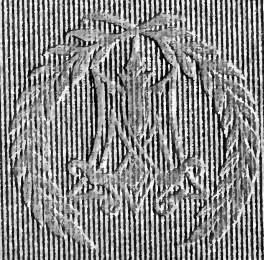

Reason, Faith and Authority in Christianity

Being the Paddock Lectures for 1901–02

By
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Preface

THESE lectures on the relations between Reason, Faith, and Authority, were delivered before the students and professors in the chapel of the General Theological Seminary in New York in December, 1901, and February, 1902.

They are published under the conditions prescribed in the Paddock Foundation. Portions omitted for want of time when they were delivered, appear in the printed Lectures.

A few notes are appended developing some important principles compressed into sentences in the text. I have also introduced in the Lectures, and especially in the notes, extracts from masters of style and luminous thinking, to call the attention of the younger generation of the clergy to books which may be helpful, educative and inspiring. The constant pressure of the pulpit for literary production may lead to the formation of the habit of slipshod methods of expression as well as crudities of thought. For intelligent laymen, as well as for the clergy, time is too short for communion through books with any but the best minds.

While I am writing this prefatory note the intelligence reaches me of the death of Dr. Eugene Augustus Hoffmann, for twenty-two years the Dean of the Seminary. That Seminary with its noble buildings, library and equipment, is in great degree a monument to his unstinted generosity, his laborious fidelity, his practical abilities, his love of the beautiful, and above all, his consecration to Christ and to His church.

The responsibility of the generation of clergy, educated under his administration, for his example and the spiritual influence of his simplicity and godly sincerity, I can only estimate by my own experience as a guest in his home. May God bless his memory and keep it green.

THE

BISHOP PADDOCK LECTURES.

In the summer of the year 1880, George A. Jarvis, of Brooklyn, N. Y., moved by his sense of the great good which might thereby accrue to the cause of Christ, and to the Church of which he was an ever-grateful member, gave to the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church certain securities, exceeding in value eleven thousand dollars, for the foundation and maintenance of a Lectureship in said seminary.

Out of love for a former pastor and enduring friend, the Right Rev. Benjamin Henry Paddock, D.D., Bishop of Massachusetts, he named the foundation "The Bishop Paddock Lectureship."

The deed of trust declares that,—

"*The subjects* of the lectures shall be such as appertain to the defense of the religion of Jesus Christ, as revealed in the *Holy Bible*, and illustrated in the *Book of Common Prayer*, against the varying errors of the day, whether materialistic, rationalistic, or professedly religious, and also to its defense and confirmation in respect of such central truths as the *Trinity*, the *Atonement*, *Justification*, and the *Inspiration of the Word of God;* and of such central facts as the *Church's Divine Order and Sacraments*, her historical *Reformation*, and her rights and powers as a pure and national Church. *And* other subjects may be chosen if unanimously approved by the Board of Appointment as being both timely and also within the true intent of this lectureship."

Under the appointment of the board created by the Trust, the Right Rev. Alfred Magill Randolph, Bishop of Southern Virginia, delivered the Lectures for the year 1901–02, which are contained in this volume.

LECTURERS.

1881. The Rt. Rev. JOHN WILLIAMS, DD., LL.D., "The English Reformation."

1882. The Rev. JOHN COTTON SMITH, D.D.,* "Relations of Religious Belief and Philosophical Opinions."

1883. The Rev. WM. D. WILSON, D.D., LL.D., L.H.D., "The Methods of Natural Theology Vindicated against Modern Objections."

1884. The Rt. Rev. A. N. LITTLEJOHN, D.D., LL.D., Bishop of Long Island, "The Christian Ministry at the Close of the Nineteenth Century."

1885. The Rt. Rev. HENRY C. LAY, D.D., LL.D., Bishop of Easton, "The Rights and Powers of the Particular or National Church."

1886. The Rev. WILLIAM H. PLATT, D.D., LL.D., "The Philosophy of the Supernatural."

1887. The Rev. JOHN H. EGAR, D.D., "The History of Christendom, Ecclesiastical and Political, from Constantine to the Reformation."

1888. The Rt. Rev. HUGH MILLER THOMPSON, D.D., LL.D., Bishop of Mississippi, "Christ's Doctrine of Development."

1889. The Rev. EDWARD HURTT JEWETT, D.D., LL.D., "Diabolology —the Person and Kingdom of Satan."

1890. The Rt. Rev. HOLLINGWORTH TULLY KINGDON, D.D., Bishop of Fredericton, N. B., "God Incarnate."

1891. The Rt. Rev. BENJAMIN HENRY PADDOCK, D.D., Bishop of Massachusetts.*

1892. The Rev. MORGAN DIX, D.D., D.C.L., "The Sacramental System Considered as the Extension of the Incarnation."

1893. The Rt. Rev. ARTHUR CLEVELAND COXE, D.D., LL. D., Bishop of Western New York. "The Repose of the Blessed Dead."†

1894. The Rev. C. W. E. BODY, D.D., D.C.L., "The Permanent Value of the Book of Genesis as an Integral Part of Divine Revelation."

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* Died before delivering the Lectures. † Not published.

1895. The Rev. ROBERT B. FAIRBAIRN, D.D., LL.D., "The Influence of Philosophy and Logic on the Revealed Facts of Christian Redemption."

1896. The Rev. ARTHUR JAMES MASON, D.D., "The Conditions of our Lord's Life upon Earth, as set Forth in the Gospels."

1897. The Rt. Rev. JOHN DOWDEN, D.D., Lord Bishop of Edinburgh, "The Theological Literature of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Centuries."

1898. The Rt. Rev. THOMAS FRANK GAILOR, D.D., Bishop Coadjutor of Tennessee, "Liturgy and Dogma." *

1899. The Rt. Rev. JAMES DOW MORRISON, D.D., LL.D., Missionary Bishop of Duluth, "The Attitude of the Church towards Holy Scripture, the Creeds, and the Sacred Ministry."

1900. The Rev. CHARLES W. SHIELDS, D.D., "Professor of the Harmony of Science and Revealed Religion," in Princeton University, N. J., "Scientific Evidences of Revealed Religion."

1901-2. The Rt. Rev. ALFRED MAGILL RANDOLPH, D.D., Bishop of Southern Virginia, "Reason, Faith and Authority in Christianity."

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* Not delivered.

Contents

REASON AND FAITH

LECTURE I

REASON AND FAITH

Introductory. St. Peter's charge to give a reason for faith. Reason defined. Its relation to other faculties of the mind. The meaning of heart in Scripture includes reason. Theology of reason; of feeling; of faith; of the will. Confusion in theology and philosophy from false psychology. Kant's analysis of reason. Reason implicit in all the faculties of the mind. Common sense unconscious reason. Belief in God an intuition of reason. Unreasonable use of reason. Psychology dividing mind into separate faculties imaginary. Reason in relation to the ideas of natural religion. Revelation. Refutation of materialistic philosophy denying its possibility. Dr. Morison on nature pointing to revelation. Prayer constant quantity in all religions. Its reasonableness instinctively recognized. Suppression of reasonable convictions results in pessimism; Renan; Goethe. Fallacy of separation between natural and revealed religion in old theologies upon ground that first is comprehensible by the reason, and the second incomprehensible, and to be received by authority alone. Natural religion a lower form of revelation, not a product of reason but apprehended by it. Revealed religion assimilates germs of truth in all false religions. Every truth in natural religion transformed in the light of reasonable faith by Christianity. The incarnation reasonable, natural. Browning on incarnation. Answers human needs. Canon Gore on Romanes. Reason in relation to personal experience. The spiritual intelligence alone apprehending inspiration of Scripture. Reasons for faith.

In the position of an American bishop, with the care of many churches and the duties and activities outside of those pertaining to his own special field of

labor, one might well hesitate to accept a call to deliver a series of lectures to learned professors who have dedicated their lives to the study of philosophy and theology, and to a body of students representing the intelligence and education of the younger generation of the Church. In a time, like the present, of theological change and reconstruction, it is not an easy task to avoid a sacrifice of sympathy from those whom we address upon religious problems; and without the sympathy of an open mind, lecturing, preaching and teaching are like toiling against wind and tide. Among brethren of the same blessed communion, in a Church with wide charity and reasonable toleration of varieties of opinion within the limits of the faith of the Gospel as she has received it, I am sure this apprehension may be dismissed, especially when I remember that I stand before the university school of that Church representing all of our dioceses, and reaching with its thought and its life our whole country and foreign lands throughout the world.

Since I was honored with the request to deliver the course of lectures upon the Paddock Foundation I have more than once wished for a longer period of time for preparation. When Prof. Alexander Campbell Frazer of Edinburgh was invited to deliver the "Gifford Lectures" upon the "Philosophy of Theism," in the opening sentences of his valuable contribution to philosophical literature, he describes

his feelings, when the call reached him, by reference to "the philosophic caution of Simonides when he was asked what God was, in first demanding a day to think about the answer, then two days more; and after that continuously redoubling the required time when the time already granted had come to an end, but without ever finding that he was able to produce the required answer."[1]

Reluctance to grapple with doctrinal or philosophical questions is more pronounced among practical workers than speculative thinkers. The hard worked bishop or pastor of a flock reconciles himself to exile from books and literary activity in his study upon the assumption that both are impossible, and that of the two the practical activities of a parish or a diocese have the first claim upon conscience and time. The assumption is illusive. Thought enriches the fields of practical activities. Communion with ideals is the natural inspiration to hope and to progress. In contributing to religious thought, no matter how humble our sphere, we are discharging a high and hopeful duty to ourselves and to the field of our work.

Each age must do its part and try its hand upon the old problems. Each generation with deep reverence for the past and cherishing with gratitude the results already accomplished, must remember that it has its own work to do and its own gains upon the

[1] "Philosophy of Theism," p. 2.

talents committed to it in its inheritance, to contribute to the corporate life of the Church in the present and the future.

We are to consider some of the relations between reason and faith in Christian belief and life. Later in the winter, by the kind arrangement of the Dean of the seminary, I hope to conclude the course of lectures with the subject of authority in its relations to reason and faith in the foundations of religious belief.

The Apostle St. Peter, in the first General Epistle, charges Christians "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." If Christian hope is rational, then faith, of which hope is the expression, must also rest upon rational foundations. In the New Testament hope and faith are convertible terms. They are coincident and inseparable in Christian experience. Hope is the feeling and the spontaneous activity of faith in the revelations of the Gospel, and as such it is the centre of the Christian life. A reason for the faith is given to those who ask for it, not to the scoffer, or to the controversial bigot, or to the pride of intellectual self-sufficiency, because by the laws of the mind these conditions bar the opening to receptivity by the reason of all moral and spiritual truth. The testimony and the evidence

of the truth is to be found in the light which it brings with it, far more than in any light that we throw upon it by our own intellectual processes. It is our moral reason, including all of our ethical faculties of conscience and duty and love of truth, which sees the truth afar off and takes cognizance of the light that is in it. It is this moral reason which dominates the mere logical and dialectic reason and which determines belief. It is St. Paul's meaning when he says, "For with the heart man believes unto righteousness." The heart as it is used in scripture, is not the mere emotional nature, but the whole character, the personality, the will, the feelings, the conscience and faith, all supported by and living in an atmosphere of the moral reason.[1]

In reading the writings of one of the greatest of our English scholars, the late Dr. Hort, Bishop Westcott's lifelong friend, I have often found myself pausing upon passages of the deepest spiritual import; and the suggestion occurred to me that if, instead of confining himself to exegetical scholarship, he had given some of his life to psychology and theology, he would have enriched our English thought and helped in the great work of making Christian philosophy luminous to the intellectual confusions of our age. He says that "the truth of God calls not for the separate exercise of any one faculty"; "that no element of our compound na-

[1] Delitzsch, "Biblical Psychology," p. 292, etc.

ture is entirely shut out from taking part in the knowledge of God."[1]

These and many other aphoristic expressions are hints and prophecies of a principle which is destined to a wider recognition than has ever been accorded to it in the past. The appeal of Christianity is to every moral and spiritual faculty of our nature. Its acceptance is by our whole personality, and the concurrent activity of reason, feeling, faith and will constitute belief.

What is religion, and what constitutes religious belief and saving faith? The answers to this are as numerous as the contending systems of the Philosophy of Religion. We have the Theology of Reason, the Theology of Feeling,[2] the Theology of Faith, the Theology of the Will, and these characterize different types of religion and mould the instrumentalities and methods of propagating them.

The theology of dialectic reason holds belief in God as the conclusion of a demonstration. An acceptance of Christianity is a matter of evidence, and logic is the weapon of its defense and propagation.

The eighteenth century abounded in books on Evidences, and our forefathers of that generation seemed to regard Christianity as a mathematical proposition to be demonstrated by logical proof. Religion declined and spiritual life in the Church of England was

[1] Christian Ecclesia. [2] See note 1.

at the lowest ebb in its history. The logical process leaves the heart cold and the conscience untouched and the wants of the soul unsatisfied.

The Theology of Feeling takes the emotions as the criterion of religion and the evidence of its possession. We cannot doubt that feeling is a vital element in religion and that the state of the heart and the affections before God is the criterion of its reality. But feeling in itself is only subjective. It must have an object which moves and kindles it, and what that object is determines its religious character. Knowledge of God is the fountain of the love of God. Faith and feeling must have reason to correct their aberrations and chasten their errors and guide them to the truth. As single faculties, relied upon for religion, they have been disastrous to thousands of souls who have trusted in them.

Again, the theology of the will[1] bids us, in the name of religion, to an act of choice as the decisive question of the soul in its relations to God. "Choose to believe, will to believe, and you are already saved." This is the favorite appeal of the fervent evangelist to the doubting and the undecided who are without the fold of the Christian Church; but the troubled hearer answers "how can I make myself believe? If that had been possible, I would have believed long ago." Naked will is powerless except for blind and arbitrary

[1] See note 2.

action. The will is the deciding faculty, but depends upon reasons that are to be weighed in its balance and upon feelings of desire or aversion appealing to its choice; otherwise it is suspended in the air, it is in a state of motionless equilibrium.

We are told to give a reason for the faith to every one that asketh. The asking is the appeal of faith, feeling, reason and the will for knowledge. The consciousness of ignorance is based upon an assumption of reason of something behind the veil to be known, and the desire to know contains in it the implicit faith that he who seeks shall find, and that to him that knocks it shall be opened.[1]

It follows from these considerations that our definition of reason in its relation to other faculties and powers of the mind, must embrace a conception far transcending that single form of its activity in the construction of a syllogism.

The clear apprehension of this principle is of supreme importance in the study of theology and philosophy. We speak of theology and philosophy as separate fields of thought, but from a higher point of view theology is philosophical and philosophy is theological. They may be separate streams in a world of finite confusions and antagonisms, but with the progress of Christianity they seek each other and at last are destined to mingle and coalesce in the unity of

[1] See note 1.

that knowledge of Him who "is the way, the truth, and the life."

When Kant in 1781 published the "Critique of Pure Reason" it pained, and in many quarters, dismayed the Christian world and furnished weapons which skepticism prematurely adopted as fatal to religious belief. The pure reason was the logical reason applied to unseen and spiritual realities. Kant seemed to demonstrate its insufficiency. The premises were too large for the conclusions; they assumed too much and the assumptions cast a shadow upon the certainty of the conclusions. The old arguments for the existence of God, the cosmological, the ontological, the teleological, upon which philosophy and natural theology had depended, were inadequate; they left a doubt in the region of the premises. Dialectic reasoning requires certainty in the premises, otherwise the conclusions are open to attack. Therefore mere dialectic reasoning upon these questions is destructive. It requires the help of a larger reason. It needs that the little trembling belief it creates shall be supplemented from other reasoning powers and from other fields of evidence. In 1788 Kant published the "Critique of the Practical Reason," and that turns the weight of his great authority the other way. The practical reason, when it goes to logic, finds its premises, not in the air, not in the infinities, but here upon the earth, here in human nature, in common

sense which is only another name for universal sense; in conscience, that wonderful judging power between right and wrong, that "candle of the Lord" in the soul which, however dimly, burns wherever man has breathed the breath of life; in duty that tells me this I ought to do, and this I ought not to do. What can duty be but an index of God in my consciousness? What is obligation but the consciousness of one who lays it upon me and whom I am bound to obey? Revelation meets my needs, answers all the cries of my spirit, and reason tells me that it comes from God who made me and loves me, and if I work with Him, He will work with me and in me to do of His good pleasure. This is Kant's practical reason. Many writers of our modern thought have read his "Critique of Pure Reason" and stopped there. Or if they have read the other they have never cared to understand it, and so they call reason the enemy of faith. The reason referred to in St. Peter's charge is an organ of mind far wider than the derivative faculty of ratiocination. The mere logical faculty which weaves the chain connecting premise with conclusion, while it enters into all reasoning as in a sense a necessary factor, is only a process and an instrument of the reason, a scientific formula for arriving at conclusions.

Reason itself is an attribute of each one of our faculties as thinking and feeling beings. It is the personality of the mind and conditions all our mental

operations. It chastens the imagination; it trains the memory which, when it furnishes reason with material for its processes, is in turn dependent upon reason to awaken it from its lapses, to correct its aberrations and to quicken the associations by which it rescues impressions from oblivion.

The will, the conscience, the feelings have in them an implicit element of reason. It is a universal faculty, so that if called upon to designate the distinguishing quality of man we would call him, not a feeling, nor a thinking, nor an acting, but a reasonable being. His reason is always at work implicitly or explicitly, consciously or unconsciously. It forms his judgments, it coordinates the testimony and unifies the diversity of all his other faculties. In the great majority of mankind, educated and uneducated, it is a simple act of the mind. It goes directly from cause to effect, from antecedent to consequent without the intermediation of an analysis of the propositions which form the premises of the machinery of formal logic.

There are comparatively few minds that have the capacity to hold before them a number of facts and inferences and arguments. The lawyers with the largest experience in practice tell us that the jury or the court are decided by some one fact or argument fastening the mind by an instinct of the reason upon the crucial point in the case, and consigning the sub-

ordinate issues to oblivion. The advocate, who has the trained instinct of reason to recognize the strongest point in his case, to turn the light upon it from every point of view and ring the changes until, like a theme in a musical composition, it runs and reappears and winds itself through all the variations, in nine cases out of ten, wins his cause over his duller adversary who wearies and gorges the mind of judge and jury with multiplication of strong and weak arguments alike.

The common sense of mankind is another name for this universal implicit reason. It acts as it were unconsciously and with spontaneity, and yet it is consciously based upon the profoundest postulates of fact and of truth. To this common sense, independent of a knowledge of scientific and secondary causes, are due those judgments by which we are guided in the practical affairs of life. Here is a countryman or a sailor whose judgment about the weather is verified in the majority of cases. His vocation is conditioned by the exigencies of the weather, and his powers of observation and memory are accumulating experience from the aspects of cloud and sky, the directions of wind, his own bodily sensations in connection with the approach of atmospheric and meteorological changes. He knows nothing of the laws of wind currents, or of the chemistry, or the mechanical forces concerned in precipitation. But

he knows a law that is deeper and wider in its sweep than all of these immediate causes. By his instinctive reason he has generalized the contents of his memory. He has formed a conception of the Order of Nature and of the uniformity of her laws. He believes that what has happened will happen again. He recognizes to-day the signs of changes which preceded changes a hundred times in his experience of the past. His instinctive reason, without argument or scientific reasoning, tells him that the change is imminent in the present. It is a question of fact. It is direct reasoning from observation to observation without the intervention of logical processes.

In a far higher region than the facts of physical phenomena this faculty of judgment is found building foundations upon which philosophy and religion rear their systems of thought. The transient elements in all systems of philosophy built up by the great minds of all ages, which one by one have been discredited and have passed below the horizon of thought, have demonstrated the futility of the hope of finding out God by abstract thought outside of the primary intuitions of human nature and outside of God's revelations.

The Scripture says "that the world by wisdom knew not God"; "that no flesh should glory in His presence." The idea is that the very effort to construct a knowledge of God upon the plane of our own

wisdom is a denial of our relation to Him as the author of that gift, and the writer of that evidence by which, in the construction of our minds, He has made known His personal being, His intelligence and His will in our own nature and in the world He has made for our home, and His character and His purposes towards us in His revelations. The very effort of an independent knowledge has in it the fatal error and sin of the flesh glorying in itself before God; resulting in the separation of the creature from the Creator, of the finite and dependent nature from the infinite author and source of its life.

The Duke of Argyle, in his "Philosophy of Belief," has this simple and powerful sentence, "The human mind looking into nature sees in all the phenomena of the world a great deal that is obviously of its own kind and quality."[1] The recognition is not a matter of inference. It is not the conclusion of a logical demonstration, nor on the other hand is it a subjective notion or impression which are as variable as differences of temperament and imagination, but it is a simple and pure matter of fact, a direct and immediate cognizance of the reason.

The difference between matter and mind is a distinction so obvious and direct that it not only needs no argument to prove it but it reappears, like a rock through the mists of materialistic speculations as an

[1] Argyle, "Philosophy of Belief," p. 5.

object of direct vision by the instinctive reason of mankind. So the existence of a mind, other than our own, in the universe, infinite in power and comprehension and activity, still like our own in quality and constitution, assumes the position of a fact identical, in the realm of mind, with the reality of the visible world through our sense of sight.[1] There are questions with reference to this mind, its character, its mode of operation, the means it uses for reaching its ends, the relations it sustains to the system of things around us which have been beset by intellectual difficulties in all ages, and perhaps ever will be beyond complete solution. There are also moral perplexities, suggested by the present system in which we find ourselves, which the highest efforts of reason and of reasoning cannot explain, and which can only find a solution in a revelation, and in the faith that receives it and, in receiving it, transcends the shadows of doubt which they cast. The fact itself of the existence of God is reached not at the end of an argument, but it is direct vision of the instinctive reason, and as such it is one of the foundations of faith; it is a perennial spring at the source of the origins of all religions.

Beside these primary convictions which instinctive reason clothes with the reality of facts, which survive the warring of words and the clashings of systems

[1] See note 3.

of thought, there are reasons for faith which approach the instinctive in simplicity and directness where, although we are conscious of the act of reasoning, the inferences admit of no shadow of doubt.

They are the reasons that are nearest to the heart and to the conscience, and therefore the most powerful for conviction. As we lengthen the chain and widen the area of induction over which our reasoning extends, with the vast majority of minds, we weaken the force of the conclusion.

Newman was a reasoner of rare subtlety and power. He speaks from his own perplexed and troubled mental experiences when he says, "Logicians are more bent upon concluding rightly than on right conclusions. . . . To most men multiplication of argument makes the point in hand more doubtful and considerably less impressive. Life is not long enough for a religion of inferences; we shall never have done with beginning if we determine always to begin with proof. . . . We shall ever be laying our foundations; we shall turn theology into evidences, and divines into textuaries. We shall never get at our first principles. Resolve to believe nothing, and you must prove your proofs and analyze your elements, sinking farther and farther, and finding in the lowest depth a lower deep, till you come to the broad bosom of scepticism."[1] These are powerful words. They

furnish the solution of the causes of much of our modern doubt and of our wild philosophy. It is the result of the unreasonable use of reason. It is a perversion of the highest faculty of the mind into an instrument to dissect and in dissecting to kill its own life.

It is a violation of that law of the mind which ordains that all knowledge must begin in the assumption of certain ultimate principles and facts, and these are verified by the results in the buildings we erect upon them.

Conviction is the combined judgment of all of our faculties in believing where there are good reasons for believing. Reason, in the larger sense, is the atmosphere of the mind. It enables us to grasp the idea of cause and to sound its mystery. It has been called the ear which listens and interprets the voice of conscience. It receives the ideas of duty, of justice and of religion and becomes their counsel when right and wrong are contending at the bar of the will. Reason is implicit in faith, and therefore the conception of an antagonism between them involves a contradiction. To depreciate reason in order to exalt faith is to despise your foundations while you are glorifying the building which rests upon them. The psychology which divides the attributes of the mind from one another is only a tentative imagination

[1] "Grammar of Assent," J. H. Newman, pp. 94, 95.

summoned for the purpose of mental analysis. When regarded as a reality it is the most fruitful source of error and confusion in philosophy. The practical reason as it appears in consciousness and in action is an attribute of mind and spirit in every department of human nature. In illustrating these principles we find both instinctive and conscious reasoning in the beliefs of both natural and revealed religion.

Consider for example the idea of a revelation from God, its probability, its possibility which are denied by a large class of materialistic scientists. Whence does it come? Why its persistence through all forms of paganism from the lowest to the highest, so that in view of the final and full revelation of God in Christ the Hebrew Prophet exclaims "The desire of all nations shall come!"[1] Had reason nothing to do with that universal expectation, that unconquerable hope?

We are told in many quarters that the liberty of God to fulfil this expectation and to vouchsafe a revelation as we have it in Christ, is limited by natural law, and that the uniformity of nature forbids the possibility of a revelation from heaven breaking through this closely linked network of cause and effect, of antecedent and consequent.

This denial proceeds from a philosophy calling itself Agnosticism from its cardinal doctrine that God is unknowable. The question may be asked, If God

[1] Haggai 2 : 7.

is unknowable whence comes the knowledge of Him involved in the assertion of the Agnostic that His power to reveal Himself to man is limited by the uniformity of nature? Suppose I have before me, as a judge, a question of the relation between separate functions of a government. In order to decide that question I must know the powers, and the limitations upon them of each function, and that involves wide and accurate information. Is it the relation, in a confederation, of the powers of the State governments to the Federal government? If the Federal government is a mystery, an unknowable quantity, how am I to ascertain the limitations and the relations sustained to it by the State Government? I must know both parties before I can adjudicate the relations between them. A philosopher holds that God is unknowable and yet he ventures the tremendous assertion that the liberty of God is dominated by natural law. It would seem to involve a profound intimacy with God's nature and God's powers on the one hand and with natural law on the other, to venture the assertion that the liberty of the one is limited by the supposed inexorable uniformity of the other. Such an assumption of a knowledge of God and of nature involves claims immeasurably beyond those of any system of speculation ancient or modern. And yet as we have seen the cardinal doctrine of this system is that God is unknowable.

Suppose we turn, with Kant, from these illogical confusions to the practical reason of mankind upon the question of a revelation. Think of the first man as he stood alone, face to face with nature. The old story of Genesis with its majestic simplicity tells us that "out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them." As they pass before his wondering eyes, his curious intelligence, his first impression would be that these creatures, through unconscious gestures and movement and expression, communed with one another; that they had, so to speak, a common language which constituted the vehicle of communication. And what is that communication between living beings but the essential principle of revelation? They speak to each other. Their needs are ministered by one to the other. It is the law of their life, and the agent for the execution of that law is inter-communication, revelation. This is nature in the highest life next to man. The first impression made upon man by nature is a lesson of revelation. Dr. Morison in the "Footprints of the Revealer" says, "shall there be eternal silence between God and man, between these intelligencies, these kindred natures with their mutual capacity for love and communion? Are all creatures in the universe that have any measure of intelligence or are even sentient, capable of telling out directly

what is in them, and have they the means and the appetency thereto? Can man commune with man through the high gift of language? And is the infinite mind and heart not to express itself, or is it to do so but faintly and uncertainly through dumb material symbols, never by blessed speech?"[1]

That reasoning would be as spontaneous and as natural to the primitive man as it is to us, the children of the light of God's highest revelation in Christ.

Another idea of natural religion is that of prayer. It is the correlative of the idea of revelation and therefore partakes of its universality. Is prayer a tradition of religion planted in us in our childhood, a habit formed, the tenacity of which is due to impressions made upon the plastic mind before the dawn of conscious thought, under the law that earliest impressions are the last to fade away? Or is prayer due to a mere imagination of duty? Or again is it a service or a task, as though it were enjoined of Heaven, which if punctually rendered would bring down the reward appointed for obedience? Is it a matter of the will, with no meaning for the reason and no impulse from the heart? Or is it a self-excitation process in which the mind is making a conscious effort to kindle the thoughts and personate the desires of devotion?

All of these elements are associated with prayer. It

[1] Dr. Morison, "Footprints of the Revealer," p. 52.

is a duty to ourselves and to God. It is a service. It is a habit as all expressions and activities of our nature organize and perpetuate themselves by habits; and prayer grows by praying. But these cannot be the grounds for the reasonable faith in it. The moment we permit these accompaniments of prayer to assume the position of its reality and its substance then the peace and strength of it wanes. The origin of prayer can only be in an instinctive reason leading us to commune with God. Conceive of what we would have been if we had never seen a human face or heard a human voice. Isolation empties human nature of its contents. We are made for sympathy, for interchange of reason with reason, of thought with thought, of heart with heart. If the intercourse with our fellow-men is a necessary process of our development, then instinctive reasoning leads us to communion with God the Father of our spirits as the natural law of our spiritual life. Those who can remember thirty years ago, will recall the sensation in the current literature of science and of religion produced by a scientific test of prayer proposed to the world by Professor Tyndall.[1] I doubt if any serious man of science to-day would venture his reputation upon a similar proposition. The fixity of natural laws is no longer an argument, even in the world of science, against the natural reason and revelation of prayer.

[1] See Principal Fairbairn, "Christ in the Centuries," p. 207, etc.

Doubtless there are thousands in Christian lands who have abandoned the habit of prayer learned in their childhood and in the worship of the Christian churches. To those who are preparing for the ministry of the Christian Church, experience testifies that they will find men and women in their future congregations, a larger number than they imagine, who are strangers to prayer. They have let go their faith in prayer. The simple prayers of their childhood are as the memory of dreams. If they should give a reason for the abandonment of prayer it would probably be the inverted one, that they had ceased to believe that God heard or could hear them. They have mistaken the cause for the effect. They give up prayer first and the giving it up brings them to believe in its futility and unreality. And yet no heart that has retained any degree of its freshness and feeling, will make the confession that prayer, and with it the thought of God, has dropped out of life, without a consciousness of loss and of banishment from its natural home.

Wherever scepticism raises its head, as it appears in much of the literature of our generation and in extensive sections of society, we find the shadow of pessimism as its invariable attendant. The spectacle is more impressive as we recognize it in minds of lofty powers and of naturally optimistic temperament. Goethe was a genial optimist, but back of it lay a

deep shadow of religious doubt. It seems to lift in some degree towards the end of his life as he came to see what Christianity really was. In a recorded conversation he says, "I have ever been esteemed one of fortune's favorites. I find no fault with my life. Yet truly there has been nothing but toil and care. It has been the perpetual rolling of a stone that I have ever had to raise anew." Of the future of the world he says, "Men will become more clever and more acute but not better, happier, stronger in action. I foresee the time when God will have no more joy in them but will break up everything for a renewed creation."[1] Renan was naturally of a hopeful disposition. During the period of his highest intellectual activity he found joy and diversion in the exercise of his brilliant literary capacity, but the pessimism of his unbelief was persistent. Summing up the contrast between the old creed of Christianity and his new creed he says, "Candidly speaking, I fail to see how without the ancient dreams the foundations of a happy, noble life can ever be relaid." "We are living," he says, "on the perfume of an empty vase."[2]

And this is unbelief at its best.

The rational instincts of the soul are ever seeking, under the pressure of God's hand, to reassert themselves against a false philosophy, and the gloom and

[1] Quoted by Dr. Orr Kerr, Lectures from "Conversations of Goethe."

[2] L'Avenir de La Science (English translation).

confusion of scepticism is an expression of that antagonism. Prayer is natural. Given the existence of God, and therefore His omnipresence, what can be more natural? Must we say that God is everywhere and yet we can never speak to Him? That God is with us all the time and yet between us and Him there must be eternal silence? We cannot conceive of religion without some kind of prayer. As well conceive of music without an atmosphere to throb the waves of sound to our ears. As well conceive of light without an ether to bear its swift vibrations through the infinities of space.

If it be true that these great convictions of natural religion are products of instinctive and conscious reason supporting faith, is there valid ground for supposing that the facts and the doctrines of Christianity, as revealed religion, supernatural in their origin, would so far transcend reason as to dispense with its support to faith and render faith or authority the sole organs for its acceptance and appropriation? Can it be that there is this cleft between what we call natural religion and the revelation in the Bible and in Christ, so that the one is natural and the other unnatural; the one reasonable and the other unreasonable, in the sense that it is removed above the domain of reason? This distinction is indeed our inheritance from the rationalistic theologians of the eighteenth century and from Romish theology of the

past. But there are hopeful signs that we are advancing beyond this conception, and that theological thought is recognizing the contradiction which it involves.

Is this distinction a tenable one, first as regards the proposition that faith, and not reason, is the organ for the acceptance of revealed religion as distinguished from natural religion? In the discussion so far, we have tried to develop the fallacy, in the assumption that faith and reason are divisible, so that they can dwell side by side in the same mind asserting principles which are contradictory. That would be to conceive of the mind as divided against itself. We have seen also that it is the confusion of a false psychology which divides our minds into separate faculties with hard and fast lines of division between them. Reason is implicit in faith and faith furnishes postulates for reason. If this be so the idea that they are antagonistic is a contradiction. Again the supposition that authority, either in a Church or in historic verity, is the sole organ for the acceptance of revealed religion, upon the ground that it is independent of reason, is an unthinkable one. Authority must have rational grounds in order to teach authoritatively. The contents of a revelation may transcend reason so that reasonable faith must supplement it. But reason must be the judge of the credentials of a revelation. Reason must at least examine the vehicle through

which the revelation comes, while the moral reason and faith together are concerned in the acceptance of its contents. Authority therefore must appeal to reason, that is, it must prove its own claims. It is impossible to conceive of authority as denying the rights of reason, for, in appealing to reason for its support, it disowns its right to teach irrationally. To call upon reason to prove its own incompetency in favor of authority, that is to refute itself, is an elaboration of contradictory thought, or a reductio ad absurdum.

Again, the distinction referred to between natural and revealed religion involves an illusion in the conception of revelation. The opening verse of the Epistle to the Hebrews has this far reaching statement of the meaning of revelation, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds."[1] St. Paul's epistle to the Romans has also this remarkable definition of God's revelation to the heathen and of the germs of truth, in heathen religions, corrupted and overlaid by unrighteousness. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that

[1] Hebrews 1: 1, 2.

which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."[1]

From these statements it seems clear that the inspired conception of revelation extends beyond the Bible and beyond the revelation in Jesus Christ. It covers the whole area of natural religion, so that the distinction between Christianity and all other religions is not that the one is a revelation from God, and that the other is the natural product of the human mind in its search after God. The germs of truth in all religions are revelations from God. Their superstitions and degradations are the human corruptions of these revelations. The recognition of this principle furnishes an element of hope and a guide to intelligent methods for the conversion of the heathen world. Through the progress of intercommunication, the expansion of Christian civilization, the study of the languages, the religions, and the ethnology of all the races of men, we to-day know the world as no other generation ever dreamed of as a possibility. That knowledge has reinforced the missionary hope of Christianity, and has enabled us to see what the inspiration of the Old Testament and the living con-

[1] Romans 1 : 18, 19, 20.

viction of the New realized thousands of years ago. The Spirit of God has never ceased to strive with man. The truth of God, even in the corruptions of paganism, has always been a light in a dark place, waiting for the dawn and the day-star to arise upon the hearts of men.

It may seem to some a derogation of the divine and supernatural origin of Christianity, to connect it with the false religions of the world by the recognition of truths that are common to both. But the Bible does this.

St. Paul, in his appeal to Greek paganism and philosophy, pointing to the beautiful idols which adorned Areopagus, where he stood, exclaims, "I perceive that in all things ye are given to religious worship, for as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription 'To the Unknown God.' Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."[1]

If Christianity, as its inspired apostles taught, acknowledged sympathies with the spiritual intelligence which, though overlaid with superstitions, it recognized in false religions; if it beheld what has been called "the unconscious prophecies of heathendom,"[2] in the very forms of idolatry which were destined to extinction by the light of the truth which it revealed, then the distinction between it and all other revelations

[1] Acts 17 : 22, 23. [2] Hulsean Lectures, Archbp. Trench.

would be that of the difference between the dim and tentative life of the plant and the wonderful organism of the tree; between the flower and the fruit, between the dawn and the noonday. As the dawn can no longer exist, but is swept away when the sun rises, as the bloom has gone when the fruit appears, so natural religion is superseded by revealed religion. It is the old that can no longer exist by the new. There is not a doctrine of natural religion that is not transformed and transmuted and lifted out of the darkness of error into the light of a reasonable faith by the revelation in Christianity.[1]

The application of this principle to the facts and doctrines of Christianity is the characteristic of this generation beyond any that have preceded it. To rescue the statements of its doctrines from the position of metaphysical and theological enigmas, to clothe the bones with the flesh of living and speaking truth, to lead men and women and children away from the paralyzing conviction that the gospel is in its essence an incomprehensible mystery, this is surely the highest, the most hopeful aim of the Christian teacher and thinker. It is an illusion to suppose that the effort to find a reason for the faith that is in us is born of that spirit which has been the bane of philosophy, the undue exaltation of reason and the cultivation of intellectual pride inimical to faith. It is in-

[1] See note 4.

deed consistent with the truest humility, but not with that spurious imitation of it which hides the talent of our reason in the earth. It is well to study and to learn the limits of our thought, and to check the spirit of self-sufficiency which, as with all of our faculties, may assert itself in connection with our reason, but in order to do that it is not necessary that we should banish reason and put ignorance and presumption in its place. We are a mystery to ourselves but as far as it goes our knowledge of ourselves is more real than any other. We know our fellow-man, it is true imperfectly, but that knowledge is the practical basis of human society and of our social life as God has ordained it. We cannot find out the Almighty to perfection, but because our knowledge of Him cannot be exhaustive it does not follow that we can never know Him at all. He "hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true,"[1] and that knowledge, as far as it goes, is the most precious of realities and carries with it the profoundest missionary impulse to impart it to others.

These considerations, which we have passed in review to establish the relation of reason to the truths of Revelation and to our spiritual faculties, would lead to the conclusion that the world under the light of Christianity would progressively develop the spirit of more openness to reason, more im-

[1] 1 John 5: 20.

patience with unreasoning ignorance. And we find that it is so. Men are less willing to believe because they are told to believe. The conception is surely growing that true authority must have reasons for the faith which secures submission and obedience.

It is simply a confusion of psychology, in the definition of reason limiting it to the dialectic faculty, which raises the apprehension that we are subordinating faith and authority to man's finite reason. We have tried to illustrate in all that has been said that the moral reason which is implicit in faith, in conscience, and in the will of obedience, is the receptive faculty for religion. It is the internal verifier of the objective knowledge that comes to us in revelation. It is receptive, not creative in the sense that it can supersede an objective revelation of truth. I may receive and believe the facts of the Gospel on authority, and authority must always be an immense power over belief, but belief on authority alone may lie on the surface of my nature unappropriated by my spiritual intelligence, and unwelcomed and unmeaning to my heart. The belief of my moral and spiritual reason must appropriate them, and find yearnings in my heart and in my spiritual intelligence which respond to the reasons in the truth. The mind that receives the Gospel must have something in it akin to the mind that communicates it. I could never have

written the poetry of Shakespeare or Tennyson, or indeed poetry at all. But it must be that the poetic instinct is in me, otherwise my heart would be dumb and my ear deaf to the poet's song. The thoughts of great minds reach us and thrill us because we are akin to them. They incarnate in words the ideas that lay in our minds in the penumbra of our thought, imagined but never seen in living form before. They speak our inarticulate thoughts and feelings, and introduce them to us as the children of our minds, and we welcome them as our own. The secret of the power by which they move our deepest sympathies is that they interpret us to ourselves. They speak to our reason, and reason recognizes their voice as its own voice, their thought as its own thought.

Thus our capacity to understand thought extends indefinitely beyond our power to produce it. When I apprehend a truth revealed to me by another, or by a revelation from God, it does not follow that I could ever by any effort of my own, have reasoned that truth out for myself, any more than I could have written the poem or produced the musical composition of the great artist, which moves my heart to its depths. My faculty for verifying truth is almost infinitely beyond my narrow faculty for discovering truth for myself.

The incarnation of the Son of God, the union of the divine and human in my Lord and Saviour; what

a tremendous ascent of mind, what an illimitable view of imagination an almost infinite grasp of reason would it have required to have originated a truth so marvelous, a conception so apparently impossible. And yet, when it comes from God, it has in it a tone of naturalness as of a voice from a far off home. Natural religion and reason tell me of God as the first cause and the moral ruler and creator of the world, but they do not tell me what I am, and the meaning of my pain, my sin, my death, my destiny.

The magnitudes of matter stultify my faith that God is my father. There must be some quantity commensurate with these magnitudes, to reveal to me the worth of my soul in God's eyes, in contrast to the apparent infinity of matter, before my faith can stand.

The poet looking at human life and at the order of Nature for the attributes of God, says:

> "Conjecture of the worker by the work;
> Is there strength there?—enough! Intelligence?
> Ample: but goodness in a like degree?
> Not to the human eye in the present state,
> An isoscele deficient in the base.
> What lacks, then, of perfection fit for God,
> But just the instance which this tale supplies,
> Of love without a limit? So is strength,
> So is intelligence; let love be so,
> Unlimited in its self-sacrifice,
> Then is the tale true, and God shows complete."[1]

[1] Robert Browning.

The incarnation is a reason and an answer to the greatest adversary to faith. It is wonderful, but intensely natural.

Is God the contriver of the world who views it afar off, the first cause, the Governor of the world? Christianity knows no such God as that. Its cardinal conception of God is the unity of God with man. Do we suffer? He too suffered for us. Do we bear pain, the innocent for the guilty? He suffered for the guilty, and in Him was no sin. Is the world to the great majority a hard world in the lot of life? "He was rich, but for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich."

These answers in the Gospel to our ethical needs and our human cries are better than many explanations. The theoretical explanations are constantly changing, but these ethical needs to which Christ and Christ alone supplies an answer, are always there in human nature and will be until pain and sorrow and sin and death are swallowed up in victory. They are the practical but ever original reasons for faith which always reach the human heart. On a great battle-field, a friend with his arm around a dying soldier, a young officer, hears the whispered words, "He tasted death for every man." "I am thankful you are a Christian," said his friend. "Yes," he replies, "I have tried to be, I know He feels for me. He suffered this, and I am safe with Him."

We are familiar through Canon Gore with the story of Romanes. His spiritual history appears in the "Life and Letters," by his wife in 1895. He was regarded by Professor Huxley as one of the ablest scientific minds of the last century. He renounced religious belief, and passed through years of scientific doubt back to the simplest Christian faith, in which he died. In his struggles to believe he would continually ask himself, "Faith is so beautiful it must mean something! Why is the Gospel story so natural? Why can we find no flaw in Jesus Christ? Were not His words after all the words of truth, telling the mind of God infinitely more surely than any reading of nature? And the final tragedy of the Cross, would it not, if once believed, solve that obstinate mystery of pain and failure and show finally how God can love and still let us suffer? To have faith in this reason for Christ would solve the great contradiction, the great trial." He prayed for this faith and it came to him at last and never left him. To you, who are equipping yourselves for the ministry of reconciliation, may I emphasize this reason for faith in Christ as the best way to the human heart.

In closing I must remind you of the relation of reason to your personal experience. My inner religious life, its experiences, its feelings, its deepest convictions, cannot be formulated into words or arguments to establish your faith. If I could express

them they might be strange to your experience, for feelings are as variable as temperament or associations. Wesley, in his later years, seems to have had some doubts about "Experience Meetings" as a means for promoting and deepening spiritual life, and endeavored to confine them to an exchange of sympathies in its duties and its daily habits. The expressions of devotional feeling in the secret life of the soul that abound in the literature of mysticism of the Christian ages, have doubtless touched and quickened Christian life to deeper feeling and a closer walk with God; but there are many to whom even the "Imitation of Christ" has in it an element of morbidness, an atmosphere of unreality, an undefinable influence of discouragement.

I can give my reasons for believing in God, for my faith in Christ from every field of knowledge, from every source of evidence addressed to thinking beings. But behind and deeper than these exoteric reasons, there are esoteric convictions which are untranslatable into words. The sources are too secret and the realities are too spiritual, too subtle, too sacred to tell. Prayers answered when you prayed with so little faith; providences that once thwarted your will and disappointed your hopes, now seen as mercy and goodness over your life; sorrows that chastened you; warnings from God that made you beware; consolations after failures; mornings of joy after nights of

weeping; memories of saints of God who loved you; a book that opened glimpses of spiritual insight; a word from a preacher that touched your heart, these are all pages of your history that the years of your experience have written, and in them and through them there comes, not a conclusion from evidence, but a knowledge that you know as no one else knows of you. "That you have never been alone, that God has been about your path all the way," is an intuition of faith, which is itself the highest reason and the deepest feeling of our spiritual nature.

There is another reason for faith which in some respects partakes of the nature of this secret experience of the soul in the history of God's dealing with us and His providence over our life. Our theologies cannot explain the inspiration of the Bible. The Church has most wisely withheld from any attempt at a definition or a dogmatic statement of the inspiration of scripture. In its essence the apprehension of it is a secret experience of the soul. No criticism, no Biblical studies, no dogmatic or authoritative definition can create the belief. They may defend it; they may educate ignorance or clear up misapprehensions with reference to the vehicle of words through which it is expressed; but they cannot impart it. It is the secret of the Lord in the heart. Its full realization requires a personal verification. This is the reason, and can be the only reason, for the universal adapta-

tion of scripture. We speak of the universality of the poet as the measure of his greatness; but the spiritual power of the Bible over the whole area of human life, as demonstrated in our age, when it has been translated into every known tongue and has reached the mind of every people, is itself the most wonderful revelation of its unity and the unity of the human race.

The Bible is primarily addressed to the people of its own time; and its diversity of form corresponds with the variations of the local and temporary elements of the ages and the authors through whom it was communicated to the world. But the miracle of literature is the transcendence of its spiritual power over the human elements which constitute the vehicle of its expression, so that its consolations and its warnings, its revelations of sin and God's righteousness, and its insight into the secret places of man's heart are as vivid and as startling to-day as they were two or three thousand years ago. It speaks to the spiritual intelligence of the ignorant with the same quickening power as to that of the scholar with his apparatus of exegesis and learning.

The reasons for faith as we have seen, are drawn from every field of thought and of evidence, and the correspondence of the testimony from the variety of sources, is itself the most powerful evidence for the conviction of the reason. With the advance

of education all truth will doubtless be, with increasing clearness of apprehension, tributary to the central truth of man's destiny and salvation as made known in the revelation of Christianity. The churches and all bodies of Christians are demanding wider education for the Christian ministry; but those who constitute the working energy and the steadfast faith in all of our congregations, are realizing more than ever the need, in preaching and in ministration, for that power which is born of living convictions based upon personal experience of the Living God, and the spiritual intelligence in the ministry to apprehend the spiritual meaning of the Bible, and to apply its lessons to the spiritual wants of human nature. In the equipment for the ministry of the Gospel these are indispensable qualifications for reaching the conscience and the hearts of the people.

FAITH AND REASON

LECTURE II

FAITH AND REASON

Faith, the vision of the unseen. The illusion that science deals exclusively with the material and the visible. The foundation of science. The faith of the Old Testament. The faith of the New Testament. Dr. Wace on faith. Mozley's conception of faith as unverified reason. Illustrations from character, from science and from religion. Faith as comprehensive name for the contents of Christianity. Antagonisms to faith in the present generation. The nescience philosophy. Utterance of Professor Huxley. Foundations of Agnosticism laid by Christian thinkers, Hamilton and Mansel. Mr. Herbert Spencer relies upon them for his philosophy. Association of Agnosticism with science among the masses. Effects upon literature, upon social life and morality. Influence upon Christian thought. "Back to Christ," away from creeds. The sermon on the mount the sum of the gospel. Doctrines and ethics of Christianity stand or fall together. Moral code of Christianity powerless without divine authority of Christ. Duty inspired by faith. The inspiration of missions to the heathen. Duty to Christ the spirit of martyrdom in the early Church. Remarkable utterance of George Eliot. Analysis. Error of reliance upon imagination for apprehension of spiritual truth. Conscious and unconscious faith. Faith implicit in duty. Utterances of Christ.

In the first lecture we endeavored to illustrate some of the functions of reason as accounting for the origins of the great ideas of natural religion, and in a higher sense the support and the cooperative faculty with faith in the fundamental ideas of Christianity. The requirement of the New Testament to give a

reason for the faith that is in us is not a specific one, confined to the first age of Christianity, when it had to meet the questionings and doubts, the traditions and authorities of paganism, but it is in force for all generations of the Christian Church, as long as the truth has to fight its way in the world.

Thought can only be met by thought, and false reasons can only be refuted by true reasons. The Christian Church has never refused the challenge of an appeal to the reasonableness of human nature and she never will. She has in her heart the abiding consciousness that, however rational her adversaries may seem to be, she has in her faith reasons that will find a response in the universal reason of mankind, as a true solution of the mysteries of man's life and the problems of the universe in which he is placed.

The Scripture phrase, "a reason for the faith," suggests the idea that reason and faith, so far from being separate or antagonistic religious faculties, are cooperative and correlative. Reason as implicit in faith, is reason working unconsciously and without criticism of its own operations.

There is an expression, in a remarkable chapter in the Epistle to the Hebrews, illustrating the relation of faith to reason which is to be our subject in this lecture. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God, so that

things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."[1] As reason in the first passage is described as implicit in faith, so faith here is defined as working in and through the reason, and laying hold of the spiritual and the unseen as the origin and the cause of the temporal and the visible world.

A cause must be apprehended by the reason, but the vision of the unseen as a postulate for reason is an apprehension of faith. This is the invariable assumption in all Scripture expressions which describe faith in its different relations and forms of activity.

It is a vision of the unseen. It lays hold upon and uses the unseen as a practical power over the spiritual and the intellectual life, in contradistinction to the seen which ever tends to dominate the mind as the only objective reality.

Science is supposed to deal only with the outward and material substance of things; that which we can see with our eyes and touch with our hands, and therefore the popular idea is that the things of science are certainties: they are the subjects of ocular and sensible demonstration. But if we think, at once we recognize this as a vulgar illusion. If observation confined itself to the visible and the tangible it could never develop into science. Animals observe and see the visible world with wider vision and more accurate

[1] Hebrews 11 : 3.

cognizance of sense than man, but the animal is incapable of science. It has certain gifts that are furnished for its preservation, by which it generalizes the contents of its experiences from observation of the phenomena of the world in which it lives, but there is an immeasurable gulf between that instinctive knowledge and the habits which are formed by it, and science as man knows it.

Physical science deals with the physical, only as a symbol and an index of the metaphysical which is the true object of its search. It is seeking to know the qualities and the relations of the substances which it analyzes. Its ultimate quest is a knowledge of the forces that are at work and that account for the phenomena. These forces, relations, qualities, attractions and repulsions are recognized by their effects, but they themselves are invisible. They dwell in a world which is to you unseen, as truly as the world of spirit is unseen. Your reason infers them as the cause, and your faith lays hold on them as the reality. This is the only possible account you can give of them, and this is the sum and substance of science. Its ultimate foundation is faith in the unseen. You are capable of science because as a being of intelligence and of spirit, you have the gift of faith to see the unseen and to build all of your knowledge upon the assumption of its reality.

This is the general principle and the philosophy of

faith, and it finds its highest expression in the revelation of the Scriptures. The faith of the Old Testament is described as "seeing Him who is invisible,"[1] and the faith of the New Testament as "whom having not seen ye love."[2]

In this relation it is the instinct and the dominant force in all religions. In the Old Testament revelation it is the principle underlying the history, the wonderful literature and the religious institutions of the chosen people of God. Their spiritual life revolved around their faith in an eternal law of righteousness and a personal God as its author. It had in it the promises to their forefathers of a future for their race, in themselves vague and improbable and opposed to present indications in the visible aspect of things, and yet certain, because their God was a God of truth. These promises were few, and to other races, who had no living belief in a personal God, they were fragile imaginations and incredible dreams. But the Jewish faith, in its ideal expressions in prophecy and Psalm, was that these promises of their invisible but covenant God were more reliable than visible nature and its order, than sea, and sun, and summer, and winter. Their historic faith kindled their imaginations to picture the scenes of their wonderful history. God had sweetened the springs of Marah for their thirst in the desert; had struck the

[1] Hebrews 11:27. [2] 1 Peter 1:8.

waters from the rock to flow in the wilderness. To them, the idea of the impossibility of a miracle, or that their invisible God, who made the visible order and assigned to the forces of nature the work they were to do, could not, for His own purposes, use them and accomplish His will through them would have been intellectual insanity. Though flesh and heart failed them, though the mountains were carried into the depths of the sea, they felt "the Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."[1]

The foundations of Christianity were laid in this preparatory faith for which the elder dispensation was the education. The advance in the faith in the invisible God was the manifestation of that God in Christ Jesus, His humanity, His divinity, His life, His death for sin, His resurrection as the ground for faith in the unseen realities. Christ had gone back into the invisible world, but the Christians believed that He was there in a nature like their own both God and man; that He was in constant communion with them and they with Him. This was the tremendous addition to the foundations of their faith and to its vital forces as a power of salvation.

The activity of the faith faculty occupies the same position in all religions for good or for evil. In the life and conduct of mankind there has been no power

[1] Ps. 46:7.

like faith. Human nature is made for it, and its absence can only be conceived of as a paralysis of man's mind on the whole side of his spiritual and intellectual constitution. One of our best thinkers says, "It has been by the invisible rather than by the visible, by the future rather than by the present, by faith rather than by sight that as a matter of fact mankind as a whole has been governed and organized and has advanced to its present position. The part played by reason has indeed been a momentous one and has been second only to that of faith. It is faith that has grasped whole nations and ages under its sway, and which has determined the main principles of their conduct and their destiny."[1]

The Scriptures illustrate faith by giving us a picture of it in action and in life. Writers and thinkers have attempted to define it as an experience in consciousness. Canon Mozley in describing one aspect of it says, "Faith is *unverified* reason; reason which has not yet received the verification of the final test, but is still expectant."[2] There can be no doubt that there is a side of truth in this statement of one aspect of faith. It is reason, looking onward for the verification of a conclusion that it has reached, leaning upon and supported by faith. Without this faith, reason is impotent for belief or for action.

I may have a strong argument for some reform in

[1] Dr. Wace, B. L., p. 9, A. Ed. [2] Mozley, B. L., 1865, p. 104.

Church or state which I am advocating, but I may not have faith, that is, practical confidence in my own argument. This constitutes the difference between a leader and a follower, between a theoretical and a practical reformer, between Luther and Erasmus, between a philosopher who sits in his study and weaves his logical chains until he is as confident about shadows as he is about realities, and one who sees the truth and stands for it though he may have to stand alone. There are thousands of men whose theories are right but they seem powerless for action. They say and do not. They need faith in themselves and in the truth they profess to believe. They lack that trust in duty and truth which alone can arouse human nature from the enervation of selfishness and send it out to work for men and for God. Right conclusions are of great importance in the fields of our duty to ourselves and to the world, but reason can only lead us up to a conclusion; faith alone can follow on. Faith alone can deepen it into conviction, and apply it to life, and link it with that hope that maketh not ashamed, and that love which transforms all sacrifice into the joy of service for God and for man.

In the sphere of the natural life it is a principle of the mind which is the secret of endurance and patient expectation in the pursuit of knowledge. The man of science toils through the patient years seeing the truth he is searching for, not by sight, but by a scientific faith.

All the lines of scientific reasoning and experiment are pointing towards the truth, but it is still in the dark; it still awaits a crowning verification, like the discovery of Neptune from observations of perturbations of the orbit of Uranus. The two great astronomers, for long years of weary nights searching the sky in vain, at last, their calculations eliminated from error by repeated experiments, fixed upon a spot in the illimitable space where the new world must be. With trembling hope they pointed the telescope, and the great planet moved into its field to greet their wondering eyes. We call that a triumph of science and so it is. But from the beginning to the consummation it was the patience, the perseverance, the toil, the hope of faith that won the victory. In the higher realm of religion that same principle of faith is, we are told, "the victory that overcometh the world."[1]

Faith again is used as the comprehensive name for the beliefs that constitute the substance and the heart of Christianity, its intellectual contents and deeper still, its living convictions; that of which the Church of all ages is the witness and of which the Bible committed to it is the revelation.

To say that Christian faith in our day and generation is engaged in conflicts with potential enemies is only to assert the identity of the experience of the

[1] 1 John 5: 4.

present with the history of the past. The vividness and the stress of the present tend to exaggeration of its conflicts and its evils in contrast with the fading memories and the receding shadows of the past. The politician and the churchman, the social reformer and the satirist are prone to intensified impressions of the good or the evil in their own generation. It is natural and human that it should be so and on one side it is a beneficent and needful provision, but still liable to illusion, and no illusion is as good as the truth that dissipates it. On the other hand the optimist may think, as some writers about religion and religious experience are saying, that the doubts which confronted faith in the past are for the most part dead doubts; that the problems that engaged the mind of the past have ceased to trouble the present so that old controversies in creeds and in philosophy, in society and the state are for the most part like the ashes and the scoriæ of extinct volcanoes; but doubts are never dead, and old controversies are never burnt out. Christianity has passed through many conflicts, and sterner ones may await her in the future, but her strength is cumulative and as her day so shall it be.

Each generation has in it an element of originality, because humanity is a progressive organism and under Christianity is ever pressing forward towards the realization of its ideal, temporal and eternal, in Christ.

The present generation is confronted by problems

and influences that are certainly exceptional in the history of religion, at least as regards the degree and the intensity of their activity. The wonderful progress of scientific discoveries has given rise to an excitement in the minds of the masses unknown before upon any subject which has engaged the attention of mankind. Science has thus been advertised; it has been brought to our doors and enters into the commonest processes of our daily life. All men see its triumphs and wonder at them. Should it be a matter of surprise that with this material efficiency and certainty of practical results, the idea should grow and spread that the principle and method of scientific investigation is the only method by which truth can be arrived at and mysteries unveiled, and that outside of these methods all else is uncertain and lacking in verification?

Christianity says "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."[1] Science, in the hands of this modern school of sceptical philosophy, says, "We can have no possible assurance of things that are only hoped for, no evidence whatever of things not seen. We can have no knowledge and therefore no real convictions of things that are incapable of being tested and verified by the senses. Every step we take in the path of knowledge demands verification. We are bound to walk by sight, and

[1] Hebrews 11 : 1.

walking by faith is thus relegated to the region of unreality and superstition. In so far as Christianity is without this verification it has no adequate ground to stand upon." This is the method and the first principle which in the popular mind is identified with science, and such identification has spread it far and wide.

This theory necessarily lands us in pure materialism; accordingly we find those who hold it engaged in the effort to discover the mechanical equivalent of thought, the physical forces in the mechanism of human life which constitute the cause of psychical phenomena. The popular and eloquent exponent of this philosophy who has lately died, says in one of his lectures, "I can find no intelligible ground for refusing to say that the properties of protoplasm, including thought, reason, will and what appear to us to be spiritual operations, result from the nature and the disposition of its molecules."[1] He does not say that movement among the molecules of nerve matter in the brain are antecedents and attendants upon the production of thought, but that they are the causes of thought; they are the phenomena of that highest power of matter which is displayed in its functions as the creator of mind.

The more cautious advocates of the philosophy of

[1] Huxley, Collected Essays, pub. 1894.

materialism, recognizing the contradictions and the impossibilities involved in this extreme but logical development of the theory, have taken refuge in the philosophy of nescience, and prefer to be called agnostics.[1] Nescience does not deny the existence of God nor the existence of a spirit in man, but simply says if these things are so we cannot know them because there is no scientific proof of them. We have no means of verifying them to our senses. God is unknowable, and therefore even upon the assumption of the possibility of a revelation it is impossible that we could receive it, because the finite cannot receive or apprehend the infinite. It is a remarkable episode in the history of philosophy that the foundation of this agnostic thought was unconsciously laid by Christian thinkers. Materialistic conceptions of the origin of the universe, including mind, are indeed as old as Lucretius. Nescience, as a fear and a temptation to the human mind, is older still. But this organized system of negations is of modern origin. Sir William Hamilton was coeval with the revival of philosophy in British thought and education, after a long period of decadence. His doctrine of the Relativity of Knowledge might be described in this simple form. We know nothing of anything as it is in itself. All that we know is only as appearance of something that is unknown. Therefore being ignorant of things in

[1] See note 6.

themselves we are limited to the contemplation of appearances.

With reference to the knowledge of God his position was that the finite could not know the infinite, and yet that the existence of the infinite is a necessary datum of the human consciousness. From the first of these propositions a consequence, which Hamilton never intended, is logically inevitable, for if we can know nothing but the appearances of things and have no faculty for the cognizance of realities, we cannot be said to know anything, for knowledge is reality and not an appearance. With reference to the second proposition, that we cannot know God and yet we are conscious of His existence, it may be replied that if we are conscious of God's existence we must know God as far as we are so conscious, and that consciousness becomes the receptivity and the promise of all other knowledge of Him. Dean Mansel applied the doctrine to theology in "The Limits of Religious Thought," Bampton Lectures for 1858 and presses it to the verge of the nescience philosophy.

Mansel and his master, Hamilton, used the doctrine to establish the proof of the necessity of a revelation. Spencer, upon the basis of the nescience philosophy, uses it to prove the impossibility of a revelation, because between the finite and the infinite there is an impassable gulf, so that not even a revelation from heaven can introduce into the finite mind a knowledge

which, without ceasing to be finite, it cannot attain. "Thought by its very nature is imprisoned in the relative."

This doctrine, in part of the Hamiltonian and in full of the Spencerian philosophy, of "impassable gulfs" between the finite and the infinite, the relative and the absolute, the conditioned and the unconditioned seems to be nothing more than a false abstraction, a metaphysical figment, a fictitious entity, an imaginary hard and fast line of division between God and man which the mind of the philosopher conjures up, and then charges intelligence with imbecility, because of its inability to think nonsense. In all religion, as has been shown by every sound Christian thinker, there is an element of mystery, but a religion which is all mystery is an impossibility and an absurdity.

The fundamental doctrine of nescience, which finds its ablest exposition in the writings of Mr. Herbert Spencer, is a blank denial of the possibility of either faith or reason attaining to any knowledge of God in natural or in revealed religion. It is an easy off-hand philosophy and fascinating by reason of its simplicity on the surface. The plain mind loves a demonstration and demonstrative evidence. That it has made a wide impression in many quarters upon our generation no one who thinks or observes or reads will deny.

In one of the latest scientific books from the

American press upon the subject of The Evolution of Government, the author addresses himself to prove the proposition that the time is near at hand when the state will not only live, but prosper more and more as religion is progressively eliminated.

Much of the ethical writing that is circulated among the masses, embodied in fiction to reach the young, and literary creations of a more permanent character to reach a maturer class of minds, has for its theme the idea that right can better prevail and law can govern without God, and without conscience deriving its sanction from a belief in a personal God.

In addition to these expressions through literature, writers have, from observation and statistics, pointed out signs in the Old World and in our New World of a relaxation of the bonds of morality; a lowering of the tone of public conscience; an increase of license; the frequency of suicide in the great cities of Europe and America, and the absence of that reprobation of it upon the conception of it as a crime against God as well as against man, which was characteristic of a former generation; the breaking down of the defenses which Christian conscience and law have thrown around domestic purity in the multiplication of causes for divorce; the absence of restraint and the yielding to impulse and passion; these and other darker symptoms of the most civilized societies have been referred to the prevalence of a negation phi-

losophy, in the name of science, which flouts at morality and blots out duty and God and immortality. There may be exaggeration[1] as to the prevalence of this philosophy and the extent of these symptoms, but there can be no doubt of the wide activity of these influences and of their direct antagonism to Christian faith.

There are also influences in the Church itself giving evidence of the presence of this negation philosophy, and accounting for tendencies in recent forms of theological thought. There is a school of thought, composed of many good men, whose watchword is "back to Christ" and "away from creeds." Back to the Gospel morality and away from the wranglings of theology. The tendency of the school is to let go miracles, to subordinate the supernatural in the person of Christ and in the wonderful facts of the Gospel; to relegate to the background, as far as possible, everything mysterious and incapable of verification; to exalt the moral precepts of the Gospel and the moral ideal of Christ, as though they could stand by themselves as the sum of Christianity. They say we need not perplex ourselves about His divinity or the atonement for our sins upon the cross or His literal resurrection from the dead as containing in it the promise and the potency of our own immortal destiny in Him. Let these mysteries alone. Preach Christ

[1] See note 5.

as the moral ideal of the race. Seek to be like Him. Strive to engraft His laws of conduct upon men, upon society, upon law and art, upon business, government and civilization. Morality, not doctrine, is the saving power of the world.

Those who hold this view imagine that they are maintaining the simplicity of the Gospel. As great as Dean Stanley was in those departments of religious thought, where his genius was at home, he had vague suspicions of doctrines and of creeds as unnecessary burdens upon reason and faith. Dr. Hatch, of Oxford, whose early death deprived English scholarship of one of its brightest ornaments, opens his celebrated Hibbert Lectures with these words: "It is impossible for any one, whether he be a student of history or no, to fail to notice a difference of both form and content between the 'Sermon on the Mount,' and the Nicene Creed. The Sermon on the Mount is the promulgation of a new law of conduct; it assumes beliefs rather than formulates them; the theological conceptions that underlie it belong to the ethical rather than to the speculative side of theology; metaphysics are wholly absent. The Nicene Creed is a statement partly of historical facts and partly of dogmatic inferences; the metaphysical terms which it contains would probably have been unintelligible to the first disciples; ethics have no place in it. The one belongs to a world of Syrian peasants; the other

to a world of Greek philosophers. The contrast is patent. If any one thinks that it is sufficiently explained by saying that the one is a sermon and the other a creed, it must be pointed out in reply that the question why an ethical sermon stood in the forefront of the teaching of Jesus Christ and a metaphysical creed in the forefront of the Christianity of the fourth century, is a problem which claims investigation." [1]

The dominance of the idea, that dogma and doctrine have nothing to do with the Gospel and are only gratuitous additions and accretions which are destined to pass away, and that the essential thing in Christianity is the new code of morals set forth authoritatively by Jesus Christ, is quite evident in this passage. It appears at the opening of the book, as the prominent thought in writing it, and it reappears at the end, in a more overt form, as a conclusion from all the lines of thought and investigation which the author has pursued. He says "The Sermon on the Mount is not an outlying portion of the Gospel but its sum." [2]

It appears from many expressions that, at least one of the influences, leading a mind of extraordinary capacity to such a conclusion, was the conviction of a supposed advantage in such a position for defending Christianity from the attack of a philosophy which

[1] Dr. Hatch, Hibbert Lectures, p. 1. [2] *Ibid*, p. 351.

denied the possibility of a miraculous revelation, by confining the statement of its essentials to the smallest possible dimensions, and to eliminate from its contents all that is mysterious and perplexing so that it may be able to challenge the scientific tests for verification. If we conceive of Christianity as, in its essence, only an ethical sermon, we remove the grounds of objections and satisfy the demands of the scientific evidence. The conscience of mankind verifies the testimony. There you have a ground that cannot be shaken. The ethical sermon is the real Gospel and the Nicene Creed is a form of dogma invented by the Church, from which the reality of Christianity has evaporated, leaving behind it intellectual dreams and arid metaphysical distinctions. Such is the complacent criticism of a school of thought upon a creed that embodies a noble history of tribulations and triumphs of the faith and the reason of the Christian Church standing through centuries of conflict for the essential Divinity and essential humanity of her Lord and Master.

The Divinity of our Lord is the only possible explanation of His words and His assumptions of power, and the Nicene Creed finds its authority in the Sermon on the Mount. The old law says, "Thou shalt not kill," . . . "but I say unto you whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment." The old law proclaims,

"Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Who is it speaking to those Jews, who supersedes and transcends the law given by God on Sinai, the centre of their moral faith? Who is it that says, "Many will say to Me in that Day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them I never knew you, depart from Me." In every word of that wonderful sermon He spoke as ruler and as judge. He who can exercise such authority must be infinitely more than man. He is the ruler of man's conscience. He is the authority of the conscience of the race. He is the Son of man and the Son of God, who shall sit upon the throne of judgment, and before Him all nations shall be gathered, and He shall render unto every man according to his deeds. It is that faith in Christ, as our judge and our conscience, which clothes His moral precepts with supreme authority. Other moralists have said very much the same things but they have fallen powerless upon the world. They have been regarded as impractical dreams.

The fact is that the doctrines and the ethics of Christianity stand or fall together. Christian morality is rooted in our relation to God in Christ. If

Christ had only been a man or the greatest of moral philosophers, the Sermon on the Mount would long ago have been relegated to the region of poetry. It would have lived in literature as a pathetic ideal dream of a hope unfulfilled. The moral faith and the moral reason in us would see in Christ the perfect life, but with it the consciousness in humanity of moral weakness would testify to our utter inability to obey His laws. The demands made upon us by the Sermon on the Mount are impossible except upon the assumption of divine help and redeeming grace. They can only be explained by what He said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again;" to the woman of Samaria at the well, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst;" to the disciples, "I am the vine, ye are the branches"; "without Me ye can do nothing." The divine morality implies the divine life to fulfil it. If Christ calls us to a life that is beyond our natural strength, a righteousness that is impossible to us by nature, He means that we shall ask Him for that strength with the simple faith that He will give it. He says that He will become ours and if we abide in Him He will abide in us. To isolate the Sermon on the Mount from the gospel of Christ, as our moral strength and our God and Saviour, is to render it unintelligible and impossible.

Men will not do right or strive after perfection be-

cause we bid them to do it. They want forgiveness for the past and strength for the future. That strength they know is not in themselves or in anything that nature can give; it is in the supernatural, it is in God. Faith in the supernatural is the sanction of the gospel morality and the reason justifies the faith.

We have seen the fallacy of the attempt, under the influence of the new philosophy, to separate doctrine and morality in Christianity. Christ, as Christian faith believes in Him, is the foundation, the strength, and the authority of the moral life of the believer. The idea of duty to Him and dependence upon Him is the vital force of character in the individual and in the Christian Church. Faith in Christ involves the assent of the reason to facts and truths in the gospels as to what He has done for us and who He is, but as a consequence of that, it involves a receptive attitude of the mind and the heart to Christ Himself; a dying to self and a submission to Him. Our faith in historical Christianity is imbedded and implicit as the motive force in the heart of our spiritual Christianity. His person and His work are the inspiration and the guarantee of our surrender to Him and obedience to Him. We must believe in doctrines but we cannot live on them as apprehended by the reason alone. For every doctrine of our creed there must be a spiritual equivalent assimilated from it, transmuted

out of it by a living faith, into our hearts, our life, our duty.

We have seen that the morality of Christianity cannot stand without the doctrine of Christianity. Can duty stand alone? Is a sense of duty a self-operating force in the mind, self-sufficient and self-sustaining? Has it no connections, no beliefs beyond it and above it? Or if it has connections, are they abstractions, principles, deductions of reason, instinctive impulses with no embodiment that gives them voice, coherence, personality and authority? What is the working force in Christianity manifested in every age in the missionary activity of the Church? What constitutes the urgency of its appeal, its sacrifice, its prayer? Why is it that this missionary spirit is the criterion of her vitality? We send missionaries to the heathen and, thank God! in a thousand Sunday-schools and homes our children are taught to give and to pray for missions. Why? Is it because we hold the heathen to be condemned for not believing in a Saviour of whom they have never heard? Archbishop Tait, one of the great men who have presided over the English Church, rebuked one of his clergy in a charge as far back as 1869, who in an appeal for missionary effort had said "at every ticking of the clock, in every four and twenty hours, from month to month, and year to year, God sends a heathen straight to never ending misery." God for-

bid that any clergyman could be found to use such an argument for missions to-day.

Our thought of God and our conception of His relations to mankind in Christ have advanced far beyond the possibility of holding such a doctrine concerning the heathen. There is certainly more probability that Christians will be judged for not taking the Gospel to the heathen, than that the heathen will be judged for not following a light they have never seen, and for not believing a Gospel they have never heard. Duty to Christ is the perennial spring in the missionary spirit of the Church. It is His command which is laid upon it and which has never been revoked. Every missionary revival is only a renewed recognition of that obligation to Christ. Every missionary, who leaves his home for a heathen land, feels that command upon his conscience. Put it off as he may, it follows him. He goes and finds peace because it is his duty to go. In all arguments about missions the question at last returns to that one supreme argument, duty to Christ. The world spirit disposes of the subject of missions with the polite scorn in the question, "Why not leave the heathen to the mercies of God? Surely His mercies are greater than yours." Christianity answers by another question. "Would you apply that principle to the poor and the sick and the destitute around you? God's mercy is over them and He will care for them." If so,

you would put an end to the ministrations of all human brotherhood, and would dry up the springs of every charity and blot out from human life all that is beautiful and noble in sacrifice for one another. If the needy sick in a city need a hospital, God's mercy is over them; but He does not build a hospital by a miracle. He employs our hands and our money to build it, and we are educated and our hearts are enlarged by building it. We, who have, are the representatives of God's pity and love to those who have not. Your brother is starving. You pass him by and leave him to the mercy of God, and he starves. God does not send him manna down from Heaven. We have food, and Christ commands us to minister to our brother. In every act of mercy we are being moved and transformed by His spirit, and our character is being redeemed by His Grace.

Missions to the heathen are identical in principle with our common daily duties to one another. It may be that God has some unrevealed purposes of mercy towards the heathen which we will never know until the restoration of all things, but that is not the question. Christ knew all about the present and the future of the heathen, and His command was to go forth and preach the Gospel to every creature. We know that the redemption of Christ extends to all the families of men, and alters the position of man as man. The Church knows that all men are capable

of salvation in and through Christ and Christ alone. She knows that every other agency has failed and will fail, and we are to-day seeing that this Gospel is the power of salvation for human nature in its deepest degradations.

No speculations of ours as to God's uncovenanted plans and purposes can, for a moment, affect the question of our plain duty to Christ to obey His command. Duty to Christ! That is the wonder of the Christian Church. When other arguments for or against Christianity have been repeated until they have lost their meaning, that goes on undiminished in its power and unanswerable in its evidence.

Paley's argument is intellectually cold, but it has in it the heart of the matter. Duty to Christ, to an unseen Lord and Saviour humbled the power of the proudest of earthly sovereignties and laid the foundations of the Church we have been building on ever since. The early Christians were men. They shrank from suffering as we do, as human nature does, but when it came to denying Christ that was another thing. Duty to Him was incommensurable with fire and with torture; they are not in the same category. The soldier takes his place before the enemy's battery. He trembles from a human fear, but that is only a physical instinct of self-preservation and has nothing to do with his mental conviction, his duty. The front ranks are thinned, but those behind move in

to take their places, and comrade cheers comrade on. Philosophers in their studies may speculate and doubt and do nothing. It is duty that moves the world. When Rome found that she could do nothing by killing the martyr Christians, and that as fast as they fell many more came to take their places, she humbled herself before what? Duty. The faith, the hope, the love in duty; duty to an unseen but living Lord.

A poet, one of the two greatest of the last century, in a few lines lights up the picture of the heroism, the unconquerable power of duty in love to Christ, the spirit of that martyr age. Every line and every word, so pure, so simple, has a ray of light revealing what human nature is capable of, in meekness and patience and courage, at the foot of a Saviour's cross.

It is Browning's Epitaph in the Catacombs.

"I was born sickly, poor and mean
A slave; no misery could screen
The holders of the pearl of price
From Cæsar's envy, therefore twice
I fought with beasts, and three times saw
My children suffer by his law.
At last my own release was earned.
I was some time in being burned,
But at the close a hand came through
The fire above my head and drew
My soul to Christ, whom now I see.
Sergius, a brother, writes for me
This testimony on the wall —
For me, I have forgot it all."

In the calm of the other side he has no hate for Cæsar. He thinks little of all the sufferings and probation of the world. He is with Christ. He has forgotten it all. Here we have human nature, with its capacities raised to their highest power by a spiritual force which transcends all the possibilities of antagonistic material forces, and links it in duty and love to eternity and to God.

A remarkable woman, whose portrayals of human nature in the realm of fiction will live longer perhaps than any other contributions of the last century in that department of literature, exclaimed to a friend a year before her death in a moment of intense earnestness, "God! Immortality! Duty! How inconceivable is the first; how unbelievable is the second; how absolute is the third!" The nescience philosophy, to which we have referred in relation to its disastrous influence for error, both without and within the Christian Church, shattered the faith of this remarkable person. But the exclamation summing up her unbelief contains a germ of belief, which is the logical refutation of her negations. God, she says, is inconceivable. Yes! inconceivable to the imagination. "Immortality is unbelievable." Yes! unbelievable to the imagination, because imagination is not the faculty by which we see spiritual things, or by which we are connected with them. It is a faculty adapting the mind to a visible world, not to an in-

visible. It is the picture making power. Its combinations are composed of the colors, the forms, the personalities we have seen, the sounds we have heard but not of things beyond the finite. St. Paul, describing immortality in Christ, says, "eye hath not seen nor ear heard neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them who love Him."[1]

It is not necessary in order to believe even physical facts or phenomena that we should be able to imagine them. Otherwise our beliefs would be limited by our ability to reproduce in imagination the appearances to our senses of the things we have seen here upon earth, or the feelings we have experienced in our consciousness. An inhabitant of the tropics could not imagine that water could be turned into a substance as hard as stone, and would refuse to believe it until the knowledge is communicated to him by visible demonstration. If beliefs are to be limited to constructions of imagination, we would be driven to scepticism about everything except the things we have seen. We have never seen our own spirits, our own minds and it is impossible to imagination to construct a picture of them. Our beliefs in the unseen and spiritual truths transcend the powers of imagination either to originate or to grasp them. When reason and faith lay hold upon spiritual truths imagination comes in to

[1] 1 Cor. 2:9.

help them by making a picture, by pointing out an analogy, by furnishing a symbol, by creating a word or a form to hold the idea; but the word is not the idea, the symbol is not the reality. They are only helps to the mind in holding them.

Now the danger is that in spiritual things we identify the form in which it comes to us with the reality, and that is equivalent to subordinating reason and faith to imagination. The tendency of human nature, even in the highest order of minds, is just in this direction. Spinoza said that "to speak of an incarnation of God taking upon Him the nature of man is just as absurd as to conceive of the circle taking upon it the nature of the square."[1] The absurdity evidently emerges in Spinoza's mind from the attempt of the imagination, dealing with the mathematical relations of material things, to form a conception of the nature of God and to originate and support a belief in revelation. He employs his imagination to arrive at a knowledge of God as revealed in Christ and, imagination failing him, he concludes the absurdity of revelation. Mr. Spencer imagines that he has disposed of the prophesies of an incarnate Saviour and their fulfilment when he asks the question, "If we can possibly believe that the cause to which we can put no limits in time or space, and of which our entire solar system is a relatively infinitesimal product, took the disguise of

[1] Caird's Philosophy of Religion.

a man for the purpose of covenanting with a shepherd chief of Syria."[1] Here we have a negation of revelation built upon the imagination of the stupendous distance between the greatness of God and man's littleness. All minds feel the impression and find in it a temptation to doubt; but the yielding to it is another thing. That is renouncing reason and faith, conscience and revelation for an imagination built upon material things. David felt the pressure as he watched his flocks by night and, looking upward at the sky, exclaimed, "When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained; What is man that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that Thou visitest him?"[2] The Psalmist from his own experience gives a picture of the shadow cast upon faith in God, in the universal consciousness of the race, by the magnitudes of nature contrasted with the apparent insignificance of man.

Yielding to the negative imagination which obscures reason and conscience is at the root, as Bishop Butler says, of all error. It is the essential principle of idolatry. The Psalmist transcends the spell of the imagnation. Reason and faith, revelation and his own experience of God's dealings with him opened his eyes to see in human nature something infinitely

[1] Herbert Spencer's Ecclesiastical Institutions, p. 704.
[2] Psalm 8 : 3, 4.

greater than the stars, or all the material magnitudes of the universe. He saw too by an irresistible logic that, if God is infinite, though as regards space He may be infinitely far, He must also be infinitely near to a creature He has made in His own image; and that there could be, in the nature of things, nothing strange that He would draw a Syrian shepherd to His side and seal him with a covenant, which had for its purpose, not the aggrandizement of the shepherd himself, but the blessing through Him to all the children of men.

The confusion of thought in the exclamation of the remarkable woman referred to, was the substitution of inconceivable and unbelievable for the unimaginable. She identified conception and belief in unseen things with imagination; but imagination gives up, comes to a blank wall upon the borders of the spiritual world, and sees nothing tangible beyond. She had been educated in the philosophy of Spinoza and Spencer and Lewes, the philosophy of void and negation; but when she comes to duty, to conscience, to the sense of right and wrong, her reason asserts itself. Her teachers accounted for conscience and duty as social instincts, developed by mechanical laws, by expediency, by the accumulation of experience that certain modes of conduct were best for the happiness of the whole, and these things were called right; certain others were detrimental to the happiness of

the individual and of society, and these things were called wrong. Morality, duty is thus a development out of human experience upon the basis of expediency. Her reason was too keen for that illusion. She recognized it as a vain imagination. She saw her own failings and they lived in her memory; they were personal, her own, not another's. Duty was her last hold upon a personal God, a kind of unconscious faith and reason that would not let her go.

She knew the meaning of philosophical terms and she exclaims "duty, how absolute!" and absolute is identical with infinite. It has been said that "the infinite nature of duty is a distinct and specific creation of Christianity, and the sense of it, as a power over the life and a permanent and growing force and inspiration to conduct, is linked to two other infinities; the infinity of God and the infinity of our communion with Him, and our portion in an endless life with Him. We could not have a sense of the infinitude of duty if our minds were absolutely vacant of a conviction of God and a life in the future with Him. We cannot have an infinite sense of duty controlling our practical life, forming an atmosphere around our conduct and at the same time believe that our life vanishes into nothing after a few brief years of our earthly existence. The sense of duty is the highest and the most active and powerful conviction that we have. If that sense is infinite, then its correlative with

which it is indissolubly associated must be infinite too. If duty has infinite relations to us, then we must have infinite relations to duty." If this is true, there is no escape from the conclusion that duty has in it an innate sense, an unconscious faith in God and in a future life. And a proof of it is found in the universal experience that in proportion as human nature identifies itself with the things of time and sense, as it substitutes idolatry to the God of this world for the living God, duty to ourselves, to our brother-men, to our whole life progressively weakens its hold in the atmosphere of the carnal mind and the self-bound view of life and of the world.

How could we sacrifice ourselves for others and lay down our lives, if need be, for truth, for duty, for human welfare if their life and ours is conceived of literally as a vapor that vanishes away? Human life is too insignificant to trouble ourselves about it. The Epicurean Creed, "let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die," would find no protest from conscience, no warning from the voices of faith in eternity and in God to stay its progress on the way to universal supremacy over mankind. Duty cannot live without faith. Wherever we find it faith, conscious or unconscious, is the atmosphere which gives it vitality. Duty implies faith in a future life and Christianity, by bringing life and immortality to light,

imparts to duty a living hope instead of a latent struggling instinct in the natural man. It transmutes a tentative expectation into a habit of mind, into an anchor that holds faster as the sea is wilder. By faith in Christ duty finds in redeeming love the courage to lay aside the weights of the past, to transcend the memory of sins and wanderings and to live for the future. By faith Christ progressively educates the conscience to see the reason and the blessedness in duty and patience and self-abnegation, by presenting a life, which, when all earthly ideals have been shattered, will stand as the one ideal for the homage and the love of human hearts.

We have spoken of conscious and unconscious faith. Doubtless the highest form of faith and that towards which all faith is growing, is the conscious faith in Jesus Christ and the work He has accomplished for us and what we owe to Him. This is the ideal faith. But how much of the faith of even the most earnest Christians is far short of that. How many duties they do when it cannot be said that they are done consciously for Him and because they are thinking of Him. Many other motives may mingle with the Christian motive. The activity, in the majority of cases, springs out of feelings in the heart and an attitude of mind which Christian faith has formed in them, and the act of duty is done spontaneously and unconsciously.

If this is true of Christians, may it not be true of those who cannot call themselves Christians, and yet strive to do their duty? Is not the impulse to duty, to goodness, to truth in them an unconscious faith which has its origin in the inspiration of His spirit and which, if it has, He will own? What else can Christ mean, when in illustrating the realities of the final judgment and looking over the whole range of human life in its infinite variety of knowledge and of ignorance, of opportunity and of limitation of light and of darkness, He says, "Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty and ye gave Me drink: I was sick and ye visited Me: I was in prison and ye came unto Me. Then shall the righteous answer Him saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered and fed Thee, or thirsty and gave Thee drink? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." He seems to comprehend all goodness, all sacrifice, all duty for love and for truth as duty to Him.

Or again He says, when He seems to be looking beyond the Christian Church, the fold of the visible kingdom upon earth, and thinking of the seekers after

the truth, the children of duty without the light who are striving to walk by the dim light which they have, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."

The Christian philosophy of duty seems to authorize the hope that this may in some sense be a true interpretation of His wonderful words.

FAITH AND REASON

LECTURE III

FAITH AND REASON

Christian thought passing beyond the conception of antagonism between reason and faith. Old controversy revived. Mr. Balfour's "Foundations of Belief." Mr. Benjamin Kidd's "Social Evolution." The unity of reason and faith in revelation, in presentation of doctrine and in Christian ethics. Difference between ethics of Christianity and all other systems. Scripture makes reason and faith basis of morality. Examples from the New Testament. Belief in its ideal form, harmonious action of reason and faith. Belief distinguished from notions of the intellect or conclusions of logic. From feeling. Belief leads to action; the practical power in life. Belief the secret of power of great leaders and men of action. Illustrations from portrayals of literature. Shakespeare's Hamlet. Philosophy of Hamlet's character. Mozley's criticism. Illustrations from social and political life. Sir Robert Peel and the factory laws. Reforms by Mr. Wilberforce. Government depends upon the character of the people. Remedy for evils of the prevalence of divorce. History of the Christian Church reveals the survival of Christianity due to Christian character appealing to reasonable faith of mankind. Gibbon's five causes for spread of Christianity. Reason for failure of scepticism in attacks upon Christianity. Controversy of the Church with Gnosticism. Prolonged controversy in modern world between the advance of knowledge and doctrine of verbal infallibility of the Bible. Plato on dangers to reason and faith when they outgrow ancient forms. First contact of science with the Church. Galileo and the Church. Controversy healed by reasonable faith. Archbishop Temple's Bampton lectures, Religion and Science. Danger of precipitate judgments. What is personal faith? Faith a step forward and each step is confirmed by the reason.

In the last lecture we considered faith in itself and in its relations to reason as furnishing it with

postulates from the unseen to support morality, conscience and duty, from which living beliefs are nourished and character is formed in the religious life.

We found in reason and faith, as cooperative and implicit, a refutation of the idea not only common to popular thought, but to past theologies and philosophies, that religion is addressed not to the head but to the heart, and that it makes its appeal not to reason, but to faith. I think it may, with truth, be said that theological thought is passing beyond this conception of antagonism between reason and faith which has characterized so much of its literature in the past.

It is true that two authors of distinction have very recently revived this controversy, Mr. Balfour, in his "Foundations of Belief," and Mr. Benjamin Kidd, in his "Social Evolution."

Mr. Balfour's depreciation of reason appears as a rhetorical contrast to authority, which he exalts as the main foundation of religious belief. In treating the subject of authority we may have the opportunity of explaining what we consider his misapprehensions, which are emphasized by his brilliant writing.[1]

With reference to Mr. Kidd's book, which has been widely read, it may be said to belong to a class below the one last mentioned. The attack upon reason is in many passages bordering upon contempt, and we

[1] See Note 8.

wonder what reason it is which is the object of his animosity, but he nowhere furnishes us with a definition. He commends Christianity as having accomplished great results in the education of the human race, and points to evolution as its cause, and reason as its consistent enemy. He does not descend to facts in support of these solemn generalizations. His views are wide and his delineations of them are eloquently expressed, but his keys do not fit the lock he is trying to open. He will be read by persons whose imaginations are kindled by what appears to be philosophical generalizations, and who do not care for precision of thought, or for facts to support theories. His book has nothing of value to contribute to our subject, although he has many things to say about it.

The doctrine of the unity of reason and faith has been anticipated in revelation, in literature, in social and political development, and in the history of the Christian Church. To the consideration of this subject this lecture will be given.

The old controversy over the supposed antagonism between reason and faith has no place in the inspired writings of the New Testament. It never seems to have occurred to St. Paul, the leading writer and perhaps the greatest of the inspired thinkers in the doctrinal development of Christianity, that there could be a natural antagonism between these faculties

and attributes of the human mind. He associates reason and faith as correlative factors, and constituent elements in every act of real belief in the truths of Christianity. He has no doubts about the facts of the gospel history because he knows them. In his mind they occupy the position of certitude. When he comes to the interpretation of the facts and the spiritual truths which grow out of them and are revealed by them, he appeals to the spiritual intelligence, to the moral reason and the conscience. Is it the atonement for sin? On the one side it is supernatural, on the other it is natural. It meets a want, it fulfils an expectation of human nature. It finds a preparation for receiving it in the reason and the conscience of man as man. The sense of sin is the preparation and the introduction in natural religion for the atonement revealed in the gospel. So with every spiritual truth in the Christian faith. He points to a background of reason leading up to faith and making the act of faith reasonable.

The same principle is recognized in his presentation of Christian ethics. He nowhere enjoins duties or gives specific directions of conduct to the Christian converts to whom he is writing, as arbitrary commands to be obeyed by blind submission, as a mere string of precepts, or a list of rules to be mechanically followed. Christ, to him, is the moral ruler of the race, the enlightener and the educator of the reason

and the conscience and the moral sense of mankind; and therefore in the recognition of His authority these are called upon for their cooperative and consentient testimony. His conception of Christian morality is that of a living spirit of service to a living Master, believed in by the reason and by the act of faith. Therefore when he lays down a principle of ethics, he explains how natural and reasonable it is.

When he is called upon for his decision in the controversy whether Christians should eat food which had been offered to idols, a question which had agitated all the churches in the heathen cities, he appeals to reason upon the facts of the case. An idol, he says, is nothing at all. It is an unreality. It has no sense, no moral nor spiritual significance, therefore it is preposterous to suppose that it can defile that which is offered at its shrine. If it is a nonentity, your reason tells you that it can neither curse nor bless, and the idea that it can impart evil to the material thing that is offered to it is an irrational superstition. Food offered to idols is therefore as free from harm in itself as any other food. But if there are among you Christian brethren of morbid imagination and weak reason, who attach the idea of defilement to the association of food with an idol, then the great principle of self-sacrifice supersedes every other consideration. Your Christian brotherhood is your highest relation to each other, and your

duties, springing out of that relation, are your noblest duties. "Wherefore if meat maketh my brother to offend I will eat no flesh while the world standeth."[1] The ethical principle of brotherhood revealed and applied to human relations by Christianity, and by it alone, conditions and controls that other principle of Christian freedom, so that an act of conduct innocent in itself, becomes a sin when it wounds the conscience and the weak faith of a brother.

This decision, upon what was then a burning question among the early Christians, was based upon principles which are decisive upon innumerable questions which present themselves in daily life at the bar of a Christian conscience.

A legal principle, emerging into the development of the law from judicial investigations and decisions in the past, becomes the basis and the rational authority for future decisions, an assumption upon which future investigations begin, without the process of arguing and proving them over again. They are common property recognized by the reason of civilized society. They are the judgments of the best intelligence and the educated conscience, which are accepted by the body of society, not because each individual has argued the question for himself, nor because he submits blindly to authority without thinking for himself, but because he has common sense to trust the

[1] 1 Cor. 8 : 13.

judgment of those who are best qualified to judge. The authority to which he submits is faith in believing where there are the best reasons for believing.

Both the doctrines and the ethics of Christianity have the ground of their acceptance in the structural harmony of the highest faculties of our intellectual and spiritual nature. There is not an ethical precept, from Christ Himself or from the inspired writings of the New Testament, which does not assume as a practical basis of ethical obligation, absolute conformity to the natural reason and conscience. The immense difference between the ethics of Christianity and all other systems, is the new knowledge with which Christianity supplies the reason, the new revelation of duty with which it quickens the conscience. When reason is supplied with falsehood its conclusions are vitiated into worthless or dangerous fallacies. When it is supplied with the truth it infallibly sheds light on the pathway to higher truth. If you feed a loom with worthless material the manufactured garment will also be worthless. If the raw material you put into it is good the product will be genuine. Faith in an error cannot save us from evil consequences of the error. Reasonable faith in truth, as a spring of action, under no conditions or circumstances can ever lead us astray. In this sense, the basis of Christian morality is faith supported by reason and conscience.

Antagonism between reason and faith, by the law of our nature, would be destruction to the foundations of our belief in Christian morality and in the doctrines and revealed truths upon which the ethical system of Christianity rests, and from which it derives its authority. There is no intimation of such a conflict or of its possibility in the New Testament. Alienation of the will from God and from righteousness; the power of that alienated will to set aside the verdict of reason and faith and to choose a vain imagination in their stead; to call that philosophy which is no philosophy; to build defenses and justifications upon the false premises of wrong desires; the yielding of the higher to the lower nature and the identifying the spirit with the flesh; eternity with time; the birthright of the soul with the momentary gratifications of sense, these are perennial tendencies of the natural man. This is the antagonism which St. Paul describes when he cries, out of the depths of his experience, "the flesh," that is the whole worldward side of human nature, "lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other."[1] He never speaks of faith warring against reason, or reason against faith. At the very foundations of belief they are wedded to each other, and the higher their development under the spiritual training of Christianity, the nearer their

[1] Gal. 5 : 17.

approach to identification; so that the Apostle in describing the immortal destiny of the soul in Christ, speaks of an endless progress towards the ideal that is in Him. "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."[1]

The growth of a finite mind and spirit must be a continuous progress, through time and eternity, in knowledge and life, in reason and faith. The two can never dispense with one another from the earliest dawn of our mortal life, through the illimitable years of our blessed immortality. St. Paul, in the beginning of the three chapters in the Epistle to the Romans containing a body of ethical precepts, which if realized in human life would necessarily transform the world, lays down the far-reaching and profound principle underlying Christian morality. "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."[2] To the natural man this sacrifice is unreasonable and impossible; but the new revelation in Christ of duty and of our destiny, proclaims it, not as an arbitrary command, but as a law of conformity to our nature as God meant us to be; that the spirit should rule the body, that the redeemed will and

[1] 1 Cor. 13 : 12. [2] Romans 12 : 1.

educated conscience should rule the flesh with its blind appetites and its wayward passions, and that in Christ it is within our power to gain the victory over the world and all the worldward side of our nature. It is rational; it is the natural order. These passages are illustrations of the assumption underlying the inspired teaching of Christianity, both in doctrine and morality, that reason is not only compatible with faith, but inseparable from it. If we attempt to analyze our consciousness and our mental experiences we find that our faculties run into each other. We cannot separate imagination and memory. We cannot conceive of feeling as independent of the object which calls forth the feeling. No more can we separate reason and faith.

This leads us to consider belief in its ideal significance as the combined and harmonious action of reason and faith. Leave out faith and belief has lost its motive power. It becomes an opinion, a notion of the intellect, a chain from premises to conclusions, an abstraction in the air outside of human nature, away from the hopes and the fears, the duties and the struggles of life. It is powerless for persuasion and impotent for action. Leave out reason, and faith has lost its moorings. It is at the mercy of impulses and feelings and wandering lights. It is without a critical faculty to "try the spirits whether they are of God." It believes what it chooses to believe. Rea-

sonable faith is action of the whole nature in harmony and proportion, and the result is what we call belief, conviction, certitude.

We only need to look at life, indeed we need not look away from ourselves, to recognize the broad distinction between intellectual notions and beliefs, as the difference between the abstract and the concrete; between thought charged with energy for action, and thought evaporating in speculation. Beliefs cannot sit still. They grasp the whole man. They move the spirit, the imagination and the will. They mould the character in which they grow. What is called strength of will is, in the ultimate analysis in the majority of cases, strength of belief, definiteness of conviction. When a man has beliefs, convictions, he imparts confidence to other minds. This is the secret of the power of the great leaders and reformers, discoverers, teachers and preachers of the world. Belief is contagious and magnetic. It kindles sympathies between all the heterogeneous personalities in a vast audience, or an army, or a nation, and unifies them into homogeneity of feeling and fellowship in a common cause. It creates character with power, whether it be upon the public stage of the world or in the private walks of life. Such characters have been behind all the great reforms which have constituted the progressive steps in the growth of civilization. Belief, conviction, reasonable faith, these are springs

of the practical, the moral and the intellectual life of the race. The lack of them is weakness; the possession of them is the measure of efficiency and the reservoir of the force that moves human nature. Literature in its portrayals of character abounds in illustrations of the principle.

Among the surprising examples of Shakespeare's knowledge of the human mind and heart the creation and the character of Hamlet is a conspicuous illustration. The penetrative criticism of Canon Mozley recognizes in Hamlet, in the critical experience of his life, a creation of the poet illustrating the weakness and irresolution of mere largeness of thought, without a moving principle of action. He says, "the mind of Hamlet lies all abroad like the sea—an universal reflector, but wanting the self-moving principle. Musing, reflection and irony upon all the world supersede action, and a task evaporates in philosophy."[1] The terrible shock of his father's death introduces him to the mystery of grief. His mother's marriage with his father's brother, a few weeks afterwards, and that brother seated on the throne; the festive gaiety of the court in which his mother participated, revealed to him a capacity in fallen human nature for the desecration of sacred affections and holy memories. While brooding upon these wrongs the spirit of his departed father appears to him to tell him that his

[1] Mozley's Essays, vol. 2, p. 190.

uncle and his mother are the authors of the crime, and to charge him with the sacred duty of avenging his death. Then come the wild protest of wrath and the instant resolve to execute justice before the day has grown an hour older. "But," says Mozley, "now comes in the philosophical element in Hamlet. It occurs to him that after all, this dreadful act, carried out with such successful artifice and self-possession, is but a sample of a vast system of wrong and injustice in this visible state of things. The king and queen represent to his mind a great evil power or tyranny resident in the system. The court of Denmark, the scene of their crime and prosperity, is the world; its business and festivity, in which his father's fate is forgotten, the world's stir and bustle burying thought, and covering up wrong as soon as done; its courtiers, the idle and careless of mankind who look on as spectators of injustice and do not concern themselves about it."[1] The criticism is true to Shakespeare's meaning. Hamlet is lost in generalization and philosophizing; the native hue of resolution is "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." He spends himself in reflection and satire upon the depravity of mankind. This crime is only a specimen of human nature, only one in a million. Retribution upon this wretched king and faithless queen may meet the demands of this single case, but still the system goes on.

[1] Mozley's Essays, vol. 2, p. 187.

Evil is ubiquitous, it is like the air we breathe. He exclaims,

> "The time is out of joint; oh cursed spite,
> That even I was born to set it right."

So from time to time he puts off the execution of his task with one excuse or another, and last performs it, only as it were by accident, and in a moment of exigency without premeditation. It is the way with philosophy without definite convictions; with criticism, either of religion, or society, or of the world, without principle or duty or faith, simply to gratify a flippant tongue. There are thousands who minister to their own conceit with satire upon the sins and follies of the world, without lifting a hand to correct its evils. There are men and women innumerable, who sit in our churches under the appeals of Christianity for missions at home, or in heathen lands, who give nothing, and do nothing, because action has been paralyzed by lack of intelligent faith, and by a self-imposed ignorance of what Christianity is doing. The sense of duty to do what our hands find to do has evaporated in a speculative scepticism arising from the immensity of the task proposed, and the supposed impossibility of its accomplishment.

Outside of our churches there is a larger class among the educated and the uneducated, than even a pessimistic estimate would conceive, whose thoughts

are dominated by the materialistic and necessitarian philosophy; who imagine that they are talking sense and thinking sense in looking at civilization as a mechanical development under law, and independent of volition; as the growth of plants, or as the order of the solar system. In the outcome of such thinking we reach the conclusion that reason, faith and character are unrealities, which condemns the premises as irrational and unthinkable.

Convictions, beliefs and freewill are the working forces in the evolution of mankind. The field of social and political life abounds in illustrations of this principle. Real belief, faith supported by reason, leads to action.

How many abuses exist in municipal and national governments, admitted by all, but only believed in by few, who are left alone to do the fighting! The demagogue is eloquent upon party corruption in the ranks of the opposition. Men of all parties condemn social evils and political corruptions, but the majority do not really believe, in the sense of a belief involving the duty to resist them. It is a party shibboleth, without faith or reason in unseen principles. Great truths, practical and ethical, lie flat on the surface of society; everybody admitting them, but nobody caring for them. By and by they take hold of the consciences of a few advocates who will not, cannot let them go. The rational conviction imparts char-

acter, and stirs them to action. The action of a few develops into organized agitation, and the agitation arouses public feeling and kindles the imagination with pictures of the iniquity against which the warfare is waged. At first the truth lay upon the intellect, upon the lower logical reason; now it has penetrated into the higher reason which moves the conscience, the faith and the heart. This is the beginning of all social and political reforms. Moral progress in government is a question, not of knowledge, but of the character of the people, who are the fountains of authority and the springs of action.

The long struggle of Sir Robert Peel, one of the noblest statesmen that England has produced, resulted in legislation prohibiting the employment of children, under a certain age, in cotton mills and other manufacturing industries. The whole nation recognized the evil, but it took twelve years to educate it up to a living conviction of the iniquity. England was then the workshop of the world. The new industries furnished work which a child could do as well as a man, and almost earn a man's wages. It was found that the cupidity and laziness in parents prevailed over parental instincts and human compassion, and thousands upon thousands of children, under eight and ten years of age, were working in factories and breathing the poisoned air for ten and twelve hours a

day. It ought to have been recognized as a bitter wrong from the first; but it required years to arouse the public conscience, not only by agitation and protest, but by the revelation of disastrous results in the alarming increase of disease and death rate among the children of the poor in the manufacturing districts, and deformity and dwarfed development among those who survived, threatening a degeneration of the bone and sinew of the English people.

When the measure was introduced into Parliament it was met by the argument that it would be an invasion of the sanctity of family government by public law, in the denial of the rights of parents over their children; as if sanctity could exist in family government with children the victims of the inhumanity of parents. Again, the reform was opposed upon the ground that the extension of governmental control over the domestic life of the people in one case, would be the entering wedge for the universal destruction of individual liberty, ending in absolutism and absolutism recoiling into revolution. It was the same old fallacy of a faithless extreme of conservatism, that refuses to mend a rotten foundation, lest the whole fabric should tumble down in the process. In our own country there are signs that the battle to save the children of the poor from their parents and from the greed of the rich will be fought over again in our own generation.

It is said that Mr. Wilberforce, after succeeding in

his great battle for the abolition of the slave trade, turned his attention to the alarming prevalence of duelling in England. The principle of duelling is the right of personal revenge for insults or wrongs. The principle of civilization, as contrasted with savagery, is the relegation of the vindication of justice and the punishment of wrong from the hands of individuals to the hands of society, to law and to legal processes. That is the broad distinction between barbarism and society organized under law. Duelling is based upon the assumption that a man has a right, and that it is his duty to leave the wife to whom he is bound by the most sacred ties of life, to leave the children whom he has brought into the world, to go out on what he calls a field of honor to be shot at by one whom he has insulted or who may have insulted him, in a moment of senseless passion. The proposition involves such contradictions to the moral reason, and such obliquity of the moral sense as to create amazement that a public sentiment could have existed along with any degree of Christian civilization, which would not only authorize, but compel a man, against his will and reason, to violate his conscience and God's law and his sacred obligations to all of his relations in life, by taking revenge into his own hands. It lingered in old England until less than a half a century ago.

Wilberforce sought the council of the Duke of

Wellington and urged him to use his vast influence with the nation and in Parliament to suppress duelling by law. The duke, after a moment of silence, replied "Yes, it is a relic of barbarism, Mr. Wilberforce, a relic of barbarism!" and that is all the duke ever said or did, and the measure failed. It was years afterwards when several conspicuous combats upon the field of honor put an end to the barbarous custom by making duelling a penal offense. Wellington saw the wrong with his logical reason; but the mere logical philosopher hits the truth, but never grasps it, and it never grasps him. In the sense of the New Testament, he has no convictions, no real belief. Therefore he has no character for action, no spring of motives to set the machinery to work.

Government in nations and communities depends upon the character of those to whom it is confided, and character depends upon the rational faith in principles. If it is government by the people, it depends upon the character of the people, the right and the wrong they recognize in their consciences, and believe with their faith. An ideal government can only exist in an ideal community. Representative institutions are doubtless best adapted for expressing the character of the people, and if we have a people with public spirit and fidelity in public service, and with reasoning capacity to form sound judgments

upon great questions of public policy, we have the best kind of government. But with a people in whom these qualities are wanting, and who have no faith in principle, and no intelligent conception of the meaning of government, confusion and corruption inevitably follow. Whatever the abstract principle, the ideal conception of your government, imperious necessity will modify or remove it for another kind of government adapted to the people who are under it. Laws that are above the moral convictions of the people may be educative in their influence as an appeal to duty and to conscience, but if they are ineffective and systematically evaded, as they will be, the degradation to law by its violation with impunity will do more harm than the supposed educative influence of the ideal contained in it will do good. You cannot enforce a law against theft if the conscience of a community does not condemn theft. You may do it in the case of the petty thief; but the educated scientific thief who steals the property of the public, or of the individual under cover of legal forms, will have perfect immunity, and will maintain his position in social and public life where the conscience of the people has been depraved by custom and greed, and by the worship of what is called success.

If government is a divine institution, taxpaying must be a religious duty, but no law can be framed which will protect government against false returns

of property to tax commissioners. Duty to conscience and to the unseen ruler and judge of conscience, alone can secure obedience and loyalty to government. No matter how unjust we may consider the demand, as long as the law is over us, no honest man in the sight of God can fail to return every penny of his income.

The agitation so widespread in state and in Church concerning the laws of divorce, is in its ultimate analysis, a question of religious faith. Is marriage a divine institution, or is it a creation of human instincts? Is it an ordinance of the world and the flesh? Has it no spiritual and eternal sanctions? If the latter is the sentiment of the community, as it is in many examples in nominally Christian lands, then men in brutal lust and women in sinful passion and vanity, will continue to scoff at the sacredness and permanence of marriage. Change the people by the power of the Christian faith in the sanctions of the unseen and the eternal laws of God, and you will change their laws. A law is dead until it has reason and faith and the character produced by their combination as its unseen foundation.

As a final element in the discussion let us turn to the history and the experience of the Christian Church viewed in the light of this principle.

In the conflict with paganism and gnostic heresies in the second century, when the Church was fighting for its life as it never had done before, and certainly

never since, it is simply incredible that it could have survived, except upon the assumption that Christianity was what it claimed to be, and that the common sense, the judgment, the reasonable faith of mankind recognized it as such. The needs of the human heart, the light of reason and that feeling of the unseen, which we call faith, only these, under the guidance of Christ and His spirit, can account for the survival of Christianity.

It is strange that Gibbon with his five causes for the wonderful spread of Christianity, could have missed the real cause, of which the five causes which he alleges were only the effects. It is as if in discussing the cause of any great historical movement, or the principle of a scientific discovery, we should describe the phenomena, the external appearance, the effects produced without a single allusion to the force, the unseen power which alone can furnish a solution of the problem. It does not seem to have occurred to Gibbon to look into Christianity itself for the cause of its triumph over paganism. He assumes that Christianity, so far as truth is concerned, is on a level with paganism, and therefore in assigning the reasons why paganism went down before it, he is driven to the region of conjecture and leaves out the facts of the case. The reason is that the spiritual revelation of the Gospel and the facts upon which they were based never reached Gibbon's mind. They never got

anywhere near to his heart. He had no sympathy with them and he did not believe them. There is such a thing as the heart being opened to attend to things, which otherwise it passes by. Lydia would have listened to Paul and gone on her way, but there was a formation of mind, a disposition which we might call a reasonable faith, as there is in the germ in thousands of souls, planted by the spirit of God, and she attended unto the things which were said by Paul. Gibbon's mind was blocked by presuppositions against Christianity, and he missed the key to the problem.

Why is it that the pagan world would not listen to the tremendous attack of Celsus upon Christianity? The odds were against the Christians in the laws, the sentiments, the institutions, the atmosphere of the religious, the secular and the national life. Celsus was defending them against their own enemies, and yet the history of that generation, A. D. 160, has no notice of his great work. It produced hardly a ripple upon the surface. Celsus approached Christianity upon the ground which in some respects is identical with the positions of modern adversaries. He denied the possibility of a revelation, and poured contempt upon the idea of incarnation and miracle, and propounded the view of the world as bound by law under the iron rule of necessity. From this point of view the whole of Christianity is swept out as an impossibility. The

reason for his failure to find a lodgment for his argument in the pagan mind of his own generation, was the same as that which has decided the issue in all controversies in which the Christian religion has been attacked. It is the argument which the natural reason of mankind presents instinctively against the destructive criticism of religion. Celsus pulled down all religion in his effort to destroy Christianity, and in one way or another it is the outcome of all sceptical systems. They have nothing to give us in the place of that which they take away from us. Instead of beliefs they feed us with denials. Instead of bread they give us a stone. The common sense, the judgment, as well as the hunger of the heart, turn away from negations. How can they live in the faith of mankind? By their own confession they are dead, and we are living, feeling, thinking, suffering, struggling. How can they help us?

My religion gives me a Father who loves me, a God who has humanity in His very nature, and a Son who reveals that humanity and shares my lot and dies to save me. It satisfies the needs of my heart. It answers and fulfils the presuppositions of my reason. This is the ultimate reason why no weapon against it can prosper in the long run.

The controversy with Gnosticism involved the very foundations of the Christian faith. It opened the last part of the first century; it grew to threatening

dimensions in the second; it perished at the beginning of the third, and left only a few faint traces upon the life of the Christian world. Gnosticism attacked the Incarnation, the miracles, the Virgin birth, the death, the resurrection and resolved them, either into allegories or into myths, creations of mystical enthusiasts of an after age. A brilliant professor in Germany leads the Gnostic thinkers of to-day. We read their books as we listen to a visionary talker, or the "Idle singer of an empty day." Their conception vacates Christianity, and with it the earnestness and meaning of life. Reason and faith relegate it to the visions of a bygone century, originating in the first contact of the wonderful revelations of the Gospel with minds trained in a brilliant but crude philosophy, whose truths Christianity has taken up into its higher truth; whose fancies and errors it has forever dissipated by that practical and reasonable faith, which it has infused into the ideas and the education of mankind.

Again, the Christian Church has experienced trials in connections with its functions as a guide and a spiritual educator of its children, which have involved agitation and dangers to faith parallel to those attending the great doctrinal controversies to which we have referred.

One of these is the prolonged controversy between the advance of knowledge in the modern world and the verbal infallibility of the Bible which held undis-

turbed and unquestioned possession of the Church until the sixteenth century.

Language is our vehicle for thought, and words are for the most part constructed of images and analogies from the world of sense and material things. The instrument of our thought is thus pictorial and metaphorical. Our mental tendency, especially in the early stages of development, is to identify the instrument with the thought, the vehicle with the idea that it carries, the picture with the spirit which it expresses. In some instances our spiritual consciousness so far transcends the material form in which the idea is expressed as to realize the thought without thinking of the vehicle. The word spirit, as a distinguished philosopher has pointed out,[1] is an example of an effort to depict that which is above sense by the aid of that which in the world of sense is most impalpable and ethereal; and even a child's mind will hardly pause on the material significance of the word in its immediate apprehension of the ideal meaning, as something above sense and separated by an infinite gulf from matter.

Yet it is true that all ordinary thought tends to identify itself with the outward form in which it is clothed; that is, to be literal and verbal.

Plato, as summarized by Professor Caird, says in his Republic that mankind in their childhood are incapable

[1] Principal Caird, Philosophy of Religion, p. 172.

of grasping an idea unless conveyed to them in a symbol, which even as interpreted by feeling, may suggest, but cannot fully express it—"Doubts and unbelief in the facts to which a Divine meaning has been attached, must inevitably arise, and at first it will seem impossible to separate the ideas from the vehicle through which they were given. The maxims of our supposed parents will lose their authority, when it is discovered that we have been obeying them under an illusion, and that we are not really their children.

"The whole religious view of life, with all that is based upon it, will seem to be discredited when the outward form through which it came to us can no longer be taken to be exactly and literally true."[1] Plato therefore recommends that the reflective, questioning activity should not be awakened in youth until the moral development is considerably advanced. "Young men," he says, "prematurely excited to question received authority, are like puppy dogs that tear everything to pieces."[2] Hence he thinks that the time for them to receive the higher truth which may seem to transcend or to contradict the old forms in which they have received it, should be postponed until there is developed in them that common sense which will enable them to bear the shocks of reflection without losing their faith.

[1] Ed. Caird, Evolution of Religion, vol. 1, p. 300.
[2] Plato, Republic.

Plato's words are illustrated in the universal decay of heathen faiths and forms of religion with the advance of material civilization in the old world. They are significant to the Christian Church as interpreting the meaning of some of the tribulations and controversies through which she has passed. She has emerged from them stronger than before, with the spiritual authority of the Bible, not only unshaken, but immeasurably strengthened by the growth in the spiritual intelligence which each generation brings to its interpretation.

The first contact of the revelations of science with the Church occurred in the latter years of the sixteenth century. We may see illustrated in that controversy how the reasonable faith educated in the mind of Christianity chastens and spiritualizes the earlier faith of feeling and of objective form, so that the spirit is seen through the letter, and the revelation of truth is seen through the form in which the truth is conveyed.

Galileo during the last years of the sixteenth century enlarged the realm of human knowledge by discoveries as wonderful, as the proof of them was conclusive. The first opposition he encountered was from the professors of the universities who feared that if the new science should gain a foothold, their occupation would be gone and their chairs vacated. The opposition extended to the church. The con-

tradiction of the new science to the cosmogony in Genesis, as literally interpreted, was agitated with fanatical intensity. How could we believe the Scripture which represents this earth of ours as the first creative work, and after it the sun was placed in the vault of heaven to rule the day, and the moon and stars to give light by night, if we accept Galileo's doctrine of our world, as only one of the smaller bodies moving around the sun? Does not the Scripture represent the sun as a "bridegroom coming out of his chamber and rejoicing as a strong man to run a race? His going forth is from the end of the heaven and his circuit unto the ends of it." Is it possible that this earth should be only one of the smaller worlds and yet be selected by God as the scene of the Incarnation and of the drama of Redemption?

The rash thinker who overturns the faith in the Bible must be dealt with by the courts of the Church. Galileo is condemned for heresy and given the choice between recantation and temporal penalties. He was never tortured, and the romance of his exclamation after torture referring to the motion of the earth "It still moves," is an invention of the enemies of the then church, and kept alive to this day by a class of scientists and by ignorant schoolbooks which inoculate our children with the conception of a fatal antagonism between religion and science.

Three centuries have passed away and the rea-

sonable faith of the Christian world has long ago settled the question that astronomical theories have no connections with Christian morality or Christian doctrine; that for the Church to undertake to legislate for and govern the universe is transcending the province of her divinely ordained function; that Christianity has enough real sins to battle with in this world of fallen men, and that to go out of its way to create artificial sins in condemning opinions which have nothing to do with the fundamentals of its faith, such as physical facts, is to extend its province into a region which has not been assigned to its keeping. All students of the Bible, Protestants and Romanists, have long ago accepted the doctrine of Galileo that the Earth revolves around the sun, and at the same time they hold with reverent faith the inspiration of the story of the creation in Genesis.

Science itself has contributed to our conception of the dignity and the majesty of the picture therein presented, and of the moral and spiritual lessons it is designed to convey. Nor is it conceivable that any intelligent scientific man in this latest generation would suggest an alteration in the form of the narrative. The sun is described as rising and setting, and will be so described as long as language is the vehicle of ideas, although it is directly the opposite of the truth. Yet it is the visible appearance, it is the practical reality, so far as we on this earth are con-

cerned, and always will be. The knowledge of the scientific fact can never supersede the expression we use, and always will use for the phenomena. The child and the philosopher are content to rest the controversy there.

The inferiority of this earth in magnitude to innumerable worlds in space, is no longer a reasonable argument against the gospel revelation of the Son of God becoming incarnate, dying upon a cross, and rising from the dead for the salvation of a family of God's lost children. Upon the assumption of revelation that we are made in the image of God with a spiritual nature and an immortal destiny, the worth of a single soul is incommensurable with an infinite magnitude of matter.

This controversy between the interpreters of the Bible and astronomy centuries ago, contains a lesson for the Church and for intelligent Christians for each succeeding age. The conflicts of the past have left the Bible, not only unharmed, but have been overruled as a means for widening its circulation and deepening the foundations of its hold upon mankind.

The revelation contained in the Bible has never been in peril. The battle has been fought over its interpretation. The defenders of revelation have identified it with their interpretation of the words in which it is conveyed, and have contended that the

Bible stands or falls with their conception of its meaning.

It has been said with much truth in this connection "there is a serious risk, if the mind be fastened on things external in some way connected with, but yet distinct from, the substance of revelation, it may turn out that these external things cannot hold the ground on which they have been placed. They have to be given up by force at last, when they ought to have been given up long before. And when given up, they too often tear away with them a part of the strength of that faith of which they had previously been, not only the buttress outside, but a part of the living framework." The same writer says with much wisdom, "It is intended that as men advance in knowledge of God's works, and in the power of handling that knowledge, they should find themselves better able to interpret the message which they have received from their Father in heaven. Our knowledge of the true meaning of the Bible has gained, and it was intended that it should gain, by the increase of other knowledge. Science makes clearer than anything else could have made it, the higher level on which the Bible puts what is spiritual over what is material. I do not hesitate to ascribe to science a clearer knowledge of the true interpretation of the first chapter of Genesis, and to scientific history a truer knowledge of the great historical prophets.

The advance of secular studies, as they are called, clears up much in the Psalms and much in other poetical books of Scripture. I cannot doubt that this was intended from the beginning, and that as science has already done genuine service to religion in this way, so will it do still better service with the process of time."[1]

These words are from the Bampton lectures for 1884, by the Rt. Rev. Frederick Temple, the present Primate of England. I would commend this book upon "Religion and Science" to all students for the ministry.

After reading, as I have tried to do with a fair mind, what has been said on the other side, productions of literary ability from the English press and publications from our own, such as Draper's "Conflict of Religion and Science" some years ago, and more recently an elaborate, painstaking volume from a professor of one of our western universities (the latter books I confess with some pain at the hostility to Christianity which they exhibited, and the use of arguments which scholarly minds ought long ago to have abandoned), I find refreshment, not only in the great literary merits, but also in the broad sympathies, the reasonable faith and the wise moderation which characterize this contribution to the discussion of the relations between religion and science.

[1] Bampton Lectures, 1884, pp. 244, etc.

In this generation of disputation upon sacred verities, not only among scholars but in the popular mind, accompanied as it is with crudities of ignorance and the use of arguments which one would suppose ordinary education would have refuted, we need the patience of a reasonable faith. We, who touch the people, need caution against the formation of precipitate judgments, and taking up opinions upon subjects where the investigation of facts necessary for the solution of questions, is yet in its infancy.

We need above all the spiritual temper, for if there is one law of Christianity revealed in the New Testament more clearly reasonable than another it is that "the things of the spirit are spiritually discerned."

What is faith? Not in its psychological definition, not in its action in the Church, or in the fields of history, but what is it in my personal life? How does it connect me with God and with Christ? How do we get faith? The answer is, in our personal experience we come to faith first and reason afterwards. Faith is an act. It is a step forward, and we must take the step. It is a venture of the whole nature. It is a capacity planted in us, but it will not take care of itself. It will not maintain its own life unless we adopt the means and follow the rules of its life. Faith is first obedience, submission. As such it is a trial. It goes against our sinful nature. But it must be borne. It is God's way of sifting us, of breaking

the wilfulness in our hearts and clearing out the litter of doubts in our minds.

As by faith we submit and enter the path of obedience we begin to know. "He that doeth the will of God shall know of the doctrine." The first great truth that dawns upon us is our dependence for help to obey. That opens to the vision of our faith the provision of grace in Christ, the meaning of the New Testament that we must be born from above. We cry, all of us cry when we realize that knowledge, "Lord I believe, help Thou mine unbelief!" How reasonable it is. Each step of faith brings its proof of reason to justify it. Each duty we do in obedience to command gives us the assurance that we are on the right path. It is as when we go to a school or an university in our early days, we assume that we will get the knowledge there of which we are ignorant, and that the way to get it is to use the means. We may not be intellectually certain, we may have doubts about many things in religion or see them only dimly. We will be like travelers who many times all the world over go out not knowing whither they go, but only keep going. Duty, submission, obeying the rules that God has laid down, that is the pathway of faith and after faith knowledge. God does not reveal Himself to the idle gaze of curiosity, or to the mind that thinks itself big enough to weigh Him in its balances. Irreverence cannot see God. "The secret of

the Lord is with them that fear Him;" and fear means the faith of obedience, the venture of trust. So the humble pathway of faith comes to reason, and reason goes back to strengthen faith for new journeys, and to kindle its eye with a new hope. What wonderful gifts of God in Christ for our salvation here, and for our unending growth in knowledge, and in love, in life everlasting!

AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

LECTURE IV

AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

Authority in religion suggests the controversy between the mediæval and modern world. The reformation produced by opposing principles in conception of authority of the Church and rights of reason and conscience. To attribute perfection to work of the reformation an optimistic illusion. Revulsion against objective religion tends to exaggeration of subjective religion. Examples from reformed churches. Distinctive characteristics of English reformation. Authority in relation to interpretation of Bible. Is authority antagonistic to reason? Authority in childhood and from hereditary transmission natural, therefore reasonable. Unconscious influence. Authority the sum of influences moulding us from without. No conflict between reason and authority. Authority at every stage associated with reason as its support. Authority requiring blind submission undermines its own foundations. What is education? Mr. Balfour's "Foundation of Belief." He represents reason as enemy and rival of authority. Attacks popular conception of rights of reason. Fails to define the reason which he considers antagonistic to authority. Authority when challenged appeals to reason. Church of Rome appeals to reason in support of authority when attacked. Mr. Balfour says we owe to authority, rather than reason, religion, ethics and politics. Refutation. Old authorities discredited by advance of knowledge. Analysis of psychological climates. Their authority. Public opinion not like a law of nature. Depends upon character of people. Examples in families and nation. Thomas Jefferson on the strength of a nation. Authority, divorced from reason, the ally of superstition. The craving for infallibility in religion. Infallibility in the Roman Church. Dr. Hort's "Christian Ecclesia." Authority rests upon rational convictions and revelation. Historic faith.

IN the previous lectures we have endeavored to

illustrate the principle that it is thought and the moral reason including faith, which are the organs for apprehending objective truth. Feeling is in itself purely subjective. It may be kindled by imaginations that have no objective reality; or it may be the result of a process of self-excitation familiar among the religious illusions, which, in the experience of the Christian Church, have turned out to be devoid of permanent results, and tending to superstition and self-deception. The character and the worth of feeling are to be measured by the objective truth which the feeling contains as its origin and its reason. Thus we have seen that reason, faith and feeling are coordinate in Christian beliefs.

We are now to consider the relation of religious belief to authority. The word suggests to the popular mind a stormy tract of history extending over the sixteenth century, dividing the forms and the ecclesiastical organisms of the mediæval and the modern world.

The reformation breaks the history of Christianity into two periods, which are mainly distinguished by directly opposing principles in relation to the authority of the Church and the rights of reason and conscience. Before the reformation the Church had developed, in the growth of centuries, a spiritual monarchy which claimed and exercised discipline and authority over every sphere of human life. By the

reformation the unity of organization was broken, and with it the machinery and the forces for the repression of the spirit of liberty. Before, the Church practically controlled the family, the state, the individual; and its authority prescribed the science, the philosophy and the secular knowledge, as well as religious doctrine and discipline. Belief was a law imposed from without, repudiating any conception of the rights of critical intelligence and of personal responsibility. By the reformation the doors of the close corporation of the ecclesiastical organism were broken down. Thought and religion were left free to the open air, and reason and faith resumed their functions in the act and the responsibility of belief. The family and the state reasserted themselves, as divine institutions, and not the creatures of the Church. Christianity is conceived of, not as a law, a visible organism to govern by visible sanctions superseding all other authorities, but as a spirit entering into human nature and redeeming it from the power of evil, and thus regenerating all of its relations. It is designed not to repress, but to sanction and to bless all of God's ordinances for human life; to restore marriage from the dominion of animal passions to the dignity and the purity of its primeval institution; to redeem government from the absolutism of brute force to the loyalty and the love of its subjects as an ordinance of God; not to kill nature and natural

tendencies, but through them and in the life that they involved, to redeem human nature by the regenerating grace of Christ. Thus the reformation was a return to the ideas of the New Testament, which had been practically suppressed by the abnormal growth of external authority in the mediæval forms of Christianity, and which had been lost sight of for long centuries in the Middle Ages. It placed history on a new basis. It amounted practically to a reproclamation of great Christian ideas; the essential spiritual equality of men in their equal nearness to God; the single mediatorship of Christ between God and man; the truth that there is nothing common or unclean in human life, or nature as God has ordained it, and that the redeeming grace in Christ is a grace sufficient to bring us off more than conquerors in the antagonisms and conflicts of life and in the last trial of death.

But to attribute perfection to the whole movement of the reformation is only an optimistic illusion. It has its strength, but with human nature, newborn strength is close to weakness. The impulse to throw off authority, when conceived of as a usurpation of the rights of private judgment, easily develops into a delusion which regards all authority as an enemy of liberty. The recognition of rights and ceremonies and sacraments as devoid in themselves of spiritual power and saving efficacy, has in it a

tendency, when unguarded, to develop an impulse to sweep away all supposed obstacles between the individual soul and God. When we part with objective religion, by a natural revulsion we are relegated to the exaggeration of subjective religion. The mediæval Church took little or no account of the individual; religion was objective, authoritative externalism. In parting with it, the danger was subjective individualism. Both extremes neutralize Christianity. The subjective, disowning the need of the objective, the inward asserting not only independence of, but antagonism to, the outward, is an illusion which empties the reason and faith of all beliefs. Worship yourself, your own subjective feelings and you are on the way to blank denial of all religion. This is the rock upon which the extremes of the Protestant movement have been and will be wrecked.

The tendency to subjectivism as contrasted with the universality of Christianity, of narrow individualism as contrasted with beliefs and creeds and prayers and liturgies acknowledged by common consent as coming down from the purest ages of faith; the naming of churches after the individual who founded them or who stamped his ideas of theology or practice upon them, all are extremes tending to error, even along with the holding of the essential truths of Christianity.

Luther gives the name to Lutheranism, and identi-

fies a great gospel with an ephemeral conception of an abstract and incomprehensible philosophy of a sacrament. Upon the Calvinistic Churches rests the shadow of the great name and the intellectual supremacy of Calvin, and through him, of a theology which may have had uses in its day, but must be a hindrance and a limitation to the great Church which clings to it in form, in an age which has passed it by. For who to-day can hold the doctrine of arbitrary election and reprobation, by which God is represented as assigning some to eternal misery, and an elect few to eternal glory, for no reason but that it is His will, that is, for no reason at all? What a burden in this monstrous doctrine for a church to bear!

We are to thank God that upon the English reformation there is no mark of individualism, no narrowness of an ephemeral system of speculative theology. When a man founds a new faith, his defects, his limitations, his errors, his idiosyncracies are transmitted to the body which he has formed and handed down with his name as their authority. The English reformation was preserved by the providence of God from the stamp of any single mind, or of a sect or coterie. The English reformers did not try to make a church or to evolve a theology out of their own consciousness. Their aim was to hold on to all that was true in the old. They listened to all that the continental reformers, who had gone far beyond them, had to give.

They judged and compared it with the Scriptures and the old history. They changed their views oftentimes under the light they sought from the Christianity of the early days. They excluded the accretions of superstition which had gathered upon the early faith, holding to the old order of organism, the simple Sacraments of the New Testament, the early creeds expressing the consciousness and the common consent of the Church when it was fighting the battles for its life and the ancient prayers through which the old faith expressed itself. Thus they have transmitted to our modern world a reverence for reasonable authority, and a mediating, chastening influence upon religious extravagance and sectarian bigotry. They have given us a Church to train our children in the fear of God and in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Her history answers the question as to her interpretation of the meaning of authority in religion and its place in the Christian Church.

Turning from the Church to the Bible the idea of authority is associated in the minds of the majority of persons, who have only a general acquaintance with biblical studies, with the claims of various ecclesiastical and theological parties. It presents a picture of the battle ground upon which new thoughts array themselves against the old, new theologies assume the attitude of destructive criticism of the old, and modern scholarship, by reason of its larger oppor-

tunities and its wider culture, claims the right of the possession of the field of critical inquiry to the discredit and abandonment of the old. Even if I felt myself competent to the task of entering such a field and attempting to conduct my hearers to the solution of its complex problems, it would be manifestly impractical to do so.

The science of theology has enlarged its area and included a wider range of subjects than was dreamed of by the elder theologians, and probably wider by comparison than the natural sciences and the systems of philosophical speculation. Every church should provide opportunities for special training in complex historical and critical problems, in connection with the Old and the New Testaments and the voluminous literature which has grown up around these questions; for the study of religions in relation to the varied fields of missions; for scientific and philosophical questions which have a bearing upon theology, so that Christianity may have competent thinkers and investigators in every field of criticism and controversy. While this is true in relation to special work, the general preparation for the Christian ministry for the practical work of the Church and the conversion of the world has only time for the principles and results of these various departments. It would be the abandonment of the greater work, if we should attempt to associate with it the ambition for complete

scholarship in any one of these special departments which, in our modern life, have been included within the borders of theological studies.

After these general considerations I will ask your attention to the theory of authority in relation to religious beliefs. It is the same aspect in which we considered faith in its relation to reason. Reason is implicit in faith. It is impossible to conceive of true faith as unreasonable. Is authority otherwise? Is authority suspicious of reason and does reason regard authority as the enemy of progress, and the refuge for wrong and oppression, and the cover for bigotry? Is the history of the controversies in the Christian Church, its reformations, its conservatisms, its progress, its retrogressions, its failures and its triumphs due to the spirit of inveterate antagonism between reason and authority? Writers of learning and ability have held this view as a true philosophy of history, of religion, of science, of law and of government. Is such a theory tenable? In the first place is not authority natural and reasonable? Is it not the rational order of life? If so, how is it thinkable that there could exist a natural antagonism between them as principles and forces governing conduct and educating character? There are some periods of life where reason seems to be entirely subordinate to authority, and yet where that is the case, the wildest social or political theorizer, in the interests of indi-

vidualistic conceptions of human rights and duties, would admit the reason and the necessity of authority.

We all agree that we enter life under authority. We are organically connected with the past, and that furnishes the conditions and the environment into which we are born. Neither in our moral nor in our physical history can we be regarded, for a moment of our lives, as separate individualities, living to ourselves, as an aggregate of individual unities working out our destiny, making our character, forming our beliefs and taking care of our bodies for and by ourselves. The law of hereditary transmission of tendencies, influences and possibilities in our physical organization, is no longer a theory, but a fact recognized by the widest generalizations from observation. Even in our bodies we have a past, which the moment we are born connects us with the corporate life of the race. In the Christian view of the world, the main feature of our destiny finds a philosophical expression in a single antithesis of Scripture, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Our inheritance from the one is the universal sovereignty of death; our inheritance from the other is the universal potentiality of life.

The principle of the inheritance of antecedent authorities and influences finds an illustration, none the less vivid in our moral and spiritual, than in our physical life. As truly as we are born into an at-

mosphere which, with our first breath, awakens and sustains our physical existence and sets the machinery in motion, so is our moral and spiritual atmosphere provided for us at the very dawn of our conscious life. We are under tutors and governors after we pass the years of helpless infancy and childhood, but during those years that lay back of conscious memory, we were engaged in the ceaseless activities of a thinking soul with moral reason. We were learning and laying foundations for every compartment of the manifold building of mind and of personality.

A mother, holding us in her arms, and bending over us, planted in us, in a moment perhaps, germs of truth that lay there under the ground below consciousness and lost to memory, but containing in them potentialities of development into spiritual beliefs, rational judgments and moral feelings, which connect our mature years with our earliest days, as the stem and the leaves and the bud and the flower contain in them, at each stage, the organic life power and promise that was enfolded in the mystery of the seed when planted in the dark ground. Countless influences were streaming in upon us before the days of positive teaching and of authoritative discipline and of conscious mental effort. We did not make our social environment; we found it here, an inheritance from a past, how remote we do not know. The example of others, the look, the tone, the expression of

countenance, the family life, the daily contact with the community and countless other influences were unconsciously guiding and leading our susceptibilities and asserting authority over us.

The idea of unconscious influence reminds us of a passage in Scripture; and the Bible, by effortless suggestion, tells us more of human nature than all literature and all philosophy. Two disciples, John and Peter, are hurrying to the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection. The narrative says John did outrun Peter but went not in. Peter hurries past him and enters the sepulchre. "Then went in also that other disciple ——" An example of voluntary and spontaneous response to that spiritual force of unconscious influence, which accounts for so large an area of human action, and which, through the individual conduct, enters into the corporate life of society and of the race for good or for evil.

Authority then, understood as the sum of the influences outside of ourselves, that stream in upon us to mould and to guide and form our opinions, our beliefs and our conduct, is, as a matter of fact, a part of the natural and the reasonable order of life. At the same time, this authority, or these authorities, are never absolute in their power or received as infallible, in the spirit of blind submission, even in the earliest years of consciousness. Reason and conscience and free will are always present, even in the elementary

stages of the development of childhood, not to question, but to weigh and consider the authority that comes to us from without. The child submits, but at the same time often asks the reason for what you tell it to do, and in the majority of cases you find it a help to the spirit of obedience in the child and a strength to your authority to know, however imperfectly, some reason in your command.

Christian philosophy regards this fact of authority over us at the beginning of life as the training school in the spirit of obedience which we are to carry on into the years of discretion, the lifetime of conscious and reasonable responsibility. That is the philosophy of Christianity, as expressed in the doctrine and the training of this Church, in a form nearest to the truth and wisest in its practical application.

There is no sign of a conflict in your prayer books between faith and reason, or again between authority and reason. From the catechism provided by the Church for teaching our children the foundations of Christian beliefs and conduct, to the prayers in the offices for the visitation of the sick and the burial of the dead, we have the assumption of the cooperation and harmony between reason and authority. The lesson of sickness and death is expressed in the last services of the prayer book in words which once heard cannot be forgotten. We pray that "when we have served God in our day and generation, we may

be gathered unto our fathers, having the testimony of a good conscience, in the communion of the Catholic Church, in the confidence of a certain faith, in the comfort of a reasonable, religious and holy hope."

Here we have the objective testimony in the communion of the Church, the objective reasonableness of the Christian faith, and the subjective testimony of a good conscience as the attitude of a redeemed sinner in view of death and of eternity and of entrance into the presence of God. Faith, reason and authority, and Christ as their foundation, are represented as the support of the Christian spirit in its last crucial trial, its baptism in the suffering of death.

Whatever of plausibility there may be, to some minds, in the proposition that every man, being responsible for his own belief, must begin *de novo* and work it out for himself, one who should contend that the principle should be applied to children, would imperil his claim to rudimentary intelligence. We are bound to teach children by authority, if we are to teach them at all. In our responsible years there may be many questions of religion which we may leave in suspense, and upon which we may decline to make up our minds and to pronounce a positive opinion; but to suspend the education of children in the fundamental truths of religion upon the ground that we have no right to assume the responsibility of teaching them, or to forestall their inalienable right to private judgment

to choose their own church, and their own creed, would be regarded by the sensible judgment of mankind as an absurdity. If, for example, you leave a child in doubt, or refuse to teach him with authority the existence of God, the worth of the soul, the life and the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ and what they have done for mankind, you are not leaving the child's mind in a state of equilibrium concerning these truths, but you are creating a bias in his mind against them. He will naturally conclude that as you do not teach them to him, they are nothing to you. You may pray yourself, but if you decline to teach and to require a child to kneel and to utter the words of prayer, you are forming in him a habit against the practice of prayer which will be difficult to eradicate. From the very beginning, he is forming habits of beliefs or of negations of belief. Religion is a matter of pressing import from the very dawn of conscious life, and so we have to assume the responsibility of teaching children with authority, long before they come to the years of discretion.

The treasures of the past cannot be communicated to the human mind in the early stages of its development except mainly by authority. We cannot wait until the time arrives when they can be grasped and appropriated by the intellect. Its truths must be taken into the mind in the form of principles of action and habits and ways of looking at things, in order to

exercise any influence upon the conduct and the development of character. And yet in the earliest years, an element of conscious reason progressively develops by the side of authority, growing closer to it as its ally and its justification.

On the other hand, it may be a question of serious import whether a teacher or even a parent, has the right to graft upon the plastic nature of a child views and opinions which are essentially their own, and which are unsupported by the authority of surrounding opinion, or are in direct opposition to it. There are numberless questions of religion and of the interpretation of the Bible, which a sensible instructor of childhood will relegate to the years of responsible reason and conscience.

There have been very few infidels who have had the moral hardihood or the obliquity of judgment, to teach infidelity to their little children. A sympathetic criticism of the writings of John Stuart Mill has led many of his readers to the opinion that, but for the passionate antipathy of his father towards Christianity, as represented by the extreme of Calvinism in the doctrine of unconditional election injected into his mind from the age of five years, he might have been a happy man and a great Christian philosopher.

A man of character and intelligence will always desire some authority outside of himself or of his little clique, to guide him in his conduct and his teaching of

his children, knowing that they are defenseless against error, and if it be error, he alone is responsible for it. The mind of a child is sacred and wonderful in its possibilities for good or for evil. The position, then, of authority, is a permanent one, but at every stage reason is associated with and implicit in it in the formation of religious beliefs. The same principle applies to general education.

The danger of illusion and waste of precious time in the education of children is on the side of the exclusive dependence upon authority. Because we must begin with authority, and a child at first must accept what is taught upon authority, we pass insensibly into the habit of conceiving of this as the normal method of teaching. How many thousands of children are taught to learn by rote, as if the object and end of education consisted in the cultivation of a verbal memory. How many in public and in private schools, are being taught arithmetic by memorizing the rules and the processes for working sums. They learn nothing in such methods but mechanical forms. Ask them for the reason of the process, and they reply by referring you to the rule. The why and wherefore of the rule, of which you have left them in profound ignorance, is the gist of the whole matter. This is only an illustration of the futility of depending upon authority in the matter of education. Authority that receives a fact or a principle in blind

submission, undermines its own foundations. The reasons that support it are alone the guarantee of its permanence.

Popular education is the most remarkable feature of our age, and the boast of our progress contrasted with all that have preceded us. The taxes for education in the common schools are paid perhaps with more willingness than any other assessments. The people discuss with interest the questions of buildings and providing teachers, and in many instances of compulsory powers of sending children to schools; but at last the main question is not the school buildings and the gathering of the children into them, but what we are going to do with them after we get them there. The question is will we teach them mechanically, that is by authority, or will we teach them to think? Rome for centuries taught the masses of the Christian world by histrionic worship, dramatic ritual and by priestly authority accepted in passive submission. When the Bible was opened at the reformation and the reason of mankind awoke from its long sleep, the spell of the authority of Rome vanished as the shadows of a long night!

In all education, religious and secular, the first question is the study of the order of the development of a child's mind. The child observes and sees, and the impression spontaneously awakens the intelligence to ask the meaning of the phenomena, the reason of

the things it beholds. Repress the questioning activity of a child's mind and you are paralyzing the nascent forces of its education. Assign, say one teacher to fifty scholars, in your public school and you render impossible any direct relation between the mind of teacher and scholar. If the child learns at all, it must be by wholesale, in cut and dried answers authoritatively furnished him. If he asks questions, it is out of order; discipline renders question asking impracticable. And yet the very object of education is to make a child's mind alert and eager to ask questions. Thus authority often lingers in the realm of education long after thought and reason should have entered to take its place, and build underneath it enduring foundations.

When from general education we turn to the special education in theology or philosophy, we find the relations between authority and reason are maintained in these higher beliefs which belong to the maturity of our development. Our literature upon this subject has been recently enriched by a contribution from a leading statesman of England, characterized by subtlety of philosophic thought, combined with great intellectual force and rare gifts of literary expression. It has attained a wider circulation than the great majority of books on philosophy, from the grace and brilliancy of the style in which it is clothed. I refer to Mr. Balfour's "Foundations of Belief." The

criticism of naturalism, as Mr. Balfour designates the materialistic philosophy, is perhaps the most valuable portion of the work as a specimen of luminous reasoning. The inadequacy of Mr. Spencer's reply is a testimony to the originality of Mr. Balfour's attack.

The main purpose of the book seems to be the exaltation of authority at the expense of reason. The impression derived from the productions of Mr. Balfour, his "Defense of Philosophic Doubt" and the present volume, is that of a painful sensitiveness in his mind to the inadequacy of reason in grappling with the deeper problems of our life and destiny; a nervous impatience with our limitations and a morbid analysis of postulates. His conclusions with reference to authority and reason may be summed up as follows: In analyzing the causes of our beliefs, not only in religion but upon all subjects, he considers that they are traceable to, and rest upon authority, as their origin and their foundation.

He represents reason as the enemy and the rival of authority. He regards authority as standing for that group of non-rational causes, moral, social and educational, which produces its results by processes other than reasoning. He represents the popular idea to be that every one has a right to adopt any opinions he pleases, and that it is his duty to sift the reasons by which such opinions may be supported and adjust his

convictions accordingly. "Authority, therefore, has no place among the legitimate causes of belief." "Reason, and reason alone, can be permitted to mould the convictions of mankind."

He finds this idea at the foundation of the largest area of the popular mind of our generation upon political and social and religious philosophy. He proceeds to demonstrate the absurdity of such sentiments, and illustrates it by the supposition of an imaginary society, in which every man, woman and child has thrown off all the prejudices due to education; all customs and habits and beliefs; all laws governing social and individual life; each one considering it a paramount duty critically to examine the reasons for everything that they have believed, or for every course of conduct to which they have been accustomed to conform beginning with the Ten Commandments. As preliminary to the question whether these commandments are to be obeyed, he represents these persons as asking themselves the question, is there really any such thing as right and wrong? May they not be, as some of our scientific people say, mere mechanical growths; automatic animal impulses of likes and dislikes planted in us with no moral sense or significance in them?

We may readily agree with Mr. Balfour when he asserts that "to say that such a community, if it acted upon the opinions thus arrived at, would stand but a

poor chance in the struggle for existence, is to say far too little. It could never even begin to be; and, if by a miracle it was created, it would without doubt immediately resolve itself into its constituent elements."[1] This is true when alleged as an argument against what Mr. Balfour considers the popular conception of authority. If this is the popular philosophy, it may be admitted without hesitation that it tends, nay inevitably leads to the disintegration and destruction of all beliefs.

Mr. Balfour fails to define authority and reason,[2] which he conceives of as antagonistic. Authority, as he employs it, is like some viewless force of nature without genesis; an undefinable principle. The reason to which he refers is the pure reason of logic, not the wider reason of conscience, of faith, of duty, the moral reason which is ceaselessly building the foundations of our beliefs. Mere argumentation may be only a sifting process which constitutes an accompaniment of the development of beliefs; but moral reason is itself the organic life of authority. The proposition that authority and reason are inimical at once encounters facts which contain its refutation. Why is it that authority, when it is challenged, at once appeals to reason to justify its claims? Why if it is supreme and self-sufficient, does it descend from its high ground and seek the lower ground of reason

[1] Foundations of Belief, p. 204. [2] See note 6.

for its support? This very argument for authority so admirably put, is a product of Mr. Balfour's reason. The proposition that reason is to be ruled out of court and authority alone to be heard is refuted by the facts in the case. If one is essentially constructive and the other essentially destructive, the appeal of authority to reason to support it becomes a contradiction.

The Church of Rome holds the doctrine of authority in its ultimate form. The development of that doctrine culminates after many stages, all involving controversy, in the doctrine of papal infallibility, which was the logical outcome of the principle which has been working in the mind of that church since the reformation. If authority is to stand its ground and cover all questions that disturb and disintegrate the organic unity and the peace of the Church, it must find a voice to express it. Christ, the great head of the Church established it here upon earth as His representative and His body; if so, He must also have endowed it with authority, and that authority, to be effective, must also be infallible and final. The necessary conclusion was the declaration of papal infallibility. Now when authority in the form of papal infallibility is assailed, it at once seeks and summons to its aid the alliance and the justification of reason. It seeks to prove its doctrine of infallibility by inference, by a priori reasoning and by Scripture; thus assuming that the authority of infallibility in order to

be accepted, must be proved, that is by reason. She says to the reason of those to whom she presents her claims, "You believe in the authority of Christ, and did not Christ say to Peter, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it'? Or again did He not command the same Apostle, 'Feed My sheep'?" How these words of Christ are connected with the claims of Rome to infallibility, how by exegesis they are to be interpreted as supporting that tremendous assumption, is to be determined between Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic controversialists.

We may agree with Mr. Balfour also in what I understand to be his own conviction that such an interpretation of these words of Christ is essentially irrational and can only be accounted for upon the supposition that, in those who adopt it, reason has been so dominated by the pressure of authority, so shut in by the foregone conclusion to infallibility, as to deprive it of freedom and paralyze its activities. It would seem that the fallacy and the contradiction in this argument in support of papal infallibility would be obvious to the common mind, but Rome has profound confidence in popular ignorance. She forgets that this is a new age when all men are beginning to think.

But the point for which we introduce the illustra-

tion, is the anomaly presented by a church first claiming an infallibility, which suppresses and denies the rights of reason, and then summoning that very reason which it repudiates to support its claims. We take this as a proof of the instinctive consciousness in all authority or authorities, that man being a reasonable being, reason must be one of the doors through which authority must enter for conviction and acceptance by the human mind.

Again, in a rhetorical passage of effortless eloquence, Mr. Balfour tells us of the work that authority does in our beliefs and in our practical life. "At every moment of our lives as individuals, as members of a family, of a party, of a nation, of a Church, of a universal brotherhood, the silent, continuous, unnoticed influence of authority moulds our feelings, our aspirations and what we are more immediately concerned with, our beliefs."[1] Again he says, "It is authority, rather than reason, to which in the main, we owe not religion only, but ethics and politics."[2] We might ask with reference to those customs referred to, which we observe in our daily life without reasoning about them, those traditions and habits to which we conform and never think of demanding a logical proof as to why we adopt them, does it follow that, because we seem to observe them automatically, they are not in their origin the children of reason?

[1] Foundations of Belief, p. 236. [2] Foundations of Belief, p. 239.

Is it rational to suppose that reason had nothing to do with their beginnings? Did they begin to be out of nothing, or by spontaneous generation? Does Mr. Balfour suppose the majority of people hold their beliefs in their churches, their religious observances, their daily customs and canons of social life by the simple force of authority, without an element of reason in it? Is not authority, without reason at its origin, unimaginable and unthinkable? Authority is a product; it must have been produced by something. The growth of law, extending over centuries, is in decisions in which great principles are laid down, and established by reason, by proofs, by the toil of mind under the tremendous pressure of legal responsibility to justice and to judgment; and those decisions become by common consent, an authority for the future in like cases. Is that a blind authority, with no reason in it? Nay, it is authority born out of the travail of reason and of moral conscience guiding the reason, and driving it to its work and supporting it under the pressure.

The history of experimental sciences furnishes almost every year examples of old authorities superseded by new ones and theories subverted which once obtained general acceptance. The old is either discredited or absorbed and transmuted into the new. The law of progress in the knowledge of nature, constitutes each generation the heir of all preceding

generations, and imposes upon us of to-day the duty to hand on the wealth from the past, enriched by our own contributions, to the future. Therefore the irrepressible instinct for knowledge and the love of its pursuit. The great philosopher of the seventeenth century exclaimed, "If I held truth captive, I should open my hand and let it fly, in order that I might pursue it again."[1] It is perhaps an exaggerated expression of the law that the pursuit of knowledge is its own reward. While it is true that we are to work for the future, yet that motive is too weak and visionary for the impulse of progress, unless reinforced by the present joy in the search of the truth for its own sake.

It is however an impressive truth in the history of the advance of knowledge, that a discovery, while it is a benefit to its own age, is far more important as a stepping stone to future discoveries in the ages to come. "Knowledge," says St. Paul, "shall vanish away." That is, old knowledge shall be superseded by the new; but the old was the stepping stone for the new, and therefore it has its place in the temple of knowledge and in the grateful memory of man. Every new knowledge creates a pervading atmosphere of its own, which sways for the time the belief and the acceptance of its own generation. The knowledge creates the authority, not the authority the knowledge.

[1] Malebranche.

Mr. Balfour refers to another kind of authority, wider and more potent than the authority of custom, because we are more unconscious of it. It is the authority of public sentiment, which is like the atmosphere we breathe, where the pressure is equalized so that we cannot feel it. He calls this kind of authority a psychological climate, and thus describes it:

"But the power of authority is never more subtle and effective than when it produces a psychological atmosphere, or climate favorable to the life of certain modes of belief, unfavorable, and even fatal, to the life of others." These climates "may cover a generation, an epoch, a whole civilization, or it may be narrowed down to a sect, a family, or even an individual. . . . But whatever may be their limits, and whatever their character, their importance to the conduct of life, social and individual, cannot easily be overstated."[1]

We agree to the proposition and appreciate the felicity of its statement. The power of public sentiment for evil or good is practically incalculable. But the real question we are discussing is what is the *origin* of public sentiment? What is the genesis of psychological climate, to which such potency is attributed? Is it outside of human nature, like the laws of matter, like the force of gravity? Is it independent of the conscience, the moral reason, the

[1] Foundations of Belief, p. 214.

character of the community where it prevails? Has this character had nothing to do with the formation of these standards, the creation of this psychological atmosphere which it breathes? We are told by persons who are familiar with social conditions in parts of our country, that there are communities where belief in the sacredness of marriage has lost its hold on the people. The psychological atmosphere has been unfavorable, and even fatal, as Mr. Balfour would say, to the life of that belief. Translate the statement from the form of rhetoric to the language of fact, and reality, and you would put it thus. The conscience, the moral reason of the community has yielded to the forces of depravity. Educate the conscience, redeem the moral reason from the sophistries of the flesh and you change the psychological atmosphere, as you redeem land from noxious vapors by draining it. Truth is truth, and if you get it into the hearts of men it will take care of the psychological atmosphere that they breathe. It will substitute the pure air for the foul air; the authority of goodness and righteousness for the authority of lust and wickedness. Mr. Balfour makes the mistake which besets the gift of poetic genius, of identifying the idea with the metaphorical form in which he clothes it, and then using it as an argument, forgetting that it is only a metaphor.

When we designate a public sentiment in a given

community upon social life, or politics, or religion as a "psychological climate," we cannot conceive, nor could the author mean, that it is arbitrary, mysterious, irresponsible like the winds which blow as they list, like the climate that bathes us with its genial warmth and light to-day, or shadows and chills us with its bleak and stormy skies to-morrow. If public sentiment is like nature, then we cannot change it. We have only to submit to it like a law of nature. The public sentiment in this country from its origin, has cherished the institution of Sunday; the belief in the moral and religious obligation to set apart one day in seven as a day of rest and worship. A clergyman in New York, in an admirable discussion of the authority of Sunday, finds the obligation to observe Sunday in the unwritten tradition of our national government. "The constitution takes it for granted as the moral code, the law for personal and national conduct."[1] It has for its support the consensus of civilized nations. Wherever Christianity goes, Sunday rests upon the authority of God. The Bible makes it the beginning of history. Like the pillars of Hercules, the story of creation reveals it standing, and beyond it there is nothing. It is the preface to the religious history of the race.

People in numbers without a precedent in the annals of mankind, are migrating to this wonder-

[1] Dr. Huntington, New York, Dec., 1901.

ful country, seeking liberty, and not knowing what liberty is. Accustomed to absolute authority, that gives no reason for itself, requiring blind submission, their Christianity a name for scenic ceremonials that have lost their meaning; their Bibles closed; their reason and conscience uneducated, they come across the sea and your Sundays confront them as an enemy to liberty. Their condition is the necessary result of absolute government built upon the suppression of reason; of authority that is objective with no subjective element in it; authority divorced from reason and asserting its sufficiency without reason. They become a menace to our Christian civilization, until Christian ideas, Christian knowledge and Christian reason form in them a Christian public sentiment. And the public sentiment becomes the foundation of loyal, intelligent citizenship.

Mr. Balfour says that authority in the form of a "psychological climate" may be narrowed down to a "sect or a family." It is true that sects and families may receive by the authority of hereditary transmission customs, traditions, manners which distinguish them as peculiarities from the order and the habits of life around them. But these local, limited authorities are ever tending to weaken and gradually disappear, and are absorbed by the reasonable disposition of human nature to conform to the manners and the common sense of the people around them. The

"psychological climate" of families in the same communities is as diverse as the temperature of the different quarters of the globe. Here it is worldly in tone, in feeling, in conversation; grown people and children knowing nothing apparently and believing in nothing but worldliness. Here is another with the atmosphere of religion, of gracious manners and pure living, and family prayer and private devotion the law of the home. Men like these to whom I am speaking, who have chosen the Christian ministry for their calling, usually have some such antecedents behind them.

It is said of Thomas Jefferson, a great pioneer in the science of popular government, that as he was riding through his estate with Madison, the President of the United States, they passed the home of one of his tenants. In the yard was the mother with a group of children around her. Jefferson paused and turned to his friend saying, "Madison, that woman has family prayers every morning; she is bringing up her children upon the book of Proverbs, the Gospels, and the book of Common Prayer. She is worth more to Virginia and to the country than political philosophers. Those are the people that make nations strong."

In the realm of spirit and of moral free agency we choose our authorities, Conscience and moral reason within, and the revelation of God's law and His

spirit from without have, if we will, the choice of the masters we will serve.

It is with the races as with early childhood, human education begins with authority; but with every advance from its childhood reason and moral responsibility within are co-workers with influences from without. Suppress reason in obedience to external authority, and education stops. Christ said to the Jews, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." There is that in the truth which will find an answer in your reason, an acceptance in your faith, a welcome from your conscience and your heart, emancipating you from doubt and fear and the bondage of ignorance, the imaginations of superstitions, the slavery to the world and the flesh. Any theory that tends to divorce authority from reason, or to conceive of them as antagonistic forces is playing into the hands of systems, which in the judgment of history, have been the enemies of progress and the allies of superstition.

To lean upon authority is a tendency of the human mind in its yearning for certainty, for tangible reality. It is a temptation to the human heart as a refuge from the trial of doubt, from the discipline of walking by faith and not by sight. Newman left the Church of England upon that ground, and that ground alone. Its doctrine of authority was too vague and indefinite; he wanted a Church to still his

anxieties and quiet his doubts, to which his faith could surrender with unthinking submission. The craving for infallibility is not an error of Romanism alone; it is a desire of human nature for authority upon which to rest its burden, and to still its anxiety. An archbishop of the Church of England, once Newman's closest friend, one of the few men whose writings will hold a permanent place in the realm of religious literature, has these striking words. Speaking of the desire for infallible authority he says, "The craving for infallibility is only an enquiry after some mode of exemption from all further enquiry; only a care to obtain relief from all further need of care; only a navigation in search of some safe haven in which the helm may be abandoned and the vessel left to ride securely without any need of watching the winds and currents and of looking out for shoals and rocks; only a hope to acquire a release from all necessity of vigilant circumspection. Can we wonder then that all that ministers to such a principle, should unite with ready acceptance from human indolence and spiritual carelessness?"[1]

It is not intended in this criticism of Mr. Balfour's theory of authority, to identify it with the Roman principle of infallibility, but only to point out the direction in which authority which disowns reason logically and naturally tends to lead. It is doubtless

[1] Whately's "Errors of Romanism Traceable to Human Nature."

far from Mr. Balfour's intention to discredit the historic evidences of Christianity, but if we are to accept authority divorced from reason as the foundation of belief, it is difficult to see how historic evidences can hold their ground or what place is left for them.

Dr. Hort at the close of "The Christian Ecclesia," a contribution to the study of the New Testament which has placed English scholarship in the front ranks of religious thought, says, "In this as in so many other things is seen the futility of endeavoring to make the Apostolic history into a set of authoritative precedents to be rigorously copied without regard to time and place, thus turning the Gospel into a second Levitical Code. The Apostolic Age is full of embodiments of purposes and principles of the most instructive kind: but the responsibility of choosing the means was left forever to the ecclesia itself, and to each ecclesia, guided by ancient precedent on the one hand, and adaptation to present and future needs on the other. The lesson-book of the ecclesia and of every ecclesia is not a law, but a history." [1]

The conception of authority as resting upon and appealing to rational convictions and supported by evidences from history, from revelation and from the experience of all the Christian ages as embodied in the Church, is contained in St. Paul's words to the Ephesians, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers

[1] Dr. Hort, The Christian Ecclesia, p. 232.

and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God. And are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone."

AUTHORITY—THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST

LECTURE V

AUTHORITY—THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST

Supposed antagonism between reason and authority due to an erroneous definition of reason. Reason and authority together form our beliefs. What is belief? Canon Mozley's illustration of the principle of belief. Belief correspondence between external and internal evidence. First element in belief in Christ is historical faith. Essence of Christianity belief in the divine and human personality of Christ. Objection to historical faith as foundation of Christianity. Professor Green's position. Rev. James Martineau and Professor Wallace on historical faith. The place of history in moulding the religious ideas of men. Conception of history in the organic life of the race. History transmits capital of one generation to the next. People of Israel trained by history. Humanity learns its lessons through the drama of its life. Facts of Christianity verified by highest degree of external testimony, but unlike all other history, finds internal verification in human nature. The Church brings us the creeds and the gospels to confirm and vivify the facts. The word fact applied to Christianity as historic. Lessing's influence upon Germany and modern thought, upon Bauer, the Tübingen school and James Martineau. Lessing's argument against historical Christianity criticised. Writers who contend that experience of power of the Gospel adequate to preserve Christianity if the Gospel history should be lost. Fallacy of the position. Argument that men believed in Christ before gospels were written. Misapprehension involved. Authority of the Christian gospels bears same relation to first as to later generations. Dr. Stanton of Cambridge. Experience of Christians of every name, testimony to the historic faith. Experience and history testify to the central position of the incarnation as the authoritative revelation of Christianity. Outside of the Church controversies Christian thought in all ages centres upon the incarnation. An example, the theory of the Kenosis in the present generation. Statement of the theory.

Held by ablest theologians as tending to exclude the divine nature in Christ. Objections to the theory. Controversies of the Christian Church hold position of far higher importance than the speculations of individual thinkers. The Arian controversy. The divinity of Christ the central question. Thomas Carlyle's remark concerning the Arian controversy. Prophetic significance of Carlyle's words. The natural man and the world-spirit inimical to an incarnate Saviour.

In the last lecture we considered the necessary coordination of authority with reason. If it may be admitted that as members of the family, of society, of the party, the state or the Church, our feelings, beliefs and habits are due, among other causes, to authority, yet authority finds its roots in reason, and falls back upon reason as its justification. This is evidence that reason, both active and receptive, is concerned in its production.

We found also in the writers in whose systems of thought authority and reason are placed in the attitude of antagonism, an inadequate and erroneous definition of reason. It is easy to prove reason to be inimical to authority and destructive of beliefs by defining it as an exclusively dialectic faculty; that by which we argue about anything and everything, truth or error, things established or things repudiated by common consent; drawing conclusions from premises that we have not examined, or claiming the logical process as the means and the only means for arriving at truth; especially religious truth where the premises are always too small for the tremendous conclu-

sions, and where the mere logical faculty conducts us only into a region of doubt. That kind of reason is a mere formula. Reason itself is a faculty, the widest of our nature. Conscience, will, feeling and faith are all pervaded by the higher reason. This is the reason which is the friend of authority, and with authority builds the foundations of our beliefs. With that conception in our minds, let us ask in the first place what is belief? What enters into its constitution? Is it simple or compound?

Canon Mozley who, even when he is wrong, is more interesting and harder to answer than most of us are when we are right, has this luminous reply to the question, what is belief? "We never do in fact believe anything upon external evidence only. Somebody whom you meet in the streets tells you a piece of news; you believe it instantly, and as a matter of course; but what is it that makes you so believe it; his own assertion simply without anything else? By no means; he might tell you some things; and you would not believe them, or at any rate you would remain a long time in suspense. There is something, then, besides the report of the witness, or the external evidence, which enters into the grounds of your belief, and that is the antecedent probability of the fact itself. If this is complete and it is a fact of a common everyday sort, then you believe the report of it without the least hesitation. Thus the very common-

est sort of credence shows upon what ground belief is raised; that it is partly antecedent probability, and partly external testimony. Transfer the belief to a higher subject, and let the grounds of probability be not the mere experience of outward life, but certain inward instincts and affections, and the law of credence still holds. Your ground of belief is a sense of probability meeting and uniting with external evidence. These instincts and affections are what Christianity falls in with and with which it coincides."[1]

The analysis is as simple, as it is profound. The antecedent probability is waiting in the mind for the light of the external revelation from God to awaken and confirm it. The truth is recognized by the instincts and yearnings, the sense of need already existing and planted in the mind by the Spirit of Christ; the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The point of coincidence of these is where belief emerges, and where its foundations are laid. The external evidence corresponds with the internal sense of need, the unconscious cry for help.

The two grounds, the external and the internal, in their correspondence and their congruity, make the whole of what we call belief. A distinguished thinker says, "Belief in its last analysis is the relation between truth and knowledge." That is, truth

[1] Mozley, Lectures, etc., pp. 3, 4, 1893.

revealed must enter in and take hold upon the mind and find there an adaptation, a welcome, a home prepared for it. This is another form of saying that whenever we believe, there must be something in the proposition which is reasonable to us. We may not see all of the reasons for it, but there must be some point to which the truth links itself, and finds a response in our inward nature.

The mere facts of the gospel would have no more power to produce religious conviction apart from their adaptation to our needs, than any other historical facts. We might believe the reports of the witnesses of all that Christ did and said. The facts of Christianity, the verity of the testimony of the witnesses who record the facts, could not produce Christian belief. Facts cannot enter our spiritual nature simply as such. They must be appropriated and interpreted in their spiritual significance. Historic verity, alone, leaves a fact standing outside of the soul as an assent of the logical understanding; a barren content of the memory. Spiritual congeniality quickens the dead fact into life.

Thus the analysis finds in the revelation of Jesus Christ and its adaptation and the response to it in the reasonable will, and sense of sin and need in human nature, the foundations of belief; of saving faith.

This is to say that belief is a combination of the objective and the subjective; the divine authority of

Christ made known to us by revelation, ministered by the Church and accepted by the reason, the heart and the obedience of the will.

The first element in belief in Christ is historical faith. By that we mean, not alone faith in the verity of the gospel record of all the facts concerning Christ, but also in the answer to the question which Christ Himself propounded to the Pharisees; "What think ye of Christ?" who is He, whence did He come? What does the history tell us from the beginning as to the answer of Christian faith to this question? There can be no doubt that whatever Christians have held as the essence of Christianity, whatever the church teaches as the centre and heart of the gospel, roots itself in the fact of the human and the divine personality of Christ. The Church has taken her stand there through all the ages. She has fought her battles to hold that ground, and though her lines have wavered, she has never been driven back and left the ground to the enemy; she has never been permitted to fall away from that faith. If we could entertain the possibility that it could be so, reason, experience and history unite in the prophecy that Christianity would evaporate into a philosophical aspiration after the divine, which to the mass of mankind would be but an idle dream. The soul cries out not only for God, for the living God, but for the transcendence of the gulf between God and man; for the identification

of God with man as a fact, not an ideal dream, not a creation of the spiritual imagination.

The objection of a large area of modern thought to the historical faith of the Church as one of the foundations of Christianity, is substantially as follows. It is maintained that there is an inner contradiction in the conception of faith as a state of mind, in which the soul has found peace with God, and love towards all men, and at the same time having for its object the historical Christ, who lived and died centuries ago. Religion is a present state of the mind and the heart. It is a present reconciliation with God, defined in the consciousness. To make it depend upon what took place nineteen centuries ago, is an unnatural burden for it to bear, and is out of essential relations with it. It is irrational to suppose that historic conclusions, with reference to events in a remote past, should be necessary to our relations to God in the present. That view would cut off the common mind, which has no opportunity to reach these historic conclusions, and all who are without the capacity for the investigations necessary to reach them, from a knowledge of religion. Therefore it is said that historic Christianity is an inherent impossibility,[1] because its essential requirement is historic verification for the mind and the heart that receives

[1] Summary from Prof. T. H. Green, Vol. 3, Miscellaneous Works, pp. 2, 35, 40.

it. It would be the religion of the aristocracy, of the few with the time and the capacity for investigation. It would not be the gospel of glad tidings to all people. Notwithstanding the surface attractiveness of this objection to historic faith, it is clear to reflection that it is without point in its supposed bearing upon Christian faith. It seems to be a conception of Unitarian and of semi-Unitarian thought; but it has commended itself to many who suppose themselves to be orthodox Christians. It appears in many modern pulpits with apparent innocency of what it involves, and in teachings in many of our churches, as a defense of Christianity from attacks upon the authenticity and the accuracy of the Scripture records. They say what if it be true if the gospel records are of uncertain origin? What if we find inconsistencies and inaccuracies in the narrative? We are not dependent upon them. The power of Christianity is a present spiritual force manifested in the life and experience of believers; manifested in its power to redeem and to save men; in the consciousness of human nature which responds to it "This is the gospel that I need; this gospel meets the wants and the yearnings of my nature; having that, we are independent of historic testimony."

This thought is the dominant idea of the Rev. James Martineau, by far the most gifted writer in the ranks of modern Unitarianism.

I need not mention Professors Green and Wallace, and writers in this country who have reproduced their thoughts. It may create astonishment that writers of ability, such as those whom we have mentioned, should disparage, and practically disown, the testimony of history of past events, as having no legitimate place among the foundations of religious belief, or as factors moulding the religious ideas of men. The idea of history, in the light of religion, as the revelation of the purpose of God towards mankind, and of man's final destiny; that the past has been in all the ages, under God's providence, working for the future; that we of to-day are the inheritors, not only of the achievements of material civilization, but of all those influences and ideas which go to make up our moral and spiritual character; the idea, in a word, of heredity in the temporal life, and in the religious life, and of history as a vehicle for and a testimony by which we realize that idea, appears to be clearer to the mind of this, than to that of any past age. That it is so, is but another proof that the intelligence of mankind in its highest development, is growing up to a recognition of the mind and the words of Christ. To cut ourselves off from the past, to shut ourselves up within the narrow circle of our own individual emotions and experiences, to treat the past achievements and records of human life as though they were not, and thus condemn human nature in each of its

generations to begin *de novo;* the possibility of such a process is an hypothesis adopted in support of a visionary theory; it is outside of human nature as we know it, and it always will be so. Christ says, "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal—that he that soweth, and he that reapeth may rejoice together. For herein is the saying true; one soweth and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor; other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors."[1]

Take any one of the civic virtues, the most commonly recognized even by the ordinary, untutored masses of mankind. The love of country, for example; no one denies that it is a virtue; no one denies what history so plainly teaches, that with human nature as it is, it is necessary to human progress, and it is the intention of God's providence. Upon what does it rest? What are the sources of its inspirations? Where does the statesman, the orator, the leader of a country's cause turn, but to the records of history to awaken and inspire in the hearts of the people the impulse of patriotism, the willingness to suffer, and, if need be, to die for one's country? What is the key to the Old Testament story of the people of Israel, and their training to transmit the revelation of the true God to mankind? When they wandered into disobedience and idolatry, whence, but

[1] John 4 : 36–38.

from the history of their past, did their inspired prophets and lawgivers and leaders seek to bring them back again? It was the history, from Abraham's call to the farewell of Moses upon the verge of the Promised Land, which was the very spring of their national life, the objective revelation, in fact and event, of their religious faith. The last words of Moses, "Thou shalt remember all the way the Lord thy God hath led thee," were repeated by prophet and lawgiver and patriot for revival of their courage in the darkest days of their adversity, and for a warning to fidelity in religion and coherence in national life, in the days of triumph and prosperity. The appeal to them from the past was made to awaken in them the reality of God in their own life in the present. The generation to which these wonders had been visibly present, had long passed away; but the history of that generation was a living revelation and a foundation of belief to each generation to come. Is it possible to believe that we are forbidden to trust in history, unless we each one for ourselves are historical students? The very conception of God's education of the world would be stultified, if no lesson from the past be allowed to enter into the guidance and the inspiration of the present. The historical element in Christian faith is, in a higher form, a method of God's training of humanity, manifested at every stage of its temporal civilization and its spiritual progress. Christ says,

"Others have labored and ye have entered into their labors." It is another statement of the principle and the history of all sacrifice. What others have sown in tears, we shall reap in joy, and our labor in the present is planting for the harvest, it may be, of a far-off future. History is the link which keeps living the memory of the sacrifice of the sowers, with the joy and the gratitude of the reapers. It is the continuous record of the manifestation of the principle of sacrifice. Seen in the light of the incarnation and the Cross of Christ, as tremendous realities of history, we may interpret the meaning of all sacrifice for others.

It is through human lives, through the action and the ideas embodied in living examples, through the drama of life in families and communities and nations, that humanity learns its lessons, and embodies new principles in permanent forms. Why should it be otherwise with a revelation from God?

General historical facts are believed upon external evidence with no internal evidence to answer and corroborate them. The victory of Hannibal at the battle of Cannæ; the discovery of America by Columbus; the fact that such a person as Shakespeare lived; all the proof that I have of these is in the nature of external evidence. There is no internal verification in my consciousness connecting me with these events. They are believed in upon the validity of the external testimony alone. But while Christianity has in the

highest degree the same external testimony, which by the laws of the mind establishes historic verity, it has in addition, an internal verification in the form of an answer from my conscience, my reason and my heart. I feel the need, and Christianity answers that need.

The Church first gives me her creed, which contains in simplest form the historic verities which constitute the foundation of her faith. She requires me to accept those facts, as admitted certainties of history. She makes the demand upon the learned and the ignorant. It is a criterion, where all inequalities are on a level. It presents facts which are verified by evidence of the same kind which is required for the acceptance of any other fact, and which in their broad outlines, no criticism contravenes or denies. This is the minimum of her requirement. Then the Church explains to me through my natural guardians, my mother in early childhood; my pastors and teachers in early youth, the meaning of the facts. This Jesus, they teach me, was sinless, and He died for sinners. He was the Son of God, and the Son of man, as no other being in the universe is, or can be. Hence He is the reconciler of man to God. His death is the atonement for the sins of the world. On His cross He draws all men unto Him. They turn and look to Him and they are changed. They can never look towards God, as they did before. They can never conceive of God and feel towards Him, as they did in

the days of darkness, before the dayspring from on high arose. He has changed everything.

The Church tells me this in her creed in the outline. But I want the picture filled out. I need, for my faith, to see all of these wonderful things realized in a person and in a life; and the Church brings me the Gospels, the history from the very fountain; then I see for myself. The life tells me that He was a man, but also that He was infinitely more than a man. The cross, with the light thrown back upon it from the resurrection, and the resurrection, with its power dissipating the human fears of His followers; the spirit at Pentecost binding them together, and laying the foundation of the brotherhood of the Church, that centre of light which is to infuse the heavenly leaven and spread it through the earth, and to bear that mysterious cross to sweeten all the world's bitter waters; all these are revelations of the Gospel story. The Church which is itself the creation of that history, brings it to me, and I believe, not that her belief is the cause of my belief, any more than the authority of Copernicus is the cause of my belief in the Copernican system of the universe; I see for myself, and I cannot refuse my belief. The essential factor from beginning to end is belief in the history, in the facts, without which it is inconceivable that I ever could have believed at all.

The word fact, as applied to the historic personality

of Christ and to Christianity as historic, reminds us of a saying of Lessing, who was one of the great literary land-marks of Germany. He was the son of a Lutheran pastor, born in 1729. German thought had remained in fixed types from the age of the reformation. Lessing came to wake it up. It is curious to trace the origin of waves of thought, either true or false, to some striking expression, or a definition, putting an old truth in a new light, or clothing a fallacy in a plausible form which is accepted without analysis upon the authority of a great reputation. Lessing was doubtless a brilliant mind for any age; but could not be called either a philosopher or a poet. He was rather, as has been said, a "Guerilla Chieftain," making raids upon the seats of philosophy, upon religion, and the Church; finding much exhilaration in the consternation produced by his performances. The sensation awakened by Lessing among the educated and the higher classes in Europe corresponds to that produced among the middle and lower classes in England and America by books like the "Christian," or the "Master Christian," attacking the Churches, the institutions of society, the received opinions in morals and religion. Lessing's audience was a far higher one than the one referred to, and he had the literary power to meet its demands. He delighted in war, and it is said in his biography that from childhood he had the gift of satire. In his attitude to German re-

ligious life he was like the worldling, who takes keen interest in the foibles of the Churches, and who listens with appreciative attention to the preacher who satirizes the inconsistencies and hypocrisies of Christians. Lessing's main attack was upon historic Christianity. The intervals between his literary activities, he spent in the indulgence of the inveterate passion for gambling. In all of his wanderings he seems to have been truthful and brave. After a cheerless close to his life, he died in 1781. More than half a century later, Strauss adopted Lessing's arguments against historic Christianity, and applied them to the four Gospels and the life of Christ. The fruit of the seed planted by Lessing appears in Bauer and the Tübingen schools, both of which, though discredited, survive in the Unitarian theology and in large areas of tolerated criticism of the present day, upon the New Testament. Martineau, in his "Seat of Authority," and "Studies in Christianity," appears to have imbibed many ideas from communion with Lessing. In the human sphere Lessing is queer company for Martineau to keep; but sympathy in destructive criticism brings about strange companionships, as in other enthusiasms not tempered by judgment.

Martineau quotes as authority Lessing's Axiomata, and sums them up with approval as follows: "Religious doctrine cannot be deduced from mere historical facts without a μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος vitiating

the whole process. *Facts*, indeed, may become the proper ground of moral and spiritual faith; but then they must be facts which come over again and again, and betray an element that is permanent and eternal; which form part of the experience and consciousness of humanity; and ally themselves with the Divine by not losing their *presence* in the world. But *unrepeated* facts, which limit themselves to a moment, which are the incidents of a single personality, are left behind quite insulated in the past, show—were it only by your not expecting them again—that they are detached from the persistent and essential life of the universe and humanity. They are but once and away; and least of all, therefore, can testify of the untransitory and ever living. The real can teach us only so far as it has an ideal kernel, redeeming it from the character of a solitary phenomenon."[1] Such is Lessing's argument, accepted by Dr. Martineau, against historical Christianity.

He says, "Facts, indeed, may become the proper ground of moral and spiritual faith; but then they must be facts which come over again and again." They must be repeated. That is, a fact which appears once and no more, is but an isolated phenomenon in the past. It must occur again to-morrow, otherwise its appearance to-day is without significance. It is worthless, detached from all connection with the

[1] Martineau, Studies in Christianity, Int., p. 32.

present. What then becomes of the moral and spiritual faith, which it is admitted a fact may carry with it and plant in the mind? What becomes of the truth of which the fact is the expression and the external proof; the mind believing it on the evidence and welcoming it as the answer to its needs? Must that die too, if the fact appears no more? Then history, and all that it means for the education of the race, are futility and illusion. If moral and spiritual truth once revealed and planted in the soul, survives only so long as the visible manifestation which constituted the vehicle for communicating it is in sight, then indeed the order for the divine training of man for his life here and hereafter is subverted; and we are to walk by the seen and not by the unseen, by sight and not by faith. The foundation of all religion is reversed; the moral and spiritual is only a momentary impression, as transient as the visible phenomenon which produced it. The things that are seen and that appear to our senses every day, and reveal their reality by the constancy of their recurrence, are the eternal things; and the unseen, the moral, the spiritual are the temporal, the transient things.

The miraculous and the supernatural must be continuous; a part of the ordinary system, otherwise they are worthless for a revelation. They can certify to nothing except by repetition. The resur-

rection must happen over and over again. Miracles must be constant, so that we may expect them every day, in order that they may be tested by each generation and each individual; otherwise they are dead facts in the past. That a thinker and a writer capable of sustained eloquence, like Dr. Martineau, can permit himself to imagine that these high sounding sentences are coherent reasoning, is a conspicuous example of eagerness to support a theory to which the mind has committed itself, blinding the quickest intellect to a fallacy. The Christian Church began to be and continues to rest upon the fact of the resurrection. But for the historic reality of that, there would have been, so far as we can see, no Church, and Christ would have been a pathetic memory fading with each successive generation. The resurrection of Christ brought life and immortality to light; and it stands as a permanent light in the memory of mankind, in the hope that it kindles, in the problems that it solves, in the power that it imparts to Christian faith in overcoming sin, the world and death.

To every hope and belief of Christian faith the history of the Gospel bears the same relation; the identical relation it bore to the belief and the faith of the Apostles and the first believers. There are Christian writers, some of much ability, who, in their eagerness to present the force of the evidences of Christi-

anity from the experience of believers, from the history of the achievements of the power of the Gospel in the world to redeem men of every age and generation, have contended, that, if the life of Christ should be lost, or had been, and nothing was known of Him but that He was a great teacher of religion, and that He had been crucified and that He rose from the dead, these facts alone would have been sufficient to have established and maintained Christianity. This is hypothesis based upon an impossible contingency. If the New Testament should be lost to-day, it would be found and reproduced to-morrow from the memories and the experiences of millions and millions of believers all over the world. It could be a hundred times reproduced from the literature of all ages and all languages into which it has been woven. The supposition is unreal, because the experience is the product of the historic faith. The history from the very first was the basis of the experience and the faith of the Church.

It has been said that men believed in Christ and found God in Him before any of the Gospels were written; and that has been alleged to prove that Christianity is independent of historic records and inspired writings. It is true that thousands of men of all races believed in Christ before any of the inspired writings of the New Testament were given to the world; but all the evidence proves, without shadow

of doubt, that from the day of Pentecost to the time when the first Gospel was written, the facts of Christ's life and ministry, through which believers formed a conception of His character and His wonderful personality, were known to the humblest Christian disciple. St. Luke in the introduction to his Gospel, refers to many narratives that were current in the Churches. As far as specimens are given in the Gospel, the tenor of the Apostolic preaching was the presentation of the personal Christ to their hearers. How could it have been otherwise? Is it possible to suppose that when they preached Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind, dying upon a cross to reconcile man to God, that their wondering hearers would not have questioned them as to who Christ was, and what He did, and said, and how He lived among men? When St. Paul preached that in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian, Cythian, bond nor free, but that all these sundered nations are one in Him; He is the head of the great family; His love passes knowledge and knows no bounds; would they not have asked for living examples of this living sympathy? Would He not have told them the narrative of the woman of Samaria, or the parable of the man who fell among thieves; of the lost sheep; of the Prodigal Son and all of those saying and deeds of His, embodying the idea of man as man, of the soul and of its worth in God's eyes? How natural for

them to ask, "How could He be like us and yet be sinless?" Would the Apostles have refused an answer? In teaching the Lord's prayer, would not they have explained to their heathen hearers that the prayer was for the disciples, and not for Christ Himself? He taught them to pray to God to forgive them *their* sins; but He never prayed to God to forgive His sins. He had no sins to be forgiven. No word of His ever breathed the faintest shadow of the memory of transgression. His consciousness knew no cloud of sin. He was one with God. He said, I do My Father's will perfectly. Sinlessness was a moral and a spiritual miracle greater than any physical miracle could have been.

The belief in His Divine nature grew out of the picture of His character; His words and deeds as revealed to them by the eye-witnesses, the Apostles, whom He commissioned to go forth and preach the Gospel. They *had* the historic Gospel, perhaps with more vividness than we, to whom it has grown common by familiarity. The argument then, for the hypothesis that Christianity could dispense with the historic faith, because the first Christians had no written Gospels, is fanciful and untrue. The historic faith was in reality the sum and substance of their Christianity.

That the experience of the great body of Christians in all ages, independent of the historic revelation of the

New Testament, would furnish a support to Christianity even if the Gospels and epistles were lost, contains the illusion arising from the neglect of the vital connection between experience and the historic faith. Experience is a powerful confirmation and commentary upon the historic revelation, but the revelation itself is the spring from which the experience of each generation and each individual is refreshed and sustained. It is perennially original. It is a present reality to every soul that is born into the kingdom of Christ. There is truth in Lessing's idea, but not in the sense in which he meant it as an argument against historic Christianity. He says that "A Christianity, once incorporated into the very substance of history and civilization, seated deep in human thought and developed into literature, law and life, subsists independently of critical questions, and is with us, not as the contingent vapor that a wind may arise to blow away, but as the cloud that has dropped the rain and mingled with the roots of things."[1] This is truth eloquently put; but as an argument against historic Christianity, it veils the fallacy that effects are independent of their causes. The "rain that mingles with the roots of things" is not dead history, but a living Christ made known to believers and to the world in the continuous vitality of the authority of the facts of the Gospel. If Christianity is undermined

[1] Martineau, quoting from Lessing, p. 34, Studies of Christianity.

at the foundations, the regenerating springs which supply the literature, the law and the life of humanity are progressively weakened, and finally fail altogether. Christian ideas which have changed the world, are not self-evolving and self-sustaining cut off from the Divine sources from which they originally sprung, and by which their strength is continually renewed. Their energy wanes, and they are pressed back by the antagonism of the world and by the forces of sin and evil, with only human nature to depend upon. The retrogressions of the Church and the world are coincident with the corruptions of the historic faith of Christianity. The reformations and the advances are the results of the revivals of that faith.

The words of Professor Green, the leading representative of the Neo-Hegelian School, referred to on a previous page, involve the same fallacy as pointed out in the Axiomata of Lessing, upon which Dr. Martineau builds his theory of authority in religion.

The principle of the authority of the Christian Gospels as contained in the New Testament, must be applied to every other theory which claims to be heard, whether as confirmatory or as a substitute.

The experience of the Church is justly held as an authority, both for the doctrinal and the ethical truths of Christianity ; but it must be remembered that it is so as confirmatory of the historic faith of the New

Testament. The living truth of this faith has fed and nurtured the experience. Dr. Stanton, of Cambridge, in his valuable contribution to the subject, refers to the position of the consentient testimony of Christian experience, as a powerful confirmatory authority of the objective truths of revelation. He says, "If religious knowledge is to exist objectively at all, and not relatively to the individual consciousness alone, the principle of authority must enter as it does in every other kind of knowledge." Again he says, "Our weak faith may be permitted to look through the eyes of some strong soul;" and "It may thereby gain a sense of the certainty of things which before we had not, and which we lose when we return within ourselves." "The volume of the spiritual experience of mankind is a fact vastly greater than the experience of a single individual." If, age after age, I find Christian men and women of different races, diverse ecclesiastical organizations, environments and civilizations, confessing the same faith, relying upon the same atonement for the forgiveness of their sins, trusting in the grace of an ever present Saviour for strength to stand against the opposing forces of evil and testifying to His faithfulness to all of His promises, as realized in their experience, their very differences emphasize their spiritual unity and present an impressive confirmation of the adaptation of the Christian faith to the ultimate needs of the human soul.

The unity is far more wonderful as a confirmation of the faith, because it is unity under diversity; it is vital agreement under external differences; it is the spirit transcending the letter.

We accept the testimony of the early fathers as witnesses to the facts and to the consciousness of the Christian Church. Their teaching, their criticism of scripture, their development of Christian ideas, we are at liberty to accept or reject in the light of wider opportunities than they could have possessed. But when we come to the experiences of a Christian soul in the struggles with sin, in the fiery trials of suffering, with the strength of a faith that overcomes the world, this is sacred. It is the more wonderful the farther we are removed from them in the external conditions of life and education. We feel there the thrill of kinship that unifies variations and transcends time. The consensus of experience is far more wonderful and real than the consensus of opinion.

I agree with a writer to whom I owe much of spiritual help and illuminative thought, the late Dr. Dale of England, when he says, "The 'Confessions' of Augustine are to me of more authority than his theological treatises. Bunyan's 'Grace Abounding,' is of more authority than 'Calvin's Institutes.' I believe in the inspiration of the Church, and I find that inspiration in its life."[1] Such is the relation of the ex-

[1] Christian Doctrine, R. W. Dale, LL. D., p. 308.

perience of the Church, the great cloud of witnesses of all ages, to the historic faith of Christianity. The heart of that testimony is the affirmation that Christ reveals, in His personality, the divine and the human; that He unites God and man. As we turn from the experience of the Church to the contact of the historic faith with thought and critical intelligence, we find the same recognition of the central position of the incarnation of the Son of God. Beside the great controversies which led the Church to form her creeds during the first four centuries, speculations upon this central truth of Christianity have never ceased, and perhaps never will, even within the pale of orthodoxy. Theories modifying and explaining the mystery of the union between the divine and the human have attracted every age of Christian thought. And that it is so is another proof of the consciousness of the Church that the incarnation is the authoritative and central revelation of Christianity. In our own age, as in other forms in the past, we have the controversy in theology and criticism over the humiliation of Christ. What it means, its significance in relation to the person of Christ as divine and human.

The theory of the Kenosis, which has engaged so many devout minds and which in some respects appeals to our sympathies, is an effort to reconcile supposed contradictions in the conception of the incarnation. The doctrine referred to has been held in our

time by many devout scholars. It is the doctrine that God in Christ, to become incarnate, divested Himself of some of His infinite attributes, in order that He might become capable of that experience of suffering and of sympathy with humanity, which in the essential fulness of His divinity, He was not capable of. The controversy arose, and continues over the interpretation of the scripture expressions describing the humiliation of Christ. "He emptied Himself." "He was rich, but for our sakes became poor." The Son of God limited Himself, left behind Him His infinite attributes, in order to become incarnate. That theory of the humiliation of Christ is adopted by able minds, who are as loyal as any to the fundamentals of Christianity, under the impression that they are only yielding some of the speculative outworks, in order to hold more firmly the citadel of Christian faith; but they have failed to see the objections to which the view is open, and the conclusious to which it may be pressed.

I think it may be said, with truth, that a large majority of the abler theologians are against the theory, as propounded by its ingenious advocates; and that the soundest critical scholars have interpreted these few expressions of St. Paul as revealing a wider and a far deeper conception of the incarnation than this theory, involving metaphysical contradictions, which seem to be fatal to its acceptance. If the Son of God, in order to become incarnate, laid aside His

divine nature, and if it was necessary that He should do so, then the divine nature did not suffer, nor did it enter into a human experience, nor did it link itself with human nature. Again, it may be said that when the Son of God is supposed to have parted with His omnipotence, in order to enter into a finite nature, and to share its weakness and its limitations, we are using language without attaching meaning to the words we employ. The power that limits itself expresses, in the very act of self-limitation, the highest power of which it is capable. In repressing itself it remains in its fulness in the very act of self-repression. A power that represses itself is greater than the power that is repressed. What meaning can we attach to the proposition as applied to ourselves, that by an act of our will we can resolve to part with knowledge in our possession; that is, to be ignorant of what we know? If by an effort of my will I seek to blot out of my memory a fact or event that I know, the result of that effort is simply to revivify the picture, and to intensify the consciousness of my knowledge of it. And again, if it was necessary for the incarnation that the Son of God should have laid aside any of His divine attributes, then why may it not be pressed to the full length of Unitarianism and say that it was necessary for him to lay aside all, for all the elements of the divine nature are infinite, and human nature as finite, is inadequate for the accommodation of all or any one

of them. If this be the alternative, those who hold the theory are confronted by the question, in what does a personality, who has parted with all of his Divine attributes, differ from an ordinary human being in weakness and finiteness? If these and other objections are fatal to the theory, we may rest assured that the judgment, the illative sense and experience of the Christian Church will recognize in it a tendency, not only to modify, but to exclude the Divine nature from the conception of the incarnation. The fate of all such theories is at last to be determined by their relation to the central authority of Christianity, as revealed in the New Testament, and believed in by the Church as the Divine and human Saviour. Speculative schemes may be entertained as tentative resolutions of supposed contradictions, which may help the faith of those who entertain them; but to the preacher, who has upon him the responsibility of teaching the Gospel, speculations upon such themes should be held in suspense.

There are great certainties which we are to teach and to preach to the world. To imperil these certainties by resting them upon uncertainties; to identify revelation and the Church with the authority of our own questionable theories, is an error from which Christian wisdom and humility alone can defend us. There are many theories in the Kenotic controversy which may be tentatively held as provisional efforts at

an explanation of the supposed contradictions involved in the idea of the incarnation. But they must be held only as efforts by earnest thinkers, to help us to understand a hard problem for the strengthening of our faith. One danger, especially with young minds, is that theories are mistaken for revelations, and assume a fictitious authority which, when the mind once commits itself to them, it is difficult to shake off or to judge dispassionately. The first question to be investigated in all such speculations, is how far Scripture intends us to go; what does it intend us to know; and at what point is our reason and our faith to rest. The great certainty, the authoritative relation is the unity of the person of our Lord; the reality of His humanity; the reality of His divinity and the voluntary sacrifice of love that He rendered for the world in His incarnation, His life, and His death. Any theory that tends to rob us of the central truth of the incarnation, that in Christ dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, will be weighed in the balances of the faith and the judgment of the Church, guided by Scripture and the Holy Spirit, and will be found wanting. We have reached the conclusion, then, that historic faith and the experience of the Christian world testify to Christ as the seat of authority in Christianity.

It remains to ask what answer has the Church given to the question asked of the Pharisees, "What

think ye of Christ?" The Church is the organized brotherhood of Christians, whose function it is through ministers, and sacraments, through teaching and worship to bear the historic message to the world; to gather and to feed the flock of Christ. Outside of these direct functions of the Church and the limits prescribed by them, history is continually weighing individual opinions and variations of thought and separating the transient from the permanent. The function of the Church individually and collectively is to defend and to hold the faith. Individual opinions are left to the sifting processes of the consentient judgments of Christian society. Our little systems have their day, and history consigns some to oblivion, and from others rescues grains of truth and plants them in the soil to grow for the future. Controversies in theology find their parallels in the secular life of this world. Political and social theories in free society exhibit greater variety than religious opinions, and they also illustrate the law of the sifting process of the general intelligence of mankind, the consensus of public sentiment. The party politician presents his platform to the people as the issue involving the nation's destiny. His party is defeated at the polls; but the government moves on and liberty still lives. The reputation and the influence of individuals illustrate this same principle. The list of great names in a community, or a nation, in one generation is subject

to revision in the next, and people live to see the idols of their youth shattered, and reputations discredited. Theodore Parker was once an idol in New England as a preacher, and among the imperfectly educated classes, as a philosopher. The leading doctrine of his philosophy was the sufficiency of human nature to serve God without Divine help, and to find God without the aid of revelation. In a valuable English book, the most recent authority upon the history of religious philosophy, and with broadest sympathies for merit wherever found, a brief criticism of Parker closes in these words, "The confidence of one who was an orator, rather than a thinker, marks all that he says, and accounts at once for the extent of his influence in his lifetime, and its cessation when his personality was removed."[1]

The controversies of the Christian Church assume a position of importance and of dignity in a far higher sphere than these ephemeral controversies of individuals, of coteries, or of parties in the irresponsible world of debatable opinions.

The Church feels her responsibility to her Lord, and to the world to which she carries His message. The most perilous period of her history extends from the fourth century to the last part of the fifth. Professor Orr, of Scotland, in his valuable book "The Christian View of God and the World," referring to

[1] Caldecott, Philosophy of Religion, 1901, p. 100.

the question of the person of Christ as it appears in Church history, says, "The first essential service which history has rendered us has been *the elimination of intermediate views*, in making it clear, as a first alternative, that the real issue on this question is between a *truly divine Christ and pure humanitarianism*. Intermediate views on Christ's person have from time to time arisen, and still go on arising, in the Church; but, like the intermediate species of plants and animals Mr. Darwin tells us of, which are invariably driven to the wall in the struggle for existence, they have never been able to survive."[1]

The statement is illustrated in many of those early controversies, when the young mind of the Christian Church was just grappling with its problems, and measuring its strength with the antagonisms of pagan philosophies. The most familiar of these is the Arian controversy upon the person of Christ. Arius was condemned at the Council of Nicæa, because his fantastic conception of the person of Christ found no ground to stand upon in the New Testament. The consciousness and the heart of the Church turned from it, and shook it off as false and destructive of Christianity. Arius made Christ a creature; and if so, God was as far from man as ever. He had not entered into humanity; He had not taken humanity into Himself. The controversy was prolonged for

[1] Dr. Orr, "Christian View of God and the World," p. 44.

many years after the Nicæan Council; but as each phase of the Arian conception arose, the Church condemned it and laid it aside. The Council of Chalcedon, one hundred and twenty-five years after, formed the full creed which is now practically the creed of Christendom. In places of worship all over the world, upon the great days of the ecclesiastical year, we may hear from all races, in divers tongues, the great confession of faith, "I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God; begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, light of light, very God of very God; begotten, not made; being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made."

Froude, as quoted by Canon Gore, writes of Thomas Carlyle, "He made one remark which is worth recording. In earlier years he had spoken contemptuously of the Athanasian controversy; of the Christian world torn in pieces over a diphthong; he would ring the changes in broad Annandale on the Homoousion and the Homoiousion. He now told me that he perceived Christianity itself had been at stake. If Arius had won, it would have dwindled away to a legend." Judging from Carlyle's writings, it must have been rare that he confessed to himself or to others a failure to see to the bottom of things; he was mistaken in this judgment. If the Church had failed at Nicæa to vindicate the historic faith, she would have

rallied, and the battle would have been fought over again and won. The phrase, "dwindling to a legend," has prophetic significance. The religious bodies of Christendom, which have modified and finally excluded divinity from the conception of the person of Christ, have gravitated towards humanitarianism as the truth has been obscured; and with them Christianity has literally dwindled to a legend. Their power as Churches and their hold upon human life have progressively failed. Their religion has evaporated into a vague philosophy; their numbers have fallen away and they are being left to themselves, away from the forces that move the world; powerless to help men; without appreciable influence upon their generation. This is the solemn lesson of history; doubtless it will be repeated in other forms. The generations of ecclesiastical life which are before our young men, who with their talents, their gifts, their faith and their hope, are preparing to enter the ministry of the Church, may find struggles as arduous, and trials to faith more searching than those which clouded the early morning of Christianity; but the results will always be the same. Human nature, self-confident, self-centred, possessed by the world spirit, turns from the incarnation, the manifestation of God in the flesh; it is the last thing it will believe. It will say it in a creed. It will worship it in a litany; but that is only a courtesy to religion, and an imagination of

God afar off. To really believe in the incarnation is bringing God too close. The world spirit says, this world is our own territory. We do not want it invaded. God must keep in His place and we are willing to acknowledge His greatness and glory afar off, whatever that may amount to. But a God who links Himself to my nature; an incarnate Saviour, who claims to rule my conscience, my thoughts, my daily life, my business, my family, my politics, my money, my all, the world cannot stand this. It is the reality of Christianity, and between this and the world spirit in human nature, conflict is inevitable; but the result will always be the same. Jesus Christ uniting God and man will be more and more clearly seen as this authority; the King of men; the central light, by which the Word of God in the Bible is interpreted, testified to by the ever deepening experience and consciousness of the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

AUTHORITY—THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST

LECTURE VI

AUTHORITY—THE HUMANITY OF CHRIST

Principles discussed in Lecture V. Controversies arising from attempt to exclude the human nature of Christ. Disappointment of Christians of second and third centuries in hope of millennium. Influence of the pagan philosophy affirming the essential impurity of matter and of the origin of evil in the body. Cause of asceticism. Docetic theology foundation of the denial of the humanity of Christ. Philosophy of Mariolatry and Saint Worship. St. Augustine. His attack upon Manichæism. Christianity revelation of sacredness of common life and of essential innocence of the body. Salvation in Christ through natural human relations, not by their extinction. Council of Constantinople. Rejection of the Appollonarian view and of all phases of the Docetic theories. Harnack on council of Constantinople. Sneers at Christian dogma betray imperfect education. The lowest conception of Church authority. The councils did not add to revelation, only excluded error and defended the truth. The heresies attempted explanations of mysteries. The councils saw in the explanations, substitutes which would destroy the historic faith, and rejected them. Relation of reason to authority in these controversies. Heresies adjudicated by comparing them with revelation and the historic faith in the incarnation. Councils did not claim infallibility. Used reason and appealed to the reason of the Church. View of the necessity of organic unity of Christian Church upon passages as Ephesians 4: 5. The facts of human life seem to disappoint the expectation. General tendency to exaggerate differences to the neglect of agreements in social, political and religious life. The agreements greater than differences. All great churches unite in the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds. Exceptional position of our own Church to represent the spirit of unity in the Christian world. The Church greater than theologians or theologies. Significance of the creeds in the Church. Is theology a science? Definition of evolution as scientific term.

Contradiction involved in attempt to apply scientific evolution to Christianity. Christian progress in life and thought towards Christ and realization of His spirit in humanity. Professor Pfleiderer's "Evolution of Religion." The decline of certain theological systems coincident with growth of Christian thought towards Christ. Illustration from science and nature. Dr. Sabatier on the creeds. His illustration of need of amendment in Apostles' Creed. Confusion of thought in his position. Great dangers in modern churches not anthropomorphic religion, but rejection of the supernatural, by their ministers, the teachers of the people. Position of a minister of the Gospel different from that of laymen who have lost their faith in their creeds. Curious incident in the life of Renan. Bernez, the Jewish rationalist, and the Ethics of Conformity. Ethical position of a minister using his office to destroy the creed of his Church. Conclusion.

It will be remembered that the subject of authority in religion, as we have considered it, has not involved the question as to whether it has been committed to a visible Church, in the sense that within the bounds of the organism the authority may be supposed to exist, and beyond those bounds its validity may be denied. It is not the *esse* of the Church on the one hand, or the *bene esse* on the other, or any question involved in the science of ecclesiastical polity. That subject, however important it may be considered to be, has no necessary connection with the principle we seek to define.

We have been considering the historic faith in its relation to Christ, and the Church in its consciousness, its experience and its organic expressions as to what that Christianity is which is confided to it to bear to the world. Our view reveals the Church of Christ of

all ages as a kingdom whose authority to rule sits upon an invisible throne, but is ever present by the effluence of His Spirit; of a body with a head who is invisible; of a family, a part of which is on earth and a part in the unseen world, bound together by ties, possible to no human relation, by Him for whom they are all named.

Christ, as the incarnate Son of God, must be the centre and the authority in His own religion; therefore, with Strauss, we may hold, that if we undermine the truth of the incarnation, we undermine Christianity. The instinctive and the logical reason of all the enemies of Christianity, ancient and modern, has recognized this as the issue. The Church in the exercise of her dogmatic function, is more explicit and more intense in the affirmation and defense of this central truth, because of her consciousness that the other truths hang upon it. We have seen in the brief review of the great controversy, ending with the full development of the Nicene Creed, the sensitiveness of the conscience of the Church in rejecting any interpretation or theory which excludes, or even tampers with the divine element in the nature of Christ. Parallel with this movement, and at times mingling with it, is the manifestation of the same tenacity in holding the revelation of the incarnation, when assailed from the opposite direction, in the attempt to relegate to the background, or to exclude the

essential humanity in the nature and person of Christ. This is a passage of equal significance in the history of the Christian Church.

The early Church was at first hopeful of the immediate conversion of the nations; and to the end of the second century the air was full of exuberant anticipations of the speedy triumph of Christianity over the kingdoms of the world. But underneath this surface optimism, due to the wonderful spread of Christianity, there was a steady development of pessimism arising from a growing consciousness of the essential antagonism between the darkened conscience and the sensual degradation of paganism on the one hand, and the moral ideals and spiritual hopes of the Gospel on the other. The Christian as an individual, felt himself alone and powerless to cope with the social evils and the spiritual darkness around him. Misinterpreted words of Christ and illusions among Christians of the first generations, had laid foundations for dreams of a millennial advent, as a miraculous dispensation for the conversion of mankind. But generation after generation passed away and no millennium came. This dream of a personal reign of a visible king to convert the world by force was then, as it has been at each period of its recurrence, the shadow of a latent skepticism as to the reality of the Saviour's last promise, "Lo, I am with you to the end of the world;" with you in My human sympathy and My

Divine power. It was a material corruption of a spiritual reality.

Another influence was the pagan philosophy, the only philosophy they knew. The stoical principle of the essential impurity of matter; the doctrine of Socrates that the body was necessarily evil and that the passions connected with it were the enemies of the soul, and that death alone was emancipation for the good, would commend itself to the Christian mind because his was an ideal of moral purity and spiritual destiny infinitely beyond the highest pagan conception. Out of this experience of the hardness of human nature and the philosophical doctrine of the essential evil of the flesh, asceticism arose. The orders, the brotherhoods and other ascetic associations had for their object, not the propagation of Christianity in the world, but its preservation and the realization of it among themselves by the exclusion of the world.

Asceticism, as has been said, was the expression of a "noble despair." The Christian feared for himself the contact with the human relations and the pagan atmosphere of the world. His passions were strong and hard to tame. His joy in wife and child might obscure the glory of God and the fair vision of immortality in Christ. The business of the world might soil the whiteness of his baptismal garments. He severed his human ties because, to him, the natural

life was essentially impure. He despaired of the present life, and regarded his religion as designed to be realized only in the future world. Thus his Christianity became an other-world religion. He conceived of the Christian salvation as from, and not through, the natural relations of human life. He desired to serve God, but his religion had lost its balance. He saw only one side of it, and that the dark side, his own weakness and the evil in the world. He could not see the Saviour, with human sympathy and Divine strength, bending over him, with the promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee for my strength is made perfect in weakness."[1] To live the higher life and save his soul, he must leave the world behind him.

The necessary consequence of this conception was the separation of things secular from things sacred, as elements essentially opposed to each other. It distinguished the sainthood of the orders and the celibate as the true ideal of Christian life. The commonalty of the Church and the world it regarded as living on a lower plane of Christian morality, and looking up with reverential awe to those who had made the great sacrifice of their human ties and their natural life for the life eternal.

Human nature acts first, and thinks afterwards. In the ordinary formation of character, practice is the

[1] 2 Cor. 12 : 9.

foundation of theory. We choose our life first, and then bring our philosophy to justify the choice we have made. The development of Gnostic Christianity, which we find in asceticism, had in it the seeds of Docetic theology. It was preparing the way for the denial of the humanity of Christ. If its theory was true that the flesh is essentially evil, the very idea of a union between the Divine and the human presents itself as a contradiction. From this point of view it is a short step to conceive of the humanity of Christ as only a semblance; a body veiling a Divine personality, which occupied it as a vehicle for manifestation, but at the same time foreign to its nature and separated from it by an infinite gulf. The Docetic heresy was thus the denial of the human nature of Christ. The rise and spread of Mariolatry and saint-worship, coeval with the Docetic exclusion of human nature from the person of Christ, finds its explanation in ordinary Christian experience. These perversions were only pathetic and instinctive efforts of the Christian consciousness to supply the vacant throne of the human Saviour; to bridge over the gulf between God and man which the heretical philosophy had created. Mariolatry and the worship of saints had no ground in the historical faith. They were foreign and contradictory to the New Testament. They were antagonistic to reason, in that they clothed human beings with attributes of omniscience and omnipresence,

which are only intelligible when conceived of as belonging to the Divine nature. The Christian heart conceives of Christ, not only as the door and the way through which we come to God, but as our representative in the very nature of God. When the human Saviour is taken away, and the ascended Lord is relegated to abstract Divinity, the instincts of human nature, blindly groping to find Him by the aid of an earthborn imagination, adopt the substitute of Mariolatry and saint worship, to fill the vacant mercy seat of prayer.

The Christian Church condemned the Docetic theories one by one, and cast them beyond the pale of orthodoxy. St. Augustine, the defender of the historic faith, was the greatest speculative thinker and the most powerful writer of the age. In the revulsion of his spiritual experience, and in the penitence of memory over a wasted youth, he had gone to the extreme of asceticism. But when he is brought face to face with the Docetic denial of the faith that his Lord was truly human, as well as truly Divine, he renounces the fundamental principle of asceticism. He attacks the Manichæan dualism of the essential evil of matter and of the flesh. His Lord was born of a woman. "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory; the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." His intellectual grasp found in this a central

revelation and an assumption of the Gospels and the Epistles, without which they would not have been written. The Son of God, because we, the children, were flesh and blood, took part of the same, in order that He might be one with us. Is it possible to conceive that He could have united Himself to a nature which is essentially evil? He was without sin, and yet He lived His human life, as we do, in the body. What is this, but the Divine proclamation that sin has no necessary connection with matter, and does not belong to the constitution of our bodies? Evil cannot be the law of the body, its natural inclination, its normal life. St. Paul has said, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other;"[1] but the antagonism, illustrated in this imagery, demands for its intelligent interpretation the carnal mind which is at enmity with God and not the body with its natural appetites and desires. The flesh is the expression for the perverted will, and the corrupt imagination, identifying themselves with the gratifications of the body and using its members to satisfy the wants of a spiritual being. The flesh must in itself be as innocent in man as it is in animals. It is only associated with evil when the perverted mind takes it as an end, and substitutes the perishable for the imperishable, the carnal for the spiritual.

[1] Gal. 5 : 17.

It is difficult to conceive of Christianity with its revelation of the sacredness of common life in the eyes of God, perverted into a dualism which disintegrates human life and pours contempt upon its natural relations. With St. Paul the family was the home and the nursery of the Church. The marriage bond was the type of the union of Christ with His Church. The family union, in its spiritual relations, is God's ordinance to redeem man from his natural selfhood, to open his mind to the realization of his blessedness and the glory of his destiny in living in and for the life of others. That highest of all human relations involves the intermediation of the natural which at once develops into the spiritual, and the eternal. As the seed in the ground takes up the dull earth and transmutes it into the bud and the flower, so that which begins in what we call our lower nature, passes on into the higher, and is progressively transformed into the love of parents for their children, and children for parents; into unselfish devotions and beautiful self-abnegations, which constitute the spiritual basis of our social existence, and which dignify and elevate those temporal relations which we sustain to the material world, into the training-school of our immortality.

Christ was human, and He took our nature upon Him in order that He might enter into and redeem all human relations.

In the vision of St. John in Revelation we read,

"On His head were many crowns."[1] The type is taken from the old world conquerors who had subdued many nations; and for each nation there was a crown, so the vision would tell us that Christ is to reign over all and every province of human life; the family, the Church, the state, the social life of communities, the policies and the laws of nations, literature, art and civilization; whatever is of human interest is of infinite interest to Him, for He is our elder brother, the second Adam of the race. With Him our redemption from sin, in and through all of these relations of our temporal life, is identical with spiritual salvation and the realization of eternal life.[2]

As we have seen in a previous discussion, the authority of Christianity was involved in the Arian controversy over the Divinity of Christ. When we consider the philosophy of the controversies over the humanity of our Lord, the importance of the issues at stake can hardly be exaggerated. The Council of Constantinople, held in the last quarter of the fourth century, affirmed the true humanity of Christ and rejected the Appollinarian view which contained in it the principle of the various phases of the Docetic theories which had been working in the mind of parts of the Christian world since the last part of the second century.

Even Harnack, whose views of the history of Chris-

[1] Rev. 19 : 12.

[2] See note 9.

tian dogma have been confused, and often rendered contradictory, by the attempt to apply the doctrine of scientific evolution to Christianity, admits that the Council of Constantinople, in preserving the perfect humanity of Christ, did an inestimable service to the world and to all later generations.

It would seem that the time has come, when among educated Christian people, sneers at Christian dogma, and the dogmatic function of the Church of the earlier ages, should be assigned to ignorance, arising from neglect of opportunities or from incompetent teachers. All organizations have authority, as such, to prescribe the terms of membership, the duties of officers, rules of government, and also the purposes and the principles which constitute the reasons for their existence. This is the lowest view possible which can be taken of the authority of any association. It is principle that constitutes the bond of coherence and the guarantee of cooperation. Without political ideas a party name represents a rope of sand disintegrating into the individual units which compose it.

In some quarters of the Christian Church there are those who seem to hold that a religious teacher or a preacher of the gospel is commissioned to evolve his message out of his own subjective experiences and ideas; and that each individual clergyman has authority to ordain rites and ceremonies for himself

and his own congregation. This reminds us of the extreme Protestant recoil from the abuses of authority in the claims of the Roman Church, by throwing off all connection with the past, and proceeding upon the assumption that our Lord, when He ascended to heaven, left Christianity in the world for each man to do with it as best he could, with or without an organization as seemed right in his own eyes.

The Church in her creeds gives the summary of the facts of Christianity and the faith of the gospel, as testified in the historic record, in her own experience, and in the Word of God. She makes no claim of infallibility for the form of words in which her creeds are expressed, just as she has never, even in times when the idea of the verbal infallibility of Scripture was the prevailing doctrine, committed herself to that theory. Not holding the infallibility of the form of her creeds, she could not hold that they were unchangeable. The old creeds were formed out of the exigencies of the case as they arose, to end a controversy, to ward off heresy and schism, to preserve truth and to secure peace. Her representatives, gathered from all parts of the world, did not come to the great councils as professional theologians to solve, as has been said, metaphysical problems. They were men of action. Their obedience to the summons of duty involved toil and danger and sacrifice, unknown and impossible to realize, in the luxuries and amenities

of modern travel upon similar missions. They came at the call of the Church to the field of battle, not as speculative scholars, but as soldiers to save the Church and to defend the truth of Christianity. They did not come to add to revelation. They knew that could be done only by a new revelation. They came to defend the faith once given to the saints, and to exclude additions as they arose successively in the form of heresies. They had no authority to add; they were there to exclude the false and to defend the true.

In all of these controversies it would be confusion of thought and untrue to fact to criticise the action of the Church in the formation of these creeds and dealing with these great heresies, as an undertaking to explain mysteries, and entering into questions involving infinite quantities beyond the grasp of the human mind. This is precisely what the Church did not do. The heresies were all attempts at explanations of mysteries; their avowed object and purpose being to relieve the faith of the burden and the disability of mystery. They sought to bring the great facts and doctrines of Christianity within the entire range of the human understanding. What the Church did was to weigh those explanations and reject them, if contradictory and perilous to the faith and the truth in behalf of which, ostensibly, they were proposed as a defense and an explanation.

Arius projected, in his imagination, a conception of Christ as a being created by God before the world was made after the pattern of the Logos who was with God, and who was God. This pattern was not God; but was separated from Him by the distance between the creature and the creator, between the finite and the infinite. This image of the Logos, Arius conceived as united in Christ to a human body, taking the place in that body of a human soul.

This conception, offered as a substitute for the incarnation, cleared up the mystery, but it destroyed Christianity. In the New Testament, upon this subject, there is only one idea, one revelation, that is, the union in Christ of God with man. Nothing is said there of the creature proposed by Arius as a substitute for Christ. St. John had said of the Logos, "by Him all things were created." The whole of the New Testament said of Christ that He is the one Mediator between God and man. How could these beliefs be entertained for a moment, if Christ was only a creature, a being between God and man, without divinity and without humanity? If, being a creature Himself, He created all things; if, being neither God nor man in His nature, He was the Mediator between God and man, such a theory, beside being directly contradictory to scripture, raised far more perplexing mysteries than the orignial mystery, for which it was offered as an explanation. Mr. Balfour remarks, with

reference to this and all such explanations as constitute the substance of the various heresies condemned by the Church in the fourth and fifth centuries, that the Church held that "all such explanations inflicted irremediable impoverishment upon the idea of the Godhead, which was essentially involved in the Christian revelation. They insisted on preserving that idea in all of its inexplicable fulness; and so it has come about, that while such simplifications as those of the Arian, for example, are so alien and impossible to modern modes of thought that if they had been incorporated with Christianity they must have destroyed it, the doctrine of Christ's divinity still gives reality and life to the worship of millions of pious souls, who are wholly ignorant of the controversy to which they owe its preservation, and of the technicalities which its discussion has involved."

The saying of a celebrated adversary of Christianity, which has been referred to, has been illustrated in the results of the great ecclesiastical controversies of the first four centuries. Christ is the authority in His own religion. "If we undermine the incarnation we undermine Christianity."

We are brought again to the question of the relation between authority and reason. What part had reason in defending the truth, in these centuries of peril? Was it employed by Him, the great Head

of the Church, in the preservation of the authority of Christianity in the world?

Can any one be in doubt as to the answer, who looks into the operation of his own mind when he is trying to reach a decision and to find his way to the truth, where plausible arguments are presented on either side of a question? In the great councils that formed these creeds that have been practically accepted by the Christian world for centuries, doubtless the Holy Spirit was given in answer to prayer; but is there a necessity for the assumption of any other operation of the Spirit upon the minds of the members of those early councils than that for which we pray in our prayer book, when we meet in the interests of Christ and His Church, that we may be saved from ignorance, pride and prejudice; that is, that the moral atmosphere of our minds may be cleared; that party prejudice may be allayed; that our conceits, the pride of our own opinions, may be subordinated to the love of the truth, so that the reason, the common sense of our minds may have fair play, to see and to weigh and to come to a right judgment in all things. The action of the Holy Spirit is to remove obstructions, and to clarify the media through which reason sees; it is to keep steady the balances in which reason weighs evidence, and compares relations. The question with those early councils was the same, in kind, with all other deliberative bodies in civilized govern-

ment. On the one side is the common sense of the Christian Church, the belief in the Gospel, the history and the word of revelation; on the other is a new doctrine seeking entrance into the body of Christian beliefs. What the council did was to compare the new with the old; to ascertain whether the new was inconsistent with the old. It did not discard the new simply upon the ground of its newness; it considered the question as to whether the new proposition was tenable and, if tenable alongside of the old, it was received as an expansion and an illustration of truth. But the propositions condemned as heresy, as in the Arian, the Sabellian, the Appollinarian, the Nestorian and Eutychian controversies, were all adjudicated by comparing them with the great Christian beliefs, with revelation. They were found to be inconsistent, and destructive of the historic faith, and contradictory to revelation; and therefore they were pronounced to be heresies, and the great body of the Christian world has accepted their judgment and acknowledged the debt it owes to them.

Whatever of authority those decisions have exercised for the preservation of Christianity is the product of reason, and reasonable processes. The undue exaltation of the authority of a general council, has led, by a law of all extremes, to its undue depreciation, to the great injury of the unity of the Christian Church. An assembly of bishops from all parts of the

Christian world, supposed to be in regular succession from the Apostles and heirs of Apostolic traditions, has doubtless appealed to the Christian imagination in forming a vague conception, but nevertheless a definite claim, for the infallibility of their decrees.

If they invoked and received the illumination of the Holy Ghost, it has been said to follow that their definition of the truth must be received as the mind of the Spirit, and submitted to without question as absolute authority. But the premises are far too wide for the conclusion. Infallibility that dispenses with reason, in the requirement of passive submission, is not, so far as we can see, in any department of God's education of the world, a part of His plan and purpose. To leave out reason, in dealing with the human race, would be to blindfold and paralyze activity in the human mind. "Come, let us reason together," is God's message, through the prophet Isaiah, to the backsliding children of Israel.

It was reason comparing one thing with another, judging and weighing and sifting, doubtless under the protection of Providence and quickened by the spirit, but still responsible reason, that reached the conclusions in the great decisions of the Christian councils. Therefore they have found, and will continue to find, a response in the reason of the Christian world; and the response of a reasonable faith is the guarantee of

an authority, submission to which is the service of perfect freedom.

The ages for a general council of the Christian world have probably passed away, never to come back again. The breaking up of the organic, or more accurately, the external unity of the Church has removed the occasion, or at least relegated its possibility to a generation in the far future. Many Christian minds, with St. Paul's spiritual idealization of the Church universal before them, "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and father of all,"[1] find it impossible to interpret the language as setting forth any other principle than that of the corporate and organic unity of Christ's followers, as the condition of the existence of the Christian Church. Contrasting that conception with the divisions in the Christian world, they are driven to the pessimistic conclusion, that the spirit of unity and unifying authority has disappeared from the Christianity of our modern world. They interpret Christ's dying prayer, that His followers might be one, that the world might believe in Him, to mean that organic unity is the necessity for the conversion of the world; and they are confronted with the mystery that the answer to that prayer, as they have interpreted it, seems to be more remote in this generation than in any of the past ages of the Christian Church.

[1] Ephesians 4 : 5.

It might tend to impart comfort to such minds to find, in other realms of the higher life of mankind, the same diversity of theory, the same disappointment in the efforts at unification. In the fields of philosophy there never was an age, characterized by such efforts of large and cultivated intellects to reach agreement upon great unifying principles of thought and belief, as our own. In the realm of speculative theology we find a repetition of variation; while in the application to Church government and forms of worship the situation is, if anything, more diversified. While it is our duty to strive after and pray for, as we do, the spirit of unity among all Christians and in the heart of every Christian, it is none the less the duty of Christian humility to remember that divine love and wisdom know what is best for the education of the human race; and that while we may reach conclusions which seem to be logically irrefutable from premises drawn from the limited field of our own observation, yet when we consider mankind with their almost endless variety, and God with His infinite resources, we might entertain at least the suggestion that variety of method may be an intended accommodation to meet the varieties of human nature.

To those, to whom the divisions in form and worship and theology among Christians in our modern world, constitute a trial and a subject of profound solicitude, a consideration is commended which we habitually

neglect. The tendency to exaggerate points of difference, to the neglect of deep and fundamental grounds of agreement, seems to find its root in a natural infirmity, disposing men to judge by the appearance only. The points in which the various Christian churches agree are taken for granted, and a thing which is taken for granted drops out of consideration. The points where they differ, either in organism or forms of worship, attract and absorb observation. The names of churches are adopted, not to represent the doctrines and the principles in which they agree with other churches, but the one point, and it may be the only one, in which they differ. The difference is held up to view; the agreement is suppressed and passes out of sight. It is a tendency deep down in human nature. It is one side of our temptation to walk by sight, and not by faith. The things in which we agree are spiritual, the things in which we differ are the external, the formal, the material. The gulf between the rich and the poor, between capital and labor, is the difference of the conscious possession of wealth and power from the lot of toil and poverty and hopeless aspirations.

A philosopher says, "It is a general law that what counts at first sight is difference. When we measure our income and our resources, it is not wholly what we are and have that gives the habitual tone to our mind. What we see as ourselves in our mental vision,

what we think others will estimate us at, is the differential amount between our estate, our endowments, and theirs. The nearer the fundamental equation of what we are and have, with what others are and have, the more keenly do we set store by our petty prerogative, in that imagination of compared dignity which haunts like a demon. It is not always his poverty that makes the poor man's hardship; it is as often the sense that he is poorer than others; it is as often the sense poorer, above all, than others he would otherwise have matched."[1]

It is the consciousness of these differences that widens the gulf between the classes; and nothing but the Christian Gospel, that appeals to them upon the basis of their unity in Christ, can transcend their alienations. They must see the broad, deep, eternal unities over their differences. To the rich man, the conception is the fanaticism of the demagogue; to the poor man it is the scorn of satire. In Christ it is reality, it is the common sense, as well as the deepest essence of the saving power of the Gospel. The rich man and the poor man, the capitalist and the laborer are one in sin, in sorrow, in death and in judgment; one in Christ, in redemption, in salvation and in eternal life.

The envy of the poor towards the rich, the hardness, the indifference and the injustice of the rich

[1] Professor Wallace, Gifford Lectures, p. 94.

towards the poor, cannot be converted by law as a constraining force outside of the heart and the conscience of the people. We may investigate the history of civilization and the philosophy of the adjustment of human rights, the duties of authority and the limits of governmental control in relation to individual liberty. We may study the schemes of social regeneration, which have kindled the imaginations of thinkers like Comte or Fourier or wilder ones, as the Socialists in Germany of the present generation; the classes may organize and put themselves in battle array and awaken the consciences of the great masses of Europe and America to the peril of our civilization, and these may bring temporary adjustments, but they will be only temporary. Nothing can heal the alienations but the common brotherhood in Christ. That did it once when Jew and Gentile, Greek and Barbarian forgot their hatreds of centuries and loved one another, to the wonder of the pagan world. That can accomplish the reconciliation, but nothing else can. It is not the organization, but the spirit of Christ in the organization as the soul and the seat of its authority, which constitutes the unifying principle. Christ, as God incarnate, is not only the author of eternal life, but He is the King of men, He is the Saviour of society.

The sectarian spirit, in every department of life, is born of the pride that persistently disowns the agree-

ments of brotherhood and bounds its sympathies within the limitations of differences. It is the spirit of a set, a clique, a select few found in communities small and large. It is the bane of society, of scholarship, of literature. It is that which gives rise to hundreds of groups of people embracing some fancy, mystical or formal, and attaching it to a religious creed to mark them off from the rest of the religious world.

Renan says something like this, "It is so gratifying to think that one belongs to a little aristocracy of the truth; that we are a peculiar people; that we hold the deposit of that which is best."

No ridicule can penetrate that ignorance of pride. The only cure is the converting grace of the spirit of brotherhood in Christ.

It has been said that the ages have passed for general councils of the Church of Christ. But surely we may be thankful for that organic unity which bound the Church together long enough to secure the canon of Scripture, as the record and the word of Revelation, and the testimony of its consciousness and its reason to the central truth of the Gospel, as expressed in the great creeds of Christendom. These creeds may in the future form a basis for practical cooperation and brotherly sympathy between all the variations of external form, which may bring about such organic unity as may be intended by Christ, the

Head of that Church which embraces all who own Him as their human Saviour and their divine Lord.

If we of this generation could hope for a representative gathering of all the great churches, those who are doing the work of Christ at home, who are taking the Bible in every tongue to all the families of mankind, who are fulfilling His command, and with wonderful signs of His blessing upon the preaching of His Gospel to every creature, can we doubt that such an assembly, with spontaneous fervor, would declare the Bible as their rule of faith and practice, the Sacraments as Divinely appointed means of grace and, with one voice in many tongues, join in the great confessions of the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds.

Such a scene might interpret the prophetic meaning of St. Paul's memorable passage, "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all."[1]

In the meantime let us realize in our own blessed communion, with its great heritage from the past, opportunities and responsibilities for maintaining, in its purity, the faith once delivered to the saints.

That great Church, of which we are a branch, occupies in the Providence of God, a position in the thought and the civilization of the world which is ex-

[1] 1 Cor. 12: 4.

ceptional in its opportunities for the defense and the propagation of the Gospel. She has in her worship for minister and people, the great creeds in which every heart and tongue confesses the essentials of the Christian faith.

In the position which she assigns to those creeds in the education and the worship of her people, she regards herself and all of her branches, as trustees of statements of facts and gospel truths which are to be preserved unchanged through all revolutions of thought and form, and which are to be transmitted to the future as treasures which she has inherited from the past. These expressions of the essence of Christianity she holds as a sacred trust to be handed on from generation to generation.

As we have seen, the great work of that early church in the prolonged struggles which resulted in the creeds, was not the formulation of systematic theologies, or speculative opinions. She gathered the facts and the truths of Christianity together and expressed them in their unexplained fulness. A Church is not a body of speculative theologians. It has a higher and greater work to do than thinking and systematizing and rounding points for agreements in the realm of speculation. It has to take the gospel to the world and teach all men. It has to help and to heal and to comfort and to feed the flock. It has, above all things, to unite them in faith by expressions

and beliefs in which they can all agree, in forms through which they can all worship, men, women and children. A Church is greater than theologies or the body of theologians. If it is to accomplish its work in the world, it needs unity of spirit in the bonds of peace. Its vital confessions must be great beliefs in the simplest forms.

When we have entered the Christian ministry with its opportunities, far beyond those of any other calling, for knowing human nature, it will not be long before the absurdity of the conception, that our office is to train our congregations to be bodies of theologians, will dawn upon us.

The great truths unite; human speculations divide.

Of these great truths the Church holds the Incarnation of the Son of God, a human and Divine Saviour, as the greatest; the "articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ." This is the significance of the position she gives to her creeds.

We are asked from various quarters, especially Rome on the one side, and extreme Protestant Germany on the other, and not a few books in our own country that echo the thoughts of the old world, as to the relation of the permanency of the creeds to the development and the evolution of doctrine and theology.

Is theology a science? If so, it must obey the law of development. It must come under the sweep of

evolution, the great order of all the sciences. The answer would be, what do you mean by science? If you conceive of theology as a system in which the parts and the truths are logically and methodically arranged in their relations to each other, then theology is a science. Its advance would then consist in the progressive harmonizing of all revealed truths; in the elimination of supposed contradictions; in the clearing away of shadows of misapprehensions; the confusions of logomachies and the comprehension of antagonisms into higher and higher unities. In this sense theology is a science, and one of the noblest of them all. But if you use the word science in its proper sense as identical, in its principles, its methods and the material upon which it works, with physical science, the answer would be the explanation of the utter misapprehension upon which the question is propounded.

Science in Physics is the observation of facts and tracing the causes of phenomena. The things that we see are the consequents; the search of science is for the antecedents. Its progress is the discovery of facts in their causal relations. Thus, the facts of nature, that appear arbitrary and disconnected, are linked together by science in a chain of cause and effect. Each consequent in the evolution of nature becomes a physical cause. The seed is the cause of the plant; the plant is the cause of the bud and the bud of the

flower. Evolution means that the plant, the bud, the flower and the fruit were all coiled up in the seed, and the elastic forces of life, under the conditions of environment, are unfolding the coil and giving rise to new forms that absorb the old ones which contained in them the promise and the potency of the new. This is the meaning of evolution in science. The notion that a similar process is applicable to Revelation involves a contradiction. Revelation may be, and is progressive, as men are able to bear it and to appropriate it, as God gives it, but at each stage it is revelation of truth, and truth is always the same. Revelation from God is true for all men and for all ages. The revelation of the Gospel to the Apostles and the first Christians, in its adaptation to human needs, is identical to believers to-day after twenty centuries. Its power for conversion and for the development of spiritual life was as great at the beginning as it will be at the end.

We go back to the New Testament, as the fountain for inspiration, and for examples of the power of Christianity to realize in sinful human nature the noblest types of sacrifice, of love, of duty, of spiritual elevation, possible to man in any age of the life of the race.

Inorganic nature is devoid of the potency to produce organic life, and would remain so for eternity, as science tells us, unless the seed of life comes down to

it from a system above, so revelation is life from above. As Neander says in the introduction to his History of the Christian Church, "Now Christianity we regard not as a power that has sprung up out of the hidden depths of man's nature, but as one which descended from above, because heaven opened itself for the rescue of revolted humanity; a power which, as it is exalted above all that human nature can create out of its own resources, must impart to that nature a new life, and change it from its inmost centre. The great source of this power is the person whose life its appearance exhibits to us,—Jesus of Nazareth,—the Redeemer of mankind, when alienated from God by sin. In the submission of faith to Him, and in the appropriation of the truth which He revealed consists the essence of Christianity."

The distinction then is clear; and revelation, from its very nature, cannot be brought under the law of physical and scientific evolution. The defenders of that law, who contend for its universal application, are thus driven to deny the possibility of a revelation, and along with that, to deny the supernatural from beginning to end; the supernatural in God; the supernatural in man; the supernatural in Christ; the supernatural in prayer; the supernatural in the spirit of God visiting and communing with the soul of man; the supernatural in the hope of immortal life.

This principle dominates the criticism of a large

class of minds, especially in Germany. Professor Pfleiderer, of the University of Berlin, is a typical specimen of this phase of modern thinking in theology. He reduces Christ, in the attempt to bring the historic faith under the law of physical evolution, to a product of his environment. He was the fruition of the best in the Jewish race; and Christianity was produced out of the consciousness of humanity in the stage of its natural evolution, in the age in which it appeared in the world. A reader of the last volume of his works, translated into English, will find in these essays upon the "Evolution of Theology" that strange combination, frequently exhibited in the German mind, of sincerity and candor, combined with unconscious lack of reverence and the tendency to gravitation to one idea, with ingenuity as distinguished from logical and practical reason.[1]

In the sense in which we use the word science in connection with theology, as distinguished from its significance when applied to the order of nature, there is room for indefinite progress. One feature in the great creeds, which have been handed down to us from the elder generations of the Church, is that simplicity and that unexplained fulness of truth which gives room to our theology for variety of illustration and expansion of apprehension in its application to all

[1] See Note 10.

knowledge and to all departments of thought and life.

There have been many theological conceptions and systems that once dominated religious thought, that have now passed below the horizon of the Christian world; but each system as it receded, revealed in clearer light a truth which the error, or the exaggeration, or the underlying contradiction in it had partially concealed. The decline of Calvinism has opened a deeper conception of the love and the human sympathy of God in Christ, while the Divine sovereignty and justice for which it was an artificial and false defense, remains as deeply rooted as ever in Christian faith and reason.

The decline of the doctrine of the verbal infallibility of the Bible has invited the humblest and the greatest minds to its pages; opening springs of Divine sympathy and lessons for the lives of men and nations, and living waters of spiritual life for earnest souls; and will continue to do so, notwithstanding the perplexities and controversies which have been raised over its history and interpretation. These are ephemeral, the other is a permanent gain. Wherever freedom of thought and speech obtain we may expect errors, vagaries and irrational theories to assume the guise of religion, of scholarship, of philosophy, of literature and of politics, but these are the accidental and the probationary trials of the truth on

its way through antagonisms to its final vindication.

Progress in theology is but a part of the general growth and spread of Christianity, and that is progress in the knowledge of Christ as the Incarnate son of God. The reaching forward towards higher ideals of goodness, of justice, of self-sacrifice in ourselves and in the world is the process of translating Him into conduct, into institutions, into philosophy, into life. If He is the full and final revelation, all progress in morality, in truth, in spirituality and in righteousness must be towards Him and through Him. In His revelation of sin and salvation, of God and of human destiny He is immeasurably in advance of human progress and always will be. He is the same, as the stars Abraham saw on the plains of Shinar are the same that we see. There are new astronomies that tell us more about them than Abraham knew, and through them we may arrive at last at a demonstrative knowledge of the physical universe; but the love of Christ and all that is comprehended in that conception of our destiny in Him, passes knowledge and always will. No truth, scientific or religious is, as many thinkers assume, a development out of our own minds, nor is it contemporary with our discovery of it. It is as old as creation. Its source and its home is the mind of God. Our progressive development in knowledge is only an enlargement, in the Providence

of God, of our opportunities and our powers of wider vision, and of our use of them as astronomers see stars through the telescope, which have been shining since the morning of creation beyond the vision of the naked eye. Progress in religion is progress in the knowledge of Christ.

In relation to our creeds, it is said by some learned and thoughtful persons in positions of authority, that we need, in a few instances, new forms to clothe our essential beliefs. The old are inadequate and the advance in knowledge recognizes in them a contradiction. "The new wine bursts the old bottles." An essay from Dr. Sabatier, Dean of the faculty of Protestant theology in Paris, has recently been introduced to English readers with the influence of distinguished persons of the Church of England. I am convinced that the English bishops and clergy who give a modified commendation to the suggestions of this essay and the distinguished writer, are on an impractical quest. Dr. Sabatier illustrates the principle for which he contends, by the supposed variety of interpretations put upon the consecrated formulas of worship, the Apostles' Creed for example, by believers of different degrees of culture. "I see a large assembly gathered in one of our churches for worship. In this assembly some are poor old women, very ignorant and somewhat superstitious; some are men of the middle class, possessing

some tincture of literature; some are wise men and philosophers who have meditated on Kant and Hegel, and even professors of theology who are penetrated to the marrow with the spirit of criticism. All of these bow down their hearts and worship; all speak the same tongue learned in childhood; all repeat with heart and lip: 'I believe in God the Father Almighty.' Is there on earth a sight more touching or anything nearer to heaven? . . . The moral unity spoken of by Jesus when He said 'That they may be one, even as we are one,' is for a moment realized on earth. But do you suppose that the word *God*, when it is pronounced by all those lips, summons up the same image to each one of those minds? To the old woman, who remembers the illuminations of her large Bible, the Father Eternal appears with long, white beard and brilliant eyes shining like coals of fire. Her neighbor would smile at the simplicity of this anthropomorphism. He has in his mind the theistic idea, as it was rationally set forth to him in the course of lectures of philosophy he attended at college."[1]

A novel writer may inject what thoughts he chooses into the mind of the character he creates. If the old woman is a Christian, she receives her ideas of God from Christ, and who will say that the conception of

[1] Dr. Sabatier, Dean of Faculty, Protestant Theology, Paris, Vitality Christian Dogma, p. 25.

philosophy which has been trying to find out God outside of Christ and upon postulates of its own, is nearer to reality than the simplest Christian faith. The supposed anthropomorphism does not exist. It drops away, as the spiritual truth, which is present in it, is presented to the consciousness. We read in the Bible that God's eyes are in every place, beholding the good and the evil; that His ears are open to the prayers of the righteous and His countenance is against them that do evil. These are anthropomorphic forms of expressing metaphysical attributes of omniscience and omnipresence; and the mind, even in its early stages of development, never pauses upon the anthropomorphic form but instinctively turns to the spiritual idea. While the relation of human fatherhood cannot be a literal reproduction of God's relation to us, it conveys to the spiritual mind the reality of that relation far more profoundly than any word or any analysis of the spiritual truth could possibly impart to us. These critics suggest an amendment to the phrase in the creed Christ "ascended into heaven," making heaven in space, and implying a miracle in the violation of natural law. But the Gospel narrative itself furnishes a reply to that suggestion which a child's mind could comprehend. In His risen body the appearances of Christ transcended the laws of matter, and impressed the disciples with the reality that He belonged to the

world of spirit, and that His manifestation was the sign of the spiritual body. It is within the capacity of ordinary thought to forget the form in the apprehension of the spiritual idea it is intended to convey. When we look through the telescope at the stars, we are unconscious of the glass; we think of the object, and not of the glass which reveals it to us.

The forms of the great creeds, through which we worship, exhibit no decay and no inadequacy to hold the living principles of the Gospel; and intimations which might awaken doubts, and weaken their authority and sacredness find no rational justification.

The danger is not to be found in any wide-spread tendency in this direction, but there is a menace to the authority of all churches and of the vital principle of religion in the position occupied by some who have been entrusted by their churches with the commission to teach and to preach Christianity. They discredit the supernatural in religion, and so teach, in order, as they contend, to bring Christianity into harmony with what they conceive to be the modern spirit. They claim the right to interpret articles of the creed, especially the statements of the supernatural birth of our Lord and His resurrection from the dead, in a way subversive of the historic faith. These persons receive salaries and minister in Christian churches. Many German Protestant churches have gone further. A hearer in one of these, testifies, as quoted by an-

other, "only put yourself in the place of those who had never received any other teaching than that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, suddenly hearing his pastor in the church at Christmas speaking of Joseph and Mary as 'the simple parents of the Man of Nazareth!' Or on Easter Sunday morning, of 'the delusion of the early Christians that Jesus had returned to the earth from the grave.'"

This position, in a minister of the Gospel, stands upon different grounds from that which not a few laymen occupy, who from one cause or another, have lost their faith in their creeds and the beliefs of their childhood, and who yet conform to the outward institutions of the Christian Church. The position of the latter may be illustrated in a curious incident in the life of Renan given in the *Quarterly Review* as follows: "While Renan was writing his 'History of Israel' he is said to have paid a visit to Bernez, the Jewish rationalist. He arrived at the festival of the Passover, and to his great surprise, found that Bernez was keeping it with punctilious observance of the ancient ritual. Renan expressed his astonishment that his friend should solemnly commemorate the holy days of a creed which he had ceased to believe, but Bernez defended himself, 'Dogma is a sort of disunion,' he said, 'but ancient ritual observances preserve our common esprit de corps.'"[1]

[1] The *Quarterly Review*, London, January, 1899, p. 103.

Whatever confusion of thought we may detect in Bernez' reply as to the relation of a creed to a ritual—for logically no ritual can transcend or contradict the creed out of which it grows—it is true that there are thousands who, with sincerity, occupy a position analagous to that of the Jewish rationalist. There is a difference between a creed and worship. A creed is a confession of the reason and the faith in an objective revelation. Worship, and going through the forms of worship, may only deal with subjective feelings that are stirred by truths which are undefined to the intelligence. There are many who know not whether they believe or disbelieve. They are afraid to say "I believe in the Incarnation, in the Atonement, in the Resurrection of the dead." These truths look hard and cold and lifeless when they see them formulated in a creed. But when they bend in the Church and hear the cry of the Litany, "Oh Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world," something in them answers "Have mercy upon us!" When they are with the worshippers on Easter Sunday morning, the glory and the joy appeal to them, and they think of friend and child and loved ones gone, and feel somehow that they are not parted from them forever. Worship appeals to the element of feeling in faith, when the mind cannot yet commit itself to the confession "I believe." Bernez was not, as he thought himself, an out and out unbeliever. Emotions, memories,

associations, feelings, undefined convictions all moved him to worship in the old forms of his forefathers. There are those who cannot say that they hold the creed of their forefathers. Doubts bewilder and their intelligence is perplexed. But the worship touches them, though they have not laid hold consciously upon the objective faith. I suppose Christ would say to such, "thou art not far from the kingdom of God." But an accredited minister of any church, who discredits the beliefs of that church and uses his office to pull down its creed, is a person whose ethical position the conscience of any community, that deserves the name of Christian, would repudiate as one who carries "a lie in his right hand."

Dishonesty disintegrates far more than doubt. Character is greater than doctrine because it is doctrine appropriated and transmuted into life. It is the evidence that gathers into unity the converging lines of testimony. It is at last the great argument. The fidelity and godly sincerity of the ministry have been from the beginning, and will be to the end, the potent factors among human instrumentalities for the conversion of men.

As its mission is higher, it is the more open to antagonistic influences from fallacies of exaltation on the one side or discouragement on the other. We are familiar by frequent repetition with the current idea that preaching has lost its power. It was well enough

in past generations when it stood almost alone as the instrument for reaching the mind and the heart of the people; but the press with its multitudinous outpourings from every field of thought, has relegated it to the past. But a little reflection exposes the fallacy. The printed word is still. The spoken word is moving, living. As you are true and earnest men, the difference dawns upon you when you listen or when you speak. It is your heart and conscience and reason, with all the accessories of voice and expression, speaking to your fellow-men. It can never be superseded as a force for moving human beings. As knowledge grows among the masses, and it is growing, the power of the earnest spoken word finds avenues to intelligence and sympathies in human nature which are progressively opened as ignorance is dissipated by education. Think yourselves, and the people will kindle with your thought. Believe yourself, and of all men in the world you as the preacher of Christ have the place and the opportunity to help men to believe. Of all others you are the one to give a reason for the faith that is in you.

Your sympathy from the beginning to the end of these lectures has imparted to the duty a sense of privilege. May the blessing of the Head of the Church rest upon this Seminary.

END OF LECTURES

NOTES TO LECTURES

NOTE ONE

THE THEOLOGY OF FEELING

DEPENDENCE upon feeling for religion is not confined to the emotional excitation of what are called Revival Meetings among the masses, or in its more refined forms to the rhapsodies of the mystics, which are mistaken by them for spiritual revelation. Belief in feeling as the organ of religious knowledge, as against reason, based upon a supposed distinction between the intellectual and emotional elements, is common in religious thought and moulds certain systems of theology.

In many writers it takes the form of a direct repudiation of reason either in Natural or Revealed religion.

Browning who is a religious teacher, as well as a poet, says, with reference to the search after God,

> "I found Him not in world or sun,
> Or eagle's wing or insect's eye;
> Nor thro' the questions men may try,
> The petty cobwebs we have spun."

These furnish no clue to the mystery. We find no voice of reason in Nature to answer to the reason within us. But let us throw reason and faith, which is dependent upon it, overboard, and seek another way.

> "If e'er when faith had fall'n asleep,
> I heard a voice 'believe no more,'
> And heard an ever breaking shore
> That tumbled in the Godless deep;
>
> "A warmth within the breast would melt
> The freezing reason's colder part;
> And like a man in wrath the heart
> Stood up and answered 'I have felt.'"
>
> —In Memoriam.

Or again in the passage frequently quoted,

> "So let us say—not 'Since we know we love,'
> But rather, Since we love we know enough."

This is poetry which has identified the metaphorical form in which it clothes itself with reality. Feeling is in its very nature subjective, and must be directed to an object. Love must know the object it loves, and in every act of loving recognizes the reasons for loving. Emotion neither reveals nor creates an object, but it is the consequent of an object revealed. Feeling cannot produce truth, but it springs up the moment the truth is made known to it. Reason, knowledge must dominate feeling, otherwise as John Caird says, "feeling is at sea." Animals feel, but the feeling ends with themselves. The attempt to separate feeling from reason and conscience deprives it of implicit elements which render it incapable of apprehending either religion or morality. A moment's reflection leads to the admission that reason, emotion and will are organically united and indissoluble in religion.

The misapprehension in Browning and many other writers is due to confining the conception of reason to the process of reasoning, that is to the understanding. Reasoning or demonstration can never bring a man to a religious or moral life. Botany, which describes each stage of a growing plant, can never produce a living plant. Psychology can never produce a mind. Reason in the comprehensive sense is implicit in all of the faculties, a balance wheel, the condition of their harmonious activity.

It is not intended to regard feeling with suspicion or as a neglectable quantity in the philosophy of religion. Feeling conceived of as having in it, as implicit and inseparable from it, reason and faith, is indeed the all of religion, the active and central power of the gospel. "Love is of God, and he that loveth is born of God and knoweth God." Bishop Butler, whose great powers were dedicated to proving Christianity to be reasonable, assigns to feeling a position of supreme importance. In his sermons on the love of God, he condemns ecstasy and extravagance of emotionalism as abnormal and illusive; but on the other hand, he has no patience with those who hold that religion is all reason and no feeling, "under the notion of a reasonable religion, so very

reasonable as to have nothing to do with the heart and the affections."

Feeling, comprehending reason, faith and hope, is the love delineated by St. Paul, the spirit breathing through the New Testament.

NOTE TWO

THE THEOLOGY OF THE WILL

PHILOSOPHY is sensitive to psychology, and theology in its essence is the philosophy of religion, and therefore must respond to influences from the views we hold about the different faculties of our minds, and the share of each in our mental operations as they appear in consciousness. Dr. James, of Harvard, contributes from psychology, his special science, his theory of belief in religion to strengthen the theology of the will.

He has the rare merit of translating religious and philosophical speculation into language and illustration comprehensible to minds of ordinary education. It must be remembered, in reading his book, that he is lecturing to a body of students and to a popular audience.

Upon religion, as an act of choice, he has the following admirable passage. "Religion is a forced *option* —— We cannot escape the issue by remaining sceptical and waiting for more light, because, although we do avoid error in that way *if religion be untrue*, we lose the good *if it be true*, just as certainly as if we positively choose to disbelieve. It is as if a man should hesitate indefinitely to ask a certain woman to marry him because he was not perfectly sure that she would prove an angel after he brought her home. Would he not cut himself off from that particular angel—possibly as decisively as if he went and married some one else? Scepticism then is not an avoidance of option ; it is option of a certain particular kind of risk. Better *risk loss of truth than chance of error*, that is your faith-vetoer's exact position."

Again in "Is Life Worth Living?" "faith makes result come true. Not a victory is gained, not a deed of faithfulness or courage is done except upon a maybe ; not a service, not a sally

of generosity, not a scientific exploration, or experiment, or text-book, that may not be a mistake. It is only by risking our persons from one hour to another that we live at all. And often enough our faith beforehand in an uncertified result is the only thing that makes the result come true. Suppose, for instance, that you are climbing a mountain, and have worked yourself into a position from which the only escape is a terrible leap. Have faith that you can make it, and your feet are nerved to its accomplishment. But mistrust yourself and think of all the sweet things you have heard the scientists say of *maybes*, and you will hesitate so long that, at last all unstrung and trembling, and launching yourself in a moment of despair, you roll into the abyss. In such a case (and it belongs to an enormous class), the part of wisdom as well as of courage, is to believe what is in the line of your needs, for only by such belief is the need fulfilled. Refuse to believe, and you shall indeed be right, for you shall irretrievably perish. But believe, and again you shall be right, for you shall save yourself. You make one or the other of two possible universes true or untrue by your trust or mistrust; both universes having been only maybes, in this particular, before you contribute your act."

Doubtless the function of the will in the formation of beliefs, is destined to wider recognition than it has yet received, and the advance in this department of psychology will contribute abundant illustration to exposition of Scripture. But a religious philosophy which designates the will as the master, and the other faculties of the mind as servants which may be dispensed with at pleasure, is one which may justify antinomianism, or extreme individualism in religion, where every man may claim to believe whatever he chooses to believe, and be church and creed and an objective revelation to himself. The faculties of the mind are dependent and cooperative. Will, faith, reason, conscience and authority, are all represented in every act of decision. The will does not move in the direction of religion except under the impulse of moral and spiritual affinities. Behind the will is the spiritual intelligence, the conscience and the sense of need. If these are not, the will is motionless. John Caird says, "The conflict of nature and spirit, of impulse and reason, of the lower and the higher self, is one from which, for a rational and self-conscious being, there can be

no escape. But it is just through this conflict that its spiritual development is attained. Moral and spiritual perfection cannot come to us by nature, but only as the result of struggle and self-conquest."

The alliance of the will with either one of these forces may be the decisive factor in human destiny; but that is a different proposition from assigning to the will the absolute determination of belief.

NOTE THREE

MIND IN NATURE: EVOLUTION

"THE reason that lives in nature, speaks a language that the reason personalized in man can understand and translate. The mathematics which have controlled and guided the Builder of the heavens, are identical with the mathematics which the astronomer, in his study, deduces from the idea of space given in his own thought, and which he proves by the processes of his own reason. If he looks at the correspondence from the subjective or dialectical side, he may say with Plato, 'The creator in His act of creation has geometrized'; but if he regard it from its objective or observational side, he will say with Kepler, 'In reading the secrets of nature, I am thinking the thoughts of God after Him.' But whether he speaks with Plato or with Kepler, he means the same thing; there is such a correspondence between the mind and the universe, between the intelligible we think, and the intellect we think by, that their relation can only be explained by identity of source, *i. e.*, by both being expressions of a single supreme intelligence." Fairbairn, Philosophy of the Christian Religion, p. 37.

It is common among writers who have adopted the theory of creation by the method of evolution, to disparage the argument of design in nature as illustrated by Paley in the opening of the evidences of Christianity, as anthropomorphic and degrading to our conception of the creator of the universe, who is likened to a builder, after the manner of the carpenter or the watchmaker. Such criticism is as unfriendly to any intelligible theory of evolu-

tion as it is to Paley's argument. Such writers would take exceptions upon the same ground to Dr. Fairbairn's statement in the above passage, when he speaks of the builder of the universe using the same mathematics as employed by the astronomer in his calculations; or to Plato's words, "The creator, in his act of creation, has geometrized." The misunderstanding with such writers is due to confusion of thought, both as to the meaning of the argument from design and the meaning of evolution. They attack the argument upon the assumption that Paley and Christian philosophers contend for the identity, both as to methods of causation and the mode in which the work is done in man's works, and in God's works in nature. But it requires only a little reflection to see that this is an entirely different question from that which Paley and other writers in the same line are discussing. Is there evidence of design, of intelligent purpose and of adjustment to accomplish that purpose manifested in the works of nature, such as we are conscious of in our own minds? Do we recognize in nature the presence of mind in the adjustment of means to ends, just as clearly as we recognize the operations of our own intelligence as they appear in consciousness in designing and contriving to accomplish a certain purpose when we work upon the materials that nature has put in our hands for our use? This is the only question Paley is discussing. The mode in which God works in nature is a different question. That is as distinct from the mode and the means we are obliged to use to do our work, as God, with His infinite wisdom and power and resources, is above us.

The difference between our works, and God's works in nature, is the difference between a house and a plant. We collect the materials, and calculate dimensions, and form the plans and fit one part into another; then with labor and care and time we put the parts together. We work by labor, manipulation, mechanism. We work, so to speak, from the outside. God works from the inside. He is the Author of life, of the materials that feed life, of the forces that organize the materials into structures. His mind, His will is in them all, and over them all. There are no hands at work in nature. There is no such thing as visible construction in the world around us. All things grow from seed. The seed has in it the life, and the materials, and the forces, with the design planted in it. Each stage of its growth has in it the

promise, the power and the plan of the succeeding stage. God works by growth. If evolution means anything, it means growth; and growth has in it the evidence of the highest purpose, and of omnipotent mind. The principle of mind and of purpose in the works of God in nature is precisely the same as in the works of man. But the difference in the methods is measured by the difference in power and wisdom between the finite and the infinite. If we had the power to make life, that life would carry mind with it as one of its vital principles, and to that mind the forces of nature would yield obedience spontaneous and absolute.

NOTE FOUR

RELATIONS OF CHRISTIANITY TO THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

THE sympathetic and systematic study of the religions of the world by Christian scholars, in the science of Comparative Religions, has refuted the view of natural religions as unmixed impostures created by credulity and superstition. The advance in thought has been a return to the revelation of the New Testament that these religions are expressions of the spiritual wants and aspirations of the religious instincts of the race.

> "In even savage bosoms
> There are longings, desires, strivings
> For the good they comprehend not."

The result can only be hopeful and encouraging to the missionary activities of the Christian Church throughout the world.

Rev. Frederic W. Maurice, in his "Religions of the World," has in his reply to arguments against Christian missions, the most powerful thinking upon the subject in British religious literature.

Dr. G. Matheson, in "Messages of the Old Religions," has suggestions of value and many eloquent passages.

Professor Campbell's "Religions in Greek Literature," and the Religious Spirit of Hellenism, is an elaborate and masterly work of great literary and scholarly ability.

Principal Caird, in his "Philosophy of Religion," has the fol-

lowing noble passage at the close of the chapter on Philosophy and History. "Christianity neither borrows nor reproduces the imperfect notions of God, be they what they may—pantheistic, dualistic, anthropomorphic, monotheistic—in which the religious aspirations of the old world had embodied themselves. In the light of this idea we can perceive these imperfect notions yielding up whatever element of truth lay hid in them, whilst that which was arbitrary and false falls away and dies. If, for example, the old Pantheistic idea that the things that are seen are temporal, and that beneath all the passing shadows and semblances of things there is an enduring substance, a reality that is without variableness or shadow of turning; if this idea comes to light again in the Christian consciousness, yet the new Pantheism does not, like the old, suppress, but rather elicits and quickens the individuality, the freedom, the moral life of man. If it says, "The world passeth away and the lust thereof," it says also "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever." If the antagonism between good and evil which gave Dualism its meaning and power, survives in the Christian view of the world, yet the new Dualism, unlike that of the old religion, is consistent with the belief, not only of the ultimate triumph, but in the sole and absolute reality of good. If it asserts that "Sin hath entered the world and death by sin," yet it declares that "all things are of God," and that "all things work together for good to them that love Him," and that a time is coming when "God shall be all in all." If Christianity claims as its own that idea which anthropomorphic religion foreshadowed—that man is the image of God, and that he is capable of rising into the Divine fellowship and of being made "partaker of the Divine nature," yet in contrast with the old religions it raises the human without limiting or lowering the Divine, and sees in all earthly goodness a reflection of the nature of God without making the nature of God a reflection of the weaknesses and imperfections of man. Lastly, if Christianity contains, in common with Monotheistic religions, the idea of God elevated in His absolute being above the world, unaffected by its limits, incapable of being implicated in its imperfections, it yet enables us at the same time to think of God, not merely as an Omnipotent Power and Will above us, but as an Infinite Love within us. It sees in our purest thoughts and holiest actions God Himself, "working in us to will and to do of

His good pleasure." It tells us that "our bodies are the temples of His Holy Spirit," and it sets before us a human life as the fullest expression and revelation of the nature and the life of God. Thus whatever elements of truth, whatever broken and scattered rays of light the old religions contained, Christianity takes up into itself, explaining all, harmonizing all, by a Divine alchemy transmuting all, yet immeasurably transcending all —— gathering together in one all things in heaven and earth, in its revelation of One who is at one and the same time, Father, Son and Spirit, above all, through all and in all.

NOTE FIVE

PREVALENCE OF NESCIENCE PHILOSOPHY

MR. JOHN FISKE, in several of his essays published under the title "A Century of Science," and also in his "Excursions of an Evolutionist," alludes to the wide acceptance of the Spencerian philosophy by the people of America. Enthusiastic disciples of new theories in philosophy are liable to exaggerated impressions of the prevalence of their opinions among the people. It will be remembered that Mr. Spencer was entertained at a banquet in the city of New York on the eve of his return to England after his visit to America. The account states that there were a hundred gentlemen present including presidents of colleges, scientific men, authors, clergymen and journalists of note, and many distinguished politicians and lawyers. The sentiment, for the evening, greeting Mr. Spencer was as follows: "We recognize in your knowledge greater comprehensiveness than in that of any other living man, or than has been presented by any one in our generation."

The sweeping character of this expression of admiration and of enthusiastic confidence in the doctrines of Mr. Spencer's philosophy, is not entitled to the value put upon it by Mr. Spencer's disciples. Criticism of Religion and Philosophy is a slow process, which extends through generations; and sentiments expressed at social functions in honor of a distinguished foreigner by his kind-hearted hosts, who knew much more of banquets than of philosophy, are without significance in relation to educated American

thought, or as expressions of their own personal convictions. Busy merchants and tired lawyers, and even college presidents, would hardly have ventured seriously to express their opinions upon questions and problems in the realm of mind and spirit, which have engaged the attention of the greatest minds of all ages.

Mr. Fiske, himself, who was largely instrumental in the introduction of Mr. Spencer's philosophy to the American public, abandoned the agnostic faith in the closing years of his life, and arrayed himself on the side of Christianity in its revelation of a future life.

It may be asserted with truth, that the philosophy of agnosticism has had its day; certainly, that the great journals of British thought and the exponents of British scholarship, now the strongest and the most reasonable of the world, are passing it by as contradictory and unthinkable.

NOTE SIX

AGNOSTICISM

THE ordinary conception of the meaning of the term is the simple idea of negation. It is the assertion of ignorance from lack of evidence. But this conception is evidently an illusion which conveys the idea of harmless intellectual modesty and reasonableness in the system which goes by the name.

What is Mr. Spencer's whole system of philosophy, unfolded in many volumes upon every variety of philosophical subjects, but a labored attempt to prove positively that God is unknowable, to break down revelation, to demonstrate that it is impossible.

Dr. Orr, in his work "The Christian View of God and the World," a most valuable contribution to theological literature, quotes Professor Huxley's definition of Agnosticism. He says, "Professor Huxley, the inventor of the term" (Agnosticism) "has given us his explanation of it. 'Agnosticism' he says, 'in fact is not a creed but a method, the essence of which lies in the rigorous application of a single principle.' . . . Positively, the principle may be thus expressed; in matters of the intellect follow your reason as far as it will take you, without regard to any other

consideration. And negatively, in matters of the intellect, do not pretend that conclusions are certain which are not demonstrated or demonstrable. That I take to be the Agnostic faith, which if a man keep whole and undefiled, he shall not be ashamed to look the universe in the face, whatever the future may have in store for him." "Agnosticism, in the Nineteenth Century, February, 1899." This, however is not a faith, as he says, but a method, which in its application may yield positive or negative results as the case may be. Behind it at the same time, lies, in his case, the conviction, that real answers to the great questions of religion are "not merely impossible, but theoretically inconceivable." Ibid, p. 182.

NOTE SEVEN

IMAGINATION DELUSIVE FACULTY

BISHOP BUTLER'S warning against imagination as "the author of all error," needs some explanation, in justice to his psychology. Mr. Gladstone has the following comment upon the passage where the expression occurs, in the First Chapter of the Analogy:

"It is singular that what Butler denounces is not '*the* imagination,' but 'imagination,' as if he were dealing with a process rather than a faculty. But we can hardly dwell upon this since he proceeds to describe it as a faculty; and, moreover, assigns to it a 'sphere.' The mischievous products of this abusive practice were, we must suppose, those of which Butler was cognizant, and with which he deals so largely in his work. But these, mentioned almost in every page, are not in truth errors of the imagination, but of unbridled fancy and caprice; of unbalanced, ill-regulated judgment. It seems probable that this is one of the rare instances in which Butler, relaxing the firmness of his hold, forgets himself and assumes license in the use of words. Sometimes, though rarely, he deals with schemes purely metaphysical; but these, if erroneous, are not errors of the imagination properly so called.

Mr. Gladstone, contrary to his custom, throughout his work upon Butler, hardly does him justice, in this passage, and in his explanation is inadequate.

Butler is opening his Analogy with the chapter upon a future life which he devotes to a reply to the arguments against life after the death of the body. He calls these arguments "imaginary presumptions," which "silence the voice of reason." He is not giving a psychological definition of imagination, but he alludes to it as a "delusive faculty" in its effect upon beliefs in unseen things, in spiritual realities. The future life is in the unseen. Imagination can give no picture of it, therefore it fails and breaks down. It identifies reality with what it has seen, and therefore to a mind which has formed the habit of depending upon the imagination for its beliefs, it is helpless because it can form no picture of the unseen. I think this is Butler's meaning and if so, as is not unusual with him, he is right.

The Duke of Argyle in the "Unity of Nature," defines imagination as "the mental power by which we handle the elementary conceptions, derived from our mental constitution, in contact and in harmony with external things, and by which we recombine these conceptions in an endless variety of forms."

This definition is true as far as it goes, but it cannot be accepted as a full expression of the powers and scope of imagination. Imagination is founded upon memory, but it is something more than memory. The power of memory supplies the substance which imagination works up into its fabrics; the stones and the timber which it uses in the construction of its buildings. It has no power to create materials, but only to combine them in endless varieties, at the same time calling in reason and the other faculties to its aid. Imagination is not only dependent upon memory for the materials of its creations, but it is largely dependent upon feeling. It derives the inspiration which quickens its activity from sentiment. One mind is cold in the presence of an object; another is kindled with sympathetic intelligence and emotion. In the former the representation of the object which memory recalls is cold and dull; in the other it is warm and lifelike. Both for the memory which furnishes the materials and for the imagination which works them up into new creations, the power of feeling is the quality which measures the difference between a dull and a vivid imagination. Again imagination is not confined for its materials to conceptions of external objects furnished it by memory or by direct observation. It may use ideas and motives and feelings

which appear in consciousness. It may add to them or subtract from them, reproducing them in other forms, interpreting them in other relations, and this wide range of imagination needs a wider definition than that of the Duke of Argyle.

Imagination is thus creative and active. It is a power which enables us with the materials in our own minds to go out of ourselves and see into the minds of others, and feel their sorrows and understand their wants.

It is a powerful ally of the reason in its capacity to form an image of things, so that the reason can see the relation of the parts and form a conception of the whole.

In some of these higher functions it is so near to the reason that, as Mozley says with penetrative insight, we come unconsciously and practically "to identify it with reason" and to mistake its verdict for reason's verdict.

When mistaken for reason it becomes a powerful obstacle both to reason and faith in the realm of spiritual things. Apart from Revelation and from Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, man instinctively seeks to grasp the idea of the personality of God. He calls in his imagination to construct a conception of God's personality, but at once he is foiled. Imagination can make no headway. God is a spirit and inconceivable under the forms of matter. Again we stand in the presence of Death, with the still form, the helpless hands, the cold passivity of inorganic matter from which the life has fled. The imagination gives way. It can form no conception of disembodied spirit. It yields to the impressions of sense and is powerless to transcend them, and yet it is in relation to such subjects identified with reason. The passive imagination thus becomes a powerful ally for scepticism and materialistic negation. It requires but little reflection to understand that in relation to spiritual things this form of imagination is the most fruitful source of delusion and unbelief to the human mind. Even the most well regulated minds are conscious of the tendency. This is the imagination which Butler repudiates, and against which his chapter on the Future Life is directed.

Canon Mozley's chapter in the Bampton Lectures on the Influence of Imagination upon Belief, is worthy of careful study.

NOTE EIGHT

BALFOUR AND PROFESSOR WALLACE ON REASON

"WHAT kind of a universe would that be which we could understand? If it were intelligible (by us) would it be credible?" Balfour, Foundations of Belief, p. 279.

"What were a world which we did NOT understand, had not in any measure understood? A world full of fears rather than hopes; a perpetual uncertainty; a grisly mystery, which made darkness cover the earth and gross darkness its peoples. The world which reason claims is one where she may go forever on and never die; a world where nothing can be called utterly unknowable, though much may remain forever unknown; a world where, as humanity accumulates more and more its intellectual and spiritual capital, we shall move about more and more freely, *i. e.*, more and more wisely, as becomes those who are called to inherit the kingdom." Gifford Lectures, Professor Wallace, p. 97.

NOTE NINE

CAUSES OF ASCETICISM

THE literal interpretation of the severe maxims of the New Testament of privation and sacrifice and entire separation from the world, may have been necessary, and if necessary, must have been intended, during the first proclamation of Christianity in the heathen world. We in a Christian land, the inheritors of the education of Christianity for two thousand years, have only the faintest conception of the dead conscience and the moral insensibility of paganism. To arouse it from its slumber necessarily involved a shock to the social order. The inward transformation of character demanded a break with the established customs and order of human life. To impress the heathen mind it was necessary to disparage the seen and to exalt the unseen. But this principle carried to the literal extreme, which resulted in asceticism, would have necessarily destroyed Christianity in the home of its birth. Christ came, not to destroy God's order for the world, but to fulfil it by imparting to human nature the spirit of regeneration which

would enter into and transform every human relation. The love of the world against which Christians are warned is not society and the conditions and activities which are necessary to its preservation. Christians in the New Testament are commanded not to go to law; but law is necessary to human society, and without law communities and nations gravitate back to barbarism. Trade, industry, care for the future, accumulation of wealth, government, war in defense of rights, all these things are necessary; all are recognized in the New Testament and they are recognized by the Christian Church as provinces of human life to be conquered and redeemed by the spirit of Christ. But the principles underneath these apparently stern and impractical denunciations of the New Testament of conformity to the world, are as true to-day as they were when the Christian Church was a little centre of light, with the whole world around it in darkness and degradation.

A passage from Dean Church contains an eloquent expression of what is meant when it is said, that notwithstanding the sympathy of Christianity with everything that belongs to the order of human life and the progress of society, its essential principle of unworldliness must be the same in all ages. In his "Gifts of Civilization," he says, "The Christian spirit is free spirit, and has, we believe, affinities with strangely opposite extremes. It can ally itself with riches as well as with poverty; with the life of the statesman and the soldier, as well as of the priest; with the most energetic, as well as with the most retired life; with vastness of thought, with richness of imagination, with the whole scale of feeling, as well as with the simplest character and the humblest obedience. It can bear the purple and fine linen; it can bear power; it can bear the strain and absorption of great undertakings. But there is one thing with which it will not combine. Its antagonist is selfishness. Be it where it may, it is the spirit which is ready in one way or another to *give itself* for worthy and noble reasons. As long as the New Testament is believed in, we must believe that the Christian spirit is that which seeks not its own, which is not careful to speak its own words, or find its own pleasure, or do its own ways. It is not merely the spirit of self-denial and sacrifice; it is the spirit of self-denial and sacrifice for the great objects put before it. For the great and rare thing is when purpose and self-denial answer to one another, and one by its greatness justifies the other, and animates it.

Doubtless it is hard to have self-denial; but it is harder still to have a great object which shall make self-denial itself fall into a subordinate place, indispensable there, but not thought much of for its own sake. The heroic mind and the Christian mind are shown not simply in the loss of all things, in giving up this world, in accepting pain and want, but in doing this, if it must be done, for that for which it is worth a man's while to do it; for something of corresponding greatness, though unseen; for truth, for faith, for duty, for the good of others, for a higher life. And this view the words of the New Testament keep continually before us. There is plenty of temptation to give up the heroic standard. It often fails. It is easily counterfeited. Its failure is scandalous. And not only our self-indulgence, but our suspicion and hatred of insincere pretense, our moderation and common sense bid us content ourselves with something short of it, and take our aim by what we call our nature. But the New Testament will not meet us here. The heroic standard is the only one it will countenance for its own, as proportionate to the greatness of its disclosures. It is a standard which lends itself to very varied conditions. It may be owned in society or out of it; in solitude or in the press of affairs; in secret wrestlings or in open conduct; by the poor and ignorant or the great and wise. But everywhere it makes the same call. Everywhere it implies really great thoughts, great hopes, great attempts, great measures of what is worthy of man, and great willingness to pay the price."

NOTE TEN

BISHOP LIGHTFOOT ON GERMAN CRITICISM

THIS criticism of the leader of the modern negative school of Germany, is illustrated by a passage from Bishop Lightfoot, in his celebrated "Essays on Supernatural Religion." To those who have studied this book, and also the work to which it is the reply, and who are capable of appreciating literary power and argumentative ability, Bishop Lightfoot's book is one of the great contributions of the last century to the historical criticism of the New Testament.

On page 24 of "Supernatural Religion," he says, "Mr. Matthew Arnold, alluding to an eccentric work of rationalizing tendencies written by an English scholar, and using M. Renan as his mouthpiece, expresses the opinion that 'an extravagance of this sort could never have come from Germany, where there is great force of critical opinion controlling a learned man's vagaries, and keeping him straight.' I confess that my experiences of the critical literature of Germany have not been so fortunate. It would be difficult, I think, to find among English scholars any parallel to the mass of absurdities, which several very learned German critics have conspired to heap upon two simple names in the Philippian Epistle, Euodia and Syntyche; first, Baur suggesting that the pivot of the Epistle, which has a conciliatory tendency, is the mention of Clement, a mythical, or almost, mythical person, who represents the union of the Petrine and Pauline parties in the Church; then Schwegler, carrying the theory a step further, and declaring that the two names, Euodia and Syntyche, actually represent these two parties, while the true yoke-fellow is St. Peter himself; then Volkmar improving the occasion, and showing that this fact is indicated in their very names, Euodia, or 'Rightway,' and Syntyche or 'Consort,' denoting respectively the orthodoxy of the one party and the incorporation of the other; lastly, Hitzig, lamenting that the interpreters of the New Testament are not more thoroughly imbued with the language and spirit of the Old, and maintaining that these two names are reproductions of the patriarchs Asher and Gad—their sex having been changed in the transition from one language to another—and represent the Greek and Roman elements in the Church, while the Epistle to the Philippians itself is a plagiarism from the Agricola of Tacitus. When therefore I find our author supporting some of his more important judgments by the authority of Hitzig and Volkmar and others, I have my own opinion of the weight which such names should carry with them. It is not, however, against the eccentricities of individuals except so far as these can be charged to a vicious atmosphere and training, that I would rest the chief stress of my complaint. The whole tone and spirit of the school in its excess of scepticism must, I venture to think, be fatal to the ends of true criticism." Again in a note upon the above Asher and Gad theory, he says, "The author's conclusions are supported by an appeal to the Hebrew, Arabic, Syriac, and

Armenian languages." The learning of this curious pamphlet keeps pace with its absurdity. If the reader is disposed to think that this writer is laughing in his sleeve at the methods of the modern school to which he belongs, he is checked by the obviously serious tone of the whole discussion. Indeed it is altogether in keeping with Hitzig's critical discoveries elsewhere. To this same critic we owe the suggestion that the name of the fabulist Æsop is derived from Solomon's "hyssop that springeth out of the wall." 1 Kings 4 : 33.

Surely we may agree with Bishop Lightfoot that it is impossible to maintain intellectual respect for writers who, upon a subject of such import and dignity as that of Biblical criticism, commit themselves to irreverent and irrational fancies.

END OF NOTES