RELIGIONS OF MANKIND

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The Faiths of Mankind

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BY
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To My Mother

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PREFACE

A SMALL book was published in 1918 entitled The Faiths of Mankind. It belonged to a series of College Voluntary Study Courses, and was prepared with that end in view. Since that time the desire has been repeatedly expressed that the writer prepare a volume with a wider public in view. The needs of the general reader and ministers were to be kept in mind as well as students in their college and seminary courses. Coming directly out of contact with students in the classroom, it is inevitable that the form of the present book and the selection and arrangement of material should be determined by that experience.

The guiding principle has been not to overload the text with a multiplicity of facts, but to select and make use of such facts as are relevant to the main lines of development, and to make clear their meaning and relationships. To interpret facts has been looked upon as important as to present them. One of the main problems with students is to prevent the confusion which results from presenting great quantities of material which they are not prepared to assimilate and make use of intelligently.

An introductory chapter on "The Nature of Religion" has been included. No doubt such a subject can only be handled with satisfaction in a volume devoted to its consideration, but even a rapid survey as is presented here may introduce the student to the subject in such a manner as to make far more intelligible than would otherwise be possible the studies of religions which follow. The historical method is adhered to throughout. The underlying purpose has been to show how religion has developed in the history of the world rather than to trace the development of any single

religion. Of course, the latter has been done in each case, but with the desire of showing how it has fitted into the growth of religion as a phase of human life. This has made necessary the inclusion of chapters on ancient religions which have passed away but which made their contribution to the progress of religion in the world. The attempt has not been made to deal with all the religions of the past or present. The ends sought could be reached by a presentation of the great typical systems, and that has been done.

The lists of books at the end of the chapters are exceedingly short. Bibliographies frequently offer such an array of titles that students scarcely know which way to turn. The lists have been pruned down to the minimum. Should further references be desired, they are ready at hand in many of the volumes given. The volumes of the History of Religions, by Professor George Foot Moore have been listed in connection with all the chapters save the first two. As the standard work in English they should be at the disposal of any reader who desires to proceed any distance beyond the bounds of the present text. Mention should also be made of Dr. James Hastings' Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics, a monumental work now nearing completion and covering every phase of the subject. Reference has not been made to this work in the lists of books because the items would have been too numerous for our space. But it is the most valuable work on the subject, and should, if possible, be available to every reader and student.

The writer has laid a heavy obligation on himself to be fair to each religion he has treated. He cannot hope to have been completely successful, despite his endeavor to present each faith in the light of all the available facts. Yet this has been his purpose, a purpose none the less strong because Jesus Christ is to him the light of all his seeing and the only hope he is able to discover for the peoples of the world in this day of change and reconstruction.

The thanks of the author are due the publishers of vol-

umes from which quotations have been used in this work. Credit is given in each case in a footnote where the volume is quoted.

Evanston, Illinois. E. D. S.
March 30, 1921.

CHAPTER I

THE NATURE OF RELIGION

The Approach to the Study of Religion

As far back as history and archæology are able to penetrate into the dim beginnings of human life man had a religion. From these primitive times down to the present religion has been playing its part at every stage in the course of human development. To understand any people or any man, to trace the history of civilization or the growth of a custom, religion must be called in to give its testimony, or we fail to probe the deepest springs of conduct and the controlling forces of human endeavor. The issues of life are determined far down among the impulses and motives with which religion deals most powerfully and directly. The contribution religion has made to human progress makes it imperative that it should be studied with great care. The pitfalls are many, and misconceptions are difficult to avoid. A little knowledge of religion is a dangerous thing, especially if it is made to support theories which might topple if brought into contact with all the facts in the case. The very seriousness of the issues involved calls for thoroughness and application, even in the understanding of what may at first sight seem to be unimportant details. Only by such devotion can the student hope to learn from an investigation of religion the lessons most surely awaiting appropriation and use.

There are two ways of studying the religion of a people. One might be called the method of immediate contact, as when a traveler or a resident in a country uses his eyes and ears to learn all he can about the religion as practiced at the present time. He visits temples and sacred places, watches the worship, and pays careful attention to the ritual, asks

questions of all from whom he can secure information, takes account of the effect of the religion on life, and in these and other ways seeks to come to conclusions which correctly interpret the religion. This method of study is obviously indispensable wherever it can be applied. Certain religions, like those of ancient Greece and Rome, have died and passed away. In these cases no living touch is possible and we are compelled to resort to the evidence of archæology and literature. But even with the living religions much investigation is still necessary before enough dependable material is at hand to draw conclusions which shall be at the same time correct and comprehensive.

But more is needed than this work of description. Another method must be called in to supplement and correct the impressions which have come through immediate contact with the people and their religious life. It may be called the method of historical investigation. What is desired is that the entire story of a religion shall be told from its beginnings, so far as they can be ascertained, through all the vicissitudes of its development, to the religion as it is after all the storms and contests through which it has passed. A religion cannot be fully explained by what lies just at hand. It has a past and this past has made the present what it is. Every belief and practice has its history and cannot be understood without a knowledge of the stages of its development. What could we know of Christianity without the Gospels, or of Mohammedanism without the Koran? And what could we know of present-day Protestantism with no knowledge of the Reformation? or of the Buddhism of Japan, ignorant of the long journey of the faith from India through China and Korea to the Island Empire?

The only conclusion to be reached is that both methods must be used, each shedding light on the other. In the study of the religion of the most backward peoples, who have neither literature nor history, the only approach is by living contact, and among the most valuable contributions to

the whole science of religion have been the volumes coming from devoted and self-sacrificing investigators who have spent years in close contact with these savage tribes. In every case, whether the study be historical or through contact with the people, the rule must be to let no bit of evidence pass unheeded, but to allow each fact to appear in its true light and speak out its full message. Only by such impartial procedure is it possible to arrive at results which shall carry weight among candid students who are seeking the exact truth with reference to the religions of the world.

The Fitting Attitude Toward Other Faiths

This is a practical problem. As students we are bound to be fair in our study of other religions, but we are more than students. Born in a Christian land and nurtured in an atmosphere which is a part of our common heritage, it is inevitable that we should have a Christian bias. Whether the student is himself a professing Christian or not, it makes little difference; he cannot divest himself of a certain bent of mind which has come to him as naturally as washing his face and hands before breakfast. If to be fair-minded involves erasing from his mind his prepossessions and convictions, then fair-mindedness is a fond dream. It is as impossible for one man as for another; we are all alike in this regard. Whatever we do and wherever we go, we carry our convictions with us, and they must be taken into account. The important question is, How shall we deal with them that we may be fair-minded and free from unreasoning prejudice?

Such a thing is not easily done, nor does it come all at once. One must set himself resolutely through a considerable period to weigh evidence with scrupulous care, and not allow his conclusions to be vitiated by personal bias. By such a course of training one may be able to formulate his personal equation, like the astronomical observer. In other words, he may come to understand what his prejudices

are and how far they tend to warp his judgment. He will come to understand himself better as time passes and be able more readily to know when he is approaching his danger line. He will thus be able so to keep a check on himself that he may see things as they are, and give each fact and, in a larger way, each religion its correct valuation, not distorted by unscientific dogmatism and prejudice.

This is not a natural gift; it is an achievement, but the achievement becomes a sacred duty when one gives himself to the delicate balancing of men's religious beliefs and practices. Instead of being a liability, the possession of a Christian experience may prove to be an important asset. One's ability to enter sympathetically into the religious life of men of other faiths depends largely on the possession of a religious experience himself. The experience of the bitterness of defeat and the consciousness of victory in the moral battle fits him the better to enter into the lives of others. The sense of God's presence in his heart and the belief in his goodness enable him the more completely to understand what is going on in the minds of other men, though the content of their belief may differ widely from his own.

The Christian student may join heartily with any student of religion, whatever his personal belief, in insisting that in the interpretation of the facts of religion the natural explanation must always be sought. Without this principle vigorously applied no science of religion can be built up. To reach the point of willingness to allow everything in religion, including all we hold most sacred in our own faith, to be exposed to the searchlight of historical and scientific investigation is a real achievement of faith. It is only a want of faith that would hedge in certain sacred spots with a high barrier and forbid scientific investigation within the proscribed inclosure. It is an admission of fear that science might dissolve what is held sacred and that religion might disappear in the brightness of the illumination. If anything in the Christian religion is so flimsy and evanescent, it is

certainly made of poor stuff and cannot long claim the allegiance of candid men and women.

And why should anyone be afraid? Every intelligent Christian believes that all truth is of God, and that all honest investigation can only arrive at further truth. And when natural explanation is pushed back as far as science is able to penetrate, a limit is reached beyond which no progress can be made, and yet with certain things remaining unexplained. But these are the very things concerning which men and women are most anxious for light and direction. Religion, which up to this point has shared the field with history and science and other phases of human culture, now steps out alone and finds itself in its own unique habitat. It is the only voice which gives satisfaction to the human heart in the presence of the great crises of life, and especially when man looks out into the great unknown and wants guidance and comfort. So long as human nature remains what it is, so long will religion find a responsive echo in the distraught lives of men and women seeking peace and failing to find it elsewhere.

A Christian who is alert to the thought-life of the world cannot be indifferent to the religion of other peoples. In his consideration of the relation of his own faith to theirs he must be able to combine two convictions which are frequently strangers to each other. The first is the fundamental Christian conviction that Christianity is unique, that it is the only faith adequate to meet the needs of all men. This sounds exclusive, and so it is. Christianity as a propagating, conquering faith would have ceased to exist long ago had it not been for this conviction. A religion lives by the intensity of its belief in its own peculiar worth and power. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4. 12). This is a truly Christian statement; it is the food on which our faith lives and grows.

But with this conviction another must be held to save the

strong, exclusive belief just expressed from intolerance. The logic of intolerance is well known. It is this: Christianity is the only true faith, so all others must be false and ought to be harried to death as soon as possible. The logic of the Christian attitude is quite different. It starts with the same high declaration of the unique place of Christianity among the religions, but from that point the difference is radical. The word "false" is not to be used with reference to other religions. That word is reserved for the sordid and insincere, for the unworthy and base among the adherents of any religion, Christianity included. The Christian cannot but look on all other religions as the expression of man's unsatisfied longing after God and his attempt to reach the blessedness God alone can impart. Seen in this light the Christian cannot be intolerant. He must sympathize with the religious spirit in every place, even when it is openly antagonistic to him and his message. He will appreciate all the good to be found in every faith at the same time that he sees the inadequacy of the remedies that are applied. And in the end it will be impossible to refrain from giving to those who do not know Jesus Christ the message of moral victory and spiritual exaltation which can only be achieved through him. And this is the primary and everlasting purpose of Christian missions.

The Definition of Religion

Is a definition of religion possible? Mr. John Morley has a caustic statement in his article on "Democracy and Reaction" (Nineteenth Century, April, 1905) that "if we want a platitude, there is nothing like a definition. Perhaps most definitions hang between platitude and paradox. There are said to be ten thousand definitions of religion."[1] An extreme view is taken by Professor C. C. J. Webb, who declares that

[1] Quoted by Edward Clodd in his Animism, p. 9. (London, Constable, 1905.)

" a definition of religion is needless and impossible."[3] Without doubt this is true if we are looking for a definition which shall be complete and comprehensive. There is that in religion which baffles us and which always must elude a definition. The best we may do is to be always approximating a definition, but never reaching it. The great realities of life are always bigger and deeper than we can comprehend. A developing thing can never be caged into a form of words which attempts once and for all to tell us what it is. If then we are looking for this kind of definition, perfect and complete, we shall of necessity be disappointed. So far we may go with Professor Webb.

But what we need is something different. Our aim is more immediate and more modest. We stand in need of a guide, a basis of identification. How is the student to know in the welter of impressions which comes in upon him what is religious and what is not? A definition should enable him to detect religion and disentangle it from what is not religion though very similar and closely connected with it. Such a definition will not be complete, but it may be true; it will be tentative, like a scientific hypothesis, but it may prove extremely useful. And what is meant by being true is that it shall point with precision in the right direction toward the final goal. Religion doubtless is much more than is embodied in a definition, but it is at least that. We may be treading on safe ground and feel sure we have a reliable clue. This is about as much as a definition of religion may be expected to do, but it is highly significant for the practical purpose we have in view.

The assumption in the mind of everyone is that he knows what religion is—that is, until he makes the attempt to put down exactly what is in his mind. Then it becomes apparent that his ideas are hazy and ill-defined, and that too much had been taken for granted in his assumption of knowledge.

[3] Group Theories of Religion and the Individual, p. 37. (London, Allen and Unwin, 1916.)

One's own viewpoint so affects his outlook that the danger always is that he shall take what religion means to him, put it into a statement, and call that religion. Like Parson Thwackum in Tom Jones, he may be tempted to say, "When I mention religion, I mean the Christian religion, and not only the Christian religion, but the Protestant religion, and not only the Protestant religion, but the Church of England."[3] We have a religion, but so has the Zulu, and any definition worthy the name must be sufficiently inclusive to serve in any land and among any people. Religions differ greatly, as we shall see, but there must be some element or elements which all the religions have in common, or no definition is possible. The common element or elements must be distinctive of religion, so that we may be able to trace the development of this one thing through the maze of the forms it has assumed. We must have in our definition a statement which will embrace every manifestation which can be called religious.

Numerous attempts have been made to define religion. John Morley's "ten thousand definitions of religion" sounds a bit rhetorical, but certainly points vividly to the fact that about every writer who essays to write on religion at all makes a trial at definition. Some of these definitions have proved so significant and so determinative of later attempts that a brief survey would seem to be imperative. Only through many years have students been able to disengage religion from other elements of culture and determine more exactly its distinctive nature. Even now theories are arrayed against each other which are so wide apart that it becomes all the more important that some position should be taken to save oneself from helpless confusion in the study of the religious life of the various peoples.

A few definitions there have been which disparage religion. Salomon Reinach writes thus, "I propose to define

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[3] Quoted by Edward Clodd, Animism, p. 9.

religion as: A sum of scruples which impede the free exercise of our faculties."[4] One more may be given, that of Giuseppe Sergi: "Religion is a pathological manifestation of the protective function, a sort of deviation of the normal function, a deviation caused by ignorance of natural causes and their effects."[5] These definitions lack the fundamental requirement of a definition. They do not spring from any real insight into the meaning of what they are attempting to define. Such insight can come only as a result of sympathetic investigation of religious beliefs and practices, and this is sadly lacking in the case of these scholars. A student must understand before he defines, and to understand religion he must view it from within, feeling at home amid the factors which make up the complex thing we know by that name.

Not far removed from this completely negative attitude is that which was held by the English Deists of the eighteenth century. To these skeptical writers the value of religion was merely as a practical discipline, an arrangement for keeping people decent and respectable. By some it was given a higher place than by others, by Herbert of Cherbury, for example, in contrast with Thomas Hobbes, but in the estimation of all, religion was not of great importance in itself, but only as a handmaid of morality. Hobbes goes so far as to make religion a means of promoting the safety of individuals. Society is looked upon as a great police organization. All religious and civil authority springs from fear and is necessary in order to keep men subservient and within bounds.

It is quite evident that these men had no adequate appreciation of religion, that they had never experienced the presence of God in their own hearts. While they had high regard for decent living, they had never heard the thunders of Sinai. Had they done so, they might have had a more

[4] Orpheus: A General History of Religions, English trans., p. 3.
[5] Les Emotions, p. 404.

profound conception of the very morality which they professed to admire so highly. They never realized that righteousness had its source in the inmost nature of God himself. Such a view would have saved them from their superficiality, and would have raised religion to its rightful place of primacy. They did well to set morality and religion in the closest relationship, but by failing to appreciate the nature of the bond they placed religion where its chief work could not be accomplished and did violence to the morality which they were so concerned to maintain.

Turning now to definitions of men who have shown high regard for religion, we may expect a very different type of definition. But even here restricted and one-sided views are to be found, views which have had their day, but which in a number of cases have been most influential in all later attempts at definition. There are those definitions which restrict religion to one phase of human life. Such is that of Hegel, who makes religion a matter of the intellect. One of his statements is this: "Thus religion is the Divine Spirit's knowledge of itself through the mediation of finite spirit." Leaving aside the monistic implication in this definition as irrelevant to our immediate interest, it is clear that religion was to Hegel purely a matter of thought. Others in a later day have to a greater or less degree followed in the same direction. Professor E. B. Tylor has a very simple statement: "The minimum definition of religion is the belief in spiritual beings."[6] This famous definition is one which reduces religion in its final analysis to a belief, an intellectual attitude. Max Müller makes religion "a mental faculty or disposition, which, independent of—nay, in spite of—sense and reason, enables man to apprehend the infinite under different names and under varying guises."[7] This was later modified. "Religion consists in the perception of the Infinite under such manifestations as are able to influence the moral

[6] Primitive Culture, 1871, vol. i, p. 383.
[7] Introduction to Science of Religion, 1873, p. 17.

character of man."[8] But in both cases the emphasis is intellectual, in spite of the necessity which caused Professor Müller in the second to incorporate the moral implication of religion as a part of his definition.

Religion has been defined in terms of the emotions as well as of the intellect. One of the most famous of all definitions is that of Schleiermacher: "The essence of the religious emotions consists in the feeling of an absolute dependence."[9] While this may be one-sided, the emphasis placed upon the emotional element in religion by Schleiermacher has deeply influenced subsequent attempts. In the present day Professor John McTaggart has a definition with a similar emphasis: "It seems to me that religion may best be described as an emotion, resting on a conviction of a harmony between ourselves and the universe at large."[10] While it rests on a conviction, religion is "described as an emotion." The emphasis is the same as that of Schleiermacher. And finally, religion has been defined as will, or the fulfillment of moral obligation. Kant stands first here with his declaration that "religion is the recognition of all duties as divine commands," and Matthew Arnold may be said to emphasize the same side of religion in his well-known word, "Religion is morality touched by emotion."[11]

In all of these cases we would be doing an injustice to insist that no place was given in religion to the other functions of the human mind, but the emphasis clearly has been as indicated in the quotations. The difficulty is that the emphasis is placed so strongly on one or another of the factors that religion becomes less comprehensive than it actually is. Religion is coming more and more to be recognized as all-embracive, as functioning in every department of human life, as involving the intellect, the emotions, and the will if it is normal and true of type. So while all these

[8] The Origin of Religion, 1878, p. 21.
[9] On Religion, p. 106.
[10] Some Dogmas of Religion, p. 3.
[11] Literature and Dogma, 1873, p. 46.

definitions are true as far as they go, and have been widely influential in subsequent investigations, they are partial and incomplete nevertheless.

Another set of definitions—and these are all the product of recent years—divide on the question of the individual as contrasted with the social emphasis in religion. We choose but two of these statements, both from American psychologists. The first is from William James: "Religion, therefore, as I now ask you arbitrarily to take it, shall mean for us the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, as far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine."[12] The other is from Professor William K. Wright: "The genius of religion is the endeavor to secure the conservation of socially recognized values."[13] Each of these definitions emphasizes an important truth of religion. Religion is both individual and social. The danger lies in laying such exclusive emphasis on one or the other of these factors that no standing room seems left for the other. Religion is individual in that for each man his religious experience is his own. He has a vertical relationship which is between himself and the higher powers on whom he believes, but James goes too far when he speaks of the religion of "individual men in their solitude," for a man's religion is so far determined by his lateral relationships in society that what he has is not his alone, nor did it come to him in solitude. Religion does undoubtedly conserve social values, and it is most fortunate that this feature of religious life has been emphasized. But to the individual religion is social and then something more. The social aspects fill the horizon in the earlier stages of development, when man as an individual can scarcely be said to exist, but gradually, as personality develops and each man begins to stand out in his separate individuality, a con-

[12] Varieties of Religious Experience, p. 31. (Longmans, New York, 1913.)

[13] American Journal of Theology, vol. xvi, pp. 385-409.

sciousness of a certain uniqueness comes over him and he realizes that while he belongs to society he is separate and detached from others in his own individuality and in his relation to the powers on whom he is dependent.

There are those who define religion in terms of worship. Professor Allan Menzies states it thus: "Religion is the worship of higher powers from a sense of need."[14] Professor A. S. Geden comes to this conclusion: "On the whole, then, it would seem that the essential quality or nature of religion is best described as consisting in worship."[15] One other, the striking statement of Professor Auguste Sabatier, may be given, "Prayer is religion in act—that is to say, real religion."[16] In these cases, as the context shows, worship is broadened out to become the expression of the total attitude of man, in the fullness of his life, toward his God. Yet, ordinarily speaking, religion is more than worship. The attitude of the worshiper must include more than the worship itself, or else his religion is restricted and incomplete. Yet the central act of religion is worship, and religion would die without it, so an adequate definition must provide for this reaction of the mind toward the higher powers or be found wanting.

In our own day a class of definitions is being presented with no necessary reference to higher powers or to God. The classic statement, and that which has largely influenced others of the class, is that of Professor Harald Höffding: "The conservation of value is the characteristic axiom of religion."[17] Professor E. S. Ames has a definition very similar: "Religion is the consciousness of the highest social values."[18] Professor G. A. Coe speaks of "religion as an immanent movement within our valuations, a movement that

[14] History of Religion, p. 13. (Scribners, New York, 1914.)
[15] Studies in the Religions of the East, p. 53. (Kelly, London, 1913.)
[16] Philosophy of Religion, p. 27. (James Pott, New York, 1913.)
[17] Philosophy of Religion, p. 10. (Macmillan, London, 1906.)
[18] Psychology of Religious Experience, p. vii. (Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1910.)

does not terminate in any single set of thought contents, or in any set of particular values."[19] It is difficult to do justice to these writers without quoting much more fully than this survey will permit, but we may at least say that these definitions run counter to those we have been considering in that religion is defined with no reference to any higher power. The question which is raised is this: Is the distinguishing thing in religion something subjective or is it objective? Is the difference between religions one growing out of differences in values or of differences in the religious object? To put it in other words: Must a man believe in God or some higher power to be religious or can he be considered such with no reference to divine powers of any kind?

Let us say at once that values always form a most important element in religion. Men want something which has value for them. If it did not have value, they would not pursue nor desire it. There are satisfactions of various kinds which are craved, and these desires form the dynamic of religion as of other human activities. But the question which arises is this: Is the conservation of these values the inner core of what we call religion? True, it is the inevitable accompaniment of religion, but is it the differentia of religion? The question resolves itself into this pertinent problem: Shall we define religion by the ends which are desired or by the means used to secure them? There are certain desires which men have, desires emotional and intellectual, individual and social. Now, if religion is the conservation of values with no necessary reference to man's attempt to secure this conservation through his relationship to higher powers, then religion may be defined without any reference to anything supernatural. That is accidental, even though it may be frequent and even almost inevitable. It remains only a means to an end, and the end which is sought is the reality in religion.

But it is possible to look at it from another angle, that of

[19] Psychology of Religion, p. 72. (Univ. Chicago Press, 1916.)

man's experience as he rises out of lower and reaches the higher planes of religious life. Man is after all sorts of things, material, physical, social, moral, and spiritual. He tries every means at his disposal, and among them is a certain conscious relation he holds with unseen higher powers. This relationship, purified and developed, becomes the chief glory of his life, raising him to a new dignity, bringing peace and unity to his troubled mind, and taking its place as the inspiring center of his whole life. And the remarkable thing is that what to him at the beginning was a means to an end becomes an end in itself. He is suffused with a glory unknown to him before, and to know God is the supreme desire and chief end of his existence. At all stages it does conserve values, but so do many other things which could never be called religion. This one relationship is unique; it makes its contribution to life as do the other factors, but is to be distinguished by a content which places it in a class by itself. The desire to conserve values is the soil out of which religion springs, and the conservation itself the end which religion seeks, but neither is to be confused with the thing itself, which is a relation of men to powers higher than themselves.

What, then, is religion? To sum up: It seems clear that religion consists of a number of elements. It is a relationship of conscious dependence on higher powers; it makes a demand on the whole of man's life, intellect, emotion, and will; it is both individual and social; it is worship, yet it is more than worship; and it conserves all the values which give worth and meaning to human life. The definition which includes all these features as successfully as any is that of L. de Grandmaison: "Religion is the sum total of beliefs, sentiments, and practices, individual and social, which have for their object a power which man recognizes as supreme, on which he depends and with which he can enter (or has entered) into relation."[20] A very convenient form of state-

[20] The History of Religion, vol. i, p. 3. (Herder, St. Louis, 1914.)

ment is that given by Professor William Newton Clarke, "Religion is the life of man in his superhuman relations."[21] With these in mind we may venture on our study of the religions of the world, with a clue sufficiently clear to guide our steps in and out among the multitude of facts and fancies which await classification and interpretation.[22]

The Origin of Religion

About a half century ago Sir John Lubbock, in his volume Prehistoric Times, attempted to show that religion was not universal, that there were tribes of men scattered fairly widely over the earth which had no religion, no worship, no belief in higher powers with whom they were related. Professor Robert Flint felt it necessary in his Baird Lecture for 1877, Anti-Theistic Theories, to answer Sir John Lubbock at length. The interesting thing is that the answer followed the same method as the argument it was answering. In each case reports from travelers and others were studied and criticized to determine as nearly as possible what the actual condition of the tribes under scrutiny indicated. The conclusion reached by Professor Flint was this: "An impartial examination of the relevant facts, it appears to me, shows that religion is virtually universal."[23]

Such a claim as that of Sir John Lubbock is no longer made. Not only has the more careful study of savages led to a deeper understanding of their life, but psychology has been developing as a science by leaps and bounds, and has made almost unnecessary any further investigation among savages themselves to determine the fundamental question of the essential religious nature of man. But even before this development had more than begun, Professor Flint had

[21] An Outline of Christian Theology, p. 1. (Scribners, New York, 1901.)

[22] I have been indebted for a number of these definitions to a list of definitions of religion compiled by Professor Robert E. Hume, of Union Theological Seminary.

[23] P. 288. (Blackwood, Edinburgh, 1899.)

sensed the conclusions reached by psychology in a more recent time and declared that "the world has been so framed, and the mind so constituted, that man, even in his lowest estate, and all over the world, gives evidence of possessing religious perceptions and emotions."[24] This could scarcely be better expressed by the most modern of our psychologists, even though the technical terms might be a little different. The study of human nature gives abundant proof that man is normally religious, that religion is an experience which man inevitably possesses as soon as his life begins to be organized and enters into relationship with his fellows and the nature which surrounds him on all sides. We are dealing, then, with what is a universal phenomenon.

It is the origin of religion that we are now to investigate. The immediate impulse is to go back in history to the beginnings and there make a study of man in the process of becoming religious. This implies that there must have been a time when man had no religion, but was developing into a religious being. The very statement just made carries its own refutation on its face. Man is fundamentally religious and that ought to make it apparent at once that history would afford no light on this question of origins. And such is the case. Go back as far as history extends and man is religious. The same evidence is forthcoming when archæology is called upon for its testimony. The prehistoric remains in Europe and elsewhere, as far as they prove anything, show man possessed of certain ideas and performing certain acts which give strong evidence of being religious. If, then, we are to know anything about the origin of religion—for it surely must have had an origin—we are compelled to go elsewhere for the help we need.

The only other course open is the appeal to psychology. What this means is that we must seek to find what in man this thing called religion is genetically, what it is which always develops in this way no matter where man is found.

[24] Anti-Theistic Theories, p. 288.

It is hard to know what to call it. Not an instinct surely, when one realizes the meaning of the instinctive life as now given us by psychological analysis and experiment. An instinct is called by Alexander Bain, "that untaught ability to perform actions."[25] Religion is not as simple a reaction as that, but is more complex, the reaction resulting from the combined action of the more fundamental features of the mental life. But this is not to say that religion is not deeply rooted in human nature. As Professor Coe puts it, "This way of organizing experience in terms of ideal values is a first item in the religious nature of man. It is present in all normal individuals, and is a type toward which freedom, popular education, and democracy tend."[26] We may not be able to arrive at a term more definite than that just used—"the religious nature of man"—but the fact to be emphasized is that the organizing of experience into what we call religion is the normal thing, so much so that, to quote again, "Any individual who fails to meet the conditions of life in this way we classify as imbecile."[27]

The material for such an investigation is quite accessible. Child study has been carried to such a point that certain conclusions may well be accepted as certain, though the conflict of opinions at other points is proof that much remains unsettled. The developing mind of a child must have some likeness to that of the early men of the race. The same may be said of the psychology of the backward peoples which has been pursued so earnestly by a small band of competent scholars. But in each case the evidence can only be used with caution. Neither the child nor the present-day savage can be held to be just like primitive man. The determining factor is undoubtedly normal psychology, our own development as we look back at it, and what seems to us as reason-

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[25] Quoted by James Ward, Psychological Principles, p. 53. (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1919.)
[26] Psychology of Religion, p. 324.
[27] Coe, op. cit., p. 324.

able in the nature of things. What can be expected as a result of such a method of procedure? The best that can be said is that it is a more or less plausible conjecture. But with all that there is value in the investigation, as it compels us to think through certain aspects of the religious life more thoroughly and in a manner which might otherwise be missed.

We may only take a glance at a very old theory of the origin of religion, that of Lucretius, who in a famous statement ascribed the origin of religion to a sense of fear. Now, fear has played a large part in religion and continues to do so, even among those whose religion should have "cast out fear," but to make fear responsible for religion is only a part of the story. No single cause can be assigned as the originating principle of so absorbing and complex an experience as religion. Aside from this early theory on the subject little was attempted until the time of the English Deists in the eighteenth century. Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans alike assumed a primitive divine revelation, and that settled the whole question. They conceived that in the beginning—that means when the first man was created and placed in the Garden of Eden—God revealed to him in some manner the essential truths of religion, such as the existence of one God, the obligation to obey him, and the hope of immortality. Thus furnished, he began his career, but when sin emerged the revelation became hazy and indistinct and finally was well-nigh if not completely lost. The difficulty with this exceedingly fascinating picture is that it rests on no solid foundation of fact. The Bible makes no clear statement which would lead to this conclusion. When man began to play his part he performed religious acts and engaged at times in a religious ritual; so much is evident, but nothing is said as to origins.

That man received his religious nature from God is very plausible, but that differs widely from the statement that he came into life furnished with a full set of religious

ideas. The theory of evolution presents us with a very different account of early man, an account which makes belief in a more or less complete revelation incongruous. He developed into what he has become and many ages passed before he was ready to appreciate the truths which on the other theory he is said to have received as an original endowment. The easy way in which through all the centuries of Christian history thinkers accounted for the non-Christian religions was to refer them to the devil as the author. This was a simple solution of a difficult problem, and it carried the Christian Church until within the last century or two, but it is too simple to be convincing and betrays an ignorance so profound that it is hard to be patient with it to-day.

Now the Deists had their own notion of the rise of religion. They were not only willing to allow that man might have had an original endowment of religious ideas, but they had the matter quite thoroughly worked out. A number of conceptions which fitted in well with their idea of religion as a natural phenomenon in the life of man were made to constitute his original religious outfit. But this was not the significant part of their theory. Man would have been all right had he retained the simplicity of his original belief, but this was not to be. A class of men arose, who came to be known as priests, who found they could work upon the fears and credulity of men and by so doing gain advantage for themselves. In order to fasten their grip upon men they devised beliefs and ritual practices which worked upon the superstitious fears of men and gave the priesthood a hold like bands of iron. This, then, explains the origin of the religions which have grown up among men. These wily men saw their chance to keep the people in their power, and have even down to our day been devising new schemes to make their tenure perpetual. No one would be foolhardy enough now to propound such a theory of the origin of religion. It is too superficial and shows great ignorance of religion and its deep foundations in human life. And let us see, as

Professor Morris Jastrow points out, that it is not the function of priests to originate but to conserve. The prophet and the seer are the dynamic creators in human society, and they have been free men troubling themselves little about the paraphernalia of religion, but speaking out a message full of pregnant meaning as men face a new age.[28]

With these outworn theories as a background we may take up those which have arisen more recently. They are the result of scientific historical investigation and are an attempt to explain religion on the basis of all the facts which are available. But even here inference must play a large part in the final conclusion. There are facts, but they do not go far enough back to give any sure standing ground for an incontrovertible conclusion. The best approach is by way of the theory enunciated by Professor E. B. Tylor in his epoch-making volumes on Primitive Culture. It is called the animistic theory. According to Professor Tylor early man attributed life to nature and the objects around him. He looked upon all he saw as animated, as possessing a spirit like his own. He did this by the only instrument of reason he had to explain what he saw and heard and felt. It was the principle of analogy, according to which all he saw was explained by reference to his own personality. If he saw a tree bend under the wind, he could only explain it by thinking that he could make the wind blow, too, and thus in a lesser but similar fashion do what he saw happening in nature. He could blow, and so there must be some invisible but very big somebody out there who was blowing very hard and causing the trees of the forest to bend and groan in the gale. To him somebody more or less like himself was accountable for everything that happened. He carried it out to such lengths that the very existence of a separate thing, even a dead thing like a stone, could be explained only on the basis of an inner spirit which was its life. Thus all nature became alive, filled with innumerable spirits

[28] The Study of Religion, chap. iv. (Scribners, New York, 1911.)

everywhere and in everything. There was to early man and to the savage to-day no such thing as inanimate nature. It was all alive and throbbing with a life like his own.

Coming to the point which concerns us immediately, Professor Tylor held that religion had its origin in the relationship which man established with certain of the spirits of his animism. This theory has been criticized by Professor R. R. Marett in his The Threshold of Religion. He agrees with Professor Tylor in his general conclusion that primitive man came finally to an animistic conclusion, but he feels that the finished animism of Professor Tylor gives evidence of considerable development in early man. According to that theory man attributed a definite, distinct spirit to the objects of nature, to each tree and mountain and spring in his vicinity. But, says Professor Marett, how could man thus attribute a spirit to what he saw when his own spirit-life was so uncertain? His thinking was confused and indistinct because, in the nature of the case, he was not capable of anything more. In this condition it takes far too much for granted to believe the savage capable of seeing distinct spirits in the nature which surrounded him. What Professor Marett feels is that to primitive man nature was characterized by a kind of aliveness just as he was conscious of a certain aliveness in himself. Now, even in this early stage we feel that religion had its beginnings, that man did not have to wait until he could attribute a separate spirit to each object of nature in order to have a religion, so we have what may be called a "preanimistic religion," using animism in the strict sense of Professor Tylor's theory. This general aliveness later developed into the definite personification of the objects of nature, that is, as his own distinctness became more and more evident to himself.

Professor Marett makes another telling point in criticizing the theory of Professor Tylor. The theory does not tell us why man should have been led to worship the spirits of his

animism. This is, after all, the question of questions concerning the origin of religion. Whatever our conclusion, let us remember that the animistic theory of nature must be the basis on which we must build. Without that we have no approach which promises a valid explanation of the savage way of looking at things.

A further development of the theory just stated is that of Herbert Spencer. He accepted the animistic explanation of primitive thinking, but emphasized that aspect which deals with the spirits of the dead. As far back as we can dimly penetrate, man is seen offering sacrifice to the spirits of his departed ancestors, and this Herbert Spencer believes to have been the earliest form of religion. Ancestors, then, were the first beings worshiped. Even the more inclusive worship of the objects of nature all around him is derived from the worship offered to those who have died and as ghosts continue their existence not very far away. The criticism to be made here is that a single form of primitive religion can scarcely be made to account for the origin of religion any more than some other aspects which might be mentioned. Why should death any more than some of the manifestations of power and activity evident on all sides be made the sole explanation of the origin of religion?

We are still far from an answer to the primary question confronting us, What was it that caused primitive man to turn in worship to certain beings whom he considered divine? But before attempting an answer it is necessary to take up one more recent theory which is receiving wide attention to-day because of the skill and ability with which it is presented. I refer to the sociological theory of the origin of religion presented by Professor Emile Durkheim, the leader of the school of French sociologists, in his work entitled The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. To Professor Durkheim religion is a genuine phase of human life which will last because it corresponds to human need. But religion is not a supernatural affair, nor does it imply

a belief in divine beings. It is a conscious relation to what are called "sacred things," and the totem is the type of these sacred things. We cannot at this point say more about the totem than that it is an animal (or sometimes a plant) with which a group of men believe they are closely related. This theory is found among savage people in many widely separated parts of the world. The sacredness which attaches to the totem is to be explained by the presence in it of a strange, mysterious force, pervasive and impersonal, which is supposed to explain life and activity in men and things. How did the thought that such a power existed arise in the mind of primitive man? Here is the distinctive point in the theory of the French sociologist. The presence of this force was aroused in man's mind by society. What does this mean? The group consciousness is different from that of the individual, though, of course, in each case it is an experience of the individual. But he realizes that in his group, which we call society, certain things come to him which could not be his were he alone in the world. It is his sense of the power, the protection, and the common interests of the group that becomes to him the consciousness of a mysterious power in the world, and this is the power he worships. The totem is its emblem, but the power worshiped is society. So society is his god, and the only god he has is society. The god of the clan is the clan itself. Thus social relations explain everything, with no relation to anything supernatural. Undoubtedly religion is social, but this is quite different from saying with these scholars that that is all there is to religion. Man persists in believing that he is in touch not only with his fellows but with beings who are over and above him. Is the lesson taught by the whole history of religion mistaken? Is there no supernatural? Is society all the God there is? "Yes," say these scholars. But again, is there not an individual reference to religion which becomes the more clear as religion develops into its higher forms? A broader foundation must surely

be laid to explain the whole of what has been developed in the course of man's religious history.

From what has been said earlier in this section it will be apparent that man has a certain capacity for religion which is his normally simply because he is a man. Man has a bent in the direction of religion which only needs the proper stimulus to become religion in one of its many recognizable forms. Here, then, in principle is what we propose as a sufficient explanation of religion, that is, as far as this origin can be explained at all. There must be an inner response to an influence from without before we are able to discover religion in man; and both factors, the subjective and the objective, are necessary to account for the final product. What is that influence from without to which the mind of primitive man responds? It is the total impress of nature, his environment, the outside world, the society of which he is a part, on his primitive mind. The points of contact are without number, and through every one come pouring in all kinds of stimuli. Most of these have no particular religious significance, but some affect him as so strange, so mysterious, so awesome that he trembles when he is in their presence. It is this sense of mystery and awe in the presence of what he conceives as higher powers coupled with a deep dissatisfaction which urged him on to secure what he did not have which is the beginning of religion.

So much may be fairly clear, that religion is the result of an inner response to outward influences, but the main point is yet to be considered. How does it happen that in certain cases his reaction to his environment is of that peculiar nature which we call religious? What causes primitive man to assume an attitude of dependence and of worship as he stands in the presence of what he looks upon as divine powers? I do not think this question can be fully answered. We may and ought to push natural explanation back as far as it is possible with the light of the last fact which may serve as a guide, but when that shall have been done there is still

some distance to travel. We may repeat the statement that man has a religious nature, but when we come to close quarters with that phrase it does not deliver up its full meaning to our inquiry. Max Müller cut the Gordian knot by saying that it was man's "sense of the infinite" which accounts for the possibility of the rise of religion in his soul. This has been severely criticized by many writers, but, after all, it is one way of stating that in man there is that which answers to the voice from without and which in the end results in religion. It points to that mysterious something which makes man reach out beyond the seen to the invisible world of which he is dimly conscious.

But when one believes that God has been revealing himself to man in many forms and at all periods in the long story of his life it is possible to take one further step. We are told that there is a light which lighteth every man coming into the world, and that even far removed from any of the legal systems which have been devised there is an inner law in the breasts of men which acts as a monitor over their thoughts and deeds. We may not believe in a primitive revelation in the sense that it consisted of a number of religious ideas placed in the mind of primitive man, but it is a very different matter to believe that man's religious nature, his religious proclivity, is the gift of God, a part of his original endowment, without which, whatever nature or society might have done, religion would never have developed.

The Development of Religion

Two results of our study are doubtless already apparent. One is that religion is fundamentally the same thing, whether found among wild men on an island in the South Seas or among the cultivated members of a Christian church. It is always a relationship between man and higher powers, a relationship stimulated by a sense of need. The other result is that all religions hark back to the most primitive forms and are developments from this simple germ.

This introduces us at once to our present subject, the development of religion.

The first question is, What is the key to this development? or, What causes a religion to develop into something more complex and sublime? The clue is to be found in the discussion of the origin of religion, where it was seen that without a conscious sense of need man would never have developed a religion at all. Now, the same causes which led to the first beginnings of religion undoubtedly are the explanation of its development. We may say, then, that the development of religion follows and is determined by a sense of need. When needs are simple and crude, the religion partakes of the same simplicity and crudity; when needs become more extensive and refined, religion changes to meet the new and enlarging needs. We may be sure of this, because, after all the religions we know of have been examined, no savage people have ever been found with a highly developed religion. The religion they possess is suited to their needs and is on the level of their advancement in culture and outlook on life. An intelligent people demand a religion suited to their wants, or else it will gradually become outgrown. If it is not able by reinterpretation or the assimilation of new elements, borrowed or discovered by some far-sighted prophet, to meet the newer needs, it is laid aside for other forms or for another religion, which promise the better to fit in with the advance in civilization which has been achieved. In every period of transition from an old order, which has become outworn, to a new order as yet untried, this process has gone on. Some religions have ceased to exist, and have been replaced by new religions, which interpret better than the old the aspirations of the people as they look forward with hope to a better day. In other cases religions have shown a remarkable capacity of adaptation and have continued to live and thrive until our own time.

There is no more significant or interesting feature of the

study of the religions of the world than this. Certain well-marked periods of crisis are to be discovered in the story of every civilized or even semi-civilized people, and it is just at these crucial turning points when, after religion has seemed to be almost stationary for centuries it may be, a new life can be discovered stirring among men, and the result is the ushering in of a new age. Just at the present time the religions of the world are passing through such a crisis. The invasion of the Orient by ideas entirely strange, the well-nigh complete acceptance of Western education, and the contact with the moral and religious ideas of Christendom have created an unprecedented situation, involving a crisis in the moral ideals and religious beliefs of all the peoples who have come under their influence. What the outcome will be no one can foresee. One thing is altogether clear: a profound change is taking place, and the final result will be apparent only when the nations have to a greater or less extent settled down again as partakers of the culture of the new age which is dawning.

One of the questions raised by such considerations concerns the strange inequality in development. While no people have been discovered who fail to show some evidence of advance, that advance in many cases is so slight that, compared with the great religious systems of the world, it seems to be sluggish and almost stagnant. Now, the question arises, why should one religion have advanced and others remained almost in their primitive state? Why should one people have developed needs and others not? Again, why should a people remain savage for untold ages, then suddenly begin the march forward? What makes the difference between peoples? Is it racial precosity? Is it the effect of environment? Is it because of outward stimulus? Is it economic, or social, or individual? No final answer has been found to these and similar questions.

But while these final questions wait for a satisfying answer we may go some distance into the process of devel-

opment and seek to discover some of its laws. We may say at once that the growth of anything so complex as religion cannot be accounted for by any single cause. Religion must develop through the interaction of many elements, each complex in itself. One of the clues which will provide a fulcrum for our query is that there is an element of conscious purpose which determines the advance man makes in religion. Of course, he does not see the end, and his aim is indefinite, but he does want something and moves forward, even blindly at times, to secure it. While this may be spoken of as an evolution, since, in general, there is discernible an advance from the simple to the more complex, from the crude to the cultivated, several very important factors must be taken into consideration to guard the statement from false interpretation. In the first place, while the general trend is toward progress, there come periods of retrogression, of degeneracy, when any advance made seems in danger of being lost. This phenomenon is to be found in many places and makes it very difficult to speak of the whole movement as an evolution—if by that term is meant steady advance out of lower forms into higher. But when the human factor is taken into consideration and given a determinative place in the process, the whole situation begins to clear. Development for man, individual and social, is, as Professor George Galloway points out, a vocation.[29] He may not be able to will anything he wants, and his choices may be circumscribed by his outlook and his environment, but—and this is the important point—he must will this or that, or nothing happens. And when we thus introduce into the evolution the personal factor, we are dealing with that which is more or less incalculable. But it is this very human element which makes our study one of abiding interest. We may at any moment come into the presence of a gifted seer who surprises us by his intuitions and fills us with new confidence in man and the religious life he has developed.

[29] Philosophy of Religion, chap. v. (Scribners, New York, 1914.)

There is, however, another side to this problem of religious development which cannot be neglected if we are to secure a view relatively complete. Does the whole burden of development rest on man alone? Is he the only one concerned in his advance toward a more satisfying life? All the religions have a very definite answer to this question, a decided negative. All believe that in one way or another the Divine has been seeking to make its will known to man. Thus the course of the history of religion is from this standpoint the progressive revelation of God to men, a revelation disclosed just as rapidly as men were able to receive it. There is, then, a divine pedagogy, God in his gracious purpose meeting man with his needs and giving him that satisfaction which makes him complete. It is a gradual process, but man is not alone in its realization. God himself, the Creator of man, is seen giving himself in ever fuller and fuller measure until, in the Christian revelation, we see him as he is in the face of Jesus Christ.

If, as we have tried to show, the development of religion proceeds along with and is demanded by the enlarging needs of man, it must be at once evident that the stages in religious growth are coordinate with the stages of civilization and culture. Religious development cannot be understood apart from that of culture in general. The steps of the cultural movement are the steps in the development in religion. We shall follow the three stages as given by Professor Galloway, namely, the tribal, the national, and the universal.[30]

1. *The Tribal.* We do not know how man was organized socially in the beginnings of his life. There are theories according to which he lived promiscuously with his fellows, with no family life, but there is an influential body of opinion to-day which holds that a monogamous relation between a man and his one wife was the earliest form of relationship in society. But whatever may have been the fact in prehistoric times, we know of no simpler form of union than the

[30] Philosophy of Religion, chap. ii.

tribe. It is spoken of as the "rudimentary form" of social union, and is the form in which all primitive or savage peoples live to-day. In this stage the individual is next to nothing, and the group as a group is the end-all. There is little or no reflection on life and its meaning, and material interests force themselves on the attention so exclusively that little opportunity is offered for anything intellectual. Longfellow's "Hiawatha" is an idealization and never had its counterpart in reality. Savages simply do not have such thoughts and feelings, which are the outcome of a very different social environment. The savage does not lead an idyllic life, and only appears to do so when we from a distance far removed read into his crude, cramped life conceptions entirely foreign to his mind. In this stage law is custom, the members of the tribe being united by the blood-bond and each member following as a matter of course in the customary line. There is little or no individual initiative, and all feel the bond of mutual responsibility. What affects one affects all and the blame for what one does is shared by all. Piety, if the word can be used at all, consists in being loyal to the tribe and obeying its mandates. On this level man's interests are determined by the constant necessity of securing enough to eat, and by watchfulness against the dangers of nature and the attacks of his enemies. Under these conditions the savage never rises above his material wants and desires, and his religion remains on that same low level.

2. *The National.* Man could never get away from the lower stage by pure reflection, for he had not learned to think and had no incentive to do so. Some change induced from the outside was necessary to produce a new stage mentally and religiously. A new set of needs must be created, and this actually came about by the disappearance of the tribe and the rise of the nation. We do not know exactly how this change was brought about, but conjecture has been able to make quite a satisfying picture of the process. War must have had much to do with it, when one tribe established

its rule over other weaker ones, and tribes were brought together and cemented in defense against common enemies from without. Migrations caused by over-population and the failure of sufficient subsistence cannot be left out as an important factor. But out of it came the state, with a capital city which exercised authority over the country lying about. In such a state conditions of life differ greatly from those in a tribe. There is now a division of labor, the soldier and the priest, the artisan and the farmer emerging and taking their place in the social organism. Reading and writing are now to be found among human accomplishments, and out of them grow chronology and the writing of annals.

Such a civilization demands gods far different from those of the tribe. They must be stronger and wiser and more distinct. A certain division of labor is found among the divinities, and we come to have what are known as "departmental gods." With more complexity in society came gods with more attributes and a richer life. One of the great developments at this stage is social morality, and this has the important effect of moralizing the idea of God. The deities begin to be associated with moral ideals in a manner unknown before. With great officials in the nation, from the king himself to the lesser men who are in more immediate contact with the masses of the people, we find the "monarchian idea" worked out among the gods, supreme gods lording it over the lesser divinities and so on down to gods which scarcely deserve the name. This is but a most general statement, but it may serve to indicate the manner in which the state of civilization is reflected in the organization of the pantheon.

3. *The Universal.* Out of the national developed the universal. The universal is the outgrowth of a deepening and individualizing of religion. As religion ceases to be merely the possession of a group as such and is seen to involve an individual relationship between the soul and his God, it becomes, potentially at least, universal. What is good for a

man as an individual is good for another man until by implication and in the ideal it begins its journey to claim the allegiance of all men everywhere. Only a few of the religions have thus burst the nationalistic bonds and have sought to become international or universal. Most of the great religions have remained through the ages attached to one people or nation. It is a distinct advance when they deepen and develop to such an extent that the very hope of their continued existence seems to lie in propagating them to the ends of the earth. This is the highest form of religion, and is to-day represented by three virile faiths, namely, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, and Christianity. These three, as representing the missionary idea, must be the high points in our study.

A last consideration must have to do with the method of procedure. We may well take it up here because the three stages of religious development just given point to the most convenient and most significant outline to be followed in the chapters which follow. Much has been written on the classification of religions, and many schemes have been devised, but most of them fail to be convincing. They are of little practical use and do not give any helpful clue in organizing the material at hand. It seems best to take up animistic religion first, representing as it does the religion of man in the tribal form of organization. Following this the national religions may be studied. Here the problem of order is almost impossible of solution, if one desires to trace development and historical continuity in any religion or in any people. Two great families of religion are those of the Indo-European peoples and the Semitic peoples. But where shall we place Egyptian religion, which is in no sense Indo-European and only partially Semitic? How shall we study Buddhism, which sprang out of Aryan soil in India, but finally disappeared there and appeared among the so-called Turanian peoples in China, Tibet, Korea, and Japan? The only thing to do is to decide arbitrarily on a certain course,

knowing full well that it cannot be entirely satisfactory. So, after having discussed the religion of the animistic peoples we shall take up the national religions, starting in by a study of the ancient faiths of Egypt and of Babylonia and Assyria. Then we may begin the journey through the broad field of the religions of the Indo-European peoples, those of ancient Greece and Rome, the religion of Zoroaster, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Having done this, we shall cross the mountains into Eastern Asia and examine the religions of China and Japan, in each case carrying on the story of Buddhism as found in these countries. This, then, clears the field for the religions of the Semitic peoples, Judaism and Islam. The last section will be devoted to an inquiry into the origins, the history, and significance of the Christian religion. The journey is a long one, but the student will be amply rewarded as he realizes that he deals with those matters which are deepest in the human heart, and which are of the greatest significance in tracing the history of man and his progress in civilization.

Suggestions for Further Study

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CHAPTER II

ANIMISTIC RELIGION

Animistic Peoples and Their Habitat

The religion we are about to describe has been called by various names. It has been spoken of as tribal or primitive religion, and also by the name we have used. Not any one is entirely satisfactory. Tribal religion is an accurate designation because all the people who have this form of religion and have not advanced beyond it are in the tribal form of organization. It is only because one or two other terms penetrate a little deeper into the inner meaning of the beliefs and practices of these people that it is not used. Probably the most widely used designation at the present time is primitive religion. The difficulty is that what we are dealing with is not really primitive. The religion of the most backward peoples in the world gives undeniable evidences of development out of something more simple and crude. At best it only approximates the primitive, and is far removed from what might be described correctly by that word. There is objection also to the word "animistic" because that attitude of mind is not left behind when higher forms of religion are attained, and so is not peculiar to those who are at the religious stage which is designated by that name. But it is used here because it is the animistic outlook or interpretation of their world which dominates all the thoughts and actions of the backward peoples. Their religion is the relationship which these peoples have established between themselves and certain of the spirits of their animism. Hence this term penetrates to the underlying philosophy of these peoples and has been chosen to designate their religion in these studies.

There is good reason why this form of religion should be most carefully investigated, and why it should be studied first. As has already been pointed out, all the more fully developed religions of the world have emerged out of these more primitive forms. They have all passed through the animistic stage and cannot be understood without a knowledge of this period of their development. In every case it will be necessary to describe that stage of each religion before going on to the forms it has later assumed. In this way we shall be dealing with animistic religion frequently and not only in this chapter. And even among the most civilized and cultured peoples many remnants or vestiges of this early stage are still to be found. Superstitions of all kinds, many of them innocent and others far more serious in their effect, abound. The good luck to be expected from an old horse-shoe and the ill luck which flows from the number thirteen will suggest a score of other superstitions known and more or less believed in among our own friends and relations. What is the meaning of these strange "survivals"? No adequate explanation can be given without an understanding of the animistic outlook. These furtive beliefs have only been handed down because in each generation receptive minds respond eagerly to such stimuli, minds which have failed to rise to the stage from which these puerile notions have been banished. But they are with us far and wide and it becomes our duty to recognize the large place they occupy and understand their significance in our civilization.

No census has been taken of the animistic peoples as a whole. We know how many there are in the United States, in India, and in some other countries, but for the most part they have lived until so recently outside the pale of civilization that any scientific enumeration was not even thought of. Now that the whole world has been parceled out and the uncultured peoples are under the supervision of one or another of the advanced nations we may expect that more

certain knowledge of the numbers of animists may be forthcoming. At the present time we must depend upon estimates. And when estimates differ widely we can only say that we do not know much about the subject. One estimate gives a hundred and fifty-seven millions[1] and another a hundred and seventy-three millions.[2] At any rate they form a not inconsiderable part of the population of the earth. In no place is the population dense, the very conditions of their life making anything approaching overcrowding impossible.

They are scattered more or less over both hemispheres. No continent, not even Europe, is without some representatives of these uncultured tribes. We have on this side of the Atlantic the Eskimos and the many tribes of aboriginal Indians, both in North and South America. The largest single group of animists is to be found in Africa, where the various Negro and Bantu tribes occupy the great body of the continent. On the mainland of Asia are various aboriginal tribes, such as the Ainu in Japan, the Lolos, and others in the mountain and desert fastnesses of northern, western, and southwestern China, and the interesting hill tribes of India, the Bhils, the Ghonds, and many others. In all these cases the more primitive peoples have been displaced by the coming of those who, emigrating from some previous abode, have taken possession of the country and driven the former occupants back into the more inaccessible and undesirable sections of the country. There they have remained much as they were centuries, or even a millennium, ago. But, again, in the island world of the Southern Pacific conditions are much as they are in Africa. A large population of animistic tribesmen, out of touch through ages with peoples of a higher civilization, live a life which has taken its form with no outside influence to turn it from its natural development. The great islands of Sumatra, Java, Borneo, and

[1] Encyclopædia Britannica, 11th edition, article, "Missions."
[2] Zeller, as quoted in Warneck's History of Protestant Missions, 10th German edition.

New Guinea, not to mention the aboriginal tribes in the Philippines, New Zealand, and Australia, furnish the largest part of the population of this ocean world. But besides these are the people of the hundreds of small islands, some little better than coral reefs, scattered over the face of the broad Pacific. Coming now very rapidly under the influence of Western nations, these people are showing many signs of change. They are still for the most part in the animistic stage, but this condition must soon be exchanged for another as they come into more intimate contact with the commerce and education and religion of the Western world. The contact already had has been both beneficial and baneful, and the serious question is, whether the last end of these simple people may not be worse than the first. It all depends upon the side of our culture and civilization which succeeds in making itself felt most powerfully as these people leave their old moorings and enter the troubled stream of modern life.

The great variety of animistic peoples scattered over the world is an embarrassment when their religious life is to be studied. Each tribe has religious practices and beliefs which differ from those of others. It would seem that the only way in which the religion of these people could be adequately presented would be to take each tribe or group of similar tribes separately and give an account of its religious rites and beliefs. This is the only way in which the great national religions can be treated, so individual are they and so different in their history and outlook. But while the religion of a tribe is not the same as that of others the case is quite different from that of the more developed faiths. The differences are comparatively slight. As soon as certain superficial differences are noted an almost monotonous sameness is to be discovered. Probably owing to the lack of suppleness in the thought-life of the animist little diversity is to be found. Thought is weak and covers a very limited range. It is not introspective, nor does it develop into reflection. Its reactions are spontaneous and

naïve, and hence more or less alike even among peoples separated by half the circumference of the globe. This being the case, it is not necessary to describe many of the varieties of practice to come to an understanding of the meaning of animistic religion.

Before taking up the various aspects of savage belief and life it may be well to call attention to several of its more general characteristics. It has been suggested that the religion of peoples living in the tribal form of organization exhibits three marked peculiarities, that it is traditional, natural, and spontaneous.

1. *Traditional.* These forms of religion, like the culture out of which they spring, have no written language and no literature. This means no history and no possibility of any significant and conscious progress. This is just what we find. The religion of these peoples is about what it was a thousand years ago. No advance can be made until the existing social order has been changed into something higher. Religion may do this, but it must be religion brought in from the outside. So long as the only means of passing on from one generation to another the accumulated wisdom of the past is by word of mouth there is no hope of building up civilization which shall show marks of steady improvement. A traditional civilization is always stationary; it only rises to higher levels when its acts can be recorded and transmitted to posterity in forms which are permanent.

2. *Natural.* By which is meant that the natural desires are about as far as the savage goes in his outreach. He is of necessity so occupied in the material and physical that no other needs are felt. Enough for himself and his family to eat, care of his animals, protection against his enemies, the satisfaction of his primary impulses—these are about all he thinks about. His needs are simple and crude and can never become more complex and refined so long as he continues to live this life. He is not awake to himself and the latent possibilities of his deeper nature. Spiritual attain-

ment is denied him because he has never felt any aspiration after the things of the spirit. This condition is not accidental, it is inevitable so long as people remain on this level. We are dealing, then, with man not at his best, but man undeveloped and curtailed and cramped and dwarfed. He is a man, to be sure, but a man without the touch which lifts him out of the purely natural into the sphere of the spirit.

3. *Spontaneous.* They can point to no founder and no crucial turning-points which have determined the direction they should take. They have grown spontaneously as a feature of the life and culture of the tribe, and as unconsciously as any other feature. Like everything else in the life about him, the animistic savage takes religion for granted, as he does the hill which stands opposite his village or the chief of the tribe. Everything to his mind has always been as it is now and needs no further justification or explanation. Religion is perfectly normal and as much a part of his life as sleeping at night or going to battle when an enemy approaches. Spontaneity, together with the other two characteristics just mentioned, shows us religion at its lowest level and almost at a standstill. Variations are to be found, but they are variations within the limits just given by these three descriptive terms.

Animism and the Mysterious Power

All people believe in spirits. No degraded tribe has been discovered without it. These spirits are everywhere, in the sky above, on the earth beneath, in the depths of the waters, and in the dark caverns and recesses of the mysterious mountains. All nature is tenanted by an invisible host of spiritual beings not far away from man and likely at any moment to make their presence felt in any one of a hundred ways. It is easy to understand why the savage should think that animals are possessed of spirits like ourselves, but it is not at first sight evident why the inanimate objects

of nature should be so possessed. Every river and lake, mountain and hill, tree and shrub, stick and stone, is the dwelling place of some spirit. The clouds, the stars, the sun and the moon likewise are what they are because of indwelling spirit. Savage man lives in a densely populated world. Not only are these spirits the invisible souls of the objects around him, but there are legions of free spirits flitting around in the air, homeless wanderers, not belonging in any one place, but at liberty to travel and range over a wide area. He may know where many spirits are by the objects which they inhabit, but that does not help him when he is in the forest or crosses a river. He cannot tell when and where a mischievous imp may trip him as he walks or some devilish ogre pull him under the surface of the water and cause him to drown. And then there is the smallpox demon who may attack his village, or the blight which may destroy his meager crop. Whatever happens is caused by a spiritual agency. "What spirit is it who has killed my cow?" asks the savage, or "Who was it that brought the flood last spring?" The savage, in other words, is an animist; he lives a world that is alive and throbbing with vitality all the time.

Now, while he believes in spirits this primitive man is not spiritual in the true sense. He has not learned to distinguish between a material and a spiritual world. To him there is no essential difference between the visible and the invisible. He may not be able to see the spirit, but it might be seen, he thinks. He looks upon it as a more or less thin vapory substance which has qualities not possessed by the heavier, tangible things he sees, but is of the same general character. Very naturally he identifies the soul with the breath, for when a man ceases to breathe, his spirit or soul has left. This breath cannot usually be seen, but it can be felt, and, on occasion when condensation takes place, it has visible form and can be seen flowing from a man's mouth and nostrils. He identifies this with the soul of the man

himself; he has not risen above the purely physical in his explanation of the spirit world.

That dreams have played an important part in making the realm of the spirit real to him there can be little doubt. A dream is just as real an experience to people living on this plane as the experience of their waking moments. They or their spirits actually do the things they dream about. While they dream their bodies may remain in the place where they lay down, but their spirits have traveled far and have passed through strange and wonderful experiences. There is no doubt about it; it is altogether real to them. The only difference between dreams and death is that when one dreams his spirit has departed for a season only, while when a man dies his spirit does not come back. Flowing naturally from this is his unfailing belief in a life after death. He continues to live on, in a world which he has visited before. It is perfectly natural for him to think that way. His ideas may differ according to natural conditions and social environment, but the belief is there, unquenchable and strong.

Without attempting to go back into stages of development man has left behind, we find in the mind of these peoples today a conception which may explain the belief in spirits and other ideas which are in his mind. It is the conception of a mysterious pervasive power present in the universe and recognized in many forms of activity. The familiar name by which it is known is taken from Polynesia, where it is called *mana*. But it is known by other names, *manitu* by the Algonquian family of Indians, *orenda* by the Iroquoian family, and *wakan* by the Sioux, and by still other names elsewhere. But by whatever name it is called it is looked upon as about the same thing. The word *mana* came into our vocabulary through the classic statement of Bishop R. H. Codrington, in his volume, The Melanesians. "It is a power or influence, not physical, and in a way supernatural; but it shows itself in physical force, or in a kind of power or

excellence which a man possesses. This *mana* is not fixed in anything, and can be conveyed in almost anything; but spirits, whether disembodied souls or supernatural beings, have it and can impart it; and it essentially belongs to personal beings to originate it, though it may act through the medium of water, or a stone, or a bone."[3] Professor C. H. Toy sums up its meaning in this short sentence: "It is, in a word, a term for the force residing in any object."[4]

It is said that the conception is not to be found among the most degraded savages, that some further development seems to be necessary before men rise to the thought. It is true also that as civilization advances the idea is laid aside and ceases to function as a definite belief. But among animistic peoples as they are found the world over the idea of this quasi-personal force is present and very influential as an explanation of about all that happens. Men are alive and do things, chiefs have authority, a tree puts out fruit and leaves, an animal secures its prey, a fisherman is successful in his catch, and a thousand other things are what they are and accomplish what is done, all because of this mysterious power. As we proceed in our study of the religion of these people, of their divine beings and their worship, of magic and fetishism, of totemism and tabu, recourse must be had to this conception, for without it there would be no means of explaining the results which appear and the activities and repressions which make up the life of the animistic peoples.

The Higher Powers of Animistic Religion

What we have been describing is not religion but the raw material out of which religion is made. Coming to the more definite question of the objects of worship, the first thing to be said is that they are the spirits of their animism. Not

[3] The Melanesians, p. 119.
[4] Introduction to the History of Religions, p. 101. (Ginn, Boston, 1913.)

all of them are worshiped, but the more primitive peoples know of no other objects they may worship. Let us beware just here of concluding that these poor people do much thinking as we should call it to-day. Their religion is far more a matter of the emotions than of the intellect. Their minds are greatly confused, and what they do depends far more on the impulse of the moment and the excitement born of a dance or a period of fasting or an impressive ceremonial than on sober thought. The instability of savage nerves is mentioned frequently by writers on the life of primitive people. Their reactions are largely of the high-strung, emotional type and cannot be understood without taking this into consideration. As a result their choice of divinities and the worship accorded them is a choice determined by the emotional reaction of the savage to his environment. He is aware of scores and hundreds of spirits around him, he turns to some of them in worship, and this becomes his religion.

We do not know what spirits he worshiped first. Herbert Spencer's attempt to prove that ancestors were the first gods men worshiped has failed to convince. All we know is that man is found worshiping a great variety of beings and doing it rather indiscriminately. The question of interest, however, is to determine why certain objects were chosen instead of others, for, although the savage may not know why, there must be some reason for his choice. There can be no question that the only being he would worship must be one which for one reason or another appears to him as possessed of power superior to his own. For this reason the gods of these peoples are frequently called Powers. That is the necessary and almost the only necessary qualification. In wisdom, skill, cunning, as well as in physical prowess he must exceed the might of man. This is determined at times in ways which to us appear naïve and utterly inadequate. Mere physical force may not seem to us to be indicative of superiority, but it does

to a savage. But besides this he is struck by what is strange, uncanny, mysterious, or even grotesque and queer. All these aspects of the things he finds go beyond his power of comprehension and suggest strength, and often for no other reason than their mysteriousness. And in this way the pantheon, if it can be dignified by that name, of savage people is not consistent and the same. New objects are constantly attracting the attention of the animist and taking the place of other powers now shrunk down to more ordinary dimensions.

Inanimate objects are worshiped wherever animists are found. Trees are alive and provide shade and food—should they not be worshiped? "Although the tree is rooted to one spot, it responds to every influence without. Swayed by the breeze, or smitten by the storm, it is never at rest. Murmurs are heard in its leaves, or its branches creak and writhe as in agony; sounds are emitted from the gaunt stem or hollow trunk—voices, the savage doubts not, of the indwelling spirit whose life seems permanently associated with the fixed tree."[5] Stones are also widely worshiped. To a savage a stone is no dead inanimate object as to us. It is so hard and sometimes so strange in color and shape that the savage is deeply fascinated and turns in real adoration to it and asks for some boon. Added to this is the fact that some of these stones fell from heaven and hence must surely be divine. Meteorites have been the objects of adoration in many countries. "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," was the shout of devoted worshipers of an ugly aerolite within the beautiful temple built to house it. Another such stone was that of Cybele, the Great Mother of the Gods, which was brought to Rome in B. C. 204, when the city was in danger of attack by Hannibal. These illustrations show the influence of stone worship in religions which had passed out of the stage we are now considering. In Nigeria "when men are sick in town, we cast lots, and then give food to

[5] Edward Clodd, Animism, p. 72.

the stones. We also give them palm-wine or gin."[6] But besides these, plants and mountains and fire and winds and waters are objects of adoration, and in each case there is some reason for the choice.

The greater objects of nature, the over-arching sky, the dazzling sun, the resplendent moon, the distant stars, all come in for their share of attention in the cult. But it must be said that the lesser objects of nature, more nearly connected with their daily wants and work, occupy the attention of these simple people far more than the grand, awe-inspiring heavenly bodies. At a later time, when religion had achieved a higher level, these greater objects came to their own. The last form assumed by paganism before it went down before Christianity in the fourth century was the worship of Sol Invictus, the "Invincible Sun."

If objects inanimate serve as divinities for the savage, how much more animals, full of life and movement and cunning. The majesty of the lion, the ferocity of the tiger, the wisdom of the elephant, the cunning of the fox, the mysteriousness of the snake led in each case to an attitude approaching worship. They inspired fear and needed propitiation. This form of worship was at times carried over into more highly developed religions, as we shall see strikingly illustrated in the religion of Egypt. Savages attribute to animals a wisdom and cunning far beyond their due. This lifts them up to a plane as high, if not higher, than man himself and makes worship seem quite natural. And even where actual worship is not paid to animals, they are held sacred and marks of respect and veneration are shown.

The worship of human beings is widely spread, though it is too much to say that it is universal. Living men, chiefs and kings, emperors and saints, have been deified and worshiped. A great man is possessed of power of the same kind as causes one to tremble in the presence of a

[6] Edward Clodd, op. cit., p. 79,

strong animal or a rushing torrent, and hence may be worshiped. But it is to the cult of the dead to which attention is now specially called. Historical personages, legendary or mythical ancestors among many peoples have been looked upon as legitimate objects of worship. Among savages, however, as well as among those more civilized, a man's own ancestors have been raised to a high place among his gods. A careful distinction must be made between reverence and worship. In many cases the attitude is not that of a worshiper at all, but when it does rise to that height it is veritable worship.

Death makes a difference. A man cannot be the same after he dies that he was when alive. Not hampered by his body, he is free to roam at large. He has powers which were not his before. He has not, however, become a spiritual being, in our sense of the word, even though he is invisible. He has the same desires and wants. Food and drink, clothing and weapons, and in the case of the great man, servants and attendants are as necessary as before. He has not passed beyond the pale of his former relationships and knows quite well what is going on. It is even thought that his condition in the other world is determined, at least in part, by the treatment he continues to receive from his family. Should he fail to receive what he believes to be his due, his anger is aroused and he may inflict sore chastisement on his relatives here below. It is chiefly those of the past two or three generations who are worshiped. Even in China, where ancestor worship has been carried along through all the stages of their development in civilization, after the second or third generation the ancestral tablets are removed to the clan hall. When memory becomes weak or fails, the ancestor fades out of the life of the living and his place is taken by those more recently lost.

What of the motives which actuate men when they worship their departed dead? Undoubtedly love and the desire to treat well and provide for their welfare have had influ-

ence in the long continuance of the custom, but the general testimony is that fear is as powerful if not far more so as a motive to-day. It is well to keep on good terms with the dead. No one can tell what might happen if the sacrifices were neglected. As spirits, resentful of the neglect and unfaithfulness of their descendants, they would undoubtedly bring ill-luck and catastrophe upon the living family. This form of worship is distinctively social and tends to keep the family together and gives its members common interests and a common sanction for their ethical standards. These must be lived up to, or the family may suffer. In this way ancestor worship has been of benefit to the race.

One of the most singular and interesting features of the religion of savages is fetishism. Our term comes from the Portuguese *feitiço* (Latin, *facere,* to make), a word applied by Portuguese sailors to the objects held sacred by West African natives, which were regarded by the Europeans as charms or talismans. What does it mean in modern religious nomenclature? It is very confusing, so much so that some have been tempted to give it up entirely. The philosopher Comte makes it mean what we have called by the general name of animism. Doctor Nassau and Miss Kingsley have given the name to all the religious practices of the West African Negroes. It is not in this sense that we use the word here, but in a much narrower sense. As Professor Menzies says, "It is best to limit it to the worship of such natural objects as are reverenced, not for their own power or excellence, but because they are supposed to be occupied each by a spirit."[7]

A fetish may be any natural object whatever, but there must be some reason why the native selects a particular object, something about it which appeals to him and shows that it possesses supernatural power. Something strikes him as being out of the ordinary, and that is enough; he will take it as his fetish. "So the fetish consists of a queer-

[7] History of Religion, p. 33.

shaped stone, a bright bead, a stick, parrots' feathers, a root, claw, seed, bone, or any curious or conspicuous object." Professor Tylor relates the story of how a man chose a stone about as big as a hen's egg for his fetish. "He was going out on important business, but crossing the threshold he trod on this stone and hurt himself. 'Ha, ha! thought he, 'art thou here?' So he took the stone, and it helped him through his undertaking for days."[8]

In West Africa a fetish is not so much found as made or concocted by the witch-doctor or medicine-man. We may quote from Doctor R. H. Nassau:

"The next step, the admixture of the ingredients, is secret. They are ground or triturated, or reduced to ashes, and only the ash or charcoal of their wood is used. Among the common ingredients are colored earths, chalk, or potter's blue clay. Beyond the usual constituents constantly employed there are other single ones, which vary according to the end to be obtained by the user of the fetish—for one end, as elsewhere already mentioned, some portion of an enemy's body; for another, an ancestor's powdered brain; for another, the liver or gall-bladder of an animal; for another, a finger of a dead first-born child; for another, a certain fish; and so on for a thousand possibilities. These ingredients are compounded in secret, and with public drumming, dancing, songs to the spirit, looking into limpid water or a mirror, and sometimes with the addition of jugglers' tricks, for example, the eating of fire.

"The ingredients having been thus properly prepared, and the spirit, according to the magician's declarations, having associated itself lovingly with these mixed articles, they and it are put into the cavity of the selected horn or other hollow thing (a gourd, a nut shell, and so forth). They are packed in firmly. A black resin is plastered over the opening. . . . While the resin is still soft, the red tail-

[8] Both quotations from Haddon, Magic and Fetishism, p. 73. (Constable, London, 1910.)

feathers of the gray African parrot are stuck into it. This description is typical.'"[9]

Now, the fetish is very much like a man. It possesses personality and will; it can feel and knows the meaning of anger and resentment as well as gratitude and kindness. It is also quite human in that while the particular spirit which belongs to the natural object can belong to no other, it can be and is sometimes separated from the object and seems to disappear. Then the natural object ceases to be of any value; that is, it ceases to be a fetish. Everything depends on the presence of the spirit to make the fetish object a source of benefit to its possessor.

The fetish is treated as an object of worship, has offerings made to it, and is addressed in prayer. But this is only a part of the procedure. If the ends sought are not gained in this way, the attitude changes and the fetish is coaxed and even commanded to bring about the desired result. If this does not succeed, the little thing is scolded for its disobedience and may be compelled to submit to a whipping. And, finally, if this vigorous treatment proves unsuccessful, the conclusion is reached that the spirit has departed, or at any rate that some more powerful spirit is interfering with the operation of the fetish. About all there is to do after such a discovery is made is to lay it aside or throw it away altogether. The savage does not lose faith in his theory or in the practice; he has only come to the conclusion that the particular fetish he had is of no use—he must proceed to find another.

A number of theories have been advanced concerning the origin of fetishism and its relation to the development of religion. That it is a very low form of religion no one can deny. This has led some to the conclusion that it is the earliest form of religion, the crude beginning of man's attempt to relate himself to powers recognized as stronger than himself. Others feel that it is a backward step from a

[9] Fetishism in West Africa, p. 111f. (Duckworth, London, 1904.)

form of religion which was developing in the right direction, but which received this serious setback. Professor Menzies speaks of a fetish as "a deity at his disposal," not above man, but below him, which if it will not do what man wants at his request, must be made to do so by coercion. So far as the origin of this strange form of "religion" is concerned, we shall probably never be able to find a satisfactory explanation. But we may do that which is of more significance, realize its meaning and evaluate it as one of the manifestations of man's need of help from higher powers. We can only come to such an understanding, however, by studying fetishism in its relationship to magic, which will appear in a later section of the chapter. Suffice it to say here that fetishism is a deadening influence in the life of the animist, and is one of the factors which tend to keep him down in the mire of dread and apprehension in which his life is so largely lived.

Before leaving the subject of the higher powers which are worshiped by animistic peoples we must take up a question of real interest, but at the same time of great difficulty. It is the theory that in addition to the many spirits and demons of his animism the savage possesses a conception of a supreme spirit over and above them all. The controversy which has raged is not so much over the presence of the conception, which is quite generally recognized, but has to do with the origin and significance of the belief among savage peoples. Andrew Lang brought the whole question to a focus in his volume The Making of Religion. His claim is that, while the savage peopled the universe with spirits in accordance with his general animistic outlook, by another channel, through a kind of intuition, he placed an All-Father in the supreme place far above the world of his spirits. It is easy to see that this conception lends itself readily to the theory of a primitive monotheism, that before man believed in higher powers in the form of the spirits of his animism he had in his mind a single being, the creator

of all, the one on whom he was dependent and to whom he offered worship. It is acknowledged at the same time that no tribe of savages is to be found with this pure belief to-day. In every case their world is filled with countless spirits and demons with whom they are intimately related in the affairs of everyday life. And what belief remains of this Creative Father is exceedingly hazy. It is far in the background of their thinking and not closely connected with what they plan and carry out in their ordinary employments. They do not even worship this far-distant being. They seem to feel that he is too far away to be interested in the things which concern them. He is there as a conception and that is about all. They are not monotheists in reality. The presence of the belief does not seem to raise their thoughts, nor to prevent them from a thousand practices which are utterly out of keeping with such a lofty conception.

But it is there. What shall be done with it? It runs counter to Tylor's theory that only as man advanced out of cruder conceptions could he conceive of a god in the monotheistic sense. One suggestion which has been made is that the idea is not original in the savage mind at all, but has been put there through contact with Christian missionaries. This may have been the case in some places, even where the people have no memory of any such obligation to the white man from across the seas. The memory of people who live by tradition is very short and confused. But it would be very reckless to claim that this was the only source of the belief. It is too widely extended and too deeply imbedded in the popular consciousness to be accounted for in that way. Andrew Lang's own explanation is not altogether satisfying, not so much because primitive man *could* not think monotheistically if the thought were suggested to him, but because it seems so utterly unlike anything else in his development and so useless in his life, as the relationship which he holds to the conception amply demonstrates.

We do not know how it arose. It may have been by the legendary embellishment of the traditions of a great tribal hero. The myth-making tendency is always at work and seeks to explain origins and striking phenomena by telling stories about natural objects, animals, and men, and making them creators and saviours of men and tribes. But whatever may be the correct explanation, we cannot go far wrong by tying up this phenomenon with others more easily understood which have their explanation in the working of the principle of analogy. This *is* his principle of accounting for things, and the only one of which we may feel sure. He has his intuitions, but intuitions are strongly emotional and are not likely to lead to what is distinctly an intellectual conception. What it does show is that man has the capacity for such high thinking and gives evidence of it even in his primitive state. He was made for monotheism and gives promise of attaining it, by even these vague thoughts which point in that direction.

Are the gods or higher powers of animistic religion good gods? What, in other words, is their character? We already have a clue; the powers partake of the character of the nature from which they are taken, and the simple fact is nature has no moral character. It is not moral nor immoral, but nonmoral; it is neutral ethically. There is another side to the question: nature may not be good or evil in a high moral sense, but she does not treat people in the same way on all occasions. Sometimes she is like a tender mother or a beautiful summer afternoon, when peace reigns everywhere and no sign of disturbance appears on the horizon. But nature has other moods and may become as fierce and ravenous as a wild beast, "red in tooth and claw." A West Indian hurricane, a tornado, an earthquake, a tidal wave, a volcanic eruption all represent another side, which is very different from the calm and quiet of an autumn sunset. Yet all come from the same source—what can the savage think of nature and the spirits who are so

kind and also so destructive? In his mind they may have a common origin, but he distinguishes between the spirits which are beneficent and kind and the demons which are constantly seeking to do him harm.

The strange thing, however, is that the mind of the savage is occupied far more with the demons whose influence he is seeking to escape than the good spirits which might be depended on to take his side and accomplish his desire. It is exceeding doubtful whether, before man had begun to till the soil and thus formulate the conception of the gods and goddesses of fertility and agriculture, his mind was not so occupied with the malignant spirits which were constantly on the watch to do him injury that little opportunity was offered for thought about the good spirits whom he might have discovered. But when the age of agriculture is reached unmistakable signs indicate that the soil which furnishes food for man and beast is looked upon as kindly. "Mother-Earth" is the term used to express this feeling of gratitude and dependence. She at least could be depended on. But even then the fear of the evil spirits which bring blight and drought and the grasshopper is not absent. He has confidence in certain spirits, but he lives a life of fear nevertheless, a life not to be envied as idyllic by those who live under more favorable conditions. So long as man remains in the tribal form of organization he seems unable to rise above the purely natural into the realm of ethical good. He has his standards of action, and the moral does enter in and determine to some extent his conduct, but, to use Professor Galloway's words, "There are no instances of the evolution of an ethical religion by a tribal group."[10]

Totemism and Tabu

Our main interest is religion, but closely connected with the religion of animistic peoples are customs and practices without which their life—and consequently their religion—

[10] Philosophy of Religion, p. 108.

would be very different. One of these is totemism. Now, a totem is an animal (or a plant or even, in a few cases, an inanimate object) very closely related to a group, which because of that relationship, holds it as something sacred. The word "totem" comes from the language of the Ojibway Indians (Chippewa) and signifies "a group." This relation of the group to its totem separates it from other groups, each with its own totem. It thus became a form of social organization determining many features of the life of the tribe. It is found developed most fully among the American Indians and the aboriginal tribes of Australia, but clear indications of its presence are to be discovered in many other regions. There are those who believe that totemism is a stage of development through which all peoples have passed, and that it is essential in order to explain many features of subsequent development. The difficulty in determining this fact is that what may seem to be a survival of totemism may turn out to be only a survival of ordinary animal worship.

Totemism is so complex and multiform that no attempt can be made to describe it here. Its connection with religion, however, may be pointed out. The totem animal, to which the totem group believes itself related, is frequently regarded as the ancestor of the group. There is no difficulty among savages to believe in so close a relationship between men and animals. They are so much alike that passage from one species to another is not strange nor unheard of in his tales repeated by the fireside. As the ancestor of a group of men and women the animal may even be worshiped. It must not be killed or maltreated. The only exception to this rule is that among some peoples the totem animal is killed on certain important occasions and eaten sacramentally by all who belong to that totem clan. They look upon it as a reestablishment of the bond between the group and its totem, thus insuring friendly relations during the time to come. But even where this custom does not

prevail and no worship is offered, the people are bound together closely and look upon what they do religiously as well as in other ways as a common act. A common obligation holds them together and leads them to feel a sense of mutual obligation and responsibility.

Closely connected with totemism are several other customs most important in the life of the savage. There is, in the first place, exogamy, or marriage outside the totem clan. This custom is very widely spread and is one of the most beneficial provisions in savage life. It effectually prevents intermarriage between close relatives—effectually, for the savage does not break over these unwritten but absolutely binding customs. The origin of exogamy is unknown. How did such a beneficial rule come into existence among people so far down in the social scale? Professor Wilhelm Wundt, in his Elements of Folk Psychology, disagrees violently with the theory that exogamy arose with the conscious intention of avoiding marriage within the bonds of near relationship, as beneficial as the custom proved to be. He holds that a scholar like Professor J. G. Frazer ascribes far too much intelligence and foresight to men in this backward condition. The complicated organization of social life to which exogamy belongs is the result of a long development and not the deliberate plan of the so-called "wise ancestors" of the present-day savage. It is hard to avoid Professor Wundt's conclusion that "the phenomena arose in the course of a long period of time, out of conditions immanent in the life and cult of these tribes."[11]

Among a great many savage peoples certain rites of initiation are practiced upon young men and women. When at the time of puberty they pass out of childhood into manhood and womanhood they are initiated into the secret lore of their people. Then is disclosed to them the meaning of customs and practices previously withheld, and they are admitted fully into the life of the tribe. The ceremonies

[11] P. 166. (Macmillan, New York, 1916.)

are long and complicated and subject the initiates to great pain and weird and disgusting ordeals. Accompanied by noise and dances which render the night hideous, the ritual is performed in strict adherence to the traditions handed down from generation to generation. These ceremonies are largely social, but some of the secrets divulged are of a religious nature, having to do with sacred objects and the cult connected with them.

Tabu (taboo) comes from the Polynesian *tapu,* which means "sacred" or "prohibited." Thus the term means, as a noun, a prohibition placed upon contact with or use of certain things set aside as peculiarly sacred. Its connection with totemism is that the totem is "tabu" to the members of that totem clan, but tabu has a far wider application than that. It is a widespread idea, and all over the world the practice is in full force, affecting the acts and plans of men in almost all their relationships. An illustration may be taken from the Todas, a backward people in South India, whose religion centers around a dairy-ritual. "Many, though not all, of their buffaloes are sacred, and their milk may not be drunk. The reason why it may not be drunk anthropologists may cast about to discover, but the Todas themselves do not know. All that they know, and are concerned to know, is that things would somehow all go wrong if anyone were foolish enough to commit such a sin. So in the Toda temple, which is a dairy, the Toda priest, who is the dairyman, sets about rendering the sacred products harmless. . . . Thus the ritual is essentially precautionary. A taboo is the hinge of the whole affair."[12]

The question may be asked relative to tabu, why the prohibition is placed upon an object, thus rendering it sacred and inviolable. Professor Frazer's explanation is that it is because contact with the object is supposed to bring to the one guilty or unfortunate enough to touch it some quality or characteristic it possesses, and this, while normal to the

[12] R. R. Marett, Anthropology, p. 217f. (Heath, New York.)

original possessor, would be a baneful influence to the one who secured it by his deliberate or inadvertent contact. But Professor Marett would go a step further and account for the fear of contact by *mana*. The object or the person which is tabu is believed to possess an especially large amount of that mysterious power which if released by contact will cause calamity, pain, ill luck, and even death. The main difficulty with the whole theory as held by savage people is that it is devoid of reasonable regulation. The practice runs wild and no discrimination is made between a prohibition which is wise and preventive of harm and a prohibition which can only hamper normal life and activity. At even a much later day it was exceedingly difficult for the Jewish people to see the difference between a ceremonial prohibition and one which involved moral and social issues. Jesus' relation to the Jewish Sabbath is a case in point. He broke through the merely ceremonial tabus which made the day a burden and, by declaring that the Sabbath was made for man, turned the attention to the underlying social and helpful purposes to which the day should be dedicated. Let us note, however, that the idea of the sacred and the holy, things which should not be profaned, existed in the earliest forms of religion. It is an idea which only needed elevation and reasonable direction to be fitted to function in the highest forms of religion. We shall never reach the point where recognition of what is holy, in human life and relationship with God, must not be counted upon to protect life from the irreverence which would ruin all possibility of development.

Animistic Worship

Up to the present time we have been dealing largely with belief, what the savage thinks about the world in which he lives, the spirits which are everywhere, and about himself and his fellows. He has his theories, and they effectively control his life and its relationships. But he acts as well as

thinks; he doubtless acts before he thinks; to him an act is more important than the thought he has about it. Students of the early forms of religion are indebted to Professor W. Robertson Smith for pointing out that ritual precedes belief, that the reaction of a savage to his environment is first of all emotional, an act, a dance, a ceremonial, and only latterly an intellectual thing, a belief or a conception. It is far more a matter of his feet and hands than of his head. So in discussing the worship of the animistic peoples we are entering into the very citadel of their religious life, into that which to them *is* religion itself.

The motive which actuates his worship—is it fear or trust? Does he have confidence in the spirits with which he deals or is he afraid of them that they may do him injury unless he does something to propitiate them or ward them off? We have already seen that the savage knows of beneficent spirits who bring him the good things he has, but this is a very little part of the story. His mind is occupied rather with the thousand evil-minded spirits, the imps and demons, who would crush him if they could, and are constantly seeking opportunity to do so. Many witnesses are forthcoming to tell of their experience among savage peoples, an experience of agony as they have witnessed the dread and terror which fill the savage mind. We choose but one of these testimonies, that of J. H. Weeks, who spent fifteen years among the Boloki of the Upper Congo. He tells us: "Their system of belief has its basis in their fear of those numerous invisible spirits—invisible to the ordinary man, but not to the medicine man—which are constantly trying to compass their sickness, misfortune, and death; and the Boloki's sole object—and the same may be written of his near and distant neighbors on the Congo—is to cajole or appease, to cheat or conquer, and even destroy the troublesome spirits, hence their witch-doctors with their fetishes, their rites and ceremonies. If there were no spirits to be circumvented, there would be no need of

medicine men as middlemen, and no need of fetishes as mediums for getting into touch with the spirits."[13]

It is no beautiful picture which confronts us when we penetrate into the inner life of the savage peoples of the world, and only distance makes possible a certain enchantment as the "simple, rustic life" of a primitive tribe is described by the traveler, who fails to penetrate the dark recesses "at the back of the black man's mind." One further quotation is needed to complete the picture and relieve the strain. After a description of the dread which is present in the minds of the Bantu peoples of Africa, we read again, "However, it would be no doubt a great mistake to imagine that the minds of the Bantu, or, indeed, of any savages, are perpetually occupied by a dread of evil spirits; the savage and, indeed, the civilized man is incapable, at least in his normal state, of such excessive preoccupation with a single idea, which, if prolonged, could hardly fail to end in insanity."[14] We undoubtedly have in this attitude of fear on the part of the savage the best explanation of his backward state. Nobility of character and the development of society never spring from the disorganizing motive of fear. To develop the possibilities in man and to organize his life in ever higher forms of social intercourse require a basis of trust and confidence—trust and confidence in one another, and even more fundamentally in the spirits and powers on whom they are dependent. And these things cannot be found and do not exist in savage life and religion.

Sacrifice must be taken up first in the presentation of worship; indeed, in early religion the two are almost synonymous. To come directly to the objects which are offered in sacrifice, the general statement may be made that they are the things which man himself needs or desires for his nourishment and comfort and pleasure. Here is analogy at work again; the spirits are sufficiently like men to need

[13] Among Congo Cannibals, p. 259.
[14] Folk-lore, xx, 1909, p. 51f.

what they need and like what they like. So food and drink, clothing and utensils constitute the body of sacrifice the world over. Analogy has even gone further and demanded the sacrifice of human beings—slaves, servants, children, wives—to satisfy the beings who surely must need these things as men do. A certain value must always attach to the object offered, or it is not efficacious. Life is the most precious thing in the world, and this recognition has led to the taking of life in sacrifice and offering it to the higher powers. This led very early and widely to the offering of human life, and the custom continued until the sensibilities of men turned against such inhumanity with horror and animals were substituted for human beings. But even to-day the practice prevails in places and is with difficulty rooted up by civilized governments which have made themselves responsible for the conduct of savage tribes. The story of the sacrifice of Isaac in the book of Genesis is the story of the transition from human sacrifice to the acceptance of an animal substitute. The letting of blood has been a feature of sacrifice from the earliest day, the idea being everywhere present that in some very real fashion "the life is the blood," and so to sacrifice by the effusion of blood is to be sure that the life itself has been offered to the power before whom one stands.

"The head of the animal or man may be cut off (and custom often requires that a single blow shall suffice), its spine broken or its heart torn out; it may be stoned, beaten to death or shot, torn in pieces, drowned or buried, burned to death or hung, thrown down a precipice, strangled or squeezed to death. The sacrifices may aim at causing a speedy death or a slow one. The corpse may be burned, in part or as a whole; portions may be assigned to the priest, the sacrificer, and the gods; the skull, bones, etc., may receive special treatment; the fat or blood may be set aside, and they or the ashes may be singled out as the share of the god, to be offered upon the altar; the skin of the victim may be em-

ployed as a covering for idol or material representative of the god, either permanently or till the next animal sacrifice. The blood of the victim may be drunk by the priest as a means of inducing inspiration, its entrails may be employed in divination, its flesh consumed in a common meal, exposed to the birds and beasts of prey, or buried in the earth,"[15] so varied are the usages in the practice of sacrifice in different parts of the world.

To placate an angry god is the idea lying back of sacrifice everywhere. It is not the only purpose, but it prevails as widely as sacrifice is found. He may be rendered propitious by gifts or bought off by the bounty which is spread before him. In the dire straits to which he is often reduced the savage is willing to do anything to secure immunity from disease or security from any one of a hundred dangers which surround him. But he has another purpose in many of his sacrifices. He is conscious, or the group is, that the god is displeased because of something wrong that has been done. A tabu has been broken or a custom has been infringed, and the god must be propitiated, he must be rendered friendly again. Then a sacrifice is offered by way of atoning for the wrong done. An animal may be killed or burned, the sins may be laid on a scape-goat and the animal sent out in the wilderness bearing away the guilt of the people. The guilt is acknowledged and the right of the god to punish is recognized. The god is willing to accept a substitute in an animal slain, and thus the idea of the vicariousness of suffering and punishment is established. These conceptions come to their fruition only in the higher religions where the sense of sin has become clear and poignant, but the ideas themselves root back into the earlier forms when men began to feel a sense of responsibility to higher powers.

The attempt to discover the earliest form of sacrifice, that out of which all the other forms have developed, has

[15] N. W. Thomas, article. "Sacrifice," Encyclopædia Britannica, 11th edition.

proved futile. Without doubt sacrifice does not hark back to any one single form. The attempt has been made to carry back every form to the eating of the totem animal by the totem clan, where it is claimed that the animal is thought of as being eaten in common by the god and his people, thus establishing a more enduring friendship between them. But this sacrifice may not be real communion at all; it may be a meal which is significant because by eating of a sacred animal some of the desired qualities may pass into the life of the eater. Sacrifices are made to ancestors to provide them with needed articles or the consolations of human companionship in the world to which they have gone. Human sacrifice may have originated in this way. Some of the bloody holocausts which have been offered in Africa within recent years have been immediately after the death of a great chief.

Closely connected with sacrifice is prayer. It may be that the earliest prayer was a call to the spirits to come and partake of the sacrifice which had been offered. It is always the expression of a desire, the making of a request that this or that may or may not take place. It is the instinctive utterance of the human heart when in distress or threatened by some danger. It is usually offered in time of need when supernatural help must be called in to save a situation otherwise hopeless. The prayer of savages never rises higher than purely material needs and desires. This being true, savage prayer never reaches up to the level where prayer is looked upon as communion with God, and where this is considered the very essence of the exercise. The chief danger in prayer is that it may revert to a spell or incantation, the value of which lies in the mere repetition of the words. Whether we understand their meaning or not it makes no difference, there is potency in the words and they will bring the desired end by being uttered. So far is this carried that "spell-narratives" about the gods are told, the belief being that even talking about a thing makes it hap-

pen. Should the worshiper know the name of his god, he has in his possession a wonderful lever to bring what he desires to pass. The name is looked upon as a part of the personality, and to be able to use the name to reenforce a request is to be far more sure of receiving the boon than would otherwise be true. Widely extended is the belief in the necessity of cleanness in approaching the spirits to be propitiated. The purifications at times are really cleansing so far as the body is concerned. The hands, the feet, the mouth, and frequently the whole body must be pure to come acceptably into the presence of the higher powers. But as in so much in savage life reason does not give direction where it is seriously needed. Uncleanness is connected closely with the idea of tabu and is incurred by contact with ceremonially dangerous and sacred things, like corpses, newly born infants, blood, and a hundred other things. To us the "purification" seems in many cases as defiling as the uncleanness itself. The chemical purity of the cleansing agent has nothing to do with it. The most disgusting things are considered highly purifying and are believed in implicitly, even in religions advanced far beyond that of the people we are studying. Only at a comparatively late stage did the idea of moral defilement arise and seem more terrible than ceremonial uncleanness. Then the outward act of purification became a symbol of the inner cleansing from the defilement of sin.

Early in the history of religion a class of men arose known as priests, medicine-men, witch-doctors, shamans, exorcists, and mediums. They are the members of the community through whom communication is had with the supernatural. The essential characteristic of the priest is that he mediate between men and the powers on whom they are dependent. In ancestor worship alone, where the father and the clan heads are the leaders in the worship, is the priest not found in early religion. Not anyone could be a priest. He must demonstrate his ability to hold intercourse

with the gods. This he does by conduct which is quite explicable to us as intoxication or ecstasy or epileptic seizures, but which to the savage clearly indicates that his personality is in the possession of some spirit other than his own. The ejaculations and groans and incoherent utterances, which to us are of no significance, to the savage are full of meaning, only needing the interpretation of the priest himself to be seen in their true light as a divine message. The office frequently becomes hereditary in certain families and when that point is reached the priesthood is a permanent institution and tends to secure an ever stronger hold upon the people. These experts in ritual become more indispensable as the ritual is elaborated and access to the gods is thought to be possible only through these channels of communication.

Magic and Religion

Magic is one thing to us and another to the savage. We look back upon it after it has shown itself to be what it really is, after the distinction between magic and religion may be clearly seen. Religion for us expresses itself in worship of higher powers. The attitude is one of dependence, coming into the presence of God in humility to thank him for his goodness and to make request for certain good things after which we crave. Magic, on the other hand, means to us a very different attitude. Instead of seeking our desires by humble entreaty the attitude in magic is that of self-sufficiency, as though there were another method of securing our ends without recourse to petition. We possess the good luck talisman, we know what will charm away the sickness, we can by doing this or that, by "knowing the trick," bring good fortune and accomplish our wish. A hundred examples could soon be collected from the practice of men and women in our own communities by which they believe certain things can be brought about or prevented by magic. The attitude is entirely different from

that of true religion. In one case we trust God; in the other we trust some contrivance or spell or charm. In one case we secure our aims by making a request; in the other we secure them by coercion. In one case we seek; in the other we demand. Not that the two attitudes are always kept apart. Even among Christians there is the constant danger that prayer, to use one illustration, may be looked upon as meritorious in itself and as efficacious in its very performance, as though we might secure the desired object because we went through the act of praying.

But to the savage in the darkness of his mind such a distinction as we have just made is utterly out of the question. He is in trouble and confusion before the dangers and uncertainties of life. At his wits' end, he is willing to do anything to get relief and secure what he so much desires. Animism is the background of all his thinking about the universe. Some kind of *mana,* or spiritual influence, is everywhere, and whatever he does or gets must be done through spiritual agency. In the use of these spiritual agencies he is led into one or the other or both of two methods. He is in fear of the spirits who can do him injury; he must placate them by offerings and make request of them by prayer; and we call this religion. But this is not all he can do. He has discovered that by doing certain things results follow which are what he wants. He can hit two stones together and produce a spark. He believes that spiritual influences can be evoked by what he may *do,* and around this belief and the coincidences which he has noted he has built up what might almost be called a science of cause and effect. Only the absence of any notion of natural law prevents us from giving these words their full meaning as we use them now. All that is effected is to him the result of spiritual forces. This being the case, we cannot expect him to see the difference between what he does when he sacrifices and prays and what he does when he shouts some "Open Sesame" and expects the rock to roll away

for him. He does not think much about it at all; he finds that it works; he knows that the all-pervasive *mana* is accountable for it, and that is enough for him.

This discovery that by doing one thing another thing happens leads him into an elaborate system of acts which are based on several simple and to him most obvious conclusions. He believes implicitly that things which were once connected and had some relationship with each other continue to have the same relationship even though they may be separated by a long distance. A coat which was once owned by some man still has some connection with him even though he has discarded it or given it away to another. If, then, you desire to do something to the original owner you may find the coat a convenient medium. By tearing or burning it a most uncomfortable experience may be caused the man to whom it belonged. Especially is this true of the hair and nails which are so much closer to him than his coat. Great care is exercised in many places among savages to bury all these cuttings and parings so that an enemy may not do injury by taking advantage of the possession of a part of you which still is considered as intimately connected with your body and its welfare. This has been called contagious magic, and finds a thousand applications in the world of the animist.

Then, again, the savage seems unable to get away from the feeling that like produces like. If this be true, a result can be attained by imitating it. A rain-maker in one of the islands in Torres Straits painted the front of his body white and the back black. The explanation was that "all along same as clouds—black behind, white he go first."[10] This has been called mimetic or homœopathic magic. Then, too, names and certain words have magical power, and the same is true of talismans and amulets, which can bring to pass what may be desired or ward off impending danger.

Professor Frazer claims that magic and religion are like

[10] Quoted by A. C. Haddon, Magic and Fetishism, p. 17.

oil and water and will not mix. He holds that man started with magic and, because this method did not bring him the fulfillment of his desires, he was compelled to leave it and try religion. One very heavy count against this theory is that we find the two methods intermingling in the life of savages in all places and at all times. Both seem to have existed from the beginning and to have developed side by side. The only distinction made by the savage himself is that between his use of the spiritual or demonic influences for his own private advantage, which may involve injury or loss to his neighbor, and that use of these influences which is for the public good. It is a very real distinction to him, and he condemns and punishes the dealer in the nefarious traffic with little mercy. On the basis of this distinction, which is the only one the savage is capable of making, there are those who would say that fundamentally religion and magic are the same, the only difference being that religion is social and magic unsocial or anti-social. It is not a matter of method or attitude toward the spiritual world, but only of purpose. Undoubtedly this difference is real and must be taken into consideration when dealing with magic and religion among savages, but, when the same act may be social under certain conditions and anti-social under others,[17] it is quite clear that some other clue is necessary to an understanding of the essential difference between them. This clue we take from the distinction we make when from our superior vantage-point we are able to see what the savage cannot see, that there is a difference in attitude between magic and religion which separates the two fundamentally.

When, in the form of fetishism already mentioned, the savage gives himself to coaxing and compelling his fetish to do his bidding, the debasing character of his practice is evident. Only because he may be able to look on some other of his spirits, not as "gods at his disposal," but as powers

[17] See discussion by Hartland in Ritual and Belief.

to be feared and supplicated, is there any possibility of advance into higher forms of religious faith. Unknown to him the struggle between magic and religion has begun, and only by the gradual ascendency of the true spirit of religion has man attained the higher reaches of religious experience. And to-day we find ourselves in the same conflict, the difference being that, knowing its danger, we may set ourselves consciously and deliberately to trample magic underfoot and raise religion to its exclusive place in our lives as we come into the presence of God.

Suggestions for Further Study

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CHAPTER III

EGYPT AND MESOPOTAMIA

The Nile Valley and Its Inhabitants

All the national religions have their roots in the animistic cults we have studied in the previous chapter. While many tribes scattered over the world have remained in the tribal form of organization and the corresponding animistic forms of religious life, other peoples have left these crude beginnings behind and have become nations and started out on the long journey toward an advanced culture and civilization. The earliest centers of such development of which we have any knowledge are Egypt, Mesopotamia, and China. In each case the development started on the banks of a river—the Nile, the Euphrates, and the Yellow River—and in each case the earliest beginnings are hidden from our view, so far back do they lie before history and chronology had begun to be put down in permanent records. Of these three ancient peoples only China has been able to maintain itself distinct and separate from other nations through the millenniums. The early civilization and religion of the Nile and the Euphrates have long since disappeared, and only the spade of the archæologist is able to recover precious bits of information which would otherwise be entirely unknown. The ancient religion of China continues to exist, changed to be sure, but of immense influence in the China of to-day; but the faiths, long since dead, of Egypt and Mesopotamia—why should we spend time in attempting to understand them in this fast-moving modern world? One might make out a case for the study of these religions, as well as those of Greece and Rome, on the ground of sheer interest in what men have believed and

practiced in an age different from our own. But while these faiths have forever passed away as formal religions the factors which made them live and which gave satisfaction to the people who worshiped the old divinities cannot be quenched. In so far as they possessed the principle of life they did not die. Other manifestations of the same life-principle begin to appear as religions change, but they are the same old elements seeking higher forms. As religions they may die, but all the true religion they contained keeps on living. We are more interested in religion than in religions, so these ancient faiths may still teach us the most important lessons concerning what religion is or ought to be among men.

"Egypt is a gift of the Nile," quoted by Herodotus from an earlier Greek writer, is the truest thing that could be said of this narrow ribbon of a country, which is little more than the banks of this wonderful river. There is first the river itself, which flows from the strange, unknown lands of the far south and, after twisting itself northward through a thousand miles and more, spreads out into the famous delta and empties into the Mediterranean through a number of mouths. The land is low for some distance on either side of the stream, and this is the real Egypt. Extending beyond this fertile strip is higher ground, which in turn reaches out to the high walls of the valley, beyond which stretches away on both sides the blazing, howling desert.

With almost no rain the country must depend on the Nile for its productivity. Every year the river rises above its banks and overflows the low-lying strip on each side. This is the secret of the fertility of Egypt. Not only is the ground thoroughly soaked but a thin layer of alluvium is brought down and deposited over the fields, thus replenishing the constantly worked soil. But there are many sections which are not reached by the inundation, and they must be irrigated by artificial means. This means canals and embankments and sluice gates and the whole parapher-

nalia of irrigation. The importance of these facts for our immediate consideration is that this economic need made necessary common labor organized to make the best use of the water supply, and with this development a similar growth of political organization. This necessity for organized toil marks the beginning of culture and civilization. He was a savage like those who surrounded him when he began, but in a short time the Egyptian begins to take a place in advance, and after a time he is living in a different world; he has developed a national life and is no longer a savage with savage tastes and outlook.

It must also be noted that the development took place during long centuries separated from contact with other peoples and cultures. This, of course, is a relative statement, for there was contact with the Semites to the east at several periods during her long history, but compared with other peoples Egypt was isolated and alone during most of the long period of her independent life. This enables us to study the religion of this country as the unique product of her genius, untouched by influences which might have turned it into very different channels.

The people of ancient Egypt were in all probability a mixture of African tribes, called by many Hamitic, and Semites, who at a very early age, long before the opening of its recorded history, came over from Arabia, fused with the natives, and formed the Egyptian type as we know it even in our own time. The Egyptian countryman, the *fellahin,* who greets you as you set foot in Egypt to-day, is the same man who gazes out at you from the oldest monuments his land contains. The Semites came in as conquerors, who in turn were compelled to adopt the higher civilization of the natives, who had already made some advance in subduing the land and harnessing the Nile to the uses of agriculture. All we can be relatively sure of is that this people, now amalgamated into one, far back between B. C. 5000 and 4000 had settled down on both banks of the river,

organized in little principalities, which later were given the Greek name of "nomes." There were more than forty of these little states, about equally divided between the Delta region, or Lower Egypt, and the long, narrow valley reaching into the south, called Upper Egypt. Each of these had its chief town or city in which dwelt the ruler and in which also the chief god of the nome had his seat. Through all the changes and vicissitudes of Egyptian history these nomes persisted and exerted an influence on the civilization and religion of the land.

The Egyptian has always been intensely religious. This is one of the surest indications we meet in a study of the earliest monuments erected by this gifted people. It was of a unique type, as we shall see, but it was genuine and deep. He was conservative beyond most people who have ever lived. Somehow he never felt he could lay aside anything he had ever picked up or discovered. He kept trailing along after him all the lumber which should have been discarded, as though he might suffer if he let go a single thing he had ever practiced or believed. Thus at the end we may study not only what the Egyptian thought then but all he had ever believed in the millenniums of his history—in fact, it all continued to be his belief still. Professor George Foot Moore sums it all up in a pregnant sentence: "The Egyptians of later ages could learn but not forget—the most fatal of all disqualifications for progress."[1]

This people were singularly lacking in philosophic power. They seemed incapable of abstract thinking—it must all be in the realm of the concrete, of visible symbols. The priests of Heliopolis and Thebes did work out a theology, but it was not in conformity with any well-knit philosophy. The Egyptian seemed always to be able to hold the most contradictory views at the same time with no sense of incongruity. What would have been abhorrent to the Greek seemed perfectly natural to the Egyptian. He wanted to see things

[1] History of Religions, vol. i, p. 148. (Scribners, New York, 1920.)

clearly; he was not willing to leave much to the imagination. His art consisted of clear line-drawings and had not much depth or mystic hazy background. His writing was in the language of symbols and with difficulty could be made to express the abstract conceptions which even he must of necessity employ. He was exceedingly practical and bent everything to his insatiable desire to bring whatever he dealt with within the compass of his alert but somewhat circumscribed mental outlook. His religion was, as a consequence, practical and lacking in philosophical and mystical depth.

According to Manetho, "an Egyptian priest who wrote an historical work in Greek,"[2] the first king of united Egypt was Menes, who reigned some time before B. C. 3000. But even before the time of this first king we have reason to believe that Egypt was divided into two kingdoms, those of Upper and Lower Egypt, and that eventually Lower, or northern Egypt, was conquered by the south. Then came Menes from the north and united all Egypt under one sway. The dynasty thus introduced was the first of thirty-one dynasties, extending from the time of Menes to the loss of independence when Egypt was conquered by Alexander the Great in B. C. 332. During this long period Egypt passed through all the experiences from the most exalted culture and prosperity, when foreign conquest added distant lands to her sway, to the humiliation of internal decay and outward defeat, when her borders were overrun by alien armies and her government was in the hands of princes appointed from far-away Mesopotamia. We cannot enter further into the fascinating details of this history, as important as it would be to understand the meaning of much in the religion which must otherwise remain obscure. All we may do is to call attention to the fact that the political history and the history of the religion experienced their periods of development and decay simultaneously, one reacting on the

[2] Steindorff, Religion of the Ancient Egyptians, p. 5. (Putnam, New York, 1905.)

other, religion and state being but different phases of a common culture from the beginning to the end of the story of this people.

The Egyptian Pantheon

The nomes or little principalities of Egypt, each with its central town and its prince, had each a chief god of its own. These gods may all in the beginning have been without names. The monuments refer to several local divinities merely by the names of the nomes to which they belonged, "he of Edfu" and "the lady of Elkab" being designations of the supreme divine beings of those cities. But names must very soon have been attached. They were originally different, but very early the same name is to be found in several places. This arose, it may be, by one name being carried by war to another nome, for, while the Egyptians were more peace-loving than their contemporaries in Mesopotamia, these little principalities were frequently in conflict with each other. Or, perhaps, the god of one nome was seen even beyond his own borders to be specially powerful and willing to bring good to his people, and so his name was taken as that which might bring good to another district if it should be attached to the previously unnamed god there. Another early tendency is also to be noted; the gods of some of the nomes who originally had doubtless been merely the protecting divinity of his own people, began to take on a deeper and wider significance. Amon, the god of Thebes, came to be regarded in a more general way as the god of fertility and generation. This would lead also to an expansion of the sphere of influence of this god, and so it was with others.

The various heavenly bodies, the River Nile, their kings, trees, and even piles of stones were looked upon as divine and received worship. But the gods of the Egyptians were to a larger extent animals than anything else. This is one of the peculiarities of the religion, and struck the people

of Greece and Rome as being as strange as it does us. The pagan Celsus is quoted by Origen as saying, "If a stranger reaches Egypt, he is struck by the splendid temples and sacred groves that he sees, great and magnificent courts, marvelous temples with pleasant walks about them, imposing and occult ceremonies; but when he had entered into the innermost sanctuary he finds the god worshiped in these buildings to be a cat, or an ape, or a crocodile, or a he goat, or a dog."[3] When the Romans were masters of the country one of the legionaries "who had accidentally killed a cat was torn to pieces by the mob. . . . For the majority of the people the cat was an incarnate god."[4] Thout, the god of Hermopolis, was either a baboon or an ibis; the god of the district of the first cataract, whose name was Khnum, was a he-goat, and Apis, the god of Memphis, was a bull. There was no bird or animal or creeping thing or beetle or fish or frog which did not take its place in the pantheon of the Egyptians. Animal worship is to be found in many other places, but nowhere did it assume such proportions and dominate the thinking of the people as in Egypt.

The problem of the origin of this animal worship is as yet unsolved. The temptation is strong to claim that it is based on an early totemistic organization, the animals later worshiped being the totems of various clans in the far-off prehistoric age. The chief difficulty with this theory is that not one shred of evidence is forthcoming that the Egyptians believed that animals were the ancestors of men or even that any intimate relationship existed between them. Such a belief may have been held at one time, but it had been so completely lost that no vestige of it remained even in the most ancient times of which we have any information. It is doubtless better for us to disclaim any certain knowledge. What we do know is that there was something

[3] See Wiedemann, Religion of the Ancient Egyptians, p. 181.
[4] Sayce, The Religion of Ancient Egypt, p. 101. (Clark, Edinburgh, 1913.)

about animals and their actions which made a strong appeal to the superstitious fears of the people and led them to treat them as divine.

Very early the gods, many of them, began to be humanized. The worship of an animal as an animal ceased to satisfy as culture increased; a god must be more like a man to be worthy of worship. The first step taken was to represent the gods with human bodies but with animal heads. Khnum is represented as a man with a ram's head, Hekt as a woman with the head of a frog, Sekhet, the wife of Ptah, is the lioness-headed woman, over whose head is represented the solar disk, crowned with the poisonous uræus serpent. Finally the gods became complete human beings, head and all, but the man or woman god was given some symbol to indicate a connection with the animal which it originally was. Hathor, for example, is a full-fledged woman with a cow's horns on her head. Amon Re is a man holding in one hand a scepter and in the other the keylike symbol of life and having his head crowned in several ways in different places, either with the sun's disk and two long feathers or with a pair of ram's horns. But even in the later day the conservatism of the Egyptian is seen in his inability to drop the animal conception. It is after Christianity had begun to do its work in Egypt that the condition described by Celsus obtained in all parts of the country. He simply could not get away from his old crude conceptions despite his advance in culture and refinement.

At Heliopolis in the days of the Middle Kingdom (from about B. C. 2000 to 1790) the priestly thinkers constructed a theology in which their god, the sun god Re, was placed in a position of supremacy above all the gods of the land. So powerful was the influence of this priesthood and so highly favored by the rulers that their theology spread far and wide until for the first time all Egypt, officially at least, came to recognize Re as the first god of the whole country. It was a movement toward monotheism, but it did not reach

it; it was not sufficiently exclusive to bar out the presence and influence of other gods who were looked upon as helpers of the one supreme god Re. One of the results of the exaltation of Re was that many other gods were assimilated to him, that is, they were mingled or identified with him in name and in attribute, and thus a new conception of a god came into existence. The other priesthoods did not want their gods to be lost, so they joined their names with that of Re and declared that Re was their god, too, only it was the Re who had been united with the original god of their temple. So we find such hyphenates as Re-Horus, Re-Amon, and many others. Only a few of the old gods, like Osiris, Ptah, and Thoth, were able to preserve their distinct identity, so strong was the influence exerted by the priests of Heliopolis and their theology.

Here is the work of priests seeking to register in theology what practically had come to be the position of their god in the unified empire. But the priests in various cities went further than this. They began to construct triads of gods, grouping them as father, mother, and son. At Thebes we find Amon the father, Mut the mother, and Montu the son; at Memphis it was Ptah, Sekhet, and Imhotep; and again at Abydos Osiris, Isis, and Horus. In the stories told of these trios the son inherits his father's authority and becomes his mother's husband. The mother does not die, not being connected with the sun as her husband and son are. Like the sun, which after the day's work sinks to rest beyond the western horizon, all the divine beings connected with him have the same kind of mortality and must look forward to an eclipse or death at the end of their journey.

But more artificial combinations were worked out by the priests in various temples. They were not satisfied with triads but went further and constructed enneads, or groups of nine gods. The idea of a group of three was still present, but now it was a multiple of three and not the original simple triad. At Heliopolis and in a few other places two

enneads were gathered together, a greater and a lesser. These combinations were the work of men who were not content to see their pantheon in confusion with no order or classification of the deities. They wanted to explain the origin and relationship of the gods, and did so by placing their great god at the apex of their ennead and the others as derived from him in a descending series of ranks. It is a clumsy and artificial construction on the part of priests, who were not able to drop any gods from their list, and who tried thus to bring some kind of unity out of the disorder. Another development grew out of the subordination of many gods to the sun god Re. It was a kind of solar pantheism. The sun, and only the sun, exists and makes up the universe. All else is appearance, the manifestation of the supreme and all-embracing sun. This, too, was a priestly formulation. It represents rather a tendency than a finished and widely accepted belief. The people went on in their own way worshiping their local gods, animals and trees, and other spirits, little influenced by the colleges of priests in the great centers of official religion.

In the New Kingdom the capital was Thebes, and Amon was looked upon as the national god of Egypt. But the influence of Re had for long been so pronounced that it was with the double title Amon-Re that his supremacy was acknowledged. Only one or two gods, like Ptah of Memphis and Re of Heliopolis, could retain a measure of their old prestige. Then came Amenophis IV, king of Egypt from B. C. 1375 to 1358. Educated with the priests of Heliopolis, this young prince was deeply religious. He came to feel that the sun-god possessed the right to universal worship, and he sought to convert his conviction into practice. He attempted to discredit all the other gods and put the sun-god in their place. It was a movement toward monotheism. It was the sun, Aton, the solar disk, closely related to Re, which was to be the object of devotion. Aton "had not, like Re, been fused with terrestrial gods of various beastly

shapes nor represented in human form, and by its freedom from such associations his name was a fit symbol for god in a purer solar monotheism."[5] Aton was made the one national deity; all were required to serve this one god alone. The statues of the other gods were to be destroyed and their names forgotten. Amon of Thebes was the special object of the rigor of his reforming zeal. The king changed his name from Amenophis or Amen-hotep ("Amon is content") to Ikhnaton ("Spirit of Aton") and moved his capital away from Thebes. But, as usual in Egypt, the king, with sublime inconsistency, allowed himself to be raised to the place of a god and received divine worship. Throughout his reign the reform lasted, but immediately upon his death the reaction came. It was tremendous and far-reaching. Thebes and its great god Amon won the day completely. Amon was raised to the supreme place in the pantheon and was praised almost in the same terms used of Aton. Yet the monotheistic feature of the reform was utterly repudiated, and other gods were allowed their place in the worship of the temples.

In the thousand and more years which followed this attempted reform on the part of Amenophis IV Egyptian religion failed to show any signs of originality or significant development. The temples became more wealthy and powerful, but the life had departed. It was a state cult and the common people found little there for them. The old local gods were about all they had to give comfort to the heart and confidence in facing the trials of life. The worship of animals seemed to eat deeper into the religious life. Not only the one animal in the temple was worshiped but the whole species was reverenced and held in high honor. It would seem that the people were reverting to prehistoric conditions and losing a part of what they had gained during the long course of their history. The influence of Greece was strongly felt under the reign of the successors of Alexander the Great, the Ptolemys, who ruled from B. C.

[5] G. F. Moore, History of Religions, vol. i, p. 182.

332 to 31. A Greek god, Serapis, was brought in during this period. His worship spread rapidly, and, identified with the old Egyptian god Osiris, he became the national god. But even he could not revive a dying paganism. Accompanied by his wife, the old Egyptian goddess Isis, this new Græco-Egyptian deity took his journey to make new conquests out across the Mediterranean, and we shall meet him again in Rome in the day when that city was reaching out after a more satisfying religion.

The Individual Here and Hereafter

Two unique features distinguish Egyptian religion from all others—the extent to which the worship of animals was carried and the view of individual immortality which was so dominant in all the thinking of the people. The belief was well-nigh universal. Only a few cynical pessimists could see little hope of a sure hereafter, and ordered their lives according to the familiar philosophy, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for to-morrow we die." The form taken by the belief was determined partly by conditions in the land where they lived. "The dry and microbe-free climate,"[6] where nothing decays but merely dries up, seemed to suggest the possibility of a kind of physical immortality in which the body might be rendered everlasting and partake of the immortality of the more immaterial parts. Egyptian architecture is above everything else massive, built to stand the ravages of time. The gigantic pyramid tombs of the kings, the ponderous sarcophagi found in all the cemeteries, as well as the temples themselves, suggest permanence. Built out of the hard rock to be found in inexhaustible quantities so near at hand, the ancient monuments have come down to us but slightly damaged through four of five thousand years. But above all else the practice of mummification is evidence of the keen interest of the Egyptian in a continued existence.

[6] Article, "Death (Egyptian)," in Hastings' Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics. (Scribners, New York.)

The idea was that the body must be preserved as necessary to immortality. Theories of the life beyond came to be held which might be considered inconsistent with the necessity of the preservation of the body, but inconsistencies were of little consequence to an Egyptian, and he kept right on making mummies of the bodies of his dead in sublime indifference to any untoward theories which might stand in his way.

When a man died, professional embalmers would remove the entrails and place them in jars, which were buried. This would prevent the jackals from devouring them and clear the body of the parts which would prevent successful preservation. "The body itself was laid in salt water and treated with bitumen; it was then rolled in bandages and cloths, while the abdominal cavity was also plugged up with linen rolls and cushions."[7] Herodotus tells of three methods of treating the body, differing according to cost. The most expensive method included the drawing out of the brain by an iron hook inserted through the nose, great care in disposing of the viscera, and an elaborate and extended treatment of the body before the final wrapping was undertaken. The cheaper processes were much simpler. In all cases the mummy was laid in a coffin of wood or stone. The chests were frequently decorated "with a number of doors intended to afford exit and entrance to the dead man. At the head-end, where the face lay, it was not uncommon to insert a pair of eyes; by the aid of these the deceased was expected to look forth from the coffin and behold the rising sun. The inner surfaces were at a later time inscribed with texts relating to the life after death—chapters from the *Pyramid-Texts* and from the *Book of the Dead;* in addition there were pictorial representations of all possible things which the dead man could need in the hereafter."[8] And then it was laid away for safe keeping, for poor people very simply, for the wealthy in elaborate tombs, and for kings in such

[7] Steindorff, The Religion of the Ancient Egyptians," p. 149.
[8] Steindorff, op. cit., p. 150f.

buildings as the pyramids, which are one of the wonders of the world. The dead needed the care of their living relatives, so offerings were offered at the tomb. In order to secure rest and service in the next world those who had been accustomed to servants were provided with *Ushebtis*, "answerers," which were little porcelain doll-like images, supposed to represent servants, which were buried with the body. This may be a survival coming down from the time when slaves were actually killed to accompany their lord to the next world.

The Egyptians had worked out an elaborate psychology. To us it seems fantastic, naïve, and very confusing, as it attempts to name and give a distinct character to various phases of the personal life. Besides his body man had an immortal soul which was composite. There was the *Ka*, which is described as a man's double or guardian spirit with which he was furnished at birth and which was liberated from the body at death. "The Ka, which had been the companion of the body in life, at death attained to independent existence. It was to the Ka that funerary prayers and offerings were made; to the mummy alone they were useless."[9] The *Ka* and the mummy could be reunited, it was believed, and the mummy reanimated and a new life lived, but in all cases food and drink must be offered at the tomb. Besides the *Ka* there was the *Ba*, which may best be described as the soul of the departed man. It is often pictured as a bird, with human head and hands, which at death would fly to the gods. But this, too, must be fed and provided with the necessities of life, as though the next life were not essentially different from this.

The abode of the dead was variously pictured by the Egyptians. They were not careful to work out a consistent picture, but, true to themselves, were quite willing to accumulate all the ideas which arose and take their pick and make combinations as they might choose. There was the early

[9] Wiedemann, Religion of the Ancient Egyptians, p. 241.

belief that the dead continue to live in the tomb a life not very different from the life they had lived before. They must eat and drink, and this is furnished by the relatives. What was not provided in this way was to be secured by magical incantations and prayers, these being painted on the coffin or mummy chest as an aid to the memory of the dead. He may at times leave the tomb and wander around, but in doing so it is necessary to be on his guard against ghostly enemies. He may interfere in the affairs of his living relatives, who dread his approach and influence. He is not as happy as they and is looked upon as restless and anxious, able by the aid of magic to assume different shapes and thus be a source of terror. Then, again, there is a belief that men—at first it was only kings, but later extended to all—might live a life of bliss among the gods in heaven, accompanying them on their journeys and enjoying their fellowship. To accomplish this a ladder was believed to exist in the west, and up this ladder the dead might climb if peradventure they knew the necessary magical formulæ. But even this abode was not entirely unlike the world in which they had previously lived.

Still another conception places the dead in the lower world. Beneath the earth there is another called Twet, through which runs a river like the Nile. Here in long passages and in deep caverns the dead dwell. By night they have the light of the sun, for through the twelve sections into which this subterranean river-course is divided the sun makes his progress, ready to appear at sunrise the next morning in the eastern sky of the real Egypt overhead. The gates separating the twelve sections are guarded by serpents and demons, and the sun-god in his magnificent barge must know their names to secure passage. It was believed at a later time that others might share with the king this nightly voyage of the sun, that is, if they were acquainted with the appropriate incantations and magical formulæ.

We come lastly to the most important of these conceptions,

that connected with Osiris. And here it becomes necessary to refer to the myth, told in many forms, about Osiris and his relation with the dead. Osiris was one of the ancient divinities of Egypt. He was murdered by Set, who dismembered his body and scattered it over the Delta. The mourning wife, Isis, wanders over the land seeking the body of her husband, while Horus, their son, vows vengeance. In the end Osiris is restored to life and becomes the "King of the Western Folk," presiding over the realm of the dead. They did not know exactly where this realm was, but it became the most exalted of their conceptions of the hereafter. This god had died and was alive again; here lay the significance of the myth and the belief connected with it. Like him men, who knew that death was sure and could not be evaded, might hope to rise again to a new life. The belief expanded and deepened until the idea of the life beyond was that men might become like Osiris; even more than this, that they might become Osiris himself, losing in a real sense their own personal identity. Dead men were considered as identified with him until they were "Osiris so-and-so." This has been given as a reason why the Egyptians never became ancestor-worshipers. The dead relative ceased to be bound to them now that he had become Osiris. No motive remained to offer worship to him as a separate being, and this despite the conditions in Egyptian family life which would otherwise almost surely have led to that reverence and worship which grew up among so many peoples.

As Osiris in the myth had been declared "just" by the judges before whom he was tried, so every man before entering his realm must come before a similar court. The judge is Osiris himself, and at his side are forty-two terrible creatures before whom confession must be made. The confession is for the most part a statement of the sins one has *not* committed, though some positive good things are mentioned. "I have not done what the gods abominate." "I have not allowed anyone to be hungry." "I have done no

murder." "I oppressed no man in possession of his property." So run the items of this confession. But this personal confession is not sufficient; his heart must be "weighed on a great balance against the symbol of justice." The heart of the man found wanting is devoured by a hippopotamus who stands close by and ready. This is about all we know of the fate of the wicked. The good are conducted into the presence of the king and become residents of the realm. Thus, particularly in the later day, the moral sanction becomes an important feature in the thought of the hereafter, though it must be said that the unfortunate prevalence of magic in all that was connected with death and the condition of the dead was so powerful that the conception of the future was only partially moralized. And all the while the mass of the people were continuing their local worships, but slightly touched by the higher religion of the priests and thinkers. When Christianity came the old religion died, unable to hold its own against a faith so much fuller and richer than anything it had to hold out to the people.

The Gods of Babylonia and Assyria

Three thousand years before Christ a civilization had been developed in the lower Euphrates Valley. Like that of Egypt it was a river civilization. In each case the control of the water supply had made necessary concerted action and political organization. Economic necessity was again responsible for the formation of a number of small city states, each with its prince or king and its chief god. In these respects the civilization in Babylonia was like that of Egypt, but there was a wide divergence whose cause is at once evident by a glance at the map. Egypt was isolated and developed her culture far distant from foreign influence. Babylonia, on the other hand, was open on all sides to the incursion of ideas as well as of armies. They might come from the mountains of Elam on the east, the desert on the south and west, and down the long Mesopotamian valley which reached.

off toward the northwest. In fact, her history was given direction many times by forces which found their way to Babylonia from each of these sources.

The civilization in this valley traveled northward from the region near the head of the Persian Gulf. There at a very early date a people were to be found called Sumerians. We do not know who they were, though it is quite sure they were different from the Semites with whom they amalgamated at a later time. It is quite likely that they came from the mountains which bounded the plain on the east. At any rate it was they who founded cities and began to build up a civilization near the mouth of the Euphrates and the Tigris. Ur, Eridu, Uruk, Larsa, and Nippur are the names of a number of these cities. The city with the surrounding territory made up the state. To the north were the Akkadians, Semites related to the desert Arabs, and the Canaanites and Amorites over on the Mediterranean coast. Wars between these city states were very frequent and deeply influenced the religion as well as other features of the life. It is to be carefully noted that the various political transformations which the land experienced made profound changes in the relationships of the gods of the cities involved. After many vicissitudes the whole of the land was finally united under the mighty King Hammurabi, of the city of Babylon (B. C. 1958-1916). After his time no distinction can be made between the Sumerian and the Akkadian elements of the population; they are now one people with a single language and civilization. It was Hammurabi who gave his people a famous code of laws, which clearly shows him to have been a wise and righteous ruler. For a thousand years after his time Babylon dominated the situation in the world of the two rivers, and even far beyond.

But another power was rising in the north. The city of Asshur on the banks of the Tigris, far away from the alluvial lowlands of Babylonia, had begun to rival the power of her southern neighbor. Finally Babylon is outclassed and

the Assyrian empire is the dominant force in western Asia from about B. C. 750 to 606. Babylon was shown no mercy and the terror of the Assyrian name was carried as far as Egypt. The city of Samaria fell and the northern kingdom of Israel was carried away captive by this relentless power. The chief glory of the empire was the reign of Assurbanipal, who made Nineveh great and left behind him a magnificent library of baked clay tablets in the cuneiform script which in recent years has so enriched our knowledge of the ancient Orient. But Nineveh and the Assyrian empire were in turn crushed in the year B. C. 606, never again to rise, and their place was taken by the rising power of the new Babylonia, or Chaldea. From that time until Babylon itself fell into the hands of the Medes and Persians under Cyrus, in B. C. 539, the Chaldean empire told its short tale. One great ruler, however, made the era noteworthy. Nebuchadrezzar made Babylon the greatest city the world had ever seen, but his work was of little avail so far as permanence was concerned. The empire was weak to its very center and fell a ready prey into the hands of the hardy mountaineers from the northeast.

The religion of the Euphrates Valley had long since passed out of the animistic stage when the little city states appear upon the scene. Yet there is plenty of evidence that everything is built upon an animistic foundation. The people continued to believe in the *Zi,* or spirits, in whom they had believed in the days before any advance had been made in civilization. As the states were in process of formation certain of the spirits of their former belief grew in importance and became distinct gods with personality and attributes. This process was hastened by the political relationships which became more complex as time passed. The god of one city came to exercise influence as far as his city was able to carry its conquests. But even at the end of the process, when the gods had become far more than nature powers, evidences could be found which pointed back

to their more humble origin. According to Professor Jastrow, the gods were personifications of the sun and the moon, the power manifesting itself in vegetation, and that of the waters and the storm. Larsa and Sippar had Shamash, the sun-god, Ur and Harran worshiped Sin, the moon-god, Uruk had Ishtar, the mother-goddess, while Eridu had Ea, the water-deity, as its patron, and Enlil, of Nippur, was the "lord of the storm." Professor Robert W. Rogers has listed over sixty gods and goddesses gathered together on one tablet, though many of these are duplications. "Nearly every place in early times would have a sun-god or a moon-god or both, and in the political development of the country the moon-god of the conquering city displaced or absorbed the moon-god of the conquered. When we have eliminated these gods, who have practically disappeared, there remains a comparatively small number of gods who outrank all the others."[10]

In an early day the priests in the greater temples began to form triads. The earliest of these was that of Anu, Enlil, and Ea. Anu was the patron divinity of Uruk and was associated with the overarching heavens, Enlil with the earth and the atmosphere immediately above it, and Ea with the waters, those on the earth and those below. Thus this triad is inclusive of the universe as conceived by the thinkers of the time. A second series of three consists of Sin, Shamash, and Ishtar, gods of Babylonia, who did not differ essentially from the Sumerian gods of the first triad mentioned. In this second triad the place of Ishtar was frequently taken by Adad, an Amorite god brought in during the course of their relationship with outlying peoples. Under Hammurabi Babylon became the capital of the empire and Marduk, the patron divinity of the city, the god *par excellence* of the empire. But even this position could only be maintained by a process which transferred to him

[10] The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria, p. 79. (Eaton & Mains, New York, 1908.)

the power and attributes of Enlil, of Nippur, and Ea, of Eridu. Particularly was this true of Enlil, doubtless because he was looked upon as the venerable patron of the oldest seat of civilization and hence worthy of respect and honor, even when another city was now the seat of far wider authority and influence.

Only one other god could ever vie with Marduk in power, and that was Ashur. He was the god of the Assyrian empire and, as the recognized head of the pantheon, marched at the head of the armies as they traveled far from the capital carrying destruction and terror all over western Asia and even as far as Egypt. He differed from all the other gods mentioned in that his worship was imageless and he was represented as the disk of the sun from which rays or wings proceed out in all directions. He was of a more spiritual type than the other gods, but this does not seem to have prevented him from being associated with all the cruelty and bloodshed which accompanied the destructive march of the armies of Assyria as they ruthlessly destroyed one city after another.

The gods were given consorts or wives, but all we may know of many of them is that they had a name. For the most part they were of little or no significance. But one among them stands out as a power of the first magnitude. It is Ishtar, the goddess of generation and fertility, the goddess of love and sexual relationships. Starting no doubt in the perfectly justifiable veneration of fertility in field and animal and man, and being looked upon as presiding over the increase upon which all life depends, this goddess became the patroness of practices connected with her worship which could only be debasing and demoralizing. It is a dark blot on a religion which at best could never rise out of a not very lofty polytheism and a worship which sadly needed the touch of what was pure and ennobling.

An extensive mythology has come down to us from Babylonia. The conflict of Bel or Marduk with the monster

Tiamat tells the story of creation in such manner that Marduk is honored and his city, Babylon, is placed before all others, so that it has been called "a great political treatise." But it was religious as well and exercised an influence upon the biblical account of the creation which is undeniable. In the Bible, however, the gross polytheism has been laid aside and the wonderful prose-poem is made to give honor to the one God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. There is also the epic of Gilgamesh, the great hero with many exploits to his name, to whom is told the deluge story with features so nearly akin to the story in Genesis that it is impossible not to see a close connection, but here also the Babylonian version revels in gods and their relations with men, thus representing a level far below that occupied by the parallel narrative in Genesis. All this, and much besides, has come down to us from the library of Assurbanipal the Assyrian, causing us to be thankful beyond measure that in so early a day he should have conceived the idea and actually carried it into effect of preserving in permanent form the best treasures of a civilization long since dead and otherwise largely unknown.

Man's Approach to the Divine Powers

In Egypt the worship of animals and the views held concerning immortality were noted as peculiar. Neither of these had any place to speak of in Babylonia and Assyria. Here the approach to the gods by divination and astrology stands out so prominently that it cannot be avoided in any account, however brief, of the religion. Divination was practiced to learn or "divine" the will of the gods sufficiently in advance to be able to prepare for what was coming; in no sense was it to turn the gods from their purpose. Many methods of divination were known. One of them was to drop oil into a basin of water and determine from the manner in which the oil scattered what the future might be. But of all the methods the favorite was that by an examina-

tion of a sheep's liver, called hepatoscopy. The theory on which it was based was that the gods identified themselves with the animal which was about to be sacrificed. By observing the part of the animal which was considered the seat of life the will of the god himself could be ascertained. Now, among the Babylonians the liver was believed to be the seat of life, probably because so large an amount of blood was to be found in that organ. The function of the heart was not clearly recognized. At a later day, as among the Romans, when the heart had taken the place of the liver as the seat of life, the heart together with the liver was examined in the practice of divination. It was the liver of the sheep, which has a very diversified surface. This offered scope for an almost infinite number of combinations of signs, all of which were worked out into an elaborate system. In this way a pseudo-science, much like our modern palmistry and phrenology, was constructed in great detail and with much precision.

Another form of divination was by the observation of the heavenly bodies, or astrology. A coordination was supposed to exist between the happenings on earth and the movements of the stars and planets and the sun and moon. The basis on which such a theory could rest was the belief that the gods and the heavenly bodies were one and the same, so that if the heavens might be correctly read the will of the gods was thereby determined. The first place in astral lore was taken by Sin, the moon-god, the "lord of wisdom," that is, the wisdom to be ascertained by the scrutiny of the sky. Astrology in Babylonia did not trouble itself with the petty affairs of the individual, but only with important matters of state, and here we must note that the concept of the state stood for the solidarity of people, king and god. So, while the common people had some impersonal share in the transactions of the state with the great gods, they had no alternative in their own affairs than to go to the spirits and demons which they believed surrounded them and deal with

them directly or through sorcerers and witches. The people as well as the priests became adepts in interpreting dreams, omens, portents, monstrosities, and prodigies. In the words of Professor Morris Jastrow, "The significance attached to omens was the most conspicuous outward manifestation of the religious spirit of the people taken as a whole."[11]

But there was more to their religion than that. The elaborate ceremonials in the temples, while shot through with the vitiating influences of magic, contained elements of religious aspiration and fervor. The Incantation Rituals were in the hands of a special class of priests who had worked out a gorgeous ceremonial calculated to impress the worshipers deeply. Unfortunately, however, the gist of the whole exercise was to avert the anger of the deities, which might only be done by going through a series of incantations. The magical has penetrated the religion so deeply that it seems exceedingly difficult to escape it. The fear of the gods makes almost impossible an approach based on trust and confidence in the good will of the divine beings. A higher stage is reached in the Penitential Psalms. The worshiper feels and confesses that he has done wrong. He appeals to this god and to that for forgiveness and cleansing. The sins confessed run all the way from moral evil to merely ceremonial offenses, discrimination between the two not being carefully made. Even at this stage, the highest reached by the Babylonians, there is much to be desired. The "exceeding sinfulness of sin" does not become apparent. Confession and forgiveness are looked upon more as things to be done in order not to suffer the evil that might otherwise come than as the heartfelt expression of a heart filled with its own unworthiness and desiring to get back into the love and confidence of a compassionate Saviour-God.

So widely have the rewards and penalties of another life been looked upon as furnishing the only sufficient sanction

[11] Civilization of Babylonia and Assyria, p. 266. (Lippincott, Philadelphia, 1915.)

for a moral life that many are led to wonder at the high ethical standards of the Code of Hammurabi, when seen in the light of the cheerless prospect of another world which was as much as the Babylonians ever achieved. The lot of the dead is not to be envied. There is nothing to do and no pleasures to enjoy in the dusty, cold, and dark prison where the dead, huddled together indiscriminately, live out their miserable existence. There is no chance of a return to the clear upper air, except it may be for a short time. There is no retribution for the wicked, no reward for the good, and no hope of anything better. The only thing to make their condition worse would be for the corpse to remain unburied or be mutilated. Then even a worse fate is his, to roam over the world and feed upon offal in company with other miserable ghosts. And yet, like the Hebrews who held a similar belief relative to the future life, these people developed an ethical system which does them high honor. But even here they were surpassd by the ideals of Zoroastrianism which were brought into the country with the coming of Cyrus. The old religion ceased to be as an organized faith when the Assyrian and Babylonian empires passed from the scene, but their influence did not perish. Babylonian astrology and divination and other features of their occult lore traveled westward and exerted a potent influence in the later days of the paganism of Greece and Rome, and even to-day the gypsy astrologer and fortune-teller remind us of the days when these and other forms of hocus-pocus were in their glory in the Euphrates Valley.

Suggestions for Further Study

Egypt:

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J. H. Breasted, *Development of Religion and Thought in Ancient Egypt* (New York, 1912).

Georg Steindorff, *The Religion of the Ancient Egyptians* (New York, 1905).

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Babylonia and Assyria:

J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Times,* Chaps. IV, V.

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CHAPTER IV

GREECE AND ROME

Religion Before Homer

Long before the arrival of the Greeks a civilization had flourished in the lands which they afterward occupied. Until recent years little or nothing was known of this civilization, which had its center in the island of Crete and sent out its influences to the adjacent shores of the mainland and islands of the Mediterranean. The spade of the archæologist has in the last generation unearthed remains which prove that this sea-faring people had developed a remarkable culture. The Minoan civilization, as it is called, was divided into three periods, the first of which reaches back as far as the pyramid age in Egypt, or about B. C. 2500, while the last may be dated between B. C. 1600 and 1200. The immediate interest we have in this development is that when the Greek immigrants made their way down from the north they came in contact with a far higher civilization than their own. What we know as Greek civilization is really the fusion of two cultures, a fusion which took place at so distant a date and so long before these people kept records that its actuality has only been fully established in recent years. Excavations at Mycenæ and other localities in Greece have revealed the existence of this early so-called Mycenæan civilization and have opened up a new world for scholarly investigation. This period in early Greek history synchronizes with the last of the Minoan, that is, about B. C. 1600 to 1200.

The Greeks, then, came from the north and settled and conquered and assimilated with the population already in

the land. We do not know much about them in that early period. Without doubt they were a branch of the widely extended Indo-European race, which we shall meet again in Persia and India as well as in Europe. The Romans were another branch of the same racial stock. But in each case the Indo-European has come in contact with some aboriginal race whom it has conquered and with whom it has blended. And while there is some resemblance between the different members of this scattered family, each has developed marked individual traits. The Greek is quite distinct from the Roman, and each has had its unique contribution to make to the subsequent history of Western civilization. Seen in this light, Greece and Rome still live, and the "glory that was Greece" and the "grandeur that was Rome" are still shedding their luster on the world of the twentieth century.

We know little about the religion of the Greeks of the early age. What can now be asserted is not known by direct evidence so much as by inference. Hints of all kinds are given which seem to point back to practices and beliefs of an age long since past. This is not very satisfactory, but it is the best we can do at the present time. Putting these various hints together and interpreting them on the basis of analogous situations in the development in other countries, tentative conclusions more or less convincing may be formed. It is important to do this, because any light which may be shed on the beginnings of the religion of so remarkable a people as the Greeks is welcomed as an aid to understand the meaning of their genius and development.

It may be inferred that the early Greek was an animist and thus in the same line of development with all other peoples whose origins are known. Evidences are not lacking that their deities were nature gods, and that they reverenced and even worshiped their ancestors. It is probable that at an early time the gods were sufficiently differentiated to be considered in charge of this or that interest. They

had in some sense become "departmental" gods, specially connected with the great functions of nature and human life. The reason why so much indefiniteness should exist at this point is that the Greek mind so soon conceived of its gods as like men and separated them from the objects in nature with which they were connected that the relation was very early all but lost and can now scarcely be discovered. They were complete personalities like ourselves and not at all suggestive of the natural objects which had first appealed to the early Greek as alive and connected with his affairs.

We know that the coming of the seasons was the signal for the holding of the religious festivals, that these early settlers believed in a future life, and looked upon their departed ancestors as able to confer blessing upon their faithful descendants. There is no reason for thinking that images were worshiped in this period, nor that the references to animals and their connection with the gods pointed back to a totemic organization of society. In all probability each community had its god of the heavens who sent the light and the rain. There must have been a mother goddess, representing "Mother Earth," the kindly and loving giver of life. There is evidence that they worshiped "a queen of wild beasts, the patron of the chase," "the shepherd god," "a god of fire," and "the spirits of the sea." As the Greeks proceeded southward in their migrations and came into contact with the older civilization, they took over certain gods already in possession. Among these undoubtedly were goddesses hitherto unknown but rapidly incorporated in their worship. Their Greek names give no clue as to their origin, thus making the problem of their Greek or non-Greek origin the more difficult of solution.

Determined partly by the physical configuration of Greece, divided by the sea and the mountains into tiny sections, but as much if not more so by the bent of the Greek mind, with its independence and love of individual initiative, Greek

civilization took the form of small independent principalities or states. Each secluded valley or plain centered in a city, and this city exercised its sway until the mountain or the sea interposed and brought to an end its authority. Attempts were made to break through this division into small states and form larger units, even a kingdom or empire, but from the beginning to the end the Greek *polis,* the city, and the surrounding territory was the unit and determined the characteristic form of Greek political life. In like manner Greek religion was a religion of city states, each city differing in some particulars from its neighbors, with its own divinities and its own worship. With all the unity attained in later times the local forms were so tenacious that they never ceased to mark off the cult of one state from that of another.

The bearing of these two tendencies, the one divisive and the other unifying, is highly important in the study of Greek religion. The best known and greatest of the gods of Greece was Zeus. Connected with the overarching sky, the giver of the bounties which come with the light of the sun and the rain, Zeus was early acknowledged as a god by all the Greek states, but in each case the Zeus worshiped had a secondary title. This title was local and represented the god peculiar to each state, which had been retained when he had been identified with the great Zeus. The small local community also made possible one of the forms of worship, the communal meal, in which all the citizens took part. In it the close connection between the city and its gods was sacramentally celebrated. The god was looked upon as kindly disposed toward his own people, not an angry god in need of propitiation. So these occasions were joyous festivals, the eating together of the divinity and his people, far removed from the awful sacrifices to which other peoples gave themselves in times of stress. Greek religion had its somber, more tragic phase, but in general, particularly in the earlier period, was marked by an airy cheerfulness and delight in beauty which were characteristic of the race.

The Homeric Contribution

The Iliad and the Odyssey of Homer reflect the life and religion of about B. C. 1000. These epics fulfilled the two-fold function of depicting the gods as they were conceived by the people at an early day and of crystallizing for hundreds of years the religious ideas of the growing communities of Greece. The stories contained in these poems were composed to be sung, and, repeated many times over at banquets and festivals, filled the imagination of the people with the stately mythology and picturesque legends of their own distant past.

The chief religious characteristic of the epics is anthropomorphism. The gods were personalities like men and women. They were superhuman, to be sure, but for all that they were only human beings built large. Their power was manifested in nature; the world was ruled from Mount Olympus, the residence of King Zeus and his celestial court. He, as the chief ruler of the universe, guided the events of human history and determined the destiny of men. While every conception of the gods is cast in a human mold, the epic always insists on a difference between men and gods. The gods are not confronted with the trials and sufferings of men; they are immortal and live on heavenly nectar and ambrosia, far removed from death and decay. Yet they are not omniscient, and in their passions and feelings are just like ordinary men. It is almost an indignity to man to say that the gods are like him, because in their intercourse on Olympus the gods are guilty of such amours and give exhibition of such passions as to bring a blush to the cheek of ordinary men at their bare recital. So we feel, and so the thinkers and writers of the classical age in Greece felt. They condemned such conduct in gods as well as in men, refusing to believe that any god worthy of their reverence should show such weaknesses. It may be said that while in the epic the gods appear at a disadvantage,

living in the company of one another in the celestial heights, as individuals and in their relation to men and human affairs they are seen in an entirely different light, thus emphasizing the difference between the Homeric mythology and the religion of the Greek states. In the cults the gods appear as objects worthy of reverence and worship, looked upon in the light of the religious traditions which had grown up around them in the local centers.

Zeus was always the greatest of the gods, and such had he been from the earliest times of which we have any knowledge. He accompanied the Greeks as far as their colonies were planted and became more than any other the national god. He was "the protector of political and social groups from the state to the household. He also took under his especial cognizance moral relations among men."[1] Artemis is the goddess of wild nature, and takes life, but, strange to say, is the protector of all life as well. In the end she is presented as a chaste huntress, punishing those who do not remain pure and clean. Apollo, the model of manly beauty and perfection, is a shepherd and the deity of the shepherds. At the same time he becomes the god of revelation and at Delphi renders decisions on perplexing practical questions. Here all Greece comes and offers him homage, thus quickening the latent sense of unity which Greece so much needed. Hermes was another shepherd god and closely associated with Apollo. He was so swift of foot that he came to be recognized as the messenger of the gods.

Besides these there were Poseidon, the god of the sea; Athena, second only to Zeus, the patroness of civilization, the inventive genius, skilled in arts and industries. Aphrodite, the beautiful goddess of fertility and of love; Hera, the wife of Zeus, presiding over husbandry and industry, the patroness of married women; Hephaistos, the skillful artificer, patron of craftsmen, god of fire and the forge; Ares, the warrior, the fickle god, husband of Aphrodite;

[1] G. F. Moore, History of Religions, vol. i, p. 416.

Demeter, "Mother Earth," the goddess of the fertile soil and of tillage, who at a later date emerges into great prominence in the Eleusinian Mysteries. There are many other divinities, each preserving his individuality despite the number of the gods in the pantheon. There was no worship of gods seeking human ill. If at any time ill fortune came, it was because the gods, capricious like men, were temporarily angry. There was nothing vague or mystical about the Greek idea of divinity. The outlines were clear, the form perfect, and everything connected with the conception of the worship of the gods was beautiful and harmonious. Unfortunately, "they were not far enough off or holy enough to make religion so potent a factor as it might be in Greek life."[2]

While in general the relation between gods and men is kindly and familiar, there is another side. Death is present, and is only baleful and horrid. There is some sense of wrongdoing and the need of sacrifice in view of sin. There is a lower world, the abode of the Chthonian, or nether-earth, gods, whose shadow falls at times over the path of man even in sunny Greece. Worship, however, is more of a companionship, doing reverence to a great king in the heavenly realm, without any of the cringing fear and abject servility so common in other religions. Combined with an artistic temperament of the finest quality, religion expressed itself in outward adornment of exquisite beauty. All the Greeks did was beautiful and harmonious, and in no feature of their life was the result more telling or more influential for all future generations than in the temples of their gods. By the time of the epic poems all the coarse and cruel features of the cult had been put away and every expression of the religious sentiment was in accord with the finest taste, a fitting counterpart to the beauties of nature and art to be seen on all sides.

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[2] Arthur Fairbanks, Greek Religion, p. 148. (American Book Co., New York, 1910.)

The Mysteries

Not for centuries after the rise of the epic did the worship find its full development. Temples grew in beauty and elegance, images were gradually introduced, and the ceremonial became more ornate and finished in form and content. But in all we have described there was little chance for the individual as an individual to express his own religious emotions. Everything was performed by the family or clan or city; it was corporate worship with little reference to the individual. But by the seventh century before our era the individual had come to a place of importance as a citizen in the city-state, and with this new attainment were born new needs and aspirations which could not be satisfied by the formal, though beautiful and decorous, worship of the corporate body of citizens. He needed and demanded what was more personal and individual and vital.

Far to the north in Thrace lived a strange god named Dionysus. He was "the old spirit of vegetable life, incarnate in the bull, incarnate in the wine." "His worship was of a distinctly orgiastic character. Groups of his worshipers, mainly women, found their way at night with torches into wild glens on the mountains; the music of drums and cymbals and flutes stirred sensitive spirits till their whirling dances and wild summons to the god induced a religious frenzy; serpents were fondled, the young of wild animals were now suckled by human mothers, now torn in pieces and eaten raw. The fawn-skin garment, the wand tipped with a fir cone and wreathed in ivy, sometimes horns attached to the head, recalled the god to whose service they were devoted." The idea in all this wild worship was "the identification of the worshipers and the god. The wilder the frenzy, the more the worshiper felt himself free from the restraints of the body and the restraints of the material world."[3] All this was incongruous with the orderly and

[3] Quotations from Arthur Fairbanks, Greek Religion, p. 241.

beautiful worship of the Olympian gods and could only find its way into Greek life because of a deep need unsatisfied by the regular forms of the established religion. It is true that the crudeness of the frenzied practices was toned down as they came into the south and became a permanent feature of Greek religious life, but we are dealing in Dionysus worship with something foreign, which could only have been admitted because of new desires which were stirring in the hearts of the people. A longing for purification, a desire to experience religion in the inner life, and the hope of immortality were abroad and could not be stifled.

Another expression of the same spirit was the increasing importance attached to the worship of Demeter, already referred to as goddess of the soil and crops. According to the myth, Persephone, the daughter of Demeter, is seized by Hades and carried away to the lower world. Demeter, controlling the growth of the grain, brings men and gods to the point of famine by failing in her grief to perform her wonted function. Zeus is compelled to intervene and succeeds in bringing Persephone back to earth and her mother. But, having tasted the food of Hades, she must return and spend a third of the year with him, but in the spring returns with the blooming flowers and rejoices the hearts of all. The touching story took renewed hold on the imagination of the Greeks, and as a feature in the mysteries of Eleusis became especially prominent in the classical age at Athens. The rescue of Persephone from the land of the shades becomes the earnest of their expectation that men, too, might look for a real immortality on the other side of the grave. "It is another instance of the resuscitation of plant life after the winter's death taken as the promise and proof that man, too, may rise to newness of life."[4]

The great Eleusinian mysteries were performed at Athens and the adjacent Eleusis in the fall of the year, and became a part of the established religion. The procession of the

[4] G. F. Moore, History of Religions, p. 450f.

initiated and the neophytes as it wended its way slowly to the sacred precincts of Eleusis was in itself impressive. There the ceremonies, of which we have exceedingly scant information, lasted two or three days. The important thing was not the doctrine which was imparted but the impression made. The myth of Demeter and Persephone was doubtless enacted, vividly picturing the return of the soul from the clutches of death. The purpose of all the rites and ceremonies was to satisfy the longing for immortality by the assurance which comes through an emotional reaction. So strong must have been the desire and so slightly was it ministered to by the ancient state cults that the mysteries at Eleusis, and others which were less famous, continued to exert an influence until Christianity superseded the old paganism.

There were still other manifestations of the same reaching out after a religion which touched the inner life. The Orphic brotherhoods, wandering evangelists of a new life, were to be met all over Greece. For a time in the fifth and fourth centuries B. C. they exerted a more wide-reaching influence than any other religious agency. They came into Greece in connection with one of the waves of the worship of Dionysus which swept over the country. They received their name from Orpheus, the sweet singer, who charmed the wild beasts and fierce men by his strains, and is even said to have been able to move trees and stones. Grieving over his wife, whom he had failed to rescue from Hades, he betook himself to the mountain fastnesses, where he was killed by the maenads, who tore him limb from limb. Here was tragedy and pathos sufficient to appeal to the deepest feelings of men. More than any of the other mysteries the Orphic religion was concerned with the next life. It preached its gospel to the individual, calling upon men to put away evil, to accept a new way of salvation, and to enter into mystic and sacramental union with their god. Unlike the Eleusinian mysteries, which were incorporated into the established reli-

gion, the Orphic faith was a kind of vagrant, outside the regular channels of religious life. This very fact serves, however, to emphasize the inadequacy of the old formal cults and the need for just the gospel which the Orphic preachers proclaimed.

The Elusinia was almost exclusively Greek, Roman citizens being the only outsiders to be admitted to the mystic rites. The Orphic brotherhoods, on the contrary, had a message for all men, "Greek and barbarian, bond and free." Man, they said, is half-divine and belongs to "the kindred of God." He may in this life have communion with the deity and in the next, after being purified from all his stains, may have fellowship with him forever. This has a decidedly Christian sound; it is, in fact, the high water mark of Greek religion, only to be surpassed by the coming of a religion which could in a more complete manner fulfill the moral and spiritual aspirations which Orphism could only partially satisfy.

The Philosophers

At the same time the gospel of personal religion was receiving a wide hearing in Greece another movement, even more significant for the future, was coming to its own and making its contribution to Greek culture. It was the rise of the philosopher and the philosophic poet. They, rather than the priests, dominated the thought life of the Greeks and gave to the people the most worthy ideas of God and the soul which have come to us out of paganism. It was secular literature unhampered by the restraints of ecclesiastical authority. The priesthoods of Greece never assumed controlling authority over the opinions and actions of men. They had no sacred scriptures to which they could appeal as authoritative and which might serve as a touchstone of orthodoxy. The result was that there were no doctrines which formed a body of dogma to which all might be compelled to conform. Nowhere in the ancient world, and only

in comparatively recent years in Christendom, has such liberty prevailed as in Greece. It was the very atmosphere which they breathed. The human mind was loosed to venture the hardest problems and to master the world of intellect and of nature. Well was it that this opportunity came to men of such consummate ability. Never have the two in such measure been found in juxtaposition even down to our own time. The Greeks have taught us how to think, and we sit at their feet to-day. Their minds ranged over the whole field of human learning, and were irresistibly drawn to look into the human heart and interpret the thoughts and desires which religion had implanted.

The Odes of Pindar, one of the earliest of the poets, begin already to turn away from the epic account of the gods and their actions. With all his love for the old stories he does not hesitate to reject what is crude and immoral. He will not believe that the gods are guilty of any such conduct, and considers it blasphemy to impute wrong deeds to them. The great dramatic poets have their contribution to make. To them there is unity in the moral order of the universe. Zeus is raised to a lofty position as the governor of the world. His righteous rule extends over all men and holds them to the exacting standards of justice and honor. Each in his own way, the three great dramatic poets, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, show little patience with the stories of the gods, and exhibit the Nemesis of wrong-doing and the tragic consequences of hate. They were on the side of righteousness and the higher conception of man and God.

Similarly, the great philosophers of the classical period, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, were leaders in moral as well as intellectual development. Particularly was this true of the first two named. Socrates was intent on pricking the bubble of conceit for men who were self-satisfied and complacent in their theories, but more than that he was constantly seeking to build men up in virtue. For Socrates virtue is defined as knowledge, so that to know things as

they are and to see clearly is to be good. A deeper conception of morality has taken us far past this stage, but the deep feeling that there is a spiritual presence in the world working for righteousness and the unconquerable hope of immortality, which made him calm and even cheerful in the presence of a tragic death, mark Socrates as one of the great souls in the history of ethics and religion.

Plato was the pupil of Socrates. He must have it that the gods are good, that they will never stoop to evil in any form. Thus, being righteous themselves, they demand the same morality in men. Receiving from his great master an ethical and spiritual outlook on life, Plato went much further and elaborated his philosophy into a system whose influence is in many respects as powerful to-day as in past ages. We live in a spiritual world in which *ideas* are the most real and important ingredient. The great Idea is God and he is one. Thus Plato was laying the foundations for a theistic interpretation of the universe. In fact, he has been called "the founder of theistic philosophy."[5] Aristotle, "the master of those who know," is far more interested in the world of nature around him. He is the man of science as well as the philosopher. His God is farther away from men than that of Plato. Man is midway between God and the physical universe and so has a nature both spiritual and earthly. He has no conception of immortality as a personal experience, as was taught by Plato and Socrates. But with many differences in outlook upon life and its problems Aristotle takes his place with his great predecessors in the insistence of his moral demands and in his belief in a unified universe controlled and held together by a single spiritual Being over all.

In the later period as we approach the Christian era several philosophies emerge which seek to interpret life to a changing, dissatisfied age. Epicureanism is not guilty of recommending a life of indulgence, as has been charged,

[5] G. F. Moore, op. cit., p. 499.

but it has no religious message. Believing that a life of contentment can only be lived if fear of the gods and dread foreboding concerning the future be eliminated, it proceeded to construct a philosophy with no reference to the spiritual world either now or hereafter. A very different viewpoint was that occupied by Stoicism, stern and forbidding as it was in so many features. There is a God, a living God, who is present in every atom of the universe, and this God is a spirit. But when spirit is defined it is seen not to be spiritual in any sense at all. It is matter like everything else, though matter in the more ethereal form of fire and vapor. But it was in respect of morality that the Stoics had a message which reached many of the finest spirits of the age. Good and evil exist side by side, and it is man's part to choose between them. It is his to choose virtue and devote himself to it. He is to do so solely for virtue's sake, not for any good that may come by so doing—that were to defeat the very end he has in view. Sternly he must suppress his impulses and live untouched by any emotional appeals. It was no milk for babes, this Stoic creed. Small wonder it found lodgment in the hearts of many of the noblest men. It was exalted and far-reaching in its demands on life and offered standing room for men who would not be drawn down into the unethical thinking and low living of the mass of the people around them.

But another idea was abroad in the land, the idea that matter is intrinsically evil. Basing their teaching on Plato and Pythagoras, these Neopythagoreans placed God, "the principle of good," in contrast and in conflict with matter, which is evil and only evil. Men are partakers of the divine nature, but are in danger of being drawn down into the vileness of their natural environment. This can only be prevented by overcoming their fleshly desires through a strict regimen, which included becoming vegetarians and celibates.

At the same time many men in Greece were turning their

eyes to the mysterious East, for out of the East were coming strange religions which found ready acceptance in the lands of the West. We shall have more to say concerning these mystery religions in connection with the later days of the Roman religion, but mention is made of them here because in Greece as well as Rome they found congenial soil in which to grow.

The last phase of the development of the Greek intellect was Neoplatonism. It based its teaching on the idealistic philosophy of Plato, but added an element to which the great philosopher was a stranger. It was philosophy touched with emotion. It also partook of the prevailing thought of the day that matter was evil. God was separated from man by a great chasm, even though man originally came from God. But man has forgotten his origin and his birthright and goes about his affairs unmindful of his heritage. He may, however, get back. This is to be done by stages, step by step regaining what had been lost, until in the end he loses himself in the God from whom he had come. Only enough has been said about Neoplatonism and the other philosophies to indicate that they were religious; that they dealt not only with conduct but with salvation; that they attempted to meet the needs of men and women who in an age of confusion were seeking the light, and that they were very evidently preparing the way for the coming of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which gathered up into itself all the elements of worthy appeal to be found in the philosophies which had preceded it and which in addition could embody in a spotless personality the very essence of its living power —and this the Greek philosophies could not do.

Early Roman Religion

The mistake often has been made of thinking that Roman religion was about the same as Greek religion. The mistake could easily be made because Greek religion was transported to Rome and became the possession of the Roman

people. But before the Greek influence began to be felt Rome had a religion of its own, and the character of this religion must be understood before the later mixture of Greek and Roman ideas can be appreciated. Then it will be seen how distinctive the Roman contribution was and how its influence was a powerful factor in the later faith of the city and empire of Rome.

The early religion of the people of Rome was above everything else practical. They were an agricultural people and their religion was suited to their agricultural needs. Already we begin to see the distinctive character of whatever is Roman. These people, unlike the Greeks, were not a thinking people; they were practical. They had no mythology and no philosophic theories of the origins of things. They were men who did not ask questions beyond the pragmatic question, Is it useful? does it work? They were men of law and order and authority with capacity to conquer and to rule. They conquered the world of the Mediterranean basin and even beyond, and out of the loose fragments welded an empire, which was one of the most magnificent products of human genius. They made little contribution to the intellectual life of the world, but they developed one of the most important gifts of the ancient to the modern world, the Roman Law. The empire went to pieces when the barbarians from the north came pouring over the defenses along the Rhine and the Danube and made the old empire their home, but the influence of Rome still lives. Our laws bear the impress of the various Roman codes, particularly that of the Emperor Justinian, and in the Roman Catholic Church we have in every country of the world the inheritor of the organizing genius of the ancient Romans, which exercises over its adherents to-day the same authority, and demands the same implicit obedience as did Rome under both the republic and the empire. Rome richly deserves the title "eternal" both as respects her continued existence as a city and her influence in the world.

The gods of the Romans were powers who were expected to do the things they were capable of doing. They were powers, *numina,* with scarcely enough personality to be called gods. No images were made of them because the Roman mind had never conceived of its divinities as personal. Each power had its own function and was not known in any other way than in its performance. This caused a division of labor among the powers which seems to reduce the gods to very small dimensions. To illustrate, "Seia has to do with the corn before it sprouts, Segetia with corn when shot up. Tutilina with corn stored in the granary, Nodotus has for his care the knots in the straw. There is a god Door, a goddess Hinge, a god Threshold. Each act in opening infancy has its god or goddess. The child has Cunina when lying in the cradle, Statina when he stands, Edula when he eats, Locutius when he begins to speak, Adeona when he makes for his mother, Abeona when he leaves her; forty-three such gods of childhood have been counted. Pilumnus, god of the pestle, and Diverra, goddess of the broom, may close our small sample of the limitless crowd."[6] This is animism pure and simple, animism undeveloped into the higher forms which point toward polytheism. With no imagination the Roman was content with such a relation to the thousand powers around him, each doing its little part in the practical work of life. Such was the condition in the earliest day, but later certain of the divinities assumed an importance unknown before and became the greater gods of the state religion. Jupiter holds the first place, and is called Optimus Maximus, and next comes Mars, who (with Quirinus) is the God of War. Janus, after whom the first month of our year is named, is the god of opening, the old Roman god of the door at the entrance of the house. The last of these larger gods of the early days was Vesta, originally the goddess of the family hearth and latterly the guardian of the state hearth.

[6] Allan Menzies, History of Religion, p. 307.

The religion of the family, as has just been intimated, was the earliest form of Roman religion. The only priest in that day was the father of the family, the paterfamilias. He offered the sacrifices and led the family in its religious duties. Certain of the earliest deities were distinctively family gods. Vesta, the fire of the hearth, in which the family life centered, came first. The duty of caring for the fire and keeping the hearth clean fell to the mistress of the house, who thus had her part in the family worship. In a later day, when Vesta became a goddess of the state, the place of the mistress of the house was taken by six vestal virgins, charged with the keeping of the fire and other duties specially assigned to them. The Lares, or ancestral spirits, watched over the household, and the Penates protected the storerooms, on which the sustenance of the family depended. The Manes, "the kindly deities," were looked upon as well disposed to the living, as their name indicates. Besides these each individual had his own protecting divinity; in the case of a man it was his Genius, of a woman her Juno. These "good angels," which seem often to be little more than one's other self, have watch-care through life over one's fortunes and at death go out into the great unknown with him.

As the old family religion was enlarged into the state religion it became in a very definite sense an affair of the state. The ministers of religion were state officials, appointed and performing their duties like other officials. True to their genius, the Romans organized this state religion as thoroughly as the government, of which in reality it was a part. The cult was purely a formal performance of the ritual and ceremonial with no vestige of sentiment about it. Great care was exercised to secure correctness and precision in the conduct of the worship, for the efficacy of the rite depended upon just these things. Like a stern earthly potentate who demands that he be approached with circumspection and that he be addressed with the proper

titles, so the gods were looked upon as making the same demands. The gods could be counted upon to prevent evils from befalling the people only if they on their part performed their religious duties punctiliously and thus gave them the honor which was their due.

The number of festival days was large. This made necessary the organization of the religious officials, that all the duties might be properly performed. The flamens were priests assigned to this or that god, on whom the conduct of the worship rested. The augurs were the official diviners, set to the task of ascertaining the will of the god by various forms of divination, notably the observation of the flight of birds and the examination of the livers of sheep. Other groups might also be named, like the Arval brothers, who officiated before the goddess who provided the needed crops, and the Luperci, or wolf-men, who sacrificed goats and dogs to a rustic god on the occasion of his annual festival. In charge of the affairs of religion was the pontifex, of whom there were at first five, later fifteen, whose duties were varied, for, being state officials, they were charged with duties now looked upon as purely secular. With their conception of the gods as powers, scarcely personal, there was little likelihood that any attempt would be made to represent them in images in human form, and with no images there would be no temples, where the gods might dwell. This development was not reached until a later day, when Rome came under the influence of foreign cults.

The Contact with Greece

With all the changes introduced into Roman religion by contact with outside cults what has already been described continued as the religion of the people and the state down through the period of the republic, which lasted from B. C. 509 to 27. Before that was the age of the kings, and after that the empire, which so far as the west was concerned, came to an end in A. D. 476. What we have now

to recount took place in the days of the republic. But even before that Roman religion had been modified by contact with a people close at hand. The Etruscans lived in Italy just north of the Tiber and were thus early brought into contact with the Romans as they began to settle, say about B. C. 750, on the hills south of that stream. It was Etruscan influence which was responsible for the building of a wall around the settlements on the hilltops, thus making Rome a city with a sense of unity and pride in itself. And the same influence was responsible for the *pomerium,* or plowed furrow around the city within which no foreign deity might be allowed to come. Thus Rome was provided through this Etruscan contact with both a material and a spiritual wall, which raised the people to a hitherto unknown sense of their unique identity. They were now a complete, self-sufficient power, able both to defend themselves and enter upon the conquests which carried their eagles almost to the bounds of the then known world. The Etruscan also introduced the temple, or *templum,* which in that day did not mean a building, but a rectangular area marked off on the ground, which was supposed to be a counterpart of a heavenly rectangle, and from which the flight of birds could be effectively observed. As Professor Jesse Benedict Carter suggests,[7] the earliest religion of the Roman people, untouched by outside influences, appealed to the *social* instinct —it was the religion of the family and family interests. Under the influence of the Etruscans the religion made a strong appeal to *national* instinct—Rome became a city, self-conscious and strong and able to make a name for itself in the world.

The current of Greek influence began about the time the republic was established. The story of the beginnings of this contact with Greece is shrouded in legend, but deserves to be told even in so short a sketch as this. "A later age,

[7] The Religious Life of Ancient Rome, p. 63. (Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1911.)

from whom history has no secrets, with a cheap would-be omniscience told of the old woman who visited Tarquin (the last of the kings) and offered him nine books for a certain price, and when he refused to pay it, went away, burned three, and then returning offered him at the original price the six that were left; on his again refusing she went away, burned three more and finally offered at the same old price the three that remained, which he accepted. Except as a sidelight on the character of the early Greek trader the story is worthless."[8] The fact is that Rome came early into contact with the Greek colonies of Southern Italy and at some time about the beginning of the republic came into possession of the Sibylline books, the traditional story of the acquisition of which from the old woman of Cumæ has just been told. These books were treasured by the Romans as a sacred possession; they were placed for safe keeping in the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline Hill in the care of guardians specially appointed for that purpose, the *Quindecemviri,* or the Fifteen. The books were kept secret and under the control of the Senate, who determined when the volumes might be consulted. All this shows the reverence in which these mysterious books were held. Now, the important thing about them was that whenever they were consulted the answer always came that certain deities, Greek deities of course, should be introduced and worshiped. This does not account for the coming of Greek religion into Italy, for it had been there long before and had already begun to influence Rome, but it does place the sanction of official approval on the reception of these foreign deities and worships. So important is this remarkable movement that Professor Carter says of it, "The study of the outward and the inward effects of the Sibylline books is therefore the real history of religion in the first half of the republic."[9]

[8] Carter, The Religion of Numa, p. 65. (Macmillan, London, 1906.)
[9] Carter, op. cit., p. 71.

In the year B. C. 496 Rome was in difficulty; her crops had failed and this rendered her position insecure in the war with the Latins then being waged. Recourse was had to the Sibylline books and the result was the introduction into Rome of the worship of Demeter, Dionysus, and Persephone, Greek deities familiar to our ears. These foreign divinities were not allowed within the *pomerium,* so continued to be looked upon as outsiders. They dropped their Greek names and were given Roman names, names of already existing Roman gods and goddesses. By taking their names these new Greek divinities crowded the Roman gods out of their place until all that was left was a name. Demeter became known as Ceres, an old fertility goddess about whom little is known. But now Demeter with the old name Ceres becomes an important goddess with a splendid temple and games to her honor. Dionysus is identified with Liber, the patron of the vine, and so completely absorbs what individuality Liber had developed that little is left of the Roman god save the name. Persephone, or Kore, is identified with Libera, the female counterpart of Liber, just mentioned. But there was such confusion that, when in a later day Persephone was again introduced into Rome, this time without change of name, as a goddess supposed to be unknown before in the city, we have two Roman goddesses, Proserpina and Libera, both representing the same Greek deity.

After this Greek gods and goddesses came into Rome one after another until they were all there. Rome had enlarged her pantheon until it seemed literally to include all the gods of the countries with whom she was in touch. Most of these gods were brought in at some time of stress. They did not come in deliberately to take the place of the old Roman gods, but to perform some function for which no Roman god seemed prepared. The very idea of deity was changed by the process, the Romans coming in the end to look upon their Greek gods with Latin names just as the

Greeks looked upon them, personalities like men and women, with images and temples in which they lived. The old ideas and practices languished and the city was filled with new forms of worship. It was a veritable conquest, Rome the Conqueror vanquished in the things of the mind and the spirit by the clever and versatile Greek. Zeus may be identified with Jupiter, Hera with Juno, Poseidon with Neptune, Athena with Minerva, Ares with Mars, Aphrodite with Venus, Artemis with Diana, Hermes with Mercury, but in the identification the Greek god lived on in power and influence despite the Latin name which had been assumed. In the end these new deities were admitted within the *pomerium* and thus were looked upon as thoroughly Roman. From the time of the Second Punic War, about the year B. C. 200, no differences can be detected between the Roman and the Greek elements in the cult; it is a new religion in fact, the Græco-Roman, and such it remained until the day when it disappeared with the oncoming of Christianity.

The last use of the Sibylline books of which we have any record was in the crisis of B. C. 205, when Hannibal was in Italy and Rome was in danger of falling into his hands. The books were consulted and the answer came that the enemy could be overcome if the Great Mother of the Gods should be brought to Rome from her home in Central Asia Minor. But now we have come to that period in the history of Roman religion when a new element, not Roman, or even Greek, finds its way into the worship and changes it still further into a compound faith, with ingredients gathered from all the lands of the East. To understand this influence is the final task in order to estimate the religion of pre-Christian Rome.

The Influence of the East

During the period of the republic (about B. C. 500 to the beginning of our era) Rome became mistress of the world. Never had there been such an empire. Wealth poured into

the city and Rome became the metropolis of the world, the center from which radiated all the ideas and forces which came to a focus in the multiform activities of its busy life. But Rome had changed; she was not as religious as she had been in the simpler days of the past. Greek philosophers had come in with their criticism of the old religious beliefs and aided the disintegration which had set in. The deterioration was not only religious but moral. Few people can stand such rapid increase of wealth and influence, and the Romans were no exception to the rule. The institution of games in connection with the triumphs of her generals and the religious festivals demoralized the people and led to such excesses that the morals of Rome in the centuries just before and just after Christ have become a byword and a reproach in all succeeding generations. The offices of religion in connection with the state cult fell into disuse and men could not be found to fill positions which were vacant. Such ceremonies as were performed were carried through only in the most perfunctory manner, like any other state function. The very knowledge of some old religious ceremonies perished and others were neglected, so that they had lost all meaning. It was a desperate situation which prevailed at the time when Julius Cæsar passed off the scene and his nephew Octavius, known later as Augustus Cæsar, took the reins of government into his hands and began to reign. The days of the Roman empire had come, and Augustus proved to be the man of the hour.

One of the events which mark his reign was the revival of religion. It was largely his own work. Augustus recognized that without religion a country is lost. He revived old ceremonies, filled offices which had been unoccupied for years, rebuilt temples, and in every way sought to restore the religion to its old place of power in the life of the people. He brought in some new features, the most remarkable of which was Cæsar-worship. At first it was worship of the dead rulers of the past, then of the living emperor sitting on

the throne in Rome. It was not called exactly by that name; the Romans would have resented such a bald statement as too much of an innovation. The proposal was to worship the "Genius" of the emperor, the shadowy counterpart of the living man which was more or less spiritual and other-worldly. This was not quite so much a shock to their sensibilities, but it was only a step removed from the actual worship of the emperor himself. This became the one universal form of religion and the touchstone of loyalty to the empire. By their refusal to perform the rites connected with this worship the early Christians were declared treasonous and were thrown to the lions.

Now, the important fact to keep in mind is that emperor worship was an importation. The old Roman might hesitate at such a step, but it was natural and easy for the Asiatic, and the introduction of the strange idea is an evidence of the strength of the influence which had set in from the eastern sections of the empire. The old religion had ceased to satisfy the desires of even the stern old Romans, and its place was being taken by religions which came trooping in from Asia and Africa. We have already mentioned the coming of the Great Mother of the Gods, whose home had been in the wild mountains of Central Asia Minor. King Attalus presented the deputation which had come from the Roman senate with the god in the form of a black aerolite, and this was taken to Rome, received with due ceremony—and the danger from Hannibal was averted. But who was Cybele, the Mother of the Gods, thus brought to Rome, so far from her original home? Attis is the husband of Cybele, and he is violently killed. She mourns him with tumultuous sorrow. He is finally raised to life again amid the wildest rejoicing. Such in the briefest space is the myth brought with the goddess to Rome in B. C. 205. Her worship in Asia Minor was an imitation of the acts depicted in the myth, and, as might be expected, was made up of wild and uncontrolled orgies. The staid Romans were

shocked at these displays and the cult had a checkered career in the capital, but in the days of the empire it won its way into popular favor and received the sanction of the government. There was a procession, which was followed by the exercises in the temple, where the old myth was retold and reacted, producing "a state of rapturous ecstasy" which swept the worshiper off his feet and lifted him into union with the deity. As Attis died and was raised to life again, so would the worshiper be sure of another life. Union with the god was sacramentally achieved by the bloody *taurobolium*. A man would stand in a deep trench under a grating on which a bull was killed, and the blood would pour through the grating over the head and body of the worshiper. In this bath he believed he had entered into a new life by physical contact with the life-giving blood. The origin of the rite is obscure, but it doubtless goes back to an ancient belief that one could physically transfuse the strength of the animal into his body, and then later the whole thing was spiritualized into the new birth of the soul.

Already the reason why such practices, so strange to old Roman religion, could exercise so strong an influence is evident. There was an emotional appeal which was irresistible. The ancient faith had no message when men began to be alive to new desires and aspirations. The old religion was cold and prosaic; these religions which came out of the East made an appeal to the senses, were full of mystery, and were exceeding human and warm in sympathy. That they descended to the level of the sensual at times did not militate against their success, for there was so much more which the old religion did not possess that defects, even when seen as such, did not prevent them from being acceptable. They were religions of salvation, of rewards and punishment, of immortality, and, last but not least, they demanded personal allegiance based on belief in the goodness of the divinity.

The religion of Isis and Osiris came from Egypt and

gathered a large popular following, despite persecution during its earlier days. But it, too, became domesticated and was considered a legitimate faith by the state as well as the people. Here, again, the appeal did not lie in its system of thought, nor in its morality, which was exceedingly questionable, nor even in its doctrine of cleansing, but in the intoxicating seduction of the ritual and the promise of immortality. Again, in this religion there was a story told about Isis and her husband Osiris, who was killed by the evil-minded Typhon. Horus, their son, would wreak vengeance on his father's murderer, but in the end Osiris is raised to a new life and Typhon is forgiven. At least so runs the myth in one of its many forms. But in them all is the appeal to the elemental passions of love, hate, vengeance, and forgiveness. They are warm with human interest and sympathy and come close to the daily life of men and women, and this the old religion could never do.

A variety of beliefs and practices came in from Syria. The most famous of the deities was Atargatis, the Dea Syria, whose worship was associated with dreadful sensuality. It could not help but work harm, yet in the ancient world there was real confusion between the impure and the sacred, and hence greater difficulty in seeing clearly what had in it the seeds of evil, especially in religious practice. From Syria, too, came astrology, which had its home in Babylon, as we have seen, and which now entered into a new phase among the peoples of the west. But of all these religions that of Mithras is the most interesting and the most important. Coming originally out of Persia, Mithras was found about the beginning of our era in the mountains of Asia Minor. From there it came into Rome about B. C. 70, the last of these Oriental faiths to reach the West. But while it was slow in starting on its career of conquest, it extended farther than all the others when its message began to be known. Carried by merchants and slaves, but especially by soldiers, the *mithreums,* or underground chapels,

have been discovered wherever in the wide expanses of the empire the Roman legions were stationed. There was again the myth of how Mithras by slaying the bull brought life and plenty to the world. This scene is depicted on all the bas-reliefs in every place of worship. It was a man's religion and made surprising moral demands upon its followers. This at once raises it to a level higher than that of the other Eastern cults. Through seven grades the initiates were led until they had attained the highest level. Mithras was the god of light and in the later time became identified with the sun, and as Sol Invictus, the Invincible Sun, was the last embodiment of the pagan idea of deity, before it went down forever in the brighter light of another religion from the East which was to supersede them all.

Christianity, then, was one of these Eastern faiths which found a welcome in the West and in the end became the religion of the whole empire. It, too, had a story to tell, of a Saviour who was crucified and who rose again and was seen by his disciples. It, too, touched the emotions, and held out the promise of immortality. A religion from the East, and in some respects like the others, Christianity, however, rose to a level of moral sublimity and self-forgetful service unattainable by Mithraism or the religion of Isis and the Great Mother. And as compared with the other deities, even Mithras, the Saviour in Christianity has the advantage of being a real historical character and of exemplifying in his own person all the moral excellencies of his own doctrine.

Suggestions for Further Study

Greece:

J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Times* (New York, 1916), Part III, The Greeks.

Arthur Fairbanks, *Greek Religion* (New York, 1910). A compact but complete survey.

L. R. Farnell, *The Higher Aspects of Greek Religion* (New York, 1912). An illuminating interpretation by one of the leading authorities.

George Foot Moore, *History of Religions* (New York, 1913), Vol. I, Chaps. XVII-XX.

Rome:

J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Times,* Parts IV and V, dealing with Rome and the Roman empire.

J. B. Carter, *The Religion of Numa* (New York, 1906). A short but helpful survey of the ancient religion.

Franz Cumont, *The Oriental Religions in Roman Paganism* (Chicago, 1911). The best account of the influence of the East.

W. Warde Fowler, *The Religious Experience of the Roman People* (London, 1911). The most extended survey in English of the religion to the time of Augustus.

George Foot Moore, *History of Religions,* Vol. I, Chaps. XXI, XXII.

CHAPTER V

THE RELIGION OF ZOROASTER

The Indo-Europeans and Their Religion

In the study of the religion of Zoroaster we make the transition from the religions which have passed away and ceased to be to the living religions of mankind. The worshipers of Ahura Mazda in India and Persia to-day, small in number though they be, are the descendants of those to whom the prophet Zoroaster came, and are proud of their history and unbroken tradition. The Parsis (a name derived from "Persia") in India are an exclusive community of about a hundred thousand souls, who have in recent decades prospered greatly and have become the best educated and most progressive group in the whole land. So, because of their long and honorable history and their present position of prominence in the land of their adoption, it is altogether fitting that we should seek to understand the religion which has bound them together so closely. Bristling with difficulties though the investigation may be, the student finds himself lured on as each step reveals, particularly in the earlier development, glimpses of a faith with such a lofty conception of the Divine Being and such uncompromising insistence on morality that he realizes he is dealing with one of the highest religions to be found among men. But before taking it up directly it is necessary to place it in its proper setting as one of the religions of the Indo-European peoples.

At a period at least two or three thousand years before Christ there roamed on the grassy plateaus and steppes either east or west of the Caspian Sea—we cannot say which—tribes of nomadic peoples seeking pasturage for their

flocks and herds. They were white men, speaking a common language, with vivid imaginations and boundless energy. For some reason—it may have been the natural increase of population which tended to overcrowd the regions already occupied—groups of these restless nomads would start off to find a more congenial home, until in the end they were scattered far to the east and south and west, all the distance from Ireland and Scotland, in the cold and misty west, to the plains of India, under a blazing tropical sun. The branch which we know as the Kelts moved westward at an early date and pushed far to the west into the British Isles and France as we know them to-day. They were followed by the Teutonic peoples to whom the Anglo-Saxons and the Scandinavians belong, and these in turn must have been urged westward by the Slavic tribes who finally settled in central and eastern Europe. We know little about their movements until in the early centuries of our era the Teutonic peoples burst through the barriers of the Roman empire and changed the whole course of civilization. Other branches of the Indo-Europeans also pushed westward and southward and had by mingling with the races already present formed the national group which we know as the Greeks and the Latins, or Italic people. Even more obscure are the movements of still other branches which swarmed into Asia Minor, whom we know as Hittites, Phrygians, Scythians, and Armenians.

These all moved toward the west. Others, however, were led to take a different direction. They moved toward the south and east and finally found a permanent home for themselves in Persia and in India. This double branch of the original stock is correctly known by the name "Aryan," which is frequently but less correctly given to all the Indo-European peoples. These Aryans formed one more or less homogeneous group for a period sufficiently long to develop certain peculiarities which belong to these races, but which are not to be found among the peoples who migrated west-

ward. We do not know when it occurred, but finally the Aryans divided into two groups, one going to the southwest and finding its home on the bleak, wind-swept plateau of Persia, and the other going to the southeast, penetrating the passes of the mountain barrier, and finally settling down in the plains of northern India. It was among these immigrants into Iran, or Persia, that Zoroaster appeared and preached his gospel of one God who demanded righteousness in his worshipers.

In the days when all the Indo-European peoples lived in more or less close connection with each other they possessed a common language, a common culture, and a common religion. As they separated differences began to appear, and became more marked as the centuries passed, but certain likenesses, particularly in language, were not obliterated and are used to-day to show the kinship between these groups who in so many ways are poles apart in their thinking and in their customs.

We owe much to Professor Otto Schrader for giving (in an extensive article, "Aryan Religion," in the Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics) an account of about all that can be gleaned from a great variety of sources concerning this early religion. It had two phases, the worship of dead ancestors and the worship of the "heavenly ones." Both burial and cremation were known and practiced, burial being supposed to have preceded cremation. The change indicated a different viewpoint, for, while burial was a means of continuing the connection between soul and body, cremation was intended to separate the soul from its body as soon as possible. One form of disposal of the dead did not completely displace the other, and we have no means of knowing why one was practiced in preference to the other. But whatever might be the means used of disposing of their bodies, the dead were held in high reverence and elaborate rites were practiced in their memory. Gifts of various kinds were made to the dead so as to provide them with what they

needed in the other world. They were not so far away, and could come and really, though invisibly, share in the feast which was spread in their honor. They had become more powerful in the other world and yet continued to be vitally interested in all the concerns of the family. They were appealed to for help; they must also be placated, for they were looked upon as even more severe than a stern parent and quite easily angered. So urgent was the demand that the good things of this life be provided for those who had passed over that inhuman cruelty was not uncommonly exhibited. Even wives and slaves were sent after the departed one for his comfort, and for a young man who had not yet been married and had met an untimely death a marriage was performed with a young woman, who was then burned or buried alive with the corpse!

The other side of the worship was that of the "heavenly ones." There are evidences of primitive animism, of fetishism, and of the higher development into the worship of certain great powers of nature. In Professor Schrader's words, "The worship of the sky and the powers of nature connected with it formed the real kernel of the primitive Aryan (Indo-European) religion." This means the worship of the sun and moon, fire, wind, and water. These gods were not named; they were looked upon as personal, but had not been fully personified. The element of magic is quite evident in the relations of the worshipers with the powers, but genuine religion in the form of sacrifice and prayer raises this relationship to a higher level. The father was the first priest, but it was not long before a priestly class began to develop and take charge of the sacrifices. Only gradually were the greater gods personalized and moralized. Until that took place the worship of ancestors was a far greater moral force than the more sublime worship of the powers of nature. Unfortunately, through it all there was the somber thread of fatalism, which permeated life with a retarding and depressing influence.

Such was the religion of our forefathers and the forefathers of the peoples of Europe and of many of those in Asia Minor, Persia, and India. This short sketch may help us to understand the better the development which later took place and also the present tendencies in life and thought among the great Indo-European family of races and peoples.

Zoroaster and His Reformation

While those who were to settle in Persia and in India were still together they developed certain common features of ritual and belief which remained with them long after they became separate peoples. They came to believe in a number of gods who were believed in by both in later times. Notable among them was Mithras (Mitras in India), who, as we have seen, traveled west and found his last home in the Roman empire in the last days of paganism. Fire is held in high reverence to-day by the Parsis, and harks back to the worship of the sacrificial flame by the early Aryans. They prepared and venerated the intoxicating Haoma (Soma in India), which was to play an important part in later Indian religion. The cow had already become sacred and remained so in both countries. There was already to be found an injunction to "good thoughts and good works," and a priesthood of fire-kindlers, who were influential in the religion of the people.[1] But as soon as the people separated differences of a very fundamental sort began to develop. The tendency in India was toward speculation, in Iran toward the practical and ethical. This cleavage goes very deep and marks a difference between the peoples which can scarcely be bridged over. We are in different worlds, surrounded in each case by a totally different atmosphere. In India we of the West feel oppressed by the pall of pantheism and the moral inertia which everywhere seem to be present, but in Persia in the days of Zoroaster the breezes

[1] The above facts taken from Professor Eduard Meyer, article, "Persia," Encyclopædia Britannica, 11th edit.

are charged with moral vigor and men see God and human life and sin clear-eyed and enter the battle of life intending to defeat evil and its agents and come out more than victors in the contest.

Unfortunately, great uncertainty exists relative to the Prophet and not many things can be set down with certainty. When he lived and where he worked are still subjects of controversy. The traditional dates are B. C. 660 for his birth and B. C. 583 for his death. And when such authorities as Professor A. V. Williams Jackson and Bishop L. C. Casartelli are convinced that these dates are substantially correct it is impossible to displace them hastily. We need only state here, however, that other competent authorities feel that the facts demand an earlier date, some giving B. C. 1000 and others an earlier date still. It would make the coincidence even more striking if the traditional dates should prove to be correct, for that would bring Zoroaster into the same century with the Buddha, Confucius, Pythagoras, and Jeremiah! Zoroaster was a real historical character despite the uncertainty in date and the locality where he worked. Professor Jackson has carried many others with him in his belief that the prophet came from the northwest of what is now Persia and, traveling eastward, found his life work in the northeastern part of the country. Here he preached, and finally succeeded in converting the king, Vishtaspa, to his doctrine. An intensely practical man, the Prophet preached the doctrine of work, especially the care of the cattle which they were to protect from the wild Turanians of the North. There, after many years of teaching, while engaged in the "holy wars" in defense of the faith, he was killed at the hand of an enemy, "a Turanian whose name is preserved to ill renown."

Zoroaster, or Zarathustra, as it is in the old Persian, must have been a remarkable character, and, if he had been followed by a succession of like-minded men, as was the case among the Israelites, might have produced effects as wide-

reaching as the religion of the Old Testament. But this solitary prophet found himself proclaiming a message little appreciated by the men of his time. Unfortunately, he was not concrete and simple in his teaching, as was Jesus, and thus failed to win the people to himself and his doctrine. He was abstract in his thinking and could never come down to the level of his hearers. Despite all this he was intent on reaching all with his new conceptions. He hated nature worship and any form of anthropomorphism. God to him was "high and lifted up" above any likeness to anything in heaven or earth. He denounced all the old "heavenly ones," calling them evil powers fit only to be destroyed and put away. He spared none, not even "Mithras and his troops"; they were all to be banished. Zoroaster's god is Mazdah, or Ahura Mazda, "the wise," the wisdom in question being the "knowledge of good and evil," or, as Professor James Hope Moulton puts it, "The unerring instinct that can distinguish between Truth and Falsehood, which for the prophet were the most vital aspects of good and evil."[2] Here, then, lie close together the two great truths which Zoroaster would introduce, that God is one, and that he is holy and irreconcilably at enmity with evil. This is not far distant, surely, from the teachings of the Hebrew prophets.

So much is fairly clear, but the difficulties are immediately forthcoming. Of the various parts of the Avesta, the sacred books of the Zoroastrians, the Gathas are undoubtedly the work of the prophet himself. They are exceedingly difficult to translate and to understand. From beginning to end they contain statements about "six highly abstract conceptions," known as Amesha Spenta, or "undying holy ones." They are to be listed as follows:

1. Vohu Manah, Good Thought.
2. Asha, Right, or Divine, Order.
3. Khshathra, Dominion, or the Excellent Kingdom.

[2] Early Religious Poetry of Persia, p. 56. (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1911.)

4. Aramaiti, Piety, or Holy Character.
5. Haurvatat, Health.
6. Ameretat, Immortality.

The last two are always found together in the Gathas.

Now, what are these Amesha Spenta? They have been called "vassals," and "archangels," who help Ahura Mazda in his work of truth and righteousness. But Professor Moulton is so profoundly convinced that Zoroaster was a monotheist that he prefers another explanation. To him they are not outside but "within the Deity"; they "share adoration with the Deity," and are not very real personifications even when they are called by their names or titles.[3]

Again we come to a point of great interest and of real difficulty. Zoroastrianism is usually considered a dualistic system, but was the teaching of Zoroaster himself dualistic? Undoubtedly in Zoroaster's mind the forces of righteousness and the forces of evil are engaged in an irreconcilable conflict, which can only be ended in the complete victory of what is true and noble and upright. Even more than this, he holds that there is a personal spirit of evil, Angra Mainyu (Ahriman), who in the beginning chose evil as his portion and who now creates evil to oppose the good which exists in the world. This being, Angra Mainyu, is the negative counterpart of Spenta Mainyu, which is the special name of Ahura Mazda as creator. So, Spenta Mainyu and Angra Mainyu are even called "twins, inasmuch as they do not exist independently, but each in relation to the other; they meet in the higher unity of Ahura Mazda."[4] It is very easy to see how a thoroughgoing dualism can be attributed to Zoroaster, but the point which Professor Moulton insists on time and again is "the uniqueness of the Creator as the central

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[3] See Early Religious Poetry of Persia, The Treasure of the Magi, and Early Zoroastrianism, all by Professor James Hope Moulton.

[4] Moulton, Early Religious Poetry of Persia, p. 67.

feature of the faith.'"[5] Ethically he was a dualist, as every man must be who is in the moral battle to win, but at the same time he was a monotheist, believing in Ahura Mazda, the sole creator and sustainer of the universe. The evidence is not altogether clear, but this would seem to represent the thought of Zoroaster better than the view that he looked upon the personal creator of evil in the world as equal and coordinate with the creator of good.

Let us be thankful for the testimony thus given to the rightful place of morality in religion, such as has rarely been surpassed. To have coming down through the history of religion such unfailing emphasis on "good thoughts, good words, good deeds," is to raise that faith and its founder to an eminent position among the world's religions. And, as Professor Moulton has said, "It is a tribute to national character that all evil should be summed up in the she-devil 'Deceit.' "[6] But at the same time Zoroaster's limitations are most evident. He was a stern prophet, unmellowed by any thought of God's love and mercy. These names are not found among the Amesha Spenta, the personified qualities of the god he worshiped. The final victory in the universe will without question be a victory of the good—this is an essential element in all his teaching. His paradise is ethical and only the pure in heart may enter, but there is little hope for the sinner. He must cross from this world to the next over "The Bridge of the Separator," which was "broad for the righteous, narrow as a razor for the wicked, who fell off it into hell."[7] There is no mediator or Saviour or helper. A man determines his own destiny and as he is wicked or good goes to hell or heaven when he dies. It is very simple, but very hopeless. Zoroastrianism is a religion of strenuous moral endeavor, but has no salvation for him who has fallen

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[5] Early Zoroastrianism, p. 122. (Williams & Norgate, London, 1913.)
[6] Early Religious Poetry of Persia, p. 66.
[7] Op. cit., p. 71.

by the way and yet longs for the good and the true and the beautiful which he has failed to attain.

Development Since Zoroaster

We do not know what might have occurred had a succession of prophets arisen in the spirit of the great Zoroaster, but there were none. We are hampered by not knowing the condition of the religion during the reigns of the Achæmenides, who ruled Persia from B. C. 558 to 331. Tradition asserts that the kings were confirmed Zoroastrians, but of this we cannot be sure. Not until the time of the Sassanids, who ruled from A. D. 226 to 641, did the kingdom settle down again and the land have rest. These centuries, the period of the "great kings," were glorious days for the religion of Zoroaster, when with the revival of the faith a missionary spirit was developed and the teachings of the prophet were carried to regions as far distant as China. But with all this it was not the pure religion of its founder which was heralded far and wide. It did not take long for polytheism to find its way back when there was no longer any Zoroaster to keep burning the flame of reforming zeal.

The changes which were introduced into the religion are accounted for by Professor Moulton, in large measure at least, by referring them to the Magi. He looks upon the Magi as an indigenous non-Aryan tribe who lived in western Persia and who, when they came in contact with the Zoroastrians, succeeded in winning a place for themselves as the priests of the people. Much remains to be investigated in order to clear up the uncertainties still adhering to the history of the earlier periods, but we do know that the Magi were the priests and exercised control over the faith during the later centuries. They are known by their adherence to astrology, divination, and the practice of magic, which, by the way, derives its name from them, the practices of the *Magi* being designated as *magic*. All this was alien to the spirit of the master and indicates a serious declension from

the high level of his teachings. "They hardened the prophet's profound adumbrations of truth into a mechanical system of dogma, therein showing the usual skill of priests in preserving the letter and destroying the spirit."[8]

These men carried the ethical dualism of Zoroaster back into their theology. Instead of continuing to place Ahura Mazda over the whole creation, the one supreme Lord above all, they made "a systematic division of the world between Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu." All the angels of the one had counterparts, who were demonic ministers of the other. Even the Amesha Spenta, who had become archangels in the meantime, had their corresponding fiends in the realm of evil. So the god of righteousness and the god of evil divided the universe between them, each equally powerful and each having had his part in the original creation of the world. It must be said, however, that even on this theory at the end Ahura Mazda was to be completely victorious over Angra Mainyu. The good was to conquer and the evil would be finally overthrown. Men were to choose which side they would take in the conflict, and so the ethical note was retained intact. But the keen edge of Zoroaster's moral insistence was dulled by the laws of purity as found in the Vendidad, the priestly code of the religion. The dualism of clean and unclean was carried to a ridiculous extreme, until the whole of life was dominated by ideas of ceremonial purity and cleanness. The moral factor was swamped under the ceremonial. The elements of fire, earth, and water were considered sacred, and many rules were laid down to preserve them holy and uncontaminated. The religious life was reduced in large measure to over-nice refinements and scrupulous care to avoid pollution.

At two points the Magi sought to introduce practices which were utterly strange to the people. In one they succeeded and in the other they failed. The method of disposal

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[8] Op. cit., p. 78.

of the dead among the Zoroastrians is to place the bodies on a framework of iron within a low circular tower and there allow them to be stripped of all flesh by vultures who await with avidity the uncovering of the bodies to begin their gruesome work. The purpose of this strange custom is to avoid the pollution of the earth and fire either by burial or cremation. It was adopted by the Zoroastrians and remains to this day one of the most marked peculiarities of their practice. Wherever there is a Parsi community of sufficient size to justify their presence these Dakhmas, or "Towers of Silence," are to be found, built in beautiful groves and surrounded by the vultures, ever watchful for their legitimate prey. The burial of the bones after they have been picked clean is not supposed to pollute the earth in which they find their resting place. The other practice which the Magi desired to introduce and failed in doing was marriage between the closest relatives. This was considered by the Magi as "a religious duty of the most extravagant sanctity."[9] Fortunately, it did not approve itself to the best sense of the people and although it is frequently mentioned in the Avesta, it is utterly repudiated by the modern Parsis.

The statement was made that other gods besides Ahura Mazda were reintroduced. Zoroaster came into a land where the great nature gods of the Aryans were worshiped. He sought in his reformation to banish these forever as unworthy of man's reverence, but upon the ascendency in the religion of men who had not risen to his high idealism back they came again and found a place in the hearts and worship of the people. And yet even here Ahura Mazda is still first among the objects of worship. And never from the beginning until the present has any image ever been made the object of worship. The symbol of the Supreme Deity is fire. The Zoroastrians have been called fire-worshipers, but it is quite certain that this is a com-

[9] Op. cit., p. 77.

plete misnomer. The fire is the visible emblem or symbol of divinity and is reverenced so highly as such that it is not to be wondered at that they have actually been called fire-worshipers. But this they have the right to disclaim.

In the Yashts, or "Songs of Praise" of the later Avesta, poems are dedicated to a number of gods, some of whose names sound quite familiar: "Mithra, Anahita, Tishtrya, Haoma, and the Fravashis."[10] Not only so, but in places even the sublime Ahura Mazda is found in a position lower than some of these divinities, and even offering them worship. And the case is not materially helped when these old gods of paganism are looked upon as "angels." A name does not change their nature, and they remain pagan still. As the idea of the gods declines so does the idea of prayer to them. Prayer becomes the repetition of formulæ which possess power by their mere repetition, whether the words are understood by the worshiper or not. The old religion with its pure and elevated outlook was not completely lost by the incoming of these alien elements, but it has been so encrusted over by features foreign to its original genius that it is with difficulty that the modern Parsi is able to disengage himself from the accretions and return to the conceptions and practices of the holy prophet he so enthusiastically venerates.

The Parsis of the Present Day

On December 10, 1916, the Parsis celebrated the twelve hundredth anniversary of their landing in India. The exact date and the detailed circumstances of the coming of these "Pilgrim Fathers of Zoroastrianism" may be more or less a legend, but what we do know is that when the conquering Islamic armies swept over Persia and most of the inhabitants turned Mohammedan, a group of faithful men and women made their escape from the country and settled in India. Not all, however, did so. A small number who

[10] The Treasure of the Magi, p. 87. (Oxford Univ. Press, 1917.)

did not deny the faith remained in Persia and have retained their identity until the present day. Known as Gabars and numbering about ten thousand, this small remnant eke out a rather unenviable existence in Central Persia. Until the end of the eighteenth century this community was regarded by the Parsis of India as possessing a certain authority over them in view of their residence in the ancient seat of their holy faith, but even this acknowledgment is now a thing of the past and there is little hope of any future for these upholders of the ancient traditions.

But even the main body of Parsis in India would seem to be only a remnant, the memory of a departed glory. The contrast is striking between a proud nation whose established religion was Zoroastrianism and the little community of exiles in India jealous of their faith and guarding it carefully against compromise with any other religion. The total number is about a hundred thousand, one half of whom make their home in Bombay. The others are scattered in small groups, only one of which exceeds five thousand souls, in a score of cities throughout India. Not only is the community small but it is exceedingly clannish. Contrary to the theory which prevailed as late as the sixteenth century, the Parsis are now opposed to any extension of their faith to other nations or among the alien peoples by whom they are surrounded. It has in recent years been a subject of hot controversy whether the foreign wife of a Parsi might be admitted to the worship in the Fire-temples and be considered one with them in the faith. The decision up to the present has been against even so slight a lowering of the bars. What is to become of such a small and exclusive company of people is a question they are being compelled to ask ever more seriously. The danger of inbreeding faces them, and the postponement of the age of marriage, which has come with their contact with the west and the more strenuous conditions of modern life, bodes ill for the permanence of a community which has taken so exclusive an attitude.

The priesthood in Zoroastrianism is very important. The Mobeds, as the priests of the fire-temples are called, are essential to the conduct of the ceremonial and the upkeep of the sacred fire. The order of priests is hereditary, and at their head in connection with each great temple is the high priest, or Dastur. Unfortunately, the priesthood in general is not worthy of the community in education and intelligence. There are some learned priests, but most of them are incapable of the leadership the people have a right to expect. The very training which the neophytes must undergo is not calculated to fit them for understanding and dealing with the difficult problems of the present day. They must be able to repeat from memory the whole of the Yasna, the oldest and most important part of the Avesta, but in a language which they do not understand. Is there any wonder the priesthood as a profession has little appeal to-day for young men who may be in line for the office, but can feel no incentive to such a career?

The most important function they are called upon to perform is the care of the fire in the temples. This is the very center of the cult, and most elaborate are the precautions taken that the purity of the flame may not be endangered. Only Parsis are allowed entrance into the inner precincts of the temple, where the urn containing the fire stands upon a stone pedestal. "Religious Parsis visit the Fire-temple almost daily, and on four days of each month, those sacred to Atar (3d, 9th, 17th, and 20th), there is a very large attendance. There is no distinction between men and women in their form or place of worship. Arrived at the temple, the worshiper washes the uncovered parts, and recites the *Kusti* prayer. Then he passes through the outer hall, goes barefoot through the inner hall to the threshold of the room where the Fire burns, and recites prayers standing. Only the priest is in the room itself. He receives from the worshiper sandalwood and a piece of money, and brings him ashes from the urn in a ladle, which he applies to his fore-

head and eyelashes. After his prayers he retires backward to the place where he left his shoes, and goes home.'"[11]

Besides the fire-temple, which is for the living, each Parsi community must have a Dakhma, one of the Towers of Silence, for the disposal of the dead. Since vultures are so essential to the carrying out of the ritual, it can readily be seen that the community must be of some size to be able to dispose of their dead in this fashion without taking the body to another and larger settlement of their fellow-religionists. In all there are about sixty of these towers, mostly of course in western India. The ideas of purity and impurity held by the Parsis come to a climax in their ideas of the impurity connected with death. The ceremonial is carefully planned to obviate the pollution which would otherwise adhere to anything connected with the last rites. The professional corpse-bearers are a class set apart from their fellows because of the contamination they are unable to avoid and which they cannot completely rid themselves of despite frequent ablutions. And so from the time of death until the vultures have done their work a constant watchfulness is maintained through a long series of ceremonials to ward off the dangerous influences which are now hovering so near. Not only so, but frequently, especially at such times as initiation into the community on the part of the young, marriage, and the birth of children, elaborate ceremonies, largely magical in nature, are performed. With all the intelligence now to be found among the Parsis these ceremonies, many of them extravagant and exceedingly puerile, have not lost their hold. They are still bound down by a tradition from which many would be free.

In addition to the handicap of small and even dwindling numbers the Parsi community is rent by serious disagreement in belief. There are the conservatives, who are vigorously opposed to any change and would have everything remain as it is now. At the other extreme are the radicals,

[11] Moulton, op. cit., p. 145.

who are anxious for the future and can see no hope unless drastic reforms are introduced. And between the two are all varieties of opinion both liberal and conservative. There is the tendency to rationalize the faith. When this has been done with vigor, as by Mr. H. T. Bhabha, the president of the Fourth Zoroastrian Conference, held in 1913, the result, put in his own words, is as follows: "It is singularly free from dogmas, and is so simple in its tenets that it differs but little from Unitarianism or Rationalism."[12] These more radical reformers are not adverse to the admission of converts, but even they want only a few. They are afraid of being swamped by the admission of those of another race who cannot share their hereditary pride and cannot be counted on to uphold unswervingly the ancient and distinctive traditions of the community. The reformers also have in their program the use of prayers in a living language, the abolition of meaningless ceremonials and of prayers for the dead, and the mitigation of certain ceremonial restrictions placed on women, particularly at childbirth. One other tendency is at work and this in the direction of theosophy. Dabbling in the occult and reaching out after contacts with the spirit-world have affected the Parsis as similar gropings do in the West, in disintegrating interest in genuine religion and magnifying the importance of the physical in the attempt to reach the spiritual.

But, after all, we cannot wonder that there should be a sense of want and need among the Parsis. Their religion at best lacks completeness; there is no adequate doctrine of salvation. A leading Parsi, Doctor Jivanji Modi, says, "A Parsee has to believe that for the salvation of his soul he has to look to nobody else, but to himself. Nobody—no priest, or no prophet—will intercede for him. For his salvation he has only to look to the purity of his own thoughts, words, and actions. . . . Think of nothing but the truth, speak nothing but the truth, and do nothing but what is

[12] Quoted in The Treasure of the Magi, p. 174.

proper, and you are saved."[13] A stern religion with a high moral code and the example of a most vigorous champion of righteousness in their great prophet, it has failed to provide for mercy and sacrifice, tenderness and love, and by this failure has made it impossible for it to be a religion with an appeal to a world lying in need not only of a noble ideal but of grace and forgiveness.

Suggestions for Further Study

J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Times* (New York, 1916), Chap. VI.

James Hope Moulton, *The Treasure of the Magi* (London, 1917). The best handbook on the entire subject.

A. V. Williams Jackson, *Zoroaster, the Prophet of Ancient Iran* (New York, 1901). All that is known about the prophet is found here.

George Foot Moore, *History of Religions,* Vol. I, Chaps. XV, XVI.

[13] Quoted in The Treasury of the Magi, p. 205f.

CHAPTER VI

HINDUISM

The Religion of the Vedas

One of the two branches of the Aryan offshoot of the Indo-European peoples migrated, as we have seen, into Persia. The other, traveling southeastward, found the passes leading through the great mountain barrier and emerged on the plains of northern India. In all probability they did not come at any one time, but straggled into the new country in smaller or larger groups during hundreds of years. Some would say that they were still arriving about B. C. 1500, while others would place their arrival much earlier, even B. C. 2000 or 2500. Coming down into northern India, these Aryans spread out fanlike over the Punjab, or region of the "five rivers," and then, as the years passed, slowly extended their settlements to the south and east, taking possession of the rich Ganges Valley as they advanced. A picture of these "tall, fair people" is given by J. N. Farquhar: "They were then soldier-farmers, equally used to the plow and the sword. They were constantly at war with the aborigines around them; and they looked eagerly for sunshine and rain to mature their crops and give them fodder for their cattle and herds. They were still a primitive people, living in simple villages, with but few of the arts of civilization, and untrammeled by the bonds of caste. They had no writing and no coinage. They ate beef and drank intoxicating drink. The tribes lived each under its own chieftain, and now and then quarrels led to war among them. The family was still in a healthy condition. Their women had a great deal of freedom throughout their lives. There was no child-marriage

among them, no seclusion in the zenana, no widow-burning, and no law against the remarriage of widows. Like most primitive peoples, they practiced the exposure of girl children and old people."[1]

They brought with them a religion in many features similar to that of the Persians when Zoroaster inaugurated his reformation. Our knowledge of their beliefs and practices is based on a collection of hymns known as the Rigveda. These hymns, or "praises," were composed during a long period and were committed to memory for use at the sacrifices. There were over a thousand of them, which were finally written down in Sanskrit and preserved as a single collection. In some ways this collection is the most remarkable body of religious literature which has come down out of the far distant past. All the gods whose praises are sung are nature deities, divided into three groups with eleven gods in each group. They are the gods of the celestial regions, those of the earth, and those of the atmosphere between earth and sky. Of the gods of the high heavens three may be mentioned: Mitras, who as Mithras we have met in Persia and in the last stages of Roman paganism; Vishnu, who in a later day assumed an importance in Indian religion which he had not known in the earlier period; and finally the great god Varuna. According to Barth, "Varuna is the god of the vast luminous heavens, viewed as embracing all things, and as the primary source of all life and every blessing."[2] The possibilities lying in the conception of this god might have raised Hinduism to a far nobler level than has been attained. Varuna was not only sublime in his majesty and power, but was the judge of men's hearts and the exemplar of nobility and truth and uprightness, who expected the same of the beings under his sway. But, most unfortunately, these possibilities were not realized and Hin-

[1] A Primer of Hinduism, p. 21f. (Oxford Univ. Press, 2nd edit., 1912.)

[2] The Religions of India, p. 16. (Trübner, London, 1906.)

duism suffers to-day because Varuna has been virtually discarded and other gods representative of far different ideals fill the minds and dominate the lives of its adherents.

There were three important gods of the earth, namely, Agni, Soma, and Yama. Agni is fire, that of the lightning and the sun as well as that we make use of every day. As the flame ascends and seems to be traveling toward the purified abode of the gods fire was early looked upon as a priest conveying sacrifices to the gods. Many high functions in human life and even in creation have devolved upon this god, but in all the various forms of service to which he has been assigned Agni has always remained just the material fire with which we are familiar. Soma is the name of an Indian plant, now unknown, and the fermented juice which was extracted from it. It is intoxicating and therefore divine, thought these early Aryans. They were possessed of a spirit not their own when under the influence of the Soma, and their only explanation was that it must come from the gods. Here is suggested to us the origin of our term "ardent spirits," which literally take possession of the man who has imbibed freely. But Soma also has a celestial reference and is supposed to flow in the invisible world as well as on the earth. The gods themselves attained immortality by drinking the Soma, and so will men when they drink the life-giving potion with Yama in the land of the blessed. Again here, as in the case of Agni, the physical character of the god is never lost. Soma remains until the end, and in spite of the idealizing process, the juice of the soma plant. Yama might have lived an immortal, but he chose to die. He thus was the first to cross the dreaded flood from which none return. The dead who have lived nobly go to him. Not much is said about the wicked, who perish or continue to exist "in dark and dismal pits" with demons and other evil spirits.

Of the eleven gods of the enveloping atmosphere Indra only need be mentioned. Of all the gods of the Rigveda

Indra takes first place as the national god of the Aryans. He is the "king of heaven," the warrior who gives victory to his people, and at the same time he is the giver of good and the author and preserver of life. Indra not only fights *with* the people when they are engaged in war, but fights *for* them with his faithful companions, the Maruts, the "bright ones," the gods of storm and lightning. Intoxicated with Soma, he rides among the clouds, striking his enemies with thunderbolts. When it is remembered that it is to the atmosphere the people of India must look not only for prosperity but for life itself, it can be seen quite readily how Indra, the god who defeats the enemies who would prevent the breaking of the monsoon with its copious rains, would be lifted up and idealized until he became their great champion and protector.

When one reads the hymns of the Rigveda he is confused by the manner in which the qualities of one god are ascribed to another so that the lines of demarcation between them become hazy and indistinct. This tendency to fuse and assimilate the gods and their functions was the beginning of a long process which continued until it led into the pantheism which is so characteristic a feature of later Indian thought. The Indian mind even at this early date was beginning to feel out after a unity in which there should be no distinctions, and, though the fully developed theory was not completed for many centuries, the tendency begins to make itself evident almost from the beginning. One is also struck in these hymns by the ascriptions of praise to one and then another of these divine beings, just as if each god were the sole god of the universe. Many gods are worshiped, but each in an exclusive manner. The theology oscillates between polytheism and an approach toward monotheism. Professor Max Müller called it Kathenotheism, the worship of "one god at a time." The worshiper seemed a bit uneasy. He had inherited many gods, with various functions, to provide him with requisite

care and protection, but he was not satisfied. The desire for unity was already present, making the worship of a variety of gods seem incongruous. With this beginning and by a very natural process among so thoughtful a people as these Aryans the conception would change and develop until all the gods came to be looked upon as manifestations only, manifestations of a primal essence behind and inclusive of them all. We have anticipated somewhat, but have done so in order to call attention thus early to the tendency which can only be understood, it is true, by following the development to its final issue, but which begins to betray itself in the earliest movements of Indian thought.

The worship of the gods was largely sacrificial. Animals were offered in increasing numbers as the centuries passed until the land ran red with blood by the time Buddhism rose in the sixth and fifth centuries before our era. There were also elaborate rites connected with the offering of the soma and of ghi, or clarified butter. There were no temples and no images in the early day, the worship being conducted in the open air. Priests were in evidence very early, but as the sacrifices became more elaborate they increased their hold until in the end no bondage can compare with that in which the people of India are held by their spiritual leaders. The theory was very simple. Sacrifice was looked upon as absolutely necessary, and the efficacy of the sacrifice depended, not upon moral fitness, nor even upon the sincerity of the worshiper, but upon the correctness with which the ritual of the sacrifice was performed. This was believed implicitly by all the people high and low. In the earliest day the father was the priest of his family, but as the theory of sacrifice developed it became increasingly difficult for him to find time to master the ritual on which the fortunes of the family depended. The priest took his place and performed the ceremonies for him. They made themselves experts in religion, masters of ceremony and ritual, and

thus became indispensable to the people. Nothing could be done without them. They dominated life and exercised their sway with ever-increasing severity. These Brahmins, as they were called, came to occupy a unique position, wielding the mightiest power in the land. Jealous of their position, they separated themselves more and more from the other classes and gave it out that they were superior beings, veritable gods on earth.

The theory of the efficacy of sacrifice was carried so far that sacrifice was looked upon as irresistible. Thus the whole system became impregnated with magic. The sacrifice became more important than the being to whom it was offered. The carrying out of the ritual with minute exactness would bring about the desired end with little reference to the will of the god who was addressed. This did not tend to exalt the gods, but it did result in further enhancing the authority of the divine priesthood which could perform such wonders. It was even said that the gods themselves had attained their present position by sacrifice, and so it followed that it was not beyond the range of possibility for mortal men now to reach the same goal. And in India theories do not remain mere theories, but are put into action, and men give themselves to all forms of religious practices and austerities in order to attain divinity at the end of their self-imposed regimen.

We have referred to the Rigveda as the earliest literary product of the Indian mind, but it was only the beginning. Even before the rise of Buddhism the literature had grown considerably. In addition to the Rigveda is the Samaveda, an arrangement of verses from the Rigveda for use at the Soma sacrifice, the Yajurveda, a double collection of prose selections and verses from the Rigveda for use in the ritual, and, finally, at a much later date, the Atharvaveda, a collection of magical formulæ. By this time the heights of the Rigveda had been left far behind and lower conceptions were filling the minds of priests and people. In addition to

all these and appended to the Vedas were priestly writings called the Brahmanas, which purport to give the inner meaning of the sacrifices and to direct the priests in their performance, but which are an arid waste of irrational theorizing with no inspiration or uplift about them.

The Philosophic Development

When the Aryans came into India they possessed no belief in the doctrine of transmigration, yet it is one of the basic doctrines among Hindus to-day. Where did they get it? The subject is obscure, but probably the idea was suggested by their contact with the aboriginal population into the midst of whom they were thrown. While the Aryans came more and more to dominate the religious life of the country of their adoption, they unconsciously absorbed many of the ideas of the primitive Dravidians. One of these was probably transmigration. The theory is that when a man dies his soul, or his essence, leaves the dying body and enters the body of some animal or human being as it comes into the world to begin its career. And the process may be repeated generation after generation times without number.

While the theory doubtless came to the Aryan invaders in a very crude form, the keen minds of the thinkers among them would not allow it to rest, but worked it out to its logical conclusion and made it a part of their growing philosophical system. The law which determined the operation of transmigration was the law of Karma. Now, Karma means "action" or "deed," but it refers to such actions or deeds in one life as work out their results in the next life and the next and so on until their force has been entirely spent. According to our Karma, we are born into a new life well or strong, good or bad, rich or poor. It is a kind of retribution working itself out automatically and inevitably in existence after existence. There is absolutely no escape from the clutches of this inexorable law. All we

can hope for is not to add to our Karma, so that when what we have inherited is finally exhausted there will be no more fuel to keep the fire burning. The fuel consists of deeds—any deeds, good or bad—which stimulate life. To live then—just to live, whether nobly or dishonorably, it makes little difference—is an evil with a most unfortunate entail for the future. If we might only cease from doing deeds, from any activity, and simply exist with no attachments to life, we would be on the way to emancipation. But it is exceedingly difficult and cannot even be begun without devoting one's whole mind to that end. The ascetic who gives himself to various kinds of cruel austerities and would thereby cut the cords of desire which bind him fast to life and its joys and sorrows, is on the highway of salvation and at some time, it may be millenniums ahead, will have exhausted his Karma and be thus set free from the necessity of further transmigrations.

While all this was being developed and was becoming the common property of the Aryan community in India, another and deeper movement was in progress. Certain men of intelligence and deep earnestness, dissatisfied with the current explanations and the crude materialism of the sacrificial system, made the attempt to penetrate deeper into the meaning of life and its problems, and in the end arrived at astonishing conclusions. Appended to the Brahmanas are to be found a group of writings called Aranyakas, or teachings "belonging to the forest." They were written by men who, leaving the society of ordinary men and women, went off into the forest and gave themselves to meditation and austerities. The results of their thinking are to be found in the Upanishads, which are embedded in the Aranyakas and are sometimes a little difficult to distinguish from them. These philosophical writings embody the fundamental principles of Hindu thinking even down to the present day.

The creed which these early philosophers evolved was very

simple. There is but one Being in all the universe; in fact, this Being *is* the Universe. Here is real unity, and that is what these thinkers were trying to find. It is pantheism pure and simple. The gods and other spiritual beings were not eternal, but only the temporary manifestations of this one Absolute. The souls of men were "sparks from the central fire, drops from the ocean of divinity," to be incarnated times without number, according to the law of Karma, but in the end to find release and drop back into the boundless ocean from which they came. The only eternal, unquestionable fact in the universe is Brahman, the World-soul, and the conclusion was reached that the Atman, or individual human soul, was identical with it. "Myself is the infinite self" and "The soul of the universe, whole and undivided, dwells in me," are two of the many ways in which this identity was expressed. Probably the most used phrase is, "Thou art That," also "I am Brahman," and "I am He."[3] The object of life for these thinkers was to realize the truth of these affirmations. Salvation was to be attained by intuition, by a sudden flash of insight, which would drive away the darkness and leave the man possessed of this liberating thought. Should he achieve this insight by the power of his intellect after profound meditation, concentrating his whole mind on this one thought, he was free. Austerities were of no further use; he had broken the bond which held him fast to the wheel of transmigration and he would not be born again. He was free forever; the release was complete and final.

We must look a little more closely at this Absolute Being, Brahman. Farquhar says that Brahman is "a neuter noun which expresses the common thought of the time, that the world-soul is an impersonal essence present in all things."[4] So enthusiastic were the forest thinkers over their "find" that they could not restrain themselves in their rapture.

[3] Quoted from J. N. Farquhar, Primer of Hinduism, p. 48.
[4] Op. cit., p. 48.

Brahman is to them everything good and desirable, the aim of all their longing. But when Brahman is described and an attempt made to state the qualities and attributes involved in their conception the result is most disappointing. Nothing positive can be affirmed; it must all be in negatives. Of each positive characteristic the only word is, he is not that. It is only by accommodation that Brahman is called "he" at all. He is impersonal and the word "Brahman" is neuter, so the more appropriate term would be "it." But even more serious is the impossibility of thinking of Brahman as holy or righteous. He is considered as a being far beyond the distinction between right and wrong. That were to lower him and bring him into the narrow circle of human frailty and need. But the sad fact is that any attempt to posit a being for whom ethical distinctions do not exist is really to descend to a level below that we occupy. Such a conception has no power to raise men to heights of moral endeavor beyond the natural desires of the human heart. This philosophical theory has crippled Hinduism through all the years and holds out little promise for the future when India needs all the moral and spiritual strength she can obtain for the task of national reconstruction which is before her.

The philosophic development which we have been considering was not completed for centuries after the writing of the Upanishads, which occurred before B. C. 500. No systematic presentation of any theory can be found in these loosely connected writings. Exactly what occurred during a long period we do not know, not until we come to the name of one of the great characters in India's religious history, that of Sankara, whose period of activity fell in the first half of the ninth century of our era. The system of which he was the supreme teacher is called the Vedanta, the "end" or "aim" of the Veda. Basing his work on the teachings of the Upanishads Sankara went to the utmost limit and set forth an unqualified monism. This had been

hinted at often before, but never asserted so unwaveringly. He not only refused to recognize anything as real except Brahman; he declared that the world and all things in it were only *maya,* illusion. That we ourselves exist as distinct individuals is only an illusion, and the thing most necessary for us is to rid ourselves of the fatal misconception and realize that there is nothing else in existence except the one absolute All and that we ourselves are that All. But in addition to his uncompromising monism Sankara was willing to allow, as a makeshift for those who could not rise to the "higher" truth, certain of the current doctrines about the gods, always maintaining that they were only manifestations of the great Brahman and not themselves eternal. As soon as one could reach the higher levels he would see that these, too, were illusive and could give no satisfaction for those who had attained.

The system of Vedanta as taught by Sankara, with its attempt to deny the reality of the world altogether, was not accepted by all. Other religious leaders, like Ramanuja (about A. D. 1100), approach more nearly a theistic position, acknowledging that Brahman is the sole reality, but at the same time holding that he has definite and positive characteristics, like intelligence and goodness, and is not utterly unapproachable by his children, who are real beings and not the mere "shadow of a dream." Not only was there this measure of divergence, but other philosophies arose, one of which in particular was utterly different from the Vedanta. In the Sankhya system we have a dualism. There is a primary active substance, called Prakriti, and also many individual souls, called Purusha, which are eternal and distinct like the primary substance itself. Here salvation is attained by insight, as in the case of the Vedanta, but the releasing truth which dawns on the mind is that one's soul is eternally different from the active substance, instead of being eternally one with the world-soul as in the Vedanta. The system is utterly atheistic and contains less

of hope and help than the Vedanta to which it is so vigorously opposed.

The Caste System

Hinduism is the most amorphous of all religions. Almost anything can be said of it with the assurance that it is true, and at the same time almost anything which is said may be denied and that with good reason. Hinduism is a strange medley of different and even contradictory elements mixed together into a very irregular and uneven mass. What is it, then, which makes a man a Hindu? What is the standard of orthodoxy which may be applied to determine a man's standing in the Hindu community? The only correct answer is that it is neither belief nor yet the acceptance of a moral code which makes a man an acceptable Hindu. He may believe what he likes and do as he pleases and yet have no question raised as to his standing as a Hindu. And yet Hinduism is as rigid and as exclusive as any religion in the world. In fact, no outsider can become a member of their religious community, he must be born into it, he must be a "birthright" Hindu or not be one at all. The clue to this strange anomaly is to be found in caste, the form of organization obtaining wherever Hinduism exists. To be a Hindu means to belong to one of the castes and to obey the caste regulations. Orthodoxy, then, in Hinduism is conformity to custom, petrified in a social organization.

A caste is a group of people kept apart from other caste groups by regulations touching marriage, food, in some cases occupation, and also residence. Taking them in the reverse order, conformity with reference to residence, which is the least important, means that a Hindu shall not travel or reside outside India. The fact that the university centers in Europe and America attract so many Hindus clearly indicates that this rule rests lightly on those who feel impelled to seek their education abroad. Yet among the stricter families a ceremony of purification is necessary on the return

from a foreign country to cleanse away the taint which has been incurred by travel and by association with foreigners, the men and women they have met in our colleges and universities! Without this they cannot be received back into the old fellowship in the family cult. But so far as the travel itself is concerned most enlightened Hindus wink calmly at it and pay no attention to the prohibition. Occupation helps to determine caste in some cases, but this is not of great importance, as members of many of the castes are to be found widely scattered among the occupations and professions.

In respect of food conformity is more significant. One must not eat with a man of another caste, and frequently among the higher castes the food he eats must be prepared by a servant who belongs to his own caste. But even with respect to this regulation many a Hindu to-day pays scant attention to it at times. He will eat with others on a dining car and at a banquet, even though he may be scrupulously careful when he is at home. The women are more conservative and prevent the growth of more liberal ideas which the men, particularly those of intelligence, might not be adverse to introducing. At the present time, when India begins to feel the need of unity in order to build up a worthy national life, the bondage of caste becomes oppressive, and leading men feel the necessity of breaking away from the old customs and demonstrating the possibility of all Indians, Mohammedans as well as Hindus, sharing a common political and social life. Not a great deal has been accomplished, but this is the tendency, and the papers frequently report the meeting of various classes of the Indian community around the common table.

But it is at the point of marriage that caste retains its deathlike grip upon the social life of India. Hindu parents are between two fires. It is a disgrace to have daughters who remain unmarried after their early teens, and yet husbands must be found within their own caste or subcaste.

This rule is absolute and unbending. A Hindu may be lax in respect of food and eating with other caste men, but at this point he is like adamant. He simply will not marry his children to outsiders and thus "break caste." This is the unforgivable sin in Hinduism. The problem that is suggested by this dilemma has led to customs which have been of untold injury to Indian life. Child marriage is an almost inevitable outcome of the necessity of finding desirable husbands and wives for all the boys and girls in the community. Thousands of marriages are consummated before children reach their teens, with physical and moral results which can only be deplorable. This custom, in a land of high mortality, has produced thousands of little widows and widowers. The boy may marry again, and usually does so, but the poor girl—her story is the saddest of all the suffering little women in the world. She is held responsible for the death of her husband, and as a criminal her hair is shaved off and her dearly loved ornaments are taken away and she is dressed in a coarse garment and becomes the drudge of the family. She may not remarry, but remains until the end of her life a poor miserable soul—unless, of course, she be the mother of sons. This lifts her to a position of honor from which she cannot be completely displaced. The most commendable thing for the widow to do until comparatively recent time was to mount the funeral pile and be burned to death with the body of her husband; and, willingly or unwillingly, this horrible custom, called sati, or suttee, was carried out many thousands of times before the British government put a stop to it in 1829. Many of the measures of reform which are being urged by the government and intelligent Hindus have as their object the raising of the age of marriage and the relief of widows by allowing their remarriage. But with all that wise reformers may say and do the mass of the people still cling to the old customs, and women still continue to be looked upon as a kind of inevitable evil. The day of woman's emancipation lies in the future, and the

sad and discouraging fact is that all we have been discussing is an integral part of the religion to which they cling with such tenacity. It is embedded in their sacred literature and has been enunciated by their great religious leaders.

No theory of the origin of caste is completely satisfactory. We do not know the exact number of castes and subcastes. We may get some clues to help us to understand the meaning of the institution. The word for caste in Sanskrit, *varna,* originally meant "color." This would indicate that the Aryan as he came into India from the north was originally fair-skinned in contrast to the dark Dravidian. In their endeavor to preserve the purity of their blood and the fairness of their skin they hedged themselves around with restrictions touching their relations with the aborigines. The earliest division we have on record separates into distinct groups the priests (Brahmins), the warriors (Kshattriyas), the agriculturalists (Vaisyas), and the menial laborers (Sudras). The three mentioned first constitute the "twice-born" people, those who had the right to be initiated or be born again into the religious community. The Sudras, who are supposed to have been largely of Dravidian blood, were outsiders so far as the ceremonial and the worship of the "twice-born" was concerned. According to the theory announced in the Institutes of Manu, the ancient book of laws and customs, the Brahmins, Kshattriyas, and Vaisyas were born from the mouth, the arms, and the thighs respectively of the Supreme Soul of the Universe, while the poor Sudra proceeded from the feet and was looked upon as the menial, doing his work at the bidding of the three other orders.

But while no one has been able to give an acceptable explanation of caste, the most evident fact in the whole system is the preeminence of the Brahmin priest. He is the key and dominates the system. All take their cue from him. He looks upon himself as inherently superior to all the others. Was he not created different and has he not demonstrated

that he is not to be classified with the common run of men? The caste system is his way of preserving his position inviolate, and he clings to it with the most serious concern. At many points he has deserved well of the people. He is rightfully recognized as the gifted leader in the higher life of the community. But on the other hand having little or no sympathy with those who occupy a subordinate position and filled with unfathomable pride, the Brahmin lords it over the consciences and wills of men and exercises a tyranny unsurpassed anywhere in the world.

Some good things may be said of caste. It engenders a certain solidarity which is of great value in the precarious conditions in which most of the people of India live. In times of distress caste acts as a labor union or a trade guild or as a relief association in giving assistance to those who otherwise would have no recourse. There is a mutual helpfulness exercised which is good and beneficial. But the count against the system as a whole far outweighs any good which may be claimed for it. It is fundamentally divisive and stands as a strong bar against the unity which the forward looking Hindu knows must be achieved before India can become a strong nation ready and worthy to take its place among the nations of the world. Even deeper than this, however, caste kills all sense of brotherhood. To a Hindu his "brother" is a member of his caste and no one else. He is taught to despise and look down upon the lower castes as inferior, by contact with whom he must not soil his hands. And when we come to the fifty millions of out-castes, or "untouchables," we reach a depth of human misery and degradation almost unbelievable. Their touch is polluting and their very shadow falling on the food prepared for a high-caste man renders it unfit for use. Centuries of such disdain and abuse have created a race of cringing creatures who, scorned by their own proud superiors, have lost all the self-respect they might have developed and are to-day among the most pitiable people in the world. They

constitute one of the greatest challenges to social and religious service to be found anywhere. And yet despite their name, *out-castes,* they are a part of a religio-social system which is responsible for their present condition.

Hinduism Since the Rise of Buddhism

During the sixth century before our era Buddhism arose in northern India. As a result of the example and teachings of Gautama Buddha the whole complexion of things religious was greatly changed throughout the length and breadth of the land. We may not at this time trace the rise and development of the new doctrine and the new discipline which affected so profoundly the life of the Indian peoples; that will be done in the following chapter. All that is needed here is to state that Hinduism was greatly modified during the centuries when Buddhism was in the ascendency. The period is very obscure historically, and only occasionally is light shed on the course of the religious development, and then it is the condition of Buddhism which is illumined and not Hinduism. Buddhism finally disappeared with the arrival of the Mohammedan on the scene of Indian history about the year A. D. 1000. But long before this decay had set in and Buddhism was losing its hold. It is exceedingly doubtful whether its teachings were ever so widely and so deeply accepted that the tenure of Hinduism was really imperiled. But what is true is that as Buddhism waned Hinduism again came to its own, and in the end established its supremacy over the land, a supremacy which has been challenged only by Islam, an alien religion which has settled itself in the land and won millions of the native peoples.

The Hinduism which raised its head again after centuries of strong Buddhistic influence was not the same. The caste system remained intact and even developed, though it was not encouraged, to say the least, by the Buddha and his followers. It was too deeply ingrained and too fundamentally in line with Hindu instincts to be eliminated by the slight

opposition offered by Buddhism. The sacrificial system was more seriously modified, but here the theory remained the same; only the form of the sacrifice was changed. Bloody sacrifices almost ceased to be offered and their place was taken in large part by cereals and flowers. We shall have occasion to note one of the exceptions to this rule, but the remarkable change is not to be minified by the relatively few instances of animal sacrifice which continued to exist. And, finally, the Hinduism which emerged after the partial eclipse of so many centuries presents a very different organization of the pantheon, and even worships a different set of gods. The same names occur, but gods who were once prominent have given place to others who held a subordinate position or to those whose names do not even occur in the ancient records.

Back in the period of the Gupta dynasty, A. D. 320-650, a movement was on foot to look upon Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva as the threefold manifestation of the Supreme, the Absolute Brahman we have met before.[5] This triad, or Hindu Trimurti, has never entered deeply into the thinking of the people, though it is frequently mentioned in the religious literature, and is at times represented in sculpture in the form of a triple head on one pair of shoulders. Brahma, the first member of this trio, is looked upon as the creator, the more or less personal source of the universe and the life which it contains. He has no popular following, only one or two temples in all India being devoted to his worship. But the fact that he is looked upon as a personal creator calls attention to the theistic tendency which has expressed itself in various forms throughout the course of Hindu

[5] For convenience, and in accordance with The Century Dictionary, a difference in spelling has been introduced to distinguish the three meanings of the word frequently given as "Brahman." This spelling *Brahman* designates the neuter, impersonal All, the philosophical Absolute. *Brahma* stands for the personal creator, also called Prajapati, one of the emanations of the Supreme Brahman. *Brahmin*, which springs from the same idea and root, is used of the priests and the priestly caste.

religious history, in spite of the popular polytheism which is to be found at every turn and the deadening pantheism which has so completely captured the intelligence of the country.

The story of Vishnu and Siva is very different. Their worship constitutes the sectarianism of modern Hinduism, the people being roughly divided between the worshipers of Vishnu and the worshipers of Siva. Vishnu was one of the celestial gods in the Rigveda and was associated with Indra, with whom, however, he could not compare in importance. During the centuries Vishnu increased in dignity and greatness and seemed to take to himself some of the qualities of the great Indra himself, until in the end he easily overtopped the national god of the Aryans of a bygone age. The most marked characteristic of the worship of Vishnu is that he is not worshiped in his own person, but in that of one or another of his manifestations, or incarnations, *avatars,* in Sanskrit. Through these incarnations the worship of Vishnu absorbed many stray beliefs, even the Buddha being acknowledged as one of the avatars. According to Barth, "An Avatara . . . is the presence, at once mystic and real, of the supreme being in a human individual, who is both truly god and truly man."[8] Vishnu himself was lifted higher and higher until he was finally declared to be one with the Universal Spirit, the great Preserver, and as such almost fills the place of the sole god of the Universe. Hindu thought thus fluctuates between what seem to us to be irreconcilable extremes, polytheistic, theistic, and pantheistic, with comparatively little difficulty.

The most prominent of the incarnations of this great god are Rama and Krishna, heroes of the great epic poems, the "Ramayana" and the "Mahabarata," but of the two Krishna is incomparably the greater. He is probably worshiped by more people than any other god in India. Krishna is an incarnation with a very striking history. How much of it

[8] The Religions of India, p. 170.

is legendary and how much sober fact, if he ever lived at all, it is exceedingly difficult to say. He is, like Rama, a great hero, "an exterminator of monsters, a victorious warrior," but unfortunately his record is not admirable. As given in the Puranas he is said to have had sixteen thousand wives and a hundred and eighty thousand children, many of his days being spent in an impure round of gambols with the shepherd maidens. Spiritualize these accounts as far as one may, the dangerous journey through such mire to reach the heights beyond is sure to leave its stain deep on the soul of even the purest-minded reader. It is a sad plight in which popular Hinduism finds itself with its most exalted incarnation. If the great God above is like that, there is little hope of raising the people to a high level of honor and purity.

In connection with the worship of Vishnu arose a new doctrine, that of Bhakti, or "devotion," which is much like the Christian idea of faith and trust. It is directed by the worshiper toward one or another of these incarnations and thus provides a point of contact with the typical attitude of Christianity, that of trust in the "incarnate God." It is to be noted that the idea of Bhakti has spread widely over India and is directed to-day to many gods outside the bounds of Vishnu worship. The Vaishnavas, as the worshipers of Vishnu are called, are found principally in the north of India. The actual worship is performed before an image of the god or incarnation and consists of prayers and offerings. The sacrifice of animals has entirely disappeared and use is made of grain and fruit and flowers and milk.

The worshipers of Siva, or Saivites are found principally in the South. In strong contrast with Vishnu, the Preserver, Siva is known as the Destroyer and represents the dark, cruel aspects of life. He also represents the powers of reproduction and is always symbolized in his temples by the Linga, or human phallus, instead of by an image. This idea is strongly emphasized in Siva worship, Nandi the bull

being represented as an attendant of the god, a striking example of powerful passion and generative power. "Yet in South India there are daily sung to Siva hymns that for warmth of feeling have not often been excelled. . . . The god seems so unlovable, yet the Saivite saints are intoxicated with love for him, and call him Grace itself."[7] With all his other attributes he becomes to them all that any of the other gods stand for, and even ravishes their gaze as they see in him the god of love. Both the philosopher and the peasant see in Siva the paragon of all excellence, for one the basis of an all-embracing world-view and for the other the friendly god who will be with him in trouble.

Unlike Vishnu, Siva has no incarnations, but he is not alone in the world of gods. He has his consorts, or wives, and is very frequently worshiped in their persons rather than in his own. Among these wives are Devi, "the goddess," Durga, "the inaccessible," Karala, "the horrible one," and Kali, "the black one." This terrible nest of harpies accentuates the tragic feature of Siva worship, and illustrates to what lengths these poor people, on whom the struggle of life has laid its heavy hand, are compelled to go to find solace and relief. Kali, to take but one example, is the goddess who is depicted as the cruel woman who with devilish glee dances on the body of her husband, whose head she has just cut off and holds in her hand. She can only be satisfied with blood, and at her temples goats and calves are killed in order to spatter her protruding tongue with the bloody sacrifice. And yet women all over India cry out to Mother Kali as their only hope in distress and suffering. Closely connected with the worship of Siva is that of Ganesa, his son, the elephant-headed god of wisdom, whose unique images are to be seen in all part of the country. The Saivites are numbered by the million, and by their devotion and earnestness attest the inalienable religiousness of the Indian people, who cry out after God and must find him,

[7] Sydney Cave, Redemption Hindu and Christian, p. 124f.

even if in the grotesque and horrible forms in which Siva and his company are represented.

Besides these main forms of religious life India has many others. When we are told by Monier-Williams that ninety per cent of all the people of India are demon-worshipers, we ask how that can be when the people have been roughly divided between the two great sects. The fact is, the lines are loosely drawn and are stepped over with ease. Millions who may at times worship at the shrines of Krishna or Siva are also devotees of lesser gods and village divinities, who are little better than malignant demons. They see no incongruity in so doing. They are in want and are fearful as they look into the future—why should they not have access to any and all gods who may possibly avert the dangers which beset them? And so the worship extends out to include the worship of heroes and saints, demons and spirits, tutelary and village deities, the family ancestors, and even animals and plants and stones and other inanimate objects. There is no end to the list of sacred objects held in reverence and worshiped by the people. The cow is holy, and to be treated with reverence. Even monkeys are sacred and inviolable, with temples erected in their honor, in whose courts troops of the chattering fortunates are fed and treated like spoiled children. India has gone mad on religion and finds divinity everywhere. All the way from the lofty conception of the Supreme Creator down to the depths, where, in Saktism, the female principle, or Sakti, is worshiped with rites which at times descend to the lowest level of vileness, India has run the gamut of religious experience and doctrine. This god-intoxicated land is not to be restrained in her long quest for a satisfying conception of God and for an experience which will bring them into vital touch with him.

Modern Reform Movements

Great changes are taking place in India, but with all that every form of belief and every practice which has been men-

tioned obtains and is proclaimed with great earnestness. It would seem that India is able to learn much and add it to her religious life, but that she finds it exceedingly difficult to let go time-honored forms and institutions even though they are clearly outworn. As Mr. Farquhar points out, this conservatism is due to the family system, founded on ancestor worship, the caste system, which is the dominant force in the life of the Hindu, and the religious system, which is so varied and multiform that a man may find just about what he wants if he searches for it.[8] But with all this India has come into contact with the West and cannot remain the same. Western education and ideas are eating into the fabric of Indian culture and great changes are impending. For years to come the customary restraints will continue to hold men bound so far as their outward conformity and formal acquiescence are concerned, but inwardly the pervasive influence of new ideas is making impossible a hearty acceptance of the old beliefs. Educated men simply cannot believe in polytheism. They are becoming too well informed to be able to assert the divine origin of caste and the unnatural distinctions which it involves. Somehow they cannot enter sincerely into the ancestral rites which have played so important a part in the family life.

The growing national spirit is making a profound difference in the whole outlook of the leading men. They see the possibility of the development of Indian nationality, which was scarcely dreamed of a generation ago. Not that India has not chafed for decades under the rule of the British, but that until very recent years this has merely taken the form of irritation because of foreign domination without any intelligent plan for a better, united India governed by her own people. Had the hand of Britain been lifted at any time in the past, India would have been plunged into civil war, Mohammedan against Hindu and even one section

[8] Primer of Hinduism, chap. xvii.

of the Hindu community against another. There was no solidarity, no sense of unity, no possibility of a real nationality. Even now the movement is so young and immature that grave danger would be faced should Britain retire. What the future holds out we do not know, but of one thing we may be sure: India has caught the vision of nationality, of a unified life, of the development of a distinctive civilization, and is determined to bend all her energies and to make any sacrifices necessary to accomplish this end. The effect of this on religion will be profound. Whatever stands in the way of the desired aim will be laid aside. The ignorance of the mass of the people will make the process a long one, but the steady increase of education and the determined attitude of the entire leadership of the country point to the day of achievement. The religious exclusiveness of both Islam and Hinduism, the divisiveness of caste, the deadening influence of polytheism—all are looked upon as standing in the way of any real progress and must therefore give way to the new spirit.

What has happened in view of these contacts with the West and all that they have involved? One may say, in general, that while the influence of the West has been recognized, the attempt has been made to accommodate the old beliefs to the newer views and thus fit them for the new age. The national appeal is strong. The pride of the Indian has been touched. Led by such men as Rabindranath Tagore, he believes that India already possesses all that is necessary to satisfy her religious needs without going to the despised, practical, materialistic West for instruction in religion. But even the most ardent nationalist feels the influence of the new day and knows he must accommodate himself to the new situation, or be lost. Even those who have the hardihood to declare that Hinduism, taken just as it is, is sufficient to meet all the needs of the land, have enlarged their horizon and attempt to show how their religion can fulfill the aspirations of all people everywhere. One of the

most interesting of all these was Rama-Krishna Paramahamsa, an ascetic, who lived in a temple near Calcutta. "He was ready to accept and to practice any aspect of Hinduism, and he imagined himself now a Christian, now a Mohammedan."[9] His greatest disciple was the Swami Vivekananda, who appeared at the Chicago Parliament of Religions, in 1893, and lectured to entranced audiences in various parts of America. Everything in Hinduism was beautiful and noble and needed only the touch of an idealizing interpretation to appear as the climax of the world's religious development. This is the attitude of Mrs. Annie Besant, who has stopped at nothing in her acceptance of Hinduism, but sees every feature as evidence of the essential divinity which adheres to the whole system.

The most advanced of all the groups which realize the situation and are seeking to bring religion into line with the new light from the West is the Brahmo Samaj. This Samaj, or "church," has had an honorable history since the day of its founding in 1828. A very remarkable man, Ram Mohan Ray (1772-1833), highly educated and well versed in the literature of Buddhism and Christianity as well as of Hinduism, turned against the polytheism, the idolatry, the social abuses, and the moral blemishes of the faith in which he had been brought up and founded a "Theistic Church." He had few disciples and in all its history the society has had but few members, not over five thousand at any time. Even this small number has been seriously divided and has been unable to present a united front against the social and religious abuses which it condemns. All hold to an unqualified monotheism and a purely spiritual worship. They are social reformers, opposing caste, child-marriage, and the enforced celibacy of widows, but at this point there is a division of sentiment between the progressives and conservatives. Caste feeling is too strong to be easily overcome, and one

[9] Op. cit., p. 157.

wing—the less important let it be said—were unwilling thus to cut themselves off from the Hindu community. The "Progressive Brahmo Samaj," led by the gifted though erratic Keshab Chandra Sen (1838-1884), threw itself into the work of reform with zeal. Keshab was a deeply spiritual man and read much in the literature of Christianity. He held Christ in the highest honor and some were even optimistic enough to look forward to his conversion to Christianity. He not only had no intention of taking this step, but in the end lost his hold on his own followers by claiming almost divine honors as a special channel of revelation. The Samaj still lives and through its numerous publications promotes the reforms for which it has stood and witnesses to its belief in the one supreme God who may be approached only in spiritual worship.

Of a very different sort is the Arya Samaj. Founded in 1875 by Dayananda Sarasvati, whose watchword was "Back to the Vedas," and who believed India could only be regenerated by a return to the ancient faith, this society has grown in numbers until in 1911 the census gives the membership as almost a quarter of a million. Opposed to idolatry and with the desire to promote the worship of one God, the Samaj has stood for certain needed reforms, but caste has not been successfully opposed, and the belief in transmigration and Karma nullifies what might otherwise be a worthy advocacy of monotheism. Violently opposed to Christianity and lending itself to the nationalistic agitation, the Arya Samaj tends to become as much a political as a religious movement. Its reforms do not go deep enough to promise anything commensurate with the need, and its failure to strike at the root of the religious needs of the country gives little hope that India's regeneration will be furthered by this agency.

According to Mr. Farquhar's analysis there is on one hand a steady advance of the old faiths and an attempt to reinterpret them to meet the new situation, and at the same time

"a continuous and steadily increasing inner decay."[10] The direction which these movements have taken has been determined by the presence of Christianity in the country. With comparatively few who as yet have abandoned their old beliefs and become followers of Jesus Christ the tendency is toward an amalgam of what is native to India and what is brought in from the outside. But such combinations fail at the point of appeal. They are clumsily put together and are neither one thing nor the other. India will remain religious —that cannot be doubted. Her great problem is to discover, as she awakens in a new, strange world, what her needs are and where she must go for satisfaction. Already the process has begun, and the results up to the present hour are not favorable to the old religious formulas, and as she more completely comes to herself the query arises whether she will not —much sooner than many now think possible—realize that in the person of Jesus Christ all her aspirations and longings may find complete fulfillment.

Suggestions for Further Study

J. N. Farquhar, *A Primer of Hinduism* (London, second edit., 1912).

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A. Barth, *The Religions of India* (London, fourth edit., 1906). One of the best of the older books.

Monier Monier-Williams, *Indian Wisdom* (London, fourth edit., 1893). History of the religious literature, with numerous examples from the writings.

James Bissett Pratt, *India and Its Faiths* (Boston, 1915). The record of a traveler with a mind trained to interpret religious belief and practice.

George Foot Moore, *History of Religions,* Vol. I, Chaps. XI, XIII, XIV.

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[10] Modern Religious Movements in India, p. 431. (Macmillan, New York, 1915.)

CHAPTER VII

BUDDHISM

Gautama the Buddha

About the middle of the sixth century before Christ a little boy was born in north India who was destined to influence the thought of Asia more than any other down to our own time. The Aryan invaders had for centuries been advancing down the Ganges Valley and were now to be found presenting a broad front along the western confines of what we now know as the province of Bengal. There they had settled down in little kingdoms not altogether friendly with each other. Local chieftains wielded sway over limited territories and in some cases were organized into federations or oligarchies, called republics. Now, Gautama the Buddha was the son of one of these petty chieftains. Within recent years the place of his birth has been identified with certainty. At Kapilavastu, about a hundred and thirty miles north of the modern city of Benares, just within the borders of the native state of Nepal, a stone tablet was discovered in 1896 which marks the birthplace of India's greatest son. He was given the name of Siddhartha, but is generally known as Gautama, the name of the family or clan to which he belonged. The title Buddha, or "enlightened one," is applied to many others, but it is Gautama the Buddha who was without doubt a historical character and founded the system to which he gave the name.

Many are the stories told of his birth and early years, which are so fabulous that it is with difficulty we are able to extract the modicum of truth they contain. We know little of the life of young Siddhartha until he was about thirty years of age. We may well believe the tradition that

he excelled in manly sports. His endurance and the attainment of a hale and hearty old age attest a strong constitution and a firm foundation laid in youth for a strenuous and long life. What we are quite certain of is that he was married and had one son, Rahula, of whom he was exceedingly fond. A persistent tradition repeated many times over in Buddhist literature indicates that he was of the meditative and thoughtful type and possessed a nature deeply touched by the pain and sorrow of life. We are told that he was strangely moved by the sight of an old decrepit man, a man suffering from an offensive disease, a putrefying corpse, and finally a wandering monk who had realized the vanity of life and had forsaken it forever to search for the deeper satisfactions in religion and philosophy. We can only guess at the feelings which were surging in the breast of Gautama. What we do know is that about the age of thirty he left house and home never to return to the old relationships again. It has been called the "great renunciation." He turned away from wife and child, from his father and the succession to the chieftainship, from all that the future had to offer of honor and success—all these he rejected to answer the summons of an inner craving which was not satisfied and which could not be hushed. He made the break just when he did because he found his little son was entwining himself so firmly about his heart that if he waited any longer it would be impossible to tear himself away.

In thus abandoning his home and becoming a penniless wanderer Gautama took the step which many before and since his day in India have taken. Dissatisfied with life and yet longing for satisfaction, reaching out after peace and not knowing where to find it, India has always had its holy men, who travel from place to place or else seek some lonely spot in the jungle or on a mountainside and give themselves to contemplation and ascetic practices. He was merely doing what countless others have done in the same quest. We know comparatively little about the next five or

six years. There is good evidence that he went to one religious teacher after another, but what they taught and what he thought of their theories we do not know. It seems clear that they could not satisfy the deep craving in the heart of this earnest seeker. The opposition which he showed in later years to the current philosophies would seem to have begun at the time when they failed to give an adequate answer to his questions. Gautama was by no means alone in his search. Many others in India at that time were seeking new answers to their religious questioning. The name of one other, a contemporary of Gautama, has come down to us, Mahavira, the founder of the religion of the Jains, which numbers about a million and a quarter adherents at the present time in India. He, too, forged a new belief out of his thought and experiences and added another to the number of cults in this deeply religious land. Based on the principle of a fundamental dualism in life, the Jains have given themselves to a severe asceticism and have made the prohibition of killing any single living thing, large or small, a cardinal doctrine. While Buddhism has ceased to exist in the land of its birth, Jainism still thrives, though it is of slight importance in comparison with the surrounding Hinduism.

We left Gautama with "the teachers, both hearing them, and asking them questions." Either after or during this period he gave himself to a strict regimen. By abstinence and other ascetic practices he reduced himself to a skeleton. A small company of disciples gathered around him in admiration of his fortitude and perseverance. They were not able to follow him in the utter abandon of his efforts to extort the peace he craved by hardships and deprivations. He carried his exertions to the breaking point and nature rebelled. He finally fell over in a swoon. His disciples thought he had died and wondered at the pluck and resolution they had failed to attain. But he revived, much to their surprise. Then an astonishing thing takes place.

Gautama calmly declares to his followers that mortification had failed to bring the peace he craved and that he would give it up. His erstwhile disciples cannot understand a statement so unorthodox, and forthwith take their leave and go to Benares with contempt in their hearts for one who has turned away from so time-honored a practice as self-abnegation and asceticism. And just here the originality of Gautama begins to show itself. Up to this time he had been a typical Hindu, but now he began to branch off and follow a direction of his own. Asceticism had failed to satisfy, so he turned away from it decisively. From this time he became an advocate of the "middle way." His experience had led him to the conclusion that neither luxury on one side nor asceticism on the other could satisfy the inner craving he felt. The only thing to do then, so far as every-day life was concerned, was to travel the "middle way," not giving way to softness and luxury on one side, nor undergoing the hardships of self-inflicted asceticism on the other. He set men the example of simple living with only a few regulations which were calculated to keep men from the evils and sins which would make the development of character impossible. It was good, wholesome living he inculcated—wholesome in all particulars save one. Gautama had separated himself from his home and his wife, and he could not see that traveling the "middle way" ought to mean the avoidance of unbridled license on one hand and celibacy on the other. To him no advance could possibly be made in character, no progress could be made toward peace and satisfaction so long as man lived in company with woman. He must turn away from home and wife and children if he were to take up seriously the task of quieting the craving within and winning the peace he desired. It was a serious weakness. To make woman a stumbling-block to man in the journey toward his heart's desire is to lower her condition and at the same time to keep man down to a level at which the finest flowers of individual and social life can

never grow. Gautama did not see this, and his system has suffered to our own day from this defect.

But all that he had attained was negative. He had learned that the inner rest he was craving was not to be had by living a life of ease or by asceticism. The process of elimination had been at work, but nothing positive had been gained. The temptation came to give up the pursuit, go back to his home, and take up his life where he had left it on the night when he suddenly took his flight. Would this not be the best course out of the confusion in which his failure had left him? But no, that would not have been Gautama the Buddha. He found himself in a dreadful moral and mental struggle, which is described most realistically in Buddhist literature. The forces of Mara, the enemy of all that is good, charged like legions of armed demons from the front and then from the rear, seeking to break down his determined resistance, but through it all he sat unmoved, with purpose unchanged and his desire unquenched. At last, under the shade of the famous Bo-tree, where he had remained all the day fighting his battle for spiritual emancipation, as the evening came on and the quiet shadows crept in around him, the enlightenment came and he was free. Thus did Gautama become the Buddha, the "enlightened." His last battle with his lower nature had been won, his doubts were dissolved, and the peace whose elusive quest he had been following so long swept over his soul, never again to be absent from his experience. He had grasped the meaning of the world's sorrow and could cure it.

Such a memorable experience and such a stupendous claim demand explanation. What was the disease which had doomed men and women to sorrow and despair? Surely the man who could not only give the correct diagnosis but also offer the cure was a benefactor the whole world was seeking. Without doubt the strivings through which he had been passing uninterruptedly for so many years and

the attempts he had made from every conceivable angle to find the way out of his mental anguish account in large measure for the final conclusion the Buddha reached, but for him the whole matter was the result of a spiritual illumination or mental intuition which burst upon him like a light flowing in from the heavens. For many weary years he had lived in the presence of his own inner discontent and the sorrow of the world around him. What was the cause of this sorrow and inner pain? Nothing less than desire, the lust of gold and fame and pleasure, all that made men cling to the things of life and sense. He had laid his finger on the canker that was eating the life out of his fellowmen. How much of all this he had thought out before the day of concentration under the Bo-tree it is impossible to say. The final element in his conclusion was that peace and praise could only come by the suppression of desire, the conquest of the lower nature by the power of the human mind brought to bear on this root of human misery.

The temptation which came to him at once was to become a solitary recluse, spending his years in quiet enjoyment of his newly found experience and thinking through all its implications. But again this would not have been Gautama the Buddha. Throughout his life benevolence and pity toward his fellow creatures was a powerful motive and determined his action. He deliberately made up his mind to devote his time to the carrying of his message to men as far as his journeys might lead him. He acted upon his determination and proceeded at once to Benares, where he found and won back the disciples who had so recently left him. They felt the power of his conviction and the truth he was uttering. In this way until the end of his long life he continued to win converts until they could be counted by the hundreds and thousands. His love for men and his desire to lift from them the burden of sorrow and misery they were carrying make the Buddha one of the

world's great altruists. He never wearied of telling his message and rejoiced as one after another men and women came to him, were convinced, and went away with a new life open before them. He had determined "To set rolling the royal chariot-wheel of a universal empire of truth and righteousness," and he never lost an opportunity to make a convert and set another soul free from the fetters of desire.

The chronology of the life of the Buddha is uncertain. The period from the time when he abandoned his home until his emancipation was probably about five years, roughly from the age of thirty to thirty-five. He died at about the age of eighty, thus spending forty-five years in declaring his doctrine up and down northern India. During the rainy season, called the "was," he remained in one place teaching his disciples and preaching to the people who came to him, but as soon as the dry season had come he was off again on his long journeys, accompanied by a group of his disciples. There were no decisive crises in his life after the period of the Bo-tree experience, and the story is a somewhat disconnected narrative of what he said and did in the course of the years. He met many people, men and women of all ranks and classes of society, and most interesting are the accounts of his replies and admonitions. He was dignified yet sympathetic, firm yet kindly, dealing in each case with insight and sending each one away with an appropriate and convincing word. No wonder he came to be idolized by his followers. They looked on him as one who could meet every emergency, as one who was not to be baffled by any carping or even sincere questioner. In the course of his tours he came to his old home at Kapilavastu, and there met his wife and his son. He went back several times. They may have thought to receive him back to the old relationships, but that was not to be. They were little more to him, that is, so far as his actions showed, than fellowbeings who stood in need of his message. His words

fell on good ground in each case, and both wife and son became members of the two orders he had instituted, one for men and the other for women. They became penniless wanderers like the Buddha himself, looking for their daily bread at the hand of the kindly laity who considered it meritorious to feed and otherwise provide for these holy men and women.

So the Buddha lived out his days, never ceasing this round of teaching from place to place. At last the end came as a result, so it is said by Professor R. T. Rhys Davids, of an attack of indigestion caused by eating a meal of rice and mushrooms.[1] He lived for a number of hours, during which the time was spent in converse with Ananda, his most devoted follower and personal attendant, and others who desired a word with the dying leader. Shortly before becoming unconscious he summoned his strength and said, "Mendicants! I now impress it upon you, decay is inherent in all component things; work out your salvation with diligence!" Earnest to the very last in his desire to give direction to all who might need it, the Buddha passed away in the presence of a group of his faithful disciples. No purer character has India given to the world, one worthy of the honor which has been bestowed by countless believers in all subsequent ages and worthy of our highest esteem and admiration.

Early Buddhism

Gautama left no written records. The early literature has come down to us in the Pali language and consists of the Three Pitakas, or "Baskets," which contain the rules which the Brothers and Sisters are to observe, the truths which are to be taught, and the psychological system on which it is based. Besides the volumes collected in those writings certain supplementary works have been added to them, which are considered a part of the early canon. How much

[1] Buddhism (Manual), edit. of 1912, p. 80. (S. P. C. K., London.)

of all the teaching came from the Buddha himself it is impossible to say—probably very little. Even in writings like the Dialogues of the Buddha, which are supposed by Professor Rhys Davids to have been put into literary form about fifty years after the death of Gautama, evidences of systematization and of arrangement according to a mnemonic system are quite apparent. It is easy, however, to go too far in this direction. We may believe that with all that was done in an early day to expand and elaborate the words and teachings of the Buddha we have substantially what he meant in his message to the India of that day. What we have to work on, then, is a library of about twenty-nine titles in which "The number of Pali words in the whole is about twice the number of words in our English Bible."[2]

Of the various approaches which might be made to the study of the teachings of early Buddhism there is none more fruitful than that through the Three Signs, or Fundamental Truths. The method of approach is of real importance, for the teaching of the Buddha is somewhat baffling and caution must be exercised at a number of important turning points. It is only within recent years, since the Pali literature has been more fully explored and more carefully studied, that scholars have felt that they are treading on firm ground and really begin to know the genius of early Buddhism and the places where emphasis should be placed in the study.

The first of the Fundamental Doctrines is the impermanence of all things. To put it in the ancient phrase, "All the constituents of life are impermanent." The statement is also made, "There is no being—there is only a becoming." This is to be accepted as literally true of all things; gods as well as the tiniest atom are equally included. The passing away may be delayed for a long period, but the principle of change is the principle of all existence, and sooner or later the process will be evident. Just as soon as there is a begin-

[2] Rhys Davids, Buddhism (American Lectures), p. 52. (Putnam, New York, 1896.)

ning decay also begins; the beginning of the end is at hand. Here in India five hundred years before Christ is being preached the philosophy of change. We do not live in a static universe, but one in which everything is in a state of flux. They were not deeply concerned with ultimate beginnings or final endings; what came home with great force to these early thinkers was that there was a great force in this world of ours which had always been causing change and which would continue to do so indefinitely. At about the same time in Greece the early philosophers were conjuring with the same idea. Heracleitus, about B. C. 536-470, denied that there was any such thing as permanence. "There is no static Being, no unchanging substratum. Change, movement, is Lord of the universe."[3] And we to-day are still discussing the same problem, Is there anything permanent, or is everything subject to change? The doctrine of evolution asserts the doctrine of change and links us to the ancient Greeks and to the Buddha and his followers. It may not be the final or complete answer, but so far as it reaches it *is* the accepted doctrine in the world of the educated to-day.

The early Buddhists excluded nothing from the sweep of their philosophy. This is the explanation of the atheism with which the Buddha has been charged. He was not an atheist; he took the gods of India for granted, but it made no difference to him whether they were real beings or not. Whatever they were and wherever they might be at any time, they were bound by the same law of impermanence and change. There was no essential difference between the most exalted of them and men. All belonged to the same universe and were subject in the same way to its laws. Why should anyone look to them? They could give no assistance which man could not render himself. They were in the possession of no powers man did not have at his disposal.

[3] A. K. Rogers, A Student's History of Philosophy, p. 15. (Macmillan, New York, new edit., 1916.)

The result was that the Buddha constructed a system in which no god was needed. A sense of dependence on a god was like leaning on a broken reed. He might for the time being seem strong and wise, but it was only a passing phase with no assurance of continuance. So, then, worship was useless and prayer an empty form. What we have is a system which strictly speaking is no religion at all. Later we shall try to estimate the meaning of this conclusion in the light of other facts, which would indicate that elements of a true religious attitude were to be found in the system from the beginning, even though formally everything religious seemed to be excluded.

The second of the Fundamental Signs is that sorrow is implicit in all individuality. "All the constituents of life are full of misery." The Buddha's discovery under the Bo-tree was that the cause of the misery which he himself had sought to escape and which he found everywhere in the world was desire, and desire is the inevitable accompaniment of conscious existence. We cannot gain what we want and we cannot escape what we dislike, and this involves misery and sorrow. This doctrine of suffering and its cure has received classic expression in the teaching of the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path, which we must give as shortly as possible:

1. "Now, this, O recluses, is the noble truth concerning *suffering.*" Then in many forms the statement is made that all human experience involves suffering, because it flows from individuality, or separate conscious existence. To live and cling to life involves desire and hence sorrow. The point to keep in mind is that it is not life, the mere living, which is attended with sorrow. We shall see that when a man has attained the "ideal state" in this life he still may continue to live on for many years without sorrow. This is possible because he has learned how he can live with no desire after continued individuality and all that that involves.

2. "Now, this, O recluses, is the noble truth concerning the *origin* of suffering. Verily it originates in that craving thirst which causes the renewal of becomings, is accompanied by sensual delights, and seeks satisfaction now here, now there—that is to say, the craving for the gratification of the passions, or the craving for a future life, or the craving for success in this present life." So long as the enticements of the outside world have the slightest attraction for us we are subject to pain and sorrow.

3. "Now, this, O recluses, is the noble truth concerning the *destruction* of suffering.

"Verily, it is the destruction, in which no craving remains over, of this very thirst; the laying aside of, the getting rid of, the being free from, the harboring no longer of, this thirst."

4. "And this, O recluses, is the noble truth concerning the *way* which leads to the destruction of suffering."

"Verily, it is this Noble Eightfold Path; that is to say:

"Right Views (free from superstition and delusion)—

"Right Aspirations (high, and worthy of the intelligent, earnest man)—

"Right Speech (kindly, open, truthful)—

"Right Conduct (peaceful, honest, pure)—

"Right Livelihood (bringing hurt or danger to no living thing)—

"Right Effort (in self-training and in self-control)—

"Right Mindfulness (the active, watchful mind)—

"Right Rapture (in deep meditation on the realities of life)."[4]

In the course of his gradual progress in the Path the monk must break the Ten Fetters, Delusion of Self, Doubt, the Efficacy of Good Works and Ceremonies, Sensuality, Ill-Will, Love of Life on Earth, Desire for a Future Life in Heaven, Pride, Self-righteousness, and Ignorance.

When a man shall have achieved the eight positive char-

[4] Quoted from Buddhism (American Lectures), pp. 136-138.

acteristics of the Noble Path and broken the Ten Fetters, he has become an Arhat (also Arahat, Arahant), and thus has realized the Buddhist ideal of life. It is also known as Nirvana, or "the going out"—"the going out of the three fires of lust, ill-will, and dullness, or ignorance." So then, Arhatship, or Nirvana, may be attained here in this life, a state of perfect mental quiet and rest, in which no desire ruffles the poise of the peaceful monk (save, of course, the desire for more of the present satisfaction and the desire to bestow the gift on others) and no longing breaks in on his contemplation. But is there no future life, no expectation beyond the time when his body shall crumble away in old age and death? This can only be answered by a consideration of the last of the signs.

This Truth is that of the absence of a "soul," the "no-soul" doctrine. "All the constituents of life are without a soul." We are individuals, but we have no permanent or even temporary soul as an entity in itself. It is all a delusion that there is such a thing as a person or a chariot or a chair. These are only names which we give to the temporary gathering together into a seeming unity of qualities or "aggregates" which are only parts of the all-embracing universe in which we live and of which we form a part. You may ask of a chair as you mention each part, "Is this the chair?" and, of course, the answer must in each case be "No." Then the Buddhist says: "Where, then, is your chair?" It has eluded you—there is no chair! What you call a chair is but the name you give to the temporary collection of parts which when brought together may perform a useful function. So of a human being. He is composed of parts which when assembled under certain conditions we call an individual, but there is no real person there, no you nor I nor he. The parts which make up a human being are called Skandhas, or "aggregates," and they are five in number. First there are the material properties, in short our physical bodies. Then follow four mental qualities, which,

as nearly as we are able to designate them in the terms of modern psychology, may be given thus: sensations, or feelings; abstract ideas, or perception; potentialities, or the elements of consciousness; and thought, or consciousness taken as a unified whole. We, to speak of ourselves as individuals, are merely the name which is given to the five skandhas when they are thus united. What holds them together is what might be called the "thread of life." When at death the thread is broken the skandhas fall apart never again to reassemble. That individual has ceased to be and will never come into existence again. There is no soul, so how could he?

But Buddhism believes in transmigration, and the question naturally arises, How can there be any transmigration when there is no soul to transmigrate? It would seem that the Buddha should have dropped this doctrine altogether. There must have been good reason for retaining it when it plunged him into such a strange dilemma. The fact is, the Buddha held fast to the old theory because it offered him a moral explanation of the cruel inequalities of life. He could not find sufficient reason in men's conduct in this life to justify the measure of blessing and suffering which was the lot of his fellow human beings. It must be because of good deeds or wickedness done in a previous life. Now, while this was satisfying as far as it went—provided, of course, one could believe in any kind of transmigration—the Buddha met the same question again, How believe in transmigration when one has no belief in a soul? And here is one of the most difficult and subtle points in the whole theory of early Buddhism, so important that it is repeated many times over in the Pali literature. There is no soul, but something does or may pass over into another existence. It is the sum total or the net result of all the actions which have been performed by the individuals who have followed one after another in the series. That is, the individual now living inherits from the individual which preceded him the result

of his moral achievement or failure. He may rise higher in the scale or sink lower than his predecessor according as he adds to or subtracts from the moral content which he inherited. What causes him to be born at all if he is not the same individual who had lived before? So long as any one dies and still has desire or craving (in the Buddhist sense) left in his heart another set of skandhas is bound to assemble and form another individual who must take up the task where his predecessor left it. And so it goes on from one individual to another until in the end the series to which they have all belonged comes to an end forever when one arises who succeeds in crushing out desire, becomes an Arhat, and enters Nirvana. His body may keep on living for years, but when it dies the skandhas fall apart and there is nothing to require another set of skandhas to gather again, for there is nothing left around which they may assemble. Karma simply ceases to function in this case.

This is the Buddhist law of Karma. According to this law, new individuals are born one after another until all desire is used up. There is no more Karma, or Karma has been used up, are different ways of speaking of the same process and its final ending. So with all the change taking place in the universe and in every particle of matter in it, there is an unchanging law according to which all this takes place. It is impersonal and works by a kind of blind necessity, but it is inevitable and unchanging, the one great propelling power in the universe. The Buddha gives no evidence that he ever thought of these final questions. He was averse to any such consideration. He makes the statement many times that he is concerned with one thing only, and that is sorrow and the curing of sorrow—all else is irrelevant. But the cure in its final outcome seems to us so inadequate. When an Arhat has in this life attained Nirvana, what becomes of him when his body dies? What becomes of a candle flame when it is blown out? We are on delicate ground, but the Buddhist is likely to answer the inquirer

at this point by saying that nothing essential is lost. We of the West are not satisfied and insist, "Is not consciousness lost, and personality lost, and without these what remains?" And still the Buddhist replies, "Nothing is lost"—so wide is the chasm between the mind of the East and the West!

Surely, all this could not be expected to find lodgment in the minds of the common people, and it never did. Attainment was possible only to those who separated themselves from ordinary life and became monks, living a life apart in communities to attain the end they sought. The order was not a priesthood, standing between God and men. The gods were of no use, and man must secure his attainment by his own powers, so a priesthood would have been an anomaly. The order was merely a means and an aid to spiritual attainment. During the whole history of Buddhism the order of monks is the key to its expansion and its power in every land to which it has gone. The monasteries, large and small, in every Buddhist country attest the hold of the idea of salvation through self-discipline on the minds of men and women. Formal and even degenerate though they may have become in many cases, the monastic institutions still continue to live and influence the lives of the people.

The Buddha, the Doctrine, and the Order are the three anchors of early Buddhism. When the candidate for the order comes before the abbot of a monastery he repeats this formula:

> "I go for refuge to the Buddha.
> I go for refuge to the Law (Dharma).
> I go for refuge to the Order (Sangha)."[5]

This is about as near a prayer as early Buddhism achieved. In it lies the germ of an amazing development when real prayer was offered to real gods who were looked upon as

[5] Quoted from Rhys Davids, Buddhism (manual), p. 160.

able to deliver them, but this does not belong to the early day. The monasteries were not to be the permanent home of the monks in the original intention. They were to be penniless wanderers (Bhikshus), depending on the gifts of the laity for their daily needs. Only during the rainy season were they to be located in a definite place. But the temptation was great to possess a permanent seat, and there arose great institutions with magnificent establishments wherever the religion was carried. A monk might possess nothing of this world's goods, but the monastery could. As a result they became powerful and had immense influence, like the monasteries in Europe in the Middle Ages. The equipment of the monks was exceedingly simple. An almsbowl, in which to secure food on the daily round; the three vestments, so that the entire body might be covered; a staff, a needle, a razor, a tooth-pick, a water-strainer, so as not to destroy animal life in drinking—and he was fully furnished. There was little variation in the daily routine. Early morning recitation of the sacred books and meditation, the round for alms in the mid-morning, the simple noonday meal, rest and meditation again, the day closing with service and recitations in the hall of the monastery. There were no services for the public and no real worship. During the rainy season the monks would preach to the people. The regulations have been changed greatly in different countries and at different periods, but these simple rules were those with which the institution started and to some extent prevail to-day.

The monk was bound to obey The Eight Precepts:

"One should not destroy life.

"One should not take that which is not given.

"One should not tell lies.

"One should not become a drinker of intoxicating liquors.

"One should refrain from unlawful sexual intercourse—an ignoble thing.

"One should not eat unseasonable food at nights.

"One should not wear garlands nor use perfumes.

"One should sleep on a mat spread on the ground."[6]

The first five are manifestly on a different plane from the last three. The Buddhists recognized this, and when inculcating moral principles among the common people required of them a strict observance of the first five only. So while the Buddhist did not believe in a soul, the moral system clearly indicates that he set high store on the discipline of life, through which he hoped for purity and honor. All this is to the credit of the system and demands recognition as a marked advance upon the practice and teaching of the surrounding population of India. It has gone with Buddhism into the Eastern world as a steadying influence, and doubtless explains in part its favorable reception into many lands which might otherwise have turned away from its teaching.

Hinayana and Mahayana

To recount the story of the development of Buddhism and its expansion into the countries of eastern and southern Asia would take long. The Buddha lived in the sixth and fifth centuries before Christ; one estimate gives the dates as B. C. 560-480. The first date in Indian history of which we may be sure is when Alexander the Great invaded India in B. C. 326. We do not know much about the condition of Buddhism until the reign of Asoka, who ascended the throne in B. C. 273 and ruled as the first real emperor of India for about forty years. The significant fact is that Asoka became a Buddhist and ruled his wide dominions according to the precepts of the faith. He instituted the office of chief minister of justice and religion, whose main task was to preserve the purity of the faith. The most notable contribution he made to the cause of Buddhism, however, was the sending of embassies or missions to various countries to carry the teaching. In this way many countries were reached, notably

[6] Quoted from Rhys Davids, Buddhism (manual), p. 139.

Ceylon, whose history began with the coming of Buddhism. Again there is a long period about which little is known. At about the time of Christ a king arose in the far northwest of India named Kanishka, who was not an Indian at all, but belonged to one of the peoples of the great central Asian plateau. He began to rule in A. D. 78, embraced Buddhism, and took much interest in the faith and its development. Again there is little information for centuries until in the fifth and again in the seventh century Chinese pilgrims, men who had become Buddhists, made journeys to India to visit the historic places where the Buddha had lived and died and to carry back relics and books to their home in China. We learn from the volumes these men wrote that Buddhism, which had been very strong, was on the decline. There may have been some persecution, but the real cause of the deterioration was that Buddhism was not distinctive and rigid enough to escape being drawn back into the Hinduism from which it had emerged. By the time of the Mohammedan incursions into India, which began in the year A. D. 1000, Buddhism had about disappeared, and now in the land of its birth and early power the faith of Gautama the Buddha, her most illustrious son, is only a memory.

Such, in brief, is the sad story of the disappearance of a faith from the land for which it promised to do so much. These outward changes and vicissitudes, however, are of lesser interest compared with the inner development and transformation which befell the faith itself. The evolution cannot be traced with any accuracy; about all we know is that at a certain time the faith was one thing, and then again several centuries after it had become something very different. Councils were called to decide on questions on which the monasteries differed, but much obscurity hangs over these assemblies. A notable council was held under the patronage of Kanishka about A. D. 100, after which a deep cleavage is apparent between two schools of thought, the Hinayana and the Mahayana. The name of Nagarjuna is

also heard; he is reputed to have been one of the leaders who made the crisis more significant and became the great promoter of the Mahayana teaching.

The terms need defining. *Hinayana* means the "little vehicle," only fitted to carry a small number on the way to salvation, and *Mahayana* means "large vehicle," as a means of salvation sufficient to accommodate all who would come. Manifestly, the name "Hinayana" was given by their opponents who desired to call attention to their own superior doctrine. But long before these two schools separated the teaching, which later was to be called Hinayana, had developed. It was based on the teaching of the Buddha, but had diverged widely from it at one or two points. Gautama had turned his back on the gods of India and constructed a system without worship, sacrifice, prayer, or any sense of dependence on a higher power. He had essayed to do the impossible—the need of help in the struggle of life and the tendency to turn to some being who is powerful enough to render assistance is too strongly intrenched in human nature to be thus eradicated. Even in his own lifetime the Buddha was raised to a most exalted position by his disciples. They came to look upon him as almost omniscient and all-wise, ready to meet any emergency. He carried himself with the dignity which forbade undue intimacy. He was a man apart from other men. Despite his democracy, which is undoubted, his elevation and disinterestedness in the ordinary things of life cast an atmosphere of aloofness about him, which was only increased by the sanctity which seemed naturally to belong to one who was so kind and pure and good. He was almost their god while he journeyed with them, intent on teaching them that there was no need of gods. Little wonder is it that in the centuries after he had passed away the Buddha himself should have been raised to the position in the spiritual world where men could look for his assistance and raise hands to him in prayer. This is the essence of the Hinayana. It became a kind of theistic faith,

placing the Buddha above all the gods of the land. Gautama was considered a sinless being; the doctrine arose that he had been born of a virgin, that he was perfect in wisdom and power, and that he had been able to perform wonders during his life. The theory arose that Gautama was the last of a long series of Buddhas who had preceded him, and that there was one yet to come, Maitriya Buddha, the gracious god who would restore all things. This is the form of Buddhism which with many differences prevails in Ceylon, Burma, and Siam, and is frequently spoken of as Southern Buddhism.

Professor Rhys Davids claims[7] that the teaching of Gautama in its purity was not put in practice outside a narrow circle in his own time and immediately following. Men are in trouble and need help, and no teaching which attempts to dam up the impulse to prayer and worship can succeed in doing so very long; the Nemesis will come and human nature will assert its inalienable right to seek after God and claim his protection and help. The Mahayana, however, went so much farther than the Hinayana that it felt it could point the finger of scorn at its less daring sister. When Buddhism came into contact with the rough warriors and nomads from the central Asian Steppes, who came into India about the time of Christ, the "no-soul" theory almost disappeared. It was repugnant to the hardy men who were poles apart from the meditative and more languid dwellers on the hot, depressing plains of India. Among the thoughtful in all the Eastern lands such a theory might hold its own, and, in fact, we do meet with it to-day, but the people have little place for it, and rejoice in the thought that they may not only go to some god, but that they are beings who live and have real power.

Much thought and work must have been put on the system of the Mahayana before it was complete. When the cur-

[7] Article, "Hinayana," in Hastings' Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics.

tain is drawn we are amazed by its complexity and extent. A new universe has been created filled with spiritual beings and opening out possibilities to men they had not dreamed of even in the Hinayana. The salvation was all-embracive, fitted to the needs of men whether they might enter the portals of a monastery or not. No wonder the Hinayana, still clinging to much of the teaching of the master, should seem narrow and uninviting. At the forefront of their teaching was the conception of an Eternal Being, or Deity, the very Lord of the Universe. This being is both a philosophical conception, called Dharmakaya, the first of the "three bodies" of the eternal Buddha, and a more or less personal god of love, known as Adi-Buddha. Men do not come into immediate contact with this ultimate Being, but they are not left helpless. This Adi-Buddha has by the power of contemplation projected into existence five "Buddhas of Contemplation" (Dhyani Buddhas), and these in turn have sent out five other beings, who are the actual creators of the physical universe, and these again have their representatives in the world of men. We are now living in the fourth of the worlds which have been created, and our human Buddha, the representative of the more exalted spiritual Buddhas, is the historic Gautama. So in the Mahayana not only have gods been created to meet the needs of men, but Gautama has been relegated to a subordinate position. They preferred to scale the ladder of speculation and make gods to their liking rather than remain true to the historic Gautama and raise him to the supreme place in their pantheon.

A new career was opened up before men. In the teaching of Gautama and the Hinayana to become an Arhat and thus to enter Nirvana was the ideal. Another idea had been known, however, and this proved useful to the fertile minds of the Mahayana system makers. Gautama had long been looked upon as one of a series of Buddhas, the last of which, the "coming one," was Maitriya Buddha. Here was the conception of one yet to come, a Bodhisattva, a "Future

Buddha." In the Mahayana this idea was developed and made only second in importance to the doctrine of the Eternal Deity and his manifestations. *Bodhisattva* means "one whose essence is enlightenment," but it is used to designate those spiritual beings who are ready to enter the final state of Buddhahood, which would mean separation from all the concerns of men here below, but who refrain from doing so for the time being in order that they may be of service to all who may appeal to them. There are many of these exalted beings, some of them widely revered, who are gods in all lands where the Mahayana has been carried. To worship these Bodhisattvas now becomes the central point in the religious life of the laymen. They have a full-fledged religion with "gods many and lords many." And now to come back to the new career which was placed before men —to prepare to become a Bodhisattva in the spiritual world after we have passed out of this life—is the end and aim of all good men. Some progress can be made in this direction even by laymen in this life, when as Future-Bodhisattvas they may begin to take the steps and undergo the discipline necessary to the purifying of life that the great goal may ultimately be reached. The superiority of this aim over that of the Arhat is readily seen. The Arhat treads the path to win for himself release and peace; the Future-Bodhisattva strives to fit himself to become a helper of men, a saviour to all those in bondage and distress. Altruism has now become the *summum bonum,* with a sweep that is universal. Not one human being lies outside the purpose of those who look forward to a life of unselfish service.

Instead of the lifeless Nirvana as the goal of all existence the Mahayana has substituted a paradise where the souls of men and women may live in conscious blessedness and peace. The idea of the soul has come back and affects the doctrine at several important points. As might be expected, a hell is brought in for the wicked as a heaven is for the good. It cannot be said that the life in heaven or hell is everlast-

ing. The haunting conception of Nirvana will not be completely put down, and beyond the heavens and the hells—for there are numbers of each—lies in the distant haze the land of passionless peace, where men are lost in unconscious absorption in the everlasting nothingness which India cannot shake off.

It is manifestly impossible within the compass of a single chapter to do justice to so complicated and multiform a system as the Mahayana. The attempt has been made to point out two of the lines of development, Mahayana as a religion or devotion, in which spiritual beings are worshiped, and Mahayana as a regimen or way of life, in which the Future-Bodhisattva, or saint, enters upon the path which in the end will lead to a career of unbounded usefulness in the spiritual world. There is still another, a philosophical development, which was hinted at when mention was made of the Dharmakaya, or the first of the three bodies of the eternal Buddha. This Dharmakaya, or "body of the law," is reality, the actual substance or nature of every being, gods or men, in the whole universe. The other bodies, Sambhogakaya, or "body of bliss," and Nirmanakaya, or "magical body," are manifestations of the ultimate reality in the world of spiritual beings and men. The philosophical problem, then, hinges on the conception of Dharmakaya, or what is reality? One school, that of the Madhyamikas, makes Dharmakaya, or reality, void or vacuity. They are the philosophical nihilists of Buddhism. "Everything is void," is their conclusion. A second school, that of the Vijnanavadins, the idealists of Buddhism, claims that the only real existences are thoughts, that thoughts do not stand for or reproduce any objective reality. Thoughts can think themselves without a thinker or reference to anything outside themselves. It is an eternal illusion that object and subject exist; only thought has any existence whatever. This philosophical development has exerted a deep and lasting influence in all the countries of Eastern Asia where Buddhism was carried.

Buddhism Among the Peoples

The Buddhism of Ceylon, Burma, and Siam is Hinayana. The religion was also carried in this form to Annam, Cochin-China, and Cambodia, now parts of the French empire in the Far East. It also made its way to the island world of the Dutch East Indies and took root in Java, Bali, and Sumatra. This was long ago, for when Islam penetrated the eastern archipelago in the sixteenth century the religion of the Buddha disappeared. Driven out of Java, those who remained true to their faith fled to the little island of Bali, but even there most have become Saivites and little Buddhism is to be found. It is a question whether the Mahayana or the Hinayana was the more prominent in the islands, for both give evidence of having been preached successfully. It is exceedingly interesting to find the ruins of magnificent Mahayana buildings so many hundreds of miles away from the lands where this form of the faith has had its characteristic growth and development. Differing from the experience in India proper, Buddhism, after a desperate conflict with Hinduism in the lands of Farther India, came out victorious and remains in possession of the field to this day.

But is it really the religion of the people? Outwardly it would seem so. All these lands are filled with the paraphernalia of the Buddhist religion: temples and monasteries, pagodas and images are to be found everywhere. Each country has its own characteristic forms, but each gives ample evidence on every hand of its Buddhist allegiance. The monks are there, and services and festivals are held, to which the people come in gala dress, enjoying the occasions to the full. With all this, however, the hold of Buddhism on the inner lives of the people is precarious. A man's inner convictions are revealed in the time of crisis, when sorrow and suffering and loss stare him in the face. What is his religion then? Which way does he turn for

help and comfort? The testimony from each of these southern lands is that it is not to the monks and the Buddha, but to the old spirits and sprites of the animism which was theirs before the coming of Buddhism. The new religion did not succeed in driving out the old fears, and they have persisted through the centuries despite the superior teaching which should have supplanted them. And have we not the right to expect this of one of the higher religions?

It is also unfortunate that the monks have to so large an extent lost the confidence of the people. Of course there are many exceptions. Worthy and good men, pure of life and motive, are to be found, but the general reputation the monks have is that they lead idle, useless lives and have not succeeded in overcoming the temptations of the flesh, which was a matter of such deep concern on the part of Gautama. In Burma the religion has penetrated more deeply into the life of the people than in any other of the Hinayana countries. This is doubtless due to the fact that education has been in the hands of the monks, who thus are able to instill Buddhist ideas into the minds of the people while they are young and impressionable. It is also customary in Burma for a young man to give a certain time to monastic life. These features of the religious life of Burma have succeeded in keeping the people in close touch with their religious teachers. In Siam the king is the chief patron of Buddhism. The heads of the order must be nominated by the king, who honors the monks and supports them lavishly. The present king, an enlightened and progressive man, educated in England, has taken his religious task seriously and is doing all he can to make the religion a power in the kingdom. In Ceylon and Burma there is a reform movement, made up of cultured people who desire to go back to the simplicity of the practice and teaching of the Buddha and to interpret the faith more in accord with Western culture and the teachings of the schools. They have preaching halls with sermons and the recitation of a creed.

Whether there is enough that is distinctive in the faith to hold the minds and hearts of men and women as they emerge into the strong current of modern life with all its problems is a grave question, which can only be settled by the test of time and experience.

In the north Buddhism has penetrated China, Korea, and Japan. The faith here is of the Mahayana type, and is frequently called Northern Buddhism. But besides these countries, the religion has taken deep root in the great elevated plateau, the hinterland of Asia. Beginning its career in Tibet, it has pushed farther and farther to the north and northeast until one arm has swung around and come in contact with Chinese Buddhism in the capital city of Peking. It also is to be found in the little Himalayan states between India and Tibet. So distinct is this form of Buddhism that it deserves special treatment. It has been given the name of Lamaism, from the monks, who are called "lamas," although that term belongs rightly to the abbots, meaning as it does "superior" or "better." Tibetan history begins with the coming of Buddhism into the country in the seventh century A. D. It came in through two wives of an able chieftain, one from Nepal and the other from China, both of which countries had received Buddhism centuries before. The peculiarity which at once attracts attention is the doctrine of incarnation, known nowhere else in Buddhism. It did not become a fully accepted doctrine until the seventeenth century. Since then it has been held that the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara (also Padmapani) was incarnate in the Dalai Lama, the ruler of the country. Other Grand Lamas have their seats in different sections, all claiming to be incarnations of Bodhisattvas, but none can approach the Dalai Lama in earthly majesty because of his possession of the scepter of the land. When the Dalai, or "Great," Lama dies the rule is placed in the hand of some young boy who gives evidence (by strange and varied signs) that Avalokita has taken up his abode in him. He is then ac-

claimed as the new incarnation, and he holds sway, religiously and politically, until his death.

The gods and spiritual beings of Lamaism form a populous and strange pantheon. All the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the Mahayana are there. The name of Amitabha begins to appear, the being who is destined to take first place in all eastern Asia. Besides all these there are "healing" Buddhas and every kind of tutelary deity, kings of the four cardinal points of the compass, Yama the judge of the dead, and finally spirits and demons, and saints who have passed over into the great beyond. Idolatry as well as polytheism has run mad, and images of all these beings are displayed and worshiped everywhere. The center of the religion is, of course, the monastic life. There are said to be over three thousand monasteries, or Lamasaries, in Tibet, the largest in the capital, Lhassa, containing as many as ten thousand monks. Waddell[8] emphasizes the terrible effect of Buddhist monasticism on Tibet. The country has steadily declined in power and numbers, the population now not being a tenth part of its former size. He declares there is "one monk for every three of the entire lay community, including the women and children. . . . The population is, presumably as a consequence of overmonasticism, steadily drifting toward extinction."

Buddhism has raised the people out of certain depths of savagery, but the notorious impurity of the monks and the hardness and cruelty of nature and man in this forbidding land have done little to inculcate high ideals of life. The idea of recompense in heavens and hells and the fear of evil spirits has taken strong hold until the religion is one of fear and terror. All the poor layman wants of religion is to secure charms against these spirits. It has become pure magic. He repeats sacred formulas; he writes them on paper and swallows them; he inscribes them on cloth and

[8] Article, "Lamaism," in Hastings' Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics.

allows them to flutter in the wind; he devises so-called "prayer cylinders" and mechanically grinds out the charmed petitions as he walks or works; he even harnesses them to water-wheels and thus nature assists him in his "devotions." Such is Buddhism at its worst, in a land exhausted physically and spiritually by priest-craft, for which there seems little hope without the coming of a salvation which shall save them from themselves and the strange devisings of their hearts.

Buddhism probably reached China in the first century A. D., but it did not spread rapidly until the fourth century, when the Chinese were allowed to become monks. One of the most remarkable events was the coming of Bodhidharma, the Patriarch of Indian Buddhism, who took up his abode in China in the year 526. Buddhism was not well suited to China and has never ceased to be a kind of exotic. The idle life of the monks who performed no productive labor was utterly irrational to the practical Chinese, and the idea of celibacy was repugnant to a people who believed as much as they believed anything that not to be married and have sons was a sin of the deepest dye. The religion has suffered a number of bitter persecutions. In the eighth century twelve thousand monks and nuns were compelled to come back into ordinary life and behave themselves like other folks. In the ninth century four thousand six hundred monasteries were destroyed and more than two hundred and sixty thousand members of the order were compelled to become secular. But Buddhism could not be driven out and remains a force in the land to this day.

The reason for this lies undoubtedly in the fact that it brought into the life of the people elements which would otherwise be wanting. A spiritual world, gods who were human and full of compassion, rewards in another life, the mediation of the monks who stand between the gods and men—all these features of the Mahayana made an irresistible appeal to the Chinese and explain the presence of Buddhism

in China. The pantheon is not so spacious as that of Tibet, but the Chinese Buddhists worship Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, saints, and patriarchs, and tutelary deities. Gautama holds a high place, though Amitabha is first in the popular thought, as he rules the western paradise, to which they desire to be admitted through his mercy. Kwanyin, whom we met in Tibet as Avalokitesvara, has now been transformed into a female divinity and is worshiped as the goddess of mercy. The pagodas are everywhere and have become a part of the nature superstition of the people. The people come to the monks for all kinds of assistance, even the rich and educated on occasion. Yet with all that, the people are not to be counted as Buddhists, only the monks and nuns should be reckoned as such in any proper sense. The Chinese come to Buddhism because of needs otherwise unmet, but they do not exactly *belong* to the religion by inward allegiance and appropriation.

Buddhism expanded eastward from China by way of Korea. In Korea the religion took deep hold and for centuries was the dominant religious influence in the country. In A. D. 1392 a new dynasty came to the throne which proved to be unfriendly to the Buddhists. The monks were excluded from the capital city and were not encouraged in any place. As a result the immense establishments have dwindled until the aspect of Buddhism is that of decrepitude. Dr. H. Hackmann speaks of the picture of Korean Buddhism as "on the whole a very dull and faded one."[9] Temples and monasteries are still found, exemplifying some unique artistic traits peculiar to the country, but for the most part their best days seem to be in the past. An effort is now being made by Japanese Buddhists to put new life into the old forms, and only time will show what hope there may be in this movement. The Korean people as a whole have reverted to the old animism of pre-Buddhist days and

[9] Buddhism as a Religion, p. 257. (Probsthain, London, 1910.)

seem far more intent on exorcising demons than on paying reverence to some Buddha or Bodhisattva.

We do not know just when the new faith reached Japan. In A. D. 552 an embassy from the king of Korea gave a formal introduction to the doctrine, which was to some extent already known. By the time the great imperial minister Shotoku Taishi died in A. D. 621 Buddhism may be said to have been acclimated. Shotoku embraced the faith and gave himself to wholehearted advocacy of the new movement. Far more than in China and Korea the faith of the Buddha has entered into the life of the nation and the people. It cannot be understood out of its relations with the whole course of the nation's history. For a thousand years it was the religion of the common people and the upper classes as well. But early in the seventeenth century a reaction set in and Buddhism has more or less ceased to be the power it had been in the lives of the educated and the gentry. It remained what it is to-day, the religion of the people. Divided into a number of powerful sects, in some cases very different from each other, the religion keeps up its forms and even its life, and is seeking to assimilate the various factors of the new age which has dawned. Again it is too early to estimate the strength inherent in these new developments. Very unfortunately, the leadership, with notable exceptions, is not measuring up to the demands of the hour and leaves much to be desired in personal character and influence. The average monk is an ignorant man, not highly thought of, because of indolence, the reputation for immorality, and charges of graft which have in recent years been proved against certain influential leaders. Yet in all probability Buddhism is more progressive and in a more flourishing condition in Japan than in any other Buddhist country.

It is a far call from Ceylon to Japan; it is even farther from Gautama to present-day Buddhism. The remarkable part of it all is that we should still continue to call by the

name of the Buddha a religion which is so varied and contains such contradictory elements in its various sects and in the different countries of its adoption. What the Buddha taught is denied, and what he repudiated is practiced by those who would never admit the charge of unorthodoxy. They speak of these changes as developments which lay in germ in the mind of the great master. One might be inclined to doubt the validity of this claim and yet justify the title "Buddhism" to all the forms the religion has assumed. All recognize that Gautama was the human founder of the faith of which historically they are a part. All believe that his ideas were living and germinal, and that it is possible to live in general agreement with the inner meaning of his purpose even though the actual doctrines may seem to contradict much that he taught. They find sorrow in the world as he did and are seeking to cure it; they are quite willing to follow his ethical demands as far better than anything they had known; they look to him as the pure example of loving service and find it difficult to measure up to his unselfish life. In all these regards they are the followers of Gautama and consider it an honor to be known by his name, so lasting is the influence of a life nobly lived.

Most unfortunately, practice has fallen far behind precept. That, of course, is true in all religions, but here barriers exist which cannot be removed. The doctrine has always been above the heads of the people, whether in the teaching of Gautama or in its later developments. What has been given to them is far removed from the sublime teaching of the schools, into the depths of which few could enter. Monasticism has been a bar to all progress, and Buddhism has always brought the monk and the monastery. It has produced a deep cleavage in human life between the religious man and the laity, and it has never succeeded, except in a few cases, in producing the type of character at which it aimed. Monasticism has hung like a pall over people who needed to see the light, and who, if they did not

see it in the lives of their religious leaders, would never see it at all.

Suggestions for Further Study

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CHAPTER VIII

THE RELIGION OF THE CHINESE

The Early Religion

What the original religion of the Chinese was has been the subject of much controversy. Before the existence of any records which have come down to us several types of religious belief had been formulated, and the question is, Which of them came out of the earliest religious attitude? A study of the Chinese character for the Supreme Being would indicate that the idea back of it was monotheistic, and undoubtedly there has been the conception from an early day of a Being raised high above all others in the spiritual world. At the same time evidences of animistic conceptions are so numerous at every period that it is impossible to believe the Chinese were ever without them. Probably the most reasonable conclusion is that reached by Dr. W. E. Soothill,[1] who is inclined to believe that animism first prevailed, but that long before we have any records the recognition of one Supreme Being over a real universe arose, so that we have two conceptions, a lower and a higher, through the long course of the history of Chinese religion.

We are on safe ground when we speak of the religion of the Chinese. It is commonly stated that there are three religions in the country, not to mention Mohammedanism, which has always been looked upon as strange and foreign. These are Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. But underneath them all and expressing itself through them all is a religious attitude and life which existed for centuries before the formal religions arose and which has not been changed

[1] The Three Religions of China, chap V. (Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1913.)

essentially by them. The thoroughgoing conservatism of the Chinese people is seen in as complete a manner here as it would be possible to imagine. The gaze of the Chinese has been directed backward for millenniums, and all their ideals are in the past. We live in the period when for the first time in their recorded history these lovers of antiquity have come to realize that their only hope lies in a change of front. They are asking for all the West may have to offer. What the ultimate effect will be no one can even guess. It may be safe to say that Chinese nature will not be fundamentally changed—it is too tough of fiber for that—but what the outcome of this eager willingness to learn of the younger nations will be is one of the most interesting questions before us to-day.

The most characteristic form which religion has taken in China is crudely animistic. All nature and all its parts are possessed of spirits, good and bad, strong and weak. They are to be found everywhere, on the mountains, among the trees, in the ground, and under the water. Everything that happens is accounted for by spiritual agencies. Sickness is caused by demons within the body which must be exorcised. A child drowns not by any natural cause, but because a fiendish spirit caught the child from under the water and drew him down. These spirits flit about through the air, invisible but exceedingly real. Streets must be made crooked because these imps move in straight lines and can be stopped in their wild career by a wall. Houses must be so constructed that a solid wall shall be opposite every gate and door and window. The whole life of the people is governed by their fear of these dangerous beings, and much of their religion consists in attempts to drive them away. Exorcism, then, plays a large part in this low and yet all-prevalent superstition, and many are its forms. The spirits are divided between those that are good and benevolent (shen) and the evil-minded (kwei). To secure the assistance of a powerful shen is the best means of chasing off the harmful kwei. The sun is a

shen of the highest order, and to secure his cooperation is to have the benefit of the most powerful influence in the contest. Everything connected with the sun is efficacious. By a subtle magic the peach blossom, because it appears as the harbinger of the spring, when the sun again assumes control of nature, is an omen of good. The actual blossoms are replaced by red paper, which has the same value. Out of the peach tree, on the same principle, a number of native remedies are concocted. So, again, the blood of the cock may ward off danger, and cocks are used as charms and in the making of medicines, because the cock crows as the herald of the rising of the sun! The tiger because of some hazy connection with the sun may bring good fortune. And naturally light and heat are agencies of beneficence. Bonfires, fire-crackers, torches, lanterns, candles, all kinds of noises, scorching and cauterizing the skin—whatever suggests or is derived from fire may be used to bring good luck or prevent misfortune. This is only a slight suggestion of the many forms the superstition takes. Whatever else he may be religiously the Chinese is a believer in spirits and in the necessity of exorcism. He may be ashamed of his belief, but he has recourse nevertheless to the exorcists when he gets into a tight place. He wants at least to be on the safe side in a world so strange and fearsome. It has colored all his thoughts and has kept him down to a level far below what one has the right to expect of so cultivated a people.

There is another side to this animistic attitude which is even more characteristic. It is ancestor-worship. Men participate with nature in being possessed of spirits which make them what they are. Even a living man, like the governor of a province who has done well by his people, may be deified and be accorded religious rites with no sense of incongruity. But especially men are worshiped after their death. It takes the form of the worship of ancestors and is so universally practiced and so implicitly believed in that it has been looked upon as the very center and nerve of

Chinese religion. Death in no sense breaks the bond between the members of a family. The family consists of its dead as well as its living members, and, strangely enough to us, the dead members are more important than the living. All the arrangements of the household must be made with the well-being and the comfort of the dead primarily in mind. It is carried to the extent that it becomes an intolerable burden. A most extensive ritual is connected with the worship. The funeral must be as elaborate and expensive as the family can stand; frequently they go beyond the bounds of reason and plunge into debt. The sacrifices are carefully prescribed, and the utmost care is taken to see that the mourning and all the other rites are carried out to the letter. The choice of a site and the time for a burial are of tragic importance, and frequently large sums are squandered on Fung-Shui, or "wind and water," doctors, to determine the lucky spot for the grave and the propitious time for the interment. It may be long delayed, and China presents the spectacle of thousands of unburied coffins kept above ground for weeks and months by this kind of hocus-pocus. It is a bondage from which the Chinese should be freed, but nowhere is the influence of immemorial custom more evident the world over than in the beliefs and practices connected with death and burial.

The ideas that lie back of the practices are the important thing. Filial piety is the first of the Chinese virtues. It is extended beyond the grave because the dead parent continues to be as much a part of the family as before. To all the inducements which existed while the parent was living to show him reverence and honor is added that of the uncanny and mysterious fact that the soul has passed out into the unknown land of the shades and may possess powers and influence even more potent and surely more incalculable than he possessed in life. To the motive of respect must be added that of fear. What might not happen to the family if the sacrifices were neglected and the shade should be

deprived of the support which it has a right to expect? Above all the other duties that of being married and having sons in order to continue the sacrifices down through the generations is the most urgent. Mencius, the great follower and interpreter of Confucius, declared, "Three things are unfilial, and having no sons is the worst." This deeply ingrained conviction has driven the Chinese to two practices, polygamy and adoption. The effect has been that woman has been looked upon as of little value in herself; only as she fulfills her function and becomes the mother of sons is she considered worthy of honor. In a real sense a man's possessions belong to his ancestors, so no living man has the right to dispose of what in the final analysis is not his. So a daughter marrying out of the family gets practically nothing—it belongs to the ancestors and must not be taken from them. Shall we call this whole attitude one of worship or something of lesser significance? Some have said that it is of the same nature as the respect we show our deceased loved ones and friends and should not be taken too seriously, but when the matter is seen in all its relationships there is little wonder that the large majority of first-hand investigators have no hesitation in calling it worship in the most real sense. As Professor J. J. M. DeGroot puts it, a Chinese "may renounce all other gods, but his ancestors he will renounce last and least of all."[2] It is not an exalted type of worship and is carried on all too often to obtain material advantage and welfare. As such it holds out no hope that, so long as it remains worship, it can ever become an uplifting factor in Chinese life.

The all-prevailing animism and ancestor worship which have been described do not complete the round of early Chinese religion. There is a state religion, based on the same principles, but with a very different development. It shows the mind of the Chinese in a far better light. Again going back to the days before records were kept, the ani-

[2] Religion of the Chinese, p. 86. (Macmillan, New York, 1910.)

mistic attitude of mind laid hold on the greater objects of nature, personified them more or less, and raised them to a dignity not possessed by the other objects of worship. The heavenly bodies, the earth and its subdivisions, and, above all, the incomparable heavenly sphere became the great gods of China. These objects were not supposed to be worshiped by the people themselves. They were restricted to their own ancestors. The august worship of the great gods became the official duty of government officials, of the governors and the emperor. To the last alone was reserved the worship of High Heaven, the supreme religious act of Chinese religion. It must be remembered, however, that in each case the emperor performed the rites not for his own sake but on behalf of all the people. He is looked upon as the father of those over whom he is set to rule, and as a father he worships for them.

The climax of the whole system is the worship of Heaven, performed by the emperor at the capital city on the occasion of the longest night of the year. With beautiful suggestiveness it is performed that night because it is when the forces of cold and darkness in the world have done their worst, the time when again the shortening days cease to become shorter and the kindly influences of the sun begin again to regain power and give the first promise of the coming glory of spring and summer. Here under the open sky, with no shelter from the elements, upon a circular terraced marble platform, is performed one of the most remarkable religious sacrifices known in the whole range of religious history. There is a sublimity about the ritual which betokens a high conception of its significance. Prayers are offered which with little change might be used in Christian churches. The worship is offered to Heaven, or Shang-ti. The term "Tien" is also used. Some have thought that Shang-ti contains more of personal implication than Tien, like the distinction we frequently make between "God" and "Providence," but others consider the two terms identical. So lofty is the

conception that "Shang-ti" has been generally agreed upon as the word by which the Christian conception of "God" should be translated into Chinese. There is nothing unworthy in the conception in any way. It gives evidence of the existence from the earliest times of a noble and uplifting view of God and of what he requires of men. What of this state religion now that China has ceased to be an empire and has declared a republic? To make such a declaration is relatively easy; it is a far different matter to change the fundamental bent of a people's mind. So ingrained is the paternal idea that the so-called "president" of the republic has taken upon himself to act as the "father" of his people and conduct the worship of Shang-ti as aforetime. He may continue to do so for years to come, since he is still the representative of the people, for in China even the emperor has always held sway as the Son of Heaven by virtue of popular sufferance.

Confucius and His Contribution

Confucius lived from B. C. 551 to 478. These dates may be depended on as accurate, though scholars are far more conservative now than formerly relative to Chinese dates before Christ. According to Chinese chronology the country was ruled by the model emperors, Yao, Shun, and Yü, about twenty-two hundred years before our era. It is not, however, until we come to the period of the Chao Dynasty, B. C. 1122-256, that definite dates can be assigned with any confidence. Confucius lived in this period, when China was divided into many small states, frequently at war with each other and owning not much more than nominal allegiance to the weak authority of the central government. This unsatisfactory condition lasted until the Chao Dynasty went to pieces, to be succeeded for a short but memorable period by the Chin Dynasty (B. C. 256-205). The one great ruler during these years was Shi Huang-ti, who has been called the Napoleon of China. He abolished the feudal

form of government and effectively established a centralized empire in the form which lasted down to the destruction of the Manchu power and the setting up of the republic in 1911. He is also to be remembered as the builder of the Great Wall, which was intended to be a barrier to protect the empire from the encroachments of the wild nomadic tribesmen, always watching for the opportunity to sweep down on the rich plains to the south. He is also remembered by the Chinese with execration because in vain conceit he attempted to destroy utterly the classical literature and by so doing inaugurate a new era which should begin with himself and his period. It may be remarked in passing that the name "China" is said to be derived from the name of this dynasty, the Chin.

In the midst of the unsettled days when China was languishing for want of a strong central authority, when warfare occupied the attention of the distracted people instead of agriculture, when education was neglected and plague, pestilence, and famine stalked through the land, Confucius was born. His birthplace was in the state of Lu, in the western part of the modern province of Shantung. His father was an old man of seventy when he married a young woman, who soon became the mother of the sage. His lot as a young boy was not easy, his father dying when his little son was only three. We are able to say with certainty that Confucius was married at nineteen and had one son. His married life cannot be called a success. He ceased to live with his wife after a short time and we hear little more of her. His son appears at intervals in the story and seems to have become one of his disciples. Early in his career Confucius was appointed keeper of the state granaries, then guardian of the common lands. For a considerable time he was wholly devoted to teaching and labored at a new edition of the ancient odes and historical records. When he was about fifty he became a magistrate in his native state and was promoted until he became what we should call the min-

ister of justice. His tenure did not last long, but it was not on account of his failure or unfaithfulness. In fact, he did his work only too well, with the result that the state of Lu advanced to a position of commanding importance among the states. The prince of a neighboring state was full of envious resentment and determined to end the progress being made by Lu. He devised a plan as diabolical as it was successful. He sent the prince of Lu a present of some magnificent racing horses and a bevy of beautiful dancing girls. It was too much for the prince of Lu. He lost all interest in the welfare of his people and gave himself to pleasure and indulgence. Confucius protested, but to deaf ears. He lost his position and was compelled to see the work of his hand dissipated before his eyes.

The sage was so convinced that the experiment he had made in his native state might prove of permanent value in any state which would earnestly apply his principles that he spent the next period of more than twelve years wandering among the feudal states trying to induce one prince after another to let him try his schemes and bring peace and order out of the chronic confusion. He never succeeded, but with all his discouragements never lost heart and became pessimistic. He was convinced until the end that he possessed the secret of statecraft and could make any kingdom prosperous by the sincere cooperation of the ruler in the application of his principles. But for one reason or another he failed to convince a single prince and was compelled to abandon his purpose and return to his native state and his early home. There he lived the remainder of his life as a private citizen, surrounded by an enlarging circle of admiring disciples, and completing his literary labors. He edited the classical literature which already had a history in his time, adding but one comparatively insignificant portion, the Spring and Autumn Annals, from his own pen. There in the year B. C. 478, at the ripe old age of seventy-three, Confucius died and was buried. His tomb

is well marked at the present time, is visited by thousands of pilgrims each year, and is destined, one may surely say, to increase in interest, not only among the Chinese but among men of every nation as they come to recognize the noble example and the high ideals represented by the sage.

For a hundred years Confucius did not receive the recognition which his disciples felt was his due. Then arose Mencius, the second greatest of China's sages, and by his advocacy and enthusiastic admiration raised his master to a pedestal from which he has never been dislodged. Increasingly Confucius has been looked upon as the embodiment of everything good in China, and the hold he has been able to secure on the imagination and conscience of the Chinese is as complete as could well be conceived. The temporary neglect which has followed the recent inrush of ideas from the West cannot in the end divorce the Chinese from their admiration for one who more than any other has made China great, and who must play a large part in the making of the China which is to be. He understood the mind of China, and that mind will not be fundamentally altered. With all the changes—and many are needed to bring China into line with the needs of the modern world—the thought of Confucius must play its part in so far as it is the expression of the genius of the Chinese mind.

What was his contribution? Very little religiously. All that has been described as the early religion of the people was in full force in his day as it is in our own time. He did not condemn it, he did not criticise it, he did not add to it—he simply took it for granted. His temper of mind was essentially practical; he seemed always to be averse to any discussion of spiritual or purely philosophical matters. He claimed to be agnostic concerning the next life and the world of the gods. His mind was immersed in the affairs of this life, with conduct, the development of character, the relations of man with man, with the state and all the complicated affairs of government. On these he considered he

had an opinion worth while, of which it would be well for men, from the ruler to the humblest peasant, to take earnest heed. He was a political reformer, and this meant for Confucius the organization of society in accordance with high ethical principles. Along with this went the most careful attention to the culture of the individual self, the development of the ideal or superior man. Confucius claimed that the principles which guided him in all his advice came down out of the past and were as old as the eternal hills. He maintained that he was not an originator but a transmitter, one who had discovered a mine of wisdom in the practice of the ancients, who stood out in his mind as the paragons of all excellence. To conserve what had been handed down was to him the sum of all virtue. Of all preposterous things the thought that anything new could be compared with advantage with the old and the tried was the height of absurdity. This tenacious conservatism, which was rooted and grounded in his deepest nature, has had its lasting influence on Chinese thought and practice.

The Confucian ideal of the superior man finds its best exemplification in Confucius himself, though he in his modesty makes no claim to personal attainment of the ideal he has described. It is the picture of a dignified and grave gentleman, somewhat stooped by study and earnest thought, holding himself in perfect and dignified control, allowing himself no levity and others no familiarity, ready to offer advice to all and seeking by the power of example and admonition to lead others in the straight and narrow way. There is nothing of the free-and-easy so common in the West. Every act and every relationship must be carefully regulated according to well-thought-out principles. A rather unattractive combination, would be the verdict of the typical man in our unconventional life. And so it seems as we think of the effect it had even in Confucius' own day. It must have been somewhat difficult for Confucius' wife to

be compelled to get along with a companion in whom every impulse to spontaneity was suppressed as a temptation of the devil. The one or two conversations which are reported between the sage and his son while still in his tender years show not the slightest comprehension of boy nature. No intimacy could grow up between father and son on the basis of such scrupulous formality. He who would regulate every action, even to the position to be taken in bed, could scarcely win a boy's heart. Yet Confucius himself from the time he was a little boy had preferred playing at etiquette and ceremonies to the boisterous play of other boys. We may smile as we think of a man punctiliously molding his life in accordance with a rigid scheme which seems to us to be devoid of living interest and practical benefit, but such was Confucius, and we cannot withhold our admiration when we realize that it was not a vain whim, but the result of careful thought and calculated to bring out of life its very best. He sincerely desired to be a good man whose example might be followed with only beneficial results by all with whom he came into contact.

In the estimation of Confucius human nature is naturally good. The function of rules and regulations is to guide the development of the individual in the right channels and thus prevent the deterioration which might ensue if the wrong course should be followed. A man must depend on his own unaided powers to achieve maturity of character, but this was not so hard, because of his natural goodness. He must seek to develop by the unfolding of his own inner nature and thus be true to himself. Confucius was compelled to recognize that the task was easier for some than for others. Some seem to possess the necessary knowledge and ability almost intuitively, others learn easily, but must nevertheless apply themselves to learn, still others are able to acquire knowledge with difficulty, while there are those who will not learn, either through indifference or willful ignorance. But whatever condition may confront a man, the

admonition of the sage is to make the very most of himself. Religion, it is quite evident, did not enter into his scheme of human life. Very little prayer would suffice and sacrifice had only a subjective influence. He confessed that he could not enter into the meaning of the yearly sacrifice to Shang-ti. He did not object to ancestor-worship, because it encouraged and enforced the obligation of filial piety, and filial conduct was the corner stone of his system of relationships.

But with all his interest in the development of individual character Confucius was primarily interested in society and the state. He believed that man could not live alone, but that he had relationships which were necessary and inevitable. These relationships came to assume such importance that it would almost seem that society and the state were more important than the individuals of which they were compassed. He worked out a scheme intended to cover all the relations of human life. They are called the Five Relations, those of Father and Son, Ruler and Subject, Husband and Wife, Elder and Younger Brother, and Friend and Friend. The significant thing about these couplets is that in each case, save the last, the first named is looked upon as the superior and the last the inferior, subservient to the other. Human life is thus stereotyped in a rigid balance between those who command and those who obey. By inherent right the father, the ruler, the husband, and the elder brother possess rights and privileges not to be questioned by the other party. It may have rendered society static and immovable, which was Confucius' idea, but it has been responsible for gross injustice and abuse. When one possesses all the rights and privileges and the other none that are recognized, society is lopsided and the full development of all its members becomes impossible.

The state was Confucius' hobby. All his theories were to be measured by their value in relation to the state. He felt that if the sage and the sovereign could be combined in one

person all would be well. Since out of the classical literature all wisdom could be drawn, there was obvious advantage in the sovereign being able to delve in the ancient lore and learn its wisdom for himself. One of his greatest doctrines in statecraft was the power of personal example. The welfare of the state depended more upon the rectitude of the ruler than on any other factor. In fact, the dependence was almost absolute, according to many statements in the ancient literature. Evil in the ruler means eventually a ruined country, and integrity and probity is the first and sure cure for a country's ills. It is almost pathetic the lengths to which this principle was believed to be applicable. With a great truth at its center it laid too heavy a responsibility on a single pair of shoulders and failed to take into account the perversity of human nature no matter how good an example might be set. Confucius believed in reciprocity as the basis of all relationships. He would have men take care not to do to others what they would not want done to themselves. It has been called the Negative Golden Rule. It is good and wholesome as far as it goes, but still it is negative. That is the difficulty with the whole system. It lacks in the positive heroic features found in the Sermon on the Mount. Confucius is dignified and cautious and circumspect. He fails to throw out a challenge which by its sheer boldness and audacity drives a man to dare the impossible and persist when everything is against him.

But Confucianism is also a religion. Temples in which the tablets of Confucius and his most noted disciples are displayed are to be found in all the centers and worship is performed before them as before the tablets of ancestors. The sage has in recent years been canonized and recognized as one of the authorized objects of divine worship. An attempt has been made since the Revolution in 1911 to have the worship made the state religion, but the movement came to nothing. It is not along this line that the influence of Confucius is to be felt in the coming years. His work was to

provide China with a moral code. He was a sincere patriot and will continue to live in the estimation of his people as the worthy example of one who saw what China might be and bent all his energies to bring that about. All the more is he to be honored in that, with no reward and unappreciated except in his own circle, he never lost faith in his country and gladly gave his all for its best good.

Laocius and Taoism

"Laocius" is the Latinized form of Lao-tse, just as "Confucius" is of Kung Fu-tsu, the philosopher Kung. We know little about his life. He was born in B. C. 604, about a half century before Confucius. Once the two met while the younger man was on his wanderings from state to state, but they could not understand each other—they were so utterly different in their whole outlook on life. Laocius is said to have been the keeper of the archives at the imperial court of the Chao Dynasty. He became more and more discouraged as he saw everything going to decay, and finally resigned and retired. But still he was in the midst of the dismay caused by the warring of the feudal states and the supineness of the central power, so he determined upon an even more drastic step. He started off into exile and reached a noted pass in the mountains where the keeper induced him to put down in writing the philosophy which he had worked out and which would otherwise be lost. As a result he remained long enough to put into written form the Tao Teh King, a writing containing about five thousand Chinese characters, which he intrusted to the keeper of the pass and then passed on and disappeared. This altogether too picturesque account can scarcely be received, but it is all we know of the story of a very original thinker.

The Tao Teh King has been translated into English a number of times, but so difficult is it to understand and render into coherent language that the various translations differ almost hopelessly. The difficulty begins in the name

itself. Beginning with the last word, *King* means "writing" or "classic," *Teh* means "duty," "virtue," or "human responsibility," but what does *Tao* mean? Many definitions have been given, very divergent and in some cases most confusing. The shortest equivalent has been given as the "way." Another is "nature," and still another "Providence." It has also been conceived of as the "order of the universe," "the rotation of the seasons," and even "time." It may be that Doctor Soothill's statement is about as helpful as any that can be found. "Tao, then, may be considered as the eternal and ubiquitous impersonal principle by which the universe has been produced and is supported and governed."[8]

The aim of the work seems to be to indicate that human duty consists in imitating the Tao or "way" of the universe. Man then becomes a follower of the heavens in their majestic and sublime progress. To learn Tao and imitate it is the good to be sought. Now, what Laocius saw as he looked out on nature was quiet, humility, and self-effacement, placidity, emptiness, freedom from effort. It was the passivity of the processes of nature which impressed him, and man was to follow nature as closely as he could. He must live a life of "inward spontaneity"; he must not be headstrong or self-willed; he must be possessed by a "spirit of inanition." He must not even teach his doctrines; they must shine for themselves. Is there any wonder that Confucius, the apostle of strenuous endeavor, and Laocius, the preacher of the gospel of inactivity, should have been incomprehensible to each other? But Confucius has won the day, and China has gone with him and not with Laocius. But the quietist has had his imitators, too, men who retired into the mountains alone and gave themselves to the discipline of nature. They thought they might by so doing become etherealized and even enter the company of the gods. They fasted, believing that a saint needed no food, and

[8] The Three Religions of China, p. 8.

became sadly emaciated, and when this did not have the desired effect they sought drugs and elixirs to induce the spiritualized condition they sought. They thought that by absorbing the good in nature they might live long and even achieve immortality. They practiced breathing exercises to drink in the good influences of the atmosphere. These strange ascetics did not grow in number nor thrive greatly. Buddhism was abroad in the land and had a more positive aim and a better organized monastic discipline. But these seekers after Tao, the true Taoists, had some influence in China and helped to bring in the belief in immortality, which had been sadly lacking despite the ancestor worship which was constantly in touch with another world.

But this is not what we know as Taoism to-day. The modern variety, which still goes under the old name, is the most silly jumble of superstitions that can anywhere be found. It is the worst side of Chinese religion. There is a priesthood, and Taoist temples exist everywhere. Theoretically, the business of the priests is to help the people live in accord with Tao, but practically it is magic run mad. Soothsaying in every imaginable form, by the almanac and combinations of lines, by magical religious ceremonies, incantations, and what not, is carried on by a priesthood which has become skillful in working on the superstitious fears of the people and by so doing keeping them in subjection and terror. The beginnings of Taoism as a formal religion go back to one named Chang Tao-ling, who was born in A. D. 34. He discovered, so it is said, the elixir of immortality, founded a priesthood and hierarchy, and set up a state in the far western province of Sze-chuan, which was put down with much bloodshed. Descended from this ambitious priest a line of so-called Taoist popes has come down through the centuries to our own time. They have for many years been situated far away in an inaccessible mountain retreat in the province of Kiang-si. The "pope" does not exercise the kind of authority his name would indicate, but he is looked

upon as the spiritual center of a system which in its sublime beginnings gave promise of a better sequel than the poor excuse of a religion it is to-day.

Chinese Buddhism

Buddhism exists in China to-day only because it meets a felt need. The Chinese are practical and Confucius ministered to that bent with such insight and wisdom that the whole life of the people has been built up around his ideals. He did not feel the need of more than the meagerest amount of spiritual influence and believed that could be supplied out of the religious life which already existed. But he was mistaken. The Chinese have deep spiritual longings and capacity for mystical religion which many are not likely to appreciate. Taoism so soon descended to the level of quackery that all it could do was to trade on the superstitious fears of the people. But still there was an unreached depth to the Chinese heart which nothing in China had been able to touch. This was the opportunity of Buddhism. Coming in its Mahayana form with the assurance of being able to bring men into vital contact with the spiritual world, the hearts of many Chinese were touched. There is no other explanation of the career of Buddhism in China, where it has persisted despite the bitterest kind of persecution. The presence of a million Buddhist monks and nuns to-day speaks eloquently of the hold of the religion on the Chinese mind and heart.

These monks and nuns are scattered widely over the country. They are to be found in little temples in the cities and villages, but here the conditions are not ideal. The contempt in which the Buddhist monk is held in China is to be accounted for largely by the conduct of these men, who are in the world and also unfortunately of the world. Their lives are not an example worthy of emulation and have brought discredit to the whole brotherhood. We are as-

sured that many of the monks themselves deplore the condition. They would not for a moment risk their reputation in such company amid such surroundings. To them Buddhism is a gospel to be sincerely followed. They betake themselves to the monasteries where ideals are high and where laxity is not tolerated. In such retreats they find others likeminded and are able to give themselves uninterruptedly to meditation and worship. Here are pure souls seeking emancipation, who resist wrong-doing and lewdness as they would a pestilence, and who are reaching out in every way they know how to find the light.

The monks are divided into various schools or sects. It is a difficult subject, on which it has been hard to secure correct information. Many of the monks themselves are not intelligent and add to the confusion. There have been ten principal schools of thought, with subdivisions. Four of the ten schools no longer play any part. The six remaining schools fall into two essentially different groups, and between the two the difference is "profound and radical." The members of the first group are the adherents of Ch'an tsung, Ch'an meaning "meditation," and tsung "school" or "sect." Doctor Joseph Edkins calls them the "esoteric schools." They made inwardness the one needed quality, so meditation was the true fulfillment of the Buddhist ideal. This school was founded by the Patriarch Bodhidharma. He opposed the use of the sacred scriptures and all outward ritual. The "inward look" was sufficient. The attempt was made to empty the consciousness of every idea. It was to be a subjective experience with no objective content; it was pure abstraction. Bodhidharma was called the "Wall-Gazer," from his habit of looking intently at a blank wall as he sought to divest his mind of thought and make it as blank as the wall itself. Everything outward was considered superfluous, and, in the older writings, even the distinction between right and wrong was held to be the imperfection of a lower standpoint above which meditation would

lift one. A monk thus becomes indifferent to everything. This school was split up into five subdivisions, each of which became a school or sect. They do not vary greatly, though one, the Liu Chi, took the lead and spread all over China and even into Japan, where we shall meet it under a different name. The second group, comprising five of the ten original schools, oppose the absolute subjectivism of the Ch'an school and teach the value of objective content in one's practice, the importance of ritual and ceremonies, and inculcate the reading of the sacred books. There are differences between them, but the important characteristic is the common ground which they take in opposing the negative theory of their rivals. The divergent views which are expressed by western students of the life in the monasteries would indicate that much investigation is necessary to get at the real facts. The charge that moral laxity is prevalent and that spiritual life is at a low ebb is met by the statement that while that may be the case here and there, the general rule is that real moral earnestness and spiritual aspiration exist in the majority of these retreats. The very fact that a number of the monks themselves feel that they have as a class been misunderstood and maligned should lead the candid student to give them the benefit of the doubt until a more thorough investigation has been made.

Buddhism is also represented among the people in that they come to the temples and have recourse to the monks. They know nothing of the distinction between the schools. They are taught that there are gods, the loving Amida and the merciful Kwan-yin, who will hear their prayers and receive their sacrifices. They are also told that there is a heaven of bliss which they may attain and dreadful hells which they may escape by throwing themselves on the mercy of these benevolent beings. This is sufficient. There is no message like that in the other religions; it answers the craving and the fear in their hearts. They do not throw over their other religious practices in thus coming to a Buddhist

temple. It has been said[5] that the several religions of China answer to moods in the Chinese soul. Confucianism makes plain their duty, Taoism ministers to their superstitious fears, and Buddhism opens up the spiritual world and gives them the promise of future blessedness. Buddhism has also accommodated itself to ancestor worship. It offers prayers for the dead and adds its comfort to the friends and relatives who are concerned about the welfare of their departed in the next world. Buddhism exists in China also in many lay communities or secret societies, about which not much is known. The members try to assist each other on the road to salvation. The monastic idea is not insisted on, but the five moral commandments of the Buddha must be kept. In spite of persecution these societies are very numerous at the present time, showing the hunger which exists for the message of a spiritual religion.

Like everything in China, the outward aspect of Buddhism is dingy and run-down. Here and there repairs have been made and at places extensive alterations have been undertaken, but in general it is the need of renewing which strikes the eye of the visitor. But when this has been said one must hasten to express his unbounded admiration at the artistic sense and the eye for the appropriate which have been displayed in the choice of temple and monastery sites. Whether on the rock-bound island of Puto, where the waves are never still, or the Little Orphan island which raises its sharp crest far above the waters of the mighty Yang-tse which surround it, or the lovely stillness of the shaded crest of Kushan Mountain near Foochow, it is always the same. By an unerring instinct the pioneers of Buddhism in China found the places of beauty and claimed them for the practice of religion. The Chinese may be practical and materialistic, but this is only half the tale. There is a depth to their nature which Buddhism has touched, but which still re-

[5] W. J. Clennell, The Historical Development of Religion in China, p. 13. (Fisher Unwin, London, 1917.)

mains unsounded—a love of beauty and a craving after the things of the spirit. This is the true China, and some day China is to come to her own.

Suggestions for Further Study

J. J. M. De Groot, *The Religion of the Chinese* (New York, 1910). One of the clearest of all manuals.

W. E. Soothill, *The Three Religions of China* (London, 1913). Needed to correct certain statements made by De Groot.

R. F. Johnston, *Buddhist China* (New York, 1913). Especially valuable on present-day Buddhism.

Miles M. Dawson, *The Ethics of Confucius* (New York, 1912). Translations with running comment.

George Foot Moore, *History of Religions,* Vol. I, Chaps. I-IV.

CHAPTER IX

THE RELIGIONS OF JAPAN

Shinto

Japan received her civilization from China. It is not known when the influence began to be felt, but the process was complete by the end of the seventh century of our era. About everything which goes to make up the life of a people came to Japan from across the sea, from the mother country of all Far Eastern culture. By way of the peninsula of Korea these influences were flowing in for several centuries until in the end Japan had entered the stream of history, and her course can be followed step by step from that time to our own. The cultivation of the silk-worm, the language and literature of China, the ethical system of Confucius and the religion of the Buddha—all these and much else came in and transformed Japan into a civilized country. Not, then, for the first time in her history did Japan in the nineteenth century show an eager willingness to receive from other peoples what was necessary for her to take her place by the side of the progressive nations of the world. She was only doing what she had done before, thus proving her willingness to learn from others whenever it is to her advantage to do so. But by the side of this characteristic must be placed another which is just as important if we are to understand the meaning of Japanese life and civilization. On everything which Japan has ever received from the outside she has not failed to put her own stamp. The sign-manual of Japan is indelibly attached to all she produces, making it her own unique output. There must be, then, a very distinctive and tenacious Japanese racial fiber, which, while assimilating with avidity all that may be offered, succeeds

in giving it a character which no one can mistake. At no point is this to be seen to better advantage than in Japanese religious development. This makes it incumbent to study with care the religious life of the people before the coming of religion from China.

The early religion is known as Shinto. This is itself a Chinese word, or two words, both of which we have met before. *Shin* is the same as the Chinese *Shen,* which means "good spirits," while *to* is the same as *tao,* the "way," as it may be translated for short. The religion, then, is the "way of the Good Spirits," or the "way of the Gods." The equivalent name in pure Japanese is *Kami-no-Michi, Michi* meaning "way" or "road," *no* being the possessive, and *Kami* meaning the "deities" or "gods." The word *Kami* is the clue to the whole system. It denotes that which is above, any power or influence which can accomplish what man cannot prevent. It is something he must look up to as possessing power. There are many Kami, presiding over all the phases of life. Thus it is seen that as in all other countries the earliest form of religion in Japan was nature-worship. The cult was exceedingly simple. Unpainted, unadorned wooden shrines were the centers of worship. No images were to be found in the early day, though the presence of the spirits was indicated by fluttering pieces of notched paper. A gong above the entrance could be sounded to call the attention of the spirits to the coming of worshipers. Lustrations preceded the clapping of the hands and the offering of the brief prayers. There was no sacred book, no doctrine to be believed, and no code of laws to be followed. Of all the religions of primitive peoples none has ever been found more simple and unencumbered than the early religion of Japan.

Yet the people were intensely religious. Wayside shrines were numerous, and various lesser divinities like the Kitchen God presided over their home life and the daily task. The God of Plenty and the God of Health had their place, as did

a hundred others, each with its designated function. Ancestor worship was everywhere prevalent. To this day no Japanese household is complete without its god-shelf with the tablets of the deceased before which prayers and sacrifices are offered. Another aspect of Shinto which grew up in the early period was reverence for the imperial house. It was fully developed by the time the continental influences had done their work and remains as one of the leading characteristics of the Japanese to this day. As Dr. G. W. Knox happily phrased it, everything in the ancient religion might be summed up in the injunction, "Fear the gods and obey the emperor." It was "essentially nature worship married to the worship of the imperial house."[1]

A closer glance is necessary at this point. In A. D. 712 a book was written called the *Kojiki,* the "Record of Ancient Matters," which has been called the Bible of the Japanese. This was followed in 720 by another work, the *Nihongi,* or "Chronicles of Japan," which covered much the same ground, but which showed more of the Chinese influence than the earlier volume. The object of the writers seemed to be to trace the history of Japan and the imperial line back to the very beginnings. We read there of the divine beings Izanagi and his wife Izanami, who produced many of the Japanese islands as well as the Japanese race; also various tales of gods and goddesses, among whom was the great sun-goddess, Amaterasu-o-mi-Kami. She ruled in the heavens in brilliant light, the highest divinity of the ancient pantheon. Not only so, it was her "grandson" Jimmu Tenno, who assumed the rule in Japan, so it is said, in B. C. 660, and inaugurated the line of emperors. Remarkable to say, the present sovereign, Yoshihito, is the one hundred and twenty-third in direct descent from Jimmu Tenno, the grandson of the sun-goddess. We may be quite sure the line has not been broken since records began to be kept in

[1] Development of Religion in Japan, p. 66. (Putnam, New York, 1907.)

the fifth century, and how long before that we cannot know. Suffice it to say that the Japanese are taught in school as the first fact of history that their reigning emperor is directly descended from Amaterasu, the sun-goddess. Little wonder that patriotism is for them a part of their religion and allegiance to the imperial house the highest obligation they know.

Then came Buddhism and all but swallowed Shinto. It would probably have done so had it not been for the reverential attachment to the ruling dynasty. This was their most tangible connection with the gods, the world of divine power, and held them fast during all the centuries. Even though through most of their history the emperor has been little more than a figure-head so far as the actual rule was concerned, the Japanese have always looked on him as the representative of the gods, as the final source of all authority. This has been consistently recognized in theory even though the treatment meted out to the ruler on many occasions would seem to belie the fact. Whenever an important act had been decided upon by the power in actual control of the country the "constitutional" thing to do was to proceed to the imperial palace, lay the matter before his august throne, and receive the approbation of the emperor. This continued to be done until, in the year 1868, a revolution occurred and the emperor was restored, for the first time in many centuries, to his rightful place as actual ruler as well as theoretical sovereign of his people. The loyalty which had centered in devotion to feudal princes was at once, almost as if by magic, transferred to the emperor himself. Undoubtedly this could not have been accomplished had it not been that in the background of all their thinking there lay implicit the thought that the divine representative of the power of heaven was in the final analysis the foundation of their lesser loyalties and might claim the right to their complete allegiance.

This may be little more than conjecture; what we do know is that in the eighteenth century there occurred what has

been called "The Revival of Pure Shinto." Motoori and other scholars began to study anew the ancient literature, notably the Kojiki, and came to the realization that things were not as they should be. Why should the emperor be kept in seclusion in the old capital of Kyoto while Japan was being ruled by the family of the Tokugawas in Tokyo? It was not so in the early day, that the literature made very clear. Other powerful forces were at work and may have had more to do with the actual course of events than this literary movement, but it at least shows that men were thinking and that it was along this line. As it was, the emperor was restored and the Japanese have rallied around him with a passionate devotion which evokes our admiration and surprise. No theory of the "divine right of kings" is more far-reaching and complete than the Japanese. But it goes a step further and asserts divinity of the very person of the emperor. He is their divine ruler, and commands their loyalty and obedience by a right seldom claimed in all history and never in modern times except in the island empire. The patriotism of the Japanese may readily be interpreted as religion, and in fact is about all the religion many Japanese have.

Shinto, then, was saved from almost complete extinction by the connection it had with the ruling house. What became of all the gods and goddesses of the early religion? In a comparatively short time after its arrival Buddhism became the dominant religion and overtopped the simple faith of the early days. Pure Shinto remained little more than the ritual and ceremonial of the court, in which the people were only slightly interested. But we must always remember that even a simple faith like Shinto has its roots deep down in the life of the people and cannot be torn up and thrown away at will. So it was in Japan. The people mixed their Shinto and their Buddhism together and the result was not altogether incongruous. It was known as Ryobu, or "Mixed," Shinto. The *mixture* almost became a *compound*

when by a happy thought or a stroke of genius, not to make the charge of more sinister motives, a celebrated Buddhist priest named Kobo Daishi (A. D. 774) declared that the old Shinto deities were in reality incarnations of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas! What they had been worshiping in ignorance of their true greatness he now made known to them, and from that day the two religions have lived side by side in peace, though it must be said that Buddhism got the lion's share and received all the glory. In Japan to-day a Shinto and a Buddhist gateway are frequently found at the entrance of the same temple, and inside a Shinto god and a Buddha may share the honor and worship of the people.

Because of its connection with the imperial cult Shinto was given a place of honor at the restoration in 1868, but declined rapidly, until in 1899 the priests of the sacred shrine at Ise, the shrine dedicated to Amaterasu, the divine "god-mother" of the emperors, took steps to make Shinto a purely secular organization. Now Shinto is the embodiment of the spirit of patriotism. It expresses their confidence "that there is a something more than their present strength and wisdom which directs and aids and on which they may rely."[2]

The Coming of Buddhism

The conquest of Japan by Buddhism was not without opposition. After the embassy from the Korean king in A. D. 552 the new faith had its ups and downs before it was able to prove that it possessed larger power and could give greater material assistance to the Japanese than their indigenous Shinto. When the cause of the new teaching had been embraced by the prominent minister Shotoku-Taishi (died 621) the opposition ceased and Buddhism was accepted as belonging to the country. And when finally Kobo Daishi amalgamated the two faiths by making the Shinto divinities incarnations of the Buddhas and Bodhisatt-

[2] Knox, op. cit., p. 79.

vas no question could be raised even by the most scrupulous. From that day to this Buddhism has remained the religion of the masses of the people. For about three hundred years other influences have taken possession of the minds of the cultured and Buddhism has been more or less neglected in these circles. Still it is the great religious power in the land, thoroughly acclimated and with a development which is peculiarly Japanese.

The contrast between Shinto and Buddhism is sharp and complete. Shinto is simplicity itself, in the lack of all outward adornment as well as of inner content. There was almost nothing to believe and very little to do in the old faith. Buddhism is the exact opposite of all this. It is elaborate and complex in every feature. It has temples ornate and profusely decorated without and full of images and the paraphernalia of worship within. It has its books and its ceremonial, its priests with their vestments—everything we associate with color and form in religion came into Japan with Buddhism and made the country over again. Art was stimulated and the beauties we associate with Japan began to appear. But more than these outward manifestations, it was rich in inner content. It opened up a spiritual world to the wondering gaze of the simple Japanese. They had never dreamed such a world existed, peopled with beings so magnificent and resplendent that they could not but win the awesome reverence of a backward people. The hope of immortality became a reality for the first time, and contact with merciful gods who were all-powerful yet interested in the salvation of men. The imagination was stimulated and the glories of a paradise presided over by the gracious Amida became real. In short, the hitherto undeveloped capacity of the Japanese for all that a spiritual religion could supply found its satisfaction in Buddhism. It could not be otherwise when the Japanese mind was beginning to expand under the influence of the culture from the continent. A more satisfying religion was necessary to

parallel the enlarging outlook of a new civilization. It was fortunate that Buddhism was on hand to fill the need.

As in China so in Japan, the rise and growth of schools or sects became a marked characteristic of the development. Some of the sects were introduced directly from China, but those which have put a distinctive mark on Japanese Buddhism were born and grew up in Japan itself. This does not mean that they are not related to the Buddhism across the sea. Japanese Buddhism has preserved the historical continuity of the faith, and even in the sects most distinctive of the country the connection with older teachings is close and vital. In a number of cases Japanese monks went to China and brought back the nucleus of what they embodied in their own systems. But it may truly be said that in the Japanese sects Buddhism has reached its farthest bound in doctrine and practice. Here Mahayana has developed to the point of greatest departure from the teaching of Gautama the Buddha. The logic of the newer ideas has been carried out more consistently than in any other country. The sects number about a dozen, but if all the subsects are counted the whole list comes to about thirty. The most important for our purpose are six in number: Tendai, Shingon, Zen, Jodo, Shin, and Nichiren.

Tendai need only detain us for a moment. It has been called the eclectic sect, in its attempt to gather in teachings of all sorts, whether one element was consistent with another or not. Its chief claim to distinction is that of being the parent of the other important sects. Out of its great establishment on Hiezan, a mountain near Kyoto, overlooking the beautiful expanse of Lake Biwa, have come a number of the great historic leaders of Japanese Buddhism. Not satisfied with the doctrinal stand taken by its leaders, they withdrew and founded schools of their own, which have become more famous than the mother of them all. It has had a stormy history. In the days when feudalism was in power and monks could be soldiers Hiezan became a ver-

itable fortress, sending out its armed men to help this side and then that in the interminable strife of petty chieftains. Finally in the sixteenth century Nobunaga, the dictator, suspecting that the monks of Hiezan were against him, made an attack, and after bloody fighting cleared the mountain and burned every building on it. The sect has never recovered from this blow, and now peaceful Hiezan is the summer home of beauty-loving Japanese and foreigners who are glad to escape from the heat of the city.

Shingon is the offspring of Tendai and was founded in 806 by Kobo Daishi, whom we have already met. The core of his teaching, according to Professor A. K. Reischauer, is "that man can even in this present life attain Buddhahood since he is essentially one with the eternal Buddha."[2] This essential Buddha is Dainichi, in India Vairochana, one of the Dhyani-Buddhas, early developed in Mahayana. He is the all, inclusive of everything. The system then is clearly pantheistic. Man came from out this all, is essentially one with it now, and will be reabsorbed; this is what it means to attain Buddhahood. There are two methods of attainment, one by meditation and knowledge and the other by a righteous life. So there are two worlds, one of ideas, "unchangeable and everlasting, having existence only in universal thought," the other a world of phenomena, the world we see and touch. Vairochana is the center of both, but, of course, the one is only a seeming world, destined to pass away. The real world, everlasting and eternal, is the ideal world to which all must attain for final salvation. Belief in the efficacy of the magic word, the spell, the posture, has worked evil in the sect, partially saved by the ideal philosophy on which it is based.

The Zen, founded in 1191, is by no means the most numerous of the sects, but it has the largest number of temples. It lays the greatest stress on contemplation and meditation,

[2] Studies in Japanese Buddhism, p. 94. (Macmillan, New York, 1917.)

thus being somewhat in harmony with the Buddha's way of virtue. Like the Shingon, the Zen aims at a divine emptiness. There are in reality two selves, one which has the world around us as its object and the other which looks away into the real world of ideas. Only when one rises to the experiences of the higher, true self is he on the road to emancipation. The training of the will is of prime importance, for no advance can be made without the control of the passions and the conquest of the physical desires. It trained and hardened the resolution of its disciples and made for stoical endurance of the experiences of life. For this reason it made a strong appeal to the Samurai of old Japan, the soldier-scholars, who better than any others represented the ancient spirit. They were taught to laugh at hardship and even welcome death without fear or the slightest evidence of emotion. The practical philosophy of the Zen fitted in splendidly with their ideal and gave a religious tone to a spirit which otherwise was likely not to rise to a very high level.

With the advent of the Jodo we find ourselves in another atmosphere. Founded by Honen Shonin in 1175, it promulgated the doctrine of the Western paradise. This is presided over, as we have seen before, by Amida. The way of salvation is by faith in him, who promises to deliver all those who trust in him. But paradise cannot be assured without the repetition, times without number, of the Nembutsu, or prayer formula, "Namu-Amida-Butsu." The rosary thus becomes an important article, as the prayers are told off one by one. Of course, it becomes a meaningless and lifeless form, even though merit and a nearer approach to the heaven of Amida is the reward of faithfulness in its performance. Another step must be taken for the "faith doctrine" to come to its own, and that was accomplished by Shinran Shonin, the founder of the Shin sect, who saw the line which must be taken.

This remarkable man had his introduction to Buddhist

doctrine in the Tendai monastery on Hiezan. Dissatisfied with the teaching, he went out determined to seek a more satisfying way of salvation. He went to China and traveled from center to center, and doubtless while there made his discovery and formulated his distinctive doctrine. Coming back to Japan, he founded a new sect in 1224. He gave it the name of Shin or Shin-shu, the Pure Land Sect. It is also known as the Jodo-shin, the Monto, and the Hongwanji Sect. He built directly on the teaching of the Jodo, with its emphasis on the Western paradise of Amida. He made much of Amida's vow. It is said that this spiritual being, going on to the perfection of Buddhahood, solemnly vowed that he would never allow himself the last and crowning experience so long as men were left below in the world of suffering whom he might help. He was still keeping the vow and holding out his hands in love to all who would come and throw themselves on his mercy. He would give them an immediate salvation, the earnest of what was in store for them in the great beyond. Shinran was very emphatic that there was no other salvation, and that it could be attained by faith and faith alone. Here is where he parted company with the Jodo. There was no possibility of accumulating merit by anything a man might do, not even by repetition of the Nembutsu. Only by putting faith in Amida and believing that he would receive any who came might a man hope for salvation.

It will repay us to pause a minute to look a little more carefully at this way of salvation. In one of the sermons of Tada Kanai this passage occurs: "This one name stands revealed in the midst of a world of Shadow and Vision, and it alone is neither Shadow nor Vision. It is revealed in the world, but it belongs not to this world. It is Light. It is the Way. It is Life. It is Power. This name alone has come down from Heaven, the Absolute and Invisible, to Earth, the Finite and the Visible. It alone is the rope which can draw us out from the burning fire of pain, and land us

safely in a place of pure and eternal bliss."[4] Even the faith which we exercise is not in our own power, but is graciously bestowed by Amida. Not even prayer avails; there is no merit in any form or "works"; it is solely by the mercy of the Saviour who looks with compassion on the heart of anyone who is willing to trust him. There is no difference between the priesthood and the laity. To enter a monastery or to practice meditation is as useless to secure salvation as it would be to storm the battlements of heaven.

Where did Shinran get this doctrine? That is a real question, as yet unanswered. Professor Arthur Lloyd[5] spent many years of serious study on the question and became convinced that Shinran, either directly or indirectly, came into contact with Christian teaching in China and adopted it as his own. It is clear that we have here the doctrine of justification by faith as clearly taught as by Paul or Luther. And it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that Professor Lloyd's conclusion is correct. Nestorian Christian missionaries had been in China for several hundreds of years, and it would be strange if some fragments at least of their teaching should not have penetrated very much farther than the direct influence of the missionaries themselves. The net result of the investigation to the present time is that there may have been this connection, but that it cannot be proved. At any time new light may be thrown on the subject which will clear away the difficulties and give us a most welcome solution.

But who is this wonderful being Amida in whom men are asked so implicitly to place their confidence? Trace him back through China to India and there as Amitabha he appears as one of the Dhyani Buddhas, or Buddhas of Contemplation. In the triple scheme worked out in the early Mahayana days we have Amitabha, and under him Ava-

[4] The Praises of Amida, trans. by Arthur Lloyd, sermon i.
[5] See especially The Creed of Half Japan. (Smith Elder, London, 1911.)

lokita, the Bodhisattva of Contemplation, and lastly Gautama, the earthly manifestation. It is all an imaginary scheme whose only sure historic foothold is Gautama, here a very inferior being. So men are asked to pin their faith on Amida, a figment of the imagination, placed in the heavens as a Saviour because man felt the need for what such a being could offer, but with no assured existence as a reality in the true world of spiritual beings. Speaking of the difference between Amida and Jesus Christ, Professor Lloyd says, "But, the one is an Idea, the other a Person—the one a creature of theological Fancy, the other a Being whose history is well defined."[6] But surely the Christ idea was present in Shinran's mind, whether he learned it of Christian missionaries or not, and some day the Japanese believers in Amida may come to see that the true embodiment of their ideal and the sure fulfillment of their hopes are to be found in the person of Jesus Christ, who unlocked the doors of the spiritual world and showed us God our Father.

The Shin sect is by far the largest and most influential in Japan. Shinran was an innovator. Monasticism meant nothing to him, so, like Luther, he broke through the bondage and married a wife. Celibacy could bring a man no nearer the goal, so he would have none of it, and to this day the priests of the Shin sect marry like their parishioners and live among men like their fellows. They dress like the laity except when attending to their priestly duties. They are in close touch with men and are seeking to accommodate their practice to the demands of modern life. They are opposed to Christianity, but pay it the high compliment of copying its methods. Preaching halls have been provided and sermons are delivered. Sunday schools are conducted, provided with the helps and apparatus of the Christian schools, sometimes with a pathetic inability to put on the original touch which would make them soundly Buddhistic. Young Men's Buddhist Associations have been organized

[6] Praises of Amida, p. 150.

in various cities, and a periodical literature attempts to meet the intellectual needs of the alert young students and the cultured men and women. They are a force to be reckoned on, with an enormous following, and a readiness to make almost any move to meet the new situations as they arise.

We have one more sect to mention, the Nichiren. It was founded by a remarkable man of that name in 1253. He was scandalized at the neglect which was being shown the person of the historical Gautama, and wished to reinstate him in his rightful position. The Jodo and the Shin, recently formed, had almost entirely neglected the great founder and had placed other deities in his place. But Nichiren taught that Gautama the Buddha was to be taken mystically. "The true Buddha is a greatness permeating all being, the great illumination we must find in ourselves."[7] What is to be gained by a return to the historical Buddha when he is not to be taken historically is a question. The system of Nichiren is purely pantheistic. The sect has been noted in Japan for its vigorous opposition to all rival sects and other religions. It condemns Buddhist sects which preach a different doctrine almost as violently as it does Christianity. It will not appear on the same platform with any other sect, but prefers to go its own noisy way, fighting here and fighting there wherever an enemy appears. But with all its misdirected zeal the movement seeks to follow the example of its founder, who was one of the most picturesque personages and noblest patriots Japan has ever known. Living in a time when the country was in danger of an invasion by the hordes of Kublai Khan, the Mongol emperor of China, Nichiren was the prophet of preparedness and had much to do with the vigorous and successful defense which kept the invader from landing on the sacred shores. Several times he was exiled for patriotically resisting the evil counsels of men in power. His life was in danger, but with singleness of purpose he went his way, seeking to lead men aright both

[7] H. Hackmann, Buddhism as a Religion, p. 292.

politically and spiritually. He died far away in the mountains of Central Japan, in a little shelter he had built for himself away from the confusion of a troubled time. The inspiration of his name is still powerful as the story of his unselfish devotion to native land is recounted in story and song.

So much for the sects, to one or another of which the people belong. They are not concerned about the philosophy of the sects; they call the priests in to officiate in times of need, and give themselves to such performances as are prescribed. When it is remembered that Buddhism is the religion of the village people who comprise eighty per cent of the entire population, it is easy to see that it is the religion par excellence of the Japanese. One of the most unfortunate facts about Buddhism is suggested by the different attitudes of the intelligent and the ignorant masses toward its doctrines. The inner teaching cannot be understood by ninety per cent of the people. To them the higher, the essential teaching is not offered. An accommodated doctrine, suited to their understanding, where symbol is used instead of idea, is about all they can take. "The esoteric teaching may have to do with self-identification with the absolute, while the popular preacher talks of a materialistic Hell and Heaven."[8] Is one consistent with the other? If it is, no one could object to the attempt to reach the heart of the people by language and figures they can understand, but, when the Japanese themselves feel, as many of them do, that there is a real discrepancy, the palpable insincerity of the whole method is a serious bar to its acceptance by those who are looking for both light and reality.

Again Buddhism has been paying a high price for its militant interference in affairs of state during the Middle Ages. The Tokugawa rulers, who assumed control late in the sixteenth century and retained it until the restoration in 1868, curtailed the aggressiveness of the sects and reduced them

[8] Knox, Development of Religion in Japan, p. 120.

to comparative impotence. The religion lost the hold it had on the gentry and became more exclusively what it had always been and is to-day, the religion of the common people of the country. It is dependent for support entirely on free-will offerings. A new earnestness is apparent, particularly in Shin-shu, which has become interested in the condition of Buddhism in Korea and China and is stimulating by visitations and gifts the reclamation of decaying institutions and the inauguration of new enterprises to make the faith again the fresh and vital force it was in the old days of its missionary zeal. It is too early as yet to estimate the real power lying back of the movement.

The Adoption of Confucianism

Buddhism did not provide a moral code for the masses of the people; it had rules and regulations only for the monks and the priests. But at the same time Buddhism came into Japan the teachings of Confucius also made their way from the mainland. With what has already been said concerning Confucius and his system we are prepared to learn of its reception in Japan and of the development which it underwent. For when the Japanese mind had finished its work on the Confucianism which came from China it was a very different thing. It was compelled to fit into the Japanese mold, and in doing so received an impress which would have caused the sage to shudder with horror. The conditions in Japan were entirely different from those in China. Confucius based all his practical injunctions on the family. The first relation was that of father and son. But in Japan it was somewhat different. The first relation was, rather, that of ruler and subject. The state is first; loyalty, and not filial piety, is the first virtue, though filial piety is of supreme importance.

In China, again, peace is the great desideratum and the scholar the first man in the social scale. The men who produce are put first, and the scholar is a producer of the high-

est and finest sort. The soldier, on the other hand, is looked on as a destroyer, and as such is put down to the lowest plane, beneath the farmer, the artisan, and the merchant. In China the emperor ruled as the Son of Heaven so long as he ruled in accordance with the principles of virtue and benevolence. He might forfeit his right to the throne and cease to be considered the Son of Heaven by unseemly conduct, provided, of course, the aggrieved people could find a leader to organize them for victory, sweep the old tyrant from the throne, and take the place himself as the accredited ruler of the people. The voice of the people was in a real sense the voice of God. Dynasty after dynasty in China has been hurled from the throne by just this process. The Chinese theory has been given in order to make clear the situation in Japan, which is just the opposite. The emperor is the Son of Heaven by right of descent from Amaterasu —such was the theory. But, more practically, he ruled by right of conquest and the power of the sword. He or his ancestors had won the first place in the land and intended to maintain the position against all comers. When the tradition had been established and the descent of the ruler from the gods could be assumed the day was won. But it can readily be seen that the whole theory was different from that of China. The imperial family must be secured on the throne at any price; peace, then, was of secondary importance, and has never been looked upon as a particularly desirable thing in Japanese history. As a consequence the soldier became the first man in Japan, and underneath were ranged the farmer, the artisan, and the merchant, in that order. By an interesting turn the soldier was also the scholar. The uniting of these two characters, which are separated by the whole width of the social scale in China, in one individual is one of the unique features we find peculiar to Japanese life in the old regime.

Now, what happened when the Confucian ideal was brought into contact with a condition as strange to its essen-

tial genius as this? The resulting Confucianism could scarcely be recognized as such. Confucius was honored by an acceptance of his system, but so changed that he would hardly have recognized it as his own. Several of the essential notes of his system had been obliterated and his ideals had been bowed out of court. There gradually developed out of the transformation which took place a new code which was admirably fitted to the feudalism which prevailed in Japan until 1871. In China, as we remember, feudalism had been abolished in the year B. C. 221, but even then it was not a feudalism like that of Japan. The code was called Bushido, *Bushi* meaning "warrior" and "do" being another form of the "tao," with which we have become familiar. Here it might again be translated the "way," making the whole word mean "The way of the warrior." Much has been written about this old code—"Code of Honor" we might call it—in praise and admiration. It deserves about as much praise and condemnation as the old code of the gentleman, with its dueling and its oversensitiveness on questions of honor, which lasted so long in this country, particularly in the South. Its great virtue was loyalty—every thing turned on this. A man must sacrifice everything to loyalty, usually to his feudal lord. Life itself was of little value compared with firmness and steadfastness in his allegiance. It applied equally to the gentle women in Japan, who were taught to sacrifice everything, even their honor, if by so doing they might exhibit necessary loyalty in a time of danger or crisis. Japanese literature is full of examples of men and women who forfeited their all for the cause of their liege-lord. Loyalty to parents was also included; in fact, loyalty in every relationship where it might be called into play. There was little chance for the development of personality, the individual counted for almost nothing.

Other sides of Bushido will throw it into bolder relief. Coupled with loyalty were hardness and stoic indifference to suffering and loss and death. Simplicity was admired in

adornment and taste. Frugality in food and clothing became a rule; the Samurai came to loathe money; to him it was literally "filthy lucre." Laconic in speech, courtly in manner, reserved among friends and dignified at all times, he led a life which had been forced into a rigid mold with little opportunity to relax and be his natural self. Never appearing in public without his two swords, he was inured to the thought that at any time he might be called on to use either or both, the keen long blade on an enemy and the short dirk on himself. For in Japan suicide was raised to the position of a virtue, if performed to escape an ignominious death at the hands of an enemy or if no other way remained to vindicate one's honor. Is there any wonder the sword was called "The Soul of Samurai"? Is there any wonder the Japanese are fierce fighters and that martial virtues are still held in such high esteem among them?

Such was one side of Confucianism when it had become domesticated in Japan—but there is another. The Chinese classics and the ethical system contained in them were being studied with deep insight. Confucian ethics is not utilitarian. It is based on the profound conception that behind our work-a-day world there is another in which what we strive to attain in moral conduct is an immanent principle. The ethical system we seek to follow is an essential part of the eternal nature of things and as such there is a binding quality to its obligation which no merely utilitarian system could command. This thought stirred the soul of men here and there and a literature grew up which rooted ethics in the very heart of a universe which in its inner essence is righteousness. To be righteous ourselves is to express in time and under mundane conditions what the universe was expressing in the solemn majesty of its mighty processes. This solemnized many a man and led him to reverence the universe of which he was a part. It became a religion for many who were not to be satisfied with the philosophy and practice of Buddhism. As might be ex-

pected, there could be no propaganda, no enthusiasm establishing a kingdom, but the calm dignity of a quietism. Men lived carefully, but, more than that, they felt hushed in the presence of a world-order which was the embodiment of all they admired and could respect. This high type of Confucianist theory could only be the cherished possession of a few. Yet it was and still is the inner groundwork of belief of conservative men who have not been able to ally themselves with any of the aggressive religious organizations which are seeking to win the allegiance of Japan.

And now again in Japan the question arises, What of the future? For the second time in her long history Japan has reached out her arms to take all she needs and can assimilate of a civilization and culture to which she has until recent years been a complete stranger. We have no way of determining what course the old religions would have taken had Japan been left to herself any more than a would-be prophet could have predicted what would have become of Shinto just before the influences from the continent began to flow in during the fourth or fifth century. Japan is to be a new Japan, but of one thing we may be sure: no flooding of the country by influences from without can obliterate the tendencies that are distinctively Japanese nor prevent the modification of the new material in accordance with the essential genius of the people.

Western science is doing its deadly work with the ancient superstitions. The old myths, legends, cosmologies, and traditions, both Shinto and Buddhist, are doomed, the only immediate hindrance at one point being the pressure of a false patriotism which as yet is winning the victory over historical truth in not permitting any statement to be made which might discount the initial claim of the royal house to be descended from the gods. But it is only a question of time when, with universal elementary education and the higher schools attended by an increasing proportion of the most eager young minds, none of the old superstitions will

have any appreciable hold on the people. When that day comes what will be the religion of the Japanese?

Can Buddhism be reinterpreted in the light of modern thought so as to hold the intellect of young Japan? If not, it must gradually lose its hold on the masses. The modern world is a single community in which every class must take its part and share the burden. What we do actually see on every hand is great uncertainty and confusion. Even the common people feel it and can be attracted by such emotional off-shoots of Shinto as Tenrikyo and Remmonkyo, both led by uneducated enthusiasts, peasant women professing to heal the body as well as minister comfort to the soul. On the other hand, Buddhism has not been able to hold the young intellectuals, as a census taken at the Imperial University in Tokyo a few years conclusively demonstrated. Of about five thousand students four thousand five hundred, in round numbers, returned answers to the effect that they were either atheists or agnostics!

The Japanese leaders are deeply concerned. In 1912 the Department of Education officially summoned what came to be known as the Three Religions Conference, so called because it was composed of representatives of Buddhism, Shinto, and Christianity. Education alone, said the officials of the Department, was not able to build up the morality which must be the foundation of a great state. Religion must do its important work, for morality without religion was a rope of sand. Could the government count on the hearty cooperation of the various religions represented to do their part in the building up of the Japan that was to be? Such was the final request of the government in a memorable conference. What can Shinto do besides stimulate the patriotism which already has proved itself quite sufficient to make men willing to dare and to die? What can Confucianism do more than it has done in inculcating a code which has had its day, and which on careful examination scarcely seems strong enough to bear the weight of

the new social problems and to emancipate the individual who is coming to feel the supreme value of human personality? What can Buddhism do unless it succeed far better than it now gives promise of doing in reaching the intellect and heart of young Japan in search after a satisfying philosophy and a moral dynamic sufficient to meet the temptations and trials of life? Is there a call for Christianity? Such is the view of many prominent leaders, not Christians themselves, who see little or no hope in Japan's own religious heritage and who are compelled to look in the only other direction they know. It is an opportunity and a challenge unsurpassed in all the history of our faith.

Suggestions for Further Study

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CHAPTER X

JUDAISM

The Religion of the Semites

Of the sons of Noah, as given in the tenth chapter of Genesis, the first is Shem. The classification of peoples which follows is partly genealogical and partly geographical, the "sons" of Shem, Ham, and Japheth being a list of peoples and nations known in the period when these records were written. The immediate "sons" of Shem are said to be the Elamites, the Assyrians, the Lydians of Asia Minor, the widely scattered Aramæans, and Arpachshad, which Canon Driver takes to mean "the supposed ancestor of the *Kasdim*," or Chaldæans, who became "the ruling caste in Babylonia."[1] Shem is also called "the father of all the children of Eber,"[2] which is intended to indicate the tribes of Arabia, mentioned in Gen. 10. 25-30, and the children of Abraham, the Israelites, Ishmaelites, Midianites, and Edomites. This enumeration roughly corresponds to the modern classification of the Semitic peoples, but at the same time differs in several important particulars. The Lydians are not now listed among the Semitic peoples, while the "sons" of Canaan, who is put down in Genesis as one of the sons of Ham, are now universally recognized as of the same racial stock with the Hebrews and Arabs and their Semitic brethren in the Mesopotamian valley. We know them as the Canaanites, the Phœnicians, and the Amorites in historic times. In general they fall into two great divisions, the Northern and the Southern Semites. The home of the

[1] Commentary on Genesis, p. 128f. (Methuen, London, 1913.)
[2] Gen. 10. 21.

Southern branch is Arabia and that of the Northern the great expanse of desert and fertile land lying to the north of Arabia between the mountains of Persia on one side and the Mediterranean on the other. But it is to be remembered that the original home of all these peoples was Arabia, the cradle of the Semitic race, which from time to time has poured out into the adjacent lands groups of its people too hard pressed by the rigors of a barren land, which is barely able to support a limited number of nomads and a still smaller number of dwellers in towns and cities.

Semitic civilization was essentially nomadic and in Arabia retains this trait to the present time. They were divided into many small tribes and lived an exceedingly simple life. When they gave up the nomadic life, as they did when they emigrated from their age-long home, the same exclusiveness expressed itself in the founding of small city states. In his characterization of the Semitic type Professor J. F. McCurdy makes these statements: "Long-continued, intense activity, within a wide yet monotonous and secluded territory, was the habit of this unique people. Such a habit of necessity produces men eager, impulsive, and intense, but narrow and unimaginative. Such were the prehistoric Semites, and such the Semites of history. Religious, for the most part, rather than moral; patient, resolute, enduring, brave, serious; faithful to friends, implacable toward foes—they have borne the stamp of tribalism all through their history. . . . Not looking far around them, they have at times seen all the farther beyond and above them. And when it has been given them to see straight and clear, they have beheld 'unspeakable things, which it is not possible for a man to utter.' But they are apt to see only one thing at a time, and so in their judgments of men and things they were exclusive, partial, and extreme."[2] To these intense Semites men are either good or bad, and they themselves in their contact with other peoples seem to have exemplified, as Pro-

[2] Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, Extra Volume, "Semites."

fessor McCurdy suggests, one or the other of these two extremes, being either a blessing or a bane wherever they have gone.

Among the Semites the clan was the social unit. This helps us to understand the exclusiveness of Semitic religion. Each clan had its own god who was always considered the father or ancestor of the clan and its peculiar possession. A man was born into the religion of his clan and would as little think of changing his allegiance to another god as he would think of changing his name or his family. The god was with his people in all their enterprises; his interests were bound up with theirs. Then, too, the gods had jurisdiction over particular territories, those in which their people lived, and it was very difficult, if not impossible, for a god to exert his influence away from his own country. In the biblical narrative we find Naaman carrying away a little of the soil of Palestine in order to be able to worship the God of Palestine far away in Syria.[4] There were as many gods as there were clans, and when one clan conquered another the victorious god became the lord over the vanquished people. In this case, however, the worship of their old god did not cease, even though he had not been able to deliver them out of the hands of their enemy. Thus there came to be more than one god in a given territory until in the end, as in Babylonia, there was a pantheon with one great god supreme over the others.

All religious acts were clan acts, the god being worshiped at the particular place where he had manifested his power. Here was placed his symbol, frequently a stone, to which was applied the blood of the sacrifice. In this way the blood was brought near the god, and the god and his people symbolized their blood-relationship. Worship, then, was the renewal of the blood-bond. This was succeeded by a common meal, the god participating with his worshipers in the festivities. Religion was very simple and happy. The

[4] 2 Kings 5. 17.

thought of sin had not arisen to clear consciousness to stand between the deity and his people. The identity of interests between them was not questioned. The individual as an individual could not be said to have come into being—every act was that of the community, and the interest of each individual was swallowed in the larger interest of the whole group. Much of this is common to other forms of early religion; what is distinctively Semitic is its exclusiveness and humanness. The god takes his name from a human relationship. He is "master" or "lord" or "king," and he holds this relation to no people other than his own.

The after-life meant little to the Semites. The perpetuity of the clan was looked for and enjoyed in prospect. Individual men continued to exist, but it was a shadowy existence in a somber underworld with nothing bright or attractive to hold out hope of anything to be compared with the joy of the present life. Every delineation was repelling, enough to make a man shudder at the very thought of such a possibility. Religion had to do with this life, and when men passed into the great beyond they left the world of gods as well as of men behind them. Rather than think of themselves as individuals in the dreary world of shades their minds were filled with the prosperity of the clan as it continued to exist down through the years. A man was happy if he had many children in whom he might feel that he, too, was to have part in the deeds of the clan and share its joy and well-being. Semitic religion, centering in the clan and not in the family and household, as was the case among the Indo-Europeans, did not develop ancestor worship. This statement may be a little strong, for there are evidences of some phases of family religion as contrasted with clan religion among the Semites, but it is essentially true and brings out in sharp contrast the difference between the two conceptions and the two forms of social organization, which determined so largely the history as well as the religion of the peoples involved.

The Heritage of the Old Testament

The people whom we know as the Hebrews or Israelites became a separate people during the period following the exodus from Egypt, which occurred about the year B. C. 1230. On this "birthday of the nation" a number of Semitic tribes who had been in Egypt for many years and had there suffered severe hardships broke loose and began to make their way toward their future home in Palestine. They were under the guidance of a leader named Moses, who proved to be one of the world's greatest heroes and nation-builders. He guided them to a mountain in the wilderness in the peninsula of Sinai where, not many months before, he had come to know the name of a wonderful God, who appeared to him "in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush,"[6] and who called him to go back and lead out his people from Egypt. He had undoubtedly been known to at least some of the people before, but, however that may be, the account in Exodus would indicate that he came as a new revelation to Moses and the Israelites when they came into the region of Sinai. This God Yahweh, or Jehovah, as we have incorrectly transliterated it, seems to have been a God closely connected with the volcanic mountain near which Moses kept the sheep of his father-in-law Jethro. He manifested himself in thunder and lightning and storm, a "God of battles," who fought for his people and led them on to victory. True, this is not the conception we get of Jehovah in the prophets and the psalmists of a later age, but it is necessary to remember that it was by gradual stages and only after a long development that the idea of God became what we see it to be in Jeremiah and Isaiah. Yahweh was to these early tribesmen the divine Being who had his residence in the sacred mountain and who was willing to become their special protector—they had not risen to the sublime heights of the monotheism of a later day.

[6] Exod. 3. 2.

The relation between this God and his people was based on a covenant or agreement. This covenant was not founded on blood-relationship, as though Yahweh was bound to them by the indissoluble bonds of kinship; it was far freer and more voluntary than that. The covenant was a mutual agreement or contract in which each side assumed certain obligations which it was bound to carry out so long as the other party to the contract remained true and loyal. And when it is remembered that this agreement was morally conditioned its uniqueness and greatness become evident. The conditions laid down, which the people of Israel were bound to recognize and obey, demanded of them rigid adherence to moral principle. Here lay the possibility of the moral and spiritual advance which marks Judaism as the religion of which more could be expected than of all the other religions of the ancient world. This covenant was interpreted in ethical terms more and more as the centuries passed until Jeremiah could affirm that the covenant was no longer to be considered as an outer law written on "tables of stone," but as an inner law, a spiritual principle, written in the hearts of men. But in the early day everything was crude. The presence of Yahweh was assured by the outward symbol of the ark of the covenant, which was taken from place to place, which went before them into battle, and which must be protected on pain of losing the divine help and presence.

When these people with their desert training came into the land which had been promised they ran the great danger of fusion with the peoples already there and of losing the distinctness of their covenant relation with Yahweh. The book of Judges shows how great this peril really was. They had been nomads living a wandering life in the open and free desert; now they began to accustom themselves to the more settled life of agriculture, and this meant a change in all their habits and ways of looking at things. And since they were learning so much from the Canaanites, among whom they settled and who were never driven out com-

pletely, was it not to be expected that they might absorb much of their religion? This was the great danger, a danger seen in its true light when we know the kind of religion it was, with licentiousness and cruelty practiced in the very temples of the gods. Yahweh was looked upon as the "Lord" of their land, but the gods of other peoples and lands were recognized as having their territory and people too. An interesting incident is recorded of David,[6] when he reasons with Saul, urging him not to drive him out of the land of Yahweh, on the ground that such an act on Saul's part would virtually mean that he sends David out of the territory of Yahweh and says, "Go, serve other gods."

During all this period the religion was saved from absorption by the judges and the guilds or "schools" of prophets, which were bands of patriotic men who kept alive in the people their loyalty to the God who had been with them and delivered them so often. Strange, wild men they were, as the narrative in Samuel indicates, but they accomplished their purpose, and must be judged by this accomplishment rather than by our judgment as to what a prophet or spiritual leader ought to be. The founding of the monarchy under Saul and its extension under David and Solomon gave material assistance in the same direction. But even then the worship was crude and undefined, being conducted at many shrines, the old centers of Canaanitish worship, and containing elements which must be put aside as the spiritual perceptions of the people became sharpened. This took place under the inspiration of prophetic leaders who began to appear even before the division of the kingdoms and who in the end ushered in a new era of religious history.

Elijah stands out as one of the great commanding figures in the history of religion. In his time again the danger of serious contamination by contact with the Baal worship of the Phœnicians menaces the people and their religion, and Elijah suddenly appears as the heroic patriot who

[6] 1 Sam. 26. 17-19.

is not afraid to use the most drastic measures to prevent the threatened corruption. He is a man of action, adding little or nothing to the religious conception of his people. That was left to the remarkable group of men who, appearing first in the eighth century, took the ideas of religion already in the possession of the Hebrew people and refashioned them into the sublime faith which was worthy to be the foundation of the teaching of our Lord and the writers of the New Testament. When Amos came into the city of Bethel and proclaimed the judgment of the God of Israel on all the nations round about and on Israel and Judah as well, a new day had dawned. True monotheism, founded on God's right to judge all peoples on the basis of a single moral standard, began to come to its own, and in the hands of Jeremiah and Isaiah and the gifted though unknown "Evangelist of the Exile" received a statement so complete and so sublime that ever after and to this day men have been compelled to go back to these inspired utterances to drink in the full meaning of the unity of God and his ethical character. This is the great gift of the Jewish people to the religious life of the world, a permanent possession which can never be superseded. This is the priceless heritage of the Old Testament to Judaism and to the whole subsequent religious development of the human race, whatever its final form may be.

The Messianic hope, the universalism of the prophets, the development of the Law, the spiritual experience of the psalmists, the wisdom of the wise men, the apocalyptic vision—these and other features of the Old Testament revelation have not and cannot be mentioned. All that has been attempted has been to trace, and that with extreme brevity, the development of the central message, the supreme gift of the Old Testament to the progress of religion in the world. The belief in one God who hates sin and loves righteousness, a belief which the Jew has never been tempted to forget since the days of the Babylonian exile, is the indispensable

foundation on which any faith which claims to be universal must be built.

Judaism Since the Time of Christ

The Jews have no country they can call their own, yet they are at home everywhere. This ubiquitous people has been dispersed over all the world and no civilized land is without its representatives. Despite the great longing which has possessed their souls to return and be a nation once more in Palestine there is little likelihood that the Jew will cease to be a part of the nationality of the countries to which he has gone. The capture of Jerusalem by General Allenby and the opening up of the country to settlement by Jews under a stable government will attract many of the race, particularly those who have undergone bloody repression in eastern Europe during recent years, but will probably not result in diminishing the number of Jews in the countries where they have prospered and have been given rights as citizens of the land. Since the days of the Babylonian captivity they have been a scattered people; the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem and the final loss of nationality drove them out into every corner of the world.

Their history has been a sad one. Success has attended their commercial ventures, but unfortunately they have been the prey all too often of avaricious princes and kings. Disliked by almost all the peoples among whom they have settled, they have been driven off by themselves into ghettos where for hundreds of years they have lived a life apart. Not satisfied by such treatment, the populace and their leaders have frequently vented their rage in the bitterest persecution, and too often this has been done in the name of the Christian religion. The enmity between Jew and Christian dates back to the first century and continued unabated through the Middle Ages and well down into modern times. In the days of their weakness the Christians were the ones to suffer at the hands of the Jews or at their instigation,

but the tables were soon turned and the growth of Christianity and its assumption of power boded ill for the Jew. This unchristian enmity has continued to our own time. While for the most part persecution has ceased and the Jew has come to his own in western Europe and America, the feeling of despite and hatred is still too frequently to be found. In eastern Europe, however, the situation has been far different. There cruel persecution has been felt in recent days, while the bloody pogroms in Russia attest the intensity of the hatred which still dominates the masses and even the officials, who are frequently responsible for the horrible outbreaks. We have good reason to believe that such experiences lie in the past and that the security which the Jew enjoys with his fellow nationals in other countries will soon be extended to every land where he has made his home. With more Jews living in the world to-day than at any other time in their whole history the future would seem to be bright as they face with vigor and enthusiasm the years to come.

It was exceedingly unfortunate that for so many centuries the Jew should have been compelled to live with little intercourse with the Gentile world. Not only was the European intolerant; the Jew was clannish and narrow; he preferred to live his life alone. But since the liberating days of the French Revolution they have broken through their isolation and begun to share the life of the people around them. Thanks to one of their greatest leaders, Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786), the Jewish people were led gradually to see that their future must lie in sharing the common life of the people in the midst of whom they lived. During all the years of their isolation they had preserved a vigorous intellectual life, but unfortunately it was concerned almost solely with their own circle of interests, their history, their Law, and their religion, but now a change takes place. Entering the universities and feeling the force of the intellectual currents of the time, the Jew became a citizen of the mod-

ern world. His brilliant gifts, which had been but slightly known, began to be manifest and after no long period he appeared in positions of leadership in varied forms of activity. He is now an integral part of our world, taking his place by the side of his fellow-citizens in every walk of life. He is distinct in race, but one with us in nationality. With unparalleled tenacity he has clung to his racial distinctiveness, and has done so because it is bound up so closely with his religion, which to him would be lost if he did not preserve his uniqueness as a people.

The loss of nationality and the destruction of the temple and the sacrificial system by the Romans caused a profound change in the Jewish religion. Other means had to be found to maintain the unity of the people and preserve their religious life. Deep in their breasts was the belief in the one God of Israel—they could no longer be alienated from him. In their hands was the Old Testament, the Torah, or Law, which became more precious as they were scattered far and wide and needed the support of a divine revelation. Common worship on the holy Sabbath day was possible through the institution of the synagogue, which had become a part of their life during the exile while they were deprived of the ministries of the temple and the recurring feasts which bound them to the soil of their native land. Not only so, but the people of Israel, wherever they found themselves, felt certain that their old covenant with Jehovah held good, and, while the Ark with the tables of stone might be destroyed, the new covenant was indelibly written in their hearts and must remain in force forever.

Judaism has always been a religion of Law and remains such to-day. It is easy to misinterpret the term and accuse the Jew of being a narrow legalist. That this danger has not been averted is freely acknowledged by leading Jewish scholars, but to use it as a term of reproach and as applicable to the religion as such would be unjust. As in the Old Testament period and at the time of Christ Jewish men and

women had penetrated behind the form to its inner spiritual principle, so down through the ages the spiritually minded have found God and have been nourished, not on the dry husks of legal formalism, but on the living bread which has come down from heaven. But when we have said this the fact remains that to be a Jew meant to keep the Law. Obedience to a written code has been the mark of the religion. Everything in conduct, even down to the most insignificant details, was determined exactly, and to fail in the observance of the written word was unthinkable in a well-regulated Jewish household.

As might be expected, various codes have been constructed. Back of them all lies the Law, embedded in the Old Testament. This was God's voice speaking His message in a form never to be superseded. But it was necessary to apply it to new situations as time passed, hence the need of further writings. The Sacred Scriptures needed interpretation for practical and homiletic purposes, and this was done in a long series of expositions written through many centuries called the Midrash, which means "inquiry" or "interpretation." The Talmud is the great codification of Jewish law, civil and canonical. It consists of two parts, the Mishna, or the text of the rules and regulations, and the Gemara, or the commentary. The Talmud exists in two recensions, the Palestinian and the Babylonian, the latter being later in time and by far the longer of the two. It was completed about the year A. D. 500. This great body of law is the mine from which Jewish scholars in all subsequent ages have produced the precious truths and traditions on which the people have been nourished. The Haggada, or non-legal part, consisting of expositions of the Bible narratives, and the Halacha, or legal sections, dealing with all phases of conduct and ceremonial, together comprise the great mass of rabbinical lore to be found in the Midrash and in the Talmud. Based on the accumulated stores to be found in these works other collections of laws have been formulated.

Among them is that of the great Spanish Rabbi, Maimonides (1135-1204), who in 1180 produced a code of law and custom called the "Strong Hand," which has been very influential among the Jews to the present time. Most Jews today, however, live under the "Table Prepared," which was compiled by Joseph Caro in the sixteenth century and is a résumé of the whole traditional law. But with all that has been done to revivify the Law and make it appear as a living expression of the will of God, the great problem is to make it an abiding force in the advancing Jewish community today. There is revolt against the binding character of the multitudinous rules and regulations, which touch not only the fundamental moral obligations, but cover an immense range of ceremonial observances and customs. These have become exceedingly irksome to the modern Jew in the western world, who does not want to be marked off from his fellows by obsolete and meaningless practices.

Judaism may be said to have no definite articles of belief. A man's actions and conduct were most carefully regulated, but his beliefs were without any authoritative ecclesiastical sanction. This has led to laxity in belief along with great strictness in conduct. There never have been any dogmatic tests, and hence no excommunications for heresy. Notwithstanding this, attempts frequently have been made to formulate the beliefs of Judaism, but never have they been successful, and Mendelssohn used his influence to discourage anyone from any further ventures in this direction. To him religion was a life and not a creed, and could not be compressed within the bounds of a formula.

But Judaism has believed, and believed with great earnestness, in a few great doctrines. At the head and transcending all others is the unalterable belief in one God, high and lifted up, the Creator and sustainer of the universe, who at the same time is a Father brooding over His children with tender love. He is the God of justice and truth who will brook no lowering of the moral standard, and who will one

day judge the world in righteousness. A list of thirteen articles of faith was constructed by Maimonides, "the one and only set of principles which have ever enjoyed wide authority in Judaism.[7] "These are: (i) Belief in the existence of God, the Creator; (ii) belief in the unity of God; (iii) belief in the incorporeality of God; (iv) belief in the priority and eternity of God; (v) belief that to God, and God alone, worship must be offered; (vi) belief in prophecy; (vii) belief that Moses was the greatest of all prophets; (viii) belief that the Law was revealed from heaven; (ix) belief that the Law will never be abrogated, and that no other Law will ever come from God; (x) belief that God knows the works of men; (xi) belief in reward and punishment; (xii) belief in the coming of the Messiah; (xiii) belief in the resurrection of the dead." Maimonides was deeply influenced, as were so many thinkers in the Middle Ages, by Aristotle. He believed in the revelation to be found in the Old Testament, but sought to show that the truths of revelation were in harmony with reason and could be thoroughly rationalized.

Down through Jewish history have come these two streams of law and creed, one stringent and the other lax, but there have been other tendencies. The Kabbala was a revolt against the intellectualism of the schools. It was a system of occult knowledge and mysticism, which exercised a strange fascination over many minds both in Judaism and Christianity. By uniting man and the divine Spirit through the practice of virtue and the overcoming of evil, preparation would be made for the coming of the Messiah who will restore all things. But here, too, there was excess in emotion and in mystical vagaries, and the inevitable reaction came in a new intellectualism, which found voice in the Jewish philosopher Spinoza (1632-1677), who, depending on pure thought, reduced the whole system of the universe to a thoroughgoing pantheism. With all these currents

[7] I. Abrahams, Judaism, p. 31f. (Constable, London, 1910.)

streaming through her life Judaism emerged into the activities of the modern world something more than a hundred years ago. A new era opened out before the Jew which has profoundly affected the religious life and thought of the people.

Orthodoxy and Reform

When Judaism came into intimate contact with modern thought and began to take a new part in the activities of the world a crisis could not but be precipitated. There were those who sought to keep their religion true to the traditions of the past and were scandalized by the thought of change. They have continued down to our own time and form a very considerable part of the people. But even among these conservatives the modern world has had its effect and all degrees of modification of the old standards can be discovered. On the other hand there is the Reform school composed of liberals who believe that the only hope of the race and the religion is to frankly admit that changes more or less drastic must be introduced and that Judaism must reinterpret itself in the light of modern knowledge. It is admitted on both sides that the differences do not constitute a schism, but may best be denominated as "schools." In the words of the late lamented Dr. Solomon Schechter, a leader of the conservative wing, each party might look upon the other as "His Majesty's Opposition"[8] in one great Parliament of Judaism.

There is complete agreement in both parties on certain fundamental points. The primary and inalienable doctrine of the faith is the unity of God, and, of course, there is not the slightest hesitation here. Judaism stands or falls on the platform of monotheism. So sure is she of her ground that her leaders make bold to claim that the two "daughter" religions, Christianity and Islam, have each done despite to

[8] Seminary Addresses and other Papers, p. 239. (Ark Pub. Co., Cincinnati, 1913.)

this central doctrine. Christianity, they declare, has ceased to believe in the essential unity of God by its doctrine of the Trinity, and Islam has lost the high ethical note of both Judaism and Christianity while it has been an unswerving witness to the one God as an indivisible unity. Another point of agreement is with reference to the Jewish people as the chosen race. The ancient call of God to Abraham and his descendants in biblical times holds good and is a cardinal point of emphasis to-day. The race must be preserved intact and all intermarriage with Gentiles is severely condemned. And when it comes to the acceptance by any member of the race of the claims of Christianity the anathemas which are heaped upon the heads of these "perverts" are the bitterest of all the invectives of which the Jew is capable. But with all this the conservative is not quite convinced that the liberal has not let down the bars to such an extent that fusion with the surrounding community may ultimately result and the Jews as a distinct people cease to exist.

Since the days of the exile, when the unknown prophet gave expression to the splendid universalism in the latter part of the book of Isaiah, that note has not been lacking in Judaism. True, a narrow particularism has more often been victorious than the more liberal, wider view, but it has been there nevertheless. The book of Jonah voices the protest against the narrowness of the period following Ezra and Nehemiah, and is one of the most splendid testimonies to the ideal of universalism we have. The Maccabean revolt naturally resulted in an exclusive attitude toward other peoples, but soon after an active propaganda was instituted which resulted in the addition of thousands of converts to the synagogues scattered over the Roman empire. These proselytes were either incorporated completely in the Jewish community, by accepting the moral obligations of the religion and also submitting to the authority of the ceremonial regulations, or became "Proselytes of the Gate," men who feared the God of Israel and acknowledged the

binding character of the moral law, but did not become circumcised and thus completely amalgamated with the Jewish people. At the time of Christ the school of Hillel and the school of Shammai were in conflict, the former standing for the broad and generous policy which furthered the winning of proselytes, the latter being narrow and exclusive and opposing all efforts to reach out after others. The School of Shammai was finally victorious and with the loss of nationality the Jew has not sought to win converts to his religion.

This condition has obtained down through the centuries, and even to-day, when a different outlook has become the ideal of the more liberal Jews, no missionary propaganda is contemplated. Still the universal note is being sounded and the mission of Israel to the nations is earnestly acclaimed. The form taken by this ideal differs among the orthodox and the Reform Jews. Holding fast the prophetic vision of a coming Messiah who shall be born of their race and be established in power and righteousness in Jerusalem, the men of orthodox faith see all nations coming to do him honor and acknowledging his rightful sway over the world. They shall all worship the one God Jehovah and spread His name far and wide until the knowledge of Jehovah shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. But in it all the Jew remains distinct and stands first, the chosen of God, His messenger peculiarly fitted to do his bidding and accomplish his desires. Such is the hope and expectation of the more conservative wing of Judaism. The Reform Jews, on the other hand, have a different ideal. Universalism is far more prominent as an immediate possibility than among the orthodox. According to several declarations of conferences of American liberal rabbis, "The Messianic aim of Israel is not the restoration of the old Jewish state under a descendant of David, involving a second separation from the nations of the earth, but the union of all children of God in the confession of the unity of God, so

as to realize the unity of all rational creatures and their call to moral sanctification."[9] And again, to use the words of one of the leading authorities, "The Messianic idea now means to many Jews a belief in human development and progress, with the Jews filling the role of the Messianic people, but only as *primus inter pares*."[10]

Fear is expressed on the part of the conservatives that their liberal brethren are breaking down the wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. It is possible now for one who belongs to another race to ask for admission to a Reform synagogue and be received. This to a conservative is rank heresy. Their fundamental beliefs may be the same, but these new-fangled notions are sure to wreck the hopes of the children of Israel. But even the most liberal are strongly of the opinion that since monotheism has not yet prevailed and Christianity has not succeeded in keeping the doctrine unsullied their witness is essential to the religious development of the world and that this can best be accomplished by the preservation of a people whose testimony to the one true God is clear and unalloyed.

In the matter of the ceremonial law and the historic festivals there is also a deep cleavage. In different degrees the orthodox hold fast the ancient traditions and with reluctance allow modifications to be introduced. They do not want to remove the old landmarks, and fear disintegration as a result. The Reform Jew, on the other hand, takes the position that ceremonies must prove their value under the conditions which now prevail, that they must not be retained merely because they have come down out of the past and have a certain historical value. In fact, he takes everything in Judaism—law, creed, ceremony, and custom—and subjects it to a searching criticism. He desires his religion to be efficient in the present day, and is willing to lay aside any item which may seem to him an encumbrance. The

[9] Quoted in I. Abrahams, Judaism, p. 93f.
[10] I. Abrahams, op. cit., p. 94.

pragmatic test is applied with vigor, and the conservative stands by and wonders whether out of the process anything worthy the ancient glory of Israel will remain. Yet what is happening before our eyes is inevitable, and we may be sure that with all its transmutations Judaism will long remain a religion among the religions of the world. With their belief in one God, a God of moral concern, whose influence has pervaded every relationship, given sanctity to the home and dignity to the individual life, a belief which has made prayer and praise a constant practice of the people and has held them together through appalling experiences which might have shattered a spirit less tenacious, the people of Israel are with us to-day believing in themselves and in their destiny. Spurning the idea of a mediator between God and men and rejecting the claims of that Man of Jewish race who would have led his people into a fulfillment of their highest ideals, they have been kept apart from a fellowship which might have brought in the era of peace for which we all long generations or even centuries ago. What the future has in store we cannot say, but trusting in the same God and reading the same Scriptures of the Old Testament the Christian cannot but believe that the revelation of that God which is contained in those writings may yet assume to the Jew a new glory when seen in the face of Jesus Christ his Son.

Suggestions for Further Study

W. Robertson Smith, *The Religion of the Semites* (London, new edit., 1914). An epoch making volume on the early religion of the Semitic peoples.

George A. Barton, *The Religion of Israel* (New York, 1918). A short but excellent sketch of the Old Testament Period.

Israel Abrahams, *Judaism* (London, 1910). A splendid little summary of the entire development.

K. Kohler, *Jewish Theology* (New York, 1918). An extended statement from the standpoint of the Reform School.

George Foot Moore, *History of Religions,* Vol. II, Chaps. I-IV.

CHAPTER XI

MOHAMMEDANISM

The Prophet

Islam,[1] the religion of Mohammed, arose in Arabia. The followers of the Prophet fondly believe that their religion was a new creation, handed down bodily and in finished form from heaven. But even a rapid survey of the origins of the faith is sufficient to show that, with all Mohammed added, the religion is firmly rooted in the past, and has received a number of its characteristic features from the preexisting heathenism of Arabia. The isolation and inaccessibility of the peninsula provided the conditions in which a development could take place hidden from the rest of the world until it was ready to start on its victorious march almost to the ends of the earth. Wellhausen speaks of the gods of Arabia as a "Rubbish-heap of divine names"; that is, the old religion was in a state of decrepitude. There were many of these deities, the most prominent of which was Allah. He was regarded as "the God," the supreme being, having three daughters. Professor Theodor Nöldeke believes that the name *Allah* may have been applied to a number of gods, and only gradually became the proper name of the Supreme God.[2] So Mohammed did not invent his God; he clarified the conception and rid God of "partners," but the monotheistic idea was not new to Arabia when the Prophet arose. Mecca was already a sacred city, the most sacred in the land, with the cubical building, the Kaaba, the center of worship. Near by was the holy well, Zemzem,

[1] Islam means "to submit," and is the religion of submission to the will of God. Moslem, "one who has submitted," is the name frequently used of the followers of Mohammed.

[2] Hastings' Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics, article, "Arabs (Ancient)."

from which all pilgrims still drink. The whole ritual of worship which is still followed was in existence and was taken over complete into his religion by Mohammed. Islam was not a bolt out of the blue, but an adaptation of much that was old, thinly disguised and still persisting.

Mohammed, "the Praised," was born in Mecca in 570 A. D., the posthumous son of Abdallah, of the tribe of the Koraish. His mother died when he was a little lad, and he was given a home first by his grandfather and then by his uncle Abu Talib. As a young child he was sent to be nursed and cared for by a Bedouin woman in the desert. Mecca was not a place where children could be expected to thrive, so his mother was following a well-known custom. His mother's death, which probably occurred shortly after his return, made a deep impression on the boy. He never forgot that his mother had been left a widow and he an orphan. Throughout his life Mohammed was always solicitous that widows and orphans were cared for, and it has left an abiding mark on the religion which he founded. As a boy he doubtless tended his uncle's sheep. As he grew older he must have joined the caravans, which, with the entertainment of the pilgrims at the time of the feasts, were the source of Mecca's wealth. We do not know, but he may have visited distant parts of Arabia and the adjacent countries in this way. It is quite certain that he made at least one trip to the borders of Syria. This period of his life is obscure. He seems to have been well thought of, earning the name of Al Amin, the "Trusty," by some service faithfully rendered.

At about the age of twenty-five a most important event happened. A distant relative of his, the wealthy widow Khadijah, was looking for some person to take charge of her business affairs on one of the great caravan journeys on which she herself could not go. Her attention was directed to her kinsman Mohammed and the arrangement was made. He not only performed the service to her great

satisfaction but was so pleasing in person and manner that she offered him her hand. He accepted and they were married, Mohammed a young man of twenty-five and she his senior by fifteen years. Yet with all this difference in age these two lived happily together until her death twenty-five years after. He never forgot her and always remembered her with gratitude and respect to the end of his life. She must have been a remarkable woman. During the long period of their married life Mohammed did not take another wife. Several children were born of the union, but only one lived, Fatima, who became the wife of Ali, one of the earliest of Mohammed's followers and famous in the early history of Islam.

Mohammed's marriage to Khadijah changed the whole course of his life. He had been a poor young man, but now, married to a wealthy woman, he had leisure. Naturally of a pensive disposition, he could give full rein to his inclination with no anxiety concerning his daily bread. What transpired during the next fifteen years we have little means of knowing. He must have brooded long and earnestly over the moral tragedy of the universe and the issues of human life. Other men in Arabia at this time had become dissatisfied with the old paganism. We have some knowledge of these seekers after truth, *Hanifs,* as they were called. They were seeking to find a pure religion and had a strong drawing toward monotheism. Eventually these men became either Christian or Mohammedan. But what influence they exercised on Mohammed must have been slight. There is no indication that he ever had any leaning toward Christianity, although he had a certain knowledge of the stories and characters of the Old and New Testaments. The Christianity with which he might have come into contact was so covered over with formalism and so lacking in vitality that there was little chance of his being drawn in that direction. He must work things out for himself in his own way.

In the year A. D. 610, while Mohammed with his family was sojourning on Mount Hira, near Mecca, during the most trying season of the year, he had an experience which made him into a different man. He thought he heard a heavenly voice commanding him to convey a message. The word was probably what we now have in the 96th Sura or Chapter of the Koran.

> "Recite thou, in the name of thy Lord who created;—
> Created man from Clots of Blood:—
> Recite thou! For thy Lord is the most Beneficent,
> Who hath taught the use of the pen;—
> Hath taught man that which he knoweth not."
> —(Rodwell's Translation.)

Doubtless the Meccans had recently learned how to read and write, and it was considered an evidence of divine favor. God was almighty; he had created man from "clots of blood," which was their way of saying that God had created man out of a very insignificant thing. The climax of the revelation was that Mohammed was to proclaim a message—"Recite thou." The participle of this verb is *Koran,* "that which is recited," and appropriately becomes the name of the sacred book of the religion. It is literally the collection of the inspired utterances of the Prophet which he was to "recite" to the people.

Mohammed was deeply agitated by his experience. He was not sure of himself and was in doubt about the reality of the call. He waited for another revelation to confirm the trustworthiness of the first, but it did not come. Khadijah comforted him with the assurance that God had really spoken to him and would do so again if only he would have patience. But still there was no voice, and he was driven almost to desperation. He attempted to make away with his life by throwing himself to sure death over one of the precipices which abounded on Mount Hira, but his good angel Khadijah interposed and kept him from carrying out his purpose. At last after two years (this is only one of the

estimates of the length of the period of waiting) another revelation came. It is given in the 74th Sura of the Koran.

"O thou, enwrapped in thy mantle!
Arise and warn!
Thy Lord—magnify Him!
Thy Raiment—purify it!
The abomination—flee it!
And bestow not favors that thou mayest receive again with increase;
And for thy Lord wait thou patiently.
For when there shall be a trump on the trumpet,
That shall be a distressful day,
A day, to the Infidels, devoid of ease."

—(Rodwell's Translation.)

From this time to the end of his life Mohammed never doubted that he was in immediate contact with God. The revelations were forthcoming whenever circumstances called for an authoritative word. He now had been told to "arise and warn," to preach the message of God whether men were pleased with it or not, to herald the coming of the Day of Judgment, when unbelievers would find themselves in dire distress.

But why that strange phrase, "O thou, enwrapped in thy mantle"? There is much obscurity relative to the physical accompaniments of the revelations. They came to him in various forms and under different conditions. Here it seems to have been while he was closely blanketed. Was it during a seizure, say of epilepsy, or a kindred malady? There are many who find evidence that Mohammed was subject to such attacks, and that this accounts for many things which otherwise would have no explanation. They think of Mohammed as a "pathological case,"[3] that he was not quite normal physically and mentally, and that the enigma of his character and personality is to be solved only on this supposition. The problem, however, is not yet solved.

[3] D. B. Macdonald, Aspects of Islam, p. 60. (Macmillan, New York, 1911.)

If the second revelation came in the year 612 the remainder of his life falls into two periods of ten years each, the first of which was spent in Mecca, the latter in Medina. Mohammed immediately began to preach to his friends in Mecca. The burden of his message was that there was but one God, Allah, that he would not tolerate the worship of any other gods ("adding partners to God," was the phrase used), that idolatry was an abomination, and that a Day of Judgment was coming, when all those who refused to listen would be hurled into the raging fire of Hell. Not many listened to him. Khadijah became his first convert. She was followed by a few others of the best people in Mecca. There were Abu Bakr, Ali, and finally Omar, all of whom became Caliphs or "successors" of the Prophet. But aside from these and a few others the Meccans turned a deaf ear to his warnings. Only a small group of slaves and lowly people accepted his leadership, and these, because they had no standing in the community, were made the butt of ridicule and abuse. It was carried to such an extent that they left the country and found a refuge in the Christian kingdom of Abyssinia across the Red Sea. Once they came back on hearing that a better feeling existed between the Prophet and the citizens of Mecca, but it was so shortlived that they hastened back to their exile. How long they remained there we do not know.

The better feeling which has been alluded to was occasioned by a temporary willingness on the part of Mohammed to recognize that the "daughters" of Allah, believed in from of old by the Meccans, might be considered as "intercessors" between men and Allah. The Meccans thought they had gained a point and were willing now to listen to the preaching of their fellow-townsman. He repented, however, of his weakness in a short time and withdrew the concession entirely. This made the Meccans all the more bitter and the breach between them widened. It came to such a pass that a ban was proclaimed against Mohammed and his

people. They were ostracized and lived precariously and more or less alone. This period lasted, it may be, for two years. The climax was reached for Mohammed in the year 620 by the death of his faithful companion Khadijah and of his protector Abu Talib. His uncle had never embraced Islam, but stood by his protégé until the end. No one could lay hands on Mohammed while Abu Talib lived. So it was a serious matter when Mohammed lost the protection of the arm of his powerful uncle. But even more serious was the loss of his wife. She had been his balance-wheel for many years. Her wisdom and judgment, coupled with her devotion, undoubtedly had saved many a difficult situation. Now she was gone and Mohammed was never quite the same again.

The question of the sincerity of the Prophet of Islam must be faced here. The evidence up to this point does not justify an adverse judgment. He preached his doctrine unhesitatingly despite the opposition of the Meccans, whom he was trying to win. Political expediency would have dictated a different course. The compromise with the Meccans was a momentary weakness. His deliberate judgment is to be seen in his return to his former position, from which he never deviated afterwards. He chose the unpopular way whether it brought him success or not. But from the time we have now reached on to the end of his life the Mohammed with whom we deal is a different man.

The Prophet now realized that Mecca offered him no field; he must go elsewhere if he were to secure the favorable hearing he desired. He began to look around. He went to Taif, not many miles away, to try out his message, but was stoned out of the city. But about this time he discovered that two tribes in Medina which had for many years been in a jealous contest for supremacy were now anxious to compose their differences under a common leader. This was a splendid opportunity and Mohammed seized it. Medina was the city from which his mother had come and

he was not unfamiliar with its problems. It took some time to make such arrangements as would be acceptable to all parties, so it was not until the year 622 that the transfer was made. In the middle of that year, after his followers had slipped away in little groups, the Prophet and Abu Bakr left Mecca secretly and made their way by a round-about route to Medina, which is just two hundred and fifty miles north of Mecca. This Flight, or Hegira, marks the year 1 A. H. (Anno Hegiræ) in Mohammedan chronology. Mohammed settled down and made Medina his home until he died just ten years after in A. D. 632. While in Mecca Mohammed had been a preacher of righteousness, a warner of the wrath to come. He stood as a Prophet of God much as the Old Testament prophets, whose successor he felt himself to be. Now it is different. He is a civil ruler, a potentate, with administrative problems on his hands and with his position to sustain against all comers. He became perforce a soldier, making war and resisting attack—a very different role all around from that in Mecca. And the difference within is as great as that of the outward circumstances.

For ten years Mohammed led a strenuous life which it is impossible here to follow in detail. He began as the ruler of Medina with the very doubtful allegiance of very few tribesmen; he ended his career as the recognized ruler of all Arabia. Summary commands had even been sent out to surrounding nations warning them against resisting the claims of the Prophet. Mecca had been captured with no bloodshed, the people opening the gates of the city and receiving their old townsman with open arms. The sweep was complete. It had not been accomplished without opposition and bloody contests. Mohammed gave himself to practices—breaking the sacred months of truce, assassination of personal enemies, raiding the caravans of the Meccans—practices which may have been necessary to win by force the mastery of Arabia, but which are hard to defend when they

are the deeds of one who is a preacher of righteousness and who claims to be voicing the inner counsels of the God of all mankind. The battle was not always in favor of Mohammed, but steadily and persistently he followed his course, whether circumstances were for him or against him and by fair means or foul, until he had attained his ambition. But with Arabia at his feet he looked out on new worlds to conquer, and the great campaigns which were carried on after his death were undoubtedly born in the mind of Mohammed himself. His ambition had grown until it had become world-wide.

When the Prophet went to Medina three tribes of Jews occupied their sections of the area which made up the larger community. They thought Mohammed might accept their faith because he had begun to claim that he was only restoring the true religion of Abraham. Mohammed on his side thought that the Jews would accept him as the promised Messiah and receive his message as a divine revelation. Both were soon brought to disappointment. For one cause or another Mohammed took aggressive action against the Jews. Their tragic fate is one of the darkest blots on the reputation of the Prophet, already sadly stained. Two of the tribes were cruelly banished and the third suffered a more terrible fate. Under circumstances which do little to mitigate the horror the women and children were sold into slavery and the men—six or eight hundred of them—were butchered in cold blood, their bodies in little groups of threes and fours dropping into an enormous ditch which had been prepared for their bloody reception. The Prophet of God gave his sanction to this unbelievable cruelty with no compunctions and with no diminution of his claim to be the obedient servant of the great God of justice and mercy!

Whatever may have been in his mind before the death of Khadijah Mohammed took no second wife while she lived. But when she died he married soon again and continued to increase his harem until he had twelve or thirteen wives.

Whatever we may think of polygamy, such conduct on the part of the Prophet did not affect his followers. They simply took it for granted as an accepted institution. But the conditions under which he took several of his wives were such as to make it impossible for us to doubt that Mohammed was displaying every sign of being a sensualist. In one case, when he married the wife of his adopted son, Zeid, who divorced her that she might become the wife of the Prophet, even his followers were scandalized, and only the prompt arrival of a revelation from Allah saved his face and made it right for him to do as he had done. Only by such a terrible expedient did he cover the all too controlling passion which lay so near the surface of his life. His insane jealousy, fear that others might be enamoured of his wives, was the real motive which led to the seclusion of women behind the veil. This one act has been responsible for as much of the backwardness and degradation of life in the East as any other known influence. When to polygamy are added facile divorce and the sanction of slavery the charge against the system is about complete. He was, it is true, a child of his time, but instead of leaving woman better off he is responsible for binding her more securely and for making the problem of her emancipation and enlightenment infinitely more difficult than it might have been had he never lived.

How explain the change? A seemingly sincere preacher of righteousness until the last ten years of his life, then a period which Professor Macdonald speaks of as "the last terrible ten years"[4]—what can be the explanation? Only this, that the loss of his good wife Khadijah and the accession of power as a ruler in Medina transformed him completely, and the side of his nature which had been held in control gained the ascendency and ruined him. He may have been more or less abnormal; undoubtedly his inner nature

[4] Aspects of Islam, p. 74.

had not been fortified by careful discipline during his outwardly correct years. Still it remains true that the loss of his moral stay in his wife and the rapid increase of power touched the two weak spots in Mohammed's character, and he was undone. Yet with all that may be said on this side, the Prophet appeared to his followers and must, as we see him through their eyes, likewise appear to us as a reformer. He found the Arabs practicing infanticide—of girl babies—and he put an end to this effectively and for all time; he found the Arabs torn and weakened by the blood-feud, and he welded them into a single brotherhood; he found them worshiping many gods, and when he died they were acclaiming Allah as the one God Almighty. He was a reformer, but failed at the crucial point of personal character. The pathos is that his greatness should have blinded the eyes of his followers so that they failed to realize that he had forfeited the right to their allegiance by a surrender of the principles of truth and honor and justice and mercy for which he had once stood.

Faith and Practice

When Mohammed died in 632 the Koran had not been compiled. It could be recited by those who had been his close companions, but it had not been reduced entirely to writing. When quite a number of the "Companions" were killed in a desperate battle about a year after the Prophet's death it became evident that something must be done, or the inspired words would soon be lost. One compilation was made by Zaid, Mohammed's former amanuensis, and, when disputes arose over various readings, a final recension was made by Zaid and several members of Mohammed's own tribe, and this has been the standard version down to the present day. The finished work, written in Arabic, the "Language of the Angels," is about as long as the New Testament. It consists of one hundred and fourteen chapters, or suras, of very unequal length. They are arranged in

general with the long suras first and the short suras last, but this order is almost the exact reverse of the correct chronological order. The lack of a sufficient number of names and dates by which the various sections can be identified and correctly placed in the life of the Prophet renders the Koran a most difficult book to use historically. Yet it is our chief source on Mohammed. It is his book; it undoubtedly came from him and is a correct transcript of his mind and the development of his thought. The frequent repetition of the word "say" indicates that in Mohammed's mind God is the speaker throughout and dictates to the Prophet what he is to "say" to the people. The Mohammedan theory of the Koran is the most extreme illustration in any literature of plenary verbal inspiration. The accepted doctrine in the Mohammedan world is that the Koran is the uncreated word of God, which has always existed at the right hand of Allah and which was delivered to Gabriel, who in turn was to convey it piecemeal to the Prophet as each foreordained need should arise. There are many lofty passages filled with poetic fire and the burning passion of righteousness, but when the "awful machinery of divine inspiration" is used to cover his own sensuality and to compose petty difficulties in his harem the sincerity of Mohammed is strained to the breaking point and the Koran becomes a very human document, of great interest withal because it opens the way into the mind and heart of one of the most compelling of men.

The Koran is the chief foundation of Islam, the authority par excellence on doctrine and practice. But much that Mohammedans believe and do is taken from the Traditions, the Sunna, as they are called. "The term signifies the custom, habit, usage of the Prophet."[5] They cover all phases of life and are believed in by all the Faithful. They are literally "traditions," handed down by word of mouth in the

[5] F. A. Klein, The Religion of Islam, p. 24. (Trübner, London, 1906.)

early day until they were put down in writing. They differ in authority, depending on the trustworthiness of the persons from whom they have been derived. Collections of the Traditions have been made, which are received as standard by the people. In recent years the tendency among European scholars has been to discredit a large number of the received traditions, some going to such extremes that little confidence can be placed in any fact concerning Mohammed and his life unless it can be verified from other sources. This is undoubtedly going too far, but enough has been done to make the student wary of over-confidence in making many statements he might have felt sure of a quarter of a century ago. These two sources are called the Roots of Islam—there are also two Branches.

Should the followers of Mohammed agree on any point which is not specifically covered either in the Koran or the Traditions that "Agreement," or Ijma, is accepted as authoritative. Now of course practically it is the agreement of the doctors of the law, the recognized leaders of Mohammedan opinion, but with Islam divided as it is to-day even this is not easy to achieve so there shall be any real consensus of view. Space is taken to mention it here because any advance or change in thought and practice the religion may make in the future depends upon this possibility. The statement is frequently made that a changed Islam is no longer Islam, but Islam has changed in the past, and undoubtedly, with the pressure of a new world situation, a new Islam will come into being. There are scarcely any limits to the possibility of transformation when a religion, brought to bay, attempts to fit itself to new conditions. Whether the changes are fundamental or only on the surface they will be made, in spite of conservatives who are horrified at the departure from the old landmarks. The last and least significant of the sources of Islam, one of the Branches, is Qias, or reasoning by analogy. The learned doctors may deal with new problems which arise by comparing them with

similar cases already settled. The decision must be based on the Koran, the Sunna, and the Ijma, to be valid. In these ways do the Mohammedans seek to meet new situations as they rise and still be true to the original faith of Mohammed.

The religion of Islam is divided into two main divisions, practical duties and doctrines to be believed. The duties are five in number, called the Five Pillars of the Faith. There are other lesser duties, but these stand out as the cardinal points of practice, necessary to one who claims to be a follower of the Prophet. The first is the repetition of the creed, "There is no God but Allah and Mohammed is the Prophet of Allah." The simplest of all creeds, to be learned quickly and never to be forgotten, its hold on the Moslem world has been tremendous. It is repeated at sundry and all times until it eats its way into the inner core of a man's being, almost never to be eradicated. Gibbon speaks of it as "an eternal truth and a necessary fiction." The idea of one God is the eternal truth, but Islam needs more; the apostleship of Mohammed is essential if Islam is to be Islam at all. The second duty is the observance of the five stated daily prayers. These prayers must be preceded by ceremonial lustrations, with water if it is to be had, otherwise with clean desert sand. The prayers are to be said either in public or private and always in the direction of the sacred Kaaba in Mecca. The times for these devotional periods are highly important—just before sunrise, at high noon, in the later afternoon (at the "yellowing" of the sun, as it is known in the desert), just after sunset, and lastly when night shuts in. At these times the Muezzin, or crier, ascends the minaret and summons the faithful to prayer. The human voice is the church-bell in Moslem lands. There are other prayers, but these are the regularly designated seasons when without fail all must turn to Mecca and go through the carefully regulated acts which accompany the repetition of the well-known formulas. The hushed stillness of rev-

erence is upon a Mohammedan as he bows before Allah and makes his requests known to him.

The third Pillar is the thirty days' Fast of Ramadan. During this sacred month the faithful are to abstain from food, drink, and bodily pleasure from sunrise to sunset. It is carried so far that one is supposed not to swallow his own saliva. The fast is not a severe hardship when the month comes in the cool season, but when it falls in the torrid season it becomes a real burden. Mohammed, probably out of sheer ignorance, would have nothing of intercalated months, with the result that the months move slowly through the seasons and do not remain fixed. The Ramadan fast is strictly observed, but like so much in Islam the observance is purely formal. Those who fast all day are likely to feast all night—it makes no difference so long as the letter of the law is kept. The fourth duty is that of Almsgiving, which is expected of every Moslem. In an Islamic country under Moslem officials the alms are collected like a tax, but there are few countries under Moslem rule to-day, and so it becomes a matter on each one's conscience. Let us give the Mohammedans credit for taking care of their poor. The last of the duties or Pillars is the Pilgrimage to Mecca. It is the duty of every Moslem once in his life to undertake the journey. If a man cannot go himself, it is meritorious to send some one and thus go by proxy. The Pilgrimage must be made at the appointed season. The details of the ceremonies connected with it are quite elaborate. They include the wearing of the Ihram, or two seamless wrappers, which must be put on as one comes to the borders of the sacred region; standing on Mount Arafat, near Mecca; going around the Kaaba seven times, during which each must kiss or touch the holy stone, which is fixed in one corner of the building; tasting the waters of the well Zemzem; and doing other strange and unique things, all of which have to them a well-known significance.

Another recognized duty, not included in the Pillars, is that of Jihad, or the Holy War, which Moslem powers wage against unbelievers. The last attempt to declare Jihad was in the fall of 1914, when the Sheik-ul-Islam, the spiritual head of Islam in Turkey, obeying the orders of the Sultan, called upon all Moslems everywhere to turn against the enemies of Turkey and fight the battles of the faith. It was a Holy War so evidently "Made in Germany," as Professor Snouck Hurgronje put it, that its call was only heeded as far as Germany's influence extended and fell on deaf ears in most of the Moslem world, which remained true to the Allies. How the Holy War will be interpreted in the future with Islam divided against itself is one of the most interesting political questions before statesmen to-day, and is a serious problem in Islam itself.

The essential doctrines of Mohammedanism are as definitely stated as the duties. They are again five in number, the first being that of God, which we shall leave to the last. The next is that of angels, the servants of God, whose one desire is to love and know God. They are free from all sin, and act as intercessors for men before God. Besides the angels are the *jinn*, who also must be believed in. They are the genii of the Arabian Nights, some of whom are believers and some infidels. They were inherited, like so many other things by Mohammed, from the superstitions of pre-Islamic paganism. The doctrine of the Books stands next. The chief sacred books are the Koran, the Pentateuch, the Zabur, or Psalms of David, and the Injil, or Gospel of Jesus. The orthodox believe that all previous books are abrogated by the Koran, thus practically rejecting the Old and New Testaments, although every reference to the Bible in the Koran is favorable to a belief in its inspiration and authority. The fourth doctrine is that of the Prophets. Many are mentioned, but the leading names are Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed. It is held that all the others were sent to their own people while Mo-

hammed was sent to all peoples. Jesus, as is seen, is recognized as a prophet, the only sinless one among them, according to the Koran and the traditions. His death on the cross is denied as beneath the dignity of one of God's chosen ones. But the one overwhelming fact enunciated by this doctrine is that Mohammed is the Prophet superseding all others. They led up to and pointed toward him, and only by accepting his claims can one be true to the essential message of all the others. Then follows the doctrine of the Resurrection and the Last Day. There will be the sounding of the Trumpets, the Descent of the Books, the weighing in the Balances, and the crossing of the Narrow Bridge, from which the wicked fall off into the fiery pit below. All mankind, good and bad, will be raised and will answer for their deeds. All Moslems will in the end be saved no matter what their record may have been. The last state is in heaven or hell, both of which are pictured with vivid imagery, calculated to appeal to the imagination of the dweller in the desert.

The doctrine of God is so important that it occupies nine tenths of the space in Mohammedan works on theology. There is but one God, Allah, and he is the omnipotent Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has many qualities which the Moslem expresses by repeating the ninety-nine most beautiful names of God. Of these attributes, or qualities, what are called the essential attributes are life, knowledge (absolute omniscience), power, and will. The doctrine of the foreordination of good and evil follows logically from the emphasis which is put on the almightiness of Allah. It has had an interesting history. The Prophet was no theologian and gave expression to contradictory views in the Koran, but as the suras are studied in chronological order predestination becomes more marked. There the beginnings are found of the fatalistic pall which has always hung over Islam, cutting the nerve of moral enthusiasm and rendering impossible any movement toward social reform. Was

it not all pre-determined by the Almighty Allah? Only once was the doctrine seriously challenged. For thirty-four years at the beginning of the third Islamic century, that is, about A. D. 825, a party flourished in Bagdad, who denied divine predestination and asserted free will in man. These Free-thinkers in Islam, Mutazilites, or "Seceders," as they were called, held other unorthodox doctrines, such as the creation of the Koran, and had great power until they were over-come and in turn suffered the persecution they had inflicted on the more orthodox. They were finally discomfited in debate and were unable again to lift up their heads through the victory of al-Ashari, the orthodox champion, who had once been a Mutazilite himself. He was a master of dialectic and brought over into Islamic theology the methods of the scholastic philosophy. He gave a great impetus to ortho-doxy, which retains its almost undisputed hold to-day, and of which no feature is emphasized with more insistence than the doctrine of God's unchangeable decrees pre-determining all that happens in the world of nature and of men.

With all the Koran says about the mercy and compassion of Allah, the great, overshadowing attribute is power. This was Mohammed's emphasis, and it still rules the Islamic world. It is power unlimited, unrestrained by any law of holiness or love. This were to lessen the dignity of Allah and bring him down from the throne of his unapproachable might. It makes no difference to the Moslem to have it suggested that it might be an inner limitation, growing out of the very nature of God, which is essentially holiness and love. It would be a limitation nevertheless, and that is enough for him to spurn the suggestion as a temptation of the evil one. Allah must be able to do as he wills with no let nor hindrance. In this way Islam has played fast and loose with morality, not being able to connect the fundamental dis-tinction between right and wrong with the essential nature of God. Sin, then, in man becomes not a breach of a moral law founded on an eternal ethical cleavage which goes right

to the heart of the universe itself, but a mere violation of an arbitrary command which might be changed according to the whim or caprice of Allah, who thus becomes a typical Oriental despot, irresponsible and unrestrained by any principle within or without.

Another doctrine must be coupled with this to appreciate the kind of God Allah is in relation to his people. It is the doctrine of "difference," which asserts the absolute separation of Allah and men. God is not a Father; that would be to make him like men, for the term "father" suggests to Moslems primarily and almost entirely physical generation, which they hold would be unworthy of God. So man in no sense is a partaker of the divine nature; he was not made in the image of God. God must not be brought down to so low a level as that. Man is carnal and must always remain so. Salvation does not mean the development of the divine nature within so as to fit man for spiritual communion with his Father. It is merely such an obedience to the rules and regulations which have been laid down that man may secure the reward in heaven which Allah has promised. And the heaven is not spiritual, but one suited to the physical desires which man is conscious of and which he will never outgrow. It is a luscious garden of fruits and running streams with delightful nooks in which are the *houris,* or damsels, which are the principal reward of the righteous. Such is Islam in its naked shame, holding men down to the purely physical, and failing to lift their eyes to a world of spiritual light and beauty where we shall be with God and see him and be like him.

But there were and are Moslems not satisfied with such an outlook. Mysticism has also found a home in Islam as in Christianity. There have been men who felt that God was in their hearts and was speaking to them, who desired communion with him and would be satisfied with nothing else. The greatest of these was al-Ghazzali, who died A. D. 1111. He was sure that there was that in man which could

come into contact with God. His experience was more than could be explained by the barren formulas of the scholastic theology. Yet he was not unorthodox. He accepted the apostleship of the Prophet, the authority of the Koran, and the Traditions, and used the methods of the scholastic philosophy. But he was a mystic, seeing the inner light and experiencing the glow of the quiet presence of God in his inmost being. He could not deny this reality, and his great work was "to reduce to an orthodox possibility those mystical conceptions, and to find a resting place for that possibility in the church of Islam."[6] Others went far beyond al-Ghazzali and were not so wise as he. They did not stop until they had landed in sheer pantheism, virtually denying all the specific doctrines of their faith and holding that all beliefs and outward practices were meaningless in the presence of the mystic union of the soul and the great All, whom they might still call Allah, but whose essential character they had completely denied. The mystical experience was given another vent, however, in the Darwish orders, which are scattered so widely over the Islamic world. The meetings of these brotherhoods seek to stimulate the emotional experience by well-understood exercises. Though they may be a poor substitute for the communion with God which Christians experience in Jesus Christ, they give abundant testimony to the presence in the heart of Moslems of a longing after God which only his presence can satisfy.

Islam in History

The rapid expansion of Islam is one of the marvels of history. When Mohammed died in 632, plans of conquest were already in his mind. During the period of the first four, or orthodox, Caliphs (632-661), Persia, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt were subjugated. In the year 711 the Moslem armies entered Spain, having already crossed the entire

[6] D. B. Macdonald, Aspects of Islam, p. 194.

breadth of North Africa, and by 732 were to be found as far north as Central France. Here at Tours they were met by King Charles, who received the name of Martel, or "Hammer," from this battle, and suffered a decisive defeat, the first check the Moslem has met in his victorious progress. The battle of Tours was one of the decisive battles of the world. The fate of Europe was decided that day, whether it should be Moslem or Christian. The faith also spread into Turkestan and even entered remote China. These conquests took place during the ascendency of the Arabs, before they gave place to the Turks in the leadership of Islam. After the four orthodox Caliphs, Abu Bakr, Omar, Othman, and Ali, who ruled from the old seat of authority in Arabia, the center was shifted to Damascus, where the Omayyad Caliphs ruled from 661 to 750. Then again there was a transfer and for a brilliant period Bagdad was the center of the Islamic world. Here the Abbasid Caliphs held sway in pomp and splendor from 750 to 1258. The last centuries saw degeneracy and the slow but sure decline of prestige. The authority was passing over to the Turks, who had come in from Central Asia and were making themselves masters of the situation in Asia Minor.

How account for this marvelous expansion? Canon W. H. T. Gairdner mentions[7] a number of factors which help in arriving at a conclusion. Zeal for God was a motive, not unmixed with baser elements, which welded the loosely organized Arab tribesmen into a compact body and drove them out to do battle against the enemies of Allah. To this must be added zeal for plunder and slaves. This made a strong appeal to the Arab. He was to be the soldier of Islam supported by the tribute of the peoples he conquered. Arabia thus became the breeding place and training ground for army after army which went out to conquer a world. The exhaustion might have come sooner than it did had it not been

[7] Rebuke of Islam, chap. iii. (United Council for Missionary Education, London, 1920.)

for the importation of large numbers of concubines and women slaves which were increased greatly by the wars. The countries which were conquered fell by the sword, but after the initial bloodshed there was usually peace. The enormous numbers converted to Islam were not necessarily forced into Islam at the edge of the sword, though that happened at times. With a nation the alternative was Islam or the sword, but with an individual after the new religion had been installed it was Islam or tribute. They might remain Christians on condition of paying tribute, and many did this, as witness the Coptic Church in Egypt, the Armenian, and other of the so-called Oriental Christian churches in the Near East. When they turned Moslem it was usually the pressure of the whole system. Under Islam, even if they remained Christian, there was a large measure of justice and less persecution than was frequently the case when intolerance marked the attitude of the warring sects in the decaying Eastern Roman Empire. It was a positive relief, for example, in Egypt, to pass from Christian rule to that of Islam. As soon as the Christians paid the tribute they were under Moslem protection. The sexual freedom allowed under Islam was a strong inducement to men not strongly under the influence of Christian ideals. The Moslem soldiers and those who followed the armies into any country were free to intermarry with any of the women of the land, and of course the children were always Mohammedans. Thus Islam won its victories, both as a political force and as a religion. The kind of Christianity Islam met could expect no other fate. It was weak and corrupt and divided and did not have the slightest chance against so determined and convinced an adversary.

During the last two centuries of the Caliphate in Bagdad the real strength of Islam as a political power was Turkish. The Turks had been brought to Bagdad as the bodyguard of the Caliphs, with little thought that they would so soon assume the rule. First the Seljukian Turks (from the year

1037) and then the Othmanli, or Ottoman Turks (from 1299 to the present time) took the lead. The Arab, seemingly having had his day, retired into the background and has never been able to regain the position he once held. During the period of the Seljuks occurred the crusades, when Christian Europe made the desperate attempt to wrest the holy sepulcher of our Lord from the Moslem, and, after temporary success, was hurled back by the followers of Mohammed. The Turks made Asia Minor completely Moslem, crossed over into Europe and captured province after province, until finally in 1453 Constantinople fell and the old Eastern Empire came to an end. The tidal wave of Mohammedan advance was not stopped until late in the seventeenth century when Vienna was besieged, only to be relieved by the Polish King John Sobieski. But the real turn of the tide did not take place until the Greek War of Independence early in the nineteenth century. Since then the retrograde movement has been rapid, so that at the opening of the great war in 1914 Turkey in Europe consisted only of the city of Constantinople and a few square miles of adjacent territory.

But to return to the early days of life and vigor, Islam under the Turk expanded eastward over Afghanistan, Baluchistan, and down into the plains of India. The forays into India began about the year A. D. 1000. In course of time Delhi became the capital of a Mohammedan empire, which under the Mogul emperors (1525-1707) was one of the most brilliant epochs of Indian as well as of Islamic history. During these years the faith penetrated more deeply into Central Asia, many Moslems entering China and joining with their fellow religionists already there. In 1507 Islam was carried by peaceful penetration into the southeast and found lodgment in the island world, where it is still spreading and making converts. Java with its population of twenty-five millions is practically Moslem, the center of the faith among the Malays.

The field of the mediæval advance of Islam in Africa was the Sahara and the Sudan. The Sahara fell rapidly to Islam, the inducement to the Arabs being trade in ivory and slaves. They introduced the camel as they advanced, penetrating farther and farther to the south and capturing some of the best people in northern Sudan. Then after a quiescence of three hundred years, during which Islam remained almost stationary, the advance southward was begun again in our own day and threatens to submerge the continent. Africa will not long remain pagan; will she be Moslem or Christian? The odds are now greatly in favor of the religion of the Arabian Prophet. Why this advance after centuries of inactivity? So long as the slave-trade continued to exist the Arab traders could not desire the conversion of the Negroes, for by Moslem law they were forbidden from making slaves of fellow-Moslems—they all belonged to one great brotherhood. But when the trade in slaves was forever made impossible by European intervention it was now to the advantage of the traders to deal with the blacks as Moslems. Their wants became greater and their desires could be stimulated, as was impossible in their pagan condition. Then, too, when European governments in the last quarter of a century inaugurated the rule of law and order wars were brought to an end and the tribes were compelled to lay down their arms, thus taking away the one pagan protection against Islam. For generations and even centuries they had sedulously excluded any Mohammedan under any pretext. They feared the influence of Islam like a pestilence. But now the Mohammedan trader and school-teacher and missionary have access everywhere, and they are making the most of their opportunity. When to all this is added the actual patronage of Islam by certain governments for reasons of political expediency, the impression made on the native is most favorable to the religion of the Prophet—a strange commentary on the influence of so-called Christian nations.

Thus Islam has advanced until to-day, with an estimated strength of two hundred millions, scattered all the way from China to the shores of the Atlantic in Africa and from the banks of the Volga in Russia to the waters of the south seas, the religion of Mohammed is a world religion, the most powerful of all the rivals of Christianity in its attempt to win mankind. It has been said that Islam is a stepping-stone toward Christianity. Undoubtedly when a pagan tribe is converted it is raised to a slightly higher level. But, unfortunately, it is left there stranded with no possibility of further progress. Islam adds dignity to the savage, clothes him in a certain respectability, and brings him within the bound of a world-embracing brotherhood. These benefits, together with that of a belief in one great God, Allah, instead of cringing fear in the presence of a thousand spirits and demons, must be acknowledged in spite of the fact that the change in many cases is more seeming than real. But—and this is the final test—when Islam brings even greater sensuality, stimulates divorce and polygamy and, in so far as it dares, slavery; when its presence always results in the seclusion and neglect of women, the religion of Islam can only be looked upon as a blight to every people among whom it has come. And as for being a stepping-stone, the proud and overbearing attitude which is always assumed in the presence of the followers of any other religion—and this is particularly true of Christians—would make Islam appear to be the greatest barrier to the progress of Christianity in the world to-day.

But even Islam does not present a united front. Deep cleavages began soon to appear and have always been present. The most significant is that between the Sunnis and the Shiites. The Sunnis represent the great body of Moslems, the followers of the Sunna, or Traditions. The Shiites, or "Followers," are the adherents of Ali, who married Mohammed's daughter Fatima and thus continued the Prophet's line. The Shiites hold to "the divine right of the de-

scendants of the Prophet through the children of Ali and Fatima"[8] to be the rulers of the Islamic world. This claim is repudiated by the Sunnis, who have allowed the choice of the people to determine the question of the headship of the religion. The Shiites, who are about nine millions strong, are found principally in Persia, though like-minded believers in Ali are widely scattered in various Moslem lands. To them Ali was the first Iman, or head of the religion, after the Prophet. He is raised to such a level that even Mohammed pales into insignificance before him. An Iman is imperative for every age as the religious authority for the people as well as their political ruler. There have been twelve of these Imans, the last of whom is still alive, though he has disappeared and exerts his influence invisibly. In the end a Mahdi, or guide, is to appear to restore all things and usher in the final consummation. The Messianic idea thus has its place in Islam, repudiated for the most part by the Sunnis but becoming "the vital nerve of the entire Shiite system."[9] When to their positive views the Shiites have added intolerance, even to fellow-Mohammedans not agreeing with them, this division in their ranks appears as a serious impediment to unity of thought and purpose. Other movements, like that of the Wahabites, who more than a century ago in Arabia inaugurated a Puritan movement and strenuously opposed all innovations as contrary to the traditions, and that of the Senussi in recent years, with their center in an oasis in the Sahara, who sought to stimulate a closer union between all Moslems, with the desire to make Islam again the great power she had once been in the world —such movements and others like them indicate restlessness within the ranks and the desire to push the claims of Islam with greater zeal.

But these divisions and tendencies are for the time being

[8] Goldziher, Mohammed and Islam, p. 222. (Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, 1917.)
[9] Goldziher, op. cit., p. 246.

of lesser importance than the political condition in which Islam finds herself in the world. The movement called Pan-Islamism, which had been stimulated for years by the Sultan of Turkey, was making real progress, and the European nations, Great Britain, Holland, and France, which had vast populations of Moslems in their colonial possessions, were watching anxiously the tendencies which were taking shape. Then came the war in 1914 and the Moslem world was rent in twain. Turkey allowed herself to become a pliable instrument in the hands of Germany and attempted to persuade and cajole the entire following of the Prophet into war on the same side. But Islam failed to show the unity which many fondly expected, and the dreams of a great united Pan-Islamic movement were doomed to disappointment. To add to the difficulties the Sherif of Mecca, the guardian of the sacred cities of the faith, proclaimed the independence of the Hejaz and set up a government of his own. Under British protection he has held his place and may continue to do so for the future. What attitude will the Moslems scattered all over the world take? The Turkish Sultan has been recognized as the Caliph only by grace of necessity and the power he has for so long been able to wield. But with the sacred land of Mohammed in the hand of an Arab king, what will be the attitude of Islam? Shall the Caliphate continue to be a perquisite of the Sublime Porte or shall it be transferred to other hands? And even more significantly, will Islam continue to claim the right to temporal power, or, under the stress of circumstances, will she be satisfied to be reckoned among the religious forces of the world, depending no longer on the power of the state but solely on her spiritual resources? It has been said that this is impossible in Islam, but no one in the present situation can predict the changes which are to take place. And among these changes none are more sure or more significant than those which are to transform the religions of the world into forms very different from those we now see. Islam has been more

deeply affected by recent world movements than many in her own fold are willing to acknowledge, and it must eventually become evident that she must accommodate herself to modern life and thought—or be lost.

Suggestions for Further Study

D. S. Margoliouth, *Mohammedanism* (Home University Library). A short but excellent summary of the faith and its practices.

P. De Lacy Johnstone, *Muhammed and His Power* (Edinburgh, 1901). One of the best short accounts of the Prophet and his system.

The Koran, translated by J. M. Rodwell (Everyman's Library). A convenient volume, with Suras arranged chronologically and notes.

H. U. W. Stanton, *The Teaching of the Qur'an* (London, 1919). A short summary with a full index.

D. B. Macdonald, *Aspects of Islam* (New York, 1911). One of the best interpretations, by a master.

C. Snouck Hurgronje, *Mohammedanism* (New York, 1916). A short but authoritative interpretation.

George Foot Moore, History of Religions, Vol. II, Chaps. XVI-XXII.

CHAPTER XII

CHRISTIANITY

Jesus Christ

Little is known of the early life of Jesus Christ. Born a few years before the year A. D. 1 in Bethlehem of Judæa, he lived in Nazareth, a city of Galilee, until he was about thirty years of age. We have no reason to doubt the tradition that after the death of Joseph, the head of the family, Jesus became the main support of Mary and the younger children. He worked at his trade, that of a carpenter, and lived the life which would be expected of a religiously-minded young Hebrew. We have only one glimpse into his life and mind during all this period, and that was when Jesus was a boy of twelve. He went up with Joseph and Mary to Jerusalem to the feast of the Passover. Here he came into touch with the official teachers of the people and amazed them by his questions and his answers. He was not only religiously inclined but showed insight and discrimination beyond his years. Upon being questioned by his mother as to his reason for staying in the city and not starting with them on the homeward journey, Jesus seemed surprised that it had not occurred to them that the natural place for him to be was in his Father's house. He seemed already to show a sense of unique relationship with God, whom it was natural for him to call Father. With this beginning at twelve we may imagine the inner development and preparation for his life task which must have taken place during the subsequent eighteen "silent years" at Nazareth, before he appeared in a new role as a teacher of the people.

At about the age of thirty Jesus suddenly appeared at the Jordan, where John, a cousin of his, was performing the

rite of baptism on those who came professing a desire to amend their ways and live better lives. Jesus also came and, against the scruples of John, who saw that Jesus was in different case from the others, was baptized. It marked a turning-point, for with the outward ritual act came an inner spiritual experience of profound significance for Jesus. A voice assured him that he was in a unique sense his Father's "beloved Son," in whom he was "well pleased." It seems to have been the consummation of his thought and prayer and eager yearning for many years. He had received his revelation. He was filled with a sense of mission, of having a work to do and a message to deliver, which to the end of his life did not leave him for a moment. Immediately after this new experience Jesus passed through a period of "temptation," in which he decided upon the principles and the methods of his work in bringing in the kingdom of God. This was his God-given task; how was it to be performed? The kingdom must be ushered in by a clear emphasis on the spiritual rather than the physical element; by a firm reliance on God's goodness and power, which would repudiate any spectacular aids; and by such a single-hearted allegiance to God that compromise with evil and subservience to the lower standards represented by the evil one would be instantly repudiated. Having passed through this crisis, Jesus went out and for a period, variously estimated from one to three years, proclaimed the message of the new kingdom.

He went from place to place in Palestine preaching in the synagogues and out-of-doors wherever the people congregated, and talking individually and to groups as they came to him with their questions and problems. He began to gather about him a little company of disciples, which soon grew to twelve and which accompanied him on all his journeys. He spent much time in giving them instruction and on several occasions sent them out to heal and to preach. Around this smaller and more intimate group a larger num-

ber, who had been attracted by the teacher and healer, gathered and evidently followed him as far as their other duties would allow. He spent much of his time in and about Galilee, though on several notable occasions he went to Jerusalem, the religious center of Jewish life, and there came into contact with the leaders of the people. But whether with individuals or large audiences, whether among friends or bitter opponents, Jesus preserved the same poise and self-control. He was always simple, candid, and sincere, and carried about with him such an atmosphere of quiet assurance that what he said always struck home, and caused men and women in spite of themselves to recognize his right to speak and be heard. His words carried their own authority and did not need the backing of rabbis and teachers and writings of recognized worth. He was heard with equal pleasure and understanding by the ignorant and learned, so simple and concrete were his words. Yet lurking behind these vivid stories, taken from the life all knew so well, were the most profound and fundamental truths, which the careless were quite likely to miss. Jesus even cast his thought into story form, that of the parable, for the very purpose of testing his hearers. It did not require high intellectual attainment but moral sincerity was necessary to probe beneath the surface and find the hidden truth, which to the vulgar and the inert would mean little or nothing. At other times his thought took the form of epigrams, which among the peoples of the East are so dearly loved, and still again he would use the forms of the apocalyptic writers of his age. Whether all the imagery and the invective which is placed in the mouth of Jesus in the great apocalyptic discourses were given out by him in just this form, or in a few cases at all, is an exceedingly difficult question. What we may feel sure of is that he was not only a preacher of pleasant and comforting things, but could be as severe as the divine judgment itself in his denunciations of sin and unrighteousness, of hypocrisy and unreality in religion.

Jesus came to establish a kingdom, and this was the burden of his message. But he never forgot that the form of the kingdom and many things connected with its coming were of lesser significance than the inner facts and principles on which it was based. The first of these was man's relationship with God. He had been called Father before, but never with the fullness of meaning which it carried after Jesus had by word and act shown what it meant. God is our Father, with all the tender love and unfailing strength which the term "Father" has taken on through Jesus' words and example of filial trust. And quite as much did the term take on new meaning through Jesus' example of compassion and solicitude over suffering and sinning men and women. It was a new revelation in the world, and has opened the eyes of men since that time to a new conception of the character of God, for nothing like that had ever been seen among men. He taught that this Father was ready and anxious to forgive all who came to him without respect to race or position in society or any other outward distinction. The condition of the heart was the only thing which mattered. The seriousness of the issues of life were not minified, and terrible things were spoken with respect to the fate of the obdurate, only it was never to be forgotten that men were always dealing with a Father whose compassion would never fail and who could save to the uttermost.

Jesus was not a social or political reformer. We cannot even tell what he felt and thought about certain questions which were agitating the men of his day, not to speak of all the movements with which his name has been connected from that time to this. Yet he laid down principles of the relations of man to man which have been revolutionary in the history of the world. He recognized none of the arbitrary distinctions which divide men, and on the basis of his attitude a true democracy has been made possible. He did not explicitly condemn slavery, but men have only been made free where his example and his teaching have been made

known. He did not inveigh against the forms of government which prevailed in his day, but all tyrannies and autocracies have had reason to fear when oppression and disregard of the rights of man have been seen in the light of his teaching. He did not proclaim a new social order, but the upheaval of the present day, which is shaking the very foundations of civilization, would never have come had it not been for the vision of all men and women possessing equal rights and opportunities which truly expresses the spirit of Jesus. Jesus was always ready to urge that his kingdom was spiritual, to be realized within the hearts of men, but the effect of such a conception has been to work its way out into all the relationships in which men find themselves and bring them into harmony with his ideals.

Jesus was not only a teacher; he was a worker of miracles. The Gospels tell us that he cured the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, fed the hungry, stilled the storm, and even raised the dead. Much was made of these wonders by former generations of Christians, who used them as proofs of the divine character of the one who performed them. Such use of these incidents does not produce the effect it once did and is being discarded. A closer study of the attitude of Jesus toward his own miraculous power clearly indicates that he minimized its significance. He would have men secure a better perspective and realize that moral power was on a higher level than the ability to work marvels. With this in view it scarcely seems congruous to use the miracles in a way which could scarcely be acceptable to Jesus himself. What they really do is to provide a window into the inner life of Jesus, which presents a far more wonderful scene than merely the ability to do what others could not. It shows the heart of compassion which was beating in his breast, leading him to acts of mercy and kindness which involved the use of all the powers at his command. It was at the point of his unbounded compassion, which led him at times almost against his better judgment to give of himself

to relieve suffering and sorrow and want, that the great difference between Jesus and themselves must have become evident to his disciples. He *lived* vicariously—had it not been so, his death would never have assumed the significance it did for the disciples of that and all subsequent ages.

Jesus was living among sinning men and women and was constantly dealing with the malady at the root of human life. His analysis of character and his ability to read the inner motives of men give ample evidence of the deepest moral insight and sincerity. Yet with all this he was not conscious of sin in his own life and was willing to throw out the challenge to anyone to lay his finger on any spot or blemish. That a man should be able to state an ideal which still goes beyond the possibility of the deepest ethical thinker to improve is an achievement unmatched in the history of ethical theory, but that this teacher should match his ideal with his life, should live it out so that the example is more beautiful than the precept, is to raise Jesus to an unapproachable pinnacle of excellence. We must use words which cannot be applied to any other of the sons of men. That was the impression he made then, and it is the same to-day. A unique event had transpired—a Being had trodden our earth of whom it could be said that he had not sinned. How to classify such an one has been the problem of problems in theology since his appearance.

But of all the impressions Jesus made the strongest was that he was in touch with God his Father and that this was the explanation of all the wonderful things about him. His prayer-life was so different from that of the disciples that they came asking him to teach them how to pray. He was with them day and night, and yet with all the closeness of the fellowship they realized that their Master had a companionship which was more real and vital to him. He lived in the presence of the spiritual world and seemed perfectly at home. God was to him a personal Being with whom a life might be shared, not some power or indefinite being

far off to whom we must send our prayers and who lives in a world so strange as not to be able to enter into the meaning of our mundane life. But this above all else is what men want to know. Is there a being at the center of the universe who cares? How can we be sure? In the presence of Jesus their questions were answered. In some marvelous manner their association with him carried more with it than they had thought possible. They began to realize that to be with Jesus gave them a sense of nearness to God, and this continued until these Jews, dyed-in-the-wool monotheists as they were, found themselves offering an homage to their Master which was little different from their attitude toward God, and were doing it with no sense of incongruity.

Jesus, however, was not only winning followers and bringing them close to God; he had come into collision with the religious authorities of his people, and in the end lost his life at their hands. They were formalists and as such had not averted the danger of losing sight of the vital principles of their religion. Jesus was an innovator, and felt free to act in accordance with the inner spirit of the old precepts even where by doing so he ran counter to the letter of the law. Jesus also failed to fulfill the popular expectation of what the expected Messiah should be, a military commander and king, who should lead the Jewish nation on to victory over the Roman Eagles and establish again the throne of David forever. This was unforgivable to the typical scribe or Pharisee of Jesus' time, and they determined to nullify his influence even though it meant his death. As time elapsed and they became the more incensed no other way seemed open, so they set about deliberately to destroy and put an end to his influence. The break had been coming for some time, over the use to be made of the Sabbath. When the leaders heard that he allowed his disciples to pluck corn as they passed through the fields and that he even healed a man on the Sabbath day, they were scandalized. The final op-

portunity came when Jesus appeared in Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover. He was seized and, after having had a preliminary hearing before the Jewish high priest and Sanhedrin, was taken before Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator, and was condemned to death. He was crucified, together with two criminals, and died at the end of six hours' agony on the cross. His body was taken down by friends in the early evening and laid in a rock-hewn tomb. The hopes of his disciples were dashed to the ground, and undoubtedly the Jewish leaders and the Roman authorities thought they had rid themselves of an exceedingly troublesome creature.

But such was not to be, for a very remarkable thing happened the third day after. To the utter amazement of his disciples, who had not recovered from the paralyzing effect of their grief and disappointment, Jesus appeared to them so unmistakably that they were convinced that death had not been able to hold its victim and that Jesus was alive. Their new enthusiasm, the founding of the Christian Church on the assurance of the presence of the living Christ, the adoption of the first day of the week as a memorial of the day when Jesus reappeared alive—all these historic facts bear witness to the genuineness of the disciples' testimony that the same Jesus who had journeyed with them, who had died and had been laid away in the tomb, was raised from the dead, their living Master forevermore. They immediately went out to preach "the gospel of the resurrection," and with that the history of the Christian Church was begun.

Development of Life and Teaching

The earliest Christians were Jews. The only difference between them and the non-Christian Jews was that they believed that Jesus was the expected Messiah and the others did not. They felt it incumbent on them to observe the regulations and take part in the ceremonies of the Jewish faith.

Coupled with this, of course, was their enthusiastic belief that Jesus was the Christ and that in him all the hopes and aspirations which had filled the minds of their people for hundreds of years were in process of being fulfilled. It was hard even for the disciples of Jesus to learn the lesson that it was a spiritual kingdom which was to be inaugurated and not a political kingdom, whose capital was to be in Jerusalem. There were these two aspects of the Messianic hope, one kingly and political and the other spiritual and sacrificial, and even to this day the two are at times sadly confused. These early disciples took it for granted that the way to Christ was through the portals of Judaism. Already the idea of Gentiles becoming fellow-religionists had become familiar through the inclusion of proselytes in the Jewish community. Some came in completely by not only accepting belief in Jehovah and the obligation of the moral law, but by submitting to the rite of circumcision. They were known as Proselytes of Righteousness. Others were worshipers of Jehovah and kept the moral law, but were not fully amalgamated with the community by the distinctive rite of their religion. All this was well known to the early Christians, and it did not occur to them that Gentiles should come into their ranks in any other way. Let them first become circumcised, then they would be eligible to church membership.

This rigid theory did not continue long without challenge. One of the most interesting developments which may be traced in the Book of Acts is the movement toward greater liberality. Much is made of the conversion of Cornelius the centurion because he was a Roman, a "God-fearing man," as such proselytes were called in the New Testament, who was baptized by Peter irrespective of his uncircumcised condition. It was looked upon as a most important step, only to be taken under the direct guidance of God's Spirit. But the really significant move occurred when Paul forced the issue and brought matters to a settlement in the Jeru-

salem council, described in Acts 15. He had become quite free in admitting Gentiles, and had come to the conviction that the new religion ought to stand in its own right and not be in the leading strings of Judaism. Opposed to him were the "Judaizers," who contended that the obligation to become circumcised and obey the ceremonial law was as binding on the Christians as on the Jews. Paul brought the matter to the elders at Jerusalem, and after careful deliberation the momentous decision was reached that the Gentiles might be admitted to the Christian churches irrespective of any relation to Judaism. It was the first crisis through which the early church passed, and from this time it became independent, and the development which followed was that of its own genius, as the inner meaning of the faith began to unfold and the far-reaching communities came into contact with the world of thought and action round about.

The Old Testament was the Bible of the early Christians. Only gradually were the books of the New Testament written and accepted by the churches. The New Testament presupposes the existence of a vigorous religious life, out of which the Gospels and letters came. The words and acts of Jesus were handed down by word of mouth and were doubtless arranged in order for catechetical classes before they took shape as we have them now. Not for about two hundred years was the canon fixed, and even then certain books, like the Revelation, were looked on askance by certain sections of the church. Many of the doctrines which were taught, like belief in the one God and the obligation of the moral law, were taken over from Judaism. More and more completely, however, the meaning of the revelation of Jesus Christ took possession of their minds and transformed even the old truths into something more living and real. He became the central fact of their faith and was raised to a place in their thinking commensurate with the place he occupied in their hearts and as dynamic in their daily living.

The second Christian century is one of the most obscure; we know little of the important changes which were taking place. The churches came into contact with a movement or tendency called Gnosticism. These "Knowers" had doubtless come into contact with a philosophy of life emanating from Persia or even farther east and mingled with Greek theories according to which a fundamental cleavage ran right down through the universe, a cleavage not only between right and wrong, but even more fundamentally between spirit and matter. The two are separated by a chasm so deep and wide that it would seem almost hopeless to bridge it. Matter was looked upon as intrinsically and inevitably evil simply because it was matter. It could not be saved; it must be left behind if the spirit of man were to be emancipated. For it was just there the problem pressed—man was both spirit and matter. He sought to be free, yet was held down as by an unsupportable burden by the flesh and its desires. The only hope was that by repudiating the flesh and by giving one's self to ascetic deprivations the body would have less and less hold and the spirit would be free to rise slowly through degrees of divine attainment to the plane of pure spirituality for which it longed. God, who was the very essence of spirit, was far distant from this earth. He created and sustains the processes of the material world by subservient beings, or emanations, which exist as a kind of heavenly hierarchy in varying grades, the lowest of which have actual contact with men and their affairs. This movement secured access to the church itself and formed one or two sects about which little is known. They wore themselves out in course of time without vitiating the central stream of Christian life. The influence of the movement remained, however, in an ascetic attitude which has been far from wholesome in the church. Continuing to believe that the body was inevitably corrupt and that its desires, particularly the sexual impulse, were evil and should be suppressed, a ban was put on marriage and celibacy was

declared to be a higher state. In one section of Syria no one was to be baptized who was living in the married state. This extreme was not followed farther west, but the tendency maintained itself in the praise of virginity and the enforced celibacy of monks and nuns and of the priesthood of the church.

It was not long before the new faith came into contact with the most powerful intellectual weapon ever forged by the human mind, Greek thought. The origins of Christianity were Hebraic, its forms of thought and the method of presentation were derived from the Old Testament and the habit of mind of the Jewish people. But even before the new religion arose Judaism had come into contact with Greek thought, notably in the cosmopolitan city of Alexandria in Egypt. There lived and wrote at about the time of Christ Philo, a Jewish philosopher who was deeply tinctured with Greek learning. He made use of the conception of the Logos, the word or the expression of the distant God, a conception which was taken by the John of the fourth Gospel and used to convey one of the most profound of the great Christian ideas. It was inevitable that Christianity, too, should sooner or later be influenced by the same powerful instrument, and be compelled to think out its doctrines anew. At the very center of the faith was Christ. He had saved men and women from their sins, he had given them the hope of everlasting life, he had furnished a new moral dynamic—in all these respects what Christianity had to present was new and startling. Nothing like it had been known in the world of Paganism. But a question began to press itself home among the more thoughtful as to the kind of being this Christ was. The discussion took many forms, but the conception of God and the relation of Christ to God was the burden of every argument. Jesus was a human being, that was quite evident from his life among men, but these Christian thinkers could not be satisfied to leave him there. He was man, but more than man. This might be

easy enough to say, and would fit in well with the experience of the many followers of Jesus who had learned to associate him with God and to worship him, but it was quite a different thing when the attempt was made to form an exact statement in the terms of the dominant Greek philosophy.

How could a being be God and man at the same time? There were no human analogies to which appeal might be made. Two marked tendencies appeared, one to make Jesus Christ the highest of all the creatures God had made, far above any other being known in the universe, and yet a creature below the dignity of God himself. The other was to take the bold step of asserting that Jesus was truly man and at the same time truly God, that he was not a creature, but of the very essence of God, that he was as much a part of God as the Father himself. This is the meaning of the decision reached at the first general council of the church held at Nicea in 325. Arius contended that Jesus was of "like substance" with the Father, the highest of God's creation, while Athanasius carried the council with him in asserting that Jesus was of the "same substance," and could not be separated from God without doing away with God himself. The Christian Church has gone with Athanasius. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity has passed through many vicissitudes and may have many more crises yet to meet, but so long as men are brought into the presence of Christ and see in him their Saviour and Lord the problem will not down. Where shall such a being be placed to do justice to the impress of the facts on eager men and women whose lives have been transformed by his touch? It cannot be among men, and if higher, where else than in the very being of God himself? And to do that means some form of the doctrine of the Trinity, for the doctrine of the Holy Spirit follows closely on that of the Christ. The final solution remains still to be discovered. It may be that it will never be solved to entire satisfaction, but that will not

alter the situation—so long as lives are being made over in the image of Jesus Christ, so long will men insist upon lifting him up to the only level which will satisfy their sense of the eternal fitness of things.

All these discussions took place in the East, which was essentially metaphysical. The day of the West was not yet come, but it was gathering strength during the years and in the fourth and fifth centuries we come to the commanding figure of Augustine (354-430), the theologian of the Western church. Now the West was the complete antithesis of the East; it was preeminently practical, concerned less about metaphysical distinctions than the problems of church organization. It accepted the doctrinal decisions of the four great orthodox councils as a matter of course; it knew how to submit to recognized authority. When it came to further developments its genius was shown in the formulation of the extremely practical doctrine of salvation, of God's grace in receiving sinners and placing them on a standing as citizens of the heavenly kingdom. This was the great work of Augustine, who had become Bishop of Hippo in North Africa. Together with this unfolding of the doctrine of salvation another movement was in progress, that of building up the church in theory and in practice as the representative of God on earth. According to Augustine man was a poor helpless creature, lost in sin and misery, until God should deign to take him and by his irresistible grace put him on his feet and make him one of his elect children. Now, when the church came more and more to stand between God and men and claim possession of the only means—the sacraments—through which men could gain access to God, the power of the church over the conscience and destiny of men became unbounded. This assertion of the church of the right to dominate the life of men, individually and in every relationship even up to the high position of king and emperor, is the dominant note of the Middle Ages. The modern world could only be ushered in by break-

ing through the authority of the church and setting free the mind of man from the intolerable bondage.

This is what the Renaissance and the Reformation did. They gathered into striking power the forces which had been developing for generations and proclaimed that man was free. What the Renaissance of the fifteenth century did for the intellect—and with many unfortunate features withal—that the Reformation in the next century, led by Martin Luther, accomplished for the conscience and the spiritual life. Its primary religious accomplishment was that it tore the church away from its position between God and man. It declared clearly and unhesitatingly that the soul of man stood immediately in the presence of its Maker and that it could have direct dealing with him without ceremonies or ritual or sacraments or priest. The church had its place, but not as an essential mediator between men and God. It was fallible as the men who led it and composed it were fallible and had not the right to demand unquestioning obedience to its behests. So much the Reformation settled for all those who have entered into the heritage of its daring leaders. But having overturned the authority of the visible church, it set up another authority in its place, that of the Bible. Undoubtedly all Protestants recognize the right of the Bible to command their lives, provided, of course, they be given full right of interpretation. But the danger has been that the Bible should be made the final fact in Christianity. Protestants have been called the People of the Book, and this has been carried almost if not completely to the point of bibliolatry. On the other hand there are those who would not dim the luster of the Book nor diminish its rightful authority but who at the same time see clearly that the revelation contained in the Book found its culmination in a Person. So Christianity as its very name indicates is in its truest sense the religion of a Person. In this it differs from both Judaism and Islam, which are far more truly religions of a Book and of obedience to its

requirements. Christians *have* a Book, which is necessary to apprehend the Person, but the Person is primary, the climactic and distinguishing point in the religion.

One of the deplorable results of the Reformation was the emphasis laid on orthodoxy. Men were to be saved by believing, but belief was defined, not in the Pauline sense of trust, but as an act of the intellect, accepting a set of propositions as true. On this basis the important thing is to believe the right doctrines, so doctrine-making became the occupation of the age, which lasted for a hundred years and more. The great confessions, which still are the creedal basis of our church life, came into being. But with all this insistence on correctness of belief the churches did not thrive. They were buried under the burden of being compelled to believe so exactly and so much in order to be saved. Orthodoxy was the *sine qua non,* and acceptance of doctrines covered a multitude of faults and even sins, which were more or less likely to be winked at provided men accepted the standards which were imposed. The real religious life of these long generations in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and even the nineteenth lay in other directions. The Pietistic movement in Germany, beginning under Spener and Francke late in the seventeenth century, and the Evangelical Revival in England, under the lead of John Wesley and George Whitefield in the eighteenth, brought tens of thousands of the common people into an immediate experience of communion with God, which warmed their hearts and sent them out rejoicing to tell others the good news of God's forgiving love and the victory they were having over sin.

With this religious quickening came a new sense of social and moral obligation. The emancipation of slaves, the reformation of the prison system, the beginnings of the Sunday school movement, and the founding of the great missionary societies, near the close of the eighteenth century and in the early decades of the nineteenth, form a fitting sequel to the

stirring of a real religious life among the Protestant churches. Slow to appreciate the significance of social service, the churches have in recent years taken upon themselves in a new way the burden of humanity and have made a social creed a part of their working program. The work has only yet begun, but convictions are being born in the hearts of an increasing number each year that the church can never fulfill its duty and be true to its Master without devoting itself to the task of making this world over again in all its relationships, that justice and love, mutual forbearance and respect, and an equal opportunity for all shall be the mark of our civilization.

And now again Christianity finds herself in the midst of an intellectual crisis. It has been in progress for a half century and more and no one as yet quite sees the way out. The doctrine of evolution, applied now to the social and historical sciences as well as to inanimate nature, and the methods of literary and historical criticism, whose sweep nothing escapes, have brought the intellect of the world face to face with the necessity of a new interpretation. It cannot be escaped. Should Christianity fail to use the opportunity to make a reappraisal of its documents and its doctrines in the light of the new methods and the new knowledge, its day would have passed. But this is just what Christianity has done in the past and what it shows vigorous signs of doing now. And when it shall have discovered the eternal and disengaged it from the changing and the temporary, and when it shall have learned to use with greater intelligence the instruments which are now being put into its hands, the religion of Jesus Christ shall again lead the way into conquests of the mind and spirit greater than any in the years that have gone by.

The Church and Its Expansion

That Jesus did not undertake a mission without the borders of his own land is quite evident; that he did not con-

template an extension of his kingdom into all the world, as some would maintain, is contrary not only to certain sayings which have come down to us, but to his general attitude and bearing. He who saw "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them" at the very inception of his ministry, and he who was steeped in the message of the Old Testament prophets, with their broad outlook, which extended out to the very bounds of the then known world—such a one could scarcely fail to see down through the years a kingdom which would be as inclusive as the human race. And this may be held despite the fact that Jesus gave implicit instruction to his disciples, when he sent them out to preach and to heal, to go to none save the "lost sheep of the house of Israel," and despite the uncertain testimony of this verse or that which has been questioned by textual criticism. Surely, the Gospel of John rightly interprets the inner meaning of Jesus' life and teaching when it shows him with his eyes fixed on the wide world, and tearing down Jewish as well as Samaritan pretensions in declaring that neither at Jerusalem nor yet on Mount Gerizim was the place where the Father should be worshiped. God is a Spirit, and all that is required is that he shall be worshiped "in spirit and truth," a condition which can be met anywhere. This declaration has been called the "Charter of Universal Worship."

The disciples in the earliest day failed to realize what Jesus really meant. It remained for the imperial-minded Paul to catch the vision of the full sweep of his Master's kingdom. He made Christianity a world religion. In his own person he carried the Gospel into the Greek world of Ephesus and Corinth and Athens, and was not satisfied until he had reached Rome. The whole motive of the book of Acts, according to Harnack, is to trace this advance, from a corner of the empire to the imperial capital itself. When once it was domiciled there the new religion could claim to be in the full tide of the world's life, and might rest assured that, given time, it would reach the

farthest extremities of the imperial regime, for in a literal sense "All roads lead to Rome," and from Rome back again to the bounds of the civilized world. It took about three hundred years to accomplish this result. When Constantine, the ruler of the united empire, called the Council of Nicea in 325, Christianity had triumphed. For many years paganism lingered on, showing considerable strength where Christianity had not as yet penetrated deeply, but its doom was sealed. Constantine recognized that it was the one solid, dependable unity in his empire, and espoused its cause. Not that he was a devout man willing to bind his life by the moral restraints of the religion, but that he saw its worth and recognized that he must lean on it if he were to consolidate the gains which had come by his victories over his rivals.

During the three hundred years of its conflict Christianity had undergone a number of bitter and bloody persecutions. It had overcome the strenuous opposition of the Eastern cults, like Mithraism, which for a time had spread like wildfire, and it had given ample demonstration of an inner power which was possessed by no other religion and which carried it on to almost inevitable victory. Its works of mercy and help, which were like a balm in a sorely tried world, its strenuous insistence on the acceptance of a new moral standard, unknown before and scoffed at by a degenerate race of pleasure-seekers, the deliverance which it promised to men and women held in bondage by vicious habits and to those who were longing after spiritual freedom, gave the religion of Jesus a leverage which enabled it to accomplish wonders in that Roman world. Not that all was at peace within. Different standards prevailed, heresy began to show its head, and leaders were advancing theories and recommending practices which did not command the approval of others and which at times sadly rent the fabric of church life. But what is clear is that the testimony of the church to the leadership of a living Christ and the presence of the Spirit

within was made good, and men began to see that what the Christians professed was not a cunningly devised fable but a new power.

The adoption of the church by Constantine was a remarkable testimony to the presence of a new force in the Western world, with which no other could be compared. What happened in the decades which followed, when the recently persecuted faith was not only released from the dangers which had constantly hung over it, but was placed in the position of favor and of authority, is not pleasant reading. In order to win the more readily the many pagans who still were to be found and to make itself less forbidding to the elite and the cultured in the cities and at court, the church lowered its standards, and suffered immeasurably in its inner spirit and life. Its opposition to the loose living which prevailed everywhere was not so genuine, and the admission of pagan practices and rites into the church contaminated the purity of its testimony. Thus saint- and image-worship took the place of the old polytheism and idolatry, and various masses which arose had a most suspicious likeness to old heathen ceremonies. The church had conquered the world in outward conquest, but the world had infected the church with its pagan spirit. Undoubtedly, much of this took place unconsciously and very gradually, but the influence was just the same. The church had become a great compact organization under the theory of the monarchical episcopacy, and this meant that it must act in the manner of such organizations. Political expediency overbalanced all other considerations and made of the church a great worldly power seeking by all means to retain its ascendency. And when the unity of the church, particularly in the active West, was assured by the rise of the bishop of Rome to a place of commanding power, its future could no longer be in doubt, despite the barbarian inroads which threatened to engulf the old civilization in their irresistible advance. The church which centered in Rome was the one immovable rock in the welter of upheaval

and change. It held its own until the world settled down again, and, with all our criticism and condemnation of irregularity and abuse, it must be credited with saving the day for Christianity in a time when the very foundations seemed to be crumbling.

During the Middle Ages the church succeeded in winning the peoples of Northern Europe. The Kelts in France and the British Isles, the Teutonic peoples who flooded westward on the track of the retreating Kelts, the Slavs of central and eastern Europe were all reached in turn. From the beginnings, when Ulfilas preached to the Goths in the region north of Constantinople and Martin of Tours was doing his apostolic work in France in the fourth century, until the Lithuanians finally accepted the faith in the fifteenth is a period of more than a thousand years. The really intensive work was accomplished, however, in about half that time, from Gregory I, the "Great" (Pope 590-604), to Gregory VII, Hildebrand (1073-1085). During that period the northern countries almost swarmed with monks. With a zeal which has never been surpassed these ardent servants of the church went to every tribe, and at the end of their labors there were none left who did not acknowledge Jesus as Lord and count themselves members of the Catholic Church. The annals of Christian devotion would be lacking some of the most illustrious examples were it not for Patrick of Ireland, Columba of Iona, Augustine of Kent, Boniface of Thuringia, Anskar of the far frozen north, and many scores of others, who in the name of Christ counted not their lives dear unto themselves, but in utter self-abandonment went to the most inaccessible islands and the most hostile peoples to tell them the message which had taken possession of their own souls. They have left a priceless heritage of courage and devotion which no criticism of their methods can dim.

The net result of their labors was that northern Europe was completely won to the church and to at least nominal

acceptance of its Christ. Unfortunately, it was so frequently only a nominal acceptance that vital religion seems never to have come to its own among large parts of the population. With little training before baptism and with no adequate instruction in the years which followed, the people remained in ignorance of the true meaning of Christianity. Pagan practices were not uprooted and attendance at the services and the performance of the prescribed rites and ceremonies meant little more to a vast majority than the practices they had left behind, except that they were grander and more impressive and carried with them the surer promise of favor with God and of the life beyond. With ignorance almost unchecked and loose living tardily rebuked, especially among the powerful, the conditions left much to be desired. The church was strong, so strong that the people were held in terror of the penalties which it could inflict, and even emperors were cowed into submission. The Middle Ages present the strange contrast of saintly devotion unsurpassed and of churchly power misused to bind the lives of men in a grip which must be broken before any progress could be made.

When the great liberation came in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a new expansion might well be looked for. A new world had been laid before the wondering gaze of Europe by the discovery of the Americas and by the finding of a sea route to India and the East. For hundreds of years, particularly since the crusades, Islam had stood as a barrier between West and East. Europe knew little of the teeming populations beyond and had strange ideas of their condition. But now the veil of mystery was to be taken down and new empires were to be founded by the youthful European nations in far off seas. The Roman Catholic Church at once took advantage of the splendid opportunity and sent its missionaries east and west. The daring Jesuits, followed by other orders, went through incredible hardships to carry their message to Canada, South America, and to India,

China, and Japan. Strange to say, Protestantism did not respond. Her task was an arduous one, to conserve the results of the upheaval in Europe, but, even more than that, her mind was occupied with the making of creeds, and was more or less blinded by impossible methods of interpretation, which led to the conclusion that there was no longer a call to the church to undertake a mission to the heathen. That had been done by the original apostles, and if the nations were not now Christian that was their own fault!

But the Pietistic movement in Germany and the Evangelical Revival in England stirred the hearts of men and led to earnest questioning concerning the non-Christian world and the conviction that the Gospel must be carried wherever it was not known. At the end of the eighteenth century, under the leadership of William Carey and his associates, action was taken, first by the Baptists, then by other bodies both within and outside the Established Church, until on both sides of the Atlantic and on the Continent of Europe Protestantism had taken seriously the task of evangelizing the whole world. This has been one of the chief notes of church life in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In various conferences the denominations have met to counsel and plan their work together. The culminating point was reached before the World War in the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910. Here for the first time all Protestantism was represented and by union in prayer and praise and in loyalty to a common Lord, reaffirmed its essential union in faith and purpose, thus giving practical expression to the growing desire that all should be one. The new consciousness of solidarity as they faced a common task has seemed to many to be the harbinger of a new day, when the unhappy divisions among God's people shall be healed and they shall veritably advance "like a mighty army." So strong was the impression made by this gathering that Professor A. E. Garvie has made bold to declare that the Edinburgh Conference may prove to be of greater signifi-

cance to the highest interests of the church than the Council of Nicea!

And after this came the World War, which tore Christendom in two and set brother against brother along many fronts. It revealed the awful fact that the Gospel had not penetrated deeply enough beneath the surface to make such a tragedy impossible, that while the message of peace had been proved the very voice of God in individual hearts and in countless churches and denominations, it had never been seriously applied to society at large and among the nations. The question was frequently broached whether Christianity had been found wanting, to receive the reply that it had never been tried at just the point where the selfish ambitions of nations were likely to clash. The smug satisfaction which possessed the souls of many good people, who relied on a civilization which had been made more or less by Christianity, is gone. A civilization which is not genuinely actuated by the spirit of Jesus is a poor reed on which to lean. To have learned this is exceedingly valuable, and places before the Christian church a task of the first magnitude. A reconstruction, which involves every feature of human life and every relation in which men find themselves, is the work which lies ahead, and so closely are the peoples related and interrelated to-day that it involves an approach which shall touch every section of the world simultaneously. Nothing like it has ever been faced before by the Christian church. Such a gospel must be preached as shall transform individual lives, make the denominations like cooperating regiments in the same army, bring peace and good will in society on the basis of justice and mutual respect, break down the artificial barriers which stand in the way of true democracy, and relate the nations so that as brothers in one family they shall exist each in its own right in peace and prosperity and each looking out for the good of all the others, not content until all shall share its security and plenty. Such a vision may be far from realization, yet nothing less is worthy of our

Lord, the Prince of Peace, who came to establish his kingdom to the ends of the earth and make righteousness prevail as far as men are found.

The Ground of Its Appeal

As the world stands trembling in the uncertainty and dismay of the aftermath of the war, what has Christianity to offer? Has it a unique message, which other religions do not know? Is there that in it which will win the confidence of great world leaders, who are desperately turning this way and that to find a cure for the world's ills? Such are the questions being asked to-day—has Christianity a sufficient answer? It is taken for granted that nothing but religion is adequate to the task. What has shaken man to the depths of his nature can never be touched by any cure which does not reach to the very center of life and the springs of motive and desire. Only religion can do this, dealing, as it does, with the ultimate facts of God and sin and salvation and the hereafter. Only religion can give man a satisfying philosophy of life, and, by pointing beyond the world while he is still in the world, reveal the presence of other factors without which much that he experiences would be utterly inexplicable.

In its approach to the present-day world the Christian religion has a *personal* note, which it would declare in the ear of every man and woman. There is a good God whom we may know by coming into fellowship with Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord. He would have every man come to him by a path all may travel—that of trust. And when the horror of sin falls like a pall over the heart, the tender word of forgiveness may be spoken which will bring joy and peace. And in place of palsied impotence in the presence of temptation may come the assurance that a new dynamic has been placed at the disposal of men which will make them "more than conquerors." And lest the danger should arise that sin may be thought of too lightly there is the cross of

Christ, revealing the awful agony in the heart of God because of human sin and at the same time the eager desire to deal with it adequately irrespective of the suffering involved.

There is the *social* note in the gospel of Jesus Christ which the world must hear. It is not enough that a man should be saved alone, even if that were possible. He is bound to his fellows by bonds so intricate and so enduring that, unless his religion reaches out and seeks to make all these lateral relationships an expression of the same spirit which fills his breast, the very meaning of what he has received is largely lost. Is he a Christian? Then his family must be Christian. And by the same token the business in which he is engaged, the social relationships which he enjoys, the political party to which he belongs, and the state to which he owes allegiance are bound to feel the steady pressure of his influence as he seeks to make them the vehicle of the moral enthusiasms and spiritual aspirations which are pulsing in his own life. A brotherhood of men in which the principles of the Sermon on the Mount shall prevail is an ideal far away it may be, but it is an essential note in that earthly kingdom which Jesus Christ came to found.

And, lastly, there is the *universal* note, universal because Christianity is personal and social. Since our religion is able to speak the word of peace to the individual man and woman, it becomes our duty to convey it to every man and woman, for we are all fundamentally alike in our common humanity. And since our religion is the only unbreakable bond of brotherhood it can only be true to its essential nature by drawing all within its sphere, until not one man is left who has not felt the inner satisfaction of being a member of a world-wide fraternity, which affects him at every point of contact with his fellow men. Other religions make the claim to be universal; the Christian claim is unique in this, that all it makes bold to proclaim is epitomized in the person of its Lord and Master Jesus Christ. He is the perfect personality; he made the Golden Rule live in daily practice;

he is the universal man, and with all that he is the living Saviour and Master who through his Spirit is in actual contact with men. A present living experience of the power of Jesus Christ, manifested many times over in every country of the world, is the ground of our confidence that in him, and in him alone, can the world and all the men and women in it be saved.

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