GOD AND THE INDIVIDUAL

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

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GOD AND THE INDIVIDUAL

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PREFACE

THE four short addresses, published here in belated response to some of those who heard them, were delivered in the cathedral of S. Asaph to the clergy of that diocese. They have been revised, some of the points have been developed at greater length, and some omissions have been supplied; but they are substantially as they were delivered.

The subject seemed to me to press for attention, when I received the invitation of the Bishop of London to attend the Fulham Conference at the beginning of 1902, on the question of Confession and Absolution. It is impossible to follow the somewhat sharp controversies on this matter, without feeling that there are two very different types of question involved. There is, first, the question of the effects alleged to arise from the practice of

Confession. The main discussion of the Conference turned on these, and on this head it does not seem easy to attain a conclusion; because both those who approve and those who condemn the practice appeal to experiences which they regard as convincing. But there is a further question of principle, and I think that a view of it is almost always at work in the minds of those who discuss Confession, and, indeed, any other part of Church organization in which sacramental media are involved. The question is, What is the relation between God and the Individual according to Christianity? Some Christians in modern times will answer that the relation is so immediate that all sacraments, and even the organization of the Christian Society, are impediments rather than helps. Others will say that these media are necessary to the true intercourse of the soul with God, and that such intercourse must be conducted on the lines formally defined by the Church; so that, for example, a man could not count on absolution from a deadly sin, except after the declaration of such

absolution by an accredited minister. Of these, the former is the prevalent view among Englishmen, and it therefore occupies the chief place in the following pages. I have endeavoured to show (1) that this view does not represent the drift of the *whole* of Scripture, though there are passages which in isolation seem to carry it; (2) that the individualistic view of man arose in certain quite intelligible ways in the course of the history of thought, but has no claim to exclusive predominance; (3) that it contains the germs of serious intellectual error.

It is probable that the first and third of these points may seem perilous theses to defend to some into whose hands this little book may come; and it may be well, therefore, to add a few words here to avoid misunderstanding. The Reformers delivered back to us, we are fond of saying, an open Bible. Some of them attempted rather more than this; they broadly underlined certain passages which had been sadly neglected in their day. This was a work supremely necessary in their

time, which we ought never to undervalue. But the dust of tradition may settle on an open Bible as well as on a closed one: and this is what has happened if, as I think is the case, we allow ourselves to take the marked passages as conveying a summary of the teaching of the whole. I am convinced that the Bible holds the solution of the controversies which vex the Church; but that to attain its full teaching we need much more than a hasty application of certain texts: we need a minute and exhaustive study of it as a whole, in the light of anything that we can acquire of critical and historical knowledge. Such a study will, I feel sure, lead to a serious modification of the Individualism which underlies so much of our current theology, without landing us in the unmodified ecclesiasticism which we identify with Rome. And this would have important practical consequences. In regard to the question of Confession, for instance, it would set aside the policy both of compulsory use of it, and absolute prohibition: it would maintain the serious concern of the whole Church in the

life of each individual, but it would leave the responsibility for the choice of means to absolution in the hands of the individual.

In the fourth lecture I have called attention to the connexion between Individualism and the negative results of criticism of the New Testament. Any one who will consider carefully how much, for instance, of Professor Harnack's results in "What is Christianity?" depends upon the principles that miracles do not happen, and that the true Christian conception of the soul is individualistic, may verify this for himself. He will be surprised to find how much falls under one or other of these rules. But I have also said that Individualism is allied with scepticism, and this needs further illustration. I could hardly wish for a clearer demonstration of this than Dr. James's recent work, "The Varieties of Religious Experience"—a work which Mr. Haldane well describes as "a powerful critique of pure Faith." [1] It shows beyond dispute the negative result of trusting to individual conviction.

[1] "The Pathway to Reality," p. 6.

The general plan and drift of the book are singularly simple. Dr. James begins by distinguishing two particular forms of judgement —the existential judgement and the judgement of value. The former consists in a declaration as to the nature and history of facts under discussion; the latter deals with their "importance, meaning, or significance" (p. 4). The former would embody the answer to the question, "What are the religious propensities?" the latter to the question, "What is their philosophic significance?" The present treatise is mainly and primarily concerned with the former, the question of value or validity being only approached at the end. Dr. James then gives under various heads a vast series of instances of religious experience in different ages and conditions, and only at the end discusses their validity. Thus the ideal of the book is a clear presentation of religious phenomena from the empirical standpoint, leading to a theory of the religious consciousness, its contents and value.

It would be easy to criticize the method and the manner of the presentation, but I think

that such a criticism would not be to the point. It is plain that religious emotion must be closely allied, on the physical side, to emotions of all other kinds, and, though this may be an unattractive fact to the religious mind, yet it is well that we should realize the relation of religion to nervous processes in the body. The criticisms now to be offered rest upon a different ground altogether, and touch rather the definition or idea of religion from which the discussion proceeds, and the view of the human soul which is assumed in it.

I. It is, of course, a matter of vital importance in an empirical inquiry that the definition of the phenomena to be investigated should be accurate. A failure on this point will go far to destroy the distinction, certainly the value of the distinction, between existential and value propositions. To include or exclude a particular class of phenomena may involve a judgement upon their relations as a whole, and so vitiate the process. Dr. James leaves us in no doubt as to what he means by religious phenomena. He erects a distinction, valid

enough in itself, between institutional and personal religion (p. 28), and he determines to confine his attention wholly to the latter. In this "more personal branch of religion," he says, "it is the inner dispositions of man himself which form the centre of interest, his conscience, his deserts, his helplessness, his incompleteness." On the same page he calls this "personal religion pure and simple." Having made this division and taken hold of one side in it exclusively, he easily reaches his definition of religion (p. 31), "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine." And in regard to this last phrase, "the divine," he makes a further definition, "arbitrarily, if you please" (p. 38): "The divine shall mean for us only such a primal reality as the individual feels impelled to respond to solemnly and gravely, and neither by a curse nor a jest." That is, he adopts entirely the purely individualistic idea of what religion is.

The ground having been thus cleared, the

next step is a still further restriction. Dr. James takes into consideration only the exaggerated cases of religious phenomena. "The only cases likely to be profitable enough to repay our attention will be cases where the religious spirit is unmistakable and extreme. Its fainter manifestations we may tranquilly pass by" (p. 39). Dr. James adheres persistently to this selection: no one who reads his book will complain that the experiences described therein are normal.

II. It is plain that a good deal might be said, in the way of criticism, on the definition and the principle by which the phenomena are selected. It will, however, be well to postpone this for the present, till we have noted the point of view from which Dr. James considers the soul or mind of man. Dr. James, as is well known, is a psychologist, and he approaches all the phenomena from the point of view of psychology. This is, of course, an individualistic point of view entirely. In order to get at the psychological aspect of any fact, we must consider the effect produced by it in the human

consciousness. Now the human consciousness is always individual, and always contains an emotional element. In the technical language employed by Dr. James, it is the scene of reactions upon stimulus. I suppose that it would be true that thought as well as feeling partakes of the nature of a *reaction* in this sense. Dr. James, however, minimizes the value of thought, owing to the variety of the thoughts associated with religious feeling. "Individuality is founded in feeling," he says (pp. 501–502), "and the recesses of feeling, the darker, blinder strata of character, are the only places in the world in which we catch real fact in the making, and directly perceive how events happen, and how work is done." Compared with this world of individualized feelings, the world of generalized objects which the intellect contemplates is without solidity or life. Thus, for instance, the thought of Christ as the Son of God Incarnate is directly placed on a lower level than the mystical sense of the Divine Presence, and the latter is treated as a primary, the former as a secondary religious phenomenon.

It is notorious, of course, that inferences from feeling are peculiarly liable to mistake; that the world as constituted by the intellect is a system of thoughts, by the coherence and consistency of which random and eccentric inferences are corrected. The lunatic no doubt really has feelings which he refers to the objects of his hallucination; but we say he is a lunatic because the objects of which he is so sure have no part in the system of things as generally conceived. There is no mistake as to the feelings, the mistake lies in the intellectual scheme which is based on them. A theory which rests so much upon feeling as this of Dr. James's is bound to be carefully protected with distinctions between the valid and the invalid—between delusion and reality. The more violent forms of religious excitement are certainly delusive: how are we to tell the difference between true and false religious emotion, between emotions equally actual in consciousness, but in the one case carrying true and in the other false inferences as to the facts outside consciousness? This question Dr. James holds

over, in part, for another book. But he endeavours to suggest a defence for the general content of the religious sense, and he finds his defence in the subliminal consciousness. There is always, he says, something *more* than the fully conscious self. "Much of the content of this larger background against which our conscious being stands out in relief is insignificant. . . . But in it many of the performances of genius seem also to have their origin. . . . It is one of the peculiarities of invasions from the subconscious region to take on objective appearances and to suggest to the subject an external control" (pp. 512, 513). Subjectively, the final content of the religious consciousness is an uneasiness, and its solution (p. 508). All things considered, Dr. James is prepared to maintain that through this deliverance reality is actually attained: even a wider and more complete reality than the scientific intellect can reach.

I think it is plain that this view is both simple and coherent, and the pivot of it all is its individualism. Emotion, present and

actual, does separate absolutely the individual that feels it from all others. I may sympathize with another's sorrow or joy, but the secondary feeling of joy or sorrow which the sympathy creates is a ghostly thing compared with his actual emotion. Again, in common language, many people may have the same thought; at any rate they use the same words, and words carry their ideas. Thought and language draw men together; emotion is unique, separate, and individual. Hence personal religion may be expected to be emotional, at any rate primarily; and its intellectual expression will come later.

Dr. James's presentation is quite in harmony with his individualistic premisses, and ought not to be contested by any one who trusts mainly for true religion to personal conviction. Indeed, I think that the definitions from which we started are really inferences rather than premisses, and are derived from the fundamental assumption that religious phenomena express the attitude of the individual in his solitude. There is a remark on Quakerism

on p. 7 which shows that Dr. James's view really represents a widely popular conception of Christianity, rather than a scientific principle or result. "Quakerism was a return to something more like the original gospel truth than men had ever known in England." This is a pure assumption; or, rather, it is an indication of the presence in Dr. James's mind of that individualistic conception of Christianity which dates back to Luther, and has, as has been already remarked, coloured so much German criticism of the Gospels. Dr. James, like most modern Protestants, really starts from a form of Christianity which is determined by individualistic ideas, and the paraphernalia of psychological science are in reality this assumption in a more scientific dress. Luther, G. Fox, and Martineau rested on subjective conviction, and believed that this was the burden of Christianity: Dr. James does exactly the same, merely giving to his Individualism a colouring of scientific psychology.

It is reasonable to demur to the justice of the sharp separation between emotion and thought.

It is true that emotion does separate men one from another, and is essentially individual: but so is thought. Words which symbolize ideas can be used as a means of intercommunication: but they only partly carry the individual's thought with them. My idea of the things of which I speak is not necessarily, or even probably, the same as another man's. A man's idea is not, *in his mind*, a mere symbol, abstract and characterless: it has his emotional and intellectual history behind it, and is individual to him accordingly. And again, it may be doubted whether emotion can really withdraw itself altogether from intellectual tests. The distinction of subject and object is largely the result of an abstract treatment of concrete experience: both are given simultaneously—they are distinguished subsequently. It would, therefore, seem an error to look in exaggerated or morbid and illusory emotions for their typical illustrations; it is true that in these we get emotion most independent of all outward relations with reality, but that would seem to be a disqualification rather than a

recommendation. The normal emotional condition, when there is a reaction in regard to an assignable and valid cause, is the proper type. It would seem to be as reasonable to take the visions of *delirium tremens* as the typical illustrations of the functions of the eye. It is surely no recommendation to a given eye that it goes on seeing when there is nothing there. The business of the eye is not merely to see, but to see rightly. In like manner the business of the emotional centres is not to be excited, but to be properly excited in relation to a true cause. It is only the desire to carry through the individualistic conception of the soul, that gives weight to emotion apart from its rational causes.

Again, the subliminal consciousness seems to me a most precarious road towards objective reality. It is admittedly capable of delusion and triviality: if the performances of genius originate in it, that in no way forms their credentials; it is in the region of thought in relation to the general system of men's ideas that we distinguish between the genius and

the lunatic. We want to distinguish between hallucinations and genuine emotions, and that cannot be done in a region no less subject than the ordinary consciousness to error, and only different from it in the fact that little is known about it. Though Dr. James is inclined to trust the evidence of the subliminal consciousness, and is, therefore, opposed to psychologists who think that to trace religion to this source is to disprove its claims, I cannot but think that the crudest form of empiricism —the Protagorean principle *ἄνθρωπος μέτρον* in its least modified shape—results from Dr. James's Individualism, and the fact that his presentation of the theory is more comprehensive and more scientifically based than usual, only makes this more emphatically plain. Unless we have some reason for believing that one type of religious emotion comes nearer to reality than others, we must place all alike on the same level, and that is chaos; though it follows logically from Dr. James's premisses.

It is probable that Dr. James would reply to much of this criticism by saying that it is

premature, and that I have no business to offer it until he has produced his second volume showing how he will account for the position of dogmatic and institutional religion. I do not think this answer will avail him: because it will not alter the fact that he has sought, unless I wholly misunderstand him, for his typical religious phenomena at the wrong end of their history. It is not the least articulate, least comprehensive, least reasoned expressions of the religious impulse which form their ideal presentation, but rather the other way. These inchoate and sometimes distorted manifestations are imperfect attempts at the expression of the full meaning of religion. Christianity which touches science and philosophy and politics on various sides, besides preserving and finding a home for the inarticulate and ungoverned religious emotions, comes nearer the ideal from this fact, and does not fall further off from it. Starting from it, the evolution which has led to it is made as completely rational as our faculties are capable of making it: the earlier stages fall, in a

measure, into their places, and cease to be incoherent. And on the other hand, the full claim and meaning of Christianity will never be explicable on the basis of Individualism: from first to last it deals with minds, which are in relation with actual truth, in regard to the soul, and the world, and God; and which have not fully attained the limits even of their own nature, till they are united in the one Spirit-bearing Body through Christ to the Father.

I

In the present organization of the Church, Sacraments are beyond doubt an integral part of worship and ecclesiastical order. Christ ordained two, which are held to be generally necessary to salvation; and the idea of a purely non-sacramental Christianity has never attracted very wide support. The Society of Friends has definitely parted with all sacramental observances, and in some of the various Christian sects the usages have been retained without any very definite theory of their relation to the general idea of the Christian religion; but, for the most part, the statement with which we began would be true, that the Sacraments are an integral part of worship and Church order.

It is obvious that the whole Sacramental

system implies the recognition, in some shape, of external order; unless they are completely otiose, it is clear that the Sacraments imply a principle. If the proper method for the religious movements of the soul excluded the use of material symbols or instruments, there would be no Sacraments; it is difficult to understand what they could mean on such a hypothesis. And their existence goes with the existence of an outward visible order. We should not naturally expect Sacraments if the soul stood alone, in the sense of a complete isolation from all others. A man can express his own private meaning to himself without symbolic aid. But if the individual soul is not isolated, but is in some way bound by spiritual links to all others in a certain spiritual condition, then it is reasonable to expect, at the very least, that some note or signal should take place in the material world as a sign of the society's act. And here, again, principles are involved.

It is proposed, in the present lectures, to get at these principles, involved in the very existence of Sacraments and an outward order,

to throw light by this means upon the controversies which have arisen around them, and to suggest certain inferences upon the whole matter.

The readiest way, perhaps, of raising the questions we want to have raised, will be found in the consideration of some of the difficulties which the very existence of the Sacraments causes. They are, as we have noticed, on one side, obviously connected with the material world. They seem to bind spiritual effects to material symbols; or, at least, to find in the material world the occasion of spiritual events. And thus they perplex the relation of the soul to God. That is, I believe, the very heart of the discussion about them. Men claim to have obtained, by the religion of Christ, direct access to God. Earlier religions dealt in symbols and types, and were separated from God by barriers. The religion of Christ gives us substance instead of shadow, and throws down the barriers that held men off from the consummation of their religious impulse. Yet, at the same time, the Christian Faith is weighted with ordinances,

which not only revive the use of material emblems, but also bring with them the idea of a Society which somehow seems to stand between the soul and God.

Thus it would seem that there are two questions which the very fact of the existence of the Sacraments brings to our notice, viz.: (1) What is the Christian conception of the individual soul and its relation to God? (2) What is the Christian view of the relation of inward and outward, of body and spirit? These questions must be answered, at least provisionally, if we are to have any intelligible and coherent view of the significance of Sacraments and of Church order.

It is very commonly held that the peculiar character of Christianity lies in its assertion of an extreme and exclusive individualism. The individual, from this point of view, is concerned immediately with God. His relations with God are absolutely his own, and are of a purely spiritual kind. Any infringement of this exclusive condition is, so far, a departure from the spirit of Christianity. When this view, or

anything like it is maintained, the Christian society loses a great deal which has been assigned to it at different times in Church history. It tends to appear as an accidental combination of individuals, who enter into partnership for purposes of mutual encouragement and convenience. It is held to be no part of Christ's intention, except in so far as He may have anticipated so very natural a development, on the part of His followers, as the formation of a society. To give it more importance than this is said to be on the way towards an infringement of the right of individual access to God, which is inherent in the Christian position; to be establishing barriers and conditions where the way ought to be absolutely open. In like manner, the Sacraments, with their close association with matter, continue to be retained (on this construction of the Christian position), rather as the result of Christ's positive command, than as the embodiment of any clear principle or theory of religious life. They also are held to be in danger of impairing the unique and exclusive intercourse between the soul and

God, which, on this view, is the predominant right of the Christian soul. And thus they also bear an accidental, rather than an essential, relation to Christianity.

It is the aim of the present lecture to inquire whether this view of the individual or any modification of it is scriptural. In a subsequent lecture I hope to say something of the history and associations of it outside Scripture.

In one respect, the question is not difficult of solution as regards the Old Testament. Throughout the early books the ancient conception of the individual prevails, according to which a man is very imperfectly distinguished from his family or tribe. The second commandment, not to mention cases of punishment inflicted on family or tribe, shows that the whole body was held responsible for individual acts. And Ezekiel, when he declares that a change is to be made in this rule, is distinctly and consciously making a new departure. He condemns the use of the proverb, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth

are set on edge,"[1] and affirms the principle that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked upon him."[2] Thus there is a clear change in the point of view. The old notion of the individual is definitely assailed, and that which is more familiar to us is suggested. We do not, however, find that the conception of the solidarity of the Jewish nation—at any rate so far as moral responsibility is concerned—is in any way modified.

But we must consider also the position of the individual as a religious being, in his relation to God. In the Psalms we have the most conspicuous case in all literature of the expression of individual moods and aspirations in the region of religion. The psalmists speak of their own penitence, their own hope, their own sorrow and perplexity at misfortune, their own

[1] Ezek. xviii. 2; and cf. Jer. xxxi. 29.
[2] Ezek. xviii. 20.

desire for communion with God. And their words have never ceased to supply a form for similar feelings in all ages. All these are necessarily personal ideas; and it is, therefore, the obvious, but not the necessary, assumption that the first person singular in such passages as those alluded to stands for the writer himself; and that he, like any modern writer using the same language, expresses feelings which are strictly his own. On the other hand, it is maintained by a large number of critics that the "I" of the Psalms is not the psalmist but the nation. The question is a very difficult one to decide with confidence, partly because it is hard to enter into the mind of a person using the pronoun in a national sense, and it is hard to avoid thinking that there are some passages which will not bear such a sense at all.[1] It may be, however, that the difficulty itself is mainly psychological, and arises from the fact that the individual and the nation were not so clearly and decisively distinguished as they would naturally be by us. A confusion on

[1] Cf. Ps. li.

this point is not one which is very likely to occur in modern poetry, because the two ideas are now completely separate. But the tendency to personify, the vivid sense of the national unity as against all foreign nations, which were certainly characteristic of the Jews, might very well make it hard to be absolutely certain how to interpret language written without a sense of the modern distinction. There would be, as there are, passages in which the national sense was certainly the right one, there would be others in which only the knowledge of the exact circumstances of the writer would enable us to decide the interpretation. The same is true of passages in the Prophets, especially of those concerned with the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah;[1] and the general truth about them seems to be that the idea of the individual, even on his religious side, was as yet imperfectly defined, so that the deep and intimate thoughts which arise in the religious region are less certainly subjective, pure and simple, than would be supposed from similar language in

[1] Cf. chs. xlii. xlix. l. lii.–liii.

modern times. On the whole, we may perhaps say that in the Old Testament the predominant view of the individual is that which has prevailed in early stages of thought in all nations, viz. that the individual man is not fully and clearly separated from the society in which he dwells; but that from the point of view, both of moral responsibility and of religious devotion, there are signs that the separation was becoming possible.

We come now to consider the New Testament, and here it will be necessary to consider our points at greater length, for the view of which I have spoken—the extreme individualistic view—is mainly based on an interpretation of passages in the New Testament. We may divide our subject into three heads: (1) The Direct Example and Teaching of Christ; (2) The Teaching of the Epistles; (3) The Psychology of the New Testament generally.

The life of our Lord was one of continual communion with God. One conspicuous illustration is found in His practice of prayer. As to this there is no doubt or dispute. The

Synoptic account represents Him as spending a night in prayer;[1] and especially as retiring for prayer before any decisive departure in policy. The Transfiguration is described as happening in the course of prayer,[2] and there is the scene of agony at Gethsemane. Moreover, our Lord definitely regards prayer as being a practice to be expected of the disciples,[3] and they ask Him to teach them to pray as S. John Baptist had also taught his followers.[4] He finds the practice obtaining amongst the Jews with many mischievous delusions surrounding it, all of which needed correction. In short, in the Synoptic Gospels, we find the practice of prayer common among individuals,[5] Christ both affording a conspicuous example in Himself of the prevalent religious custom, and also from the depths of His spiritual insight giving instructions available for others. In S. John we find the same

[1] S. Matt. xiv. 23; S. Mark vi. 46. [2] S. Luke ix. 18.
[3] S. Matt. vi. 5, etc.
[4] S. Luke xi. 1–4.
[5] Cf. esp. the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, S. Luke xviii. 10, etc.

general characteristics, developed and explained by the deeper teaching as to the relation of the Son to the Father. There is an absolute community of will and purpose, so that prayer seems to take the form rather of intercourse and thanksgiving than of petition.[1] It is in this Gospel, also, that we have the most precious promises as to the efficacy of prayer. In the Last Discourses the promise is given and given again, in the widest and most universal form.[2] It is noticeable that this promise takes a particular form. Our Lord assures success to prayer without any distinct restriction as regards subject, but it is to prayer in His name. This is a phrase which appears in the passages in question without explanation, and in itself might mean comparatively little, but must certainly be taken in connexion with the teaching of the context as to the relation of the Apostles to their Lord. This very close union, which is described as an abiding in the Lord, is to be the characteristic feature of the future life of

[1] Cf. esp. the prayer at the grave of Lazarus, S. John xi. 41.

[2] S. John xiv. 13, 14; xv. 7, 16; xvi. 23, 24, 26.

the Apostles, and it is from this position that they have unhindered access to the Father. There is very little said of prayer to Christ Himself; the teaching of the discourses on this head is mainly of the certainty of prayer made to the Father in Christ's name. So far, therefore, our Lord's teaching is clear. Prayer is the duty and privilege of His followers: and, of course, prayer that does not carry with it the will of the worshipper is but a mockery. Other modes of worship are not discussed.

It is necessary now to glance at the position occupied by man in the scheme of redemption and the relation of Christ's work to it, as these are presented in the Gospels. There is no question at all that the future of man—his salvation—is connected in some very close way with the work of Christ. There is no mistake about the importance of the work which Christ does. He is in a position to place His words and the fulfilment of them upon a level with the Law: the people themselves noted the authority of His teaching. It is true that He rarely alludes to the sacrificial or redemptive

aspect of His Death; He refers to it most often as the result of the malice of the Jewish authorities; but He does describe it to the disciples as λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν.[1] In the Fourth Gospel there are hints, in somewhat mysterious language, of the critical necessity and importance of His Death;[2] and in more direct words this truth is asserted in the allegory of the Good Shepherd;[3] and the whole series of events—the Suffering, the Death and Resurrection—is represented in the discourse to the disciples at Emmaus as a fulfilment of Divine order prepared for in the Old Dispensation.[4] It is remarkable that the allusions to the causes and the nature of man's need of salvation in the Gospels are very rare. There is no doubt that sin is the main disturbing feature in His life, but this is rather accepted as a fact than taken as the basis of discussion. The parable of the Tares refers mainly to the kingdom, still probably to be regarded in the future; but

[1] S. Matt. xx. 28; S. Mark x. 45.
[2] S. John iii. 14; xii. 32–35.
[3] S. John x. 15–18, and cf. xv. 13.
[4] S. Luke xxiv. 26, 27, and cf. 44.

the work of the enemy would be easily understood, and would probably be accepted as representing the way in which evil came into the world. Repentance and remission of sins are set forth as the object of Christ's preaching;[1] the need of repentance is clearly considered to be universal: and, in S. John's Gospel, Christ is pointed out as taking away the sin of the world.[2] There are signs that the question of birth-sin was before the minds of our Lord's contemporaries;[3] our Lord dwells on the peril of sins against the Holy Ghost,[4] and against the witness of His own words and works.[5] But there is no elaborate psychology of sin, or theoretical account of salvation.

We might, perhaps, have expected a fuller treatment of these questions than we actually find; but, instead of this, we have a considerable amount of teaching on the subject of the kingdom of heaven or the kingdom of God, and this would seem to be the main

[1] S. Luke v. 32; xxiv. 47.
[2] S. John i. 29, 36. [3] S. John ix. 2, 3, 34.
[4] S. Matt. xii. 31; S. Mark iii. 28, 29.
[5] S. John xv. 22–24.

contribution of the Synoptists to this subject of man's redemption. Like the Baptist before him, Christ came preaching the kingdom of heaven,[1] or the gospel of the kingdom,[2] and this, as shown in S. Matt. xxiv. 14, was to be the burden of His followers' message to the world.[3] This kingdom is represented as being, in fact, the fulfilment of the hopes of the Jewish nation. Men like Joseph of Arimathæa are said to have waited for the kingdom,[4] or for the redemption of Israel.[5] For citizenship of the kingdom certain characteristics were required—a greater righteousness than that of the scribes or the Pharisees,[6] and, more positively, poverty of spirit, sincerity in practice, a childlike simplicity of heart.[7] Certain other characteristics, on the other hand, exclude from the kingdom—hypocrisy of all kinds,[8] all excessive devotion to earthly interests,[9] and to

[1] S. Mark i. 15. [2] S. Matt. iv. 17; ix. 35; xxiv. 14.
[3] Cf. S. Matt. x. 7; S. Luke ix. 2, 11, 60, 62; x. 9, 11.
[4] S. Matt. xv. 43; S. Luke xxiii. 51.
[5] S. Luke ii. 38. [6] S. Matt. v. 20.
[7] S. Matt. v. 3, 19; vii. 21; S. Mark x. 14, and parallel in S. Luke.
[8] S. Matt. vii. 21; xxi. 31. [9] S. Mark ix. 47.

wealth,[1] any lack of determination in carrying the work of the kingdom through.[2] All these are personal qualities, conditions of the mind or will, which Christ represents as necessary to the citizens of His kingdom.

When we inquire as to the outward marks of the kingdom, we do not get an absolutely clear answer. One point, at least, is certain. The world is likely to be conscious of the kingdom, and hostile ;[3] the citizens are likely to be persecuted for righteousness' sake, and to have to display their worthiness of their privileges by suffering for Christ's sake. But at the same time the kingdom comes not with observation : it is within, or among, the people,[4] and yet it is a society into which the violent press by force.[5] Christ alleges the miracles as a sign that it has come upon the Jews.[6] On the one hand, it seems to be described as a purely spiritual condition : on the other, it seems to have a place and effect in the world.

[1] S. Matt. xix. 23, and parallels. [2] S. Luke ix. 62.
[3] S. Matt. v. 10.
[4] S. Luke xvii. 20, 21. [5] S. Matt. xi. 12 ; S. Luke xvi. 16.
[6] ἄρα ἔφθασεν ἐφ' ὑμᾶς (S. Matt. xii. 28 ; S. Luke xi. 20).

With the parables of the Kingdom we seem to reach a position which in some measure clears up the obscurity left on the mind by the isolated position of passages like those cited above. Certain of these leave no doubt that the kingdom of God involves a relation between God and men, conceived, not only as individuals possessing each his own spiritual history, but as a *body* held together by their membership of the kingdom. Thus the parable of the Sower sets forth spiritual differences among those to whom the word of the kingdom comes. The parable of the Tares or that of the Drag-net has in view the kingdom as a stage in God's providence,—the combination of men of all sorts into a particular position as regards God, their one point of contact being their external unity in the kingdom. Ultimately a separation, based on spiritual principles, will be carried out: now, and in this order, the bad and the good are united almost indiscriminately in one society. The kingdom is administered by delegates, and work of a certain type and quality is required of every member; and those

achieve what is required of them who fulfil their task without questioning and whose whole being is governed by loyalty to the kingdom and the King. No details of the organization are supplied, but we have before us the picture of a society of men, combined in orderly fashion, and yet with the power of breaking spiritually the link that binds them to God.

There is apparently no choice in regard to belonging to it, for those who profess to follow Christ: the sons of the kingdom are those in whom the work of Christ has been effective:[1] while those who are outside it are never represented except as having failed to realize their opportunities. There is no talk of voluntary association among men already in the right relation to God: it is the society of those who have overcome the various temptations and inducements which bind them to this world—riches, pride, and the like: and the entry into the kingdom is the moment at which the right relation to God is re-established.

[1] *οἱ υἱοὶ τῆς βασιλείας* (S. Matt. viii. 12), seems to mean primarily the privileged Jews.

There is one passage, and, we believe, one only, that gives countenance to the notion of a purely voluntary association of individuals apart from the unity of the kingdom. It is the well-known verse, S. Matt. xviii. 20: "Where two or three are gathered together . . . there am I in the midst of them." Quoted thus, without its context, it undoubtedly seems to require this interpretation; with the context, this view is much less certain. The passage from ver. 15 contains instructions for occasions of injury of one brother by another. At first, the matter is to remain between the wrongdoer and his victim; but if private appeals fail, the remonstrance is to be repeated in presence of two or three witnesses; and then, if this also fails, the matter is to be referred to the Church; if he disobeys the Church, "let him be to thee as a heathen man and a publican." Our Lord then promises validity to these disciplinary judgments, in the words, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The next two verses seem to explain

the ground of this in the power of united appeal to God. "If two *of you* agree upon the earth concerning anything which they shall ask, it shall be unto them from My Father which is in heaven." And this again is based on the further reason, "Where two or three are gathered together into My name, there am I in the midst of them." It will be seen that the ordinary interpretation of this passage breaks the continuity of it. As it stands, the subject of the discourse is the same throughout, the Church—those who bind and loose, the "two of you" who agree, the two or three gathered together. It involves a completely new idea to apply this last verse to the purely accidental association of individuals: on the other interpretation the passage falls in exactly with the promises in regard to prayer in S. John xiv. to xvi.

In the Fourth Gospel there is only one direct allusion to the kingdom—in the discourse with Nicodemus.[1] When Christ is challenged at His trial with claiming to be a

[1] S. John iii. 3–5.

king, He admits the claim, but maintains that His kingdom is not of this world :[1] but there is no general doctrine of the Kingdom, such as we find in the Synoptists. The special point which this Gospel emphasizes in regard to the disciples is their union with Christ. As we have already noted, this is brought out clearly in the Last Discourses in reference to the prayer of the disciples: they pray in Christ's name in virtue of their union with Him. The union is ultimately with the Father, and is conveyed only through the Son :[2] there is no indication of the possibility of any such union apart from the Son. This particular point is brought out in the imagery of the Good Shepherd, and a relation is implied between the establishment of the new order and the death of the Shepherd Himself. S. John the Baptist had pointed to Christ as the Lamb of God without defining the way in which He was to take away the sin of the world.[3] In the parable of the Good Shepherd it is clear that the ultimate purpose of the Good

[1] S. John xviii. 36. [2] S. John xiv. 6. [3] S. John i. 29.

Shepherd's work can only be achieved after His death. Already Christ forecasts the destruction of the barrier of privilege which surrounded the Jews, and looks forward to the initiation of a single society (*μία ποίμνη*) under one Shepherd.[1] And the unconscious prophecy of Caiaphas[2] is interpreted by S. John to mean that Christ not only dies for the people, but also should gather into one (*συναγάγῃ εἰς ἕν*) the children of God that are scattered abroad. Once more, the Last Discourses lay emphasis on the necessity for unity in the future times when Christ shall have been withdrawn. And this unity is not conceived as a separate end apart from the relation to God described in the phrase, "abiding in" Him: it is another aspect of the same lofty result; it is the extension to men of the unity which obtains between the Father and the Son. There is no sign that individuality is to be extinguished; but the condition of unity with God and the brethren is the atmosphere in which the individuality is sustained.

[1] S. John x. 16. [2] S. John xi. 52.

The above, in a short and superficial manner, sets forth what I believe to be the doctrine and drift of the Gospels on the position of the individual. If it fairly represents the purport of our Lord's teaching, as it has been preserved to us by the Evangelists, it is manifest that the extreme individualism mentioned at starting is by no means so certainly a part of Gospel teaching as is commonly supposed. The promise of certain answer to prayer, and of uninterrupted communion with the Father, is made, as we have seen, primarily to those who are in Christ, who pray in the name of Christ; and this points to a definite and concrete relation between the individual believer and Christ, which, though not precisely described in the Gospels, would certainly seem to depend on some act of God, and not on mere individual volition. That would be true of Christ's later followers which was true of the first: "Ye did not choose Me, but I chose you."

The preaching of the kingdom, however it be described, acts as a judgment—attracting some, repelling others—just as Christ's own

self-manifestation acted in the days of His Flesh. And those who are won are taken up into union with Christ, so that they abide in Him, and He in them: their life as redeemed, as disciples, exists, and is maintained in this unity. Also unity with Christ *is* unity with all others who are in Christ; at any rate, there is no indication in the Gospels of any separate process of association with the brethren being necessary or possible.

Now, if this is true, it follows that we must use great care when we interpret rather familiar passages of the Gospels. We use the words of the Last Discourses, for instance, and use them rightly for comfort or edification to our own souls; and it is easy to assume that they have this virtue in relation to our individual life as such, and not to us as members of Christ. These discourses have conveyed, and will convey, endless comfort to souls in trouble, and seem to speak directly to them. And so in a sense they do. But they speak to the soul directly in virtue of the primary fact that it has attained through Christ a particular

position in regard to God. To interpret such words as belonging to the individual alone in his bare and negative particularity is to introduce into them a thought which the context does not contain, and incidentally to prejudge the whole question of the individual and the Church. It is easier to say that this or that view of the individual is not in the Gospels than to say positively what is the conception that prevails there. I think we shall probably be right in concluding that the question had not then arisen in its modern form, and that, therefore, we have no positive theory of the individual given or implied in the Gospels. But owing to this, certain problems which seem to us difficult would not have affected the minds of our Lord's contemporaries in anything like the same way. All the phraseology which our Lord uses of Himself and the Father, of the indwelling of the Spirit in men, of His own return through the Spirit to His disciples, is to us of very considerable difficulty. It is very hard to understand it in any precise sense. We understand readily enough a

separate relation, for instance, between our Lord and the Father, because that is easily paralleled by the relation of one man to another. And, by means of the same analogies, we can understand in large measure a considerable range of intercourse between the Two, of any degree of intimacy that preserves their separateness. Where there is no separation, there is no intercourse. But, then, what does our Lord mean by claiming oneness with the Father? It clearly does not imply identity of person. The whole drift of His language in all four Gospels excludes this: the common Synoptic phrase, "My Father, which is in heaven," by use of spatial imagery, makes this impossible. Nor, on the other hand, is it merely the kind of generic unity which obtains between man and man; it is not that He and the Father are two individuals in a class. Moreover, He contrasts the sort of knowledge which men have of Him with that which He has of the Father, and finally asserts the truth, "I and My Father are One" (ἕν ἐσμεν)—a statement which the Jews of His day

interpreted more intelligently than some later Christians.

It is clear that if we endeavour to maintain the popular and exclusive conception of the individual, all this language becomes at once unnatural and unreal. We must explain it as being of the nature of highly strung oriental metaphor to which no certain meaning can be assigned. And then there is this further difficulty that our Lord uses this language as the mode of expressing the unity between Himself and His Church, and the members of His Church one with another. The ideal of unity He sets before them is that of the Father and the Son. And here again a voluntary association of sporadic individuals, however truly such an association issued in love or was based on love, would fail to express adequately our Lord's meaning. But it will perhaps be said that this teaching is Johannine, and is much later than the teaching of our Lord; a theological hardening of phrases never meant to receive such treatment. But surely the main evidence for this lies in the covert assumption

of individualism such as I have been speaking of. The Synoptic doctrine of the kingdom is compatible with the harshest individualism, provided it be assumed that there is nothing else and could be nothing else in the Gospels. But it is not the *necessary* presupposition even of the Synoptic account, and, on the other hand, there is no incompatibility whatever between the Synoptic doctrine of the Kingdom and the doctrine which we find in the Last Discourses. From the Synoptic Gospels it would seem that men are naturally combined in a society, and the state of salvation seems to consist in membership of the society. That is the outward point of view. The doctrine of the discourses places all this upon a deeper foundation. That which looks like a kingdom—a society of men—is a spiritual organism, living by Christ's life and held, through Him, in union with the Father. And this is to the doctrine of the Kingdom as S. Mark's history of the outward life of our Lord is to the doctrine of the Word.

II

THERE can be no doubt that the stronghold of individualism has always been in the writings of S. Paul. It was the reading of S. Paul to the Galatians, we are told, that led Luther to his fundamental doctrine of Justification by Faith and the strong assertion of individual religion which accompanied it. It will, therefore, be of great importance to inquire carefully whether the doctrine in question adequately represents the teaching of S. Paul and the other Apostles.

Before entering upon this inquiry, we may note in passing that the Epistle of S. James throws no special light upon our problem. S. James conceives of Christians as living under a law which is, however, a law of liberty; as being bound to the service of God and of one

another; he reproves those of his day who allow secular distinctions of wealth and station to affect their dealings in Church; and he also speaks of mutual intercession. There is nothing, however, to show how he conceived the relation of the members of the Church. What he says is compatible with a strong belief in the unity and solidarity of the Church —such a belief, for instance, as was characteristic of the Jewish nation in regard to themselves; and it is no less compatible with the idea of a loose and voluntary organization of individuals fortuitously collected together.

Passing on to S. Paul, it is important to remember the history of his mind up to the time at which we meet it in his writings. By his conversion he had entirely turned his back on his own past; he had discovered that the principle on which he had rested most securely was an erroneous one, and that its exact opposite was the true guiding law of life. The observance of the Law had seemed to him the main object of true religious life; he had come to see that the precise fulfilment of

external rules might be without religious or ethical value, and could never, by themselves, as external observances, place man in the true relation to God. Thus his peculiar attitude towards justification and all kindred problems emerges with special force when he has to deal with those Judaizing members of the Church who are undermining the distinctive teaching of the Gospel by reasserting for Christians the paramount importance of the Law. So in the Epistle to the Galatians we find him in sharp conflict with those who, as he thinks, are endeavouring to lead back his converts to the bondage of the Law in its least profitable aspect, and his object is to insist that the Judaizers are not introducing a form of teaching which may be legitimately held in conjunction with his own, but one which is absolutely excluded by it. They rest their hopes of righteousness in God's sight on the faithful performance of the works of the Law ; whereas he and all who think with him know that they have no power to fulfil the demands of the Law, and depend for justification absolutely upon their faith in

Jesus. Knowing, he says in ver. 16, that no man is justified by works of law, but through faith in Christ Jesus, we also believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by works of law, for by works of law no flesh shall be justified. And so later, he searches for words to express the violence of the contrast, and uses the metaphor of death. "I through law died to law, that I might live to God."[1] This death, moreover, was shared with Christ on the cross. He died, and by the form of His death became a curse for us. His death also was a death to law, as His triumph over it showed. And it is this death to law which S. Paul shares. "I am crucified with Christ; but I live, no longer I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life I now live in flesh, I live in faith which is of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me."

It cannot be denied that in this passage we have the strongest possible assertion of the reality of individual experience. Though at

[1] Gal. ii. 19.

first the question is discussed, and the difference between the old and new order is asserted in general terms, the critical phrases are otherwise written. S. Paul changes to the first person singular, and the most striking and powerful expressions are cast in the form of a personal experience. The death to the Law, the crucifixion with Christ, the sense of Christ's indwelling presence are facts of S. Paul's own knowledge: and it is this clearly which gives them their significance in regard to him. The salvation of Christ is not a process purely external to the individual saved: it is one which must be brought close down upon each separate life, and realized in each separate experience. Men are not saved blindfold, nor independently of themselves: there must be action of theirs in the acceptance of salvation, and a vivid sense in them of the power of Christ controlling them. With this passage would be ranged those many others in which the finality of Christ's work is emphasized; such as Eph. ii. 14–18, Col. ii. 13–14. Christ has removed barriers, and opened a way of

access which is now standing available for us all —Jew and Greek, those far off and those near: *τὴν προσαγωγὴν ἔχομεν οἱ ἀμφότεροι ἐν ἑνὶ πνεύματι πρὸς τὸν πατέρα.*[1] In all these we read of a definite act of transformation performed by God through Christ, in which each individual has his share. Divisions existed between God and man, and between Jew and Gentile; that is, between the privileged and unprivileged: and these divisions are done away by the work of Christ, specially by His death on the cross. Speaking to the whole body of Christians in the Churches to which his letters were addressed, he uses the plural pronoun *you*; but there is every reason to believe that he would have applied his teaching to each single soul in the Church of Christ, and that he would have expected such language as he uses of himself in Gal. ii. 20 to be true of those to whom he writes.

It is on words like these that they rightly rely who dwell on the individual and personal aspect of the Gospel as preached by S. Paul.

[1] Eph. ii. 18.

There is no doubt whatever as to S. Paul's belief that the new Faith gave a directness and certainty to the religion of each individual such as had never been attained before. The burden of sin was to be removed from each conscience; each person was to realize within himself the presence of Christ, and the new friendship with God. But this is, of course, by no means all that S. Paul had to preach, and we must now consider the relation of all this to other aspects of his doctrine.

Besides the strong individualism, we are presented with a doctrine of the Body of Christ. This is a metaphorical phrase by which the Society is described in which the various Christian individuals are united. The question then before us is, How are the individuals in question related to this Society? Is the Society an accidental result of agreement in opinion, or unity of purpose among the various individuals, or is it a fundamental aspect of their position as Christians? When we glance at the distribution of the idea in the works of S. Paul, we notice that it is entirely absent from certain

Epistles,[1] and that in those Epistles where it does occur it is used in two different connexions. In Rom. xii., 1 Cor. xii., it is used as a basis for exhortation. Different members of the Church, S. Paul argues, have different functions, like the various limbs in the body, and if things are to go well they must be content with the gifts which God has allotted to them, and perform willingly the service which such gifts demand. In these passages it might be a mere metaphorical expression, suitable for giving vividness to an exhortation to unity; and then it would be unreasonable to press it as throwing any light on the fundamental character of the Christian Society. But this interpretation would weaken considerably the argument of the passage 1 Cor. x. 16, 17, in which the phrase occurs. S. Paul is here giving reasons for abstaining from the use of meats that have been offered to idols, and appeals to the Eucharist to confirm his judgment. This, he contends, establishes a close inter-relation of the faithful one with another, and with Christ, and therefore

[1] Thess., 2 Cor., Gal., Phil., Past. Epp.

makes impossible a similar relation to demons. It is unnatural to restrict this phrase to the limits of a mere metaphor. The point of the argument is an appeal to a certain relation actually existing among the Christians themselves, and between them and Christ ; and the language is only metaphorical in so far as is rendered necessary by the difficulty of expressing in any language a fact so deep-seated and remote. But the appeal is to this fact, which is sufficiently fundamental to mark the sharp distinction between all those who are Christ's and those who still have part with idolaters.

If this is true of this passage of 1 Corinthians, it is more emphatically true still of the passages in Ephesians and Colossians. Here the constitution of the Church as the Body of Christ is dogmatically developed, and the phrase appears in various connexions. Thus, in the Ephesians, the Church under its Head is presented as the climax of the long revolution of God's purpose.[1] It is in one body that Christ is to reconcile us to the Father.[2] Similar points

[1] Eph. i. 23. [2] Eph. ii. 16 ; cf. iv. 15, 16.

are affirmed in Colossians,[1] and it is clear from these Epistles that S. Paul, looking at the matter with somewhat different eyes, and in different conditions to those of the Churches of Rome and Corinth, maintains the paramount importance of the Body. He still speaks of our being called, but he adds in one passage,[2] "in one Body." He still speaks of our having access to the Father, but it is as reconciled in the one Body.[3] The normal condition of Christian men is certainly membership of the one Body. There is here no tendency to undervalue the importance of the individual. S. Paul emphasizes in these Epistles, as in Romans and Corinthians, the variety of gifts, and their combined importance to the Church. But the notion is really excluded that this social aspect of the individual lives is in any way accidental; it is involved in the method of salvation, as S. Paul conceives of it.

If it be asked how such a view as this is brought into relation with S. Paul's demand for individual experience, the answer will probably

[1] Col. i. 16; ii. 19. [2] Col. iii. 15. [3] Eph. ii. 14–18.

be found to lie in his phrase ἐν Χριστῷ. This is one of the commonest expressions in the whole of S. Paul's writings, and its use prevails from one end of his career to the other. He uses it or some similar phrase, such as ἐν Κυρίῳ, to describe the normal condition of the Christian. The believer is baptized εἰς Χριστὸν,[1] and thenceforward lives ἐν Χριστῷ. S. Paul seems to have conceived this baptism into Christ, in some sense as an incorporation into Christ's life. He further thinks of the Christian as baptized into His death, being buried and raised with Him ;[2] and these facts become, as it were, part and parcel of the man's life ; he dates back to them, and their efficacy spreads itself over his life, instead of the facts of Adam's fall and sinfulness.[3] Thus to be in Christ is to live in a new moral atmosphere ; to have passed from the condition of isolation and hostility towards God in which men had lived before, and to be so completely united with Christ as to appear before the Father in His merits. The access

[1] Rom. vi. 3 ; Gal. iii. 27.
[2] Rom. vi. 3, 4 ; Gal. ii. 20 ; Eph. ii. 5, 6, etc.
[3] Cf. 1 Cor. xv. 22 ; Rom. v. 15–19.

to the Father of which S. Paul speaks belongs to us as individuals, but as in Christ; and it is by union with Christ, and by this only, that it becomes possible to attain it. The experience of which he speaks in Gal. ii. 20 comes to an individual who has been crucified with Christ, and on whose individuality the overmastering Presence of Christ has come down. But it is this union with Christ, this life in Christ, which is described in other connexions as membership of the Body. To be baptized into Christ is to be baptized into one Body[1] in which the life of Christ is active, by which His work is carried on, and in which men fill up that which was lacking in His sufferings on behalf of the Body.[2] It is not consistent with the whole language of S. Paul to speak of an individual relation to God apart from the Body of Christ; only by entering or being grafted upon the Body is the true relation between God and the individual soul established.

We cannot pass from the consideration of S. Paul's doctrine of the individual, without

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 13. [2] Col. i. 24.

tookring to his conception of faith. Here, Goch, there is very strong evidence for the individual character of the act which is implied in it. A man's faith must be his own, and flow out from the deepest springs of his personality. It is this fact that helps to account for the justifying efficacy of faith. The fulfilment of an external rule, of course, involves an act of will; but it may be an act which carries very little of conscious deliberation with it, it may be the almost mechanical result of mere habituation. This is impossible in the case of faith: faith, at least, is the free and deliberate act of the true self. But here it is necessary to use care in statement. Faith is not merely the free selection of a set of opinions. When S. Paul passed from the dispensation of works to that of faith, it did not mean merely that he, of his own accord, reversed his previous opinions about the Law; it meant that he gave himself over wholly to his Master Christ, and through Him obtained a new position in regard to God. But then, looking back, he sees that this is more than a self-chosen act of his: it is also a

response to a gift. And this gift begins not in the mind of the individual, but in the will of God; it is part of the whole guiding purpose of which the Incarnation, the Death and Resurrection and Exaltation of Christ are the central events. Faith is the inward side of the process by which the man passes into Christ, so that the Death and Resurrection of Christ belong also to him:[1] there is no evidence that S. Paul conceived of it as standing alone.

In dealing with the doctrine of S. Paul, we have to consider an extremely complex condition, and estimate his view of the various elements involved in it. It cannot be denied that the commonest phrase by which he describes the position of the Christian is ἐν Χριστῷ, and that this expression mediates between his vehement assertion of the necessity of individual experience and his doctrine of the Body. It is in virtue of this phrase that S. Paul may be described as a mystic. He certainly claimed to have the most vivid certainty of his oneness with Christ, and at times his mystic certainty of Divine things

[1] Cf. Eph. ii. 4–9; Rom. iii. 22–26; vi. 3, 4.

took the form of visions and revelations from God.[1] But though this is true, and though it is true that he presents various aspects of his whole doctrine separately in different passages, it is unreasonable to set them at variance one with another. The providence of God in the gift of faith to each individual, the surrender of each individual in faith to the Crucified and Risen Lord, the transference of each individual from one spiritual condition to another by baptism, the life and activity of each individual in the Body of Christ, are parts or aspects of one whole. A man is saved, by the grace of God, by his personal faith in Jesus Christ; but there is no evidence that S. Paul contemplated the possibility of a person claiming to have faith and yet refusing baptism, and asserting a position for himself over against the Body.

Similar conclusions may be drawn from the language of S. John. There is considerable difference in the usage of the two Apostles. S. John does not use the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ. He says that we (in contrast with the world, which

[1] 2 Cor. xii.

lies *in* the evil one) are "*in* him that is true, in His Son Jesus Christ."[1] But for the most part he uses the phrase which belongs to the language of the Lord, of abiding in Him. S. John says nothing of being baptized into the death of Christ, or being crucified with Him; nothing of the Body of Christ. He scarcely ever speaks of the Church—only in 3 John i. 9, 10. His usual phrase for the Christian Society is "the brethren,"—and even this is rare,—but he conceives of the faithful as abiding in Christ and Christ in them. This means, primarily, that they stand to Christ, and so to the Father, in the same relation as He claimed for His own in regard to God. There is a community of life; all barriers, all independence and externality are broken down; we live in virtue of our abiding in Christ, in union with God. There is but little sign in S. John's language of formal organization among the brethren; but nothing that he says excludes the possibility of it. What is excluded by his language is, if the phrase may be permitted, a triangular relation of the

[1] 1 S. John v. 20.

individual—to God in one direction, to a body of believers in another. All believers are bound up in unity with Christ, and abide in Him: and it is this that makes possible their relation with the Father.

As in the case of S. Paul, this doctrine of abiding in Christ explains, or rather makes clear, the consistency of phrases which might conceivably be treated as incompatible. S. John mentions various indications of abiding in Christ, and tests whereby those who have not attained to this privilege may be excluded. Moral life is one,[1] love to the brethren is another,[2] true doctrine is a third.[3] It might seem as if these would be difficult to combine into one whole. But those who abide in Christ have their whole being in that connexion. They live and act and think in union with the life of Christ Himself: in S. Paul's language, they with all their brethren are *in Christ*.

It would seem, then, that, however frankly and completely we accept S. Paul's preaching

[1] 1 S. John ii. 5, 17, 29; iii. 6, 9.
[2] 1 S. John ii. 9–11; iii. 11, 12, 13, 14, 23, 24.
[3] 1 S. John ii. 22, 25; iii. 23, 24; v. 9–12.

of the need of subjective certainty and the right of individual access to God, we shall be misrepresenting the Faith, as preached by the Apostles, if we construe this to the exclusion of a necessary social relation between the individuals. They come before God as *in Christ*, as *abiding* in Christ, and the normal indication that they have attained this condition is to be found in their admission to the outward Church. Nor must this be regarded as being in any sense an infringement or extinction of their individuality. The Church is not a new mediator, it does not stand between them and God, or blur their individual relations to God. But it is, as it were, the social atmosphere which makes such a life possible as must be led in God's sight. There is differentiation of function in it, but there is also unity of purpose: and the combined activity of all is a help and stay to the work of each. They work individually, but not singly; and "all the body, fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due

measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love."

It is clear that this view of the teaching of Scripture will have importance in various directions ; we may, at this stage, point out one or two of these by way of illustration. First of all, it has an important bearing on the regulation of individual life, especially in regard to sin. It is often assumed, openly or tacitly, that the interest of the Body in the sin of the individual begins only when his sin reaches the point of open scandal. A glaring defiance of the standard maintained by the Church naturally brings it into bad odour, and impedes its work. It is easy to see this, and it is obvious that such an effect is deplorable. But this is not the primary or main mischief caused by sin in regard to the Body. It is rather a real impediment and injury to the life of the whole Body in the spiritual sphere. And therefore the Body has an interest in insisting that it has a right to deal with such cases. The method it might choose to employ might differ very widely at

different times and in different conditions ; but any living Church must have a method of some sort. The Church of England provides public forms of Confession and Absolution, and leaves any more personal process of absolution entirely to the penitent. The established Kirk of Scotland "fences the tables." But it does not by this means throw aside its responsibility in the matter, or surrender its right to demand that men should be reconciled with God, before they seek to make use of the privileges of membership.

It is important, again, to remember that in all such actions the Church acts as a spiritual Body, wielding spiritual powers in connexion with sin, and not like a corporation enforcing by-laws. Confusion has often arisen on this point, because, as the Church has grown in size and complexity of life, it has been forced to enact what may fairly be compared with by-laws. If these are broken, and any penalty is enforced, this is strictly of the nature of an "ecclesiastical" penalty or censure. Thus a person who violated the rule of the Church by

fasting on the wrong day, or in any other such way would, at certain times, have been liable to certain penalties : and this, whether or no the act were supposed to imply unsoundness of doctrine. But the case would be different if he committed a sin. At times the Church has imposed penance for such things, and has been far from successful in working a system of such penances. But whatever it has done, it claims to do in its corporate capacity, in virtue of its commission to carry on the work of Christ in the world ; and to deal as He dealt with man's chief need in this life, forgiveness of sin. It is probable that it would rarely or never have *denied* man's right to sue to God for forgiveness, but it would always insist that no man has a right to use its services unless he takes the measures which are from time to time laid down for securing that he does not come unworthily. Nor has any man a right to use such language as S. Paul uses of his union with Christ, unless he corresponds with this fundamental requirement of the Body of Christ—in which he attains his union with God.

Secondly: it is worth noticing that a view of things such as this, which aims at preserving full individual liberty, and yet, at the same time, asserting the importance of the society, is more and more coming into prominence in other regions than theology. The reaction against authority produced the same sort of effect in the political world as in the field of religion. There was a parallel assertion of individual rights to freedom of action and thought in the State as well as in the Church. This assertion was a long time in making itself good, but it was achieved at last, and, in England especially, took a negatively individualistic form. Wherever this point of view has reigned, we have had a tendency to be suspicious of any policy which seemed to curtail the untrammelled freedom of individual action and thought. In spite of the value and necessity of securing free action for the individual, it has long become clear in the political world that when life becomes complex individualism means chaos, waste of effort, and ineffectiveness of action. And so there is now a tendency to correct this

individualistic position by one more in harmony with the real nature of man, and more likely to lead to successful results. The old position has been subjected to damaging attacks from every side, in every branch of thought; and it does not seem likely that it can avoid serious modifications. Its real stronghold has always been in religion, where it seemed to be bound up with everything that Englishmen hold most tenaciously. But here, too, it would seem to have been asserted in an exaggerated form; it has been asserted in a form which does not appear to be true to Scripture, and which is certainly fruitful in difficulties and confusions of various sorts. Of course, all modifications of such a position in the religious world is difficult, will probably be slow, and will certainly involve some peril; for the equally one-sided mediæval assertion of the opposite point of view is still among us. But if we realize that S. Paul, with all his subjective mysticism, had a consciousness no less strong of the claims of the Body, and how little reference—if, indeed, there is any—we find in the New Testament to the

mere individual standing alone before God and apart from the Body, it cannot fail to make a considerable difference to our attitude towards many things. And the drift of opinion, in speculative and political regions, will bear out the change.

III

I HAVE endeavoured to show in the last two lectures that the hardest form of Individualism does not exist in the New Testament—that the scriptural idea of a man in a state of salvation (σωζόμενος) is that of a person called and admitted into a society—ἐν Χριστῷ—living in a certain atmosphere or environment, and not conceived in any solitary or exclusive sense. He is not in what I have ventured to call a triangular relation—to the Church in one direction, and to God in another,—but his membership of the Church is the elementary fact which makes the true relation to God possible. Nor is the Society conceived as an intermediary which keeps the individual off from God, but as the normal condition of real and direct access. I propose, in the present lecture, to say something of the history and

sources and associations of the Individualistic theory.

1. In the first place, it will be necessary to touch shortly on the conception of an individual obtaining in the philosophical world in the early days of Church history. We saw that there is no clear theory of personal being in the New Testament; the same may be said of the Greek philosophers, from the earliest days to the time of which we are thinking. There were two main reasons why this should be so.

a. The political conditions of Greece had given countenance to a view of the individual by which the State almost entirely absorbed him. The claim of the individual as against the State was hardly recognized at all. Plato, for instance, had made Socrates deny the right of the individual to be happy provided only the State was happy as a whole.[1] And the Science of Politics, as Aristotle conceives it, decides what forms of knowledge each man is to pursue, and to what extent, and many other points which we should regard as more properly

[1] Plat. Rep., p. 420.

belonging to the individual's own sphere. And this indifference was due to the same cause which we noticed in operation among the Jews. Man had been, at first, regarded mainly from the tribal point of view—that is, as a member of a society and not in his individual capacity at all; and it was only by degrees that the individual emerged as a separate being, possessing inherent and distinguishable rights. The problem in its modern sense was never before the ancient world. The Stoics, it is true, developed a strong sense of individuality, and claimed, under the oppressive tyranny of the Roman emperors, individual liberty of thought. But their emphatic insistence on reason as the fundamental principle of all action and history led them, at the same time, to conceive the individual as a part of a rational whole. The whole world was, to their minds, a single system, in which individuals had their places; but this did not involve rights as against the whole. An inclusive rational order was the true idea of the world.

b. The philosophical tendencies of that time

lay in a direction which was not suitable for the doctrine of the individual. The Greek philosophers had taken what is called an objective view of the world; that is to say, they had looked at it from the outside, and endeavoured to find objective distinctions between the true and the false—the real and the unreal. On the whole the tendency of the most conspicuous thinkers was to seek for reality in the universal, and to treat the particular and individual as having departed just by reason of their particularity from the highest type of reality. Hence the particular embodiment of humanity in the individual was somewhat of a difficulty; or perhaps, we ought rather to say, would have been a difficulty if it had been really faced. Again, the Greek philosopher approached the soul as being a part of nature. It was in no way restricted to men. The possession of soul began with the lowest stages of organic life, and the distinction between them and higher kinds lay in the fact that these last had new capacities without losing the simpler powers of lower organisms. Thus Aristotle

speaks of three parts of the soul in man : (1) a vegetative part, by which he means the principle of organic growth, and this is shared by all organisms whatever ; (2) a perceptive part—the region of consciousness, such as seems to distinguish animals from plants ; (3) the rational part, which in man supervenes on and controls the others. You will see that this is in no sense a definition of, or even an attempt at defining, personality, it is simply a classification of observed psychical phenomena. Assuming that soul runs through the wide organic world, it manifests itself in the various ways noted above. In two places in Eth. ix., x., he speaks of the Reason as being the man in the strictest and truest sense ; but the Reason is also the universal side of man, that which survives the material body, and is (probably) merged in the universal soul of God.[1]

With the exception of the Stoic view already referred to, I am not aware of any philosophical attempt to bring the individual into clear theoretical treatment till Plotinus. His

[1] Cf. De An., III. v.

way of explaining the relation of the individual and the world-soul is not particularly satisfactory,[1] but it is important to notice that by his time there is a strong feeling of the necessity of retaining the reality and certainty of individual experience; in other words, the question, If the universal is the truly real, what is the nature of individual experience? had arisen in his mind.[2] Plotinus retains the idea of the self in contradistinction to the world, and to its own particular acts. Thus the idea of determinism is rejected, the notion that we are only parts of a whole which operates independently of us, so that our initiation is only apparent and unreal. Again, it is important to note that Plotinus offered a new analysis of the act of thought. Aristotle had distinguished in any act of thought two elements—the process of thinking (*νόησις*), and the object to which it was directed (*νοητὸν*). Plotinus sees that this involves a confusion between the subject exercising the act, and the process itself; and insists on the distinction of three elements—

[1] Enn., IV. ix. 5. [2] Enn., III. i. 4, 8.

the subject, his act, and the object of the act.[1] It is noticeable also that Plotinus grasps with great strength the idea of the self as an inclusive unity: he sees that the many powers exercised by man are held together in each individual by the self, ἃ τῷ ἑνὶ ὥσπερ δεσμῷ συνέχεται.[2] This point of view becomes of considerable importance in another connexion.

It is worth while to bear in mind these few facts concerning the philosophical position of some Greek thinkers, as regards Personality, because I think it shows how very unlikely it would be that we should find Individualism of the sort I indicated in the first lecture in Apostolic times. Plotinus lived from about 204–270 A.D., and he has only just begun to ask the question, In what sense and within what limits is the individual distinct? I do not say that men had no sense of their own individuality: that would be absurd. They lived and acted as individuals just as we do. But both on the political and metaphysical sides the hard negative idea of the Self was absent. It was

[1] Enn., V. vi. 6; and cf. VI. ix. 6. [2] Enn., VI. ix. 1.

assumed that an individual was a member of a society in which his own life was developed, and without which his powers and the fulness of his life would have been seriously impaired. And one reason why this seemed so natural and obvious was that the metaphysical question was scarcely under discussion at all.

2. We must now proceed to consider briefly the question of the sources and associations of the Individualistic doctrine. I venture to think that an articulate doctrine of Personality has been one of the conspicuous results of theological discussion; and that there are two controversies in particular which have been the cause of its development. These are the controversy over the Two-fold Nature of our Lord, and the attempt to formulate the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity.

We are fortunately unconcerned with a large portion of the long and anxious controversy as to our Lord's Nature. Two points must be recalled at the outset. It will be remembered that the difficulty which had, at first, been felt in regard to the question turned, not on the

Lord's Divine Nature, but on the reality of His Humanity. Docetism, in its various forms, was an attempt to deal with the question by accounting for the human manifestations as appearance or phantasm. Further, the result of the Arian controversy had been to raise a new point of difficulty—to vindicate the truth of the Divine Nature, and yet leave it wholly uncertain how this was consistent with the truth of the Humanity. It is manifest that the solution of this question would be seriously affected by any theory which might prevail as to the nature of man—its essential and accidental attributes. Thus one thesis (maintained by Apollinarius) was that the Divine Logos took the place in our Lord of the human νοῦς, or reason. The condemnation of this view depended on the principle that νοῦς, or reason, is necessary to the completeness of human nature, and that if our Lord was without this His Humanity was incomplete, and humanity altogether imperfectly redeemed. We had occasion, a few pages above, to mention a phrase of Aristotle's

which seemed to identify the personality with the reason : this will show how easily and naturally a heresy like that of Apollinarius might grow up, and what sort of question was involved in it. The decision of the Church meant that a new distinction was taking shape in people's minds : the distinction between the individual, and the powers of action and thought which he sustains and which are similar to those sustained by others. But the distinction does not become entirely explicit till the close of the Monothelite controversy. The Monothelites identified the will with the personality, and therefore maintained that in the Incarnate there was but one will. To this view, with various modifications, which we need not stop to discuss, the same measure was applied as to Apollinarianism. A distinction was again drawn between the personality and the nature. It was argued that human nature is incomplete without will, and that the Word of God assumed humanity in its completeness—that is, with all its powers, therefore with will as well as the others. Thus

the formula was finally and explicitly asserted, One person in Two natures. The distinction is made with great elaboration of detail by S. John of Damascus, in the treatise, "De Duabus Voluntatibus."[1] Later on in the same treatise the personal element seems to be identified with the character,[2] but the general conception seems to be that of a living being or force which has certain characteristic modes of exercise. The possession of these is conceived as being essential to the completeness of the nature in question; to use the analogy of the body, the various characteristic powers of the self are like limbs which are necessary to completeness: but the distinctive character displayed by each individual—the distinctive bearing and use of the limbs — is due to the presence and activity of the person. It must be confessed that this distinction, valid as it is

[1] See especially Ch. iii.: *Φύσις* is said to be *τὸ κοινὸν καὶ ἀόριστον*, while *ὑπόστασις* is *τὸ μερικὸν—τὸ καθ' ἑαυτὸ ὑφεστὰς, οὐσία τις μετὰ συμβεβηκότων, τήν καθ' αὐτὸ ὕπαρξιν ἰδιαιρέτως καὶ ἀποτετμημένως τῶν λοιπῶν ὑποστάσεων, ἐνεργείᾳ καὶ πράγματι κληρωσαμένη.*

[2] Cf. ch. xxiii.: *Ἡ μὲν θέλησις τούτεστιν ἡ θελητικὴ δύναμις καὶ αὐτὸ τό ἁπλῶς θέλειν φυσικὸν, τὸ δὲ θελητὸν, τούτεστι τὸ τοιῶς δὲ θέλειν, γνωμικὸν καὶ ὑποστατικὸν.*

in essence, may easily be pressed to absurdity. The person and the nature alike tend to become mere abstractions; the nature tends to be treated as a concrete thing, existing alone, and waiting, as it were, to be picked up by the personality. Such language could not, of course, be seriously pressed; and it is unfortunate that the Incarnation has been sometimes interpreted in this fashion.[1] But it is important to note that there is a real distinction between the personal and universal elements in man, and that it was brought into clear light by the theological discussion. An idea which was not clearly present to the philosophic mind in earlier days was thus defined and elaborated for the first time.

Before leaving this subject it is necessary to consider briefly the contribution of S. Augustine to the matter in hand. It is noticeable that S. Augustine's doctrine of the individual self appears in connexion with his presentation of Trinitarian theology; his analysis of the human personality occurs where he is trying to find

[1] Cf. Wilberforce, The Doctine of the Incarnation, ch. iii.

means of expressing, in terms more or less approachable by human reason, the mysterious doctrine of the Three in One.

S. Augustine conceives of the higher side of human nature as consisting of three powers or types of action : to which he gives the names —memoria, intelligentia, voluntas.[1] By *memoria* he means not merely the recollection of past facts, but that continuity of self-consciousness upon which the recollection of past facts depends.[2] This self-consciousness finds perpetual realization in thought and will: thought, by which the mind becomes an object to itself, and will, by which it approves or disapproves, or, in stronger language, loves or hates those ideas which come before it. Thus the emphasis in S. Augustine's psychology is on the reflex operation of the mind upon itself. The three powers—memoria, intelligentia, and voluntas—exist and operate within the unity of the self; but they are not separate from it; the unity is in a sense conditioned by their fulness and freedom of movement.

[1] De Trin., XIV. xiv. 18. [2] Ibid., XIV. xi. 14.

It is unnecessary to trace out the special use made of this theory in the exposition of Trinitarianism; we need only mark its importance in connexion with our present question. It is obvious at first sight that it avoids the difficulty which was pointed out as incidental to the theory of S. John of Damascus. It draws no sharp contrast between the self and the powers exercised by it—as if the powers could be, as it were, lying out dead and inoperative like tools waiting to be picked up and used. Instead of this, to S. Augustine's mind the unity of which every one seems to be conscious is seen, on careful observation, to be constituted by the interchange of three modes of action, each of which is necessary to the others. Moreover, the Greek view tends towards an undue hardening of the individual as against other individuals: and its prevalence has been part of the cause which has led to the Individualism under discussion at the present moment. Whereas Augustine, by his special treatment of the relation of voluntas and amor, places the individual at once in his due position towards God and man. The true self,

when rightly in action, knows things as they are, and conceives of them according to a true scale of desire—that is, is brought to perfection both in intelligence and will, knows truth and desires or loves rightly. Thus the ideal of manhood is, *ut se ipsam cogitet, et secundum suam naturam vivat, id est, ut secundum suam naturam ordinari appetat, sub eo scilicet cui subdenda est, supra ea, quibus præponenda est.*[1] Its ideal condition is not to be shut in within itself, but is throughout involved in relations both to God and man.[2]

It is manifest that Christianity, by its doctrine of individual salvation, and the equality of men from this point of view, had in it the elements of a strong Individualism, quite apart from

[1] De Trin., X. v. 7.

[2] It is unfortunate that the influence of S. Augustine has been confined of late years mainly to his views on Predestination, and that the psychological side of his philosophy has been largely ignored. It would be easy to show how seriously the so-called Augustinian view of Predestination is modified when taken in connexion with the Augustinian Psychology. Modern Calvinism combines the severest Augustinian Predestination doctrine with a narrow Individualistic Psychology, and thus adds a touch of arbitrariness to the idea of the Divine Election which is quite absent from S. Augustine's theory.

doctrinal considerations; and it will be necessary to call attention to some tendencies working in this direction.

It is perfectly clear that S. Paul had before his mind the danger of Antinomianism. Men who had been recently freed from the bondage of the Law would be inclined to emancipate themselves from law of every kind and trust to the certainty of salvation which they felt within them. Then there were the prophets, who had clearly caused difficulty at Corinth. They were certain of the revelation made to themselves, and had no doubt about proclaiming it, no sense of order or reserve in regard to others. Hence it becomes his duty to warn these people that the spirits of prophets are subject to the prophets, and that God is not a God of *ἀκαταστασία*, but of order. The liberty of prophesying had to be restrained in the interest of the whole body. The necessity for these regulations points to the existence of an extravagant self-assertion against the order of the Church, for which a superficial justification might probably have been found in S. Paul's

own teaching. These tendencies developed to a serious point in later days under various influences. Thus we have, at an early stage, the Montanists, who set their own subjective certainty of inspiration against the slower and more prosaic order of the Church. They claimed to be the immediate recipients of an inspiration from the Holy Spirit, and that in them had been fulfilled our Lord's Promise of the coming of a Comforter, who should carry on and complete His Revelation. In like manner those who suffered martyrdom or were under sentence for the sake of the faith claimed to administer the discipline of the Church, on the strength of their own exceptional position. Here again, in a different shape and in different circumstances, we have the assertion of individual rights and an individual position as paramount. The collective judgment of the Church was to retire before individual certainty, or at least individual caprice.

In the eleventh century the right to absolve was definitely claimed for pious monks, who had forsaken the world, irrespective of their

ordination, by a monk named Symeon. His letter περὶ ἐξομολογήσεως is printed among the works of S. John of Damascus,[1] and has recently been edited, with introductions, etc., by a German scholar, Dr. Holl. According to Symeon, a man who has sinned can only reconcile himself with God by means of one who is φίλος Θεοῦ. Symeon treats the sinner as standing quite alone, apart from his intermediary, but does not, apparently, think it possible that he could reconcile himself to God. The only person capable of sustaining this mediatorial relation is the monk who has from the hands of God τὸ ἔνδυμα τῆς μετανοίας. The evidence for his theory he finds in the miracles which have been ascribed to saintly monks. The setting of all this belongs to an age with which we are unfamiliar. But the doctrine reminds us of modern theories—of the view that any pious man has the right as such to administer spiritual things, quite apart from any special call or ordination.

These fragmentary references will be sufficient

[1] Ed. Lequien, vol. i. pp. 598, *seq.*

to indicate the presence in various connexions of a form of Individualism comparable in its completeness with more modern types of the same thing. It will not be maintained by any one that they represent the main drift of Church opinion, or that they take very attractive forms. But still, they existed, and by their existence indicate a tendency of thought which might easily come to be more popular. This result—the real history of the evolution of the modern idea of the individual—is enacted in the course of the ages preceding the Reformation.

As before, the theory of the individual, the conception held of the individual man, depends upon current experience in politics and philosophy. The Greeks had started from the experience of the city-state, and had dealt with the matter from the point of view of a philosophy which tended to see reality in the universal. The mediæval thinkers approached the question, with the experience of the universal Empire and Church; while their philosophy, as time went on, tended to move away from the old position which had descended

to them, through devious paths, from Plato, towards a position which was not widely distinguished from Empiricism.

We will first consider the more philosophical antecedents of the Individualistic theory. To do this it is necessary to refer briefly to the controversy between Nominalism and Realism. Every one knows that this controversy is concerned with what is called the reality of universals. When a general name is used, what exactly is meant? The Realists argued that there is no name without some thing corresponding: hence that there must be some reality answering to the general names "man," "tree," etc., just as there is a reality answering to the singular terms Socrates, Anselm, etc. The extreme Nominalists argued that there is no such universal reality, actual or possible. It is all a matter of direct observation. We observe things outside us, and when they resemble one another we apply the same name to them; but the name is "mere breath;" it does not imply or refer to any concrete reality. It does not, at first sight, seem as if this controversy could be

of any serious importance, but a moment's consideration will show that it had very serious consequences. If there are no universals, it must be true that there are no absolutely binding laws, no absolutely certain truths. The primal moral laws must be explained as the positive commands of a God, who could with equal right and justice have willed the exact opposite of all of them. There can be no absolute laws of reason; that will be true for every man which each man observes. These are two very natural results of the extreme Nominalist position, and there is no doubt that some of those who held this position were not afraid to draw them.[1]

Further, it is clear that Nominalism depended in large measure upon simple observation. The objection to universals did not affect their convenience for the purposes of thought, but depended on the impossibility of finding such a thing in existence. The triangle which we see is always *either* equilateral, isosceles, or scalene; the universal triangle is *neither* equi-

[1] Cf. Maitland, "Political Theories of the Middle Age," p. 172.

lateral, isosceles, or scalene—a thing never met with in experience or fully conceivable by imagination. So it might easily be argued that the real man is the individual who meets the senses, and who is to himself a centre of experience in every form. A state would thus tend to appear as an aggregate of such individuals, and the social or universal aspects of man would tend to become accidental, due to the exercise of the convenient processes of reflexion and imagination upon the mere individuals of experience. In the earlier period of the Middle Ages, Realism was certainly the prevalent philosophy; but after the time of Scotus, Nominalism virtually triumphed, largely through the instrumentality of Ockham, and this change in philosophical attitude synchronized with the changes which flowed from the political conditions of the time. To these changes we must now turn.

We must note, first, that the Greek conception of the city-state, though it implied a high degree of unity among the citizens, was an extraordinarily narrow view of human life.

The citizens were a body of privileged persons; outside the limits of the city the citizen might fairly expect to find himself not only among foreigners, but among enemies. It was owing to this limited view of the political society that it was possible to consider such a question as the proper size and population of an ideal city; being privileged persons, their numbers could be limited, at any rate in theory, like those of a club. The Roman Empire itself was based on a similar idea. It had come into being through conquest; the citizens of one city had gradually extended their sway over the various nations of the world, and, at the time of the foundation of the Empire, they (with the citizens of a limited number of cities, and some isolated individuals definitely admitted to the franchise) stood out as a privileged class over against a mass of unprivileged subjects.[1] But

[1] A curious survival of the sense of the civic character of the Roman Empire is found in the claim of the people of Rome to dispose of the Empire on a vacancy (cf. Maitland, *op. cit.*, p. 41, and notes 146–150). May we not say that existing Papal claims are another survival of the same sort—"the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire sitting crowned upon the grave thereof"? Hobbes, "Leviathan," ch. xlvii.

the growth of the power of the Emperor, and the practical disappearance of his republican associations, led necessarily to changes in this respect. The franchise was more widely extended, until Justinian made the whole world Roman citizens. Also the inevitable intercourse with foreigners which had resulted from their conquest, and the necessity of dealing with them on some principle of law, had given rise to the idea of certain rights as being inherent in the natural man ; and thus the doctrine of a Jus Gentium was evolved. This, combined with the Greek notion, derived mainly from Stoic philosophy, of a law of nature representing the self-expression of the Divine Reason in the world, produced the idea of something like a code or system of natural law, prior, and perhaps superior, to the particular enactments of special codes.

By the time we reach the Middle Ages we have to do with two powers claiming universal sovereignty—the Empire on the secular side, and the Church. It was the conflict between these powers which forced forward the question of

the right of either to supreme rule. Either one alone would have seemed calculated to satisfy mediæval conceptions. The method by which the mediæval mind dealt with its experience—starting from data and articulating them formally—would have found, we might have thought, an admirable field for exercise in the Empire or the Church. The Emperor could easily be, and was represented as the supreme head of the secular state, from whom the whole order of kings and subordinate officers descended in due gradation; a similar position was ascribed to the Pope. But there were two main difficulties before the theorists: they had to deal with a dual system, of Empire and Church, and this meant the need of a delimitation of frontier; and they had to face the fact that neither Pope nor Emperor did his work well. It is possible that if it had not been for weakness and ambition and gross abuses, the difficulty might have been solved in some such way as in Dante's "De Monarchia." To Dante's mind, both powers were ultimately ordained of God, though resting also on the

will of men ; each had his special functions, from confusion of which all the mischief came. But Dante's method required ideal working ; it was not suited to a condition of things such as is represented, for instance, by the Papal schism. We cannot here enter upon the long history of the discussion between Pope and Emperor, between the supporters of the absolute power of the Pope and those who sought to subordinate him to a council. We can only give one or two illustrations of the effect of the experience of the day on those who reflected.

Dante had bemoaned the Donation of Constantine as the source of endless evil.[1] Wycliffe was for depriving the spirituality of all temporal power, and probably also of all temporal possessions. He drew a sharp distinction between the spiritual and the secular ; but he also gives a religious significance to all authority or rule. The right to rule is a grace from God, and therefore cannot belong to any one in mortal sin, or any one who is not predestinated to the favour of God. He

[1] Inf. xix. 115–117.

admits no hierarchical order in things, but affirms that the righteous man has, by virtue of his righteousness, complete title to possession over everything in the world. From the universal claim of each to all things, Hobbes deduced a state of anarchy; Wycliffe argues to Communism. It is true that Wycliffe sought to avoid the anarchical results of this principle, deciding that the righteous man ought even to obey tyrants; but it is clear that his theories would lead easily into anarchy, the State and Church being simply associations of mere individuals, directly related to God, and having rights which on secular levels must necessarily conflict.

Wycliffe's methods were almost inevitably condemned; they affected too many people to be lightly treated. But there was another view, rising out of the discussion of the right of Pope or Emperor to command, which no less certainly undermined their powers.

More and more decisively, as time goes on, the idea emerges of power committed to a ruler through some form of contract by the

individuals composing his state—that is, the notion of the necessity of social union to the completeness of individual life tends to recede, and mankind is conceived instead as a horde of atomic individuals accidentally organized for purposes of convenience into the form of a State—or Church. The question of the right to depose or imprison or execute a ruler is discussed with various solutions: on the one side it is argued that the ruler holds office precariously at the will of the people; on the other, it is maintained that his right is absolute and divine. It was the former solution that commended itself to the Reformers. They stood on the natural rights of man, they claimed the right to deal with a misdemeaning ruler, and saw no necessity in any form of government. It is easy to see how there comes of this the thesis on the religious side that membership in a society is "in no way an indispensable condition to the fulness of spiritual life" and may be a positively mischievous element.

It has already been pointed out that these political discussions synchronized with the

virtual triumph of Nominalism, that this form of thought rests great weight on direct and particular details of experience as opposed to universal or general ideas. Individualism has a natural affinity with this sort of philosophy. Each individual is conscious of himself and his own experiences; he seems to be complete in himself, and his external relations seem accidental. But Nominalism—Empiricism—whatever name is used for it—has in it the seeds of Materialism and Scepticism and has continually developed in those directions. In like manner Individualism has in it the seeds of political and ecclesiastical anarchy; and this fact soon became obvious after the Reformation had once begun. Round the serious and thoughtful Reformers, whose minds were really stirred by the frightful abuses of the Roman system, and were really in revolt against a monstrous tyranny, arose sects or companies of persons who claimed the indefeasible right of each individual to determine the fact and the method of his own salvation by means of the light of his own unaided interpretation of Scripture.

This was the main principle of Anabaptism. It reappears in many of the Puritan sects, and was one of the main objects of Hooker's polemic.

A fatal objection to it, as well as to its diametrical opposite, Romanism, would seem to be its excessive simplicity. It is easiest to argue that the supreme power is divine, and therefore must necessarily be absolute and autocratic: or to argue that because autocratic power is indefensible therefore each individual has an equal right to his opinion and equal freedom of self-determination. But both theories are incapable of unmodified translation into practice. The one, which would be absolute slavery if carried out, is necessarily modified in fact by all sorts of practical expedients. The pure individualism fails by reason of the absolute practical impossibility of the total isolation of men which it theoretically demands. It has been the work of the more stable societies which have diverged from Rome to find what looks like a *via media* between these extremes, but what is in reality a more

accurate expression than either of them of all the facts concerning the status of the individual soul in regard to God. The idea that the Church holds off the soul from God, if it means anything, is an assertion of pure Individualism in religion. It has been argued here that it is not scriptural: though there are phrases in Scripture which, taken apart from their context, might seem to justify it. And in the extremely brief sketch in the present chapter, it is attempted to indicate the conditions leading to the development of what I venture to think a thoroughly unscriptural idea. If the facts are approximately as presented here, it will be admitted that Individualism has no right whatever to be treated as an axiom, and that some popular utterances about Church order will have to be seriously modified in the interests of truth.

IV.

THE previous chapters have been concerned with the question of the necessity of an outward order in the Church of Christ. The notion of such order is continually assailed on the ground that it forms a barrier to impede the free intercourse of the soul and God. It has been attempted to show that this view, though it has the support of many of the most deeply religious of Christian men, is not based upon any sure warrant of Holy Scripture. The outward Society is the natural atmosphere for the individual religious life.

The purpose of the present chapter is to apply somewhat similar methods to the doctrine of the Sacraments ; *i.e.* to endeavour to remove certain preliminary objections, which are frequently felt and urged to the sacramental system. Of course, some of the contentions put

forward under the other head will hold good for our present question. If the extreme and narrow conception of the Individual fails, one of those *a priori* difficulties which we noticed at the outset in regard to the Sacraments, disappears too. If the individual loses nothing of his individuality, but gains in fulness of life by entering into a religious society or atmosphere, there is reason to think that his religious acts may be achieved with closer analogy to the acts of his ordinary life than some popular theory anticipates; that is, that they may be naturally expressed in some external form or ritual: it will no longer be necessary that they should be confined within the man's private consciousness, or limited to the expressive capacity of words. And, as was pointed out at the beginning, there is no doubt that Christ ordained certain outward observances for certain occasions.

Our first task will be, then, to gather what instruction we can as to the scriptural idea of a spiritual religion, for there is no doubt whatever that the faith of Christ is intended to be in the fullest sense spiritual.

It is probably true to say that there is no sign in the Old Testament of any incompatibility between spiritual religion and material expression. When the author of Wisdom writes: "For a corruptible body weigheth down the soul," and assigns to this cause the failure of the hopes and aspirations of men, he shows a sign of the influence of Greek philosophy, and does not speak with the voice of Hebrew religion. When the Psalmists lament the inoperative character of sacrifices and burnt offerings, it is not primarily because they are material, but because they do not, in point of fact, avail to take away the consciousness of sin. God does not need them, seeing that all the beasts of the forest are His,[2] nor do they produce the contrite heart which God does need.[3] In this they refer to their experience, and do not offer any explanation of the fact. They know well the weakness and transitoriness of human nature, but do not see in that a reason why communion with God should be impossible. Nor is it easy to say in what form the

[1] Wis. ix. 15. [2] Ps. i. 7–15. Ps. ii. 17.

Old Testament writers did expect communion with God to be effected. With their indefinite conception of immortality, it is impossible to maintain that they expected death to remove the barrier.[1] The whole question, for them, is a question of ethical fitness, not of metaphysical possibility. And it would probably be true to assert generally of the Old Testament that any method which would remove *sin* would make intercourse possible with God, and that, for this purpose, it would be a matter of indifference whether a man was in the body or not, since this was not the real point of the question.

Thus it was, therefore, that when Christ came the question of the relation of spirit and matter was not the one that pressed and was difficult. It did not seem impossible that God should speak through Jesus, just as He had spoken through earlier prophets: if our Lord had put Himself on the level of the ancient prophets and claimed no more, there would

[1] The uncertain interpretation of Job xix. 25–27, and of Ps. xvi. 10, makes it impossible to rest much weight upon these passages.

have been little trouble as to His fundamental demands. He does not, however, confine Himself within these limits: but still, in the growth of opinion about Him on the side of the Apostles and His enemies, the metaphysical question is not raised. He is condemned for claiming to forgive sins; and He is condemned because He made Himself equal with God. The Jews maintain that there is a great gulf fixed between God and man in nature and prerogatives, and they take it as an axiom that such language as Christ's involves a breach of this fundamental distinction, and is blasphemous. And Christ condemns them, because they do not give due weight to His sinless life and wondrous works, but, in their anxiety to maintain their own position intact, ascribe His works to the powers of darkness.[1] That is, Christ seems to imply that the question of Revelation through humanity turns largely on ethical considerations. On the other side, the Apostles grew naturally into a belief in the real Divinity

[1] Cf. S. Mark iii. 28–30; S. John viii. 46, 47; x. 32–38; xv. 22–25.

of their Master without any sign of difficulty on the ground of His human life. The position from which the mere fact of concrete human life would have led to trouble and discussion, does not appear to have been before their minds. They preached of necessity that which they had seen and heard.

It is clear that the establishment of this belief must have carried certain consequences with it. It would be impossible that any one who had fully grasped the Incarnation doctrine could fall into the state of mind to which matter and all that is material are unworthy of God. Such a person would be prepared for the use of material vehicles, not merely to symbolize, but to convey spiritual effects. And that is the principle of the sacramental system. The material side of the Sacrament is not merely a suggestive and picturesque presentation of a spiritual idea which is wholly apart from it: the spiritual effect is, in some sense, conveyed by it, so that in normal circumstances the effect is conditional on the occurrence of the material event. This was certainly the principle on

which we find the Apostles acting. When Cornelius and his companions receive the Holy Ghost as a result of Peter's preaching, this is not held to be a reason for dispensing with Baptism, but an evidence that it might now be administered. S. Peter was clearly doubtful before about admitting Gentiles: but this made him certain that Baptism—the normal sacramental mode of entry into the Church—might rightly be performed. Again, we read, in Acts xiii., that at Antioch there was a concourse of prophets and elders, and that "as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." We do not know how this intimation was conveyed. But the effect is noticeable. Before the two missionaries depart on their journey they are set apart by solemn laying on of hands. It could easily have been argued, one might have thought, that so solemn and precise a call needed only to be obeyed, and did not need any physical process, such as laying-on of hands, to complete it. But this was not the

view of the earliest Christians: they were so fully accustomed to the idea of sacramental ordinances, that they naturally express their corporate spiritual purposes in this form.

Before leaving this part of the subject, it will be well to turn to one or two passages which seem at any rate to conflict with the doctrine apparently underlying the practice of the earliest ages. They are phrases quoted in the interest of what is called purely spiritual religion, and it is important to see how far they carry us.

(1) In the dialogue with the woman of Samaria, the old question of the proper place of worship is brought before our Lord. "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, but ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Our Lord, in His answer, begins by explaining that the era of local worship is over. "Neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father." Then He points out the real difference between Jewish and Samaritan worship: the former is on the right lines of religious development, the latter is a blind movement to an uncertain object. Then he

turns to the future and marks the characteristics of the true worship to come: it will be in spirit and truth—a character which will belong to it as being the right worship of a God Who is Spirit. In old days men had thought that worship meant going to some special place where the deity worshipped could best be approached. Even the Jews had held this, though their religion was in the direct line of salvation. That view had to pass away, in the light of the knowledge that God is Spirit, and therefore not tied to place. Thus our Lord's phrase consecrates, as it were, the whole universe as a place of worship—claims the whole for God. But the words, "in spirit and truth," must be taken positively rather than negatively: they command rather than forbid. They demand that the object of worship shall be rightly conceived—in truth, as opposed to the vague and imperfect imaginings of the Samaritans; and that the worship shall be a true spiritual communion between the worshipper and God—in spirit, as opposed, for instance, to a mechanical observance of external customs such as was

characteristic of Judaism. Thus while they command worship of a particular kind, these words in no way forbid such forms of religious expression as the Church has historically adopted. If it were true that spiritual worship is incompatible with material expression, they would forbid the worship of the Church, and much else besides. But this extreme position will hardly be maintained: and if not, the words must be taken as dealing with manner rather than with method.

(2) There is a contrast which occurs more than once in S. Paul's writing between the Spirit and the Letter. This is usually taken to refer to two different methods of interpreting a given document. Thus we speak of fulfilling the letter of an Act of Parliament, and defying its spirit, when by ingenious devices the purpose of the Act is set aside under the cover of strict legality: and the contrast implies, as has been said, two different attitudes towards the single document or form of words. But great confusion is caused if we apply this interpretation straight to S. Paul. We

have to remember, in dealing with S. Paul, that, when he wrote, the New Testament was not in existence; and the most salient point of distinction between the old religion and the new was that the one rested upon a written book, and the other had no written book. The phrase, the letter, then meant all that intractable externality which S. Paul felt so strongly about the written Law: and the letter killed, not because it was interpreted literally and applied with endless casuistical ingenuity; but because it was the letter, the outward written thing which declared what the Law was, but supplied no inward force adequate for the keeping of it. An interpretation of the Law such as Christ's, in the Sermon on the Mount, would not have made it kill any the less: what was wanted was the mission of the Spirit. Circumstances, especially the length of time since the first days have brought the New Testament into something of the position of the old Law; it is the authoritative book of Christianity, as the Law was of Judaism. S. Paul's language does not forbid this, nor does it imply a right of free

interpretation apart from all effort at exactness or accuracy: the contrast is between a purely external code, and a condition in which the indwelling of the Spirit moulds the life from within into harmony with the Law of God. It does not necessarily forbid the use of ordinances, but it would certainly forbid a mechanical use of ordinances, even though they were not necessarily mechanical in their character.

It is, perhaps, not a matter for surprise that there is no full discussion in the Gospels or Epistles of S. Paul of the general relations of spirit and matter. There is no uncertainty left in our minds, as we read S. Paul, as to the prevalence and meaning of the Sacraments; but the allusions to them are in the form of allusions to practices well known and not needing explanation; they are not discussed fundamentally, like some of the points of doctrine which emerge in the course of S. Paul's Epistles. But we might fairly have anticipated that there would be some such discussion in the Epistle to the Hebrews. This Epistle was

written, apparently, to persons who had not fully grasped the significance of Christ's work in regard to the Old Covenant. The fall of Jerusalem, and consequent cessation of the old worship, or the apprehension of these things, was causing serious disturbance in the minds of those who had been accustomed to the old order. They seemed to be losing what was of great religious value. The author of the Epistle shows, in answer to this difficulty, that the old order had not the attribute of permanence: that it was avowedly temporary, and that the benefits obtained by it were only typical of an effect which could not be achieved by it. The Sacrifice of Christ was complete, and therefore incapable of repetition or rival: it had done all that the old sacrifices and other observances only shadowed forth ineffectively. This seems to be the central point of his contrast between the old and the new. If the cause of the failure had been that the older sacrifices were material and Christ's was not, that the whole Jewish dispensation dealt with material emblems and Christ's did not, he would surely have said so.

But this is not what he does say. He tells us that the blood of goats and calves could never take away sin : but this failure was due, not to the fact that it was blood, but to the fact that it was not the Blood of Christ. Christ has performed the one only Sacrifice, but this was a material act occurring in the outward world, at a point in time ; and part of the efficacy of it lay in the fact that it was not a purely spiritual transaction, but was achieved by One Who came into our conditions for the purpose, and "learned obedience by the things He suffered." It is not acts done in the flesh by material means that the author condemns ; he sets aside a certain system of such acts as inefficacious.

Teaching such as this is, so far as it goes, mainly critical of what had gone before. In regard to the present, and the condition of the people who had received Christianity, we have one or two very interesting and important phrases. Christians are said to have become *μέτοχοι τοῦ Χριστοῦ* (iii. 14), to be God's house (*οὗ οἶκός ἐσμεν ἡμεῖς, ἐὰν τὴν παῤῥησίαν καὶ τὸ καύχημα τῆς ἐλπίδος μέχρι τέλους βεβαίαν*

κατάσχωμεν· iii. 6), to have come to Mount Sion and the City of the Living God (xii. 22), all of which phrases recall, but are not identical with, the language of other New Testament writers in regard to the Christian Society.

There is little said about the method in which the new condition of things is made effectual on individuals; and allusions to contemporary practices and history are rare. There is, however, one passage which seems to describe the contents of the elementary teaching of the Church. In ch. vi. 1, the author says: "Let us leave the word of the beginning of Christ, and pass on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and faith towards God, teaching of baptisms and laying-on of hands, rising again from the dead, and eternal judgment." The context seems to show that these subjects—repentance, faith, baptism, and laying-on of hands, resurrection, and judgment—formed the elementary teaching without which membership of the Church was impossible. For in the next verse the author says that those who have fallen

away cannot be renewed again to repentance, *i.e.* brought to the position in which the faith was introduced to the catechumen. And it is not easy to say what the higher teaching was, which the author found himself unable to bestow upon the Hebrews. It is not, however, necessary for our purpose to discuss this, seeing that the allusions in ch. xiii. show that the higher teaching, whatever it was, does not exclude the duty of assembling together for purposes (apparently) of edification and worship, and partaking of the Eucharist. We may urge, therefore, that the contrast present in the mind of the author of the Epistle is not so much between ordinances and no ordinances, as between ordinances which carried no spiritual effect, and ordinances which are the expression of a spiritually effective society. If this be true, his attitude would be that which is normal in Holy Scripture.

At this point it may be well to add a few short remarks upon the sources of the very prevalent opinion that there is something unworthy of a true spiritual religion in the use of

material vehicles. It has been indirectly made plain that the Hebrew writers, whose works form the Canon of the Old and New Testaments, had little or no interest in metaphysic. They took the world as they found it, and though they were keenly interested in ethical problems, they did not concern themselves with any analysis of their experience. But the Greeks, as was pointed out in Chapter III., did ask themselves fundamental questions as to the nature of things. It is important here to grasp as clearly as may be one important distinction which the Greek philosophers observed, and which lies at the root of all their thought, and of all philosophical thought which dates from them. It is the distinction between *sense* and *reason*, *αἴσθησις* and *νοῦς*. *First*, let us distinguish the terms. Sense includes all the experiences which come directly through the senses: the sounds we hear at any given moment, the sight we see at any given moment and the like belong to the region of sense. On the other hand, the general names which we give to things, names which apply indifferently

to all the instances of a given class, belong to thought or reason. *Next* let us notice an important difference between the objects which appeal respectively to sense and reason. The objects which we experience through the senses are bound up under the restrictions of time, space, and matter, and they are in a constant condition of change. The objects of reason, the ideas by which we interpret and come to know the world of sense are less liable to these restrictions. To take an illustration, for clearness' sake. When a clock strikes five every one who is within range hears its five strokes. Each sound falls singly on the ear, and each is, one may say, a unique historical event. Each is different from the others, and ceases to be before the next begins. The clock will strike again, but those particular strokes can never exist again. To an uninstructed person, or to an animal, the sounds would be mere sounds—they would enter the consciousness without meaning, and convey nothing. To us they have meaning, because they are interwoven for us into a system of thought, a rational system

of ideas. They are compared consciously or unconsciously with many other sounds, and connected with a system of measuring time, and brought thus within the range of knowledge. All this is possible because we look away from the particularity of the events and concentrate our attention on the universal aspect of them—that which they share with others. When we say that we heard five strokes on the bell, we mean that certain sounds which might be heard almost anywhere, and which have a certain assignable cause, occurred in a group at a particular time. When we say, "I heard it strike five on January 1st," we refer all the sounds to a general system of measuring time, and note the occurrence of the event which might happen any day on one day in particular. Now, the Greeks noted these differences, and regarded all the particular events which were subject to the limits mentioned as less true than the thoughts which interpret them. And they thought that the source of all the mischief was that the objects of sense were involved in the disadvantages of material

existence — that they were fleeting and in perpetual change, whereas the great ruling thoughts were independent of time, place, and all particular manifestation.

When Christian thought came in contact with Greek philosophy it found this opposition firmly established. The material to the philosophic mind was always the unworthy—the inferior—that which should be eliminated if possible, in order to free the soul from a burden. Moreover, various Oriental systems of thought definitely identified matter with evil, and the Church had a fierce struggle to maintain its right to admit the material world to a place in the scheme of God. The struggle has never been finally decided; the battle is going on still. Partly, this is due to a survival of Greek philosophic ideas. Partly it depends on the perpetual effort of philosophy in all ages to explain away the apparently fundamental dualism of matter and mind. In various forms philosophy is always endeavouring to find one principle from which all the various phenomena of the world may be derived: so that, in one

direction, we have efforts to show that mind is only an incidental result of the movements of matter; in another, that matter is only a particular mental way of looking at things.

The point on which we must lay most emphatic stress is that this philosophical opposition between thought and thing is not in any sense the same as the contrast drawn—say, by S. Paul—between spirit and flesh. The rational ideas of Plato, etc., in no sense correspond to spirit, in the sense used by S. Paul; for the whole point of view is different, and there is no reason for the Hebrew thinker why matter should necessarily involve evil. S. Paul, when he contrasts the spirit and the flesh, means to mark, not a metaphysical, but an ethical distinction. The disposition to treat material elements as necessarily an impediment to the action of the spirit comes, not from Scripture, but from philosophy.

But it is probably true also that the strong Individualism of which we have been thinking helps the philosophical tendency, as well as the fact that in every life much temptation comes through the world of sense. The individual

who is exclusively separated from all other men, to whom the existence of a society seems an impediment, falls back upon himself. He recognizes the temptations which come through the senses; he is excluded by his principles from finding help and sympathy in the society and the atmosphere which it creates. His notion of intercourse with God is of a private, silent communion which needs no media or instruments; He finds his ideal in what Dr. Martineau called lonely pieties, unknown to all save God. There is no disparagement intended to these "lonely pieties." God has confidences with every faithful soul. To him that overcometh is to be given the white stone—and upon the stone a name written which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it. The full force of the new name, the meaning in terms of character which the struggle with evil in life has implied for him that overcomes, is between God and him. But it is possible to urge seriously that we lose indefinitely by proceeding, as so many of us do, upon the individualistic theory. We lose of necessity, if in that respect

our doctrine falls short of the fulness of that which is set before us in Scripture. We lose, also, because our whole view of the teaching of Scripture lacks the coherence which it seems to have in its original form and place. What would have been, for instance, the history of criticism in regard to the New Testament, if the assumption had not dominated the German scholars—many of them Lutherans, or under Lutheran influences—that an individualistic doctrine was the true teaching of S. Paul. It would not have been necessary to rule out the Ephesians as spurious, by reason of its teaching on the Church, as is done by Pfleiderer: it would not have been necessary to deal so violently with the history of the earlier centuries, if it had not been that the idea of a Catholic Church was assumed to have no place in the primitive teaching of Christianity. In the New Testament and in Church History things seemed incompatible and contradictory because the assumptions under which men were working were inadequate to the facts.

It is easy to point out evils which have

resulted from the peculiar position of the Church in England. Yet it seems that there is, in this connexion, an advantage which has been almost of inestimable value in it. In spite of all errors of management, in spite of great variety of opinion within itself, it has kept before men's eyes the idea of a Communion, as having a kind of inherent necessity, and not being merely an accidental coagulation of individuals. It has had an order and doctrine that are in theory independent of the vagaries of individual caprice. And people who have been brought up in it have some sort of principles to start upon when they search into its history, instead of having to work at the history of an institution of which they only half know the nature. It is impossible, surely, to read the life of Dr. Hort—which is in many ways a life also of his great friends and contemporaries, Dr. Lightfoot and Dr. Westcott—without feeling that they started on their investigations with better and not worse chances of attaining a scientific result, from the fact that they were Churchmen and in Holy

Orders. No men were freer from bias in the sense in which bias perverts the judgment ; no men ever looked facts, ascertained with infinite labour, more firmly in the face. But they were happily delivered by their position from that indeterminateness of mind which is not scientific, but means, if the real truth is to be told, a wide ignorance of the problem under investigation, and a total lack of experience of the society, the nature and history of which has to be traced.

If we have rightly described the drift of the Scriptural evidence, it goes to show that the incapacity of matter to convey a spiritual message, and the necessarily separating influence of material symbols, is not to be found in Scripture, or proved thereby. If we may now venture to formulate what seems to be the true teaching of Scripture on these points, it would be somewhat as follows.

I. From the beginning, the nature of man and the physical world are taken very much as they are : God made them, and this fact implies that they are, in idea at any rate, good. Sin

impairs the whole situation, and expresses itself in confusion of thought and moral evil, so that the purpose of God in the world is, in a measure, spoiled.

II. The scheme of salvation, when it comes, works in upon the existing order, remedying its defects, recalling it to its ideal, but not involving an absolutely new start. The Son of God becomes Incarnate, sinlessly, in a family which dates back through the kings of Judah to David, and counts Rahab among its earlier members. By the Incarnation, the spiritual value of the material world is not destroyed, but made more certain; so that all life and nature become capable of certain spiritual meaning: it would thus be natural that critical acts of spiritual potency should express themselves in material form. The religion that flows from the Incarnation would naturally and necessarily be sacramental.

But III., the world is as yet but incompletely converted: considered as a principle or force, we may still say, with S. John, that the world lies in the evil one. And though the Sacrifice

upon the Cross takes away the sin of the whole world, it requires to be applied to each individual soul, and to enter as we saw above, into the experience of each individual. The Society of the Church is the normal atmosphere in which this effect is achieved. Men who become members of Christ are so far placed in the right relation to God. They pass out of the world, leaving behind them its associations: they come into Christ, and live before God as in Christ. To them, all that God had designed for man is possible in virtue of their inherence in the Body of Christ. Their prayer is certain; their sacraments are not mere symbols or the embodiment of aspirations, but are spiritually potent; because, in the ideal order, matter is not a dead, inert, meaningless mass that weighs down and impedes the spirit, but the natural form in which spiritual meaning may be thrown. And the use of it here in the Church militant, and all the life of the Church in this world, has the promise of life in the world to come, when the body of our humiliation is changed into the likeness of the glorified Body of Christ. In the

world, this spiritual society lives and acts—in the words of our Lord's parable—like leaven, hidden in the measures of meal, until, by slow and secret movement, the whole lump is leavened.

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