of the moral and spiritual ; it maintains an orderly and consistent Providence in harmony with the dignity and all the high and holy attributes of our God ; and it teaches us, if we would take advantage of the Divine Providence, we must put ourselves in harmony with the Divine Will.

In the direction of moral and spiritual attainment, the grand and all-important truth is well expressed by the Apostle Paul:—"And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good."

We believe that all the forces of the universe, whether natural or spiritual, are arranged and calculated so as to co-operate with all the endeavors of those who "love God" and strive to know and obey His will in the realization and attainment of all that is worthy and permanent.

Man, by his study of Nature and Revelation and by the constant experience of every-day life as well, is ever learning more and more of the will of God, as he comes to understand more thoroughly the laws of the universe and their many possible combinations and applications. Providence is waiting to co-operate with him ever increasingly as he attains to a more complete and exact knowledge of these laws of the universe and renders to them a more intelligent obedience.

What a grand future of attainment lies before the race as man learns more and more how to co-operate with God in the Divine processes and in harmony with the Divine purposes, and so comes to command more and more the potency of the Omnipotent in the development of a higher civilization and the realization of high moral and spiritual ideals.

3. Evolution has also been thought to destroy the basis of prayer with its doctrine of the universality of law, or to render its use irrational and meaningless.

It is true there are certain kinds of Prayer that this doctrine makes to appear irrational,

not that it changes the facts at all, only that it makes their true character manifest that all may appreciate their absurdity.

To this class belong those prayers that are content to rest satisfied with empty words in the form of petition, when the means which must be employed to bring about the desired ends are within reach, and only half-heartedness, laziness or ignorance on the part of the petitioner keeps him from striving himself for the attainment of the desired object. No amount of prayer for bountiful harvests by the farmer can take the place of the necessary labor of preparing the soil, sowing the seed, and attending to the proper nurture of the growing plants.

If man does his part, God, working through and by means of natural law, will crown his efforts with success, in proportion to the care and labor that he has expended, but He puts no premium on laziness or ignorance.

Man must pray, if he would pray acceptably, according to the will of God, and that will is clearly manifested in the terms of law and has its unmistakable and unchangeable requirements. The "Faith Cure," so called, is a fail-

ure, not so much because of the lack of faith, as the absence of that intelligent faith which leads its possessor to strive to understand the will of God as manifested in the known laws of hygiene, and then to put himself in harmony with that will by using the best and most approved means at hand.

Even in matters relating distinctively to religion, we have learned to value only those prayers that pledge the petitioner to use, himself, all the means at his command for the attainment of the desired end: and here, also, we are beginning to discern the fact that God works by and through laws, which we may hope to understand and use with increasing efficiency.

The influence of Evolution upon Prayer will be to make the petitioner more humble and earnest, and the petitions more rational and more nearly in harmony with God's manifested will:<sup>1</sup>—"As the Supernatural discloses itself more perfectly in and by and through the natural, prayer will pass more and more into silent trust and wise diligence: not because intervention is felt to be unfitting, but because the wisdom

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Bascom: Natural Theology.

and grace of God are felt to be present unsolicited, and to be sufficient of themselves without importunity.”

Moreover, we may expect, with clearer and more rational conceptions of the nature and office of prayer, a deeper appreciation of its meaning and value, both as a means of communication and communion with the Immanent God, and also as a force of supreme importance in the world of spiritual life and endeavor. Science, because of the many irrational uses of prayer, has never accorded to it its true place in the universe as a force: indeed, science has rarely taken much notice of the spiritual side of the universe, and has never been willing to give as ready hearing or credence to the facts furnished by consciousness, as to those obtained by observation and experiment. The true science of the future cannot fail of taking into account this important class of facts so long disregarded by the advocates of the empirical philosophy. There is no lack of testimony as to the value, power and efficacy of prayer; and it cannot fail of obtaining recognition sooner or later as a primal power or force in the spiritual world, as gravitation is in the world of

nature: and the very doctrine of Evolution may require such recognition in order to explain the many facts of consciousness and experience: certainly it is no foe to the prayer of the righteous man, which "availeth much in its working."

## CHAPTER VIII.

## EVOLUTION AND IMMORTALITY.

THE Immortality of the soul is one of the oldest and most important problems of philosophy and beliefs of religion: a conception or idea fundamental to human thought and belief, which philosophy has ever tried to establish upon a rational foundation, but with varying degrees of success, even in its own estimation.

It is a subject of such evident and transcendent importance that it is not strange that it has ever been uppermost in human thought: indeed, as the question of the life or death of each individual is involved in it, we should expect that it would engross the thought of mankind to a greater extent than any other question could. We may say that this belief is philosophically or logically dependent upon our conception of God and His attributes and the

requirements of our own spiritual natures. It is also true, on the other hand, that a belief in the immortality of the soul makes a vast difference in our conception of the attributes of God and appreciation of the meaning of the facts of our own nature and life.

It is evident that physical science can have nothing to say directly with regard to the solution of this great problem, either for or against a belief in immortality.

From our own physical constitution we are not able to obtain any rational expectation of a future life.

We are only able to draw our presumptions in favor of a belief in immortality from our rational or spiritual nature and its demands, and the character and government of God. The value or validity of these considerations or arguments varies with different individuals, according to each person's individual bias or the standpoint from which he views and explains the facts from which they are drawn. The materialist is logically shut out from any belief in a personal immortality, and can only look forward to an immortality of influence, a continuity of existence in the lives and characters of others.

To the one who accepts the Christian Revelation these considerations bring additional and corroborative proof of that which he already believes to be true on the basis of other evidence. It may well be doubted whether it is possible to demonstrate the personal immortality of the human soul apart from the light and aid furnished us by Revelation. And yet the considerations brought forward by Natural Theology in support of such a belief are most important as affording at least a presumption in its favor, and a philosophical basis for its acceptance. In other words, it adds much to the harmony and consistency of our thought if we can with the light of Nature discover traces, however dim, of that truth which the clearer light of Revelation makes manifest and establishes.

In this endeavor the requirements of the doctrine of Evolution and its philosophy will, I believe, be found to furnish most important and substantial aid.

Man possesses in his spiritual nature powers which are of a peculiar order. They cannot be explained as the product of matter in any of its manifestations or as the result of the

action of its forces. Human life is characterized by intelligence, freedom, and morality—qualities not inhering in matter, nor possessed by the brute creation. To predicate extinction of this life on the death of the body on the basis of analogies drawn from the organic world is not logical, nor can the chemical forces all-powerful in the process of bodily dissolution be conceived of as having any effect upon those elements which go to make up the personality, the true spiritual nature and the life known to consciousness. Although the life of man is manifested through the bodily organism, and developed in connection with it, on the decay of the body as it approaches the termination of the allotted period of its existence, there is no corresponding decay or enfeeblement of the intellectual and spiritual powers. On the contrary, man's higher powers seem to be capable of an indefinite development and growth: and the experience and wisdom of age surely prepare their possessor for life rather than death, and make possible a larger existence and a higher development, and are clearly prophetic of it.

Evolution, with its doctrine of the persist-

ence of force, so fundamental to all its conceptions and processes, would seem to require a belief in at least some form of existence after the death of the body.

When the bodily organism perishes, the forces which have been manifested in and through it cannot be destroyed: they must be conceived of as passing to some other form of manifestation, and as existing as really when using some other instrument as when they inhabited the body. Evolution teaches us that no force can be destroyed: it can only be transmitted. No more can that higher spiritual life, which manifests itself as reason, will, and conscience in personality, perish out of the universe. This doctrine of the general indestructibility of the soul may not be by any means perfectly synonymous with the doctrine of personal immortality; and yet it is hard to see how or where the distinctive element of personality can be lost. It is claimed by some that with the decay of the brain tissues and the nerves all conscious existence must come to an end; but this is pure supposition and is not required by any considerations necessarily following from the doctrine of Evolution.

Prof. Fiske has declared<sup>1</sup> that he does not at all agree with the conclusion "that the complex web of human consciousness cannot survive the disintegration of the organic structure with which we invariably find it associated," and that he considers it as "a conclusion not involved in the premises, and one which no scientific philosopher, as such, has a right to draw."

Without immortality the whole object of the development of man would be lost. If death ends all, what a weariness of fruitless labors, what a protracted series of purposeless movements, what a succession of insufficient issues, what a waste of material and of force, what a prodigality of energy, of endeavor, and of suffering the history of the development of humanity discloses; and the process is still going on without any prospect of reaching a satisfactory termination.

How can we afford any explanation of the moral faculty, or find any justification for the promulgation of moral law to guide a simply moral life?

Self-sacrifice, duty, and high ideals—what

<sup>1</sup> Excursions of an Evolutionist.

opportunity have they to bring forth their appropriate fruit or manifest their logical and inherent tendencies ?

If immortality be not a fact, morality is useless, if not immoral, and the only natural and rational rule of life must be, as the Apostle Paul perceived,—“Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.”

Moreover, if immortality is not a fact, we have to explain how a belief in it could arise and maintain itself so stubbornly, notwithstanding the fact of the death of the body which seems at first sight to destroy all such hope. The belief in the immortality of the soul is a widespread one, common to all the great religions, and it seems to belong to the same class of primal, if not intuitive beliefs, as that of the existence of the spirit and of a God. How and upon what basis could such a belief, transcending all experience, have been developed in the childhood of the race : and how could it maintain itself when the growing experience of mankind saw only universal mortality of the apparent life of the race ? And yet we find in man something more wonderful and even harder to explain on any other

supposition than that of the immortality of the soul:—a craving, a longing, deeper and stronger than any appetite or passion, for continuity of existence. Man cannot endure the thought of annihilation. He cannot even imagine the going-out of his conscious, personal existence. We have no reason for supposing that the brute experiences anything analogous to this. It seems to be a soul-instinct, implanted within the soul of man too deeply to be completely eradicated, even at the behests of a materialistic philosophy, which the individual may bring himself to accept. There is not a bodily passion or appetite but that can find its appropriate satisfaction provided for it by nature and within the reach of its attainment.

Mental and æsthetic tastes exist also and only to the extent that there is material ready at hand, or to be obtained in the universe, for their satisfaction, and, as they are developed and become more critical in their demands, the store-house of nature is still able to furnish all that is needful. Can we now suppose for a moment that this longing of the soul, the deepest and most persistent of all, is alone to

go without any appropriate satisfaction? Can we bring ourselves to believe that it was planted and developed within us only to mock us, and without any reality to correspond with its demands? Indeed, we cannot, and there is no theory of Evolution that can afford us any aid in accounting for the belief in and the all-mastering desire for immortality, without postulating immortality itself as its cause and explanation.

The truthfulness of God demands the immortality of the soul, for He has permitted, at least, the development of this belief and the awakening of this wide-spread hope. The benevolence of God and the manifestation of the ends of creation and the justification of the methods of the government of the universe also require it. Without the immortality of the soul and the awards of the future life, the beneficence of God would remain an unproven supposition, truth and righteousness would be unvindicated, while death, sin and suffering would be proclaimed as victors in life's purposeless struggle. Indeed, apart from a belief in immortality, it is doubtful whether any evidence could suffice to demonstrate to us the existence of a God at all.

We might also say that the doctrine of Evolution is equally imperative in its demands for some belief in immortality in order to afford a satisfactory and worthy end for its processes, looked upon as a whole. Evolution tells us of elemental forces working throughout long ages, of chemical forces following in the line of succession, and of vital forces making possible the development of plant and animal life, and of the constant working of all these forces and of resultant progress ever onward and upward throughout long periods preparing the way for a higher development and manifestation of life. The fruit of all this waiting, the result of all these manifold processes is man, who adds to all that the preceding development could furnish, reason, conscience, freedom and personality.

So far the process of development has been steadily onward and upward, taking, as it were, longer strides in advance at each stage. Have we any reason for supposing that this process is now to be reversed, and that when it comes to pass to the next stage, man will lose all, or indeed any portion, of his present endowment?

Not at all. The whole analogy of the past

is against any such supposition, and the whole law of continuity and development points the rather to a higher manifestation of the spiritual, the moral and the personal. There are some<sup>1</sup> who would apply the law of the "Survival of the Fittest" here, and consider immortality as mainly qualitative, believing that those souls which do not choose those qualities of truth and righteousness, "which are essential to a divine, and, therefore, an immortal life," are not likely to survive the transition from this earthly existence to the spiritual: an opinion in harmony with a well-known theological theory, which seems to be gaining currency in certain quarters. Without entering upon the consideration of the influence of Evolution upon the development of the doctrine of immortality—a task which properly belongs to Systematic Theology—it is enough for us to maintain that Evolution is clearly in harmony with its general conception, or belief, that it would seem to prophesy a larger career for the soul of man in an enlarged sphere of development, and that all the analogies of its processes in the development of that which has preceded man, and in

<sup>1</sup> Myron Adams: *The Continuous Creation*.

the evolution of man himself, are clearly and unequivocally opposed to any conception of immortality which involves any loss of the higher and more distinctive qualities or powers of the soul.

According to Evolution and Revelation alike, "it is not yet made manifest what we shall be."

We await the realization of the Divine plan: the consummation of the processes of Evolution: the manifestation of the new creation in Christ—the "revealing of the sons of God."

We wait with earnest expectation and with steadfast confidence, based upon the unchanging character and purpose of love of the Immanent God—the Word made flesh. Ours is the faith of the beloved disciple, who said:—"We know that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him even as he is."

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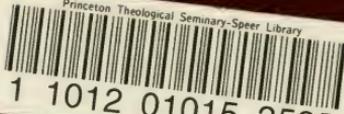








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