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HISTORY

OF

INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT:

ON THE LINES OF

MODERN EVOLUTION.

BY

JOHN BEATTIE CROZIER.

Author of
"Civilization and Progress," &c., &c.

VOL. I.

GREEK AND HINDOO THOUGHT; GRÆCO-ROMAN PAGANISM; JUDAISM; AND CHRISTIANITY DOWN TO THE CLOSING OF THE SCHOOLS OF ATHENS BY JUSTINIAN.

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PREFACE.

A WORD or two, by way of preface, as to the materials I have used in this work, and as to the manner in which they have been put together. My plan has always been, where possible, to go direct to the original authorities living at or about the time of the events recorded, or those in some way in contact with them, and having steeped my mind in these, to reconstruct to the best of my ability some picture of it all, in my own way, and from my own point of view. This done, I then, with the view of repairing the gaps and oversights inevitable in the view taken of any large and complex subject by a single mind, have had recourse to those great modern authorities who themselves drew from the original fountain head, and especially to the works of those specialists in the various departments who have devoted themselves to the elucidation of some single period of history, or school of philosophy, or to the lives of particular great men. When the subject-matter was more than usually complex, and the threads of connexion more than usually involved or difficult to follow, my method has been to construct diagrams, so as to represent more clearly to myself the points at which, in my judgment, the connexions were either satisfactorily established, or were left still incomplete. And it was not until I had got the lacunæ filled up, and the sprawling tag-ends of unrelated points connected with the rest, and rounded into some sort of harmony, that I felt myself justified in trying to discover the central law or principle of the whole period or movement.

J. B. C.

January 1, 1897.

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By John Beattie Crozier.

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INTRODUCTORY.

IN the present and succeeding volumes of this series I propose to ask the reader to accompany me in a Historical Survey of the Intellectual Development of the world. In the introductory volume, "Civilization and Progress," I restricted myself, it may be remembered, to exhibiting in a general way the parts played in the complex movement of civilization by the great cardinal factors of Religion, Government, Science, and Material and Social Conditions, and to pointing out the laws which regulate the interplay of these factors as they roll along together down the course of Time. In this and the following volumes I propose to apply the general principles there laid down, to the detailed evolution of one great factor in Civilization, viz., Intellectual Development, under which term I shall for convenience include the three great departments of Religion, Science, and Philosophy. But this change from the investigation of the laws of Civilization in general, to the laws which regulate the evolution of a single and separate factor, must necessitate, it is to be observed, a wide change both in method and in treatment. In determining the laws of Civilization in general, as for example the laws that regulate the relations subsisting between Religion and Science, between Religion and Morality, and between both and Material and Social conditions, it is obvious that when once these laws are discovered they ought to hold good at any time and in any place; in the same way as in Physiology when once the laws which regulate the relations between two or more organs of the body are determined, as for example between the stomach

and liver, or lungs and heart, and so on, they ought to hold good at each and every period of life, from youth to age. A detailed account, therefore, of all the factors at every stage of their evolution, even if it were possible, would be superfluous; it is practically sufficient if, as in geology, on sinking a shaft here and there into different quarters of the field, the results are found to correspond to the law or laws laid down. History, that is to say, though an admirable handmaiden, and even a necessary *instrument of investigation*, is of but secondary and subordinate importance as a *standard of interpretation*, and must give way to more direct methods of insight and penetration. But in investigations into the laws which determine the evolution of any single factor, on the contrary, and more especially of the intellectual factor with which we are here about to deal, an exact knowledge of historical sequences is of the very essence of proof; just as in physiology, again, where the laws regulating the evolution of any particular organ, as of the eye, say, are to be determined, they can be demonstrated only by a detailed exhibition of the stages passed through by that organ from the embryo onwards. The main question therefore which concerns us here is whether there is at hand a sufficient body of facts bearing on the history of intellectual development, to justify the attempt to reduce them to scientific laws, or to serve as proof of the truth and sufficiency of these laws when found. The answer will, I am convinced, be given by most competent authorities in the affirmative. For by the patient labours of generations of students who have devoted their lives to these subjects, the main facts of Greek and Hindoo Thought, of Græco-Roman Paganism, of Hebrew Religion and Morality, of Early Christian Doctrine and Practice, have been successfully disinterred, freed from obscurities and foreign adhesions, marshalled in logical order, and placed before the reader in their true sequences and relations. And yet, as with the cataloguing of the planets and stars before the law of gravitation was discovered; or the

orderly dividing of the animal and vegetable kingdoms before Darwin; something more than this mere cataloguing and arranging, however exhaustive and accurate, is needed, before a history of the evolution of the great periods of human thought can be said to be scientific in the proper sense of that term. It is necessary, as well, that the law or laws which the evolution follows either as a whole or in its separate periods and stages should be so clearly grasped that they can be laid down at the outset; and that the procession of the facts should be seen to conform so closely to these laws, that when regard is had to the great complexity of the subject matter, the result may fairly be held to constitute a scientific demonstration. Now this is the task which I have set myself in the present and succeeding volumes; and in venturing to ask the reader to follow me over so wide a field, I would crave his indulgence for such crudities and imperfections as must necessarily attend the attempt to break ground on so difficult and complex a theme.

I am aware, of course, of the deep suspicion with which many readers will regard any attempt to reduce to law those products of thought or action which would seem to depend on the uncertain caprices of men; and can fully realize the surprise of the reader when he hears that an attempt has here been made to anticipate the views which men like Plato, Aristotle, Buddha, or Paul, were likely to hold on the great problems of the world and of human life. So much so, indeed, that were it not for the deep conviction which I have entertained ever since writing "Civilization and Progress," that it was a thing possible to be done, and that the time was now ripe for doing it, I might well have shrunk from the attempt. But with the view of lightening the weight of suspicion that may attach to the undertaking, as well as of marking out more precisely the limits of the enquiry, I have thought it well at the outset to indicate a few of the reasons which have made me feel that the enterprise was feasible.

These reasons in the case of the purely philosophical parts of our subject, such as those on Greek and Hindoo Thought, are quite simple and apparent. In the first place, in none of these ancient systems of Philosophy is the curve of evolution liable to be deflected from its natural course, as it would be in modern times, by the intrusion into the problem of the discoveries of Physical Science—which, like concealed magnets, are at the present time liable to be sprung on you at any moment, and must for ever render all scientific prevision absolutely impossible. On the contrary, throughout the whole period during which these systems were evolving, no scientific laws, like those, say, of gravitation, of the Copernican Astronomy, or of the connexion between the mind and the physical condition of the brain and nervous system, had yet been observed; and the mind of the philosopher, in consequence was left free to follow its own inner workings to their logical results, undisturbed from without, and to weave its own airy webs unobstructed by the intrusion into its dreams of the hard and rocky facts of Physical Science. Then, again, as systems of pure philosophy unconnected with action, they were not liable to be disturbed in their logical evolution by the capricious intervention of the human will. And lastly, as it is only with the greatest thinkers that one has to deal, and as it is these who, like the great chess players, follow most logically the moves necessitated by the complex game of their predecessors, there is no reason why the same human mind which has woven these airy flowing webs of speculation, should not be able to interpret them and even to anticipate them also; provided always that the starting point be given, and that the laws of the particular game of thought, as it were, that is being played, whether Greek, Hindoo, or Modern, be fully and clearly seen. For it cannot be too often repeated that although the subject matter of all philosophy is the same, viz., the great field of the world and of human life, the game that is being played is never in these great world-systems twice alike; and

so the same facts have in the different systems a quite different value given them, as in a game of whist the same hand has quite a different value according to the card that is trumps. In the whole period of Greek Philosophy, for example, from the time of Socrates, and in all European thought down to the advent on the scene of Modern Physical Science, the principal of Intellect or Intelligence (νους) is the supreme principle around which all thought is centred; what is called the Vital Principle or diffused Soul of things being regarded as but the matrix for the growth and nourishment of Intellect; the foundation, of which it is the architectural crown; the casing, in which as a jewel it is set. All the problems of the world and of life, accordingly, take their cue from this principle, and from their relation to it receive all their own importance and significance. With Hindoo Thought, again, it is just the opposite. Here the Vital Principle (ψυχη) the Anima Mundi which is the life of Nature, is the supreme principle to which all else pays homage; the Intellect being regarded as but an evanescent foam-bubble thrown up to the surface of its deep and ever flowing stream, and turning for the moment its gleaming colours to the light, but coming into being only with the lives of men, and with them passing away. In modern systems of philosophy, again, like that of Mr. Herbert Spencer, it is evident that still another principle and one different from both these, is king, viz., that of pure Physical Mechanism; masses and molecules and particles being the supreme pontiffs whose dress not only the 'Vital Principle' of Hindoo Thought, but Intellect, Beauty, and Love itself must wear, before they can have the entrèe to its high courts. From all of which it is evident, that as in systems of pure philosophy things take their value from a single supreme principle, we ought, if only we can seize what this principle is in any particular world-system, to be able to lay down at the outset the laws of its procession and the curve of its evolution, with a large measure of scientific exactness and precision. But we ought to be able to do more,

for just as when the past position of a planet or satellite is disputed, the difficulty can be at once resolved by asking where the law of gravitation would necessitate that it *must* have been; so in disputed questions as to the meaning to be attached to certain controverted doctrines, say of Plato, of Aristotle, or of Buddha—as for example to Plato's doctrine of Ideas, of Number, of the ἄπειρον, or of the twice bi-sected line in the Republic; to Aristotle's doctrine of Matter and Form; and to Buddha's doctrine of Nirvana, Karma, etc.—we are helped to the right solution by asking which of the disputed interpretations, if any, is the one cut through, as it were, by the evolutionary curve as it passes on its way.

The Reader will not be surprised, therefore, to find that in most of the chapters of the present volume, dealing as they do with the most controverted as well as with the most difficult problems of the past, differences of greater or less importance from the current readings and interpretations have been introduced for his consideration. In regarding the facts of the different periods from a somewhat novel point of view, it was inevitable that their significance, emphasis, and connections, should undergo changes in accordance with that point of view.

So much for the reasons that seem to me to justify the opinion that the line of evolution of all the great world-systems of Philosophy that have arisen, culminated, and declined before the advent of Physical Science, can be laid down at the outset with a large amount of scientific precision.

With Religions on the other hand the problem is changed and the method of solution different. For if Philosophies may for the nonce be defined as games of thought played by the abstract or logical intelligence, Religions may be defined to be games of thought played by the whole human mind—intellect, conscience, and heart. And although by thus introducing into the problem the uncertain element of human will, our difficulty in anticipating the line or curve of evolution would seem to be indefinitely enhanced, if indeed

the problem were not thereby rendered insoluble, still in reality it is not so. The problem can still be undermined, if even it cannot be taken by a direct assault. For Religions may be said to differ from one another rather in the spirit or soul if we may say so, which animates them, than, as philosophies do, in the purely intellectual dogmas in which that spirit or soul is clothed. If, then, the spirit or soul of the religion from which we start, say of Paganism, be determined, and the spirit or soul of the Religion at which we are to arrive, say of Christianity, be likewise determined; and if further we divide the intervening distance into a number of spiritual or moral stages as it were, each stage representing a step in evolution, it ought to be as possible for the philosophic historian to forecast the kind or kinds of experience through which the tribe or nation must pass from stage to stage if it is to reach the goal, as it is for the scientific dog or pigeon-fancier to forecast the kind of crosses he must make between his breeds before he can get a particular form of head or colour of wing; always allowing, of course, in the midst of so much complexity, just sufficient historical landmark as finger-post to steady him on the way, and give him a firm footing for the next advance. This then is the nature of the attempt that I am about to make in the following history; but lest the reader should be led by these introductory remarks to strain the scope of my attempt to a larger reach than I have intended, I have been careful to lay down at the beginning of each great movement, whether philosophical or religious, the precise positions which I think it possible to make good asking only for such indulgence in minor particulars as may be fairly granted to the pioneer who enters for the first time on a new and untrodden sphere.

I am, of course, aware that at various periods during the century, attempts have been made to reduce the History of Intellectual Development to fixed and determinate laws; notably by Hegel at the beginning of the century, by Comte

and Buckle in the middle, and in our own day by Herbert Spencer. But there are various reasons, differing more or less in each case, why these attempts, admirable and even magnificent otherwise, were as scientific histories fore-doomed to failure. In the first place it is only within our own time that a sufficient body of historical facts has, through the labours of the Higher Critics, been brought together, to justify the attempt to reduce them to fixed and scientific laws. Hegel, in consequence, was obliged to limit himself to the enunciation of a single general law for the whole field of intellectual development, instead of enunciating a number of more closely-fitting laws for its separate divisions and sections. And although his law, into which I will not enter here, was, in my judgment, the true law of the movements of intelligence in the abstract, it was nevertheless, like a hat too big for the head, altogether too wide and general to be of any scientific value for determining the line of evolution of the lesser divisions of intellectual development—except perhaps in relation to German Metaphysics, from which, indeed, the law was derived and to which it is specially applicable; in the same way as the general Law of Evolution, although doubtless true in itself, is much too wide to be offered as a serious explanation of the special phenomena of the stock-exchange, or the law of gravitation of the special phenomena of chemical affinity. And hence, when he comes to trace the evolution of Greek Philosophy, for example, instead of laying down at the outset a law that should keep so close to the facts, that it would enable us to track the course of that philosophy through its various windings, side-spirts, and doublings, until it was at last run to earth in Christianity, he offers us, instead, a law so vague in its nature, so wide in its scope, and so general in its range, that it enabled him to do little more than to throw ring-fences, as it were, around the various fields through which it was destined to pass. And yet this is what he calls tracing the evolution of Greek Philosophy. And for result we have,

as we should expect, a history in which underneath this huge immeasurable metaphysical night-cap the real features of these old Greek philosophies are as unrecognizable as the visages of pigmies under the helmets of Brobdingnagians! And when some of his followers, notably Strauss for example, undertook to apply this abstract metaphysical law of his to the evolution of a flesh and blood religion like Christianity, and when instead of constructing their theory of its origin and rise, out of such substantial human motives as hope, fear, imagination, passion, tradition, devotion, and the like, as one would construct a rope out of good substantial hemp, they undertook to do it out of a network of metaphysical cobwebs, bloodless, attenuated, and unsubstantial as shades or dreams, the result was ghastly in its inappropriateness and absurdity.

The next great Thinker who undertook to trace in the history of Intellectual Development a clear and orderly evolution, was Comte. In his law of the "three stages," as it is called, he has given us in my judgment, in spite of the temporary neglect into which it has fallen, the most comprehensive, the most philosophical, and, I will add, the most practically useful working conception of the march of human progress as a whole, which has yet appeared. But, as in the parallel case of Hegel and his followers, the very width and generality of this law unfitted it for the purpose of scientific prevision, and for determining the curve of evolution of the special systems, which it is the last object of a scientific history to achieve. For although in these "three stages" of his, the Theological, the Metaphysical, and the Positive respectively—he has accurately gathered up into their separate categories and compartments, as it were, the facts of evolution in the different periods of the world's history; and although in his splendid march across the centuries, he has supplied in these "three stages" a torch which really lights up the interiors of these compartments, so that the nature of their contents is everywhere fully and clearly seen; and although,

further, he has shown by means of them how the *social* and *moral* phenomena of these several periods were connected together, he nevertheless found his law too wide and general to determine their *intellectual* curve and line of evolution, and so has left this aspect of them almost a virgin soil for future explorers.

The next great Thinker, again, who made an attempt to reduce the history of intellectual development to definite laws, was Buckle, but of his performance little need here be said. He has not added anything to Comte's great classification, but, on the contrary, has adopted it entire, only under a different form and under other names. The Theological and Metaphysical stages of Comte, in which the mind starting from unproven hypotheses of gods on the one hand, or of 'vital forces,' 'essences,' or 'spirits' on the other, reasons from them downwards as it were, to the facts, he has called, when regard is had to their intellectual aspects, the 'deductive' method of inquiry; while the Positive or Scientific Stage of Comte, in which the mind, beginning from the facts, reasons upwards by means of observation, experiment, and verification, to scientific generalizations and conclusions, he has called the 'inductive' method. But while Comte applied his law to all the great intellectual periods of the world's history, Buckle applied his doctrine of intellectual method only to the period when Science, like a young David, made its first appearance in the field against the Goliath-like superstitions, as Buckle regarded them, of Religion and Metaphysics; and his work, in consequence, in spite of the splendid powers of generalization which it exhibits, must be regarded rather as a magnificent piece of special pleading in the interests of a particular stage of intellectual development and of a particular method of intellectual inquiry, the Scientific—than as a scientific enquiry into the evolution of them all.

The last of the great Thinkers who has attempted to reduce the history of intellectual development to law and order, is

Mr. Herbert Spencer, who, in his magnificent and colossal work on Evolution, has, with a genius all his own, made the world of Thought his eternal debtor. But here, again, as in the case of Hegel and Comte, the law which he has propounded, the great law of Evolution, is as we have said, much too wide and comprehensive to be of scientific value in the special problems of intellectual development with which it is the object of this volume to deal. The larger part of his work is taken up with exhibiting in detail the great fact that just as in the world of nebulæ and stars, in the solar system, in the crust of the earth and in the animals and plants on it, so, too, in the intellectual and moral world, begin where you will, every new germ of thought, every new ideal of morality that is dropped like a seed into the world, will, like it, pass gradually from its first vague and indeterminate condition, into a highly complex and involved one, will split itself, as it were, into endless differentiations, and into ever and ever greater complexity and variety of form, whether that germ be a religious precept, a form of government, a principle of morality, a new style of painting, or architecture. But this fact of endless differentiation, although a truth of prime importance in its bearings on our conception of the Universe as a whole, is barren and useless for the more limited purpose to which we here wish to put it; as the sky, although spanning the world and being the abode of the gods, is useless to protect the homes of men from the wind and rain. For if in the first volume of this series "Civilization and Progress," I have succeeded in showing that the progress of civilization consists in the gradual establishment among men of higher and higher moral codes, higher and higher ideals of life, it will follow that the interesting and important point is not so much the knowledge (interesting and important as it is) that when once a new germ of religion or morality is sown in the minds or hearts of men, it will unfold itself in endless differentiations and in infinite ramifications of organs

and institutions (this is the case with all germs, and may as confidently be looked for as an etcetera to them as tails may to comets), what is most important to know is not how men and their philosophies and religions and moralities developed into other men with other philosophies, other religions, and other moralities, important as this may be, but how the lower form develops into the higher, plants into animals, animals into men, the 'Vital Principle' of Hindoo Philosophy into the 'Intelligence' of Greek Philosophy, the morality of Paganism into the morality of Christianity and so on. Now the only section of intellectual development which, in this sense, Mr. Spencer has treated scientifically, is the development from dreams, etc., of men's primitive religious conceptions of God, the Soul, and a Future Life, as seen in those savage races who are the existing representatives of the thought and feeling of Pre-historic Man. But he has stopped just at the point where they become of interest to us, viz. when these primitive conceptions are taken up into the thought of civilized nations, of Hindoos, Greeks, and Europeans, and woven by them into religions and philosophies. Into this Mr. Spencer nowhere enters, and so he has left the field of investigation of the evolution of these higher and more interesting stages of Intellectual Development, still open.

So much then for the aim, scope, and method of the present work, and for the reasons which have made me believe that its execution along the lines laid down, would be both opportune and possible. But the reader may still ask what is to be the upshot of it all, what the result, what light, if any, is it intended to throw on the great and complex problems of To-day? To which I would reply, much in every way, if I shall have succeeded in the enterprise. Starting out as I did on this enquiry with a mind disengaged from all preconceptions whatever, religious or philosophical, and with no notion of what the outcome was likely to be, my one object being to discover how far it were possible that the game of human

thought, when played under defined and known conditions, could be determined beforehand in the curve and course of its evolution; and feeling deeply at the same time the inadequacy and even impertinence of a limited and finite product like the human mind, with its few poor and limited avenues of knowledge, professing to guage the infinite possibilities of that Nature from which, as a time-begotten ephemera, it has been cast up; I had not gone far before I discovered that after all ordinary scientific causes had done their best or worst in the explanation of the phenomena under discussion, there still remained a residuum which was unexplained by all special explanations; some unknown Power, as it were, which held all the factors together, and constrained them all to a definite and apparently pre-determined end. This Power, whose nature was left quite undetermined, did not make itself so plainly apparent in the evolution of the purely philosophical systems—whether those of the Hindoos, of the Greeks, or of the Moderns—for these were only the explicit and elaborate unfolding of principles which were already latent and implicit in the mind itself, requiring only to be drawn out into logical sequence and form. But in religions, on the other hand, like those of Judaism and Christianity, which deal not so much with the purely logical intelligence as with the entire nature of man, and therefore with his conscious will, the progress of our enquiry not only disclosed the presence of the Unknown Co-ordinating Power of which I have spoken, whose nature had so far remained indeterminate, but this Power began to clothe itself with certain definite attributes. It exhibited for example a steady tendency to the production of higher and higher moral and social relations among men; a tendency apparently never lost sight of for a single moment, but visible everywhere to us now athwart all the impediments, the immoralities, the stupidities, the delusions, and even the frauds by which in actual history it was worked out. And further it became evident that in the working out of this

tendency or end, this Co-ordinating Power used means as various and ingenious as those of the natural world; and that just as the cross-fertilization of flowers is effected now by bees, now by the wind, and now by animals; so in civilization the evolution of higher and higher ideals of morality is worked out now by Religions, now by Government, now by Science, and now by the Material and Social Environment; each like a good fairy bringing its own appropriate and peculiar gift, and all, like the vassals of King Solomon, furnishing, though unconsciously, one or other of the materials needed for the building of the great Temple of Humanity. Now were the active agents in working out these great designs *conscious* of what they were doing, the whole achievement would be only an instance of the activity of the human spirit working after its own proper laws, and making for itself its own world of religion, its own moral and social environment, according to the ideal and pattern of its dreams; and so would have no further or ulterior religious or philosophical significance. But when it is discovered that the individual men and women who are the instruments by which these great ends of civilization and morality are brought about, are no more conscious of what they are doing or of where they are going, than the bees are when in the search for honey they are made at the same time to fertilize the flowers, but on the contrary are either intent on their own private ends, or if on public ends not on the ends which this Co-ordinating Power, this Genius of the World, is working out through them; when we discover all this, we feel that this Co-ordinating Power, this Unknown X in the equation, which is *not ourselves* and which makes steadily for *moral* ends, is what in the case of human beings we should designate as both Intelligent and Moral. But although the course of this History thus supports the belief in a stupendous and overarching Supernaturalism everywhere enfolding and pervading the world and its affairs, and giving scope and exercise to all that is properly religious in thought and feeling,

it nowhere lays emphasis on any particular one of those Supernaturalisms which have prevailed among the different nations and peoples, and in which poor belated human souls, hard pressed by Fate, have in this rude world taken refuge from the storm, and for a brief space found peace and solace and rest. On the contrary it treats them one and all as *means* and *instruments* merely to the one great end of Morality and the elevation and expansion of the human spirit. Now these conclusions which are rather a bye-product of our study of intellectual development than a part of its essential aim, have in no way affected our treatment of that development, which would have been the same had there been at the bottom of it all nothing more than a blind and unmeaning Fate. They are largely, I admit, personal conclusions, drawn from the impression which the spectacle of so many generations of human souls all moving unconsciously towards a predestined end, is calculated to make on the contemplative spirit, and are not necessarily transferable to other minds. They are nowhere, therefore, pressed upon the reader as a thing once for all demonstrated and done with, but are left rather to his deeper moods with their finer and truer spiritual affinities and intuitions.

PART I.

THE EVOLUTION OF GREEK THOUGHT.

HISTORY OF
INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT.

PART I.

LIST OF AUTHORITIES FOR THE FOLLOWING CHAPTERS

ON THE

EVOLUTION OF GREEK THOUGHT.

PLATO	ERDMANN	VACHEROT
ARISTOTLE	KROHN	SIMON
DIOGENES LAERTIUS	SPENGEL	LEWES
SEXTUS EMPIRICUS	RITTER	JOWETT
HEGEL	HEINZE	FERRIER
ZELLER	STRÜMPELL	GROTE
SCHWEGLER	MARTIN	MARTINEAU
BRANDIS	JANET	BOSANQUET
UEBERWEG	COUSIN	BIGG

Errata.

Page 5, for νους read νοῦς .

„ 5, *&c.*, for ψυκη read ψυχή

„ 49, *&c.*, for ἀπειρον read ἄπειρον

„ 82, for *vegetable* read *reptile*

„ 150 *and* 248, for *Rénan* read *Renan*

CHAPTER I.

THE KEY.

IN searching for the key to the evolution of Greek Philosophy, a few general observations are necessary perhaps, at the outset, to enable us to envisage as it were the full scope of the problem before us, and to help us to the direction in which we are to look for its solution. To begin with, then, I would remark that the views which men are likely to entertain as to the meaning and significance of the World and of Human Life—the object of all Religion, Science, and Philosophy—like those they entertain as to the meaning and significance of a comet, a ghost, or an eclipse, will entirely depend upon the notion they have formed to themselves as to the *nature* of the cause or causes by which they conceive these effects to have been produced. Now of the vast and multitudinous complexity of causes of one kind or another that occupy our attention from day to day, all may be reduced under one or other of three distinct types, which for convenience we will call Religious Causes, Metaphysical Causes, and Scientific Causes, respectively. These Causes, as their names imply, are the characteristic and typical modes of explaining the world which are most in vogue with three types of thinkers—the Religious, the Philosophical, and the Scientific. The characteristic of a Religious Cause is, that by it phenomena are referred to the agency of Personal Wills like our own, whether

of gods or of demons; and its peculiarity is that it *underlies* or lies behind, as it were, the effects to be explained, in the same way as a man's will may be said to stand behind the house he has built, as its cause and explanation. To these Religious Causes, owing to the analogy they have with our own wills, the unsophisticated human mind has, in the infancy of knowledge, always yielded a full, free, and unhesitating assent. The characteristic of a Scientific Cause, on the other hand, is that it refers phenomena not to Personal Wills but to Physical antecedents; and its peculiarity is that it is the physical or mechanical *equivalent* of the effects to be explained; so that when a given amount of wood, for example, passes over into an equivalent amount of ashes, smoke, gases, and so on; or when so much heat passes over into its mechanical equivalent of motion, or so much motion into an equal amount of electricity, or vice versa; these various phenomena are said to be scientifically explained and accounted for. To these Scientific Causes, too, when once demonstrated, the human mind is always prepared to yield the same ready assent that it does to the proposition that two and two or three and one make, cause, or pass over into four.

But it is to the third class of causes, viz., the Metaphysical or Philosophical, that I desire especially to direct the reader's attention, as it is on the chance of our being able to establish some definite relation between the nature of these causes and the Personal Wills of Religion, that the hope of our being able to lay down beforehand the course which Greek Philosophy is likely to take in its evolution, will be found to depend. But here it is necessary to pause and remark that the nature of these Metaphysical or Philosophical Causes was quite different in Ancient from what it is in Modern times. In Modern Philosophy a Metaphysical Cause is in a manner identical with a Scientific Cause, the only difference being that whereas a Scientific Cause, as we have seen, implies a movement from a *physical* antecedent to a physical consequent, a Metaphysical

Cause implies a corresponding movement from a *mental* antecedent to a mental consequent. But in the Ancient Times with which alone we are here concerned, a Metaphysical or Philosophical Cause differed from a Scientific Cause in being the 'essence' or 'spirit' of a thing rather than the thing itself, in *underlying* it, as it were, and having an existence independent of it. An illustration or two will perhaps bring out my meaning more clearly. Take, for example, the scent of a rose, and the effects of a glass of wine respectively as the phenomena requiring explanation. In Modern Times these would be attributed to the oil in the rose, and to the alcohol in the wine. In Ancient Times, on the contrary, they would be attributed to the 'essence' of the rose, and to the 'spirit' of the wine respectively; and this is what I mean by a metaphysical cause. So, too, the physical, chemical, and other activities of the animal body would in Modern Times be regarded as the scientific causes of the movements and activities which the body displays; in Ancient Times these movements would be referred to the 'vital principle,' or 'animal spirits,' as their cause; and this, again, is what I mean by a metaphysical cause. So too the exaltation or depression of mind which to-day would be regarded as due to conditions of the stomach or liver, or of the brain and nervous system, would in Ancient Times have been referred to good or bad 'spirits' as their cause, while all those artistic, poetic, and other intellectual productions which would now be assigned to a larger quantity or better quality of brain-matter as their scientific cause, would in Ancient Times be referred to 'inspiration,' the 'divine afflatus,' and the like, as if, indeed, these were separate entities, having an existence apart from and independent of the activity of the brain itself. These are crude illustrations of what is to be understood as a Metaphysical or Philosophical Cause in Ancient Times; and if we are to see how the understanding of the nature of these causes is to help us to find the key to the evolution of Greek Philosophy it will be necessary, perhaps, to first figure to ourselves

a system of Philosophy constructed entirely out of these Metaphysical Causes. In a general way we may say that in its crudest form it would be something after this pattern:—To every object displaying any apparently spontaneous activity, or exhibiting any unusual or distinct quality, a separate 'essence' or 'spirit' would be assigned as its cause, as, for example, to stones of unusual shape or appearance, special kinds of trees, like the oak or elm, animals with well defined characteristics, as the dog, the wolf, the bear, the fox, and so on; and such a philosophy, indeed, exists at the present day among the lowest races, under the name of Totemism or Fetishism. If we now advanced from a Metaphysical system of this kind to one more generalized and less crude, we should find that besides each peculiar object or quality having its special 'spirit,' all those things or objects which seemed to resemble each other in some way, or left the same or an analogous impression on the mind, would be grouped together under a common 'spirit,' as it were; and we should then have the 'spirits' of the earth, of the air, of the rocks, the caves, the trees, the fountains, and the groves and so on, as in the metaphysical aspects of the Greek or Fairy Mythologies; while in the most refined and subtle as well as most generalized systems, we should find all the minor essences or spirits reduced under a few great heads, and our inventory of Metaphysical Causes would then consist of some such categories as the following;—the 'essence' of matter as such; the 'spirit,' 'vital principle,' or 'soul' of the animal body with its passions; 'intelligence,' or the most abstract essence of the mental power peculiar to man; and lastly, perhaps, the 'spirit' of the Beautiful and the Good as being the highest spiritual essences of the highest order of men. Further than this, or into fewer categories, no Metaphysical Philosophy of the Ancient World could go. For each of these categories of essences, it is to be observed, has qualities and characteristics impassable by the others, and therefore not to be further generalized, or reduced to fewer types. The 'essence' of

Matter, for example, is a something simple, single, and homogeneous; the 'vital principle' or 'Soul' of the animal body with its passions, is on the other hand a double-sided thing; it is diffused through the body, and so, like Matter, has extension, but it has passions and instincts also, and so is partly mental. The 'Intelligence,' again, or most abstract essence of mental power, unlike the 'vital principle' and the animal 'soul,' has no extension; and instead of being bound up with and limited to a certain definite range of affinities, as the instincts of the animal soul are, it is completely detached from them all, hovering over them, as it were, and surveying them all with equal freedom and ease; while the 'spirit' of the Beautiful and the Good, which like a subtle essence pervades the world, marks itself off from the body and its passions, by its difference in *quality*, and from the intelligence, by its difference in function. If then we regard the World as some great and complicated lock, and the problem of all Religion, Science, and Philosophy, be how to open it with the smallest number of keys; or varying the metaphor, if we regard it as a vast symphony, and the problem be how to get its infinite harmonies out of the smallest number of strings, it is evident that the ideal solution would be one in which the lock could be opened with a single key, the harmonies, were it possible, got from a single string. But we have just seen that in the most subtle and refined Metaphysical systems of the Ancient World, the number of these strings could not be reduced to less than those just enumerated, viz., the essence of Matter, the Vital principle, the animal 'Soul,' 'Intelligence,' and the 'Spirit' of the Beautiful and the Good. If then we can find a solution elsewhere which will give us the same harmonies on a smaller number of strings, it is evident, is it not, that one and all of these Metaphysical systems, must in the course of their evolution, if left free, pass over into it? And this solution, as I shall now show, is furnished by the Personal Wills of Religion. For observe that just as in the human Will all the

essences, spirits, and activities, both of the body and mind, are implicitly if not explicitly involved in the acts of that will, each like a separate counsellor having given or refused its vote before the final resolves are taken; so in the Divine Will all the essences, spirits, and activities that make up the vast complexity and multiplicity of the World and of Human Life must have been implicitly present before the World could have come to be; the only difference in the case of a number of gods being that these essences and activities are distributed among several wills, instead of being concentrated in one. All Metaphysical Philosophies whatever, therefore, of the type prevalent in the Ancient World, start them where you will, must make for Religion as their ultimate goal; all their causes being included and embraced in one Supreme Will. If it be a crude form of Metaphysical Philosophy that is in question, as for example where each separate quality and form of activity is represented by a separate 'essence' or 'spirit,' then no inventory of these 'essences' can be sufficiently complete to give the unity and harmony that are implicitly involved in a Divine Will. Or if, on the other hand, it be that most subtle and refined form of Metaphysical Philosophy which we have just described, in which all the infinite essences of the world are gathered up and generalized in a few great categories,—in that case while you have all the strings, you still require the Player, viz., the unity of the Divine Will, to combine them into the one vast symphony of the World. And hence we may lay it down as a principle, that if during the prevalence of any particular Religion, a Metaphysical Philosophy springing from the same stage of culture comes anywhere within the range of its attraction, that philosophy will, in the absence of countervailing influences, as those of Physical Science for example, be drawn to it with the directness with which a stone, or a shot bird, falls to the earth; while if, as in the case of Greek Philosophy, the Metaphysical system is thrown off the prevailing Religion in

re-action as it were, and in antagonism to it, it will still fall towards Religion, it is true, but, like a bird wounded but still struggling, it will reach it at some more distant point along the field. This, then, is the key to the direction which any Metaphysical Philosophy will take, when in the presence of a religion springing from the same stage of civilization and culture; and we now have to see to what extent it is applicable to the details of the evolution of Greek Philosophy.

Now in our introductory chapter it will be remembered that we stipulated that two conditions should be supplied us, before the successive stages passed through by Greek Philosophy in its course and evolution could be laid down in advance. The first was, the circumstances of the starting, and the second, the rules and limits of the game, or as we may put it here, the conditions of the starting and the conditions of the running. As for the conditions of the starting, we may say that Greek Philosophy was not imported into an alien religion but was, as we have said, thrown off in re-action, as it were, against the superstitions of the prevailing Polytheism; while as for the conditions of the running, the essential point is that it was free throughout its whole course from the intrusion into it of the disturbing element of Physical Science—no great discovery like that of the Copernican system of Astronomy, the Law of Gravitation, the Correlation of the Physical forces, or the intimate connexion between the Brain and the Mind, having as yet appeared, to modify men's conceptions of the World and of Human Life. The game, accordingly, was a comparatively simple one, between a hand, as it were, of Metaphysical Cards, and a hand of Religious ones, or to revert to our other metaphor, the running was between the purely Metaphysical Causes of Greek Philosophy, and the Personal Wills of Religion. If, then, we represent the river of Philosophy as flowing between the two shores of Religion, on the one hand, and Physical Science, on the other; and if, further, we picture the religious bank at the time of which we are writing, as thronged with the

miscellaneous multitude, while the scientific shore is as yet practically uninhabited and unexplored, it will follow from the principles we have laid down, that if the little boat of Greek Philosophy, in its reaction against the puerilities and absurdities of the prevailing Polytheism, pushes out from the opposite shore of Science, it must take a diagonal course, as it were, across the stream, and finally run into that religious bank from which, at its starting, it had sought to escape—but at a point much lower down the stream; at that point, in fact, where the shore had already been prepared for its landing, by the passage of Paganism into the new religion of Christianity. And it will follow, further, that as we know the first move on starting, viz., the hypothesis of Thales that the material essence of Water was the essential principle of all things, we should know beforehand that having failed to account by this single essence for all the varied richness, beauty, and complexity of the World, it would be logically pushed on to call in one after another all those essences we have described, to its aid, until in the end, having exhausted them all, and being still unsatisfied, it would be bound in its own despite to pass over into the new region of wills and so fall into Religion again. In the following chapters I propose to demonstrate this in detail, by following the little boat till it lands on the shores of Christianity.

But before doing so a word or two may perhaps be necessary, to indicate the nature of the difference between the attempt I am now making, and the parallel attempt of Hegel. In the introductory chapter, I ventured, it will be remembered, to assert that the law laid down by Hegel as that along the line of which not only Greek Philosophy, but all Philosophies and Religions whatever, had been envolved, was unfitted by its very range and generality for the strictly limited and defined problem of the evolution of Greek Philosophy. But after the preceding dissertation on the nature of the different kinds of Causes proper to Religion, Philosophy, and Science respectively, we are in a position to go farther, and to assert that the law of

Hegel is not only not suitable to the use to which he would put it in the problem before us, but is as entirely inapplicable to it as a door-key is to the purposes of a watch-key. The real problem, it is to be observed, is not so much the mere fact of the evolution and unfolding of Greek Philosophy as such, nor even the law of that evolution, as it is its direction and goal. For all germs whatever, whether of Philosophy or Religion, as we have already said, differentiate and unfold in the same way, and after the same law; and this law is practically the same whether in the form given it by Hegel, or in that given it by Herbert Spencer; the only difference being that the law of the movement of 'Spirit,' of Hegel, is the inner or mental side, as it were, of Spencer's Law of Evolution on its outer or physical side. With Spencer the Universe with all it contains is but the progressive unfolding and evolution of a fixed quantity of Force in the antagonistic forms of attraction and repulsion; with Hegel it is the same progressive unfolding, only of Being or Existence in general, with positive and negative poles; the only difference being that while with Spencer things unfold themselves on the flat, as it were, as an egg into a chick, with Hegel they unfold in an ascending spiral, step on step, like a staircase. But as for the movement itself, it is the same in both, viz. "a continuous process of differentiation and integration," as Spencer himself defines it. If then the direction and goal of Greek Philosophy, and not its mere evolution, is the main question, the existence of fixed points outside itself, is absolutely necessary. In ancient times, Religion was the fixed point towards which Greek Philosophy was advancing, and into which, as we shall see, it ultimately fell. In modern times, on the other hand, as we shall see in our next volume, Science is the fixed point towards which Philosophy steadily moves, until it passes over into and is absorbed by it. Without such fixed points, indeed, from which to take their bearings, neither Ancient nor Modern Philosophy would have any defined goal whatever, but like a ship without

a rudder, or an engine off the rails, would run their course of differentiation or evolution, here, there, or anywhere. In order, therefore, that the law of evolution, as laid down by Hegel, should be of practical and not merely of speculative value for purposes of Philosophy, it ought to include among its repertory of 'causes,' not only the 'essences' of Philosophy, and the 'antecedents and consequents' of Physical Science, but the 'Wills' of Religion. But the difference in nature between a will, an essence, and a physical antecedent, is in its way, it is to be observed, as great as the difference between the mind of a man, the perfume of a rose, and the angles of a triangle. If therefore, Hegel's law of the movement of Thought were capable of grinding out in its evolution the nature, say, of an 'essence,' or of a 'physical antecedent and consequent,' it is evident that it could not by the same act and movement grind out that of a 'will.' Nor indeed, to do him justice, has he anywhere made the attempt. What he did was to put all these causes into the smelting pot together, and because they were all covered by the one term 'cause,' to assume that the same movement which had ground out one, had thereby ground out them all—as if he were to assume that the same quality which gave the colour to a rose would also give its perfume or the form of its petals. And, indeed, even had he succeeded, the result would have been of no value for our purpose, for by smelting down all kinds of causes into one kind of cause, he would thereby have left no objective points outside of itself, to indicate the direction in which Philosophy was moving; and so instead of giving us a solar system, as it were, in which the various planets get their practical significance from their relation to the sun and to each other, he would have given us a Stellar Universe with direction and goal, beginning and end, equally unknown. It would have been like a world in which there was nothing but white light, or, to use a metaphor which he has himself used in another connexion, like night in which all cows

are alike black. But if further presumptive evidence were wanted that Hegel's law of intellectual development could no more grind out in its revolution and ascension a cause of the nature of 'will,' than it could the perfume of the violet, or the colour of the rose, it would be found in the fact that Schopenhauer, following on Hegel, could construct out of his leavings, as it were, a philosophy of the world and of life (and a very plausible one too), based on this very conception of 'will' as cause; and further that Von Hartmann could by taking the law of the movement of Thought from Hegel, and the idea of real causation or 'will' from Schopenhauer, construct a highly developed system of Philosophy, different from both. Now in my work 'Civilization and Progress' I ventured to go still a step further, and to take my stand neither on the Logical Understanding of Hegel, nor on the Will of Schopenhauer, nor yet on both together with Von Hartmann; but on the Human Mind itself *in its ensemble and as an organized whole;* and as the human mind contains in itself all kinds of causes, this enabled me to get the three kinds of causes to which I have referred, and to point out those fixed relations between them on which I shall now attempt to reconstruct the history of Intellectual Development. Instead of dashing and confounding the three distinct kinds of causes into one, I have kept them apart, and so have been able to use each as a fixed point, as it were, by which to measure the movements of the others, as a surveyor requires to use something outside the field he is surveying, say a tree, or a stake, or a house, before he can take its measurements and its relations to surrounding things. And hence, instead of regarding Philosophy, as Hegel has done, as a swelling torrent which whirls into its own current Religion and Science as its mere tributaries and spoils, like that king who summed up the State in himself; I have figured it as only one form of thought among several, Religious, Scientific, and Poetic, each of which has its own laws and modes of procedure. Or we may compare it to a thin silver streak meandering between

the great mountain ranges of Religion on the one side and Science on the other, its little bark, far from being independent of Religion and Science, being on the contrary deflected by them as by great mountains of magnetic ore, now to this side and now to that—to the Religious shore in Ancient Times, and to the Scientific shore in the Modern World.

To sum up, then, we may say that by taking his stand on the limited categories of the Logical Understanding alone, Hegel was unable to get more than one kind or category of cause, for use in his history of human development. He has nowhere shown that things so different in nature as a 'will' an 'essence,' and a 'physical antecedent and consequent,' are either modes of one kind of cause, or modes of universal laws of thought, in the same way as heat, electricity, and light, can be shown to be but modes of universal laws of motion. Nor yet has he shown how an 'essence,' for example, can develop into a 'will,' or a 'will' into an 'antecedent and consequent.' He cannot, therefore, fore-see that a Philosophy of essences will under certain conditions eventuate in a Religion of wills, or a Religion of wills in a Science of antecedents and consequents. Although, therefore, his law may be the true law of thought-in-general, as the Law of Evolution of Spencer may be the true law of the Universe as a whole, it is nevertheless not a law from which we can determine the direction or goal of Greek Philosophy. But if, on the contrary, taking one's stand on the Human Mind in its ensemble, as it were, we begin by frankly accepting these causes as different in essential nature, and not attempting to grind them down into forms of some one universal law, or into modifications of some one kind of cause; and if further we can discover that although different in nature, like love and jealousy, or religion and morality, they yet stand in certain definite relations to each other, so that when one is known the other may be fore-seen, we ought by using each as a fixed point by which to measure the other—like the surveyor who uses the height of a tree to measure the extent of a field,

and the length of a field the height of a tree, or the astronomer who uses a planet to measure the distance of the sun, and the distance of the sun to get the position of the planet; we ought, I say, by using Religion as a fixed point for Philosophy, Science as a fixed point for Religion, and each in turn as a fixed point for the other two, to be able to trace beforehand with a large measure of scientific precision and detail, the great movements of Intellectual Development, both in their general unfolding, and in their several stages of evolution.

With these somewhat abstruse preliminaries then, with which I regret to have been obliged to afflict the reader on the very threshold of our subject, we are now in a position to advance with comparative ease to their detailed application to the course and evolution of Greek Philosophy.

CHAPTER II.

UP TO PLATO.

TO begin with, then, one might anticipate that Greek Philosophy originating as it did in the reaction of men of culture against the absurdities of Polytheism, would, in the violence of this reaction, go to the opposite extreme; and instead of starting from the *multiplicity* of wills of the gods of Paganism, start from a *single* principle, and that this principle, instead of being of the nature of a *Free Will*, would be at the farthest remove from it, viz. something definite, concrete, and *Material*. And we might go farther and anticipate that taking its stand on a Material Principle as cause or essence, Philosophy must inevitably advance to the next higher stage of existence, viz. Vital Principle or Soul (ψυχη) then on to the still higher Intelligence, and finally to the highest of all, viz. Morality and Beauty; and that having in this way gone the whole round of the mind, and exhausted each of its broad categories or divisions separately, there was nothing left for it but to take its stand on them all, combined and knitted into a living concrete whole by the unifying bond of Will, which degrading them all to instruments of its own design, would use them all freely in its explanations of the world;—and what is this but to pass over again to Religion? All this indeed in general outline one might have expected, but we can go still farther and anticipate the details of each of these successive

stages with a surprising approach to accuracy. To take the first stage, for example, viz. that in which Philosophy takes its stand on some Material Principle as the essential cause and first principle of things,—one would know beforehand that it could not pass into the higher stage of Vital Principle or Soul, until all the potentialities of Matter had been exhausted; and further that as it would, as we saw, most probably begin at a point the farthest removed from the free Will of the gods, which was the efficient principle in Paganism, viz. at some concrete and palpable form of Material Essence, its next stage would be to something less concrete and palpable, as being a more flexible and efficient instrument, until it reached a principle of such a degree of unsubstantiality and tenuity that it could scarcely be distinguished from the Vital Principle or Soul into which it was inevitable that it should next pass. And this, as we shall now see, is precisely what historically took place.

The first systematic attempt to account for the World by Philosophy rather than by the conflicting Wills of the gods, was made among the Greeks, by Thales of Miletus, who looking into the world around, and observing that the germs of all life came from damp and moisture, boldly pushed his little philosophical bark out into the stream, and announced that Water was the first principle and essential cause of all things. He might have selected Earth as a still more crudely material principle, but it would have required a belief in miracles as great as that of the Paganism he had abandoned, to have imagined a principle so gross and stolid as Earth, capable by its own nature of transforming itself into all the light and airy beauties of the world. He was obliged accordingly to begin with Water, as a material substance of sufficient fluidity and flexibility to be at least conceivably capable of transforming itself, under the influence of Heat and Cold,—those two great *dei ex machinâ* of all the early Greek philosophers—into the multiplicity of Existence. But as even this failed to satisfy

the culture of the time, to Thales, accordingly, quickly succeeded Anaximenes who from a different set of considerations of no importance to us now,—such, for example, as that the world was enbosomed in the atmosphere as in a matrix, and that the breath of the nostrils was the life of the body,—advanced to a principle less concrete and palpable, and therefore all the more flexible, and announced with equal confidence that Air was the first principle and essential cause of all things.

And here, perhaps, it is proper to pause and remark that Water and Air although to the reader they may seem more like Scientific than Philosophic causes, in reality were not so. For although undoubtedly material in their nature, they did not, like scientific causes, *precede* their effects, and pass entirely over into them to be lost in them, as when wood, for example, passes over into ashes, soot, and gas, in the process of combustion, but were conceived by these philosophers to *underlie* each and every transformation which for the time being they assumed. That is to say they were *philosophical essences*, and not *scientific causes* in the modern sense of the term. That this is so may be seen in the position assumed by the Thinker who took the next step in the solution of the Problem of the World, viz., Anaximander. This philosopher, feeling doubtless the difficulty of transforming water or even air into all the infinite variety of the world, thought to avoid the difficulty by going behind the concreteness of Water and Air, to something more intangible still, to that infinite, indefinite substratum common to them both when stripped of their special and peculiar properties, that indeterminate something which is not Water, or Air, or Fire, but of which these and all other things are but the modifications. Now this intangible, indefinite substratum, the ἄπειρον as it is called, which is a still more flexible and efficient cause of things than Water or Air, inasmuch as it can pass with equal ease into each and every kind of substance and effect, was regarded by Anaximander as being not like that primitive homogeneous and nebulous Matter of Modern Science,

which precedes, passes over into, and is lost in the suns which it throws off from itself, these suns, again, being, as suns, lost in the planets thrown off by them in turn, and the planets again in the moons, etc.; nor like those anthropomorphic apes, our ancestors, who passed over into primitive men and were lost in them, and these again into civilized men, etc.; but rather as an invisible essence underlying *at each and every point of time*, each and every quality of substance or thing, and transformable with equal ease into them all.

With this indeterminate Substratum, accordingly, Matter in so far as it has body or substance, exhausts itself, and can go no farther. There remains, therefore, nothing more in Matter for Philosophy to take hold of in its explanation of things, save pure Form alone; and this step accordingly, which was inevitable before Philosophy could advance to the higher stage of vital Principle or Soul, was taken by Pythagoras, who, while figuring, like Thales and Anaximenes, Water and Air—to which he also added Earth and Fire—as the original essences out of which all visible and sensible existences were composed, and while conceiving these again, like Anaximander, as resting on an infinite substratum common to them all, went a step farther and announced that this again rested upon and was made up of figures or forms—solids, planes, lines—all of which, again, were but modifications of Number (the odd and the even, the monad and duad, and the like), which, accordingly was the cause not only of all material things, but of mental also;—the secret not only of the rhythmic movement of the starry spheres, but of virtue, truth, health, happiness, friendship, justice; even God Himself, being but the deep and everlasting harmonies of Form and Number.

Philosophy having thus exhausted not only the Substance of Matter but its very Form also, in its attempts to explain the phenomena of the World, there was nothing for it on its way to that principle of Will or Religious Cause to which its little barque was inevitably drifting, but to pass to the next higher stage of

Vital Principle or Soul (ψυχη) as First Cause and primal essence of the World. And so accordingly it did.

But before attempting to exhibit the evolution of the successive stages of Soul or Vital Principle when used as explanation of the phenomena of the world, we have to ask, as before, how much of the detail of these stages could be anticipated beforehand from those great general relations between Religion and Philosophy which we have seen to exist. To begin with, then, we may confidently assert that the evolution of Soul or Vital Principle as First Cause of Things will follow an entirely different movement to that of the Material Principle which it superseded; and that instead of proceeding in its explanation of the World, from the concrete and palpable to the abstract and intangible, as we have seen to be the case with the Material Principle, it will proceed, on the contrary, from the indefinite and abstract to the definite and concrete. And the reason of this is that Matter, being in its nature comparatively stolid, becomes the more flexible, efficient, and capable an instrument, the more ethereal and impalpable it is; whereas the Vital Principle or Soul, being by its nature ethereal, becomes the more efficient, the greater are the number and variety of the concrete qualities with which it is endowed. And we may go farther and anticipate that as the very conception of a Vital Principle or Soul involves some kind of body or Matter with which it is indissolubly united, all theories of the World in which this Vital Principle or Soul is the active factor, the positive pole, the right hand, must include also some Material Principle which shall be the passive factor, negative pole, and left hand as it were. And further still we may anticipate that as Soul advances in the number, differentiation, and definiteness of its qualities, the better to explain the world, so, too, must the Matter which is bound up with it, and which goes hand in hand with it; much in the same way as the better to render a piece of complex music, you require not only a greater number of players, but

also a greater number of strings; or the better to explain an obscure case of crime, you require not only a greater number of special motives, but a greater consensus and circumstantiality of incident with which to harmonize them. And lastly we may go a step farther and anticipate that as the Soul or Vital Principle is a double-sided essence, having as it were both a material and a spiritual side, the successive philosophers who embraced it, while following the general law of its advance from the vaguer and more abstract to the more definite and concrete of its forms, must at the same time have laid particular emphasis or stress, some on its material, others on its ideal side, according to their special peculiarities of temperament, disposition, or natural affinity. And all this, as we shall now see, is what historically took place.

The first philosophers to take up the problem of the World at the point where Pythagoras had left it, viz., at that most abstract conception of Matter which is involved in Number and Form, and to carry it on to the higher stage of Soul or Vital Principle, were the Eleatics, who, conceiving this principle, it must be remembered, as a something indivisible and incorporeal, indeed, but at the same time as having *extension*, and pervading the Universe in the same way as we conceive the Vital Principle to pervade and animate the bodies of men and animals, began, accordingly, by representing it, as we should anticipate, in its most crude and abstract form, as pure Being—a principle which under the designation of the One, or the Eternal Unity, was made by Xenophanes the First Cause and animating principle of all things. To him succeeded Parmenides who so overweighted this principle, so made it the be-all and end-all of existence, that the opposite pole, viz., the Material World which was indissolubly bound up with it, was degraded to a mere succession of fleeting ephemeral existences, coming into being, and passing away as in a dream, or, like the images in a mirror, shadowy and illusory appearances without reality or independent existence of their own; his follower, Zeno,

going so far as to maintain that not only the substance of things but the movement and change, the multiplicity and variety which are characteristic of the Material World, had not and could not have any real existence of their own—as he proceeded to prove by the story of Achilles and the tortoise.

But the tough Material World was too real and pressing to be thus lightly disposed of, and the next step, accordingly, in the evolution of Soul as prime cause of things, was taken by Heraclitus, who, instead of conceiving it under the abstract form of blank Being, gave it the more concrete form of a fiery Æther; and instead of regarding the Material side of things with which it was bound up, as an illusion or appearance merely, conceived it as a real but opposing force which by diluting the fiery Soul produced what we know as Air, when more strongly diluting it, Water, and when with its full force entirely neutralizing it, Earth; the everflowing stream of Existence being regarded by him as due to the omnipresent action in every substance of these two powers in varying degrees of strength and activity. And thus the little bark of Philosophy which had been so overweighted on its ideal side by the Eleatics, that its material side was lifted high and dry out of the stream as but illusion or appearance merely, now became so overweighted by Heraclitus on the material side, that the ideal or spiritual side was reduced to a fiery Æther, that is to say almost to a material substance.

With Heraclitus and the Eleatics the way was prepared for Empedocles who took the next step in the evolution of Soul as first principle of things by advancing to a point where both its ideal or spiritual and its material side become more differentiated, more concrete, and more definite; while at the same time the boat is held so level in the stream, that both sides receive from him equal deference and consideration. Instead of a single hand on the ideal side, viz., fiery Æther, we have a pair of hands, Love and Hate; instead of a vague antagonistic Force on the material side diluting the fiery soul successively

down to Air, Water, and even Earth itself, we have, for the first time in Philosophy, Fire, Air, Earth, and Water erected into separate immutable and eternal existences. His mode of representing the World is, accordingly, to figure these material elements as lying in their globe-shaped sphere in undisturbed repose from all eternity united by Love, until the Spirit of Hate, entering from without like an evil demon, brought Fire into a position where it could be attacked by Water, Water by Air, and the like, and so broke up their peaceful harmony and rest; giving rise to evil and sin, and dooming all mortal existences to extinction, until the spirit of Love descending into the chaos, brings all into peace and harmony again. Having reached this point, the principle of Soul, which began its career as interpreter of the World, in the form of blank Being, with Matter as non-existent or as illusion; and from this advanced to the more concrete and definite form of fiery Æther, with Matter as a real Force opposed to it; and on again to the still more concrete forms of the Spirit of Love and Hate which by their affinity or repulsion dispose the still more concrete elements of Matter—Fire, Air, Earth, Water—into the harmony and discords of the World; with this, Soul can go no farther as a first principle of things, and so comes to an end as a stage in Philosophy. To have gone farther, and differentiated the Spirit of Love into the still more concrete forms of human love, benevolence, friendship, and the like, and the Spirit of Hate into its human forms of jealousy, revenge, and the like, would have been to have run the little bark of Philosophy into the Religious shore, in among those Pagan gods against whom it had already been for more than a hundred years in revolt. For although its prow was moving steadily in the direction of the Wills of Religion, it was not to the effete old gods of Paganism that it was tending, but to the God of Christianity. This, however, was still beneath the horizon in the far future, and in the meantime there was nothing for Philosophy but to keep steadily on its way,

and to take the step next in order towards that ultimate goal.

We have now to ask, then, what this next step must be, what is the next stage through which Philosophy must pass on its way to that Religious shore to which, in the absence of Physical Science, it was inevitably bound? It started out, as we have seen, with a single principle, Matter, as the prime cause and essential principle of things, and advanced from that to the higher and double-sided essence, Vital Principle or Soul, in which were indissolubly bound up both the Vital Principle itself and a Material Principle as its counterpart. The next higher stage, it is evident, can only be that of free Intelligence, conceived of as existing *apart* from Matter, and having an independent sphere of life and activity of its own. Now the difference between a Vital Principle or Soul as the First Cause of things, and a free Intelligence, is practically the same difference which we conceive to exist between the powers and capabilities of Instinct and the powers and capabilities of Reason. For while the Vital Principle is limited in its powers not only by the range of quality of the Matter with which it is bound by, but also by its own nature—the vital principle or instinct for example of an oyster, or a fish, or a reptile, being strictly limited to certain fixed and rigid modes of action within which its powers are confined, and beyond which it cannot go—free Intelligence, on the contrary, being conceived as quite disengaged from Matter, has as many capacities or tools with which to work, as it has range, variety, and combinations of ideas. That is to say that while the Vital Principle or Soul is doubly restricted, firstly by its limited range of function, and secondly by the rigidity and obstinacy of the Matter with which it is bound up—we have just seen that Empedocles had to construct his theory of the World out of the two primitive instincts of Love and Hate, acting on a hard and fast number of materials, Fire, Air, Earth, and Water—Intelligence, on the contrary, like a free untrammeled hand, is capable of the most

subtle, varied, and complex movements of its own. And from this follows an important result.

It will be remembered that when Soul or Vital Principle was the standpoint of Philosophy, and when in consequence, the material side of the conception could no more cut itself loose from the mental side, than the mental could cut itself free from the material, those thinkers who by natural bias or disposition leaned to a materialistic view of things, were unable to get out of the boat and start on their own account unhampered by any spiritual principle, but at most could as we saw, only weigh down their own side. But when once a free Intelligence was made the standpoint of Philosophy, and Matter, in consequence, divorced from Spirit, was left as free and untrammeled as Intelligence itself, to account for the World by principles of its own, it was possible and even inevitable that those thinkers who leaned to a materialistic point of view should sail away in a boat of their own, to explore by methods of their own, the great stream of existence for themselves.

To return, then, to the point at which the problem was left by Empedocles, viz., of a Vital Principle or Soul whose spiritual side, Love and Hate, and the material side, Fire, Air, Earth, and Water, were inseparably united together,—the next to take up the problem was Anaxagoras, who perceiving that the great principle of Design was so immanent and apparent in Nature that any scheme of things which neglected to find a place for it was doomed to incompleteness, opened a new era by announcing that Intelligence was the first principle and prime cause of all things. This principle, however, was held by him more in the crude form of a *disposing* and *arranging* than of a *creative* Intelligence. And so, like the Vital Principle or Soul which had been the standpoint of preceding thinkers, it required some foundation or ground-work of Matter on which it was to act. Now although an arranging Power is, like a kaleidoscope, capable if it have the full number of pieces to

work on, of producing from these pieces the most varied, complex, and picturesque effects, it cannot like a chemically combining or constructive Power get these effects from a few simple elements. The consequence was that Anaxagoras was obliged to endow beforehand the Matter on which his Supreme Intelligence had to work, with all those qualities which, in the world, were afterwards to be explained; he had, that is to say, to pack as many qualities into his Matter at first, as he was afterwards to bring out of it. He accordingly figured the World as consisting originally of an infinite number of invisible atoms of as many different *qualities* and kinds as there were substances in the world to be explained,—flesh, bone, muscle, sinew, blood, brain, wood, sap, bark, gold, iron, copper, stone, and the like. These were all of the same size, and all mixed together, and his theory was that when the whole of this diffused, extended, universe of atoms was made by Mind (in its character of principle of Motion) to revolve, the like parts would by their own affinity separate out from the unlike, and so form those visible masses of flesh, bone, brain, nerve, wood, iron, clay, and the rest, of which the world is composed; and that then Mind in its character of a Supreme Intelligence overlooking the whole, as it were, would bring the bone and muscles and blood and nerve together, to form the endless species of the animal kingdom, the wood and sap and bark of the vegetable kingdom, and so on.

Now, that this Philosophy was an advance on that of his predecessors who had made the Vital Principle or Soul the first principle of things, may be seen in this, that it brings to the problem not only a greater number of tools, but a greater variety of material on which to work. To take, for example, Empedocles who was the last of the Thinkers who had made Soul or Vital Principle their standpoint, it will be remembered that his only tools were the blind instincts of Love and Hate, of attraction and repulsion; and his only material, the four gross and tangible elements of Fire, Air, Earth, and Water.

But Anaxagoras, on the other hand, had in his principle of Intelligence a tool of universal application, and one too of an infinite flexibility, subtlety, and range of movement; and in his infinite variety of substances, existing not in crude unmanageable masses but in freely moving atoms, a material that could be moulded with ease into every possible shape, size, and combination; and so, like a painter with a greater variety of pigments, or a musician with a greater number of more finely modulated strings, he was the better able to reconstruct in thought from their elements, the vast multiplicity of the world which it was his function as a philosopher to explain.

That the appearance of Anaxagoras marked a new era in Philosophy no one will deny, but as the great world was not to be cramped within the limits of even this enlarged formula, further advance was inevitable. To him accordingly succeeded no less a personality than Socrates himself, who, pondering deeply the works of Anaxagoras, objected to the small place that was assigned in them to a free *creative* Intelligence as Supreme Power, compared with the great use made of Intelligence as a principle of Motion, *i.e.*, a mere arranging and disposing Power; and complained that it was only when the principle of mechanism or arrangement had failed to account for the phenomena, that recourse was had to creative design at all. Accordingly he was himself forced to take the next step, and to attribute the World to a Supreme Power that was not a mere *arranging* and *disposing* principle like that of Anaxagoras, but a free *creative* and *constructive* Intelligence.

Now this step, apparently so simple and natural, was attended with great and important results, deflecting the little barque of Philosophy for the time being from its steady onward course, and almost running it prematurely into that Religious bank towards which of itself it was slowly but surely tending. For when once the Supreme Power is conceived of, not as a mere Arranging Intelligence, but as a Creative and Designing one, it can create the qualities and properties of Matter as it

needs them, just as easily as it can arrange them; and the precise constitution of Matter, in consequence, which was of so much importance to previous thinkers becomes now, as it is in all religions, a matter of little or no concern. It was natural, therefore, that Socrates when in prison, and when thinking over the probable reasons that Anaxagoras would have given for his remaining there when he could so easily have escaped beyond the territory of Athens to his friends at Megara; it was natural that he complained that Anaxagoras would most probably have attributed his remaining to the particular arrangement of the bones and nerves of his body, which kept him to his seat, instead of to its true cause, viz., the feeling that it was not only the right but the best and wisest thing to do, to remain there and submit himself unreservedly to the recognized tribunal of his country. Besides, for Socrates to have given a definite physical constitution to Matter in the face of a Supreme Creative Power, would have been to have weakened and hampered the exercise of that Power as much as the giving a free constitution to a conquered people hampers the free activity of a Ruler who has hitherto been not only nominally but absolutely supreme. And further, as Socrates had not only advanced from the Arranging Intelligence of Anaxagoras to a Creative One, but had taken the additional step of making that Intelligence a power that worked for *moral* ends, it is evident that any constitution he could have given to Matter, must have been of that neutral, vague, and indeterminate character which would allow of its being transformed into anything, and so, practically, be as good as no constitution at all; getting all its distinctive properties and qualities not from the Matter, but from the Creative Power alone. Perceiving all this, and remembering how all those previous theories of the World in which atoms and elements played so conspicuous a part, had swallowed one another up, and all alike become discredited, Socrates felt that a sufficient account of the World would have been given if

you could discover in each instance, what good *purpose* the design everywhere apparent in Nature subserved. He accordingly threw to the winds all theories and speculations about Physical Nature, and took his stand boldly on a Creative Intelligence or Providence working for moral ends as the be-all and end-all of existence. Now in this, as we see, he came perilously near running into Religion, the very note of whose theories of the World (if we take the six days Creation of Genesis as a typical example) is that it represents the World as created out of Nothing, or some blank form of Existence which is tantamount to Nothing, by the fiat of Creative Power alone. Indeed one might almost go so far as to say that had there been an accredited Revelation, like that of Christianity, ready at hand and waiting to receive him on the shore, he must have run his little barque into it. But, as it was, naught but the figures of the old Pagan gods stood confronting him there, and his only course was to remain where he was, and try to discover what those *moral ends* were, which the Creative Intelligence everywhere had at heart; and having once discovered them, to try and persuade men to conform their lives to them. Now it is open to men to get at these moral ends of the Creator either by direct Revelation, as in Religion, or by the contemplation of Nature and the Human Mind, as in Philosophy; but Socrates as a philosopher was restricted entirely to the latter course, viz., of getting at the moral ends of the Creator from the truths of things. But how to discover the truths of things? By the method of Dialectics, says Socrates. Now this method consists simply in taking a number of samples of different kinds of things, of men, of dogs, of trees, of virtuous actions, of just dealings, of temperate conduct, and the like, finding out what *common* quality characterizes each of these kinds, and giving this common quality its abstract shape or expression. In this way we get the true definition, or in other words the truth, of man, dog, tree, virtue, justice, temperance and the like; and these

truths, once discovered, will, in the opinion of Socrates, be the counterparts in Nature and Life of the moral ends which existed in the mind of the Creator in creating them; so that from the discovery of the former, we may indirectly, but with certainty, know the latter. But he went further and contended that when once the truths of things, and by implication their moral ends were discovered in this way, men could no more act in contradiction to them, when brought face to face with them, than they could to the truths of the multiplication table in any business or worldly transaction. Hence his great and only watchword was Knowledge, knowledge, ever more knowledge, as summing up in itself all that was essential to the well-being of Man.

Such was the Philosophy of Socrates. And here we may remark that however well these doctrines of his might, under other circumstances, have served as the basis of a Religion, they could not, in the absence of any theory as to the physical constitution of things, long maintain themselves as a Philosophy. The consequence was that after lingering for a little while among his immediate followers—notably Euclid and the Megaric School, who went beyond their master in adding Goodness and Wisdom to the other attributes of the Deity, and in making goodness, virtue, justice, wisdom, not only as with Socrates the supreme *ends*, but the *only realities* of life (Evil with them being an illusion of our sensuous nature, and having no real existence)—they were lost in the sands, and never reached that religious shore towards which they were bound. And it was not until Plato had given a constitution to the Physical World, and had extricated the Supreme Intelligence from its dangerous resemblance to the old deities of Religion, reducing it to the more abstract form of an Essence or Spirit of the Just, the Beautiful, and the True, that Philosophy entered again on its old course, and continued in the line of its own proper evolution.

In the meantime, however, a movement had begun in quite the opposite direction. For, as we saw, when once Intelligence,

which differs from Soul or Vital Principle in this, that both it and the Matter on which it has to act, are conceived as existing independently of each other,—when once Intelligence was made the first principle of things by Anaxagoras, it was open to thinkers to take their stand on the Intelligence exclusively, or on the Matter exclusively. And, accordingly, just as Socrates and his followers had developed a theory of the World on the basis of a pure Creative Intelligence, without regard to the constitution of Matter, so it was open to any thinker who inclined to a materialistic view of things, to start a theory of the World on the basis of pure Matter alone, without regard to a Creative Intelligence. And this, as we shall now see, was what really occurred.

The first to start the new movement was Democritus, who launched a boat of his own, which put off into mid-stream in the direction of the Scientific shore, where it was lost for awhile from view. Re-appearing some century or two later in almost the same shape in the doctrine of Epicurus and his followers, it thenceforward continued visible down the stream until all systems alike were swallowed up in Christianity; after which, disappearing entirely from view during the night of the Middle Ages, it again emerged in full sail and in more scientific shape, in the Materialism of Modern Times. Now to understand this theory of Democritus, it is necessary to remark at the outset, that all theories of the World are at bottom but attempts to account for the *qualities* of things,—the quality of Mind as distinct from Matter, of animal as distinct from vegetable, of vegetable from mineral, and the like—with all their infinite sub-divisions and shades. And, accordingly, just as when a mere arranging Intelligence was made the First Cause of things, as with Anaxagoras, the Matter on which it had to work had to be endowed at the outset with as wide a range of *qualities* as there were qualities in the world to be explained; so when Matter is made the First Cause of things, the infinite variety of its qualities and

properties have to be shown to be the effects of the size, shape, weight, and other properties of the atoms, *i.e.*, of relations of *quantity*. And hence it was, that while Anaxagoras began by representing the World as made up of an infinite number of atoms of the same size, but of different *qualities*, Democritus began by representing it as made up of an infinite number of atoms of the same quality but differing in *quantity*—in size, shape, weight, and the like. And having separated these atoms from each other by interspaces of vacuum in which they were free to move, his theory was that if left to themselves, they would by mere chance, as it were, and by the very necessity of their constitution, unite and separate, separate and unite, to form the world of things as we know them; the light particles separating from the heavy, to unite again with the light, those of this shape with those of that, the heavy particles falling to the bottom, the light rising to the top, and so on; and that in this way not only the properties of fire, air, earth, and water, were to be accounted for, and the million-fold combinations into which they enter, but mind and soul as well; the gods, if they exist at all, having no influence either on the course of the world, or of human life.

With these two off-shoots, then, the one, of Socrates and his followers who were making towards the Religious shore from the off-side, and the other, of Democritus and his successors who were making towards the Scientific shore from the near side, both of which were lost, the first in the sands, for want of a suitable Religion to welcome it on the shore, the last, in mid-stream, for want of the necessary scientific *proof* to enable it to land—Philosophy with the advent of Plato re-entered the old boat, and continued on its old path.

Now in order fully to appreciate the nature of the great contribution made by Plato to Philosophy, it is important to bear in mind that the thinkers who preceded him had already occupied every available standpoint or principle from which the Problem of the World could be approached. Beginning with

crude Matter as first principle of things, they had advanced from that to Soul or Vital Principle, from that again to Intelligence as an Arranging Power, and from that to a Designing Intelligence working under the still higher conceptions of Morality, Wisdom, and Virtue. No entirely original standpoint, therefore, was left for Plato to occupy, unless indeed it were to add the conception of the Beautiful to those of Morality and Wisdom already included in the idea of the Supreme Good. He was obliged, accordingly, to content himself with taking the principles that had been bequeathed to him by his predecessors, and after freeing them from their grosser impurities and adhesions and re-casting them into more classic form, using them as pillars in the magnificent and harmonious structure to be erected by himself. Indeed we may safely say that there was scarcely a principle that had been advanced by previous thinkers, which he did not adopt and find some place for in his scheme, or which he did not make his own by the new form that he gave it, or by the originality, beauty, and brilliancy, with which he set it forth. And it is only when we have traced the history of Philosophy up to his own time, as we have done here, and have seen how poor and primitive were the huts which his predecessors had built, that we can fully appreciate the great Temple he has erected out of their prostrate and sunken pillars, the vast and magnificent cathedral-like dome with which he has spanned their ruins.

To take, for example, his first great principle, viz., the ἄπειρον or principle of Change, the material basis and groundwork of things—this Plato got from the atoms of Anaxagoras and Democritus; perceiving as he did the infinite superiority of these atoms for purposes of philosophical manipulation, over the relatively gross and crude masses of fire, air, earth, and water, of Empedocles. But while appropriating these atoms, he arranged that the little invisible triangles of which they were composed should have such shapes given them, that when they were bound together by his second principle of Number

into solid figures—Fire, Air, Earth, and Water—these figures would account for the *properties* of the fire, air, earth, and water also; the cubes, for example, that constitute what we know as earth, accounting for the stolidity of earth; the sharp-pointed pyramids that constitute fire, for the piercing nature of fire, and the like. His second great principle, again, or Number, he appropriated from Pythagoras, but he so extended and altered its range and meaning, that while it no longer accounted for moral qualities, justice, beauty, and the rest as with Pythagoras—who by the way had only the one string to his bow, viz., Number, from which to deduce them—it was made to explain not only the harmonious movements of the spheres, as well as the shape and outward form of all inorganic bodies, but the physical *qualities* of those bodies as well, as we have just seen; and was extended farther still, so as to explain and account for those pure *ideals* of outward form of all objects whatever, on which the Artist loves to dwell. The third great principle with which Plato worked, viz. his chain or system of Ideas, as he called them, which hung suspended from their topmost link, the Supreme Good, like an inverted tree, and which corresponded to the *inner* nature and soul of things as distinct from their *outward* visible forms,—this principle, again, he borrowed from those general concepts or definitions which Socrates extracted from things, by his method of Dialectics, as their real *inner* nature or truth. And as in the opinion of Socrates these logical concepts corresponded to the true nature of things as they existed in the Creator's mind; all that Plato had to do in order to get the material he wanted with which to explain the inner nature of things, was to transform these general *logical* concepts into *real* essences having an actual independent existence of their own. Had he left them, indeed, like Socrates, as ideas merely *in* the mind of a Creator, he would, like him, have been in danger of running prematurely into that religious bank which he sought to avoid; but by giving them, from all eternity, a separate and independent existence,

he was able to keep his fourth great principle, the Supreme Good, within the bounds of a strictly philosophical conception, that is to say, as an Essence or Spirit of the Right, the Beautiful, and the True, with disposing and arranging, but not, as in Religion, with Creative power. This Supreme Good, too, he borrowed like the rest—this time from Anaxagoras—but as usual gave it an extension and range which completely altered its character, and made it embrace not only an arranging and disposing Intelligence, but one working for the higher ends of the Just, the Beautiful and the True.

With these four principles of Plato, viz., the Good, Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον, and the variations that may be rung on each, Greek Philosophy, in the absence of Physical Science, reaches its highest point as an analysis of the existing structure of things. Beginning, with Thales, with a single principle, Matter, it passed in the Eleatic School to Vital Principle or Soul, made up of two elements, a mental and a material, inseparably bound together, and culminating in Empedocles with these elements still further differentiated,—the mental side being divided into the two subordinate elements of Love and Hate, the material into the four elements of Fire, Air, Earth, and Water. It then passed on to the Intelligence of Anaxagoras which gave the mental element a still greater range of combination, while the material element, being made up of an infinite number of atoms of every quality and kind, is capable of being mixed and compounded in every proportion and degree. And now that it has reached Plato, it is differentiated into four distinct and independent principles instead of two, viz., the Good, Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον each of which is susceptible of as many combinations as there are *properties* of Matter to be explained, as there are *forms* and shapes of bodies, varieties of *nature* and disposition to be accounted for, and as there are possible ways of realizing in Nature the supreme ideas of Beauty, Justice, and Truth. So that whether you take a man, a horse, a dog, a tree, or any other existing thing, each

alike will be found to be made up of a physical basis of ἄπειρον, on which a particular visible form is impressed by Number, in which, again, a particular nature or Idea is implanted; the whole fulfilling the function appointed it in the great scheme of things. The World-fan, which was closed up when Thales regarded Water alone as the sole principle of things, has been unfolded by Plato until it shows its utmost rib; and, indeed in the absence of Physical Science I know not what more satisfactory analysis of things could be given.

But however admirable this World-scheme of Plato may be as a *statical* theory, it had this fatal defect, that it contained in itself no *dynamic* quality, no *principle of evolution*. The component principles of things, and the hierarchy of relations in which they stand to each other, are as well marked in his theory as the successive strata of rock in a railway cutting; but as to how they will evolve as time goes on, it gives us no clue. And the reason for this is that the four original principles out of which things are compounded, viz., the Good, Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον, are represented by Plato as having existed quite *independently* of each other from all eternity, until, persuaded by the Supreme Good, they came together to form the World. There are therefore none of those relations or connexions existing between them, whereby from their present state their future state may be anticipated. That is to say, the theory while giving us a solution of the question as to what is the actual existing structure or constitution of man, or horse, or tree, gives us no hint whatever as to how man, or horse, or tree, will evolve either from youth to age, or into other forms of life as in the Darwinianism of the present day. On the contrary at every stage of its existence each creature would have to be rebuilt afresh, and would require a slightly different amount of the ἄπειρον to what it had in the former stage, to which a slightly different Number would have to be united, on which again a slightly different Idea would have to be impressed, and so on. I am of course aware that Plato thought he had

provided for the incessant flux and change of things, by the invisible little triangles of the ἄπειρον, which, like particles of ice in a bladder, are kept in continual agitation and movement by the pressure from without; but as he still left the other elements of Number and Ideas unaltered, the theory was felt by Aristotle and his successors to be crude and inadequate. There was nothing for it, therefore, but for Philosophy to discover such connexions between these four independent principles, that from their particular state at any one time, their future state might be seen to follow; to advance, in a word, from a *statical* to a *dynamical* theory of things.

The World-fan having thus unfolded itself in Plato till every rib of its structure was visible, it now remained to show what those *connexions* were between the ribs, whereby they were bound to gradually draw together until they finally coalesced and closed into a single principle again. To exhibit this gradual closing of the fan until it shuts itself up in Christianity, and to show the stages through which the little boat of Philosophy, now in mid-stream, must pass before it reaches that Religious bank to which it is slowly but surely tending, shall be my endeavour in the following chapters.

CHAPTER III.

ARISTOTLE.

WE have just seen that in Plato, Greek Philosophy has reached its highest point of *statical* excellence, the highest point, that is to say, in the analysis of the great factors of Nature and Life; while at the same time preserving unimpaired the relative hierarchy of these factors in the scale of existence; the ἄπειρον or groundwork of Matter at the bottom, above that, Number or the *outer* shape of things, above that again, Ideas, or their *inner* natures, and at the top the Supreme Good itself. But as these factors have no natural relations or connexions among themselves, and each has a separate and independent existence of its own, it is evident that a change taking place in any one of them would not necessarily be followed by those correlated changes in the others, which are involved in the conception of a sustained and regulated evolution. For such evolution, indeed, two things are necessary. In the first place the factors must be grouped in such a way that a change taking place in any one member of a group, will draw after it corresponding changes in the other members of the same group; and in the second place, some more steady and equable principle of Motion must be supplied them, than that furnished by the ἄπειρον of Plato, whose movements it will be remembered were entirely determined by the haphazard pressure from without to which from

moment to moment its little triangular atoms might chance to be exposed.

Now these deficiencies in the theory of Plato it was left for Aristotle to supply, and so to advance the little boat of Philosophy another stage in the direction of that Religious shore, to which, as we have seen, it was bound. And what he did was this. He took the four separate and independent elements of Plato, viz. the Good, Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον, and dividing them into two groups, placed the Good and Ideas on the one side, and the same Ideas and the ἄπειρον on the other; leaving out Number altogether, for reasons which we shall see farther on. He then took the Ideas of the first group, and instead of leaving them *outside* of, and independent of, the Supreme Good, as Plato had done, he placed them *inside* it, that is to say in the mind of the Supreme Good. After which, taking the ἄπειρον of the second group, and freeing it from the little triangular atoms of which it is composed, and which would only have stood in his way, he packed and loaded it with the same Ideas with which he had endowed the Good. So that on the one side we have a Supreme Intelligence, Immaterial, Immovable, but full of Ideas, that is to say of the qualities and natures of all substances, of all life, of all intelligence; and on the other a void and passive background of potential existence, extended, divisible, and material, into which the same Ideas have been packed, but so placed in relation to this material background, that they cannot unite with it to form the world of real existences until Motion has been communicated to it. But whence this Motion? For, as we have seen, Aristotle had already emptied the ἄπειρον or material basis of things, of the little triangular atoms which with Plato were the source of all its movements. There was nothing for it, then, but to discover some independent source of Motion, and a source, too, which could be relied on to supply it with the equability and regularity of the water to a mill. This regulated supply,

accordingly, he professed to have found in the great expanse of Æther that fills the vault of Heaven, carrying on its bosom the stars or gods with which it is inlaid, and revolving in an eternal circle round the pole; from whose perennial spring, indeed, all the movements of this lower world are supplied, and into which again they all sooner or later return.

With a Supreme Intelligence sitting outside the circumference of Heaven, on the one hand, and a void expanse of Matter packed with Ideas at the centre where our Earth now is, on the other, the World-fan which in Plato had unfolded itself until its utmost rib of structure was visible, now shows signs of contracting and infolding itself for a dynamical movement; and instead of the four independent principles of the Good, Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον, we have now, with Aristotle, only two, with an independent reservoir of Motion between them. And his theory is that when the Supreme Intelligence opens the world of Time, by attaching the great reservoir of Æther to the extended plane of Matter here at its centre, the Ideas with which this Matter is loaded are so arranged on its outer surface, as to be taken up by it in its revolutions, one by one in turn; in the first revolution those lowest Ideas which when united with it give us the elements of fire, air, earth, and water; in the next, the various combinations of these, that go to the formation of the special qualities of animal and vegetable tissue; in the next, again, the Soul or Vital Principle of these material bodies; then the Intelligence superadded to these Souls; and finally the consummate flowers of Beauty, of Justice, and of Truth. So that just as when the motion contained in the mainspring of a watch is communicated to the axle, the wheels, motionless before, begin to turn and to mark out the hours in regular sequence on the dial-plate; or as when the water of the dam is allowed to get at the mill-wheel, the machinery, silent before, begins now with its merry hum to grind out the corn; or as when the electric wire is attached to the battery, the message which has been transmitted

along it, hitherto invisible, now begins to write itself out in mystic but visible characters on the tape; so when the great reservoir of Æther in the Heavens is tapped, and the Motion therein contained is allowed to get at the vast expanse of existence here below, void and silent as yet, but loaded with the potentialities of all forms of life, this vast expanse begins to turn, and gradually approaching the Ideas, at last unites with and is interpenetrated by them as the warp by the woof to form the world of changing reality as we know it; the world of earth, and sea, and air, of plant and crystal, of animal and man; these mystic pictures in all their variety, beauty, and harmony, being one after another inwoven into it, as it steadily turns beneath them, like patterns on some swift-revolving loom. In other words, the same Ideas which circle round the mind of the Supreme Intelligence for His eternal contemplation and delight, are, when Time begins, inwoven into the texture of the world, and, as Time-pictures, are unrolled before us in what are known as the phenomena of the world and of life; their sensuous forms being but the visible hieroglyphs of the invisible Ideas corresponding to them in the Creator's mind, and requiring but Motion to develop them, and, as on a photographer's plate, to bring them up into reality, visibility, and actuality.

Such is Aristotle's theory of the World, and if held steadily before the eye in its entirety, it will not only enable us to see the origin of many of his favourite special doctrines, but will clear up those difficulties of interpretation which have arisen from the use of common terms in technical and unusual senses. To take for example, his use of the terms Form and Matter, which correspond respectively to the Idea and ἄπειρον of Plato, and which are the two elemental essences, positive and negative, of which all actually existing things are composed; it will be evident that if Form corresponds to what Plato calls Idea, it cannot mean with Aristotle what it means with us, viz. the outer shape or form, but rather the inner nature or quality,

as for example, the tenacity of steel, as distinct from its composition, the use of a house as distinct from its order of architecture, the quality of a chemical compound as distinct from the elements of which it is composed. And so, too, in organic nature, it is the fragrance of the rose that is its Form, and not merely its botanical composition; the function of the hand or eye and not its shape or structure; the soul or vital principle of an animal and not its mere form; the intelligence of a man and not his bodily figure or sensuous and animal existence. And hence we have Aristotle defining it as the something over, the new quality added to the elements of which a thing is made up; so that, to give his own instances, the syllable ba is the Form of which the letters b and a are the Matter, and flesh is the Form, the something over, of the fire and earth of which it is composed; in the same way as we might say that water was the Form, the quality added to the oxygen and hydrogen which were its Matter, and the like. And if, as we have seen, the primordial Matter when it begins to revolve, takes up these Forms or Ideas in succession one by one, as a snowball takes up fresh material as it goes along, it is evident that just as each part of a rolling wheel is now on the earth and now in the air, that which is now Matter, will, when it takes up an Idea become Form, which in turn will become Matter again to the next Idea incorporated with it, and so on; each thing being both Matter and Form, according to the point from which it is viewed; the tree for example being Form to the sap and juices of which it is composed, but Matter to the house which is to be built from it; that which is Form to a lower Matter, being in turn Matter to a higher Form.

Now if Matter and Form are with Aristotle thus inseparably united, and tend naturally to pass each into the other in the course of evolution, and not, as with Plato, distinct and independent so that the Form has to be impressed afresh at every turn on an alien Matter with which it has no tendency to unite,

as a seal on wax,—it is evident that virtue which is the Form, the something over, the something superadded, as it were, to the natural inclinations and passions from which however it cannot be separated; it is evident that virtue is to be reached not by mere knowledge alone, as with Plato, but by the cultivation of good habits, and the exercise of moral restraint, *i.e.* not by cutting off the natural desires, and making virtue alone the object of pure contemplation, but by the assiduous care and training of these desires, as one trains the straggling shoots till they grow into the symmetry of the perfect tree. And it further follows that in Politics the best Commonwealth with Aristotle is not the one that is devised off hand and excogitated from the brains of Philosophers, as with Plato, and then realized by political arrangements which shall for ever cut off citizenship from its natural basis in the family and the home, but the one which is best adapted to the circumstances of the time—climate, soil, locality, the moral and intellectual character of the people, and the like—and which is administered neither by Philosophers alone, nor by the Rich alone, nor by the Populace alone, but by those who having competent means, have been trained to habits of virtue and knowledge of the world; by those, in short, who are most likely to be on a level with the best aspirations of the time, and who, in consequence, are best fitted to guide existing conditions into a new and higher form.

And from this same fact, viz. that Form and Matter, like the poles of a magnet, are indissolubly united, and cannot, except by a merely verbal abstraction, be conceived as having an existence independent of each other, it follows that the Divine Spark in man which is bound up with his animal instincts and intelligence as the Form of which they are the Matter, although a ray from the Supreme Intelligence itself, cannot be immortal, as it cannot exist apart from and independent of that Matter of which it is the Form. As the animal instincts and intelligence die with the body, so too must the Mind and Soul.

Again, in the three great elements of Aristotle's Philosophy, viz. the Supreme Intelligence, the Reservoir of Motion in the Æther, and the matrix of Matter loaded with Ideas or Form as its positive pole, we have the origin of another favourite position of his, viz. the reduction of all things to either the Actual, or the Potential. Now the Supreme Intelligence being, as it is, an immaterial, immovable, and invisible essence, insusceptible of change, must be an Actuality. So, too, the great globe of Æther which fills the vault of Heaven, and is co-extensive with the bounds of the Universe, must be an Actuality. It is a unity and totality which, moving in a circle, is incapable of change, or of being aught but what it is and has for ever been. But this Earth of ours, on the contrary, with its two poles of Matter and Form, which however can only unite on condition that Motion is supplied to them, must have been a Potentiality. So, too, must have been each and every thing on the Earth. For as all existing things are made up of the *union* of the two opposite essences, Form and Matter, it is evident that, as there is always a chance of these essences missing each other as it were, and not meeting full circle in their revolutions, instead of the existing thing we might get the negation of the thing, its privation; for example, instead of light we might get darkness; instead of heat, cold; instead of beauty, deformity; instead of life, death; and so on. It is the same in the *moral* region. If the two essences meet, we have good, if not, evil; if they meet, happiness, if not, misery; if they meet, love, if not, hate; if they meet, forgiveness, if not, revenge. And hence we have Aristotle saying there is no Evil in the Eternal Actualities, that is to say, in the Supreme Intelligence and the Moving Vault of Æther, but only on this Earth of ours, this world of Potentiality, where by reason of its two poles, two courses are always open, either to hit or to miss, to meet or to pass, to make or to mar.

And lastly it is in these three great factors of the Aristotelian Philosophy that we have the source of Aristotle's well-known

division of causes into Final, Efficient, Formal, and Material. The Supreme Intelligence, for example, corresponds to the Final Cause of things, that is to say to their end or aim, as a man's end in building may be said to be the final cause of the house. The Reservoir of Motion in the Æther, again, corresponds to the Efficient Cause of things, inasmuch as it is the agency by which the two poles of Matter and Form are brought together; as the bricklayers and hodmen who bring together the materials, may be said to be the Efficient Cause of the house. The Ideas or Forms, again, with which the primordial Matter is packed as its positive pole, correspond to the Formal Cause of things, to their qualities, properties, function, or vital principle; as the formal cause of a house is its use or function and not its mere external shape or architecture. And lastly, the primordial Matter of the world corresponds to the Material Cause of things, in the same way as the bricks and mortar are the material causes of the house.

And here, perhaps, it may not be out of place, before proceeding on our way, to indicate briefly the relative excellences and defects of the systems of Plato and Aristotle. Indeed these may all be summed up at once by saying that while the system of Aristotle is superior as a *dynamical* theory of the World, that is to say as a theory of the evolution of things, of their movement and procession; the system of Plato still remains superior as a *statical* theory, that is to say as an analysis of the great elements of which at any given time the World itself as a whole, with all that it contains, is composed. As a dynamical theory the system of Aristotle has the same superiority over that of Plato, as the doctrine of Evolution of our own day has over the six days creation of Genesis. For while with Plato each new person or thing, animal or man, requires a fresh exercise of the arranging Intelligence, of the Supreme Good to constitute it, a fresh application of Number to the ἄπειρον, of Ideas to Number, and so on, in the same way as in the Mosaic Cosmogony the

creation of each new species requires a fresh act of Creative Power; in Aristotle, on the other hand, when once the two poles of Matter and Form are brought together and kept in revolution by a continuous supply of Motion, they will of themselves and by their own natures evolve one after another all the phenomena of the world and of life, of earth, and air, and sea, of crystal and plant, of vegetable, and animal, and man.

But this superiority of the system of Aristotle over that of Plato as a dynamical theory, was compensated by its corresponding inferiority as a statical one. For having found an independent source of Motion elsewhere, viz., in the great reservoir of Æther in the Heavens, Aristotle who was anxious to pack his Ideas or Forms into the primordial Matter in such a way that they would be indissolubly united with it, was obliged to empty this Matter of the little triangles with which Plato had endowed it; as otherwise he would have been as much embarrassed by them as a weaver would be who should be required to impress a new pattern on a warp still inwoven with an old one. But these little triangles were to Plato not only his source of motion, but, like the triangular wooden bricks which children build into cubes and other toy figures, were the elements with which, by the application of Number, he built up the outward form and configuration of things; the first application of Number binding them into the sensible forms of fire, air, earth, and water; the next building these again into the infinite variety of animal and vegetable forms; and the last into the beautiful figures, the ideal shapes, outlines, and proportions of things on which Art loves to dwell. The consequence was that Aristotle, having got rid of these little triangles from his primordial Matter, in order to make room for the Ideas or Forms which he wished to pack in their place, had left himself no elements with which to construct the outward shape of things as distinct from their inner essence; and no place, therefore, for Number, whose only function with Plato was to bind these triangles into the infinite variety of

forms. He was unable therefore, to find any place in his system for a theory of outer forms, and hence it was that in re-arranging the four great factors of Plato, viz., the Good, Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον as groundwork for his own system, he left out Number as we have said altogether. It is quite probable, indeed, that Aristotle would have argued that the Ideas which were answerable for the use, quality, function or vital principle of things, would be answerable also for their external forms; but this would have been to make one essence accountable for two such naturally antagonistic things as soul and body, mind and matter, which would have been a poor and inadequate explanation. Indeed if further proof be wanted of the superiority of the system of Plato over that of Aristotle as a *statical* theory of things, it will be found in the fact that when a new dynamical principle other than that of Motion, viz. the theory of Emanation, was introduced by the Neo-Platonists, it was to the original factors of Plato that they turned for the elements on which this new principle was to act, and not to those of Aristotle.

But before closing this chapter it is necessary to remark that although the dynamical theory of Aristotle has a superficial resemblance to the modern theory of Evolution, it really bears only the same relation to it that a phantasm does to the reality. With Aristotle the evolution of things, of earth, and crystal, and plant, and animal, and man, is got by uniting and *adding* one shadowy Essence to another as shadowy as itself, and this again to another, and so on; whereas in Modern Scientific Evolution, real forces that can be weighed and measured are *converted* into their equivalent of other forces, and these again into their equivalent of others, and so on; so much vital energy into so much chemical product, and the rest,—quite a different matter.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM ARISTOTLE TO CHRISTIANITY.

IN the last chapter we saw that Aristotle by grouping the four separate and independent elements of Plato into two compound and connected ones, was enabled to account in a measure for the procession and evolution of things over and above their mere structure and composition; and so pushed the little barque of Philosophy a stage nearer that Religious shore to which it was inevitably tending. We have now to see that its next stage had to be reached by a continuation of the same process, viz., by the drawing together again of this connected *pair* of factors into a *single* concrete unity. Aristotle, we may remember, had reduced the great factors of the World-process to a Supreme Power possessed of Ideas, on the one hand, and a basis of Matter packed with the same Ideas, on the other; and had filled the gap between with the great reservoir of Æther which by communicating Motion to the wide expanse of Matter, enabled it to incorporate into itself one by one the Ideas with which it was surcharged or surrounded, thereby precipitating the order and beauty of the phenomena of this World of Time as we know them. Now in this theory, God, it is to be observed, is separated and kept apart from the Universe, and can communicate with it only through the intervening medium of the Æther. If, therefore, we were to suppose this intervening medium to be abolished, and the

Supreme Power instead of contemplating in eternal serenity from *outside* the Universe the Ideas with which He is filled, were to be introduced within the world of Matter, and so diffused throughout its substance as to act on it directly everywhere and everywhen, would not this be the last step in that unifying process which it is the aim of Philosophy to consummate? For now, instead of two separate and compound existences connected by a third different from either, we should have only a single concrete existence, the World, but with two sides or faces, as it were, a material or sensible, and a spiritual or invisible; the latter, as being diffused through the former, being of the nature of a universal Spirit or Soul, and containing within itself all those elements of which it is the representative; —the Supreme Power, Ideas, and the Motion-giving Æther. Now this is not only the general but the precise position taken up by the Stoics whose theory was that the World was a single concrete entity with two faces or aspects, a material and a spiritual; the Spiritual, which pervaded the Material, including under the one term of a Universal Soul, conceptions so different in essential nature as the Supreme Good, the Ideas or Reasons of Plato, and the Motion-giving Æther of Aristotle. But although the Stoics in this way were enabled to reduce the World to a single concrete unity with two sides, it is evident that owing to the number of heterogeneous categories which, in this forcing process, they were obliged to dash and confound together—categories so essentially distinct as God, Reason, and the Æther—the unity they got was a merely formal unity more apparent than real; and that here at least Philosophy could not find its final rest.

What form then was Philosophy next to assume? Back it could not go, without the sacrifice of those advantages which had made each successive step an advance on the last; and farther forward than this Pantheistic Unity of the Stoics, with its two poles or sides of Matter and Soul, the unifying process could not go. What then was the next move to be?

It will perhaps give us a hint as to the direction in which we are to look, if we consider that a Philosophy, to be entirely satisfactory, must not only account for the movement and evolution of things, but must maintain unimpaired in the process the hierarchy and independence of the ultimate factors of which they are composed; must have not only dynamical efficiency, but statical integrity. Now, as we have seen, each step taken by Philosophy after Plato with the view of getting greater dynamical unity and efficiency, was purchased by the loss of the independence, the gradation, or even the very existence of one or other of the factors or elements of which things are composed. Plato, as we have already seen, had reached the highest point of analytic and statical truth in his decomposition of the structure of things into four separate and independent elements;—the Good, Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον, elements which accounted in the broadest and simplest way for the composition and hierarchy of the World; the ἄπειρον accounting for their material basis, Number for their external forms, Ideas for their inner natures, and the Supreme Good representing the end to which they all worked. But, as we saw, these factors had no connexion or relation with each other, and could not therefore unite to explain the movement and evolution of things. To remedy this and to get a principle of movement and evolution, Aristotle, accordingly, was obliged to represent these factors as being united in groups with an independent principle of Motion between, so that the movement of any one element would draw the others after it, and so account for the movement and evolution of them all. But in thus endeavouring to find room in his theory for the movement and evolution of things, he was obliged to sacrifice Plato's principle of Number, and so to leave unexplained the entire range of that quality of things which is included under their external form. With the Stoics it was worse, for, as we have just seen, in order to get a still greater unity and dynamical efficiency than Aristotle, they were obliged to confound together under the

single name of the Spiritual Principle or Soul of things, categories so separate and eternally distinct in nature, as God, Reason, and the fire-giving Æther; so that the image of the World which Plato had set up with so much labour and conscientious care, with all its parts in their relative hierarchy and subordination: — Godlike Reason and Ideas as the head; Number in the beauty and proportion of its bodily form; the ἄπειρον in the material of which it was composed; and the whole figure pointing upward to the Supreme Good; this magnificent and perfect creation of Plato was left lying by the Stoics in a prostrate and undistinguished heap,—God, Reason, Form, and Matter vaguely showing through the fictitious unity in which they were enclosed as in a sack, and all promiscuously confounded together. The truth is, it is impossible on any ordinary dynamical theory, to get the ultimate elements of which things are composed to unite together to produce the movement and evolution of the world, without doing violence to their real independence and statical integrity. Being ultimate elements they can have nothing in common into which they are further resolvable; and having nothing in common, it is impossible by any artifice to so unite them as to make them form a coherent unity; as we have just seen in the case of the Stoics who imagined they had given unity to such different categories as God, Reason, and Æther, by the simple expedient of putting them into a common receptacle, and labelling them with a common name. On the other hand, even if it were possible to make them unite so as to produce the movement and evolution of the World, they would lose in the process all that was distinctive in their nature, all their separate and self-subsistent virtue; for it is the characteristic of an ordinary dynamical movement, that the cause *passes over into and is lost* in its effect; that when two things, for example, unite together to produce a third that is different from either, they cease thenceforth to exist as independent elements with distinguishable qualities, losing their old identity in the new

creation, as when oxygen and hydrogen unite to form water. It is evident, therefore, that if no philosophy is complete which does not furnish us with a dynamical as well as a statical theory of things, a theory of their movement and evolution as well as of their composition and structure; and if this double requisite is impossible on any ordinary dynamical theory; it is evident that to release Philosophy from the *impasse* in which it was left by the Stoics, and to give it a fresh start, some new dynamical principle must be found, which shall at once account for the eternal procession and evolution of things, and at the same time preserve unimpaired the dignity, independence, and essential integrity of their ultimate elements. What then is this new dynamical principle?

Up to this point, indeed, I had been enabled by means of the principles which I had laid down at the outset, to anticipate to the extent and in the manner we have seen, the successive steps taken by Greek Philosophy in the course of its evolution and development, with a glance only here and there to make certain on points of detail, and to assure myself that I was keeping on the right track. But when I arrived at the point which we have now reached, I confess I was at a loss to know in what direction to turn. On surrendering myself, however, unreservedly to the actual historical facts themselves, I found that the next step taken by Greek Philosophy embodied precisely the new dynamical principle which was wanted, and which, indeed, I might with a little more patience have foreseen. This was no other than the great principle of Emanation which has played so great a part both in Religion and Philosophy, and which, when once it was introduced, continued to be made the basis of both, for over a thousand years. It was drawn from the belief that there were causes in existence which, unlike ordinary dynamical causes, could give rise to effects without themselves passing over into these effects; but on the contrary remained where they were, without change of place or loss of substance. This kind of cause was to be seen, for

example, in the mind, which although the cause of endless thoughts, still remained the same mind; in the sun, which in spite of its infinite radiations into Space, still remained the same sun, without apparent loss of substance; or in the parent who, although the cause of a numerous offspring, still remained the same parent; all of which apparent instances of emanation or begetting must, in the absence of a knowledge of the Physical Sciences, have seemed just and reasonable. Now when this kind of cause was introduced into Philosophy, it at once solved the difficulty in which she had been landed by furnishing a new dynamical principle which should account for the movement and procession of things, without destroying the independence and integrity of the great original elements of which they were composed. And it became evident that if once you could get a true statical theory, that is to say, a true theory of the structure and composition of things, a true inventory of the original, eternal, and underived elements of all existence, all you would have to do to explain their evolution and movement would be to let them *emanate* from each other, the lowest from that above it in the scale, that again from the next, and so on until you came to the highest of all from which all had originally proceeded. In this way you would get a series of existences eternally proceeding from each other, without loss of substance, change of place, or confusion of quality. You would get, in a word, a theory which was at once dynamical and statical, which would explain the movement and evolution of things consistently with the integrity and independence of the ultimate factors of which they were composed. Now of all the Greek Thinkers Plato was the one whose philosophy, as we have seen, had reached the highest point of statical perfection; succeeding Thinkers, like Aristotle and the Stoics, in their endeavours to account for the movement and evolution of things, being obliged either to sacrifice one or other of the great factors of Plato, or to confound them all together. If Philosophy, therefore, should

return to Plato for its statical basis, and instead of representing his original factors, viz., the Supreme Good, the System of Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον as isolated and independent existences, as Plato himself did, were to represent them as *emanating* from one another in the way in which thoughts emanate and proceed from the mind, rays of light from the sun, or children from their parents; the System of Ideas from the Supreme Good, Number or the Ideal forms of things from the Ideas, and last of all the ἄπειρον or Matter from these forms; would not this by accounting for the flux and evolution of things without endangering the integrity and independence of the original factors, be a Philosophy in advance of all that had preceded it?

Now this was precisely the position taken up by Neo-Platonism, a school of philosophy inaugurated by Philo, a Jew of Alexandria, about the time of Christ, and reaching its culmination in Plotinus some two or three centuries later. The Neo-Platonists boldly went back to Plato for the statical elements of their system, ignoring all those Thinkers who had lain between them, and who had exercised the ingenuity of the Schools during a period of four or five hundred years. Their theory was that the World was the emanation of an omni-present activity, an intelligent Vital Principle or World-Soul diffused through the Universe; that this World-Soul again, was the emanation in turn of the pure Reason which united in itself the entire system of Platonic Ideas; and this Reason, again, or Logos, as it was called, the emanation of the Eternal One, the Good, the Primitive Unity which was neither Reason nor World-Soul, but included them both, and was itself the Unthinkable, the Unspeakable One. Or to put it another way, from the Eternal One proceeded, as first emanation, Reason or the Logos; and from this again as second, the World-Spirit or Soul which was the vital principle of all things; and these three are on the principle of emanation, one; in the same way that the rays of light in the sun and the rays

of light on the earth, though different are yet the same; or that a man's mind, the thought of his mind, and the expression of that thought, though unlike are yet the same; though three, are yet one. And lastly from this invisible Trinity in Unity we have as final emanation of all, the world of sensible things, of Material Existence, as we know it and see it around us. This is the first appearance in the Western World, it is interesting to note, of the doctrine of the Trinity, a direct result as we see of the doctrine of Emanation; and this doctrine, again, not, it is to be observed, a religious conception at all, but a purely philosophical one; introduced as we have seen, to meet the necessity that had arisen of finding some new dynamic principle, different from the old, which should explain the movement and procession of things, without endangering the independent existence of the elements out of which they were composed.

And here we may pause to observe that as the soul of man, like the World-Soul, is on the theory of Emanation one with the Eternal Unity, instead of being as in Plato different from it, it is evident that the way in which the soul must reach this Supreme Unity must be different in the two systems. In Plato, where the chain of Ideas that lead up to the Supreme Good as their topmost link is so arranged that each lower Idea, while containing something in common with that above it, is also different from it, it is clear that you can reach the Supreme Good only by separating at each stage the like from the unlike, and holding fast to the former; in the same way as you can reach the root of an inverted tree from any particular leaf on its circumference, only by following up this leaf to the twig that is common to many leaves, this again to the branch that is common to many twigs, this again to the trunk that is common to many branches, until at last you reach the root and source of all. This process of reaching the Eternal Unity of things by the continuous process of separating their differences, and uniting their likenesses is known as the method of Dialectics,

and is the method of all science or knowledge. The ethical watchword, accordingly, of Plato was knowledge, or intellectual definition. But in Neo-Platonism where the soul of man, like the World-Soul, instead of being different from the Supreme Good, as with Plato, is, on the principle of Emanation, really one with it, and in consequence is only prevented from becoming absorbed into and united with it, by the fleshly body with which in man it is bound up, it is evident that if in life you are to get a glimpse of the Supreme Good at all, it must be not by climbing up the chain of Ideas by the laborious process of separating the like from the unlike, (for the Ideas of the Reason or Logos, as we have seen, are one with the Supreme Good already,) but by the mortification of the flesh, of the appetites, passions, and natural desires with which on its under side, as it were, the soul is bound up, and to which in this world of Time it is chained,—in a word by Asceticism.

With a Trinity in Unity, then, as the Godhead from which the material and sensible world is a remote and inferior emanation; and with Asceticism or mortification of the flesh as ethical code; it is evident that the little boat of Philosophy is at last drawing close to that Religious Shore to which from the first it was destined. So close, indeed, has it come, that but a single step more, a single plank as it were, is necessary to enable its occupants to step forth on to the banks of Christianity, where, after burning their boat behind them, they will no longer walk apart as before, but for the next thousand years, mingled and absorbed in the life around them, will be undistinguishable in doctrine from the great human throng. What this single step was will be made more clear, perhaps, by a simple pictorial representation of Neo-Platonism and Christianity respectively. The Trinity of Neo-Platonism consisting of the Eternal One, Reason or the Logos, and the World-Spirit, we may figure as a triangle with equal sides, from whose base lines of emanation stream, radiating downwards and outwards to form the great world of Time, of

Material and Sensible Existence. As such, the theory is a purely philosophical one; the Eternal One, Reason and the World-Spirit, being purely abstract spirits or essences. But Religion, as we have seen, differs from Philosophy in this, that it deals with Wills and Personalities and not with Essences or abstract Spirits. If therefore we are to turn Neo-Platonism into Christianity, we must manage in some way to change the three philosophic *essences* of the Neo-Platonic Trinity into the three *persons* of the Christian Trinity. Now to do this, all that is necessary is to take the lines of emanation that radiate from the base of the triangular Trinity, and bring them to a point or focus somewhere between Heaven and Earth, as it were, before allowing them to radiate downward and outward to form the world, in the same way as one might pass the folds of a handkerchief through a wedding-ring; and then to represent this focus, this wedding-ring of mediation between Heaven and Earth, by the man Christ Jesus. This simple step is all that is necessary; for if Jesus Christ is the Son of God, it is evident that the first person in the Trinity instead of being an abstract Eternal One, must be God the Father; and the third person instead of being an abstract World-Spirit, must now be God the Holy Ghost. That only this single step of the mediation of Christ Jesus, separated Neo-Platonism from Christianity as a philosophy, is placed beyond doubt by the testimony of St. Augustine. Himself brought up and nurtured in the writings of Neo-Platonism, he admits when summing up the advantages that Christianity had over it, that he found practically the same doctrine of the Godhead in both; that Neo-Platonism equally with St. John contained such doctrines, for example, as that 'in the beginning was the Word or Logos, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,' etc., that the Son being of the *same* substance, was in the form of the Father, and 'thought it not robbery to be equal with the Father;' that God the Word 'was born, not of flesh and blood, but of God;' and the like. What he did not find in Neo-Platonism,

he tells us, was the Incarnation, the truth contained in such texts as that 'the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us'; that 'He came unto His own and His own received Him not'; that 'to those who believed on His name to them He gave the power to become the sons of God'; that 'He took on Himself the form of a servant', and 'in due time died for the ungodly'; and the like.

Now, that the step from the abstract essences of the Neo-Platonic Trinity to the personal wills of the Christian Trinity, whether through the Incarnation of Christ Jesus or not, had first or last to be taken by Philosophy, a few considerations will make manifest. In the first place, in the absence of Physical Science and of the new conception of the Uniformity of Law which it has since thrown as a necessary element into all speculations on the problem of the World, no mere Philosophy as such, employing abstract Essences as its subject-matter, could go farther than Neo-Platonism. It was the first, as we have seen, to introduce a *dynamical* theory of things, which should be compatible with the continued integrity and independence of the original elements of which they were composed. It had besides absorbed the essences and abstract principles of all preceding Thinkers, and had woven them into a scheme more harmonious and complete than any that had gone before. Backward Philosophy could not go, and it is equally evident that forward it must. For, as we saw at the outset of this survey, there are only two kinds of causation that can permanently satisfy the minds of men; either the Wills of Religion, or the uniform antecedents and consequents of Physical Science. Now the Essences and Abstractions of Philosophy are neither the one nor the other of these, and as in them the mind of man cannot rest, it must, in the absence of Physical Science, make in the direction of the Wills and Personalities of Religion. The law governing the direction and successive stages of this movement, I ventured to lay down at the outset, and, as we have seen, the long train of individual

Thinkers have walked in the line marked out for them by this law, as if by immutable decree. From the abstract Trinity of the Neo-Platonists to the personal Trinity of Wills, Philosophy was bound to go; and whether by the dispensation of Providence, or by the accident of Fate, Christianity stood waiting on the shore with every condition favourable for its reception. Not that Christianity was the only religion into which Neo-Platonism could possibly have passed in its way from a Trinity of Essences to a Trinity of personal Wills; on the contrary any religion with a like philosophical basis, however different from Christianity in its historical basis, would for philosophical purposes have answered as well. Nor did Neo-Platonism pass into Christianity because the latter was the only religion on the shore ready and waiting to receive it; on the contrary Paganism too was there; but although the later and degenerate Neo-Platonists allied themselves with the Polytheism of Paganism, and became its High Priests (much in the same way as the Patriarchs and Bishops became the priests of the Christian Trinity), it was a disgraceful and unnatural union which could bear no fruit, and was, as a matter of fact, in a few years swept away without a murmur or a sigh. Nor yet again did Neo-Platonism pass into Christianity because, as has been alleged, it had itself already in the early days of Christianity, forged and prepared the doctrines of the Godhead which it was afterwards to appear to accept at the hands of its opponents; on the contrary Christianity as a philosophy must have assumed a form similar to that which it did assume, had Neo-Platonism never existed. Growing out of the historical fact of Christ's being the Son of God, its philosophy must have been the abstract expression of that concrete relation. Now as that relation happened to be practically the same as the relation of the Logos to the Eternal One in Neo-Platonism, this of itself was sufficient to account for the likeness in form at least of the two philosophies. It is true that those early doctors of

the Church who were most instrumental in formulating its philosophical creed, especially the relation of the first to the second Person of the Godhead, were drawn from the schools of Neo-Platonism, and that they gave to the historical fact of Christ's relation to God, the fact of son-ship, the philosophical form in which they were accustomed to think. Indeed we may go farther and admit that from the time that the Gospel of St. John, which is closely moulded on Neo-Platonic lines, was received into the canon of Scripture, the philosophies of Neo-Platonism and Christianity became, as we should expect, in form at least practically identical. But no mere formal identity could have been permanently established between the philosophies of Neo-Platonism and Christianity, had there not been a real identity in principle; that is to say, had not the relation of the Logos to the Eternal One been the same in principle as the relation of the Son to the Father in Christianity. And what was that principle? It was the principle of Emanation; the only difference in the form of this principle when applied to Neo-Platonism and Christianity respectively being that in Neo-Platonism the relation of the Eternal One to the Logos was drawn from the analogy of the abstract Intelligence, which in giving off broods of thought, remains itself the same; whereas in Christianity the relation of God to Christ is drawn from that of parent and offspring, where the total personality or will of a man, as it were, passes over into the offspring, while itself remaining the same as before. If once then the historical facts of Christ's birth, death, and resurrection, could be believed in, it would evidently be not only easy and natural, but inevitable, that Neo-Platonism should fall into and be absorbed in Christianity. For if it were true that Christ really were the Son of God, and that He had sent the Holy Spirit after He was gone, was this not precisely what the philosophy of Neo-Platonism had taught, viz. that the Logos or Word proceeded from and was the incarnation of the Eternal One, and the World-Spirit again, the

emanation of the Logos?—but with this advantage on the side of Christianity, that by turning the abstract Essences of Neo-Platonism into a Trinity of real Persons, it not only gave, in the absence of Physical Science, a more satisfactory Cause of things than any mere abstract essences could supply, but furnished also an object of reverence, sympathy, and love, which should engage equally the imagination and heart—a thing impossible in any merely abstract philosophy. For in the long run the human spirit can find comfort, consolation, and sympathy, only in a spirit like its own; and in Christianity this was supplied by the second person of the Trinity, the man Christ Jesus, a man in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. And here again we may refer to the testimony of St. Augustine, who declares that God of the excellency of His grace, in sending His Son Christ Jesus to save sinners through faith and love, gave to the minds and hearts of men a more permanent and abiding solace and peace than could be got from the transient glimpses of God which were to be caught by Neo-Platonism only after the most vain and laborious Asceticism. Instead of having, like the Neo-Platonists, to gaze from the wooded hill-tops to the land of Peace, without finding any way to it, the Christian could, he says, by the grace of Jesus Christ, hold on his way straight through beneath the stronghold built by the Heavenly Commander; instead of hearing by the way the dreary whistling of the winds, the jingle of the lifeless abstractions of Philosophy, he heard wafted to him such sweet notes as these, "Learn of me for I am meek and lowly of heart, and you shall find rest for your souls." "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." But beside these spiritual consolations which it offered to cultured and uncultured alike, Christianity by its adoption from Genesis of the doctrine of a Tempter, accounted for the ever-present sense of Sin in our inmost members, in a way impossible to Neo-Platonism, which, regarding the natural world as the last and lowest emanation of the Godhead, could

not endow Sin with that positive and absolute character which it assumed when it was believed to be the fruit of a Spirit not good, like the World-Spirit of Neo-Platonism, but, like Satan, absolutely evil in himself.

For these and other reasons Greek Philosophy, encompassed on all hands by a religion which surpassed it not only in moral purity and elevation, but in the satisfactions of its philosophic creed, passed as was inevitable, though not without prolonged struggles of self-interest and pride, softly and slowly into Christianity; and with the closing of the Schools of Athens by Justinian, disappeared, save as armoury for the exercitations of the Schoolmen, or models for the pens of the Humanists, for ever from the serious beliefs of men.

PART II.

THE EVOLUTION OF HINDOO THOUGHT.

HISTORY OF INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT.

PART II.

LIST OF AUTHORITIES FOR THE FOLLOWING CHAPTERS ON THE

EVOLUTION OF HINDOO THOUGHT.

For Hinduism

VEDIC HYMNS	WILSON
YOGA SUTRAS	MUIR
RAJA-YOGA	ELPHINSTONE
SANKHYA-KARIKA	MAX MÜLLER
VEDANTASÂVA	MONIER-WILLIAMS
SADDARMA-PUNDARIKA	

For Buddhism

DHAMMAPADA	SPENCE HARDY
KHUDDAKA PATHA	OLDENBERG
UPASAMPADA-KAMMAVĀCĂ	RHYS DAVIDS
BURNOUF	MAX MÜLLER
KÖPPEN	BEAL
WASSALIEF	BIGANDET

For Theosophy

BHAGAVAT GÎTA	BESANT
UPANISHADS	CHATTERJI
BLAVATSKY	ROW
SINNETT	OLD
OLCOTT	MEAD
JUDGE	FULLERTON

CHAPTER I.

HINDOO PHILOSOPHY.

IN the following chapters I propose to pass briefly in review the great philosophies and religions of India, with the view of ascertaining the extent, if any, to which the doctrines of these schools can be said to have entered into the composition and structure of European thought. And with this object I shall make it my aim in the first place to determine, if possible, the general level or *plane of thought*, as it were, on which these religions and philosophies all alike lie; as, if we shall once succeed in doing this satisfactorily, we shall, like the naturalist who has ascertained the family or order to which some extinct but newly-discovered mammalian skeleton belongs, be able the more readily to estimate the position occupied by these systems in the great chain of World-Philosophy as a whole; and the extent, in consequence, to which they are likely to enter as permanent elements into the Philosophical Evolution of the future. But more than this, we shall be able to show, as we did in the case of Greek Philosophy, that the evolution of these successive systems follows from, and can be anticipated, as it were, by a law or principle of the human mind, which law we shall at the outset without much difficulty be enabled to lay down.

Now it will be remembered that Greek Philosophy began its evolution under Thales and his successors, by making some one or other *material* principle, such as Water, Air, etc., the

Prime Cause and main efficient factor in its explanation of the phenomena of the world; that it then advanced under Xenophanes, Parmenides, and their followers, to the stage in which what is called Soul or Vital Principle was the First Cause; and that from the time of Anaxagoras and Socrates onwards it reached the point where pure Intelligence was believed to be the best explanation of the phenomena of the world and of human life. Like the embryo of man, which passes rapidly through the lower stages of fish, vegetable, and mammal, to expend the best part of its life in the exhibition of characteristics that are distinctly human, Greek Philosophy ran rapidly through the lower stages of Matter and of Soul, to expend the opulence and fertility of its genius on the changes that could be rung on the principle of Intelligence as the First Cause of things—and from that time to the present, the Thought of Europe in its evolution and development has but continued the process still farther on the same lines. But that there may be no mistake as to the meaning to be attached here to the terms Soul and Intelligence, respectively, I may as well explain at the outset that by Soul or Vital Principle is always to be understood a double-sided principle, half material, half spiritual—a principle which, when the spiritual side is most in evidence, may be figured as a kind of ghost, as it were, which although spiritual in one aspect has always the material quality of extension on the other; and when its material side is most obtrusive, may be represented by that Vital Principle of Nature which rolls through things, giving them their life, and of which the visible body of Nature is but the material side or counterpart. Intelligence, on the other hand, is always to be figured as an indivisible, immaterial entity, *without* parts or extension; and when it is a self-conscious Intelligence, always involves the idea of a Thinker on the one side, and of thoughts, images, and ideas which pass before it on the other, on which its eye is transiently directed, but from any one or all of which it is conceived as capable of detaching itself.

Now, that Greek Philosophy from the time of Socrates, and that European Thought and Religion ever since, have made the principle of Intelligence, in the sense in which it is here used, the Supreme Cause and Prime Operative Factor in things, is scarcely open to dispute. With Plato, for example, the Supreme Cause, which he calls the Supreme Good, is represented as engaged from all eternity before the world began in contemplating that golden chain of Ideas, or Types of Things, on which the world was afterwards to be constructed—a chain of Ideas which ran up to this Supreme Good as its topmost link, but from which the Supreme Good, as a thinker from the object of his thought, is represented as for ever free. This Supreme Good, then, is obviously of the nature of an Intelligence. With Aristotle, again, the First Cause of things which is represented as letting loose that principle of Motion which gives the world the primitive push needed to start it on the path of evolution, and which carries with it those Types or Ideas—Forms he calls them—which are to be deposited one by one along the track of evolution, and one by one to be built into the structure of the world—this First Cause of things is represented by Aristotle, as it is by Plato, as finding from all eternity in the loving contemplation of these 'forms,' its sole and supreme delight. It, too, therefore, is a principle of Intelligence. And so too with the First Cause of the Stoics, which although working through laws of Nature fixed and inexorable as Fate, and sometimes even identified or confounded with these laws, was nevertheless represented as being conscious of them as of so many thoughts and activities of its own mind; and so was a principle of Intelligence. It was the same when Christianity took up the mantle of Greek Philosophy, for in its speculative doctrine of the Trinity it still endowed the First Cause of things with the attributes of a Supreme Intelligence, to which it further added the concrete attributes of personality and will. And not only did this attribute of Intelligence remain through all the changes of that religion, but it was

present also in the Deism of the eighteenth century, and in all those Religious Philosophies of more recent times that have endeavoured to found a natural religion on the analogies and processes of Nature. If further proof, indeed, were needed that the Religious Philosophies of Europe are all alike founded and constructed on the principle of Intelligence as their First Cause, as distinct from that of Soul, it would be found in this fact, viz., that those systems of Materialism and Atheism which have risen in reaction against the supernaturalisms of prevailing religious philosophies, have always assumed that the First Cause, whose existence they are assailing, is of the nature of an Intelligence, and not of a mere blind Vital Principle or Soul. And having once reached this principle of self-conscious Intelligence as the First Cause of things—a principle drawn from what is *highest* in the human mind—it may be safely asserted that no system of Philosophy which admits the supernatural element at all, can ever again return to the merely negative and featureless principle of Soul as its starting principle,—a principle drawn, not like Intelligence, from what is highest in ourselves, but from that mere vitality common to all the works of Nature alike, the only distinction of which is that it is *without* either emotion, self-conscious intelligence, or will. It has neither the dignity, elevation, nor realizable efficiency of a self-conscious Intelligent Will, on the one hand, nor the reality and demonstrable regularity and uniformity of the 'antecedents and consequents' of Physical Laws, on the other. And if, as we shall now see, not only Hindoo Philosophy, but its modern counterpart Theosophy also, are constructed on this conception of Soul as their supreme principle, we may safely predict that they will no more affect the evolution of Philosophy in the future, than those present-day kangaroos and opossums of Australia, whose ancestors were cut off by cataclysmic upheavals from the main current of evolution in the Jurassic Age, will affect the future evolution of the Mammalian Kingdom.

Now, that the stage of Soul is really the highest point reached by Hindoo Philosophy and Esoteric Buddhism, that in this principle they have found their last expression, their flower and consummation, and there stopped, it must now be my endeavour to prove. It is quite true, indeed, that on this plane they have put forth their fruit with a richness and luxuriance of detail unknown to Greek Philosophy in its corresponding stage, but this is only what we should expect. For when an embryo stops short at the stage, say, of a dog or pigeon, there to expand and live its natural and normal existence, you may expect it to display there a greater range and variety of aspects than will be displayed at the same stage by the embryo of a creature like man, who only passes through these lower stages on his way to his own proper life and destination. And so, too, was it with Hindoo Philosophy. As those marsupials of Australia which were cut off from the general course of evolution in the Jurassic Age, and imprisoned within a limited area of the globe, unfolded the type on which they were constructed into every variety of form; so Hindoo Philosophy, imprisoned within its own area and cut off from the higher evolution of Europe has developed its systems with an elaboration and subtlety of detail unknown to the corresponding stages of European Thought. But for all that these systems are still only expansions of the principle of Soul, not of Intelligence; they are marsupials and not higher mammalia; they are dogs and pigeons, and not men.

Now, that all systems of Hindoo Philosophy, including the Esoteric Buddhism and Theosophy of the present day, are but elaborations of the principle of Soul as explanation of the phenomena of the world and of human life; and that this Soul is a purely *negative* principle, whose only distinction is that its spiritual side is entirely without thought, emotion, or self-consciousness of any kind, except mere life, and its material side is divested of every quality except mere extension—all this might be known beforehand, and from the most careless

glance at the general configuration and structure of these philosophies. The first thing that strikes one in them all, is the curious circumstance that Self-consciousness and Intelligence—Reason, Judgment, Memory, Will, etc.—which are regarded by us Europeans as parts of the *Soul*, if not indeed its very essence, are in these Hindoo systems put down among the *material* substances that make up the body; they are regarded as a very subtle differentiation of Matter it is true, but still Matter, as much so indeed as fire and earth and water are Matter, or the plants and flowers and animals and trees into which they are built up; having as little permanence and stability as these latter, and like them coming into being, blooming their little hour, and then ceasing to be. From this alone it is evident that the principle of Soul in Hindoo Philosophy must be something quite different from the Self-conscious Intelligent Principle which it is with Western nations. Indeed we may safely say that no progress can be made in the proper understanding of Hindoo modes and systems of thought, until it is clearly realized that when we Europeans speak of Soul, and when the Hindoos speak of it, we mean two quite different and indeed opposite things. With us, Soul, as we have said, is a principle of Self-conscious Intelligence and Will; with the Hindoos it is a mere vague diffused essence pervading Nature, the distinctive quality of which is that it is *without* thought, emotion, will, self-consciousness, or, indeed, any other quality whatever except that of extension and life. That in these Hindoo Philosophies, Soul must be something of this kind, would on reflection be evident, if from nothing else, from this single fact alone, viz., that all their systems, in which it is the object of the individual to unite with the universal Soul, require for their logical harmony and completeness some scheme of Transmigration and Re-incarnation after death. Now while a scheme of this nature is quite compatible with a principle which, like the Vital Principle of Nature, can, from the absence of any definite qualities of its own, unite with the bodies or minds of each

and every species of animal or plant indifferently, it would be quite out of keeping with a principle of Self-conscious Intelligence. For a Self-conscious Intelligence, be it observed, is a positive and highly complex existence; a concrete, differentiated, and composite entity; and can no more be transferred at pleasure from one type of creature to another after death, so as to unite harmoniously with it, than a lion's head can be made to unite harmoniously with an asses body—and in reality is as absurd and impossible as the satyrs, mermaids, and centaurs of fable. Hence it is, that in all European systems of thought or religion, Re-incarnation and Transmigration are unknown, and the soul after death is obliged either to occupy the *same* body that it had during life (or its incorruptible counterpart), as was the view of the Early Christians; or to exist quite disengaged from any body whatever. But even were a self-conscious intelligence capable of re-incarnating after death in other bodies than its own, it is evident that its aim, which is that of communing for ever with the Infinite Intelligence, would be baulked rather than forwarded by the return again to Earth. For Intelligence and Love can only grow into a greater richness and perfection by commune and contact with Infinite Intelligence and Love, as one torch can be lit only by contact with the fire of another. And hence it is that in the Christian Religion, those believers who have merited the Divine favour are translated after death, and after the probation of but a single life on earth, to a Heaven where they are destined for ever to remain, drinking the waters of knowledge and love from the Infinite Fountain of Knowledge and Love. And this is just what one would expect when both the Supreme Soul and the Individual Soul are conceived to be of the nature of Self-conscious Intelligences. But where both the Universal Soul and the Individual Soul are blank abstractions, essences characterized by the *absence* of all thought, emotion, and self-consciousness; and where intellect, emotion, will, and self-consciousness are but differentiations of

the *material* world, the material side of Nature as it were; it is evident that the Individual Soul can only unite with the Universal Soul by cutting itself free not only from the gross body within which it is confined, but also from the intellect, emotions, and will, which, like the body, fetter and confine the soul—as the water in a bottle can only unite with the infinite waters of the sea by which it is surrounded, by breaking the bottle in which it is confined. To do this only two ways suggest themselves, either self-destruction which would be of no avail, for the soul would immediately re-incarnate and you would be no farther forward than before; or else that the soul should be sent back to earth again and yet again, until the Intelligence which imagines itself in its ignorance to be the Soul (as a man may mistake a rope for a snake in the dark), realizes that it is not the soul at all, but is only a mortal instrument as finite, transitory, and limited, as the body; until it realizes that all the aims and ambitions, the loves and hatreds of the world are but vanities, illusions of its own making, and due to that same ignorance. Until all this is seen and felt, the soul cannot detach itself in a natural way like a ripe fruit from that mind and body, those senses, intellect, and passions, which bind it so strongly to the world, in order to resume its union with the Universal Soul from which during its life in the body it has been separated. And as this is precisely the solution which is given to the problem of existence by one and all of the systems of Hindoo Philosophy, it is itself a proof that what the Hindoos mean by Soul is not the Self-conscious Intelligence of European thought, drawn from what is highest in man; but is a mere vague and indefinite essence, void of all mental attributes except existence, and of all physical ones except mere extension; and drawn from that lower Vital Principle, that Anima Mundi, which rolls through all things, and is common alike to the vegetables, to brutes, and to men.

If then the general principle of Soul as distinguished from that of Intelligence is the basis of the Hindoo Philosophy, the

principle on the plane or level of which all its evolution has taken place, it ought to be possible for us to mark out beforehand the changes that can be rung on this principle, as seen in its successive systems and schools of thought, in the same way as we have found it possible to do for Greek Philosophy. The principle of Soul, then, being a double-sided essence, one side spiritual and the other material—a spiritual, vital, entity, that is to say, having the material quality of extension; it is evident that, as was the case in the corresponding stage of Greek Philosophy, three changes only can be rung on it; either the spiritual side is made the efficient and all-important factor, the material side with which it is bound up being degraded to a mere appearance or illusion; or the material side is made the active factor, the spiritual side, or Soul proper, arising from it like an invisible mist, or exhalation; or finally each side is equally real, and equally independent in function and activity. No other combinations but these are possible, and, as we shall now see, to these great main divisions the three out of the six systems of Hindoo Philosophy that are chiefly speculative, viz. the Vedanta, the Vaiseshika, and the Sankhya systems, correspond.

To begin with the Vedanta. In this system the Spiritual side of the Soul is all in all, and the Material side or factor with which it is bound up, is degraded to a mere illusion or appearance. This philosophy, which still remains the doctrine of the most enlightened Brahmins, grew immediately out of the Upanishads—that portion of the Vedas or Sacred Scriptures of the Hindoos which deals with the more speculative aspects of their religion, and whose doctrine can be summed up in one simple proposition, viz. that there is but one real Being in the Universe, the Universal Spirit or Brahma, who is outside Nature and within Nature and one with Nature: of whom all our individual souls are parts; from whom they have emerged, and into whom they will return; rising from Him as a vapour from the ocean, and returning

to Him again as waters to the sea. Now these Upanishads are, as I have said, part of the Religion of the Hindoos; and as the objects of Religion can only be beings endowed with personality and will, and not mere metaphysical abstractions, this Universal Spirit or Brahma is invested with all the attributes of a personal Supreme Being, and is celebrated in strains characterizing Him by such personal epithets as the Ruler of Rulers, God of Gods, the Omniscient Lord of All Things, with a thousand eyes, hands, and feet, the Immortal One, uncreated, of spotless purity and light, diffused through endless space and yet existing and abiding in the heart, and the like.

Now what the Vedanta Philosophy did with this doctrine of the Upanishads on which it was founded, was, to strip its Universal Spirit, Brahma, of the personal attributes with which, as the object of Religion He had been endowed, and to reduce Him to a pure Philosophical Essence or Soul again; and having done this, to attempt to explain from this Universal Soul, the origin and constitution of the World. And as this Supreme Soul was the pure essence of immortal existence, without intelligence, self-consciousness, emotion, or will, it was necessary to account for the mortality and evanescence of all created things which in endless succession come into being and pass away—for the evil and misery, the passion and gloom that everywhere intermingle with and cloud the purity of all earthly joy, dashing and confounding it; and for the grossness and ignorance that everywhere limit and darken the purity of knowledge and truth. And this the Vedanta Philosophy does by the simple expedient of putting before the Supreme Soul a series of parti-coloured *veils*, or coloured glasses if you will, in which it looks, to contemplate and enjoy the images and reflections of itself which are seen there. Now these veils, or domes of coloured glass, are five in number, and are each made up of three separate qualities or colours, but in different proportions, viz., of Goodness or Purity which may be figured

as pure white; of Passion and Activity which may be figured as red; and of Ignorance and Darkness which may be figured as black. Of these veils the first is so nearly *transparent* that the Supreme Soul when it looks through it, sees itself almost in its naked purity; and when this veil is put on, the Soul, although free from all emotion, feels itself pervaded by a certain diffused happiness or bliss, as of a person in a light and dreamless sleep. When the second veil is put on—the veil of pure *intelligence* and *self-consciousness* we may call it—in which the pure white of the veil is slightly tinged with the redness of the passion which must inhere in every personality, the Supreme Soul, which is without self-conscious intelligence, emotion or will, which is pure and free from all evil and all activity, sees itself as a self-conscious being, fully aware of its own existence, and of its own feelings and activities, whether they be good or bad. When the third veil is put on—the veil of *worldly intellect and judgment*, the Supreme Soul, which is free from all doubt, hesitation, or passion, finds itself hoping and fearing, wondering and doubting, sorrowing and rejoicing, as the shifting, changing world of objects and attractions pass before its view. When the fourth veil, again, is put on—the veil of *vitality*—the Supreme Soul, although devoid of all motion, life, or activity, finds itself speaking and acting and moving, eating and drinking, as in some strenuous dream. And finally when the fifth and last veil—that of the *material body* is put on—a veil which is made up almost of pure darkness, the Supreme Soul, which is infinite in extension, which is immortal and unchangeable and free from pain and decay, finds itself cribbed and confined in this mortal cabin of a body, subject to pain, to birth, growth, change, decay and death. Or in a general way we may say that when the first veil is put on, the Supreme Soul is conscious only of a vague diffused happiness, as of a dreamless sleep; when the second, third, and fourth are put on, it feels or imagines itself acting and suffering, hoping and fearing, doing and daring, as in a vexed and

troubled dream; when the fifth, the material body is put on, it sees and feels itself a thing of flesh and blood, standing there awake and in the open day. Again, when the veil is most largely composed of whiteness or purity, the Soul is conscious only of high aspirations, pure sentiments, and the nobler exercises of the imagination and heart; when it is mixed more largely with the red and dark shades of passion and ignorance, the Soul is conscious of the conflict of fierce passions, and is filled with the lust of the eye, and the pride of life; when it is made up mainly of darkness, the Soul is conscious of dulness and stupidity, of pain, mortality and decay.

It is then, from these different veils that the Vedanta Philosophy accounts for Nature, and for the great variety of attribute, affection, quality, and condition of body and mind; it is from the blending of the different colours in these veils that it accounts for the spectacle everywhere seen of joy dashed with sorrow, of aspiration with baseness, of pure sentiment with selfishness, of pure truth with falsehood and ignorance. The pure white of the Universal Soul, which is without consciousness, emotion, passion, intelligence, or will, is by the interposition of these parti-coloured veils or screens, seen as the moving panorama, the brilliant phantasmagory of Nature and life. But it is all an illusion. With the exception of Time and Space, whose objective reality has only been denied in the Idealism of Modern Philosophy, there is in reality, no parti-coloured world of good and evil, of beauty and ugliness, of happiness and misery, of light and darkness, such as we imagine we see around us; there is no "I" as distinct from "You," from other men, and from the world of Nature; there are no separate and self-conscious minds that perceive, and judge, and know, and will, and do; there is nothing, in truth, but the One Supreme Soul, which is blank as Space itself, which is in all, and through all, and one with all.

Such is the great Vedanta system of Philosophy so prevalent among the higher Hindoo minds of the present day. And

before passing on, it may be well to pause and to note that the Supreme Soul in this philosophy has none of those attributes of self-conscious intelligence and will which the Supreme Cause has in Western Thought, and that these high attributes of the mind are neither part nor product of the Soul, as with us, but are, like the rest of Physical Nature, the offspring entirely of those veils of illusion with which it has surrounded itself. That is to say, Intelligence, Self-consciousness, and Will, instead of being, as with us, parts or attributes of the Supreme Spirit, are in this Vedanta Philosophy, as in all the other Hindoo philosophies, part of Nature, that is to say of the *material* side of things with which as its other side the Soul is bound up. Individual salvation, in consequence, or that union of the individual soul with the Supreme Soul which is the end and aim of the Hindoos, can only be attained by the perception of the fact that the world of Nature and of human life and even the world of intelligence itself, strange as it may seem, are but the results of so many veils of illusion by which we are deceived; and that therefore all the loves and interests which appertain to these things, must be entirely shut out from the mind and heart. Or in other words, the Supreme Soul raises up an intelligence which is no part of itself, in order to enable the Soul to separate itself from what is not itself, and from this very intelligence as much as from the rest; as the seed, in the words of the great Sankaracharya, purifies the water of its mud, and then sinks to the bottom with the sediment when the work is done.

With this great Vedanta Philosophy as starting point, a philosophy in which the Supreme Soul plays so important a part as to reduce its material counterpart to a mere veil or illusion, it is evident that Hindoo Philosophy cannot rest, but must continue its evolution through a stage in which the Material Factor shall have some more real and positive place assigned it. And this we have in the next great system, the Sankhya. In this system the two sides have equal and

co-ordinate functions. The material side, instead of being reduced as in the Vedanta to a series of illusory veils, is made up, on the contrary, of a series of *real substances* corresponding to these veils in number and function, and like them made up of a triple strand of Purity or Goodness, Passion or Activity, and Ignorance or Darkness. And as in the Vedanta the first veil, the one nearest the Supreme Soul, is represented as the cause of the other veils, so in the Sankhya the first material essence or substance, called Prakriti, with which the Soul is bound up, is the one from which the rest are evolved,—the Higher Intelligence, the Self-conscious Worldly Intellect, the Vital Principle, and last, the Material Body itself—in practically the same order, and with the same functions, as the veils in the Vedanta. The only difference between the two is that while in the Vedanta it is that portion of the first veil which is made up of Darkness or Ignorance which arouses the Passion that it is the function of the Purity or Goodness to countervail; in the Sankhya, Passion is the element in the triple compound Prakriti, which is the primary moving power that sets in motion both Goodness and Darkness.

As fort he Supreme Soul itself, Purusha, which is bound up with this Prakriti, this material side of things, instead of being all in all as in the Vedanta, where the material side is an illusion, it is reduced in the Sankhya to the position of a mere *onlooker*, as indeed was almost inevitable in a system in which the evolution of the material side accounted for everything—for the World, Nature, Life, and the Mind itself. Nothing was left for the Supreme Soul to do, unless indeed it were by its mere presence, as of a concealed magnet, to wake all those elements into activity and life. Hence it is represented as absolutely impassive, and unaffected by anything occurring either in Nature or in the body, mind, or heart of Man; over all of which, indeed, it sits as a brooding spectator merely. It has been compared in its relation to the evolving life of the world,

to the lame man who sits on the shoulders of the blind man to be carried along with him to contemplate and enjoy the beauties and glories of the way; Nature, the World, and the Life of Man existing, as is said in the original, like the exhibitions of a dancing girl, for the delight and contemplation of the Soul. And here, too, as in the Vedanta, it is important to observe that the Supreme Soul is devoid of Intelligence, Self-consciousness, and Will; and that these qualities instead of being, as with us, parts or attributes of the Supreme Being, are only parts or attributes of Nature, Prakriti, or that material essence with which the Soul is bound up. And hence in this system too, as in the Vedanta, individual salvation is to be attained by a knowledge which shall clearly separate all that is merely a product of Prakriti, from the Soul itself with which it is the fate of untutored ignorance to confound it; and so deliver the Soul from that bondage to sense, and in consequence from those weary rounds of incarnation and re-incarnation to which it is doomed, so long as by ignorance and passion it is attached to mortal existence.

If then in the Vedanta the Supreme Soul is everything, and its material counterpart only an illusion; and if in the Sankhya both Soul and Matter are alike real, the Soul being the onlooker which by its mere presence stimulates into activity and life the material side, Prakriti, which in its evolution gives birth to Mind as well as Matter; it is evident that the circuit of Hindoo Philosophy cannot be closed until some system shall arise in which the Material side of things shall be made the all-important factor, and the Soul in turn be degraded to an after-product or effect of the Material Atoms to which it is attached.

And this system we have, accordingly, in the Vaiseshika of Kanada, the "Atom Eater" as he was called, who figured the world as made up of an infinite number of atoms of five different kinds, fire, air, earth, and water—and mind. These atoms are represented as invisible; and under the wand of an invisible Necessity, named Adrishta (which is itself the result

of works and actions done in a previous world), are arranged and marshalled into aggregates, first of twos, and then of threes, at which point they form the *visible* particles of fire, air, earth, and water, as well as of what is called mind. Now it is important to observe that this thing called mind, is, like the rest, built up of invisible atoms of mind. It has a definite existence in time and space, and will only allow one thought at a time to pass through it to the Soul; and being, besides, only a combination or aggregate of the original and eternal atoms of mind, it is decomposable into its elements again, and so is as transient an existence as any other natural product, coming into being like all things else, and like them passing away. Now it is these visible, tangible, and otherwise sensible masses or aggregates of fire, air, earth, water, and mind, that, when still further combined among themselves in different proportions, make up, according to the Vaiseshika system, the infinite variety and complexity of the world and of human life. And just as in the Vedanta System the world of men and things is accounted for as the result of the refractions of a number of parti-coloured veils or glass domes of illusion with which the Soul is surrounded, and in the centre of which it sits enshrouded; and as in the Sankhya System it is these same veils that are transformed into real substances made up of the same three qualities or parts, viz., Purity, Passion, and Ignorance; so in the Vaiseshika it is again the same, or practically the same, veils or divisions that appear, but in this case they are composed of infinite aggregates of atoms, in different forms and stages of combination and complexity.

Such is the *material* side of this system. As for the other side, the Supreme Soul, it is the same as in all the other Hindoo Systems, that is to say it is infinite, eternal, without self-consciousness, intelligence, or will, without pain, or pleasure, or motion, or any other quality whatever except mere extension. And as for the individual souls of men, they are represented as each diffused through the infinite space like

an ether; and like vast and infinite balloons take their colour, complexion, and quality from the particular combination of atoms, bodily and mental, to which at some point of their vast extent they adhere, as the polyp takes its colour from that of the particular rock to which for the time being it is attached; taking a spiritual impress from its material counterpart as wax from seal—good and evil, pleasure and pain, merit and demerit. In this way the souls of men pass from incarnation to incarnation, gathering up merit or demerit as they go along, from the particular combinations of bodily and mental atoms with which during their earthly pilgrimage they are bound up, and transmitting it accumulated and intact to the next; until at last, purified from all grossness, and with colour, quality, and complexion now indistinguishable from that of the Universal Soul in which they all alike float, they become merged and absorbed in it; and so escape at last from that weary round of incarnation to which they appeared to be doomed. And here, too, again, we may formally repeat that in this system, as in the others, the Universal Soul is devoid of Self-conscious Intelligence and Will; that these high human attributes are but as the vapours and exhalations that arise from the particular combination of bodily and mental atoms to which they are attached; and that salvation is only to be reached when these individual souls become as neutral in quality, pure in tint, and free from all admixture, as the Supreme Soul itself.

These three systems being representative of the only three radical changes that can be rung on the double-sided principle of Soul as the Supreme Cause of things, with them Hindoo Philosophy, in so far as it is made up of speculative systems, practically ends. In the Vedanta system, as we have seen, the Soul side was everything and the Material side nothing, an illusion; in the Sankhya, both the Soul side and the Material side were real and independent entities, with distinct and reciprocal functions; and now in the Vaiseshika the Material side is everything, and the Soul side, in its turn, is reduced to

a mere after-product or effect. But besides these distinctively speculative systems, there are three others, the Nyaya, the Yoga, and Mimansa, which are not World-systems, but which beginning by accepting the current beliefs of the orthodox in reference to the Supreme Soul and the like, or despairing of finding the truth in systems made by human reason, concern themselves rather with the kind of conduct or attitude of soul necessary to obtain salvation, than with the knowledge which in the systems we have just examined is the indispensable means to that end. These more purely ethical systems have existed in all ages, appearing in and among the speculative systems, and keeping a kind of running accompaniment to them without in any way interfering with the natural course of their evolution. Among the Greeks, for example, Socrates was the first who, discarding the physical and metaphysical theories of his time as problematical at best, and of but secondary importance, made it his first concern to instruct men in conduct and virtue as the great aim of life; the dialectic method he employed, although afterwards used by Plato to solve the problem of the Universe as a whole, being invented by Socrates in the first instance for the more immediate object of determining what in any given case was justice, and what injustice, what was virtue, and what vice; questions which the sophistries of the Sophists had so perplexed as to make it almost impossible to determine. Among his followers, the Cynics who constituted the left wing, made, like him, a virtuous life the end of their philosophy, using the method of dialectic rather to confirm them in their contempt for the ordinary decencies, the innocent enjoyments of life, than, like Socrates, to find out by means of it what the golden mean was in reference to all these things. The Stoics, again, although they had a distinct speculative system of their own, still made conduct and virtue and the best means of attaining them, the great aim of their speculations; while in Christianity, while the fathers and the doctors of the Church were engaged in

constructing its creed and philosophy, the great masses, accepting the doctrines without question at their hands, sought salvation by conduct chiefly, and by the attitude of soul known as faith, or conversion. In Modern Philosophy, too, you have mystical systems like that of Boehme, or systems founded on faith and belief like that of Jacobi, interspersed among the purely speculative systems, or running side by side with them. So, too, then with the Hindoo Philosophy. Besides the Vedanta, Sankhya, and Vaiseshika systems which were primarily theories of the World, you have the Nyaya system which dealt chiefly with syllogism and logic; the Mimansa which made the Veda or Sacred Scriptures its only God, representing it as having existed from eternity; and lastly the Yoga system of Patanjali. This system begins by accepting the belief in the Supreme Being as fundamental, and then goes on to ask by what conduct or mode of life, union with Him is to be attained? By distracting the mind from worldly things is the obvious solution; and in devising expedients for doing this the ingenuity of this philosophy exhausts itself. Among other things you are exhorted to constantly repeat to yourself the mystic syllable Om, to practise forbearance and religious observances, to put your body in certain favourable postures, to hold the breath, to restrain the senses, and, steadying the mind by contemplation, to try and get into a trance by fixing the eyes steadily on the tip of the nose! And, indeed, so profound in many cases does the trance become by means of these exercises, that, as Sir Monier-Williams relates, men have been known to remain immovably fixed for so long a time that birds have built nests in their hair, and ants have thrown up mounds as high as their waists; they have stared at the sun till their sight was extinguished, kept their fists clenched till the nails have grown through their hands, and have kept their arms in the air until they have become fixed there, and the flesh has withered to the bone.

Now the object of all these systems of conduct, whether Modern, or Greek, or Hindoo, is to get rid of those cravings of the senses and appetites which prevent the union of what is best in us with the Supreme Spirit. Some, like the Stoics, accomplish this by trampling on the senses; others, like the monks and ascetics, by mortifying them or starving them; others again like the Yogis, by putting them to sleep in a trance; but it is only in Christianity that an attempt is made to accomplish the same object, not by mortifying the senses and appetites, but by drawing them off to a supreme object of love and devotion elsewhere.

Such are the six systems of Hindoo Philosophy; and with them the principle of Soul as prime factor in the explanation of the phenomena of the world and of human life, exhausts itself. To turn these philosophies into the religions of the great Hindoo masses, all you have to do is to give life to these abstract essences by endowing them with personality and will. For the Supreme Soul of the Vedanta, for example, you substitute the god Brahma; for the Supreme Soul, Purusha, of the Sankhya system, and the material principle or Prakriti with which it is bound up, you substitute the male god Siva, and the goddess Sakti; while for the multitudinous variety of Nature, good and evil, through which the Supreme Soul is manifested, you have the gods Vishnu the preserver, and Siva the destroyer, with their numberless ears, and eyes, and hands.

With these preliminaries we shall now be the better able to understand the great system of Buddhism, and to estimate more justly the part that is likely to be played in the future both of Religion and Philosophy, by the system now known as Esoteric Buddhism or Theosophy. But before passing on to this, it is necessary with a view to future developments, to observe that in all these systems of Hindoo Philosophy there is an entire absence of Science in the modern sense of that term. As for Physical Science, there is of course absolutely none; there is nowhere any physical relation established between one

thing and another, no line of connexion whereby when the first thing or fact is given, the second may be foreseen to follow. And as for Mental Science, instead of a system of relations being established between any one part of the mind and every other and the whole, by which you are able to predict that when the first impulse or emotion arises the second may be expected to follow, you have a mere list, catalogue, or inventory of faculties or powers,—attention, memory, judgment, love, hatred, envy, and the rest,—flung down before you as explanation of the mind; much in the same way as the chemical elements might be flung down in a heap as explanation of the constitution of the material world, without any knowledge of the laws of their special combinations and affinities. For beyond the fact that you are told, as in the Vedanta and Sankhya systems, that of the bodily and mental elements which make up the different sheaths or veils that constitute the world, the first *produces* the second, the second the third, and so on; or as in the Vaiseshika that from certain original elements of body and mind all the differentiated powers, qualities, and attributes of matter and mind are *produced;* beyond this, neither the *why* nor *how* required by Science in its explanation of things is ever so much as hinted at;—a fact the supreme importance of which will be abundantly apparent as the course of this evolution proceeds.

CHAPTER II.

BUDDHISM.

IN the preceding chapter we have seen that three radical changes only can be rung on the double-sided pantheistic principle of Soul, where that principle is invoked as the Supreme Cause of Things, and that these three changes are in fact represented in the three distinct stages through which Hindoo Philosophy has passed in its evolution, viz., in the Vedanta, the Sankhya, and the Vaiseshika systems respectively. In the first system, the Vedanta, we saw that the *spiritual* aspect of the Soul was so aggrandized, that the *material* side of things was reduced to a mere appearance or illusion; in the Sankhya that *both* sides came in for equal, independent, and co-ordinate shares in the common result; while in the Vaiseshika, the *material* side was so prominent that the Supreme Soul, although it existed, yet played no active part in the system of things at all, while the Human Soul was reduced to the dependent position of a mere effect of the groupings and combinations of its mind-atoms, which, strange to say, constitute its material side. With these three systems the general principle of Soul exhausts itself as Supreme Cause of things; and the only position left for Hindoo Philosophy to take up is to deny the existence of Soul altogether, both Divine and human. And this was the step taken by Buddha.

Of the details of the Buddhist system, the researches of scholars have furnished us with material in such abundance,

that probably little more of importance remains to be known; but of the successive links in the chain of thought and reflection by which Buddha, brooding and pondering over the various systems of religion and philosophy around him, arrived at his results, no sufficiently consecutive account has yet been given. This deficiency I shall now do my best to supply, and shall endeavour so to re-arrange the great central ideas of his system, that its lesser streams of thought shall be seen to flow from them by a natural and spontaneous sequence. And this can probably be best done by enquiring at the outset, what that aim or end is, which not only the Hindoo Religion but its systems of Philosophy propose as the result of their labour and speculation? The answer in a word is, the attaining of that state of bliss which is believed to follow from the union and absorption of the human Soul in the Divine; and the no less important consequence of this, viz., the escape of the individual from the necessity of re-birth and re-incarnation on earth. And this latter consequence introduces us at once to one of the most curious differences between the Eastern and the Western mind, and to a view of the world and of life which to European nations is scarcely credible. With us, life itself and the continuance of life—and the more and fuller the life the better—is an end in itself, to be bought, if need be, by the sacrifice of almost all else besides; but to those poor Hindoos, what with ages of despotism, and a certain impassivity of nature inherent or acquired, life, which to us is a blessing, is a real curse and sorrow; and the prospect of birth and re-birth on earth, which would give us no great concern, is as cheerless and hopeless as the rounds of an everlasting treadmill, or an endless journey to and fro across burning or barren sands. And all the more so, perhaps, because with them the task of shaking off the burden of life on earth is so difficult. To us this seems a simple matter enough, and anyone who is prepared to chance the life to come, may at any time get rid of life on earth once and for all, by a bare bodkin. But to the Hindoo, neither death by his own

hand nor by that of another can avail anything, so long as the merit necessary for union with the Supreme Soul has not been attained. So long as any the smallest trace of selfishness, of love of the world and its vanities, adheres to the soul, it must descend again to the Earth for further rounds of re-incarnation; and hence the extremes of asceticism and self-mortification to which the Hindoo will cheerfully submit, in order to escape from that dreaded fate.

With these preliminary observations, which may serve as key-note to the Hindoo way of looking at life, we may now remark that that union of the Individual Soul with the Supreme Soul which is to free men from further re-birth on Earth, is represented both in Hindoo religion and philosophy as a state of supreme bliss; and it was owing to the logical contradictions which Buddha encountered when pondering on this doctrine of supreme bliss and the means of reaching it, that his own system of doctrine took its rise. For in all these Hindoo systems, it will be remembered, it was a main article of belief that no union of the human soul with the Divine Soul was possible, until the former had purified itself of the last trace of selfishness and worldly desire. Now it is evident that no act done in the present with the object of a future reward, can be altogether free from that secret self-regard which, according to all these systems, must be got rid of before the Human Soul can unite with the Supreme Soul. Buddha had already discovered this in his own experience, for having retired to the forest to put in practice the asceticism of the Brahmin hermits—their penances, and fastings, and bodily and mental mortifications —he found that he was still as far from the goal as ever. For, however much these asceticisms may have chastened his bodily desires and appetites, they did not enable him to get rid of that secret pride, self-love, and complacency which such so-called meritorious acts tended to engender—and certainly not at all of that longing for future bliss on which the eye of the devotee was for ever fixed. He saw, in short, that they were merely

the sacrifices of present bodily and mental pleasure, for the sake of a greater pleasure by and bye. He was accordingly constrained to give them up, much to the disgust of his companions. As for the rites and ceremonies, the prayers and sacrifices of the Brahmins, these were still more palpably only sacrifices of present bodily or worldly good for the sake of a greater future good, and were equally of no avail; while as for the systems of the philosophers, they were still more contradictory. For while on the one hand they represented the union of the Individual Soul with the Supreme Soul as a state of perfect bliss, on the other hand, as in the Vedanta, they represented this supreme bliss as due to the first of the veils of illusion which the soul puts on; and as all these veils must be stripped off the soul before it can unite with the Supreme Soul, it is evident that that union cannot be one of bliss. So that whether we take the religion of the people, or the doctrines of the philosophers, it is evident that the bliss for which they all alike yearn, and the cessation from earthly existence which was their dream, were on their own logic impossible. And as this was due entirely to the belief in the continued existence of a personal identity called the Soul, through all the changes both of body and mind, Buddha was impelled to deny the existence of any soul whatever, whether human or Divine. But, as to take this momentous step was to break with the whole tradition of Hindoo Thought which, as we have seen, was built from foundation to roof on this double-sided principle of Soul, it was natural that it should give him pause; and indeed it was not until after prolonged meditation under the Bo-tree, that he saw his way to a scheme of the World superior in harmony to the old Soul-theory, and equal if not superior to it in meeting the intellectual and moral wants of the time: and so was finally impelled to break away for ever from the doctrine of Soul, and once and for all to repudiate it.

Now as to these wants of the intellect and heart, there were three at least for which any scheme must provide, if it would

meet with acceptance either from the philosophers or the vulgar. It must provide some plausible theory of the World and of Life, some credible explanation of the origin and significance of this moving panorama of animals and plants and men; it must provide means for the cessation of birth and re-birth on earth; and it must provide some state of blissful peace and rest, here or hereafter. And all these wants Buddha felt that he could satisfactorily meet without the belief in any Soul whatever, Human or Divine, and without going beyond the circle of the thought and speculation of his time.

The first thing, however, was to get rid of the doctrine of the Soul. How was this to be done? How explain the world without it? And how make the mind hold together as a possible existence without it? This was Buddha's first concern, and to accomplish it he had recourse to arguments drawn from the mouths of the philosophers themselves. For he pointed out that the feeling of continued personal identity and self-consciousness from which the belief in a soul was drawn, was, according to all the systems, a part not of the soul, but of the material counterpart that is always bound up with it, coming into being like other material existences, and like them passing away. In the Vedanta System, for example, it will be remembered, the feeling of self-consciousness was produced by one of the veils of illusion with which the Soul surrounded itself; in the Sankhya, it was produced by Prakriti, the *material* counterpart bound up with the Soul; while in the Vaiseshika it was produced by one of those temporary aggregates of mind-atoms which, like the atoms of fire, air, earth, and water, existed independently of the soul. According therefore to the philosophers themselves, self-consciousness or the feeling of personal identity was either an illusion, or it was only a temporary aggregate of sensations, turning up in the great flux of things. It was thus but a broken reed on which to rest the belief in a Soul which, instead of a temporary appearance, was an eternal and abiding reality; which instead of being one in nature with

self-consciousness, as in our Western thought, was eternally distinct from it. In this way having convinced himself that there was no real justification in the systems of the philosophers for the belief in the existence of the Human Soul, and much less for the existence of the Supreme Soul, Buddha had now to show how both the World and the Human Mind could be satisfactorily accounted for without it.

Now both in the popular Hindoo belief and in the systems of the philosophers, the world with its animals and plants and men, was wont to be explained by the hypothesis that these existences were the rewards and punishments which were being meted out to re-incarnated souls for the good or evil deeds done in previous lives; and if the very existence of souls was denied it would indeed at first sight seem impossible to account for this varied world of life. But Buddha was equal to the difficulty, and again it was in the systems of the philosophers themselves that he discovered a basis for a theory of his own. In the Vaiseshika System, it will be remembered, there were five different kinds of atoms that had existed from all eternity, and were immutable and indestructible. These were the atoms of fire, of air, of earth, of water, and of mind; and the change and flux of things, their coming into being and passing away, was explained as due not to any change in the atoms themselves, but only to the different combinations into which for the time being they entered. These original atoms included, as I have said, those of mind; and just as the infinite varieties of material bodies were only different combinations of the fire, air, earth, and water; so the infinite varieties of thoughts and feelings were but different combinations of these original atoms of mind. And as these atoms of mind were indestructible, and as *mental* combinations cannot be decomposed by fire, air, earth, or water, as *material* combinations can, it is evident that those relatively fixed combinations of thought and feeling, of craving or desire, which go to make up what we speak of as a man's genius or character, cannot be dissolved by death like

material bodies (where the fire, air, earth, and water, burn, quench, and otherwise extinguish one another), but, unless killed during life, must wander about the world of shades like disembodied spirits, holding together like a swarm of liberated bees, until they come across a suitable body, nidus, or tabernacle, in which to take up their abode,—or in other words, to re-incarnate. Such was the train of thought and reasoning that gave rise to Buddha's great doctrine of Karma, the doctrine, viz., which denying the existence of Soul, still asserts that the effects on a man's self of his speech and action, or in other words his *character*, are indestructible and cannot die, and are as inevitable and as sure to appear, as the effects of violations of, or conformity to the Laws of Nature; thus accounting for the world and its inhabitants without the necessity of a Soul, and explaining the world of the future from the world of the present, as it explains the present from the world of the past. As for the origin, age, and First Cause of the whole Universe itself which so exercised those who believed in a Supreme Soul, Buddha having satisfactorily explained to himself the limited world we see, was content to dismiss the larger question as a mystery beyond the range, as it was unworthy the concern, of serious men.

Having in this way explained the World and the Human Mind without resorting to the belief in the existence of souls, Buddha was also prepared with a complete and harmonious scheme for realizing the other two pre-requisites of any philosophy that should hope for popular support, viz., the getting rid of re-birth and re-incarnation on earth, and the attaining to a state of bliss.

It will be remembered that in the popular religion and philosophies of the Hindoos, the escape from further re-birth and re-incarnation on earth was to be attained only by the laying up of sufficient *merit*,—whether through rites and ceremonies, purifications, penances, and prayers, as in the popular religion; or by the extremes of asceticism and self-mortification as with the Yogi hermits; or by knowledge alone

as among the Vedanta and other philosophers—but that none of them were able so to purge the soul of its self-interest, cravings, and vanities, as to fit it for that union with the Supreme Soul which was the only condition of its escape from the rounds of birth and re-birth on earth. And we have now to ask how Buddha proposed to do it? Evidently, by in some way or other destroying the Mind-atoms, or their re-incarnating aggregates. But how? These atoms could not be killed by the death of the body, either as atoms or when united into those more or less definite and constant aggregates which we know as individual character. Nor could they be killed by knowledge as in the Vedanta and Sankhya Systems, for knowledge alone would not give virtue and character. They could only be said to be killed when the cravings and desires ceased to exist. But as no asceticism and self-mortification, however extreme, even if it killed the bodily organs associated with desire (and this it could never altogether do while life lasted), could kill the *mind* atoms of desire, could kill pride, or self-love, or that craving for future bliss which was the motive-power impelling to these mortifications; the only other possible alternative was to starve them out, as it were, by withdrawing conscious attention from them, and so, gradually allowing them to die of inanition. Now the only way of preventing the mind from dwelling too much on its own *self*, was to fix it on the *not self*, that is to say on the happiness or welfare of others. It was not necessary, therefore, that the attempt should be made to kill the desires outright as the Yogis did, by the direct method of extreme mortification and asceticism; but only that they should be so far disciplined and trained as to keep them at every point overshadowed and overpowered, as it were, by the higher motives; to keep them so subdued, in a word, that the mind could always be turned from them, and concentrated on the happiness and welfare of others. And hence it was that Buddha, after trying a course of self-mortification, penance, and asceticism in the forest, and

finding it unavailing, came out of it, not indeed to eat and drink, and love and hate like other men, but to practice a bodily and mental regimen which, although extreme when compared with the freedom of other religious reformers such as Mahomet and Christ, was when compared with the extreme asceticism of the Yogis, almost licentious. His plan, then, was not to try and stamp out that smallest residuum of desire necessary to life, but to so arrange matters that, like Napoleon, he should be able at all times and places to concentrate an overpowering force of unselfish motive on any point where desire was likely to arise, and so to beat it off or keep it down; to so load the unselfish motives, as it were, that, throw the man in what position you would, his love for others and abnegation of self would always, as in a loaded die, turn face uppermost. He would, in a word, out-manœuvre selfishness and desire, and starve them out, rather than attempt to kill them outright by a direct attack,—which, as we have seen, he believed to be for ever impossible. Now this method he summed up in what he called his "noble eight fold path" which consisted in the following eight particulars:—Right belief, right feeling, right speech, right action, right means of livelihood, right endeavour, right memory, and right meditation. And here it is evident that the word right must mean that two sides exist, and that feeling, speech, action, modes of livelihood, endeavour, memory, and meditation are not to be crushed out altogether by extreme asceticisms and self-mortifications, as was the endeavour of the Yogi philosophers, but only that the nobler exercises of these functions, and not the baser, shall at every point be kept supreme; that our feeling, for example, shall be one of love, not of hate; that our speech shall be charitable, and not envious or spiteful; that our action shall be for the good of others, and not of ourselves; that our mode of livelihood shall be one which while enabling us to support life, shall not be such as shall stimulate or inflame desire; that our endeavour shall be after

high and pure thoughts and resolves, and not bodily mortification; that our memory shall dwell on the lives of the Saints and Arhâts, and not on vain repetitions of the words of the Vedas; and that our meditations shall be centred on the noblest truths, and not, like the Yogis, on mere nothingness and vacancy—with the eyes fixed on the tip of the nose! In all this we see that two terms are involved between which the right relationship or harmony has to be established, and not merely one term, with the other crushed out. Not a Greek harmony it is true, where the several parts of our nature are as evenly balanced as the opposite sides of a circle, but such a treatment of them that the unselfish side shall always keep uppermost. This involves, no doubt, a good deal of severe discipline, and to those who would reach the highest goal, what to our Western minds would seem the extreme of asceticism. The novice, for example, who enrolled himself in the order of monks which Buddha established, was not to marry; he was to beg his food from door to door, dressed in a ragged orange-coloured robe; and, dwelling in a hut in the forest, was to spend long hours in meditation on the sublimest truths, and on the best ways of doing good. But as the selfish nature in man is naturally stronger than the unselfish, something more was necessary to make the higher nature the stronger than merely disciplining the lower and stroking it over with fine ethical precepts, however golden. All religions have felt this need, and have provided for it some in one way some in another. Christianity, for example, took the positive method of attempting to reinforce and redouble the natural strength of the higher nature, by the stimulus of the enthusiasm aroused among men by the presence of a unique personal exemplar. But as, according to Buddha, each man had to work out his own salvation for himself, without God or Soul, this method was not available; and the only alternative was, in some way or other, still further to weaken the lower desires. His plan was to cause the decay and death of our lower nature not so much by directly

attempting to stamp out the desires as they arose, as by starving them out through cutting off the motives for them at their root; in the same way, and on the same principle, as we feel that to the condemned man about to die, the motives for untruthfulness are withdrawn. Now as Buddha conceived that the motive-power which kept up the existence of desire, was the belief in the existence in us of a Soul, or continuous thread of personal identity running alike through our present, past, and future, so that the pleasure lost now, would be gained in the future by the same continuous ego; he made the denial of it the first step in the programme of his "noble eightfold path;" —Right Belief, viz. or belief in the non-existence of Soul, Divine or human. Believing the soul, as we have seen, to be a mere aggregate of more or less definite feelings and powers,—'skandas' he called them—sensations, abstract ideas, memory, reflection, attention, will, joy, covetousness, contentment, shame, effrontery, love, hate, doubt, delusion, vanity, pride, merit and demerit, etc., etc., some 52 of them in all, including, be it observed, individuality or self-consciousness, from which, as we have seen, the idea of a continuous soul arises—and believing these faculties and sentiments, in turn, to be mere aggregates of mind-atoms in different combinations; these combinations coming into being and passing away like bubbles, mirage, or the foam of the sea—he considered it to be as absurd to imagine that the same soul or individuality, the same 'I am,' that enjoyed or suffered to-day, would enjoy or suffer to-morrow, as it would be to imagine that it would be the same water that would make the river to-morrow, that makes it to-day. By gradually starving the desires, then, by cutting off all motive for their action through the denial of the existence of a continuous soul in man, Buddha hoped to be able to keep the higher nature supreme at every point, and that in time the craving and desire, the thirst for existence, would gradually slacken, until it ceased altogether. He believed that the disciple who had felt the inefficacy of all the rites and

ceremonies, the prayers, penances, and self-mortifications of the Brahmins, and who should begin afresh by denying the existence of Soul whether Divine or human, and of individuality and personal identity, would be able gradually to reduce all sensuality and hatred, all clinging to existence here or hereafter to a minimum, and finally to get rid of them altogether; that he would then be fit to enter on the path of the Holy Ones or Arhâts, where, free from all clinging to life, from all pride, envy, self-righteousness, and sin, he would, like a mother with her child, have nothing else to live for but love to others, and universal good-will. He would have attained to holiness, and would have put an end to all delusion and all sorrow. He would, in Buddha's own beautiful metaphors, stand like a pillar of the city gates unmoved, like the broad expanse of earth unvexed, or like the pellucid lake unruffled; and would not only have reached a bliss, a mental serenity and peace passing all understanding while he lived, but at the end of this life there should be for him no more re-births on earth. All desire and craving having become extinct, no more Karma in consequence was being produced, while the old one was gradually working itself out and becoming exhausted. Now this bliss here on earth, followed by death, or rather freedom from re-birth hereafter, is what Buddha means by Nirvana—an interpretation of the term which, following as it does by logical necessity from the whole of his doctrine, re-unites and reconciles the views of those two hostile schools of commentators the one of whom would have it to mean only a blissful peaceful state of mental serenity in which all desire is extinguished, and the other only annihilation, by making it to mean both, only not at one and the same time—but first bliss here and in this world, and afterwards annihilation and extinction. And if, as the Northern Buddhists and some of the sects of Southern Buddhism contend, Nirvana means also the continuance of this blissful state into another sphere of existence; this, too, would still be in harmony with the rest of

Buddha's doctrine. For if the bad mind-aggregates, the aggregates giving rise to desire, etc., must continue for ever to exist and to cause re-birth on earth unless killed out, the good mind-aggregates which help to kill these bad ones by drawing off attention from them, must also continue to exist through all time. And if these good aggregates can produce a blissful state of mind even in this world and while the body still lives, much more must they produce this blissful state when the body no longer lives to oppose them.

If now we ask in a general way how Buddhism differed in these respects from the existing Religion and Philosophies of the time, we must answer that while they held out to their votaries and followers a blissful existence in another state of being in the union of their individual souls with the Supreme Soul, and, in consequence, a cessation from re-incarnation on earth, Buddha held out to his followers, besides the same freedom from re-incarnation, a blissful existence in *this* life, now and here, even if not in another life also. Besides, while what the Hindoo Religion and Philosophies promised, although beautiful in theory, was impossible of attainment while the existence of a continuous and individual soul was assumed; what Buddha promised was within the reach of all. And all this he was able to do for them, by a new synthesis, merely, of doctrines already held in one or other of the existing Hindoo Systems, and without violating any of the distinctive features of Hindoo thought,—with the single exception, of course, of the denial of the existence of Souls. But this denial of a continuous personality or individuality, however scientifically true, was so opposed to the intuitions of men, that Buddhism, after having over-run the greater part of India, was driven out in turn again by Brahminism which, with its doctrine of the soul, was more in harmony, at that stage of culture, with the intuitions and consciousness of men.

And now perhaps it may be as well to sum up the general significance of these Hindoo systems of Religion and Philosophy

by contrasting them in their great characteristics with our Western modes of thought. And this cannot be better done, perhaps, than by comparing them as to the way in which they propose to attain the great end of all religions, in so far, that is, as religions affect the minds and characters of men. Now as the lower faculties of our nature, our self-interest and passions, are stronger than our higher feelings and our regard for the welfare of others, we may say that the main object of all religious and ethical systems has been to devise means whereby these positions shall be reversed, and the higher instincts of our nature be so re-inforced and strengthened, that notwithstanding their relative weakness they may be made practically supreme. And this, it is obvious, can be done either by weakening and depressing our lower nature, or by stimulating and strengthening our higher, or by both together. Now the scheme of the Hindoo Religion and Philosophy is one of pure and absolute repression, a dead mechanical round of pure asceticism, self-mortification, and penance, with such bodily or worldly sacrifices as are involved in the offering of worldly goods or in the refraining from physical and bodily comforts. In this scheme, the higher nature is kept uppermost, as we see, not by any direct re-inforcement of itself from without, but by the direct weakening and depression of the lower nature. In Buddhism, the whole of these rites, ceremonies, sacrifices, and offerings are swept away, the extremes of asceticism and self-mortification are avoided as useless and unnecessary, and only such repression is put on appetites and desires as shall prevent their intruding on the field of consciousness; the main reliance being placed on the process of starving them out, by denying the existence of the soul, or continuous identity, in whose service they are yoked, and thus cutting off the motives that keep up their activity; trusting that when the motives for selfishness are killed out, there will be no more reason for withholding our natural sympathies from others, than there would be for a condemned man withholding the truth on the

morning of his execution, or for a balloon not rising in the air when the ropes that keep it to the earth are cut away. With Christianity, on the other hand, all is different; and the difference is typical of the *toto cælo* difference between Eastern and Western thought. Christianity differs from both Hindooism and Buddhism in the same way as the principle of love differs from the principle of asceticism, as the solicitude of affection differs from the sordid calculations of hope and fear. It acts, not by repressing the lower, but by stimulating the higher nature; raising it above itself, as it were, by holding up before it for its contemplation a Divine ideal and object of love, in whose presence the lower desires shrink into the shade. In other words, while Hindooism would keep the higher nature uppermost, by the direct but negative method of killing out the lower, and Buddhism by the indirect but still negative method of cutting away the motives that feed its root, Christianity would accomplish the same object by the positive method of directly stimulating, strengthening, and aggrandizing the higher nature, by holding up before it a supreme object of devotion and love.

Now if these differences correspond to differences in the very genius of Eastern and Western Thought, it is not very likely they will stop here, but will be found to run into every aspect of practical life and conduct. Hindooism, for example, represents the extreme of Individualism. The one object of its votaries is to save their own souls, not by working for the welfare of others but by attending solely to their own salvation, not by following through love the footsteps of a high personal exemplar wherever they may lead, but by practising a low and selfish asceticism, and by keeping a profit and loss account of merit and demerit. It has no regard, therefore, for the welfare of the family, let alone for that of the State, or the world at large; and to this disregard, the doctrine of re-incarnation, which means the incarnation in their children not of their own souls but of the souls of other men, still further lends

itself. Indeed, neither Hindooism nor Buddhism, being based, the one on the doctrine of Soul as the Supreme Cause of things, and the other on its mere denial, can find support in their systems for any doctrine of love among men; for that sentiment can only get inspiration from an intelligent, loving First Cause, and not from a mere blind Vital Principle or Soul. Now Christianity no doubt, too, is primarily individualistic, for the first object of the believer is to save his own soul; yet owing to its getting its constraining force from the love of Christ, and the fatherhood of God, it permits and encourages all that can make for the good of the family, the State, and the World; feeling that in this it is doing the will of God. Again the object of Hindooism being to attain to bliss by the direct suppression of all forms of desire, all the great work of secular life which springs from the stimulus of one or other form of desire—of wealth, of power, of fame, of applause—is directly repressed; and life itself, with nothing on which to exercise itself, must become a weariness, and re-birth therefore a misery and sorrow. It is obvious, then, that Civilization, which is the record of the achievements of man when pushed on by the desire to satisfy his wants,—his want of what is good to eat, good to wear, good to ease the friction of life and of society, good for peace of mind, good for the satisfaction of the eye and heart, and the like,—it is obvious that Civilization, to men who can live on a little rice, and with whom the satisfaction of these desires could only serve to lay up a store of future demerit, must be an anomaly; and, since for the same reasons, Science, in the modern sense of the term, and in its application to the arts of life, has made no advance; must remain stagnant and unprogressive. Buddhism, too, has no need of Science; for although, like Christianity, it makes the good of others one of its means of Salvation, it is not their bodily or mental welfare but only the welfare of their souls that is its object, and not of their souls in the sense of expanding and enlarging them, but only in the sense of the merit or demerit, the profit or loss they

are laying up for themselves against the day of judgment or re-incarnation. It supplies, therefore, no motive to forward Science, or to apply it to the arts of life. And as the object of Buddhism is the suppression of all desire, it gives no stimulus to material progress or to Civilization. Indeed one may observe here, that neither Hindooism nor Buddhism could be universal religions, were it for nothing more than that they both require that others shall supply their bodily wants while they sit in meditation; and therefore their success, viz., the getting rid of desire, is only possible on the condition that others shall have enough desire to work to support them. With Christianity, on the other hand, where the desires, instead of being repressed, find their legitimate sphere in working for the good of the family, the State, and the World, Science is directly stimulated and encouraged for the sake of its practical results; and would be more so, indeed, were it not for fear of its speculative effects on the Mosaic Cosmogony with which Christianity happens to be bound up. Civilization, in consequence, is to that extent directly promoted by Christianity.

Summing up, then, we may say of Buddhism, that it is the most determined attempt ever made to solve the problem of the world not only without God or the Soul, but without either Civilization or the influence of environing conditions. The attempt, however, to make of it a universal religion was hopeless in the face of the higher point at which Western Thought had arrived. For although its beautiful ethical precepts were in many ways identical with those of Christianity, still the difference in the position occupied by these ethics in the systems of Buddha and of Christ respectively is as great as the difference in the position occupied by the Laws of Nature, in Stoicism and in Modern Science. In Stoicism, although the Laws of Nature were held up as inflexible and inviolable, as a Fate to which all must bow, still no attempt was made to discover any of these laws; and in the absence of the knowledge of the *particular* laws, no advance was possible

either in knowledge of the world, in civilization, or in the arts of life. So, too, with Buddhism. Although its central precept, as in Christianity, is the doing good to others, that good consists in the cutting away of all desire, and therefore no effective motive is given for improving the material welfare of men. Its power of really helping others, accordingly, could go no farther than sitting idly weeping over them or with them, or in the barren comfort of wishing them well; whereas Christianity, by encouraging Science in the application of its discoveries to the welfare of the family, the State, and the World, really does the good which Buddhism may desire indeed, but which, from its very genius and spirit, it can take no step to carry into effect.

CHAPTER III.

MODERN THEOSOPHY.

IN the present chapter I propose to complete my study of Hindoo Thought by some account of that curious modern mixture of Hindooism and Buddhism which is known as Theosophy. I do this the more readily inasmuch as it will not only give me an opportunity of discussing certain great intellectual fallacies by which the human mind has at all times been deceived, but will also help to dissipate the exaggerated pretensions which have been made for this particular system by its modern disciples. For this ancient wisdom of the Eastern Sages, this philosophy of the Mahatmas or Masters, professes, it is to be remembered, to contain a more comprehensive, harmonious, and sublime scheme of the Universe, than that unfolded in the Modern Philosophy of Evolution; and to meet and satisfy the higher emotions and needs of the intellect and heart better than the Religion of Christ. I had myself stumbled on the subject during the course of my studies of Hindoo Thought, and imagining that perhaps it would form only a natural sequence or pendant to the other Hindoo Systems, I entered on the perusal of Mr. Sinnett's "Esoteric Buddhism," the work in which the Mahatmas first gave their knowledge to the Western World, with somewhat languid interest. But I had not gone far when I found that it contained a system of Cosmogony, Ethics, and Metaphysics, more

complex, ingenious, and harmoniously adjusted, than any I had yet known; a system elaborated and refined to a point of detail, of which there was no example in orthodox Buddhism or in any of the other Hindoo Systems, and to which the system of Evolution of Mr. Herbert Spencer with its magnificent and far-related symmetries, alone in Western Thought affords a parallel. I was amazed at the stupendousness and harmony of the scheme, rather than convinced by it, but I nevertheless felt that here was a system of Thought before which one must pause, a system which one could not skip, but which would stand confronting one until it had been reckoned with, and in some straightforward and legitimate manner put out of the way. I had at that time been reading a good deal about thought-transference, hypnotism, clairvoyance, and the like, and was no doubt carried away into allowing the powers of the Mahatmas a greater range than, as we shall see, can legitimately be claimed for them; and it was not until I saw that the Mahatmas had assumed for these powers of clairvoyance, etc., an extension into spheres of truth not legitimately open to them, that I perceived that the picturesque symmetries and ingenious harmonies which had at first so much impressed me, were not necessarily the expression of real facts at all—facts, that is to say, which could be seen by us all if our faculties had been sharpened by training and exercise to the due pitch—but, on the contrary, that they need only be mere paper-harmonies; harmonies, that is, which if one knew the precise difficulties to be overcome could be worked out on paper, like prize puzzles, by successive generations of ingenious monks exercising their imagination and working perhaps, on some earlier design or pattern that had come down to them. And then, too, I perceived that however high and noble the aims of the Theosophists might be, and this I readily admit, if once this illegitimate method of the self-hypnotist and clairvoyant, were to supersede the ordinary and legitimate methods of Science, viz., observation, experiment, induction,

and verification—not only would men be perplexed with the world of ghosts and shades and malignant spirits of the departed which the Theosophists have conjured up for us, but it would bring back all those superstitions of the Middle Ages which we have at last and with so much labour happily outgrown. The witch and the black magician would again be with us; the sorcerer would take the place of the Scientific Physician and of the careful observer of Natural Law; and the more nervous portion of mankind self-hypnotized by their own superstitions, would again be whipped into madness by the imaginary presence among them of hosts of malignant but invisible foes. And now I saw why it was that the high priests both of Religion and Science had passed by Theosophy in silence. The truth is, it does not lay itself open to refutation either by Physical Science or by Religion. Not by Science; for it professes to exhibit its harmonies on a plane to which Science does not pretend to have as yet been able to penetrate, and by means of mental powers to which Science with its limitation to the five senses and the instruments that aid them, is a stranger. Nor can it be refuted by Religion; for it simply and frankly opposes the authority and revelation of the Mahatmas to the authority and revelation of Jesus and Mahomet, and nothing more can be said. If refuted at all, it would most easily be done by the method which the Zoologist would use to refute the claims of some strange and newly-discovered mammal that was being forced on his notice; from the point of view, viz., of its philosophical genealogy, or the position it occupies in the evolutionary chain of World-Philosophy as a whole. And one would make the same reply to Theosophy that the Scientist would to the stranger who should come from Australia, bringing with him specimens of its flora and fauna, and who should contend that their rich and luxuriant foliage or their particular beauties of structure rendered it probable that they would supersede the flora and fauna of the Western World. The Scientist would reply that

this result must be for ever impossible, as the forms in question —kangaroos, ferns, and palm-like trees—were the lineal descendants and existing representatives of those earlier and lower forms of life which during the Jurassic period covered the entire globe, but which, owing to geological catachysms, had become imprisoned in Australia and the adjacent islands, while the flora and fauna of the mainland had gone on to the development of higher and higher forms. In the same way one would endeavour to prove that Theosophy, like some opossum among the higher mammalia, is the sole representative in the Western World of a type and mode of thought which attained its culmination in the East some two thousand years ago, but which cut off since then from European influences has remained stagnant, while European Thought has steadily gone on evolving into higher and higher forms. And one might go farther and contend that far from superseding Western modes of Thought as its followers believe, it will not even be able to unite with them so as to take its place as an element in the philosophical evolution of the future. But I must limit myself for the present to the direct treatment of its two great cardinal features, viz., its Method, and its Doctrine of the Planetary Chain. In doing this, I shall make no apology for treating the matter seriously, ridicule of the system having already had its day; and the discussion, at any rate, will serve to throw into clearer relief some of those curious tricks of intellectual sleight-of-hand by which, in this motley age of Spiritualism, Rationalism, Scientific Materialism, and Religious Dogmatism, the beliefs and imaginations of men have been entrapped, fascinated, or subdued.

To begin, then, with the Instrument or Method by which the Mahatmas have arrived at their knowledge of the Constitution of the World, and of the end, aim, and meaning of existence. Now of all the characteristics of a system of Philosophy, this of the Method or Instrument by which it arrives at truth is by far the most important. Whether a

system relies mainly on the testimony of the outer physical senses, as in Mr. Spencer's Philosophy of Evolution, or on the testimony of the inner spiritual senses, as in the poetic philosophies of Bacon, Goethe, Emerson, and Carlyle; whether, with Cardinal Newman, it uses the "Illative Sense," or, like the Metaphysicians, the merely logical and formal Understanding; whether it makes the satisfaction of the heart its main criterion, as in the higher religions, or employs the method of clairvoyance and hypnotism, as is done by the Mahatmas,—on this question of the "instrument" or method, as on the right or wrong focussing of a camera, will depend either the truth and reality of the resulting picture, or its falseness, exaggeration, and deformity. I shall not, therefore, apologize for asking the reader to observe with me the cunning and dexterous manipulation with which the Mahatmas, in presenting their system to the World, have substituted for the genuine results of their method, totally different and illegitimate ones, as if they were one and the same thing. Their method, as I have said, is the method of the clairvoyant, the thought-reader, the hypnotist, or the spiritualistic medium—it matters not which, for in essence they are all alike—and the one indispensable condition to success is, that the things they reveal while in the trance-like state shall be previously known to some living mind or minds with whom the medium is able to put himself *en rapport*. In this state, it is now generally admitted, the medium can do many strange and wonderful things. He can, for example, tell you the number of a bank-note known only to its possessor, he can find his way to the spot where a hidden pin lies, he can read the contents of sealed letters, and can even recall circumstances and events in the life of others which have passed quite out of their conscious memory. Or, again, in his capacity of crystal-gazer he can look at a finger-ring and tell you the romance of its history, at the panels of a room and uncover again the deeds and scenes of which they were the witness, at the ruins of a city wall and re-

trace the steps of its prosperity and decay. But all this he can do only on one condition, viz., that the facts in question are known to one or other of the persons present at the séance, or to those with whose mind he has been able to put himself in communication. Now in all this, it is evident that there is no *increase* of knowledge either of the facts or of the laws of Nature or of human life, but only its *transfer* or exchange. The contents of one mind are picked and appropriated by another, and the sum-total of knowledge in the world remains the same as before. And hence it is that no clairvoyant, thought-reader, or mesmerist has ever professed to have added anything by his art to the existing knowledge of Nature or of human life. He has never made any discovery by it in mechanics, physics, chemistry, biology, or botany; has never by invention applied discoveries in these sciences to the arts of life; and has never thrown any new light on history, or on the causes that regulate the rise and fall of Societies or of States. Indeed, unless someone whose thoughts he can pick has already known these things before him, he can utter no word; and until the astronomer, the zoologist, and the traveller have spoken, he must remain dumb as to the constitution of the Moon or Mars, as to the life of the deep sea beds, and as to the interior of dark and impenetrable continents. And as for his knowledge of the laws of that human mind whose passing thoughts he can pick so easily, one would as soon expect to get an essay of Bacon or a play of Shakespeare from a schoolboy, as from him. But to do him justice, he has made no pretence to be able by his method to do any of these things.

And now observe the difference in the attitude and pose of the Mahatmas. Their object is the same as that of the medium, viz., to pass as quickly and easily as possible into that trance-like state into which a hypnotized or mesmerized person is thrown; their means, too, are the same, viz., the fixing the attention steadily on some object—in their case, as is recommended by the Yoga Philosophy, usually on the tip of the

nose! There is no reason, therefore, why their powers should differ in *kind* from those of the ordinary medium, however much, owing to their greater asceticism and more systematic training, they may differ in *degree*, as for example in the clearness of their trance-perceptions, the distance to which their mind can be projected, and the like. And yet, with a hardihood to which I can remember no parallel, they have calmly assumed that because they can read off with facility such facts and events as are known to other minds, they could equally read them were they altogether unknown. And, indeed, at the first blush the two things seem so alike, and it seems to make so little difference whether you can read off the facts from other men's minds or read them off independently, that their disciples have been completely taken in. And yet when you come to consider it, there is as deep a gulf fixed between the two things, as between heaven and earth. The one, as we have seen, gives no increase of knowledge, the other is the virtual assumption of all knowledge; the one goes no farther than the modest claims of the thought-reader, the other boldly claims the omniscience of a God. Once allow the Mahatmas this omniscience, and it follows that nothing in heaven or earth or sea can be concealed from their gaze. And accordingly we find them claiming, and their disciples admitting, that they could, if they would, settle for us all those disputed questions about the inner constitution of the Sun, the nature of the Ether and other elemental forces, and the like, on which men and Science have been so long engaged; while as for what takes place within the mere limits of our Solar System, they are as familiar with it as if it were their own back garden. And this claim of omniscience on the part of poor mortals like themselves, their disciples instead of baulking at, have swallowed with as much credulity and easy good faith as yokels at a country fair. Stiffly upheld in their belief by the phenomena of hypnotism and thought-transference which in all simplicity they imagine to be the same sort of thing, but differing only in degree, they have

yielded themselves up to this claim to omniscience on the part of the Mahatmas without a murmur of protest or suspicion, doggedly upholding the claim themselves, and indignantly repudiating any doubt cast on it by others. And all because some poor clairvoyant or thought-reader is able to read the passing thoughts of other minds! For it must be remembered that the belief in the Mahatmas rests not on any personal experience which the disciple himself has of these powers, but on the false assumption that they are really and logically analagous with those other powers of which he has experience, viz., of the thought-reader and hypnotist. Probably no more successful piece of intellectual *legerdemain* has ever been played off in the history of human thought, and considering how gross and palpable is the deception, when once pointed out, none more readily or greedily swallowed. How gross the deception is, and to what ludicrous lengths it will carry the disciple when once firmly entertained, can nowhere be better seen than in the case of the author of "Esoteric Buddhism."* If, like the rest, he has been betrayed by a false analogy into believing that the things that are seen by clairvoyants and thought-readers in a trance are the real things themselves, and not the mere thoughts of the things as they exist in other minds, then it follows that these things must have a real objective existence in fact. And hence we have him gravely declaring that the *astral plane* is crowded not only with all the thoughts, ideas, wishes, and passions of all the human beings who have ever existed, but that every mountain, river, or building has also left its image there, and will continue to leave it for immeasurable periods of time. And not only these, but the ghost of every shop window, market cart, and hansom cab, even of every old hat and pair of trousers, is to be found there also! To such a depth of absurdity has he been reduced by not perceiving that to see the thoughts of things as they exist in other minds—and this is all he had any reason to expect from the method of

*Nineteenth Century, *August, 1894.*

the Mahatmas—is not quite the same thing as the omniscience involved in their claim to see the things themselves.

But if there be still any doubt, and if further proof be wanting that neither clairvoyants, thought-readers, nor Mahatmas can see what to mortal men cannot be known, it will be found in this fact alone, viz., that what these 'Seers' say they see in the other world for example (and this is a good test case), is in each case as different and contradictory as are the impressions and ideas in which they have been brought up. The French Spiritualists, it is admitted, declare that the departed spirits who revisit the earth, re-incarnate in their own children; the English Spiritualists deny that they do so; and yet both are reporting not what they imagine, but what they have seen. Again, both the French and English Spiritualists assert that it is the real spirits of the departed that appear in *seance* rooms. The Mahatmas, on the contrary, are equally sure that these are only their cast-off 'shells' or mortal passions, which have been wandering about and have been caught up and re-animated for the time being by the mind of the medium; and that their real self-conscious souls are far off in Devachan or Heaven, wrapped in illusory dreams, and sublimely unconscious of the things of Earth. Even the great recognized seers, in describing Heaven as they have actually seen it, differ as widely in their reports as do the mediums, and see only the reflection of that which they have been brought up to expect. The Mahommedan seers, for example, describe it as a beautiful garden of the blest, where the figures of the Houris may be seen reposing under the trees in the shade; the Parsee sees the Chinbat Bridge of Souls guarded by the dread maiden and her dogs. Swedenborg, again, declared that he actually saw in Heaven those conditions and states which correspond to the letter of the Bible in which he had been brought up, and in which he believed; while the Thibetan Mahatmas see in Devachan only the pure spirit freed from all the passionate parts of the Soul, and dwelling in peaceful reverie on all the higher experiences of what was good

and beautiful in its last incarnation on earth. Could anything further than this be wanting to the demonstration that what clairvoyants, thought-readers, seers, and Mahatmas alike see, is not the real existences at all, but only the imaginations or impressions that have been formed of them in their own or other minds? When, therefore, the disciples of the Mahatmas in all simplicity, urge as a proof of the truth of their system of Cosmogony, that it is seen precisely alike by all the brotherhood, the humour and absurdity of the position are as great as if the mesmerist should seriously appeal to the unanimity of the mesmerized under his influence, in proof of the assertion that the floor was covered with rats, or that the water they were drinking was the most delicious wine!

Having, by this first intellectual illusion, led their disciples to accept their practical omniscience, the Mahatmas, by a second, have induced them to accept their omnipotence also. Now I am quite prepared to admit the possibility that the body of a medium may, owing to some reversal of its polarity or other cause, be made to levitate towards the ceiling instead of gravitating to the floor; and that chairs and tables may be made to move from their places by magnetic or other currents emanating from his body, in the same way as magnetic currents capable of setting up mechanical movements proceed from a bar of iron when it has been brought into the condition of a magnet. But this no more implies a knowledge, in the human medium, of the forces that play through him, than in the metal one. Were it otherwise, we should long ago have got from the medium a new science. But to do him justice he has, as I have said, never professed to know any more than his audience either as to the nature or the laws of the subtle and mysterious forces that play through his body, and by which he, far from being able to control them, is himself controlled. He becomes merely, as his name implies, a medium for the time being for supplying us with a new order of facts. To get to a knowledge either of their nature or their laws, he, like the rest

of us, would be obliged to have recourse to the old method of observation, experiment, and induction; in other words he would have to drop the method of the Medium, Clairvoyant, or Hypnotist, and take up the method of the Scientist.

And now observe how the Mahatmas have changed all this. Starting from the power of the medium to levitate to the ceiling, or to make chairs and tables move without personal contact, as their premiss or basis, the Mahatmas have persuaded their followers into believing that it is merely an extension of the same sort of thing when they profess to be able to clothe the spirit at pleasure in a new body of flesh and blood, and with this body to pass through stone walls as if through air; to call the elements from the four quarters of the earth to make cigars for them, cups and saucers for them, and pen, ink, and paper for them—and all with as much ease as when Jehovah created the world out of nothing, or man out of the dust of the ground; that is to say, they have by an intellectual illusion, persuaded them into taking a leap across a gulf which is practically infinite, the gulf, viz., that separates poor human powers from omnipotence, the mere liberation of mechanical force when the body or mind is in a certain state from the complete knowledge of and control over all the forces of Nature. And all this as if it were no logical or mental leap at all, but only the next step in the common path of logical sequence! With this monstrous assumption, the reader will not feel surprised if I here draw the line, and affirm as I venture to do, that all such pretensions are and must be pure delusions of the mind. For consider it well, to make out of the scattered elements of Matter anything you please, you would require a complete knowledge of and control over all the laws and forces of Nature. So that in granting this power to the Mahatmas, their followers have passed at a bound from the premiss in which a man is a mere pipe through which certain new, and more or less unknown forces of Nature play, to the conclusion that he can attain to the knowledge and power of a God.

In this way the Mahatmas, having by one intellectual illusion induced their followers to grant them omniscience, and by another to grant them omnipotence, had little difficulty thenceforward in getting them to admit, what indeed must follow of necessity from such superhuman insight and power, viz. the truth of their great and elaborate System of Cosmogony, and of the revelations they have given of the end, aim, and meaning of human life. And finding in this scheme many subtle and seductive harmonies, this again has re-acted on and confirmed the belief in the omniscience and omnipotence of the Mahatmas. What I now propose to do, accordingly, is to examine this system of Cosmogony, to trace its genealogy, and mark out, if possible, its place in the chain of evolution of World-Philosophy as a whole. I shall also try and determine whether in its inner structure it exhibits those marks which, humanly speaking, we should expect in a System proceeding from omniscient and omnipotent minds, or whether, on the contrary, as I shall endeavour to show, its harmonies, like those paper constitutions constructed in such numbers at the time of the French Revolution, are not more easily accounted for on the hypothesis that they are merely paper-harmonies, ingenious devices for meeting certain great cardinal wants and aspirations of the human soul, but having in themselves, except on paper, no real existence at all.

To begin with then—if it be asked what it is specially in Theosophy that has so fascinated and subdued the many able and competent minds who have embraced it, and that, too, in spite of the absence from its demonstrations of those scientific methods with which most of these minds have been familiar from childhood, we shall be obliged unhesitatingly to answer, the harmonies of what is known as the 'Planetary Chain.' This Chain, which I shall presently describe, has as its component parts the seven separate and independent principles or planes of being of which, according to Theosophy, the Universe and the human mind are alike composed—the Material, the

Astral, the Vital, the Passional, the Intellectual, and the Spiritual—each and all of them being but successive outbreathings, as it were, in stages of increasing materiality and condensation, as in the passage of steam to ice, of a single Universal and Impersonal Soul; outbreathings which beginning with the spiritual, pass through the intellectual, the passional, the vital, and the astral, to end in the grossly physical and material. And these principles are so linked and interwoven in the Chain, as to give to the whole an exquisite and subtle harmony, all the parts mutually supporting and strengthening each other, and the whole being upborne on the wings of that hypnotic clairvoyance which is the final guarantee with the Theosophists for its absolute reality and truth. This chain is the last perfection, the flower and consummation of Hindoo Thought; and whether we choose to regard it as the perfect web or pattern which has been woven out of orthodox Buddhism and the other systems of Hindooism when all that is imperfect and inharmonious in these systems has been thrown away, or as itself the original esoteric design from which these systems have proceeded as separate individual threads, is of no consequence to us here, and cannot in any way affect our estimate of its inner nature and significance. That it is not the seven planes or principles in their separate and uncombined state that have captured so many able minds, may be seen in this, that they are the seven self-same principles which lay at the foundation of all the old and outgrown religions of the world—the Chinese, the Zoroastrian, the Egyptian, the Hindoo. As seen in these systems they are a mere inventory or invoice, and have no more of those organic connexions and relations between themselves necessary to constitute a scientific system, than have the items of an auctioneer's catalogue. They may or may not be just divisions of the World of Nature or Man, but you might as well fling down the chemical elements one by one and call this an explanation of the Physical World; or the

separate phrenological organs and call it an explanation of Mind; as to put forward these seven unrelated planes or principles of Theosophy as an explanation of the World. It is clear that it is not this old-world division of things into seven separate and unrelated categories or planes, that has captured the minds of those European Thinkers who have given in their adhesion to Theosophy. Nor is it that other great doctrine of the system, viz., of re-incarnation and re-birth through Karmá which has subjugated them. For although this doctrine may satisfy our sense of outraged justice, by showing that the misery and sorrow we are reaping in this present world are but the fruit of what we have ourselves sown in a former existence on earth, still the doctrine is robbed of all its practical virtue and efficacy, by their being no consciousness in us of any continuity or identity between the persons who reap and the persons who have sown; much in the same way as the paternal relation would be robbed of all its virtue, if fathers and sons when they met were ignorant of the relationship they bore to each other. Nor, again, is it their Heaven or Devachan as it is called, which has attracted so many minds; for although Theosophy holds out to its devotees the promise of a delicious opium-like dream of bliss for 1,500 years or so between each incarnation on earth, and that, too, without the unpleasant chance of any other Hell than that of re-birth in case of failure; still this is not the kind of motive that would most strongly appeal to the noble-minded, truth-loving men who have adopted this belief, and must be set aside as a main or even secondary cause of the spread of Theosophy. No, from no one or all of these causes can the spread of Theosophy be accounted for among the best minds. The real cause of its spread lies in the efficacy of these seven principles or planes of existence when bound together into the Planetary Chain; in the harmonious solutions, viz., which this chain gives to those perplexing problems of the World and of Life which Physical Science has never been able quite satisfactorily to solve, and

which still haunt the mind after she has uttered her last word. And although we should know beforehand that the mere mixing and interweaving of these principles or planes, without the establishment of real organic relations between them (and this as we shall see has not been done), can give no more real insight into the world than the same principles in separation; and that the so-called harmonies, in consequence, which result from their intermingling, are but illusions, mere word-harmonies or paper-harmonies with no existence in reality; they are nevertheless most seductive and alluring to that large class of professed thinkers who are deficient in natural penetration, and to whom the merely formal and logical concatenation or linking of things, irrespective of the nature and value of the things linked, is the main criterion of truth—a class of thinkers, I may remark in passing, than whom none are more easily duped and deceived.

What then are those unresolved doubts, suspicions, or cravings which Physical Science is unable to satisfy; and to which Theosophy claims to have given a complete and harmonious answer in its doctrine of the Planetary Chain?

First, there is the suspicion that as the bodily senses through which all natural scientific truth is reached are few in number and limited in range, even when aided and supplemented by the highest powers of microscope and telescope, there must surely exist somewhere in the world or in the mind of man, a method, power, or point of view which, if you could once find it, would let you at a bound into the whole inner truth of things, instead of this weary plodding age after age and generation after generation for infinitesimal increments of that truth which so many generations have died and must die without attaining. Now this natural doubt and suspicion, and the craving there is to satisfy them, have hitherto been met by Religion; which in its Cosmogony and its fixed and definite Revelation has given man an entrance at once into the full-orbed plenitude of both physical and spiritual truth. And it is to fill the gap left by

the discredit into which Religion has fallen in these latter days among the most advanced minds, that Theosophy now steps forward and professes, through its new method of direct clairvoyant vision, to furnish us in its Planetary Chain with the full and final scripture of eternal truth.

The second doubt, which indeed springs out of the first, is whether, the bodily senses being thus limited poor and imperfect, the explanation of the phenomena of life arrived at by Science through them—natural selection, the survival of the fittest, etc.,—are not likely to be incomplete also; and whether something more than the mere evolution and differentiation of Matter is not required, to account for those new and higher qualities of life and soul which in their successive stages of development meet us in animals and men. This doubt also was solved by Religion with its dogma of Special Creations, where the prototype of each higher form is directly created by Supernatural Will; but now that this explanation, too, has become outgrown, Theosophy again steps in, and professes to explain the mystery of the ascent of life by its doctrine of the successive currents of Life-waves which stream in on to our Earth from those higher globes of the Planetary Chain connected with the Earth, but which are invisible to our senses (although clearly seen by the clairvoyant vision of the Mahatmas); life-waves which as they flood the Earth on their way round and round the Chain, entirely alter the nature and character of the creatures it contains.

The third doubt, and one allied to the other two, is as to whether it is not probable that there should be a different and *higher* end and destiny for the human spirit than that extracted by Physical Science from the birth, decay, and death of all things in this world. This doubt and longing, Religion also met in its doctrine of a Future Life beyond the grave. Here, too, Theosophy comes to us with a fresh solution in its doctrine of the progress of the human soul when emancipated from the body, through those higher, more ethereal, and more

spiritual globes which, as we shall see, make up with our earth, the Planetary Chain.

With these preliminaries we are now prepared to learn what this Planetary Chain specially is which professes not only to supersede all existing Religions, but to give a more harmonious view of the world and of human life than can be given by Physical Science. But first, to sum up clearly in the mind the points of the problem which it is the boast of Theosophy to have solved in this Planetary Chain. They may, perhaps, all be included in the following:—Given a world which from all geologic time has been a *material* world, that is to say a world that can be seen, tasted, touched, and handled; how to account for the appearance in this material world at various periods and stages of its evolution of Psychic and Spiritual forces which seem to be eternally *distinct in nature and attribute* from those of Matter? Besides, although these forces are bound up with and embedded in Matter, they have this further peculiarity and distinction, viz., that instead of lying on the *same* plane as Matter, they are seen gradually working their way *upwards* in ascending stages or terraces through higher and higher creatures until they reach the surface as it were in Man. Then, in the highest minds of the highest races of man, and in the ideals of these minds, they are seen striving to free themselves as far as possible from the rigid body of Matter in which they are embedded, in order that they may clothe themselves in a more flexible and ethereal body. Such being the broad outline of the facts to be interpreted, we have now to ask whether Theosophy can legitimately claim to have given, in its Planetary Chain, a more harmonious explanation of them and of their inner meaning and significance, than either Religion or Physical Science?

The Planetary Chain, then, is a revelation of the Mahatmas, and is made use of by them to exhibit the way in which the Seven Planes or principles of existence of which, as we have seen, the Universe in the system of Theosophy is composed,

are interwoven and bound together, so as to explain the phenomena of the World and of human life as we know them. For the sake of greater clearness, this Chain may be figured in thought as some great wheel or circle around which seven globes, each of which corresponds to one or other of these seven principles of Nature, are suspended at regular intervals like so many different coloured Chinese lanterns; or say rather like so many buckets, each of which is full and brimming over with the special quality of life peculiar to itself. Our Earth, as the only *material* body in the chain, is situated at the bottom of the circle, at the point, that is, where the stationary wheel would rest on the ground, and where the Life-impulses streaming down one side of the wheel from the other globes would be arrested before turning to go up the other side; the other six globes which represent the astral, the vital, the spiritual, and the other principles of Existence, being, of course, invisible to us, although clearly seen by the clairvoyant eyes of the Mahatmas. Now, if we assume the successive Life-impulses or principles of being, to start from the topmost globe of the Chain, to travel down one side, filling the successive globes, like buckets, with their own peculiar quality of life or being, and evolving and transmitting the accumulating result to each globe in turn as they pass along; and if we further imagine that after reaching our Earth at the bottom, and becoming embedded there in its Matter, they then turn and pass up the other side, filling the globes on this side too with their accumulated life, until they reach the top; and so on round and round the Chain until the cycle of evolution is complete;—if we represent to ourselves all this, it is evident, is it not, that if at any particular circuit round the Chain, the life-impulse or spirit, if we may so call it, which swept over our earth, were that, say, of the fish, then by the time it came round again, having evolved in the meantime and incorporated into itself the life of the other six globes, it would no longer be the life-principle of the fish, but of something higher, say of

the reptile? And the consequence would be that this new life-impulse of the reptile breathed into the bodies of the fish, would change their entire structure and configuration, dissolving them before our eyes and reconstituting them afresh—but this time as a reptile; and all with the rapidity of a transformation scene, as one sees the tail of a tadpole melt away as the creature turns into a frog and its gills are replaced by lungs. In the same way, if a particular life-wave left the earth at the stage of breeding monkeys, for example, by the time it came round the Chain again it would have evolved into the life-impulse or soul, say, of a man. And the effect must be the same as in the case of the fish; the tails of the monkeys would be whipped off, and their hands and feet altered to suit the new conditions and environment; and all so quickly, that unless you caught the particular monkeys that were in the act of turning into men, you would never again have the opportunity; for from thenceforth the monkeys would breed monkeys, and the men breed men, and the missing links could never again be found. In this way Theosophy claims to have given, in its scheme of the Planetary Chain, a more harmonious view of the World and the processes of Nature, than has been given by Physical Science. For consider, it says, the alternative. If 'natural selection' and the 'struggle for existence' were the sole causes of evolution, the whole field and expanse of Nature, instead of being broken up into deep furrows and trenches, as we see it in the great divisions of the animal and vegetable kingdom, the molluscs, the reptiles, the mammals, etc.,—divisions which, unlike species, have remained practically fixed from immemorial geologic time,—would be covered, as we see is the case within the limits of any particular species, with all manner of intermediate forms,—forms so fluid and indefinite, so subtly graded in their shadings and markings, as to make the world more like a vast waving cornfield, than the scarred and deeply trenched thing we see it to-day. So that it seems a more probable explanation, that at regular intervals in the life-history of our

planet, fresh waves of life-impulse have swept over it, breathing a new quality of life and soul, if we may so speak, into the old forms, and changing at a bound, as it were, their entire structure and character; changing mineral into vegetable, vegetable into animal, mollusc into fish, fish into reptile, reptile into mammal, and mammal into man. And all this, Theosophy claims, as we have seen, to have beautifully and harmoniously accounted for, and that, too, without breach of continuity or evolution, by the scheme of the Planetary Chain; accounting as it would seem to do for the fixity and rigidity of type with the fluidity of species, in a way that is inexplicable by 'natural selection' alone.

Then again not only is Physical Science, owing to the vast expanse of Universe to be explored and the poverty of its instruments (the five bodily senses), unable to deal exhaustively with the laws of Matter, but even could it give us a full and complete inventory of these laws, we should still get from them no hint of the end, aim, and meaning of the World. For however much Matter may be broken up, differentiated, and re-constructed again in the course of Evolution, it still manifests in itself no drift or *tendency* from which one could divine the goal towards which the world was moving. It is a mere medium or vehicle for the exhibition of Psychic and Spiritual Forces; and, like the marble of a statuary, permits itself with equal indifference to be carved into the image of a satyr or of a god. Although in ceaseless activity, contracting and expanding, attracting and repelling—like the spring of a watch it itself points nowhere, but is of use only as supplying movement to the index fingers, those Psychic and Spiritual powers which alone have any direction and tendency. It is to a study of the nature and drift of these powers, therefore, that we must apply ourselves, if we are ever to find the end, aim, or meaning of the World. For here, indeed, all is direction and tendency; and from the first dawning of sensation in the lower animals to the appearance of the spiritual nature in man, there

is a steady and gradual ascent, stage upon stage, until when we reach the highest ideals of the human mind, we see these spiritual powers, like an Emperor come to his majority, asserting their native sovereignty, and making that very Matter which has hitherto restrained them, the free and flexible minister of their own designs. And as the spiritual, æsthetic, and moral ideals, although still clogged with Matter, nevertheless strive ever upwards to free themselves entirely from the body in which they are imprisoned, they would seem to demand for the next stage of their evolution, a sphere of activity as spirit-like and diaphanous as the texture of their own dreams. And if we could only follow the flight of these ideals as they pass, far out of sight, to their goal in other spheres, it is evident that with both the beginning and the end of the curve or tendency in view, we could interpret the meaning of that small broken arc or portion of it known as our World, in a manner impossible to Physical Science, which can deal only with the aimless and indifferent Matter of our Earth in which for a time these psychical and spiritual forces are imprisoned and embedded. And this is precisely what Theosophy claims to have enabled us to do, by its revelation of the Planetary Chain.

To begin with, the Planetary Chain throws out Physical Science as a possible method for finding out the meaning of the World, by making our Earth the only one of the seven globes in the Chain that is a *material* globe, and therefore open to the methods of Physical Science at all; and also by making it the merest *turning-point* or corner, as it were, of the Chain; so that to give the same importance to the laws that control the mere Matter of our Earth, as to those that control its Psychic and Spiritual Forces, would be as absurd as to attach the same importance to the dust thrown up by the strife of horses and riders at the turning-point of a race-course, that we do to the movements of the horses and riders themselves around the whole extent of the field. But if there were any

method by which we could mount these Psychic and Spiritual Forces, and, borne round and round the course could explore the whole extent of the field as we go,—would not this be, indeed, the true method for interpreting the inner meaning and significance of that little corner of the entire Chain known as our Earth? And this method, accordingly, is the method of direct clairvoyant vision by which the Mahatmas claim to have been able to rise to the different Planes or Life-waves of the Universe, and, borne around on their currents, to have been carried into the region of all Truth.

Not only does Theosophy thus dispose of Physical Science as a method for arriving at an understanding of the end, aim, and meaning of the world, but it also attempts to dethrone the Physical Laws of Nature from their present-day position as the true causes, the true means and instruments by which the phenomena of the world and of life are produced. And this it does by representing these phenomena as due not to 'natural selection,' 'struggle for existence,' and the like, but to the strife and collision of those psychic and spiritual impulses, vital, passional, intellectual, etc., which clash and collide at this their meeting point on our Material Globe on their way round the Chain; the gaps between mineral, and vegetable, and animal, between mollusc, and reptile, and mammal, and man, being caused, as we have seen, by the evolution that has gone on in these life-principles on the *other* globes of the Chain, in the intervals that elapse between their successive re-appearances on Earth.

And lastly, Theosophy gets rid of Physical Science as a method for determining the future *destiny* of man; for it represents the aspiration of the highest human spirits after the ideal and the eternal, not as the off-spring of mere Matter with which alone Physical Science can deal, and which would die with the body, but as a foretaste and prediction of the time when human life shall have run its course on this Earth and shall take its flight to the next higher globe in the Chain—a

globe in which spiritual essences will exist in a medium which, from its transparency and plasticity is scarcely distinguishable from Spirit itself.

In this way Theosophy, in its great scheme of the Planetary Chain (the most general outline only of which I have sketched here), claims to have given a more harmonious view of the World and of Human Life, of their end, aim, and meaning, than either Physical Science or the old and decaying Religions of the world can give; to have given, in short, a scheme which will satisfy those longings, aspirations, doubts, and suspicions which still haunt the mind, as we have seen, after Physical Science has uttered its last word. For, in place of a few poor imperfect and limited senses groping amid Matter for bodily provender mainly as Carlyle would have said, as our sole means of knowledge, it substitutes the direct clairvoyant vision of the Mahatmas; for the causes and instruments which produce the actual phenomena of the World and Life, it relies, not on the laws of Matter—on 'physical antecedent and consequent,' 'natural selection,' and the rest,—but on psychic and spiritual Life-waves,—vital, passional, intellectual, astral, etc.,—coming round the Chain from other globes where they have meantime been evolving into higher and higher forms; and for the end and destiny of Man, not death, or the survival of the individual only in the work he has done for the race, but an immortality of spiritual bliss, first in Devachan or Heaven, and then in the higher and more spiritual globes of the Planetary Chain. And indeed it must be confessed that were the Planetary Chain a reality and not a dream, it would have gone a long way, in appearance at least, towards giving us a harmonious solution of the great problem of the end, aim, and meaning of the World and of Life.

But alas! as we shall now see, the whole scheme is a myth, a paper-system, a product of the imagination merely; and has no more solidity or reality than the plan of a bridge which, symmetrical enough on paper, when turned into wood and iron

will not stand; or of a house which, though beautiful as a design, is quite impossible to build. It expresses rather what, if true, would be harmonious, than what because it is harmonious must be true. Instead of dealing with the real causes of phenomena, it deals only with lines and curves on paper; instead of genuine explanations of them, it gives us false and fictitious ones. In the early part of this chapter I pointed out the intellectual deceptions which had been practised by the Mahatmas on their followers, when they led them to believe that the power of reading clairvoyantly what was passing in the minds of others, was in no way different, except in degree, from the power of reading the facts themselves independently of their being known to any other mind; thus making it appear plausible that they, the Mahatmas, could by clairvoyant vision see the Planetary Chain as an actual fact, when what they really saw was merely the image or plan of the Chain as it existed in the minds of those by whom they had themselves been taught. I have now to point out the still more insidious intellectual illusion by which they have persuaded their followers to accept their pseudo-causes as true causes, and their pseudo-explanations of events as bonâ fide ones; and as this particular illusion is one which is easily played off on the unsuspecting when the subject-matter is complicated, I shall offer no apology to the reader for asking him to consider it for a moment with me. What, then, do we mean by a bonâ fide cause, a bonâ fide explanation, of any phenomenon or event? If we take the human body as an example, it is evident, is it not, that neither its functions in health nor its symptoms in disease can be said to be really understood or explaned, until the *relations* and *connexions* between its different organs are so well established that on any change taking place in any one of these organs the effect on the others can, as it were, be anticipated or foreseen; or, speaking generally, until from the state of the body as a whole to-day, you can, other things being equal, anticipate or foresee its

condition to-morrow. It is the same, then, with the World. It can only be said to be explained as a whole, or in any of its special departments, when the *lines of relation* between the different powers or forces engaged in the production of its phenomena are so well known, that from the present condition of these forces, their future state may be anticipated or inferred. And now in what way does a sham cause, a sham explanation differ from this? In this, viz., that instead of giving us the *relations* between the factors or powers involved in any given phenomenon, it gives us merely a *catalogue* of these factors or powers. Now although this catalogue may be said to account in a way for the phenomenon as an existing fact, and if complete, to fully account for it, it does so only in the same way as the body may be said to be accounted for by a catalogue of the functions of its separate organs; or as a piece of music may be said to be accounted for by a catalogue of its notes; or the sense of a sentence by the words in which it is expressed, and the like. These are what we may call false causes, false explanations, and the main feature about them is that they make no *addition* to our knowledge, but are the mere echo or duplicate in another form of the effects to be explained; as if we should say that the cause of the phenomena of life is the vital principle! Now it is entirely of such causes as these that the Planetary Chain, as we shall now see, is throughout composed; and it was for this reason that I said at the beginning, that it was quite possible to construct the Chain on a sheet of paper, by the exercise of ingenuity alone, and without any fresh accession of knowledge. Let us now see in a rough way how this may be done.

If then we regard the World, as the Theosophists do, as made up of seven independent Planes or Principles of Existence —the material, the astral, the vital, the passional, the intellectual, the spiritual, and last of all the impersonal Universal Spirit itself from which the rest are all emanations— all we have to do to account for men and things generally, is to

connect with the Earth or Material Principle, the other principles as so many globes set round it in a circle; much in the same way as in making a pudding you would set around you on the table the butter, and eggs, and milk, etc., of which it was to be composed. This done, if you should then make the principles represented by these globes pass severally and in turn (as they came around the circle) *into* the Matter of the Earth to be united with it, you would explain the world in general, in the same way as you would the pudding by bringing all its ingredients one by one into the dish. If you wished to go still further into detail, and to account for the great types or divisions of plant and animal, of fish, of reptile, of bird, of mammal, and of man, all you would have to do would be to count the number of the divisions to be explained, and then let the Principles or Life-impulses pass around the Chain a corresponding number of times, each round representing the evolution of a type more highly developed than the one that went before; while to get the varieties of species into which each of these greater types are divided, you would let the different principles before going round the Chain as a whole, go as often around the separate and particular globe or globes involved as there are numbers of species to be explained. In this way you would get the Planetary Chain in the rough, which you could then work up into finer and finer detail, according to the number and variety of the forms of life you were expected to explain. Now in all this, one sees at a glance, that the Planetary Chain is so constructed as to be a mere *duplicate*, as it were, of the varieties of life it is called upon to explain; although as an explanation it is made to *look* genuine on the principle that heat, for example, is explained if only you can find a fire anywhere to account for it! In essence it amounts only to this, that the cause of the fish, or reptile, or monkey, is the 'life-principle' of the fish or reptile or monkey coming round the Chain and taking up its abode in the Matter of our Earth; and that similarly the cause of the man, is the

Life-principle of the man. This is what I call a false and not a genuine explanation of the World; as if one should say that the cause of baldness is the loss of hair! To make it a genuine one, you would have to show *how* and *why* it was that the Life-principle of the fish on its way round the other globes of the Chain, developed or was evolved before it reached the Earth into the Life-principle of the reptile; how and why the Life-impulse of the monkey passed into the Life-impulse of the man;—but this, I need scarcely say, the Mahatmas have not yet attempted to do. And so it has come about that the followers of these Mahatmas, not satisfied with 'natural selection,' the 'struggle for existence,' etc., as sole causes of the Evolution of the World, instead of seeking to discover other genuine principles to make up for the deficiency, have thrown them all alike to the winds, and duped by the Mahatmas with their pretences to clairvoyant vision, have without pause or hesitation rushed into their arms to be dazzled and deceived by such poor and illusory harmonies as these.

But if further evidence were wanted to strengthen our conviction that the Planetary Chain is but a paper-system, a product of imaginative ingenuity merely, it would be found in the fact that with all the pretensions of the Mahatmas to clairvoyant vision, this of the relations which subsist between these different Planes, Principles, or Forces, and in which alone as we have seen true knowledge consists, is precisely the one point on which they are silent, and which is absent from the system of the Planetary Chain. For if we consider it, both in Nature and the Human Mind, these planes, principles, faculties or powers, or by whatever name we choose to call them, are so reciprocally *inter-connected*, that each acts on or is affected by every other, as a flower is by its root, or the vintage by the qualities of climate and soil; and you can no more detach any one of these principles from the rest, and treat it apart from its relations to the others—you can no more for example, detach intellect from passion, passion from sentiment and will,

and all from the material body in which they inhere—than you can the heart from the lungs, the lungs from the liver, or any or all of them from the rest of the body. The truth is, these so-called Planes or Principles of Being have no real independent existence in *fact*, but only in *relation* to each other, and like algebraical x's and y's, only exist as aids to the processes of thought. But the Mahatmas, instead of binding these abstract principles into a system of true knowledge by living bonds of relation, have merely arranged them into the pretty and harmonious wreaths, rings, and festoons of the Planetary Chain, as so many cut flowers mechanically tied together by invisible threads. And the consequence is, that like butchers who have dealt all their lives with the organs of the animal body, but who from want of knowledge of the physiological relations of these organs leave off with as little knowledge of the body as when they began, the Mahatmas, although dealing all their lives with the principles and planes of the Planetary Chain, can, from their want of insight into the relations of these planes give us no true knowledge. And now we can understand how it is that Theosophy with all its pretensions has done nothing for the progress or civilization of the world. Ignoring those relations in which true knowledge consists, it has discovered no new relation, or what is the same thing, no new Law of Nature or of Life; no new law of mechanics, physics, chemistry, biology, or new application of these to the arts and industries of life; no new principle in mental philosophy, in politics, political economy, or the arts of Government and State. These they have left to Science with its slow but steady and sure march through the ages, with its method of observation, induction, experiment and verification, to which we mainly owe the present high state of European civilization; while in no land are Magic and the Black Arts more universally practised than in Thibet the chosen home of the Mahatmas, nor ignorance and superstition more extensively diffused.

PART III.

THE EVOLUTION OF JUDAISM.

HISTORY OF
INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT.

PART III.

LIST OF AUTHORITIES FOR THE FOLLOWING CHAPTERS

ON THE

EVOLUTION OF JUDAISM.

OLD TESTAMENT	WELLHAUSEN	KITTEL
APOCALYPSE OF ENOCH	HITZIG	RÉNAN
APOCALYPSE OF MOSES	REUSS	ZELLER
APOCALYPSE OF BARUCH	SCHÜRER	HELGENFELD
APOCALYPSE OF EZRA	NOLDEKE	DIESTEL
JOSEPHUS	KNOBEL	DRIVER
PHILO	HEGSTENBERG	CHEYNE
TALMUD	JOST	ROBERTSON SMITH
EWALD	GRAETZ	MONTEFIORE
DELITZSCH	STADE	DRUMMOND
KUENEN	NEUBAUER	HATCH

CHAPTER I.

PAGANISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

IN the introductory chapter of this volume, when discussing the feasibility of the attempt to forecast the stages of Evolution passed through by Religions as distinct from Philosophies, it was pointed out that the problem presented quite a different aspect and required quite a different method for its solution in the one case from what it required in the other. Philosophies being defined to be games of thought played by the *abstract* or merely *logical* intelligence under definite conditions, it was argued that if you could once seize the laws or rules of the particular game that was being played, the course of the Evolution could be anticipated, as we have just seen to be the case with Greek and Hindoo Philosophy respectively, with a large amount of scientific definiteness and precision. But Religions being, on the other hand, games of thought played by the *whole* man, as it were,—intellect, conscience and heart—their evolution far from depending like that of Philosophies, on laws of pure thought, was dependent on other elements as well—on tradition, custom, affection, sentiment, and sensibility. And although, therefore, it would seem that the attempts to forecast the course and evolution of Religions, would be a much more difficult task than in the parallel case of Philosophies, it was seen that this was not so. For although it is true that the number and complexity of the elements of a

man's nature that have to be affected before a change will occur in his Religion, are much greater than in the case of his Philosophy, still religions have the advantage over philosophies in this, that dealing as they do with the *whole* nature of man, they can be reduced to some simple expression, to some spirit or soul, as it were, which is their inspiration and life, and which gives unity and harmony to all their parts; much in the same way as we may say of an individual, that the soul of all his thoughts and actions is love, or ambition, or money-getting, or pride, or what not; or of a nation, that the soul of its institutions is equality, or liberty, and so on. And from this it was argued that if the Spirit or Soul of the particular religion from which we start, say of Paganism, can be reduced to some simple and expressive moral formula, and the Spirit or Soul of the Religion into which it is destined to pass in the course of evolution, say of Christianity, can be equally so reduced; and if further the *moral* distance, as it were, between the two can be definitely mapped out into stages, each representing a step or stage in evolution, it will be comparatively easy, with a little help in the way of historical landmark now and then, to forecast the *kind* of experience through which the tribe or nation in question must pass from stage to stage, until it reaches the end in view. At all events, this is the principle on which I propose to proceed in the sections of this History which are now immediately to follow—with what result the sequel will show.

Our present theme, then, being the evolution of the Intellectual World from Paganism to Christianity, and our problem how it is to be done, I shall begin at once, in accordance with the principles just laid down, by asking what is the Soul or Essential Spirit of Paganism and Christianity respectively? That of Christianity we already know; for alike in its creed, its institutions, its precepts and laws, in the nature of God and of Christ, and in the relationship existing between God and Christ, between God and Man, between Christ and Man, the

spirit which pervades it is that which may be best expressed in the relationship of father and son, of parent and children; and from this its spirit and life, perennially proceeds a current which flows for ever in the direction of the Good, the Beneficient, and the Merciful; an impulse which tends gradually as the tyranny of material and social conditions is step by step relaxed and dissolved, to draw mankind together into one great family, with God its Father. This spirit it is which has covered the world with institutions of charity and mercy, which in morals broke at once and for ever the bondage to the *letter*, and when the time was ripe, opened up to mankind political liberty, and to the slave, emancipation and life. It is the Soul of Christianity, as distinguished from the bodily accretions which have become embedded in its structure—the Mosaic account of Creation and the like, which have been the fruitful source of all its woes. If now we could digest the soul of Paganism into as brief, simple, and expressive a formula, and one that should hold good throughout the institutions of Pagan life, we should have vastly simplified our problem by the establishment of two fixed and definite points, the point from which we have to start, and the point at which we must arrive in the course of evolution; and by marking off carefully the separate intervening points between these two extremes, we shall be enabled to lay down approximately beforehand, the kind of steps necessary to enable Humanity to traverse this ground from stage to stage. What I propose then to do now is, to show that the genius and essential spirit of Paganism, the moral relationship or soul that runs alike through its Religion, its Polity, its Jurisprudence, and its Social Life, may be accurately represented and summed up in the relationship of *master and servant*, *master and slave*, as that of Christianity can be by the relation of *parent* and *child*.

But before this can be clearly seen, it is necessary to correct a certain false colouring that has been given to the nature of the Pagan gods through our associations with

Christianity. We are too apt to imagine that, like the God of Christianity, these beings filled the vast expanse of the Universe with their presence, and we can scarcely be made to realize how much they had in common with ordinary humanity. The truth is, they were simply human beings of a superior order, male and female, with greater powers and passions than men, and of superior size, strength, and beauty; a kind of transfigured race of men, in short, living on a finer kind of food, with bodies less gross, blood more rarified and ethereal, and endowed with immortality. And far from peopling the vast expanse of the Universe like the God of Christianity, they inhabited only the upper regions of the air, that narrow belt between earth and sky level with the summits of the mountains, on which, accordingly, they were believed to have their abode. And indeed in the absence of any scientific presumption to the contrary, it was natural both for the vulgar and for the philosophers to believe that this region, too, had its appropriate inhabitants; as the sea was peopled with fish, the air with birds, and the earth with animals and men. But the vast expanse of the Universe beyond this region, which to Christianity is the abode of God, was, on the contrary, reserved in Paganism for Fate which was supreme over all the gods; or, as in Plato, for those fixed stars and planets, immortal spirits set in a galaxy of fire and carried round in the revolutions of the Universe, dwelling for ever on their own perfections, and contemplating the pure form of Beauty as it is,—while marking out the years and hours for human souls, and by their periods and conjunctions controlling not only the destiny of mortal men, but of the immortal gods themselves. Now these gods, living as they did so near the Earth, had gradually extended their sway over human life, in the same way as man had done over the inferior animals; and when History opens they had already partitioned out the whole earthly domain between them, like the provinces and estates of a settled kingdom. Besides the greater deities, the Dii Majores who presided over the sky,

the sea, war, fire, love, wisdom, letters, the arts and the like, there were deities over every the smallest department of Nature and Life; deities of Cough, of Fever, of Patrician Modesty, of Plebeian Modesty, deities of the Roman State, of the Revenue, of Child-birth, etc., as well as separate deities to teach the child to cry, to eat, to drink, to speak, and to sleep. These vast swarms of deities formed a hierarchy among themselves with Jupiter as King at their head; and had their councils and councillors of State, their messengers and cup-bearers, their feasts, their loves and hates, their jealousies and wars, their revenges and reconciliations, just like men. Like men, too, they were almost entirely wrapped up in their own affairs, regarding mankind much in the same way as we regard the inferior animals, or as absentee landlords regard their tenants; as instruments, viz., to minister to their own appetites, pleasures, or designs. If they entered, as they occasionally did, into the wars and quarrels of mortals, it was, as with us, mainly for the interest and excitement of the sport—taking sides, laying the odds, or backing the winners. In fact they regarded men precisely as we regard the inferior animals, neither loving them nor hating them, but simply making use of them; and were angry or pleased with them, according as they furthered their wishes, disappointed their appetites, or thwarted their designs. If they happened to fall in love with any particular human being, it was as purely a matter of personal caprice as if one should love one's dog, and established no bond that could not at a moment's notice be broken or dissolved. The essence of their relation to men was the same, in a word, as the essence of our relation to the inferior animals, viz., that of masters and slaves. They cared as little for the mere love of mortals, provided their dues came punctually in, as a Despot and his Court care for the mere love of the conquered inhabitants of a distant dependency, provided their tribute is punctually paid. The only relation, in consequence, in which men could stand to them was one of fear and dependence,

propitiating them by incense, offerings, libations, sacrifices and the like; the amount and quality of the food, the time and place of offering it, the mode of presentation and the form of supplication accompanying it, being all elements of as much importance in securing the good-will of the gods, as they are in the parallel case of exacting and capricious human despots.

With this relation of master and slave as the essence of the connexion subsisting between the gods and men, we should expect the relations existing between man and man to be framed in the same spirit. And so indeed they were. It was the old relation of master and slave, of man and the inferior animals, repeated in all relationships of life—political, moral, legal, and social; the father or head of the family representing the master, and all the rest of the family being like animals, the mere creatures of his will. It was the pure law of primitive despotism, the law of the stronger, untempered or unsuffused by any higher moral atmosphere; and controlled only where it was controlled, by an authority equally cold, despotic and unsympathetic, viz. the Laws of the State; the only effect of which was that, far from softening or modifying the despotic spirit, it made it, like a river confined between its banks, run all the more fiercely. In Greece, the father was restrained by law from putting his son to death, but he could disinherit and banish him. In Rome, on the other hand, his power was absolute, alike over his children, his wife, his property, and his slaves; the only exception being in the case of any of the sons who should happen to fill the office of flamen or priest. He had, besides, practically unlimited power of divorce, subject only to the merely nominal censure of the Censors, or the fear of his wife's relations. In every relationship of life, political or social, men's relations to each other were purely *legal;* and one no more expected the Christian law of love and pity to enter into the relations of man and man, than one expects them to enter into a purely legal contract between landlord and tenant in the occupancy of a house or estate. Here again then the genius

and essential spirit of Paganism is seen to be that of master and slave, of man and the lower animals, as distinct from that of Christianity which is that of father and son, of parent and children. And a still more decisive evidence of this, perhaps, is to be seen by a glance at the nature and functions of the Priesthood. In a religion like Christianity, for example, where the relation between God and man is as we have seen expressible by that of father and children, the inward state of the heart towards God is as important in the priest who is to make intercession, as in the worshipper for whom intercession is to be made. The training of the moral and spiritual nature, accordingly, is the most important end of the long novitiate preparatory to entering the Church; and the highest offices were as freely open in the early ages to the sons of the peasant, if they were men of devout and holy lives, as to the sons of the lords of the soil. But in religions, on the other hand, where the gods are believed to care as little for the moral and spiritual attitude of the priests and suppliants, provided their dues be paid, as tyrants do for the feelings of conquered tributaries, one would know *à priori* that the spiritual or moral character of the priest was a matter of no concern. And so indeed it was in Paganism. Men would as little have thought of inquiring into the spiritual condition of those about to enter the Priesthood, as they would of those about to enter the Army. The priests were drawn exclusively from the Patrician families, as the supremacy of these in the State was held to be a mark of their having been specially favoured by the gods; the sole qualification necessary to the priest, besides that of good family, being that he had rendered good service to the State. Instead, therefore, of depending on their prayers and holy lives for their success in making intercession with the gods, their sole function and duty was analagous to that of those Court Chamberlains who regulate the approaches to the Throne, viz. to stand by the suppliant and dictate the form of words to be used by him when presenting his offering or

petition, so that no word should be forgotten or used out of its proper place, their sole concern being, lest by some irregularity of form, they should draw down on themselves the wrath and vengeance of the gods. In all other respects they went through their function with as little spiritual or moral feeling as the cicerones of a museum or picture gallery.

If, then, we have sufficiently shown that the soul and essential spirit of Paganism may be expressed by the moral relationship of master and slave, as that of Christianity is by parent and children, my next point will be to show that there was no possible way by which the one could pass into the other by direct continuity, as it were, but that if the Græco-Pagan World was destined to become Christian, it would have to be impregnated *from without*, as animals must be when we wish to change the breed; and that the spirit of Paganism could no more change itself without outside impregnation, than a negro could become white. For Religions differ from Philosophies as we have seen in this, that they are not merely a set of abstract propositions, but are the expression of a soul, a spirit, a life; and therefore although religions that express the *same* spirit may become incorporated by force or conquest, religions like Paganism and Christianity which are the expressions of two wholly different spirits—the spirit of force or law on the one hand, and the spirit of love on the other—can no more pass into one another in the course of evolution, without outside mediation, than a cold-blooded animal can pass into a warm-blooded one. Nor can such mediation be effected by any form of Philosophy whatever. Stoicism which arose out of the bosom of Paganism, attempted it; and with its high doctrine of One God of whom all the merely popular Pagan deities in transfigured human shape were but transitory forms, with its cosmopolitan spirit, its recognition of the natural rights of man and of the inherent equality of master and slave, was as well qualified as another to effect the change. But although, animated by its spirit, high-born dames made

praiseworthy attempts to establish charities, to reclaim young women from vice, and to help the aged and the poor; and Emperors who had been trained in its Schools enacted laws mitigating the lot of the slave; these were all but as drops in the ocean, and not only did not, but could not bridge over the gulf that separated Paganism from Christianity. For Philosophies being attempts of the human mind—a part of Nature—to comprehend the whole of that Nature of which it is but the part, the merest passing product and limited palpable *effect*, men cannot except from vanity or presumption place sufficient reliance on their own theories of the great totality known as the Universe to enable them to repose on them with full and entire confidence. It is true that on the verified Laws of Nature, those laws that connect the different *parts* of Nature together, they can place an implicit reliance, whatever be their theories of the nature of the Supreme Power, or of the Universe as a whole; but in the absence of the discoveries of Physical Science, the Pagan masses, even were they all born philosophers, could neither singly or together have generated sufficient faith and trust in their own reasonings to turn the abstract God of the Stoics into the living God and Father of Christianity. If this were to be done at all it could only be done from the side of God, not from the side of human reason; from some *authority*, that is to say, coming in the name of the *whole* Universe to instruct Man the *part* as to what his relations to the whole Universe are; instead of from the side of man, presuming as in philosophy to judge of that whole of which he is only a part. It could only come, in a word, from Religion, not Philosophy.

But we may go farther and say that not only could Paganism, as we have seen, owing to the nature of its essential spirit, not pass of itself directly into Christianity, but it could not even form the first link in any evolutionary chain that should eventually end in it. And for this reason—that for a chain that was to end in a moral and spiritual bond so strong as that of parent

and children, some kind of *reciprocal* relation however rudimentary must be secured as a first link; and this is for ever impossible in any religion where there are a *multiplicity of gods*. For, with these gods regarded as but magnified and transfigured beings of the same nature and passions as ourselves, but with absolute power over us; having besides their own ends and aims among themselves to serve; and caring nothing for men beyond what in the way of incense and offerings they could get out of them—with gods like these sitting at every corner and turning point along the highway of life, to exact toll from the passers-by from youth to age, from this one a libation, from that one incense, from another prayers, from one a cock, from another an ox, and from a third a whole hecatomb of oxen;—you could no more get a standing reciprocal relation however crude and rudimentary, established, than a simple countryman could with the gangs of sharpers to whom on a race course he is in turn delivered; or than the helpless trader of the Middle Ages, with the robber barons who swooped down on his caravan, one after another, from their mountain fortresses as he passed. For even the beginning of such a bond, you must have only *one* god to deal with. Now this it is evident you were not likely to get in any large Empire like that of Rome, or Persia, or Assyria, where the gods of the conquered peoples out of which the Empire was originally formed were almost sure when the Empire was consolidated to be swept into one great Pantheon—and so we have multiplicity again. To get a starting point, therefore, from which to effect from *without* the transition between Græco-Roman Paganism and Christianity, we should be obliged to go to some small tribe or nation which had a *single* tutelary god itself—even although it admitted that other tribes had other gods of their own to whom in their perplexities they also could look for assistance or protection. And accordingly, as we know from History, the transition from the Pagan World to Christianity was actually effected by the tribe of Israel.

CHAPTER II.

JUDAISM.

WITH the Israelites then as our starting point, we are now prepared to show that if once we succeed in marking out the different *moral* stages, as it were, that lie between the religion of tyrant and slave of Paganism, and the religion of father and son of Christianity, we shall be able, given a minimum of historical fact, to anticipate in a large measure the kind of experiences that must befall this one small tribe, in order to advance it from stage to stage, until at last, in the fullness of time, it is ready to impregnate the great Pagan World with its own spirit. These stages, then, we may with sufficient accuracy for all practical purposes represent as follows :—Beginning with the Pagan relation of despot and slave, in which, between the multiplicity of gods on the one hand and the world of men on the other there can be no reciprocal bond whatever, nothing but pure force and caprice, we have as first stage of evolution the relationship between a single god and a single tribe, in which the god, capricious and revengeful, gives aid and protection in return for certain purely material services,—offerings, sacrifices, etc.,—a relation similar to that between a feudal lord and his dependents, and one in which the *moral* relations existing between the different individuals composing the tribe, forms no part of the contract, expressed or implied. This is practically the relation existing between all small

tribes and their single deities. The next stage is where the god, still capricious and immoral himself, grants his aid and protection only on condition that his worshippers do what is just and right among themselves, as in the relations existing between a king and his people. The next stage is where the god becomes moral himself, and becomes god also of the rest of the world; but while regarding his own tribe as the children of his peculiar care, regards the rest of the world as at best but step-children only. And finally we have the last stage which brings us to Christianity, where God is not merely the severe Moral Father, but a God of Love as well; where not only His own tribe are His full children, but all mankind without prejudice of birth or nationality; and where the sole qualification for God's favour is the inward disposition of the heart,—love, viz., for both God and men.

Now if one were desirous of demonstrating that the Great Power which makes use of men for its own ends, is not a mere Fate, or abstract Order of the World, but a real and living Providence, one could not find a better historical example than the way in which the Jewish people were gradually prepared and matured for the purpose of introducing a new and higher religion and morality into the world. It was as if a gardener, having some particular flower or fruit in his eye, should be seen standing over his plants, watching the variations as they arose, and picking, culling, rejecting, cross-fertilizing, until he got what he wanted; or like some dog or pigeon-fancier breeding and selecting from among his puppies or birds those most approximating to the type he has in his mind until at last the happy variation for which he has been working, appears. And so it was with the Jews. It matters not how they were brought to these several stages, whether by what we should call chance or happy accident, by illusion, by unconscious imposture, or even, as in one or two instances, by downright fraud,—all was alike seized on by a Power greater than themselves, and who, through these means, was leading

them on to issues more vast than those they knew or dreamed of. If now we take the different stages through which the Jewish nation had to pass before its end was reached, we shall see that what actually befell it was precisely the sort of thing necessary to befall it, if its fortunes were guided by a Providential and Intelligent Power.

Given, then, a small tribe of Israelites with its tutelary god, among a number like itself each with its own protecting god, we have to ask what kind of experience must befall this tribe, over and above that of the other tribes, in order to enable it to take the first *moral* step in that series of evolutionary steps which should end in Christianity?

The answer in a word is, just such an experience as we should expect to befall the *individual* in a like case to produce a like result, viz., that state of *physical isolation* in which the mind, blown on alternately by deep gusts of hope and fear, looks helplessly around for some object to which to cling; and having found it, yields to it an implicit reliance and trust. Now this first indispensable condition to a closer relationship with their god than the Pagan relationship of master and slave, was fulfilled in the case of the Israelites by their long sojourn in the Wilderness,—an experience, we may say, which, in spite of the apocryphal matter mixed up with the narrative when reduced to writing in succeeding times, must, from the abiding impression left in the memory, have been, in its broad aspects at least, true. A small band of Egyptian slaves who have just narrowly escaped capture by their Egyptian masters, find themselves wandering about, all unaccustomed, among the desert solitudes, encompassed by danger and terror on every hand—terror of lightning and tempest, famine and drought, serpent and scorpion—and yet seeming, as their moving train winds along beneath the blaze of their torches by night, and the smoke of their camp fires by day, to be led on by some mysterious and invisible Power, which, now thundering to them from the top of Horeb, now whispering in the ear of their

trusted guide, now nerving them to victory, now punishing their disobedience by defeat, brings them, like some great Captain, after many wanderings, to the Promised Land at last. Such a novitiate in the solitude and desolation of the desert, alone with Nature, and encompassed by terrors on every hand, was calculated to attach them to their invisible Leader with a bond more personal, and to burn the belief in his protecting care into their minds with a brand more deep than was possible to more settled tribes, who, distracted by other cares, were only casually and intermittently, under the agitation of hope or fear in war, driven to reliance on their protecting gods.

This of the Wandering in the Wilderness was the first great experience in the history of the Israelites, calculated to differentiate them from other and surrounding peoples, and to prepare them for the high part they were to play in World-history; and its effect, trivial at first, became as we shall see, more and more powerful as time went on. It gave to their belief in an over-ruling Power who had chosen them as his own, and who had for weal or woe bound himself up with their fortunes, a vitality and tenacity unknown to other peoples, and only paralelled in later times by the belief of the early Mahomedans in the power and omnipresence of God. But when they at last had fought their way into Canaan and settled there, both their religion and morality received a taint from the surrounding idolatry which threatened to obliterate, and indeed for many centuries really succeeded in obscuring, all that the wandering in the Wilderness had done for them. For, in taking over the land from the conquered inhabitants, they took over their places of worship also. These were usually situated on the tops of hills, or under the shade of green trees—'high places' they were called—and there, side by side with the pillars and sacred groves of Astarte the Syrian Goddess of Love, and with the images of Baal the Sun-god, they set up altars to their own god, Jehovah. With such proximity of sacred rites and among peoples allied to them-

selves in blood and with whom they had begun to inter-marry, it was almost inevitable that the worship of Jehovah, which had burnt ever more bright and pure in the wilderness, should become mingled and polluted with these idolatrous cults; and that the people should relapse into that polytheism which, as we have seen, so long as it lasts must preclude all hope of religious or moral advance. But this was not all. For connected with the worship of these heathen deities, and indissolubly bound up with it, were a number of nameless abominations and immoral practices sanctioned and upheld by the religions of which they formed a part. Now, the private code of morality which the Israelites brought out of Egypt was comparatively pure; and when on the occasion of joyous thanksgiving in the Spring, at Harvest and at the In-gathering, they met at their altars to offer sacrifice to Jehovah for the good things he had given them, they ate the firstlings of their flocks and the cakes of bread they brought with them (after giving the best parts to Jehovah), and drank their wine, in innocent joy and merrymaking; returning to their homes unpolluted and unstained by personal immorality or impurity. But now that they had embraced the gods of the people of the land, they adopted from them the practice of sacrificing their children to Moloch by burning them in the fire; they regularly dedicated their daughters as prostitutes in the groves of Astarte; they polluted themselves with the nameless abominations which these religions enjoined; and instead of listening to the pure counsels of Jehovah, gave themselves up to necromancers, soothsayers, wizards and diviners, who, in the delirium of ecstasy, polluted their minds as the others did their bodies. But worse than all, once entered on this downward course, there was no power *anywhere* available to impede or arrest it. For the altars of Jehovah, as we have seen, were not as they afterwards were, concentrated at Jerusalem, but were found on every hill-top and under every green tree; and the priests, in consequence, who ministered

at them, scattered, isolated, without unity or organization, were, except in the great sanctuaries like those of Bethel and Shiloh, entirely in the power, as they were often in the pay, of the rich and great. However desirous they may have been, therefore, they were as impotent to put a stop to immoralities which had been embraced alike by the people and by their rulers, as ministers of religion in the slave states in modern times have been to put down the iniquities of the traffic. This, doubtless, could have been remedied, as indeed it afterwards was, by the centralization and supremacy of the Priesthood, but here they were behind-hand, having been anticipated by the Kings under whose sway the tribes had united when the temporary and casual leadership of the Judges had failed to cope with the continual inroads from all sides,—of Moabites, Edomites, Philistines, and other surrounding tribes. And as it was the object of these Kings to keep all power, religious as well as political, in their own hands, their supremacy still further tended to reduce the Priesthood to subservience; and that, too, at a time when owing to the impetus and encouragement given to idolatry by the wives and concubines of these kings (who caused images and altars of their own gods, of Baal, Chemosh, and Astarte, to be set up in the very precincts of the Palace and Temple), the authority of a united and powerful Priesthood was the more necessary to aid in repressing it. Under circumstances such as these, what with the multiplicity of gods with their attendant moral abominations, what with the supremacy of the kings, and the subservience of the priesthood, it would seem as if no point of support was to be found anywhere *within* the nation itself on which could be planted a lever that should lift the people from their degradation,—nothing, indeed, unless it were the deep feeling of dependence on Jehovah, and the consequent *sense of sin* on failing to keep His law, which in the best spirits still survived from the traditions of the wilderness. This feeling found its most burning expression in the great

Prophets who arose in the eighth and ninth centuries before Christ, who thundered their denunciations of the prevailing idolatry, corruption, and immorality into the ears of recreant Kings and an unwilling People—denunciations of the Baal and Astarte worship with their attendant moral abominations; of the servility, corruption, and even crimes of the priesthood, who pandered to the lusts and caprices of kings, sold justice for bribes, and abetted the great in their extortions and oppressions of the poor; of the luxury, pomp, and frivolity of the Court, which, instead of relying on Jehovah, the God of Hosts, who had brought them out of Egypt and delivered them by a mighty hand, relied on their arms of flesh, on chariots and horsemen, on hollow political combinations and alliances—now on Egypt, now on Assyria, now on Syria—broken reeds all, that pierced their hands when they tried to lean on them when the hour of trial came. Against all these the Prophets continued to hurl their thunders; but although ultimately, and when the time was ripe, they became, as we shall see, by the sense of sin which they aroused, the main factor in the establishment of the Israel of God; in the meantime they were of little avail in the face of material, social, and political conditions so hostile to their designs. For were not the 'high places,' the idolatrous shrines, and sacred groves still there? And these the people had come to love. Were not the priests still scattered, isolated, and without organization, and dependent on the rich and powerful, who had every incentive to keep them so? Did not the king and court rely on their chariots and horsemen, and the people at large prefer to have it so? If then the Jewish people were destined in the order of Nature or Providence of God to be the organ of introducing a new and higher religion and morality into the world, it would seem that reformation must come from *without*, and *not* from *within*; and we have now to ask whether, with a minimum of historical fact to guide us, it were possible, from the Laws of Civilization in general, to indicate beforehand the kind of

experience that must befall them, to enable them to reach their high goal.

To begin with, then, it is evident that the objects to be aimed at are two, first, to put down the Idolatry which was the parent of the immorality; and secondly, to secure the Supremacy of the Priests over the Secular Power. I shall begin with the first, the putting down of Idolatry. Now to secure this end from *without*, only two possibilities were open. The first was the complete conquest and assimilation of the people by some foreign Power having a more exalted idea of religion and morality than the Israelites; but no such nation was, at the time, in existence. The surrounding nations were either polytheistic like Egypt and Assyria, or if like Moab and Ammon they had each their single god, it was precisely the immoralities connected with the worship of these gods which it was the problem to put down. The other alternative was that some foreign Power should do with the Israelites as men do with those domestic animals whose pure blood has been mixed and polluted by some base and vicious strain, viz., destroy entirely the more corrupt specimens, and breed only from the purer specimens that are left; destroy the worst of the off-spring of these again, and again breed from the purest and best; and if in the end, as is said to be the case with pigeons, it is impossible to keep a breed pure even in the presence of other breeds, there is nothing for it but to remove them from their native haunts, and start afresh on a pure and virgin soil. Now this is precisely what occurred in the case of the Israelites. First, the ten tribes of Northern Israel, who had been the worst offenders, and who, after the revolt of Jeroboam, had set up the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, were carried wholesale into captivity by Sargon, King of Assyria, in the year 722 B.C.; the land being re-peopled by tribes sent specially for the purpose from the region of Media and the Euphrates. How precarious, indeed, had become the hold of Jehovah on the minds of the Northern Israelites, and

how impossible it would have been, with blood so tainted, to have weaned them from their idolatry and immorality, was seen in the fact that in a few years they had quite forgotten the God of their fathers, and had embraced the Assyrian religion, melting into the surrounding population, and soon leaving behind them no trace of their separate existence. Northern Israel with its ten tribes being thus summarily wiped out, the hope of Israel was centred on the small Southern kingdom of Judah. But there, too, Baal and Astarte worship were as rife as they had been in the North; and although the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah hurled their thunders against the prevailing idolatry with a fierceness unapproached by Hosea and Amos in the North, even their voices would have proved as impotent as those of the Northern prophets, had it not been for two very important facts. In the first place, owing to the presence of the Ark of the Tabernacle in the Temple at Jerusalem, the sense of Jehovah's invisible presence there between the wings of the cherubim, was more indelibly impressed on the minds of the people of Judah, than was possible in the North at so great a distance from the Capital. The sense of Sin, in consequence, was more easily aroused by the consciousness of any breach of Jehovah's law; and the word of God as announced by His mouthpieces the prophets, fell on minds thus imbued with the sense of sin, with a more profound effect than in the North. In the second place, the remembrance that the captivity and exile of the Northern tribes had been foretold by the Northern prophets, and especially the fulfilment of the prediction of Isaiah as to the destruction of the host of Sennacherib by the power of Jehovah, lent to the prediction that Judah also would be swept into captivity, the weight almost of a Divine decree. But still the 'high places,' the pillars, and the groves to which the people had been so long accustomed remained; and sanctioned as they were by all the force of prescription and time, neither the exile of the Northern tribes for the like sins,

nor the weight of fulfilled prophecy, nor the keener sense of sin following on any infraction of Jehovah's law, could avail to abolish them. There was little chance, then, of their being abolished by the people themselves; yet if a purer and nobler religion and morality were ever destined to come out of Judah, abolished they must be. The King alone had the power, if he had the inclination, and accordingly when Hezekiah came to the throne, and Isaiah succeeded in convincing him that some such policy was necessary, he immediately took steps to carry it into effect; and without more ado removed the altars of Baal and Astarte with the exception of those that Solomon had set up on the Mount of Olives, broke in pieces the pillars, cut down the sacred groves, and ground to powder the brazen serpent of the Temple. But there he stopped, leaving still standing the altars of Jehovah throughout the length and breadth of the land. And thus the attempt failed, for as long as these altars to Jehovah were allowed to stand on the spots where altars to Baal and Astarte had so long stood beside them, the long association of the worship of Jehovah with that of these abolished deities, was too strong for the people to resist; and when, in the reaction under Manasseh, not only the images, pillars, and groves were set up again, but altars to the sun and planets and all the host of Heaven were raised in the very courts of the Temple, and children once more were passed through the fire to Moloch,—it became evident that nothing would exterminate idolatry and its attendant immoralities, but the wholesale abolition of all altars whatever outside of the Capital, those of Jehovah as well as of the other gods, and the removal of the attendant priests to Jerusalem where all worship should henceforth be concentrated. But to carry out a reform of this magnitude against the interests of the local priests, as well as against the inclinations of the people, was an undertaking more difficult than any that had yet been attempted; and was felt to require for its success a recourse to more than the ordinary means of appeal. And so, when Josiah came to the

throne, and gave evidence of his good intentions and zeal for the cause, Jeremiah felt that the time was ripe for the supreme effort. And then was put in practise a *ruse* which for boldness and originality, for the profound effect it produced on the minds of men at the time, as well as on the religion of all succeeding ages, is without a parallel, perhaps, in the history of the world. The authority of both King and Prophet having failed in the case of Hezekiah and Isaiah, it was now resolved to invoke the supreme authority of Moses himself. And accordingly, in the 18th year of Josiah's reign, in the year 621 before Christ, Hilkiah the high priest brought from out of the recesses of the Temple, when it was undergoing repairs, a book which he professed to have found there, and which purported to contain the last instructions given to the children of Israel by Moses before his death in the land of Moab, and before they crossed over into the land of Canaan. This book was our present Book of Deuteronomy; and the burden of its injunctions, which were accompanied by cursings and blessings, was to the effect that when the Israelites should come to the place of worship which Jehovah should choose for them,—to Jerusalem to wit,—they should offer sacrifices at no other shrine, but should break down and up-root all altars, pillars, and groves elsewhere throughout the land, all worship of the sun and stars, all practice of sorcery, divination, and witchcraft, in a word should do precisely what the prophets and the priests of the Temple now saw was necessary to be done. Now although it is admitted on all hands, by orthodox as well as heterodox divines, that however much the book containing these injunctions may have embodied the *spirit* of laws as old as the time of Moses, it was actually concocted and written at this very time by the prophets or priests about the Temple; still, nothing of this was suspected, and its effect on the public mind was immense. The nation, it could no longer be doubted, had all this time been guilty of the most heinous sin, and yet had been almost, if not entirely

unconscious of it! The King, when he heard of the penalties that were to befall the nation for its sins, rent his clothes and sent to Huldah the prophetess to find out whether they were indeed likely to be inflicted. She replied that they were, but that he himself should be spared on account of his humility and piety. He therefore gathered the priests and prophets and all the people of Judah into Jerusalem, into the Temple, and when the words of the Covenant, as contained in the Book, were read to them, they all there and then with one accord made a vow to stand by them. This done, the king without further delay began his reformation, and carried it out with a thoroughness that left nothing to be desired. He first of all commanded the priests and door-keepers to clear out of the Temple the vessels devoted to the service of Baal, of the grove, and of all the host of heaven, and to burn them in the fields of Kedron. He then destroyed the high places devoted to the worship of Baal and Astarte, not only throughout Judah but throughout Samaria also, as well as those which Solomon had built on the Mount of Olives. As for the priests that ministered at these altars, he slew those of Samaria and put down those of Judah, while those that ministered at the altars of Jehovah throughout Judah, he brought up to Jerusalem, where they afterwards assisted the priests and had charge of the Temple under the name of Levites. He also beat down the altars that Manasseh had raised to the sun and stars in both courts of the Temple; destroyed the adjoining houses of the Sodomites, and defiled Topheth in the valley of Hinnom, where the children were offered up as sacrifices to Moloch. But not even the destruction of all the idolatrous shrines throughout the kingdom, the slaying or removing of the idolatrous priests, and the removal of the priests of Jehovah to Jerusalem, radical and thoroughgoing as the reformation was, was sufficient. For the Court was still there—the king, the aristocracy, the governors, and the civil and military functionaries—and so long as it remained men would still continue to rely on the arm of flesh, on their

chariots and horsemen, rather than on the might of Jehovah; and it only required the accession of a new king with less pious leanings and less under the influence of the prophets and priests than Josiah, to bring back much of the old idolatry. And accordingly we read that his successors did evil in the sight of the Lord, as their predecessors had done; not all the cleansings and purifyings that the nation had undergone being able to purify the corrupted blood—not the exile of the Northern tribes, the authority of the prophets, the miraculous repulse of Sennacherib by the hand of Jehovah as revealed by Isaiah, the destruction of the high places of Josiah, the words of Moses himself as contained in the book discovered in the Temple, nor lastly the complete destruction of all altars whatever except the one at Jerusalem, and the abolition of all priests except those who ministered at the Temple there. Nothing availed so long as the secular State by the existence of its arm of flesh, shared with Jehovah the allegiance of men, as the old hill-tops still did by their associations with idolatry. If the Jews, therefore, were ever to become pure worshippers of Jehovah, it could only be by removing them bodily and once for all from the polluted soil, and giving them a fresh start elsewhere. And this indeed is just what happened. Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah, and in 597 B.C. carried off all the leading inhabitants of Jerusalem to Babylon; and in 586 burnt the Temple, broke down the walls, and left the land a desolation and a waste. And now at last that sense of the personal dependence of Israel on Jehovah which had been burnt into them, as we have seen, by their sojourn in the Wilderness, and which was the first experience needed to differentiate them from other peoples and to prepare them for their great mission, began to exert its full effect. Fanned into a burning flame by the prophets who carried on the tradition of the covenant between Israel and its God, it gradually aroused in the nation a sense of sin so deep at the recollection of the broken Law, that although at first of little

practical avail in the face of the many religious, material, and social conditions hostile to it, it was destined in the end, and when the time was ripe, to become the sole factor in shaping the Israel of the future. So well indeed had the prophets done their work in the century and a quarter that had elapsed between the exile of the Ten Northern tribes and the exile of Judah, that whereas in the North the deported populations in a few years had melted away and were lost amid the foreign populations; in the South, exile, instead of making the captives forget their God, or feel as was usual in such cases that He must be inferior to the Babylonian deity who had conquered Him, served only to deepen their conviction that Jehovah was the one and only true God, and that in all their humiliations, sufferings, and exiles, He was but using the other nations of the earth as His instruments to chastise them for their sins. And so they sat by the waters of Babylon weeping for their beloved Zion, and in Psalms of immortal beauty wailing forth their laments over their broken Law. There, absolved from all political and material cares, and far from the associations of idolatry that had been so seductive and fatal to their peace, the last obstacles which up to then had prevented them from realizing the prophet's ideal were removed; and they were now free to look up to Heaven and like Ezekiel to paint on its pure azure the Israel of their dreams. And when at last they returned to Jerusalem, still further purged of the worldly-minded among them who were left behind, and indeed of all except those who lived in these delicious visions of the future, they returned a 'remnant' indeed, but one which cleansed from all taint of idolatry, and purified by suffering as if by fire, only needed to be kept apart from surrounding peoples for a while, to realize the dreams of the prophets, and to form the nucleus of what was afterwards destined to become a pure Theocracy, the true Israel of God.

And so, for the first time in recorded history was taken a real step in the advance of the Morality of the World to a higher

plane, and that, too, by a small Semitic tribe. For the first time idolatry had been suppressed, and after centuries of effort the belief in One God (without which, as we have seen, no real advance in morality was possible) was firmly rooted in the minds of men. If, then, we now ask what the particulars of that moral advance were, we may tabulate them as follows:— The getting adultery, prostitution, and other nameless heathen practices (as well as the taking of human life), recognized by men as sins, and not as mere civil offences in which you could indulge if you were willing or able to pay for them; the making the parental relation a sacred one, at a time when in all other countries parents were either the tyrants or slaves of their children; the recognition of the human brotherhood of the stranger and alien within their gates and of his claim to kindness and consideration, at a time when elsewhere he was regarded with dislike, or treated as an enemy; the making of sorcery, witchcraft, and divination, sins and crimes; the abolition of human sacrifices; the mitigation of slavery to the point where it almost ceased to be slavery; and the making of philanthropy a religious duty binding on all, instead of leaving it as a matter of individual caprice. Now these were all real advances in Morality, not attained for centuries afterwards by any other nation, and wrought out by the Jews, and by the Jews alone, through such long ages of national and personal humiliation, punishment, and sorrow, as we have just seen. So that when Christ came there was nothing for him to do but to take peaceful possession of this vast estate which had been already won and prepared for him, viz., the belief in One God, freedom from Idolatry, and a code of Personal Morality which, with the exception perhaps of the marriage laws, was identical with that of the present day.

And now observe that these moral advances could only be made permanent by parallel advances in the conception of God; and these advances, again, in the conception of God were necessitated by the same outer and inner experiences as

had led to the advance in morality and the putting down of idolatry. Beginning, like Baal of the Syrians, and Chemosh of the Moabites, as a cruel, capricious, and tyrannical god, standing like all the Pagan deities, in relation to his people as a master to slaves, Jehovah was believed, after the experiences of the Wilderness, to have bound himself up in a more intimate and personal manner in the fortunes of the Israelites, for weal or for woe, than was the case with these deities and their worshippers, and to have assumed a more paternal relation towards them; and so could be represented by the Prophets as one who would not suffer any one of his children to be oppressed by the rest, but who insisted that justice and mercy should flow equally among all, like a running stream. It was the first step towards a real paternal relation in men's conception of God, and found its expression in the code of the Ten Commandments; a code in which the higher morality that usually only subsists between family and kindred, was for the first time in history widened so as to embrace a whole nation. Not only did no Pagan nation reach this height, but in States where Society was built on the relation of master and slave, and where fathers could put their sons to death and masters their slaves, it was impossible that they ever should have reached it. But it must be remembered that, like Baal and Chemosh, Jehovah was still the god only of a single tribe; and to enable Israel to rise to the conception of him as not only the god of their special tribe, but as God of all nations, yet another great experience was needed, and this was vouchsafed when the Northern tribes were, as we have seen, carried off into exile by the Assyrians. For now there was no alternative but to believe either that Jehovah was no God at all, and that Assur the Assyrian god who had conquered him was the only True God, or else that he was merely using the Assyrians to punish his people for their sins, But under the burning preaching of the Prophets it was inevitable that the latter of these beliefs must prevail. And the consequence was that henceforth Jehovah, although still having his

dwelling-place in Zion, was believed to be not only the God of the Israelites, but the Great and Supreme God of all the Earth as well. That is to say, from a Monolatry, the religion of the Jews had passed at a bound, almost to a pure Monotheism. Not quite to a pure Monotheism—for the existence if not the supremacy of the gods of other nations was still recognized. But it only required the Second Exile, with the sight of the Babylonian gods in the old form of dead images—half wood half god as Isaiah contemptuously calls them—to convince them that Jehovah was not only the Supreme but the only God of the Universe; and with this belief the religion of Israel passed at last into a pure Monotheism. And further, this very belief of the people that Jehovah was only using the Babylonians as instruments to punish them for their sins, itself necessitated a still further advance in the character of Jehovah, turning him from a god wilful and capricious though requiring justice and mercy from his children, into a god himself absolutely just and merciful. And lastly, the fact that he had chosen the Jews as his own children, while all the rest of the nations stood to him as step-children merely, made him all the more sensitive to neglect from his own people, all the more tenacious of his own honour and dignity, all the more exacting of reverence and awe from them. Further than this of a God Just and Righteous, but with high ideas of his own honour and dignity, the Jews did not go in their conception of the Deity. Nor indeed could they have gone farther without renouncing all that was distinctive of them as a people; all the teachings of their history, all their memories and traditions, all that had made them what they were, all that had been ingrained in them by centuries of humiliation and sorrow. To have taken the next step, and conceived of Jehovah as a God of Love of whom all nations alike were the children without prejudice or favour, would have been to have passed over from Judaism to Christianity itself; and this step, until the millennium dawns, and nations shall without compulsion submit to sink their pride

and to freely admit their former inferiors to a position of equality with themselves, they could not be expected to take.

But neither the purging of the infected blood of Israel by successive Exiles on the one hand, nor the sense of Sin branded into the national mind by the Prophets on the other, would have availed to raise the morality of the nation to the high point it ultimately reached, or to have permanently kept it there, had it not been for the parallel and steady advance of another factor of scarcely less importance, viz., the unity and supremacy of the Priesthood. For it is evident that had the successive exiles purged and reduced the population of the kingdom to its last two inhabitants, still nothing would have been gained had there not been some provision by which these two should be compelled to start afresh with a unanimity of practice and belief. Nor would it have availed anything that the Prophets should have aroused the conscience of the nation to its highest pitch, had they left it without definite knowledge of precisely what men were to think and to do in the various circumstances of life as they arose. Now if it was the function of the Prophets to declare in *general* terms what the Law of Jehovah was, viz., to do justice and hate iniquity, it was the function of the Priesthood to frame rules for its application in detail,—to mature, consolidate, codify and conserve it,—and this could only be done by their gradual advance to unity and supremacy. For it is clear that with a multiplicity of scattered priests, unorganized, dependent, isolated, and without the guidance of a written code, decisions as to what the Law of their one God, Jehovah, specially was in any given case, were likely to be almost as various and conflicting as if they had been the decisions of the priests of *different* gods; and a steady advance towards any common goal of morality or conduct would have been impossible. It will now be interesting to ask what those chance conditions or circumstances in the life of the nation were, which were seized upon and utilized by the Presiding Genius of the World for the purpose of gradually raising the Priesthood

from its isolated, unorganized and dependent position in the time of the Judges, to its final unification and supremacy over all powers in the State, under a single High Priest, after the Babylonian Exile.

The first condition, and the one without which no start could have been made and no foundation laid, was the fact that the Ark or seat of Jehovah's presence, where his will was declared, his judgments given, and his oracles delivered, was a *single* structure that could neither be multiplied nor divided; and that his presence between the cherubim was an *invisible* presence. The consequence was that images of Jehovah could not be multiplied at different shrines, nor various readings of his Law given by the priests in charge of such shrines, as was the case with the gods of the other tribes. It is true that images of Jehovah, as of the other gods, had been multiplied throughout the land, but these had always been regarded by the prophets from the very first as idolatrous, and responses in consequence given at their shrines must always have lacked the weight and authority of those delivered before the Ark. And accordingly when the Northern tribes, who after their revolt had erected images to Jehovah at Dan and Bethel in the shape of two golden calves, had been swept into exile, and with them the little teraphim or household images of Jehovah which were also in common use in private families, the Ark which had been removed by David to Jerusalem, and over which Solomon had built his Temple, gave to the priests connected with that central sanctuary, an authority and supremacy over the priests of all other shrines which they had not before possessed. But although after the building of the Temple the teraphim were removed from the private families of Judah as well, and placed within it, still the altars to Jehovah remained on the 'high places' throughout Judah; and the priests who ministered at them, infected as they were with idolatrous practices, must have given responses and decisions as impure as were their idolatrous rites. And hence it was that when Hezekiah broke

the images of Baal, destroyed the groves of Astarte, and pulled down the 'high places' devoted to the worship of these deities, but left the altars to Jehovah still standing in the places where the idolatrous altars had been, nothing was gained. It was only when Josiah had abolished the altars to Jehovah as well as those to Baal throughout Judah, and had brought the priests who ministered at them to Jerusalem to act as inferior clergy or Levites about the Temple and in the service of the priests there; and especially when the whole Law of God, moral, ceremonial, and civil, was reduced to writing, as it stands in our present Book of Deuteronomy;—it was only then that the authority of the priests at Jerusalem abolished the last traces of the authority of all the other priests. And yet, so long as the Monarchy lasted it was impossible that the pure Law of Jehovah should have free play, or that the Priesthood should have the supremacy over all other powers in the State. It was not until the Second Exile had destroyed the Monarchy and the last vestige of Judah's existence as a secular State, that the priests were able to return to Jerusalem with a High Priest as a centre of unity at their head, and with full power to administer a single code of laws—moral, civil, and ceremonial—for all Israel. This Code, still further elaborated in its ceremonial part by inclusion in it of the Priestly Code found scattered through the other books of the Pentateuch and brought by Ezra from Babylon B.C. 444 (about 100 years after the return of the exiles), became and remained the sole code of the Jews; while the Priests who administered it, now at last organized, unified, and centralized, remained henceforth in all matters, religious, political, and ceremonial, the Supreme Power throughout Israel.

With idolatry at last abolished after centuries of effort by the combined action of repeated purgings by Exile, of the sense of Sin awakened and kept alive by the Prophets, and of the steady advance of the Priesthood to ascendancy; with a new and higher Code of Morality inaugurated than any the world had yet known; we are now prepared, before completing our study

of Judaism, to face the problem which has so long puzzled the critics and commentators, viz., as to why it was that the great cry kept up by successive generations of prophets from age to age, the cry, viz., that what Jehovah wanted was not so much sacrifices and burnt offerings as the doing justice, loving mercy, hating iniquity, and walking humbly with their God—that this, which was quite on a level with the best Christianity of our own age, should have ended after the Exile not in the Christian doctrine which would seem to have been its natural outcome, but in a devotion to outer observances and ceremonial forms of the most puerile character,—in a state of opinion in which the picking up of sticks on the Sabbath, or the touching of a dead mouse, was considered as great a sin as adultery; circumcision as important as uprightness of character; and purity of skin or of dishes as purity of heart? Now it must be admitted that the absurdity of such an ending after so glorious a beginning is indeed glaring, but a few preliminary considerations may perhaps explain the apparent inconsistency and serve to put the matter in a new light. To begin with it is necessary to correct the false assumption that confronts us on the threshold, and which, as I believe, is the root of all the fallacies into which the commentators have fallen, the assumption, viz., that what the prophets of the 7th and 8th centuries before Christ meant by the phrases to do justice, love mercy, hate iniquity, etc., was much the same as what we should mean by these phrases at the present day. With us the words have a wide, universal, and cosmopolitan sense, embracing the entire world, and one which it would take ages and centuries to realize. But with the Prophets they had no reference to the world at large at all, but were aimed at certain *definite* moral and social grievances and injustices existing among the Jewish people themselves. These may be practically summed up as follows:—The extortions of the rich and their oppression of the poor; bribery and the sale of justice by judges and priests; the corruptions of the court; false

prophecy; idolatry and the moral abominations with which, as we have seen, it was associated. Now my contention is that the reform of each and all of these abuses was carried out long before the excessive devotion to ceremonial came into vogue, and further that had the reform of the abuses not been followed by this excessive devotion to outside ceremonial and observances, idolatry would have crept in again, bringing back all the old immoralities in its train; and so the Mission of Israel, which was to prove so important for the whole after history of the world, would have failed. Or to put it more plainly, I should contend that the ceremonialism of the Scribe and Pharisee was as necessary to the great part that Israel had to play in the world, as either the preaching of the Prophets, the successive Exiles, or the work of the Priests; and that without it neither the conception of One God, nor the high code of Morality which the Jews had realized, could have been maintained.

But I must first prove my point, viz., that the prophets in their great cry of 'doing justice and loving mercy,' had in their minds only certain *definite* moral abuses and grievances existing among *their own people*, and that these abuses had all been met by legislation before the excessive devotion to ceremonialism set in. Indeed one may say in general terms that the fact that with the prophets Jehovah was the god of a small tribe of chosen people with whom all his interests were bound up, ought of itself to be sufficient to prove that the words of this same Jehovah through the prophets to do justice and love mercy, could not have had an extension beyond the limits of their own tribe, no more so indeed than if they had been the words of Chemosh or of Baal. But, if wanted, a more direct proof is to be found in the Book of Deuteronomy which was the work of the Prophets themselves. Here you have it laid down as Jehovah's command that the Jews, although they may exact usury and the payment of debts from the foreigner, are not to do so from their own people; and that they are to utterly destroy without mercy the people of the land, the Canaanites,

the Hivites, the Jebusites, etc., leaving nothing alive that breathes; all of which surely shows that the command to do justice and love mercy was not intended to have a universal extension to all peoples, but was to be strictly limited to the affairs of the Jews alone. It is true that the second Isaiah, sitting in exile long after the reform of all the moral abuses by the Code of Deuteronomy, could indulge the dream that the day would come when all nations should come to Jerusalem for their Law, and when justice and mercy should radiate from thence to all parts of the earth; but this was only a dream of the far future, a purely personal ideal which would no more be permitted to force itself on an unwilling people until the time for it was ripe, or to interfere with the orderly evolution of the steps necessary to consolidate what had been already won than in our own time the Christian ideal of universal peace is permitted to interfere with the steady evolution, often through conflict and strife, of communities and States. That the words of the Prophets had but a limited application was further seen in this, that when Josiah came to the throne, and the prophetic party for the first time had full freedom given them to legislate against all abuses either in Church or State, the *actual* abuses for which remedies were found and embodied in the Deuteronomic Code, were precisely those abuses against which the prophets had so long inveighed—and no others. One of the most pressing was that the rich had gradually added field to field until the land of the country having passed into fewer and fewer hands; its produce instead of being distributed among the people was exported for foreign luxuries; the consequence being that the people had fallen hopelessly into debt from which they could only redeem themselves by borrowing at usurious rates of interest, or delivering up their own persons to their creditors as slaves. This abuse was one against which the Prophets had inveighed from the first, and it was now met in the New Code by the institution of the Sabbatical Year and the Year of Jubilee, in which all debts were to be

cancelled, all slaves set at liberty, and the produce of the land given to the poor; as well as by the promulgation of laws forbidding the taking of usury by one Jew from another, while the gleanings of the fields at harvest were to be left for the widow, the fatherless, and the stranger living among them Other laws were enacted against the taking of bribes by Judges and Priests, and the use of false weights and measures by the Merchants and Dealers. The corruptions of the Court, again, with its luxury and its dependence on the arm of flesh instead of on Jehovah, were provided against by the law prohibiting the King from accumulating much silver and gold, from marrying many wives, and from keeping many horses and chariots; Idolatry and Witchcraft were put down by the enactment of laws prohibiting the setting up of images and of groves, and the practice of religious prostitution and unnatural vices. Now these were the particular abuses which the prophets had in their minds when they spoke in general terms of doing justice, loving mercy, and hating iniquity—these and no other; and they were all reformed or in the way of reformation, by the laws enacted against them before the Exile. If further proof of this were needed it would be found in the fact that when, about a hundred years after the return from exile, the new Code of the Pentateuch was brought by Ezra from Babylon, there were no laws in it against usury, bribery, idolatry, cruelty, adultery, religious prostitution, incest or sodomy; no provisions with regard to slavery, poverty, debt, etc.; showing that the old Law of Deuteronomy had done its work, and that all the moral abuses against which the prophets had so long railed had at last been reformed—so far, that is to say, as it was possible for legislation to reform them. And hence it was that after the Exile, the Age of Prophecy ceased, until the new conception of God inaugurated by Jesus demanded a new moral propaganda in accordance with it.

Having cleared the way of these preliminary misconceptions, it will now be comparatively easy to show that instead of the

prophetic cry to 'do justice, love mercy, and hate iniquity,' finding its natural sequel in the Christian doctrine, as indeed it ought to have done had it had a general instead of a strictly limited and local range of application, it was both right and necessary that it should be followed by the ceremonial scrupulosity and regard for outward observance which is the very antithesis of Christianity. In other words we may say that both the belief in One God, and the moral advance that had been so dearly purchased by the Jews, could only have been permanently won for the world by something of the nature of the ceremonial fastidiousness of the Scribe and Pharisee.

And here we may lay down the general principle, that in ages of the world when the actions of men are believed to have their roots and causes in the will of the gods, so closely is their morality, what they shall do or avoid doing, bound up with the conception they have formed of these gods, that any change in the character of the latter will be found to re-act immediately on the former; and, therefore, that if the morality reached at any given point in the life of a nation is to be kept pure and steady and prevented from retrograding, the conception of the character of the god or gods which corresponds to that morality, must be guarded with the most jealous care. If this be so, and if the Jews were destined to lead both the religion and the morality of the world up to the very door of Christianity, but like Moses, not themselves to enter in; if instead of the God of Love of Christianity who required only a morality of the heart, of upright intention and motive as best corresponding to His character, they were to stop short at a God of Justice, Righteousness, and Honour—it is evident that after the moral reforms of the Prophets, which corresponded to His Justice and Righteousness, were carried, the chief concern of the Jews henceforth must have been to find the most fitting form of satisfying this dignity and honour. What special form this should take, would depend, of course, on circumstances, on historical antecedent, or on precedent. In the case of the Jews,

as we know, it happened to be Ceremonial Purity. It need not necessarily have been so. More substantial things were included in the worship—food and sweet smelling savours in the form of incense and burnt offerings (for traces of the old barbaric and tribal God clung to Jehovah to the last); and the satisfaction of his honour and dignity might have been a matter of mere quantity of food, as distinguished from its quality and from the cleanliness and purity of the priests and people by whom it was offered, as well as of the vessels in which it was served. But historical antecedent and tradition having determined once and for all that the dignity and honour of Jehovah were best to be consulted by ceremonial purity, nothing was left now for Judaism to do, moral abuses and grievances having been removed, but to carry out this ceremonial purity to its last extreme. And accordingly in the Priestly Code of the Pentateuch which Ezra brought with him from Babylon after the Exile, this ritual of ceremonial purity was wrought out with an elaboration and to a point of detail beyond which it were impossible to go. Of this code, and of the oral traditions which accompanied and overlaid it, the Scribes were the official exponents; while the Pharisees set themselves apart with the devotion of the early monks but without their asceticism to carry out its precepts into the minutest details of life. To what a point of elaboration and differentiation they carried it may still be seen by the variety of nick-names with which they were characterized. There was the 'bandy-legged' Pharisee who knocked his feet against the stones in the ecstacy of his devotions; 'the bloody-brow'd' Pharisee who, shutting his eyes that he might not see the women, ran his head against the wall; the 'pestle' Pharisee bent double in humility like a pestle handle; the 'strong-shouldered' Pharisee with back bent as if he were carrying the whole burden of the Law; the 'what is there to do and I do it' Pharisee, always on the look out for some new precept of the Scribes to perform, and so

on. Now although the Pharisees, and indeed the whole Jewish nation, took these ceremonial trifles with the greatest seriousness, and observed them with a scrupulosity and devotion which they did not accord to the higher morality and to the weightier matter of the Law, the point of importance for us to observe is that all the while the World-Spirit was getting out of it all precisely that at which it aimed. For the effect of all these ceremonial observances, embracing as they did almost every action of life, and occupying the thoughts of men at every hour of the day—observances which it was as difficult to keep without falling into sin on one side or the other as to walk on a razor's edge,—the effect of all this, which did for the Jews in the settled state what the wandering in the Wilderness had done in the nomadic, was to keep Jehovah and His honour ever in the mind's eye to the exclusion of almost all else beside, and to so burn the idea of a single omnipotent God into successive generations of men, that when Christ came this belief had attained to the certainty of an axiom of thought which could be assumed without controversy or dispute, and on which, as on a sure foundation, he could build his new and still higher conception of God. And further, and perhaps even more important, together with this conception of one God of Righteousness and Justice, there were preserved to the world for all time those moral reforms which had been won under its inspiration, but which in the midst of heathen nations would have been lost again by any relapse into idolatry. With this ceremonialism of the Scribes and Pharisees the religious evolution of Israel practically ends.

CHAPTER III.

THE EVOLVING CENTRES IN RELIGION.

THE attempt I am making in this work to lay down at each stage of our journey the lines along which the great intellectual, moral, and social movements of the world will be seen to have evolved, can only be justified on the assumption which I have made throughout, viz., that the *fact* of Evolution holds good in the spiritual and moral, as well as in the physical world; and that however catastrophic the means employed by Society at certain periods of its history may have been, the abiding results achieved will be found to have been deposited, like geological strata, in the most orderly, gradual, and uniform manner; no step in the long line of ascending terraces which Humanity has built for itself and on which from time to time it has rested, being omitted, but each being well and solidly laid down before the next was entered upon. Accordingly, as we saw in the last chapter, it took some three or four centuries of Pharisaic puerilities,—ceremonial washings, purifications, feasts, new-moons, Sabbaths, and the rest,—before the great conception of the Unity and Personality of Jehovah was sufficiently burnt into the minds and hearts of the Jews, to enable Jesus to enter on it as on a sure inheritance, and on it to build, as on an axiom of thought, his new and higher conception of God. In the following chapters it shall be my endeavour to ascertain from the study of Jewish life and

thought immediately preceding the appearance of Jesus, whether it is possible to determine what, on the hypothesis of Evolution, the next development of Religion ought to be and must be; and I shall then hope to use the knowledge so acquired to clear up difficulties of interpretation in the doctrine of Jesus and the Early Church, which, from the contradictory nature of the existing records would be otherwise unresolvable. In attempting this, it will not I trust be necessary to make any apology to the reader, for I am only proposing to do what is now done every day by Science, as for example, when the law of gravitation is invoked to determine the exact position of a planet or moon in times long past, and which in the absence of all record would, but for the use of this law, remain for ever unknown. Without some such outside help, indeed, it would be impossible for us now ever to attain to a sure and well-grounded belief as to the exact meaning to be attached to the words of Jesus in those cases where his recorded utterances are absolutely antagonistic and irreconcilable—as, for example, in reference to the Kingdom of God, where some of his sayings, as we have seen, would seem to indicate that he meant by it an internal condition of the mind and heart, others, again, an outer and visible kingdom to be set up on earth. Not indeed that for our purpose here it matters so much, strange as it may seem, what Jesus himself meant by this or that disputed point of doctrine, as what the disciples and apostles who laid the foundation of the Church understood him to mean by it; for if, in any instance, the thought of Jesus were over the heads of his followers, or were premature, utopian, or otherwise impracticable, to that extent precisely, even if it were true, would it either be inoperative or be dropped until the time was ripe from out the circle of the faith. And yet, although it be true that not all the views of the Founder of a religion need necessarily correspond with what the principle of Evolution would demand, still, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, it does seem natural that, imbued as he must be more deeply than

others with the spirit and wants of the age, he should be credited with those doctrines which would follow most logically and naturally out of all the preceding evolution. And this leads me still further to remark that not every part of a religion is from the point of view of evolution of importance, but only those parts of it which we may call its *nuclei* or *evolving centres*. And hence it is, that before the principle of evolution can be applied with a prospect of success to the passage of one religion into another, it is necessary to determine what, in general, these nuclei or evolving centres are; and to establish if possible such lines of connexion or relation between them, that the character of one or more of them being given, the nature of the rest may be scientifically determined and forseen. To pause for a moment and institute an inquiry into this indispensable preliminary to the true understanding of the message and doctrine of Jesus, and of the stages by which Judaism and Græco-Roman Paganism led up to it, will form the subject-matter of the present chapter.

To begin with then, a glance at the structure of all or any of the great historical religions will show that they are all alike made up of three main elements—a Supernatural Ideal, a particular Conception of God or of the gods, and a more or less definite Moral Code.

As for the Supernatural or Ideal Element, it is to be observed that all religions alike hold up before the eyes of their votaries some Ideal Kingdom, some bright Supernatural Realm, some fairer and happier land that shall more harmoniously meet the desires and aspirations of the mind and heart than any the existing world affords. This ideal is an essential and all-important factor in all religions, and is what chiefly distinguishes them from philosophies. It corresponds in the economy of religion to the brightly-coloured corolla and honeyed perfume which attract the bees for the fertilization of flowers; and without it religions would never reach the masses of

men at all. Its distinguishing feature is that it is no pale cold abstraction like Philosophy, but is always a warm concrete reality in which the spiritual, moral and sensuous sides are so skilfully and harmoniously blended, as to fascinate and allure the hearts and imaginations of men. It contains a sensuous side, I have said, for just as in the carrying out of any great secular design, fame, wealth, or power must enter as necessary elements to draw on the imagination and keep men to their task; or as in the highest human love, as Montaigne has said, you will hear if you listen closely some sensuous strain mingling with its purest note; so, too, is it with the Ideal element in all religions. In Mahommedanism, for example, not only is there opened up for the contemplation of the devout, a God awful in majesty whose decrees are as unshunnable as death, but for the sensuous is provided as well a paradise of gleaming waters, luxurious couches, waving palm trees and dark-eyed Houris. In Buddhism, again, life-weary souls instead of being condemned to an eternal round of transmigration and re-incarnation, as in the prevailing Hindooism, had opened up before them a Heaven emptied of the monsters in the shape of gods by whom it had been peopled, and converted into a Nirvana of everlasting peace and rest. So, too, in the Heaven of popular Christianity. Besides spiritual and holy joys for the pious and devout, there are the golden harps, the precious stones, and the gates of pearl, for those to whom such things appeal; while for those who can be acted on only by bodily fear the sulphurous fires of Hell are kept perennially burning.

Now these Supernatural Ideals, answering to and reflecting as they do the very various longings and desires of different nations and peoples, grow like them out of a common root—viz. the general Material and Social Conditions of the place and time; and besides take a tinge and complexion as we shall see from the other two great elements in religions which we have now to consider, viz., their Moral Code and their conception of the Nature of God.

The Moral Code that is bound up with and forms one of the great evolving centres in the structure of all religions, consists in the system of duties, obligations, observances, habits, and customs of the different peoples; and determines for those who live under it whether and to what extent their minds and hearts shall be dwarfed and confined, or be allowed free range and expansion. It is the measure and index of the stage of Civilization reached at any given time. Unlike the Supernatural Ideals of which we have just been treating, and on which the *individual* man has fixed his eye, these codes of morality, of practical duties as operative between man and man, are the real objects which the World-Spirit has most at heart. They are the true kernels of all religious systems, the seed which Providence or Fate so carefully guards and conceals at the bottom of the beautiful coralla of supernatural delights opened up before the eyes of men to lead them on. They are the real ends, we may say, towards which all this supernatural paraphernalia is but inducement and means. The chief superiority of Buddhism, for example, over the Hindooism out of which it grew, consisted in its pure and simple morality—its kindness, charity, mercy, and peace,—and although these virtues were inculcated, as we saw in a former chapter, rather for their negative value in helping men to escape the burden of life than, as in Christianity, as the positive means to a larger and fuller life, still they were a great advance on the cruel and inhuman practices and rites of Hindooism—practices which degraded and oppressed the souls of men while monopolizing their lives and activities. The superiority again of Mahommedanism over the wild Arab life it superseded, consisted, as we saw, in its almsgiving, its sobriety, its simplicity of life—a code of morality which in spite of the polygamy and slavery which still adhered to and marred it, and the contempt for Science with which it was bound up, and which in the end condemned it to stagnation and sterility, was nevertheless an enormous advance over the wild, undisciplined life, the

revenge, licentiousness, and bloody feuds which it replaced. Take again Judaism. The superiority of its moral code over that of the Canaanitish inhabitants of the Promised Land consisted in the purity of life which after centuries of exile and affliction it eventually realized for itself, and which, although in the matter of divorce, etc., still leaving much to be desired, was nevertheless an immense advance over the incest, the pollution, the unnameable abominations of the Syrian Nature-Worship which it superseded and replaced.

The third, and from the point of view of man, the all-important element in Religion, the element on which the Moral Code depends for its permanence and stability, is the conception men have of the nature of God or the gods. In saying that the stability of a Moral Code is bound up with the stability of a corresponding conception of God, I do not mean to imply that religions always have their origin in some new view of the nature of God. On the contrary, originating as they always do in the depths of some individual mind,—Moses, Mahomet, Buddha, Jesus—it will depend largely on the individual genius and temperament of the Founder whether the germ of the new religion is called into life by disgust with or reaction against the prevailing morality, or against the prevailing conception of God. But as the Code of Morality, as we shall now see, always corresponds to and varies with the conception of God, it matters comparatively little as to which has had the precedence in the mind of the Founder. There is nothing capricious or fortuitous in the connexion. You cannot have a higher moral code without its giving rise to a higher conception of God, or a higher conception of God without its engendering a higher Morality. Where you have, as in Paganism for example, a multiplicity of gods sitting at every corner and bye-path of life, and exacting toll in the shape of offerings, sacrifices, and the like, from the passers by, you would know beforehand, as we saw in a former chapter, that from it no higher code of morality could arise than that

engendered by the relationship of master and slave; and that on such a religion no institutions demanding a higher conception of human duty or truer relations between man and man, could ever be founded. In the same way, in a religion like that of later Judaism, where the conception of Jehovah was of a Being unapproachable in majesty, purity, and holiness, dwelling high above all things earthly, offensive, or impure, but bound up with the destinies of a particular people, you have a morality which runs almost entirely to external forms of adoration and homage,—purifications, fastings, abstention from contact with impure persons or dead animals, from forbidden foods, from Gentile peoples,—in a word you have the morality of the Scribe and Pharisee. On the other hand, from a code of morality purely secular in character, and professing to be based on a purely scientific conception of the way in which men must be related to each other if they are to attain to their highest welfare, as in the Religion of Humanity of Comte, you would know beforehand that as God is no longer needed in the system, it would end in a practical, if not speculative, Atheism or Agnosticism; while in systems where, as in Nihilism, men are taught that there is no future for them in another world, and that if ever they are to get a glimpse of happiness it must be here and now in this, you have the tendency—almost indeed the certainty—for the disbelief in God to out-run the hesitations and uncertainties of Agnosticism, and out-jumping the evidence to end in an aggressive and absolute Atheism. And lastly, from the conception of God as a God of Love, the common Father of all mankind as in Christianity, you will of necessity have a code of morality co-extensive with the whole human race, a universal brotherhood of Man. From all which it would appear that in studying the origins of religions as they first take shape in the minds of their Founders, it is practically of little importance whether we begin with the conceptions of Morality, or the conceptions of the Nature of God; as owing to this reciprocal

relationship existing between them the one must inevitably accompany the other, or speedily draw it after it. The important point to remember is, that until a particular code of Morality has been fixed and stereotyped by a corresponding conception of God, it cannot be regarded as secure; depending as it does for its continued existence and vitality, on that conception, as a tree on its roots.

With an Ideal World, then, of joys and delights as the brightly-tinted corolla, the honeyed perfume with which to fascinate and allure the hearts and imaginations of men; with a Moral Code as the real seed which the World-Spirit most carefully watches and guards, and exhausts all its ingenuity to propagate and spread abroad; with a Conception of God or the gods corresponding to this code of morality, varying with it, and giving it all its vitality—we have the three main elements, the three evolving centres or nuclei in the organization of all religions. It now only remains to be added, by way of preliminary to our application of these conceptions to the origins of Christianity and to the way in which Judaism and Græco-Roman Paganism passed into it, that before a new religion, however superior, can replace an old one, it must find means to secure a belief in its truth. For, as was asked so penetratingly by Carlyle, what feeling in the mind is after all so strong and operative as the feeling of *belief?* Now it will be remembered that in the Ancient World, of which we are treating, and in which all the great historical religions took their rise, none of those laws of Physical Science which are the glory of the Modern World had as yet been discovered;—no law of gravitation, no Copernican Astronomy, no law of the correlation of mental states with physical conditions of the brain and nervous system,—all of which were calculated to profoundly modify, for better or worse, our views of the World and of Human Life. All phenomena or events, in consequence, the least strange or unusual, were referred not to their natural causes as would be the case To-day, but to the

intervention and operation of supernatural wills, good or bad, of angels, demons, and the like. No criterion or test that could in any way be called scientific in the modern sense of that term was available therefore, and belief, in consequence, in the truth of one religion over another, could only be established by such indirect methods as appeals to fulfilled prophecy, or to the more striking nature or unique character of the miracles recorded as was the case with Christianity; one of whose most powerful agents in conversion, as we learn from Tertullian, was the power exercised by the name of Christ in casting out demons when all else had failed.

With these preliminary observations on the inner structure of Religions in general and the relations existing between their different parts, we have now to attempt to determine what, on the principle of Evolution, that new religion must be which shall issue from Judaism—as seen in the light of its three evolving centres, its Supernatural Ideal, its Code of Morality, and its Conception of God—and to use the knowledge so attained to clear up difficulties in the doctrines of Jesus and the Early Church.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EVOLUTION OF JEHOVAH AND OF JEWISH MORALITY.

IN the foregoing chapters I have treated the historical Evolution of Judaism from the point of view of Civilization in general, that is to say from the point of view of an imagined Providence or Fate supposed to preside over it,—a Power which having to attain its ends by successive stages of orderly evolution, has to consider the means best adapted to bring them about. In the present and following chapters I shall consider the same historical period from the point of view of the Jewish people themselves, the actors in the drama, who, guided in their ideas and conduct by the immediate circumstances of the time and hour, knew, in the large sense, neither what they were doing nor where they were going; I shall consider this period, that is to say, not in the light and from the point of view of what is called, 'final cause,' but rather from the point of view of those immediate scientific causes that are seen operating in the three great evolving centres or nuclei of all religions, viz., the Conception of God, the Code of Morality, and the Supernatural Ideal. But as the Conception of God, as we have just seen, always keeps in correspondence and line with the Moral Code; and as it is impossible to treat each of them separately without the risk of unnecessary repetition, I propose here to consider them together, passing from one to the other as occasion requires, and shall leave to a separate chapter

the evolution of that Supernatural Ideal which took shape in the Jewish Conception of the Messiah and the Kingdom of God;—so bringing the history of each down to the point where it touches, as it were, the line that separates it by but a step from Christianity.

In a former chapter we saw that the Jewish conception of Jehovah began by representing him as one only among a number of other tribal gods like to himself—Moloch, Baal, Chemosh, etc.,—each of whom was bound up with the interests of his own particular tribe. We saw, too, that although cruel and capricious like them, Jehovah differed from them all in this, that what with persecution, oppression, isolation, and the wanderings in the wilderness, he was drawn into a closer relationship with his own people for weal or for woe, than was the case with the gods of other tribes. We saw, too, that with this closer relationship the germ was laid of a future bond or covenant closer than was possible between the pagan gods and their worshippers, the very essence of whose relationship was that of pure caprice, as of master and slave. It is true that this bond between Jehovah and his people was at first only a very general one, a moral covenant, not between himself and each individual as it afterwards became, but between himself and his people as a whole; the consequence being that in the event of any infraction of the terms of the covenant, punishment was visited not so much on each individual as such, but only as he was part of the nation as a whole; the individual suffering not more for his own particular sins than for the sins of the nation at large. In a word, Jehovah concerned himself, not so much with the conduct and moral relations of men to each other, as with their relations to himself and his commands. But not only was Jehovah's relation to his people and, in consequence, his system of rewards and punishments national or tribal rather than individual in character, they were also purely secular and wordly. There was no life beyond the grave, no immortality

either of the soul or of the body; and the blessings promised for obedience to the covenant were in consequence of a purely material kind—the national possession of the promised land, rich crops, smiling fields, rivers of wine and oil, long life, old age, and a numerous and happy progeny; while the punishments were national disaster and disgrace, desolate fields, pestilence, famine and captivity. This conception of the nature of Jehovah and of his relation to his people, is the one reflected in the period of the Judges; and it lasted far down into the period of the Kings. But when the Northern part of the kingdom had seceded under Jeroboam and the rival courts of Israel and Judah with their princes and nobility began to grind the faces of the poor by usury and taxation, until burdened with debt they were forced either to sell their lands or give their own bodies up to slavery; when in consequence of this land-monopoly the rich were able to buy up all the corn and to hold it until it reached famine prices, and so still further to oppress the poor; when, further, these kings and courts began to rely on their chariots and horsemen rather than on Jehovah, and to go a-whoring after other Gods, the Baals and Astartes of the time, and to forget the God who had brought them up out of Egypt and had delivered them by a mighty hand; when, in a word, the measure of their iniquity was full, and the great pre-exilian Prophets arose to denounce them, Jehovah was the only power to whom the Prophets could appeal. The consequence was that they were obliged to represent Him not only as a jealous, capricious God, thinking mainly of His own worship and honour, but as a God who loved mercy and hated iniquity, and who was as much offended by tyranny and injustice as by idolatry. From being a jealous, cruel and capricious god, he had thus advanced in the conceptions of men to being a God of Justice and Truth also; and as we should expect, this change in the conception of God soon made itself felt in the penal code and in the system of rewards and punishments.

These were indeed still purely material and worldly in their character (although the threatened loss of the Law of God is made a great hardship by the Northern prophets), and included national disaster, famine, desolation and exile; but from this time onwards the people are no longer all lumped together in one condemnation, as was the case in the time of the Judges, but a distinction is made between the good and the bad, between the righteous and the wicked. It is only the wicked now who will be cut off; the good and those who repent will be saved and will return from the exile to which the prophets had fore-doomed them, either as a holy 'remnant' or as a purified and renovated Israel. But all this while, Jehovah, although the only God of the Israelites, is still only one among the many other gods of neighbouring nations and tribes.

The Jehovah of the Prophets up to the time of the Exile, then, is a God of great power and majesty, loving justice and hating iniquity, but of much loving-kindness and tender mercy; and at first sight this may appear not unlike the God of Jesus and the Early Church. Nothing, however, can be farther from the fact, as will appear if we turn to the Book of Deuteronomy which was compiled and written shortly before the Exile—a book in which the conceptions both of the prophetic and of the priestly party are fully embodied. There we shall find that the loving and fatherly character of God is purely in relation to His own chosen people, and by no means extends to all mankind. For although the stranger in their midst is set down equally with the widow, the orphan, and the slave, for gentle and compassionate treatment and consideration, you will find set down beside this the equally authoritative command of Jehovah, to smite down and utterly exterminate all the original inhabitants of the land, without pity or mercy. Jehovah, it is evident here, is not yet regarded as the loving Father of all mankind, but of his own people merely. And yet that there had been a great advance over the old conception of Him is seen if we compare the morality of Deuteronomy with the

morality sanctioned by Him in the Book of the Covenant in Exodus, written some centuries before. This old code bears all the marks of an early and barbarous Civilization, and of an early and barbarous God—private revenge, cruelty to slaves, incest, the destruction of crops and fruit trees, family feuds, the offering up of the first-born as sacrifice, etc. Now in the Book of Deuteronomy all these have been done away with, owing to the advance made in the interval in general civilization, and in the higher conception of God. The law of retaliation, for example, is entirely done away with except in the single case of false witnesses. Sons, again, are forbidden to take their father's wives and concubines as part of their inheritance, as had been done in the old times—as we see in the case of David and Absalom. Religious prostitution, too, in connexion with the Temple-service was forbidden; and women-slaves were ordered to be manumitted, as men were, after seven years service. The crops and fruit trees of the enemy were to be spared; and parents were forbidden to offer up their first-born children to Jehovah in sacrifice, as had been the practice in the earlier times. And instead of God being Himself the Judge of causes, judges were now appointed to dispense justice in His name. All these, it is plain, were immense advances in Morality—the products of a higher civilization, and reflecting in their provisions the progress men had made in their conception of the nature of God. During the Babylonian Exile the conception of Jehovah underwent, as we saw in a former chapter, a still further change. Up to this time He had still remained, in the popular mind, only one God among a number of others; but when confronted with the terrible disaster of exile and captivity, the Jews had to face the alternative of whether this great affliction meant the victory of the Babylonian deities over Jehovah (the most natural explanation according to the ideas of the time), or whether Jehovah was using these other nations as instruments in His own hands, to chasten His people for their sins. Under the influence of the Prophets, and backed

by the long record of prophecy fulfilled, the latter view prevailed; and when the exiles had made near acquaintance with the Babylonian gods, and found them to be only made of wood and stone, they were still the more confirmed in their belief that Jehovah was not only a God above all other gods, but that He was the only real and true God—all the rest being but dead idols or malicious demons. But this sudden advance to a pure Monotheism was not attended as might have been expected by any further advance in morality; for although the second Isaiah proclaimed that the elect of the Gentiles as well as the Jews would be brought to the knowledge of the one true God, and would come from every quarter of the earth to pay Him homage on His Holy Hill of Zion; still the fact that the Jews alone were believed to be His own children, while all other nations continued to be at best but step-children who in the ideal kingdom of the future were to be but servants of the chosen race, prevented any further advance towards equality in the relations between man and man—prevented in other words any further advance towards justice and morality.

After the Exile, the captives who had returned to their native land were free to carry out on virgin soil the high morality of the Prophets which had already been definitely formulated in the Deuteronomic Code, but which owing to the presence of unfavourable conditions, had only been partially realized. With the Exile, however, all these unfavourable conditions had completely passed away—the High-places, the Land-Monopoly, the Court, the Army, the Monarchy, and all the other instruments of iniquity and idolatry against which the Prophets had thundered—and with them disappeared the debt, the usury, the grinding poverty, the slavery, which had grown directly out of them. In the re-constituted Israel, which was constructed after the Exile according to the ideal of their dreams—what with the equality of conditions involved in its peasant-proprietary, what with its Theocracy, its Temple-tax, and its fixed and onerous but cheerfully paid dues for the

support of the priesthood—neither grinding poverty nor licentious luxury had any place. The first result of this condition of Society was that the conception of Jehovah as a God of Justice and Mercy, a God of the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, now that it had no longer its appropriate grievances to keep it alive, was, although never entirely to be lost to Israel, allowed gradually to fall into the background; and was indeed practically forgotten for centuries until revived by Jesus and widened so as to embrace all mankind. That these grievances which had called forth the denunciations of the prophets, and had given rise to this new conception of Jehovah as a God of justice, love, and mercy, had really been swept away by the Exile, will be seen at once, as has already been shown, if we compare the provisions of the Priestly Code of the Pentateuch which Ezra brought with him from Babylon about a century after the Exile, with those of the Deuteronomic Code about a quarter of a century before. In the Priestly Code no mention is made of kings, or courts, or of military service; of 'high places;' of pillars, asheras, or the worship of other gods; matters all of which are of constant recurrence in Deuteronomy. And why? Clearly because, as we know from history, neither king, nor court, nor army, neither 'high places,' idolatry, nor 'other gods' had any existence in Israel after the Exile. In the same way no mention is made of Sabbath Observance, of the Decalogue, of Jerusalem as the only place of sacrifice, of the absence of blemish in the animals offered—and that because all this had long been taken for granted and acted on as a matter of course. In like manner no mention is made of usury, of the oppression of the poor, the slaves, the widow and orphan or the stranger—and that because the social conditions which had given rise to these grievances had been completely swept away, and the grievances themselves had no longer any existence or were of such exceptional occurrence that they could be easily dealt with by laws known and recognized by all. Another consequence of

the new state in which the Jews found themselves after the Exile was that the great race of Prophets, being no longer wanted now that the grievances which had given them their *raison d'être* were removed, disappeared from Jewish history and were no more seen. The Prophets gone, the Priests, who had shared with them the authority and homage of the people, stepped into the vacant place. Now the characteristic of the priest as distinguished from the prophet is this, that, like a lawyer, he is not expected to originate any new ideas or to initiate any new line of policy or reform, but only to administer and carry into ever finer subtleties the existing law—extending its range it may be, but not altering its genius or essential spirit. And, accordingly, the consequence of this decay of the Prophet and rise of the Priest was that the prophetic conception of Jehovah—the conception of Him as the righteous, loving, and merciful Father of His own people—fell into the background; and the priestly conception of Him as the jealous, exacting God, full of punctilio and tenacious of His own dignity, came almost exclusively to the front. And this conception of God, once ingrained in the mind, was supplemented by another which grew out of the new political situation in which the nation found itself. Protected from all danger of foreign aggression by the Persian suzerainty, and allowed to freely develop their Theocracy without interference and indeed with the direct encouragement of the Persian King, the God who had walked in the garden with Adam, who had been heard thundering from the top of Sinai and through the mouths of his chosen servants the Prophets, was now no longer needed; and this, together with the exertions of the priesthood to remove Him from contact with all that was earthly, defiling, or unclean, had the effect of raising Him to such a transcendental height of holiness, aloofness, and unapproachable dignity that He was in danger of dissolving into space and disappearing altogether from the lives and interests of men. And this indeed would have been the result had it not been for two

very important considerations. The first was that the very difficulty, in fact impossibility, of keeping the whole of the ritual and ceremonial law without falling into sin on this side or on that, was of itself sufficient to keep Jehovah ever present to the mind; the second was the introduction into the vast inter-space left between Heaven and Earth of a number of subsidiary beings, neither gods nor men, as media of communication between God and Man, and as messengers and interpreters of the Divine Will. It was inevitable, indeed, that some such beings should arise from the time when the gods of the nations were seen to be nothing but blocks of wood or stone, and Jehovah was left supreme in the Universe, alone in his solitary isolation—it was inevitable, I say, that some such beings should arise to carry out his behests and to watch over the destinies of individuals and of nations, though still strictly subordinate to His Supreme dominion and control. And the particular order of beings most suitable for this purpose, as being neither gods nor men, and so neither encroaching on the dignity of Jehovah nor endangering his monotheism, were the Angels adopted by the priests from the Persian religion and brought back with them from Babylon. Now the Persian religion was in so many points akin to that of the Jews both in form and in spirit that one is not surprised that even a people as stiff-necked as the Jews should have found many things in it which they could utilize and embody in their own. The Ormuzd of the Persians, for example, was, like Jehovah, the Supreme God of all the World. Like him, too, he was worshipped without images, and was to be approached only after a course of purification identical almost with that of Judaism. The Jews had already taken their stories of the Creation and the Deluge from ancient Babylonian myths—with the single exception that to keep up their monotheism they were obliged to replace the hosts of Pagan deities who played their respective parts in these dramas by a single Divine Will, that of Jehovah, and a single Angelic Will, that of Satan.

They were also soon to adopt as a model for their synagogues the Persian meeting-houses where the sacred books were read, and hymns and prayers were recited and offered up to Ormuzd. And now, at the period of which we are treating, the period following the Exile, they had borrowed from the religion of Zoroaster the seven heavenly spirits or angels who surrounded the throne of Ormuzd and carried out his commands—the 'non-slumberers,' as they were called, who, according to some, make their appearance in Zechariah as the seven eyes and seven arms of the golden candlestick. They had each received special names, Gabriel, Raphael, Michael, Uriel, and the like, and formed a hierarchy among themselves with Gabriel at their head; each nation having its own special angel to watch over it—that of the Jews being Michael, as we read in Daniel. These seven angels surrounded, as I have said, the throne of God, and were in the form of winged men. They were the helpers of men in their perplexities, and became later the guardian angels of Christianity. In the Persian religion there were bad angels as well as good—'devas' they were called—who were the special servants of Ahriman, the god of Darkness. But here, again, the Jews had to draw a firm line to protect their Monotheism. It was impossible for them to admit the existence of a separate and independent God of Darkness; nor could they admit the existence of spirits, evil or otherwise, who were other than the servants of Jehovah. And accordingly with the Jews, Satan is only one among the seven angels or spirits who surround the throne of God; his special function being that of the 'accuser' of men. In Zechariah, for example, we find him reproved by God for unjustly accusing Joshua the High Priest. In Chronicles, again, he has advanced a step farther, and is now seen provoking David to number the people. In Job, he has become an active mischief-maker who puts pit-falls in men's paths to trip them up; but it is not until the time of Christianity that he has escaped entirely from the control of God, and become a

Tempter on his own account. At no period of his history, however, does he become a separate and independent God like Ahriman; but ever remains, although a fallen spirit and rebel angel, the offspring and *creation* of God.

With the gods of the Nations thus supplanted in the Jewish mind by angels, who were neither gods nor yet properly men, but a higher order of being created by Jehovah for the carrying out of His designs, and for acting as His intermediaries in dispensing blessings and punishments to individuals and nations, the Jews had at last attained to a completed system of Absolute Monotheism in which one Supreme God, Jehovah, was the God of all the World, with themselves as His chosen people—a God who, although occupying the vast stretches of immensity, had still in some mysterious way his dwelling in their midst on the Holy Hill of Zion. In thus conceiving of Jehovah as specially their God, and of themselves as in a special sense his children, while all other peoples were at best his step-children merely, the Jews had reached a point beyond which their national pride would not permit them to advance; for however it might be with individuals, it is certain that the nation at large would never take the next step needed to bring them to the conception of God as a God of Love, the common Father of all mankind. Higher, indeed, than a God of holiness, justice, and unapproachable majesty, of high dignity, sensitiveness, and honour, who was to be approached only with the most scrupulous attention to personal purity, and with feelings of the most devout reverence and awe, the Jewish conception of Jehovah, as we said in a former chapter, could not rise. And corresponding with this conception of God, as we should expect, was their Moral Code. Not that the conception of Jehovah as a God of Justice and Mercy which had been so dearly won by the Prophets, with the code of morality founded on it, was ever again lost. Although falling into the background, it was always there and ready to spring up as we see in the Psalms in times of national

or personal perplexity and adversity. But it was practically overshadowed for centuries by the other conception of Him; and the Code of Morality became almost entirely a ritual and ceremonial one, in which all was done for the honour, dignity, and glory of God, rather than for the essential well-being of men. The consequence was that the better to secure the blessings promised to obedience and to avert the penalties threatened for disobedience to Jehovah's statutes, the Jews had only to carry out the provisions of their Law with greater and greater scrupulosity, and into finer and finer detail. And as these provisions were mainly external and ceremonial, and concerned such matters as sabbath observance, circumcision, Temple-service, sacrifices, feasts, fasts, ablutions, and the like, it is clear that in the end the Jewish life must have reached in ritual and ceremonial a point of scrupulosity transcendental in degree—as indeed we know it did under the régime of the Scribes and Pharisees. Now this degeneration of morality into ritual and ceremonial observances had already taken place at the time of which we are speaking, that is, shortly after the Exile, and was only less in degree than under the Scribes and Pharisees. The rewards and punishments, too, for obedience and disobedience were still *national* in their scope, and took the form of material well-being in the present life; while on the other hand the rewards and punishments of Christianity concerned the *individual* himself, and took the form of spiritual blessings in another world. It is evident, therefore, that although the post-exilic conception of God required only a single step to bring it to the conception of the God of Jesus, that step could not be taken until the gap between a system of national rewards and punishments, and of individual and personal rewards and punishments, between a national immortality and a personal immortality, was bridged over. This process, as we know, took fully four hundred years to accomplish; and to trace its successive stages shall be my aim in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

EVOLUTION OF JEHOVAH AND OF JEWISH MORALITY.

(continued).

IN the last chapter we saw that at the period at which we have arrived, viz., after the return of the Captives from Babylon, the blessings and penalties which attended on obedience to or infraction of the Divine Commands, were conceived as relating to the Jewish people *as a whole*; the individual participating in them rather as a member of the community at large, than on his own account. It is true that men were beginning to feel, as did Ezekiel, that rewards or punishments were or ought to be personal to the individual as such, but as yet the thought existed only in germ in the foremost minds and had not descended to the body of the people. The conception of the rewards and punishments themselves, on the other hand, remained as it had always been, purely material and worldly in character,—riches, happiness, long life, prosperity, and a numerous progeny, or their opposites. But the gap between a stern and jealous God who regarded only the nation as a whole, and who visited the iniquities of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation, and the God of Love of Christianity who looks into the hearts and minds of each of his children, was too great to be bridged over by a *single* step of evolution. It had

to be led up to by a stage in which blessings and penalties, while still purely material, and dispensed mainly in consideration of outward and ceremonial acts (on the simple business basis of a *quid pro quo*, in opposition to the free grace and love of Christianity), were nevertheless, as in Christianity, conceived to be personal to the *individual*, and not, as in the earlier Judaism, general to the nation at large. Now the agencies which were chiefly instrumental in inaugurating and consolidating this intermediate stage in the relations between God and Man, between the older Judaism and Christianity, may be formulated as follows;—the Long Peace, the Written Law, the rise of the Scribes, the admission of the Prophets and Psalms into the Canon of Scripture, and the institution of the Synagogue.

The most important of these agencies, perhaps, as being the indispensable basis of all the rest, was the long peace which the nation enjoyed under the Persian Suzerainty for two centuries after the return from the Exile,—a peace which was continued practically for another century and a half under the Greek Protectorate up to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. Now it is evident that so long as the nation was surrounded by foes on every hand and was engaged in a ceaseless struggle to maintain its independence, the greatest blessings which Jehovah could bestow for obedience to his commands, must have been national existence, the secure possession of the land, success in war, and the rest; and that He Himself would be regarded as the God of the nation as a whole, rather than as the God of the individual. But in the long peace of three centuries and a half which followed the Exile, during which the Jews were permitted under Persian and Greek protection to manage their own affairs in their own way, and to organize their Theocracy on the pure ideal of their minds without the fear of foreign aggression or interference,—it was almost inevitable that their thoughts should turn *inwards on themselves*, and should centre each on his own individual hopes and fears; and that God, in conse-

quence, should gradually come to be conceived of as interesting Himself in the affairs of individuals, watching their actions, and keeping a strict audit of what each had done and left undone. And this, which as a general tendency was almost inevitable, was converted into certainty and actuality by the other causes we have mentioned, viz., by the institution of the Synagogue, the rise of the Scribes, and the admission into the Canon of Scripture of the books of the Prophets and the Psalms.

Before the Exile, the worship of God had consisted, as we have seen, chiefly in the sacrifices which were offered up at the 'high places' to be found everywhere throughout the land, on every hill-top and under every green tree, and within easy access of all. But these 'high places' had all been abolished by Josiah shortly before the Exile; and from that time onwards sacrifice was permitted only in one place, the Temple at Jerusalem. Now this centralization of worship at the Capital, far from bringing God's presence nearer to the heart and conscience of each individual, would of itself have had precisely the opposite effect;—the three great yearly feasts of the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, which brought the Jews in crowds up to Jerusalem from all parts of the world, tending rather to keep up the conception of Jehovah as the God of the Jewish nation, than as the God of the individual. But as these feasts and sacrifices occupied only a few weeks in the year, the people from the country round, now that the 'high places' were abolished, were left for the greater part of the time to those ceremonial observances and laws relating to the keeping of the Sabbath, personal purity, etc., which could be practised away from the Temple, and which from their narrowness and strictness kept the fear if not the love of Jehovah for ever present in their minds. Now the agency for the inculcation and enforcement of these private exercises was the institution of the Synagogue,—an institution which the exiles brought back with them from Babylon. During the Exile, when far away from their beloved Zion and

with their Temple in ruins, their only form of worship was prayer, praise, and the reading and exposition of the Law; and this worship they practised in the little meeting-places which they had constructed for themselves on the model of those Persian houses of worship where were recited and sung the holy songs and ancient prayers of the Zoroastrian faith. After the Exile it was but natural that they should bring back with them to Judæa an institution to which they had grown so accustomed in Babylon; and, accordingly, these Synagogues, as they were called, were soon to be found in every village in the land, and in the intervals of the great Feasts at Jerusalem were the only places of worship. They had taken the place of the ancient 'high places,' but differed from them in this important particular, that while the 'high places' were the scenes of sacrifices as gross almost and purely external as those of Paganism, the Synagogues were places of meeting for prayer, praise, and the reading and exposition of the Law,—that is to say of a worship purely inward in character. These meetings, which were held twice a week, were opened with prayer and with the reading of the Shema, 'Hear, O Israel,' etc., after which a portion of the Law was read, interpreted, and expounded by anyone present who felt he had something to say. In this way the word of God was brought consciously home to the heart and mind of each,—and it is interesting to remember that these Synagogues were afterwards felt by Jesus to be appropriate places for the exposition and propagation of his own doctrines.

But the reading and exposition of the Written Law, the Pentateuch, although it kept the fear of God before the individual mind, would have had but little influence in making religion a personal concern between each man and his Maker had it not been for the addition to the Canon of Scripture of the Books of the Prophets, and especially of the Book of Psalms,—with their glorification of the loving-kindness of Jehovah, and His forgiveness to all those who kept His

commands and put their trust in Him. Then, and then only, did the full influence of the Synagogue in transforming the conception of Jehovah from a national God to a God of love and mercy, a God who listens to the cries of the least of His children, begin to be felt. The Pentateuch itself, or Book of the Law, the Thora as it was called, was a composite work, made up of old and new portions, edited and in part fabricated in Babylon by the Scribes, and brought to Jerusalem by Ezra in the year 444 B.C., about a hundred years after the return from the Exile. These Scribes were the descendants of the priestly class who had gone into captivity, but who, owing to the impossibility of sacrificing at any other place than the Temple at Jerusalem, had been forced to turn their attention to the study and exposition of the Law. They were, in a word, a kind of transformed Priests. Now when the Temple worship was re-established at Jerusalem after the return of the exiles, those Scribes or religious lawyers who remained behind in Babylon, set themselves to work to bring the great mass of Sacred Literature that had for centuries been accumulating, into one compact and as far as possible harmonious whole. The materials they had at hand were many and various, and consisted of old historical tales of the Patriarchs and Heroes of the early world; narratives of the nation's wanderings and exploits in peace and war, taken from the history of the Wars of Jehovah; the old Covenant of Jehovah with His people known as the Book of the Covenant, which had come down from a remote past, and is now found in certain chapters of the Book of Exodus; the new Covenant or Book of the Law found in the Temple by Hilkiah the High-priest in the time of Josiah shortly before the Exile, and now known to us as the Book of Deuteronomy; and the elaborate Temple ceremonial and ritual of feasts, fasts, sacrifices, music, etc., which we see beginning to be planned during the Exile, and taking shape in the ideal dreams of Ezekiel, and which, during the hundred years that followed, had been elaborated to the point of

minuteness that we find in the Priestly Code, especially in the Books of Leviticus and Numbers. Now these separate portions of the Pentateuch which had up till then existed only in scattered copies, had been collected and worked over by the Scribes in Babylon; but as owing to their antiquity and the reverence in which they were held, no one dared take the liberty of altering them sufficiently to bring them into a compact, harmonious whole, the only plan was to bring the separate portions together side by side, and, after rubbing off the rougher angles of discordance, to fuse them into a solid mass,—filling in the interspaces with a priestly and ceremonial medium which gave character and colour to the whole and like the hardened sand between the larger stones in a conglomerate mass, held it firmly together. The effect of this was that when united into a single book,—the Book of the Law,—an additional sanctity and reverence was given to the whole, over and above that which had formerly attached to the separate parts. But as the Book was given out to be the full and complete revelation of God to Moses, it became all the more necessary to harmonize the various discordances that were to be found in it, as well as to bring all its provisions up to date, so as to meet the needs and necessities of the times. And as it was impossible to alter, add to, or take from the Written Word, the difficulty of stretching, bending, or otherwise twisting its provisions so as to harmonize them with each other and to adapt them to changing circumstances, was surmounted by what was called the Oral Law,—the Law of Tradition,—whose collected utterances were afterwards to form the greater part of the Talmud. But it was necessary, besides, that this Oral, this Unwritten Law, should have equal authority with the Written Law. The Scribes, therefore, were obliged to resort to the same expedient which had proved so successful when Hilkiah brought the Book of Deuteronomy from the recesses of the Temple, and when Ezra brought the Pentateuch itself from Babylon;—the expedient, viz., of

referring it back to Moses. It was alleged that Moses had received the Oral Law along with the Written one from Jehovah on Sinai. And just as with us, Case-made Law, as it is called, has existed from time immemorial alongside of the Statute Law and on an equal footing with it, so this Oral Law of the Jews from the time of Ezra onwards existed side by side with the Pentateuch and enjoyed equal authority with it—each generation of Scribes, like each generation of our own lawyers, being bound by these oral decisions of their predecessors as by so many sacred and authoritative precedents.

Now the Supreme Tribunal to which all disputes in reference to the meaning, interpretation, or legal application of both the Oral and Written Law were referred, was a body of the most eminent of these Scribes sitting at Jerusalem, and known as the Sopherim, or Men of the Great Synagogue. A commission of this body shortly after the bringing of the Law from Babylon by Ezra, went about the country taking it with them and explaining it to the people; and afterwards when the Synagogues were fully established, those who conducted the services as well as those who acted as judges in administering the Law, were in the habit of appealing to this body at Jerusalem in all cases of doubt, difficulty, or dispute. But it was only natural that the first generation of Scribes, the men who had themselves taken part in adding the ceremonial and ritual parts of the Pentateuch to the old original Book of the Law,—the Book of Deuteronomy,—should not show the same reverence for the letter of a Law which themselves had made, as their descendants of later centuries. And accordingly we find that not only did they overlay the Written Law with the traditional Oral Law, but they did not scruple to lay sacreligious hands on the written text itself. Among other things, for example, they altered, as Kuenen has pointed out, the third of a shekel which was the amount of the Temple-tax in Nehemiah (x., 32), to the half a shekel which was the amount in Exodus (xxx., 13). From the beginning, and indeed for

many ages, the Pentateuch was regarded as the complete Law of God, containing provisions, it was believed, which when properly interpreted by the Oral traditions of the Scribes, were sufficient for the regulation of every act in life. But finding that the old Historical Books were capable, when properly redacted, of yielding much matter serviceable for doctrine and instruction, the Scribes added them one by one to the Canon; until as time went on they came to be regarded as having the same kind of authority, although somewhat less in degree, as the Pentateuch itself. Among others, the Book of the Judges, for example, was redacted from the priestly point of view from sources now lost, while the Books of the Chronicles were simply a redaction from the same point of view, of the Books of Kings. Fortunately, the reverence for the Books of Kings was so great that they still form part of the Canon; and in minutely comparing the historical accounts with the parallel ones in Chronicles, as has been so ably done by Wellhausen, the fact that the one is but a priestly redaction of the other, is put beyond all doubt. In the same way, the noble record of fulfilled prophecies had made it evident to all that the Prophets had been inspired by God; and the Books of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and the rest, were added to the Canon.

Now it was only when these Prophets and the Psalms were added to the Canon of Scripture, that the full power of the Synagogue in bringing Jehovah home to the hearts and consciences of each *individual* Jew, began to make itself felt. For the Pentateuch, the Book of the Law proper, deals, it is to be observed, mainly with matters affecting the well-being of Israel as a *nation*, and only secondarily with those peculiar to each individual. It deals, for example, with historical characters like the Patriarchs and holy men of old, whose lives, though full of idyllic beauty and charm, have still a historical and national, rather than an individual significance; or with rites like Circumcision, and the observance of the Sabbath, whose main object was to keep up a distinction between the Jews and other

peoples; or with the great festivals—Passover, Pentecost, Tabernacles,—which drew the Jews up to Jerusalem from all parts of the world, and made those who took part in them feel rather their *national* relationship to Jehovah, than their *personal* relationship to Him; the individual, being as it were for the time lost in the crowd. So, too, the great Day of Atonement was instituted for the cleansing away of the sins of the *whole* people; while the continual burnt-offering was the expression of the continued gratitude of the nation as a whole to their God. It was only the sin and trespass offerings, the laws relating to purity, etc., which primarily concerned the individual as such; but they were purely formal and outward acts, calculated, it is to be observed, rather to appease the wrath of God than to promote the personal communion of the individual with Him. So far, therefore, as the mere reading and exposition of the Pentateuch was concerned, the Synagogue, except that it kept the fear of God before the mind of the individual Jew, would have been as far almost from bringing him into intimate personal relationship with Him, as the old 'high places' with their merely outward, and in essence and effect Pagan, sacrifices. It was only when the Prophets and Psalms, as I have said, with that sweet resignation and trust in the loving-kindness and tender mercies of God which have made them so dear to the afflicted, the sorrowing, and the wretched, in every age—it was only when these were added to the Canon of Scripture, to be read in the Synagogue and applied by each to the needs of his own individual heart, that Jehovah became transfigured from the Great and Supreme God of the nation as a whole, to an intimate and personal God, near to the heart of each one of His people, to comfort and bless them and to do them good.

But although at last through these various agencies Jehovah had been transformed from a national or tribal god to a God near to the heart of each individual Jew, still the system of rewards and punishments continued, as ever, purely material and worldly in character—riches, happiness, health, prosperity,

long life, old age, and numerous progeny, and their opposites; the consequence being that each man as reward for obedience to the Divine Commands, looked to the promises of God for the enjoyment of these blessings in himself and *in his own lifetime.*

Of the strange *impasse* to which this brought the Jews, and of how, coming on it suddenly and quite unwittingly, as on an open precipice, Judaism was brought by it to the very verge of disaster and ruin—this, together with the consequences that flowed from it, shall be our theme in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE RESURRECTION AND OF A FUTURE LIFE.

IN the last chapter we arrived at that point in the Evolution of Judaism where but a single step intervenes to separate the Jewish Conception of God and the Jewish Code of Morality from those of Christianity; and yet that single step cannot be taken for some three hundred years to come. In the present chapter, accordingly, I propose to institute an inquiry into the causes that have interposed this delay; and the narrative will form one of the most interesting and instructive chapters in the whole history of Judaism.

To begin with, it will be remembered that we found in a former chapter that the active centres, the evolving *nuclei* of all religions might be reduced to three, viz. a Conception of God, a Code of Morality, and a Supernatural Ideal. It would seem probable, therefore, that if the conception of God and the code of Morality of the Jews were, during the period of Greek domination, or say about 300 B.C., separated by but a single step from Christianity, the delay in passing over into it was due to some incompleteness in the evolution of the third factor, the Supernatural Ideal. And this *à priori* probability will be found in actual fact to be true. That both the Jewish conception of God and the Jewish code of Morality were at this

time within a single step of Christianity, and that they still remained practically where they were without any real organic advance until the time of Christ, cannot, I think, be disputed. The conception of God was of One Holy and Just Being, of great majesty, aloofness, sanctity, and purity, resenting any want of reverence or approach to familiarity as a stain, but of great loving-kindness and tender mercy to His own chosen people, His ear ever open to the cries of His children. Now a single step forward will take us to the conception of a God full of grace, loving-kindness, and mercy, not only to His own people, but to all mankind—and what is that but Christianity? The moral relation, again, existing between God and man, which in early Judaism had been a relation between Jehovah and the Jewish nation *as a whole*, had at the time of which we are speaking become, as we have seen, a personal relation between Him and each individual Jew. But the terms of that relation were still those that we should expect from a just and jealous but loving God, who kept a strict audit and balance-sheet of all the actions of His people, and who demanded, in consequence, for each transgression a legal equivalent in offering or sacrifice. Now if we take a step forward, you have a God near not only to the heart of each Jew but to the heart of all men, a God who pardons the sinner, not by ticking off each offence as its legal equivalent is paid, but by freely and of His own grace wiping the slate clean from the outset—and this is the God of Christianity. And now, again, we have to ask what prevented this single necessary step being taken at once, instead of requiring three hundred years of varying fortune for its realization? That the delay was due to some arrest in the evolution of that side or element in religion which we have called the Supernatural Ideal—an element which in the case of the Jews took the form of the rewards and promises held out by Jehovah to His people—we have, as we have said, every reason on *à priori* grounds for believing; and that it was so in actual fact we are now to see.

We have already pointed out that throughout the whole period of Jewish History from the earliest times to the latest, the promises and blessings held out by Jehovah to His children for obedience to His commands were of a purely material and worldly nature—the secure possession of the land, rich fields, bounteous harvests, national freedom and independence, success in war, etc.; the penalties incurred by disobedience being also of a worldly character,—defeat, exile, slavery, pestilence, famine, and death. There was no immortality either of the soul or of the body, no resurrection, no after-life of rewards and punishments—nothing but national and worldly prosperity, or the reverse. Now as the life of a nation, unlike that of an individual, has no definite limit or end, the earthly felicity promised as reward of obedience to God's Law, can, if not accomplished in the existing generation of men, be postponed to a future generation, without serious detriment to the religion which announces it, or suspicion of bad faith on the part of the God who has promised it. But from the time that the rewards and penalties attaching to good and bad conduct were no longer believed to be lumped together in the form of *national* prosperity or the reverse, but were believed to be strictly *personal* to each individual Jew and accurately apportioned to each according to his deserts; and when in consequence of there being no future life or immortality, these rewards and punishments if made good at all must be made good within the compass of a *single human life;* then, Judaism all unconsciously to itself, had, by the strain it put on Providence to realize its promises, brought itself to the very verge of ruin—to the point, indeed, at which no philosophy or mere external logic could save it, but where, if saved at all it must be by the Providence or Fate which is concealed in the secret and invisible logic of events. For although it is true that at any age of the world the individual could always appeal, even in his own single life, to a *spiritual* compensation, an expansion of heart and soul, an elevation of

rank in the scale of being, following with mathematical certainty and as by inevitable decree on all devotion to the good and the true—still up to this hour it has never been found to be true that *material* prosperity will in like manner follow the track of the virtuous and the good. To believe otherwise and to teach it as an article of faith, was to put a greater strain on Providence than it could well bear; and as a matter of fact, from the time that these two streams of thought, viz.—the worldly prosperity and the limits of a single life—were seen like railway trains converging and approaching each other, disaster and ruin were imminent, and had it not been for what we have called the unforeseen logic of events, the collision must have resulted in the complete break-down of Judaism. For from the position thus taken up a logical retreat was impossible. This dependence of each man's fortunes on his own good or bad conduct had not been reached in a night, but by gradual stages and slow evolution through many centuries, and could not be revoked. Backward, therefore, it was impossible to go, and to press forward was but to break and shatter oneself against the hard rock of facts; and falling, to drag down again that belief in One God which had taken long centuries of persecution and exile to laboriously and painfully build up—together with all that it implied for the future of the world. It is true that this inevitable consummation towards which Judaism was steadily moving was delayed for a time by the interposition of one or another of those pleasing illusions, those consoling fictions which the mind makes for itself when threatened with the approaching ruin of its ideals or hopes. Among other things, for example, it was said that the bad fortune which had attended the good man up to the last hours of his life, would be succeeded by a moment of supreme bliss which in itself was sufficient compensation for all the sorrows and afflictions of a life-time. Or, again, that if we could only see everything in its true light and perspective as God sees it, we should find

much evil in the lives of those men who had been so afflicted, but whom we had been in the habit of regarding as models of all the virtues. These were, of course, pure fictions without foundation in reality, but they served to postpone for a while the inevitable doom that must sooner or later overtake any religion which has had the imprudence to link its fate with a hypothesis so viewy and unsubstantial as the reward of goodness and virtue by material and worldly prosperity in the present life. Now the most complete and elaborate statement in Jewish literature of these fictions, especially of the one last cited, is contained in the Book of Job—which could only have been written at this period, that is to say at some point between the return of the Exiles and the rise of the Maccabees. In this book you have the problem stated in all its pregnancy, and the question discussed in all its fulness—Why a good and virtuous man like Job should be so afflicted by God? There, too, you see the sophistical fictions by which his friends try to convince him that he must, in spite of his unconsciousness of all evil, have been guilty, even if unwittingly, of some sin that has brought on him the displeasure of God. But it is all in vain. No one is convinced by them; and Job himself is only saved from absolute scepticism by the reflection that God's ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts; that is to say by giving up the problem as from the Jewish point of view insoluble. But it could not end there. By the time Ecclesiastes was written, all these hollow sophistries had been thrown aside as worthless, and the finer spirits had resigned themselves to an absolute pessimism and scepticism. With neither a resurrection, a future life, nor a reward in this life for their virtues, what could men do but exclaim with the Preacher, 'Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity'? One event happens alike to all, whether they be virtuous or wicked, therefore let us eat our bread with joy, anoint ourselves with oil, put on white garments and enjoy the passing hour. 'Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die,' for there

is no wisdom or consciousness in the grave to which we are fast hastening. So far indeed had it gone with the Preacher, that in Ecclesiastes the Jews are no longer the peculiar people, nor is God known as Jehovah, but only as Elohim. It only required a little time for this pessimism and despair of the Preacher to reach the hearts of the many, and to end in the open and avowed scepticism of all and the bankruptcy of the Jewish religion. But this goal to which it all logically led, and which it was impossible to avoid by any inner process of reason (for it was the strict and logical outcome of all that had gone before), was evaded, as we shall now see, by the help of Providence or Fate in the shape of events from *without*. The manner in which this came about we have now to see.

Up to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes King of Syria, or say to the year 170 B.C., the Jews, sheltered first under the political wing of Persia and then under that of the Greek Kings of Egypt and Syria respectively, had been permitted to enjoy all the privileges and immunities of their religion, undisturbed either by persecution within or interference from without. They enjoyed, too, all the political privileges of the Greeks who were the dominant caste both in Egypt and in Syria, and were favoured by kings in many instances with high offices and dignities. The consequence of this was that their harsh and sordid lives began gradually to be softened, inter-penetrated, and suffused with the genial radiance, the warm pulsating sunshine of the Greek life which surrounded them like an atmosphere on every side. More especially was this the case with the Jewish Aristocracy—the Priestly Party—who in the long peace and in the absence of persecution had, as the governing body of the nation, been gradually transformed from servants of Jehovah into men of the world and politicians, refined and worldly aristocrats and courtiers. So far, indeed, had this inter-penetration of Jewish customs and modes of life by Greek influences gone, that many of the leading Jewish families were willing and even anxious to introduce among their countrymen

the more brilliant and refined culture of the Greeks; and difficult as it must have been to all Jews after the persecutions of Antiochus to realize it, there can be no doubt that the more intimate the association of the upper class of Jews with the Greeks became, the more ashamed did they become of their own peculiar customs and modes of life. They tried to introduce into their towns the baths, theatres, and gymnasia, of the Greeks; and to avoid the ridicule of the heathen populace, they even went so far as to submit to a painful operation in order to conceal their nationality. All this, it is needless to say, was viewed with deep disgust and a growing sense of irritation by the great masses of the Jewish people, who were passionately attached to the ordinances of the Law and to their own cramped and sordid modes of life, and who abominated as much the social customs of the Greeks—their games, gymnasia, baths, etc.—as they did their idolatry. Such was the state of Jewish feeling up to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. But during the reign of that monarch, matters were brought to a crisis. It so happened that the office of High Priest, which was held by one Jesus, or Jason as he was called in Greek, was taken away from him by the king, and given to his brother Onias or Menelaus. The people took the part of the deposed priest, and in a riot which ensued, Menelaus was obliged to fly from Jerusalem, and seek the protection of the king. He then assured Antiochus that both he himself and the priestly party at Jerusalem, were anxious to give up the Jewish laws and customs, and to adopt those of the Greeks; going so far even as to ask the king's permission to build a Greek gymnasium at Jerusalem. Now whether it were that the passion of Antiochus for hellenizing the peoples of his dominions led him, when he learnt how far the process had already gone among the upper classes of the Jews, readily to believe that the rest of the people could be weaned from their religion by a sufficiently vigorous application of force—the more so, indeed, as the Scribes, who were the leaders and

teachers of the people, had as yet no voice in the governing body or Sanhedrim, but were confined to their purely academic functions of expositors and interpreters of the Law—or whether it were the fear lest if he delayed too long, the discontented party in Jerusalem would call in the assistance of the rapidly growing Roman power; or whether it was owing to pecuniary embarrassments; or mere greed; or to disgust with the internal tumults of the Jews and their attitude towards himself, cannot perhaps be known; but whatever may have been the reason, certain it is that he seized the opportunity afforded him by the riots in the city to march an army into Judæa with the object of rooting out once for all the Jewish religion and nationality. 'Thorough' was to be the policy, and in carrying it into execution 'terror' the order of the day. He burnt the finest buildings, razed the walls of the city to the ground, and to overawe the population built a fortress at Acra on a hill close by, overlooking the Temple, and in it put a colony of Greeks. He then rifled the Temple, carrying away the golden candlesticks, the altar of incense, the table of shewbread, and the curtains of scarlet and linen; and giving orders that no child should be circumcised, and that all copies of the Law should be secured and burnt. But worse than all, and horror of horrors to the Jews, he caused a statue of Jupiter Olympus to be erected on the altar of burnt offering in the very Temple itself; and to this, the 'abomination of desolation' of Daniel, sacrifices of swine were offered daily. The citizens were slain or sold into captivity, the women strangled, and those who were caught endeavouring to make their escape were whipped with rods, torn to pieces, or crucified. This was in the year 167 B.C., and ought, one would imagine, to have resulted in the complete bankruptcy of a religion which, while promising worldly prosperity, happiness, old age, and respect, to those who kept its precepts, could give even its martyrs no better reward than the whip, the rack, the cross, ignominy, infamy, execration, and death. But it had in fact pre-

cisely the opposite effect, and, indeed, was indirectly the means of restoring to something like its pristine vigour that Jewish religion whose heart, as we have seen, was being slowly eaten out by scepticism. This it did by sweeping away once and for all those puerile fictions, those hollow fatuities and sophisms, with which in times of peace men may amuse themselves and a religion hide for a while its bankruptcy, or postpone its downfall, but which in the hour of trial and in the face of calamities like these of the Jews under Antiochus, were felt to be unendurable mockeries. Those dreams of a happiness in this life to be the attendant of virtue; those accusations of guilt, as in Job, where there had been affliction; those promises of a happiness in the last moments of life which should more than make up for a life's misery;—all these fictions it swept away for ever as convicted impostures; and in despair of finding justice in this life men boldly set sail for another, preferring rather to cherish a pleasing dream of a future which could not be disproved, than a lying unreality in the present. And so we have the first entrance into Jewish religion of that doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body and of a Future Life on Earth, which when transformed and modified by Greek speculation, was afterwards to play so important a *rôle* in Christianity. It first makes its appearance in the Book of Daniel, which all scholars are now agreed in believing to have been written shortly after the Greeks and Syrians were driven out of Jerusalem by the Maccabees. It was just three years to the day from the date of the 'abomination of desolation' being set up in the Temple, that Judas Maccabeus who had fought his way up to supreme command with the obstinate valour of an old Roman, entered the city, broke in pieces the statue of Jupiter Olympus, and destroyed the polluted altar of burnt offering on which it stood; restoring the altar of incense, the golden candlesticks, the table of shewbread, and all the other appurtenances of the Temple, to their former position. Now it was to comfort and console the

Jews in their desolation after the persecutions, and to resuscitate the faith which had been so rudely shaken by the death of the martyrs, that the Book of Daniel was written. The writer pictures in apocalyptic visions the triumph of the Jewish nation. "I saw," he says, "in the night vision, and behold one like a Son of Man came with the clouds of Heaven and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near Him. And there was given him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Here, the 'one like a Son of Man' is used, as is afterwards explained, in contrast to the four figures of beasts, who represent the Assyrian, Median, Persian, and Greek Empires respectively; and is meant to represent the Jewish nation, the ideal people of Israel, the lambs of the Most High,—those who had fought and died for the faith during the recent persecutions under Antiochus, as distinct from the renegade Jews who had adopted the Greek customs, denied their faith, betrayed their nation, and been ashamed of their religion. But this kingdom of the Jews which God Himself was to set up through the instrumentality not of the Messiah but of the angel Michael, was an *earthly* kingdom not a *heavenly* one. And it was into this earthly kingdom that the martyrs who had died for their God and His Holy Temple were to awake,—as well as their teachers, the Scribes, who were to shine like stars. It was into this earthly kingdom, too, that the renegades were to awake to shame and everlasting contempt. But what it concerns us especially to note here is, that this resurrection to an earthly and worldly kingdom of the future is only a *partial* resurrection, being limited strictly on the one hand to those who had died for their religion and on the other to those who had betrayed it. And being a resurrection into an *earthly* kingdom, it was a resurrection of the *body* as well as of the soul; differing in this from the resurrection of the

Greeks, which, being to a place in the pure ether beyond the stars, was a resurrection of the soul only. And when Christianity took over the Jewish code of the resurrection of the body as well as of the soul, but at the same time transformed their earthly resurrection into a heavenly one, the difficulty of determining what kind of body it would be which should thus ascend to Heaven became a source of great perplexity to the Early Church, as we see from the Epistles of Paul,—and indeed has remained more or less a mystery and perplexity to the present time.

Now this belief in a Bodily Resurrection to a Future Life on Earth, as compensation for unrewarded virtue in the present one, saved from extinction that Jewish religion on whose existence so much still hung for the future of the world; and no sooner had it been announced by the writer of Daniel, than it spread over the whole Jewish world like a breath of spring, rescuing them from the dilemma in which their doctrine of an earthly felicity following on obedience to the Law had placed them, and becoming for the Jews everywhere, with the single exception of the Sadducees, a most sweet and precious possession. And here, perhaps, it may be as well in passing to observe that the reason why the Sadducees could still continue calmly and with the utmost *sang-froid* to stake the good faith and honour of Jehovah on the prosperity and worldly felicity which were to attend the virtuous in the present life (and that, too, in the face of all observation and experience, and even of the most damning evidence to the contrary), was, that belonging as they did to those priestly families who were endowed with all the authority, prestige, and power of a governing caste,—a hereditary nobility, the special favourites of Heaven, and supported at the public expense,—they could fearlessly appeal to this very fact of their earthly felicity and prosperity as evidence of the truth of their doctrine. For were they not the virtuous and the good, they seemed to ask, and had they not been rewarded in this

present life? What need, then, for a resurrection and another life, if men get their deserts in this? It was a pleasure to them to maintain a doctrine which so flattered their self-love, and could be applied, besides, with so much self-complacency to the worldly misfortunes of their less favoured fellow-countrymen;—the fact of their scepticism as to the doctrine of the resurrection, only going to prove that although *individuals* may be found in every age and clime, who, surrounded with luxury and power, will still give up all for the hope of an ideal world beyond the grave, *classes* of men who are securely entrenched in the privileges of wealth and power, whether kings, or priests, or aristocracies, will always manage to get through the world with much satisfaction to themselves, without either the hope of a resurrection or of a future life.

The reason that the writer of Daniel represents the earthly kingdom of God as inaugurated by the angel Michael rather than by the Messiah, was because the Messiah had always been represented by the older prophets as belonging to the lineage of David, whereas the Maccabees, who were the leading spirits in the revolt against Antiochus, were not of the Davidic line at all. They were the sons of an obscure priest named Mattathias, living at Modin; and he in turn was descended from one Asmonæus, a priest of the order of Joarib, and living at Jerusalem. And hence the dynasty to which he gave his name was called the Asmonæan Dynasty.

With the introduction into the Jewish religion of a future life on earth and a resurrection of the body, it would seem as if the time were ripe for taking the last step which separated Judaism from Christianity. Not so, however; for the doctrine of the resurrection as contained in Daniel is not that of a *general* resurrection, but of one strictly limited, as we have seen, to a very small number of people—to the martyrs, viz., on the one hand, and the renegade hellenizing Jews on the other. Time accordingly must elapse before this limited resurrection can develop into a general resurrection for all;

and until then the frontier of Judaism cannot strictly be said to be separated from Christianity along its entire line by but a single step or stage of evolution. For this evolution of a resurrection and a future life of reward and punishment, of a kingdom of God, etc., belongs naturally to that third main element in all religions which is here called the Supernatural or Ideal element;—the element which deals with that vast complex of hopes, fears, imaginations, desires, consolations, dreams, etc., which, like the honey in the flower, lead men on to realize in action those successively higher and higher Moral Codes which, as we have seen, it is the final end and aim of all religions to achieve.

And with this evolution of the Resurrection and Future Life, this evolution of the Kingdom of God, goes the evolution of the person who was to mediate it, the Messiah, viz. ;—and to this, which will complete our study of the History and Evolution of Judaism, and bring it all along the whole extent of its line up to the frontiers of Christianity, I propose to call the attention of the reader in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

EVOLUTION OF THE MESSIAH AND OF THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM.

IN a former chapter I pointed out that what I have called the Ideal or Supernatural element in all religions, the element to which in Judaism all that pertains to a Resurrection and a Future life, to a Messiah and a Kingdom of God belongs, is never a pale, cold, philosophical abstraction, but is always a warm concrete reality, palpitating with life, instinct with hope, fear, aspiration, and passion, and suited to every variety and grade of temperament and genius, of taste, culture, and refinement. And we may go farther and say that in no part of Religion is the correspondence between the Supernatural and the Natural, the things of Heaven and the things of Earth, more intimate and exact than it is between our longings, hopes, ambitions, and aspirations in the present world and the nature of the Heaven we shall construct for ourselves in the next. So close indeed is it, that from a knowledge of the former the latter can with a very great degree of certainty be forecast. And as it is with other religions so it is with Judaism. Not the Valhalla of the Norsemen with its heroes drinking mead out of the skulls of the enemy they have slain in battle, not the Paradise of the Mahommedan Arab with its beautiful houris, its smiling oases, its luxurious couches, and its gleaming

waters, were more exact counterparts of the earthly ideals of these peoples than was the nature of the Messiah and of the Messianic Kingdom of the earthly ideals of the Jews. This I now propose to demonstrate in detail at the different stages through which in their evolution and development the nature of the Messiah and the Messianic Kingdom have passed,—and mainly with the idea of throwing light on those disputed passages in the gospel narratives which bear on the conception which Jesus had formed for Himself of the nature of the Messiah and of the Kingdom of God.

To begin with, one may affirm that before the Exile, the ideal of the imagination in which the Jews lived, and on which in all their calamities they loved to dwell, was not, as we saw in the last chapter, a Heavenly Kingdom beyond the clouds like that of Mahomet and the Early Christians, but was purely an Earthly Paradise, variously figured by the Prophets in detail, but always consisting of certain fixed and definite elements—national independence, material prosperity, abundance of corn, wine, and oil, long life and an abundant progeny. It was on the one hand a purely material and worldly prosperity, and on the other a purely national one, in which the individual Jew was to share, and in the contemplation of which he was to find the ideal of his dreams. But these pre-exilian times were, it is to be remembered, times of oppression—oppression of the poor, of the stranger, of the widow, the orphan, and the slave, by a luxurious and licentious court and a grasping and tyrannous plutocracy. They were times, too, in which the nation now enjoyed profound peace, and now was threatened from without by cruel and relentless foes—Assyrian, Egyptian, Edomite, Moabite, or Philistine. In the picture of their ideal future the Jews, accordingly, would not look for a Messiah sent from God for the conversion of their souls, as in Christian times; for as yet there was no doctrine of a resurrection or a future life of reward and punishment for the individual Jew. The utmost compass of their hopes went no farther than the dream

of an Ideal King, and most naturally a king of the line consecrated by God, the line of David, a king who should put down the corruptions and extortions of the great and powerful, who should judge righteous judgment, and protect from oppression the widow, the orphan, and the slave. How entirely this was the case may be seen in the writings of the great pre-exilian Prophets, where the Messiah is always represented as a King of the line of David, with justice, wisdom, and righteousness as the characteristics of his reign, and reliance on Jehovah rather than on horses and chariots, his policy. Whether he is to be warlike or peaceful (warlike until his enemies are subdued, and peaceful afterwards), whether he shall admit the Gentiles or not to the blessings of the Messianic Kingdom, depends on the circumstances of the time, the temper of the prophet, or the state of national feeling at the time at which he wrote, and of which for the time being he is the mouthpiece. Listen to the war-like note of Amos, who, with the Northern kingdom threatened by the Assyrian, in his longing for the good old times of David when Israel ruled over Edom, Syria, and Moab, writes (chapter ix., 11): "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old; that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this." On the other hand, hear the halcyon note of Isaiah after the first struggles with the enemy are over, and the oppressors are put down. In chapter xi., 1, he says: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him. . . . With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. . . The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall

lie down with the kid . . . and a little child shall lead them." Or the note of Justice and Righteousness in Jeremiah, who in chapter xxiii. 5, says: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." Or the adumbration of a peaceful, gentle Messiah, with the nation's trust placed in Jehovah, and not in the strength of its armies, in Zechariah (ix., 9 and 10), which Jesus in after times will interpret in reference to himself. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle-bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen, and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." This peaceful note is continued in Micah, who makes Jerusalem the centre to which all the nations shall come for worship and law. In chapter iv. 2 and 3, he says: "And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

As to whether the Gentiles will be allowed to participate in the blessings of the Messianic reign, that depends much on the individual temper of the Prophet and the state of public feeling at the time of which he is writing. In Amos and Hosea, with the Assyrians closing in around the Northern kingdom, the blessings of the Messianic times are strictly limited to

Israel; in Micah, Josiah and Zechariah, in the pauses of conflict, they are extended to the Gentile nations as well.

As to the time of the coming of the Messianic King in these early prophets, it is vaguely foretold by them as 'in the last days,' but was generally believed to be close at hand. In chapter xxix., 17, seq. Isaiah says: "Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed as a forest? And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice." Zephaniah, too, writing it is believed in the time of Josiah, considers it to be close at hand. "It is near, it is near," he says, "and hasteth greatly."

And now observe the change that came over the dreams of the Jews during the Babylonian Exile. With Jerusalem in ruins, the leading families in captivity, and no possibility of the Assyrians allowing the exiles to return, all hope of a restoration of the Davidic line had to be resigned. And accordingly the prophets who wrote during that period could see no possibility of the realization of the national hopes except by the direct interposition of God Himself. The problem was primarily how to get the people back again to Jerusalem, and this it seemed to Ezekiel and to the author of Isaiah (xxiv.-xxvii.) could only be done by the resurrection of those who had died in Babylon. And, accordingly, we have a doctrine of the resurrection specially devised to meet this particular difficulty,—a doctrine good only for the particular occasion, and which, when it had served its purpose, was not heard of again for four hundred years. If we turn to Isaiah (xxvi., 19) we shall find him writing, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Again, in xxv., 8, he says: "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord shall wipe away tears from off all

faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth; for the Lord hath spoken it." As for the Assyrians, on the contrary, their enemies and oppressors, they shall die without hope of resurrection. In chapter xxvi., 14, it is said, "They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise, therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish." Again in chapter xxvii., 13 we read: "It shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the Holy Mount at Jerusalem." The inauguration of the new Israel being celebrated (chapter xxv., 6) by a feast made by God Himself to all peoples, "a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." So, too, Ezekiel sees no other way of establishing the Ideal Kingdom of the future but by a resurrection. In chapter xxxvii., 12, he says: "Behold, O my people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." As with Isaiah, it is God Himself who is to do it. "And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves. And shall put my spirit in you and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it and performed it, saith the Lord." Deutero-Isaiah, again, at the close of the Exile, also feels how hopeless it is to expect deliverance from the Chosen People themselves. God alone can do it through the instrumentality of Cyrus, whom He has anointed and specially raised up for the purpose. And in passing it is interesting to note that with Deutero-Isaiah as with Amos, it is God Himself who does everything, evil as well as good. Amos, it will be remembered, asks in chapter iii., 6, "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in

a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" So, too, Deutero-Isaiah, in opposition to the Persians who believed that a special god Ahriman was the creator of Darkness, declares in chapter xlv., "I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." As for the "servant of God" mentioned in Deutero-Isaiah, it is now generally agreed that this has no reference to an expected Messiah, but is a collective name merely for those Jews who had remained faithful to their country and their God.

When we come to the Persian period, or say broadly between the years 530 and 330 B.C., we shall find the close correspondence between the political and social condition of the Jews and the Ideal Future of their dreams still further exemplified. For here, too, as during the Exile, the conception of a Messianic King of the line of David is entirely absent—but for a different reason. The conception of a Messianic King disappeared during the Exile because of the apparent hopelessness of its realization; it disappeared during the Persian period from want of sufficiently crying grievances on which to feed. With the restoration of the Jews to their native land by Cyrus, with full liberty given them of worshipping God in their own way, and with the absence of all political or social oppression, there was no need of a Messiah. The very idea, in consequence, fell into abeyance. And accordingly in prophets like Haggai and Malachi we hear no more of a Davidic King, or indeed of any future King at all. Haggai concerns himself mainly with the rebuilding of the Temple and the encouragement of Zerubbabel; while with Malachi it is the corruption of the priests and the luxury and licentiousness of the surrounding peoples, that is the subject of his invectives. And instead of a Messianic King, you have Elias the prophet, the great destroyer of idolatrous priests, coming to prepare the way for God Himself who in that great and terrible day will destroy the wicked. But as the Priests and Scribes are all-powerful in the Persian period, the ideal

future Kingdom is figured as the carrying out more rigorously the observances of the Mosaic Law. And as that can now be safely entrusted to the all-powerful organization of the priests and scribes, Prophecy having exhausted its function, becomes extinct in Israel.

With the Greek period, beginning with the Macedonian conquests about 330 B.C., the Prophets have given place to the Apocryphal Writers, as they are called, who were in the habit of assuming the names of one or other of the older prophets with the view of giving greater weight to their own reflections on current events; and in them, too, we find the nature of the ideal kingdom accurately reflecting the political and social outlook of the nation at the time in which they are writing. The dates of the works of many of these Apocryphal writers are very uncertain, but enough is known for our purpose here. And accordingly we find that in the absence of all political and religious persecution up to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and with no greater anxiety than the occasional passage through Jewish territory of hostile armies who sometimes fought their battles on Jewish soil, no allusion is made by these writers to any Messianic King. The Son of Sirach, in his Book of Wisdom, looks to God Himself to gather all the tribes of Israel together at Jerusalem, and there to bless them; but instead of being heralded by a Kingly Messiah, He is to be heralded, as in Malachi, by the prophet Elias—the Messianic hope resolving itself into a vague general anticipation of a happy future for Israel, with abundant manifestations of the presence and goodness of God.

But with the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes, and the rise of the Maccabees, the Ideal Kingdom took quite a different shape in the imagination of men, and one still quite in accord with the new evils under which the nation was suffering. For the doctrine of a Resurrection and a Future Life, had, as we saw in the last chapter, now come in as compensation for the ills, injustices, and oppressions, which the

virtuous had to suffer in the present life. The consequence of this was, that to the function of King which had hitherto been the office of the Messiah, was now added the function of Judge also. But Judas Maccabeus had already realized in his own person all the heroic glories of a Davidic King. There was therefore no room for a Messianic King of the house of David; and accordingly, as we should expect to find, none of the apocalyptic works written about this period, with the exception of the Sibylline Oracles, make mention of a Messiah at all. In Daniel (xii., 1) it is the angel Michael, as we have seen, to whom the Jews were to look for deliverance, and in chapter ii., 44, it is God Himself who shall set up the Jewish Kingdom which shall not be destroyed; while it is to the Saints of the Most High, that is to say to the faithful Jews, that the judgment of the wicked is committed—the resurrection being restricted as we saw, to the Saints and Martyrs who were to enter into life everlasting, and to the renegade and apostate Jews who were to suffer shame and everlasting contempt. If we turn to the Book of Wisdom, also written about this period, we find again no mention made of a Messiah. It is God Himself who will reign for ever, and it is the Saints, and not the Messiah, who are to judge the nations. Nor in the first Book of the Maccabees is mention made of a Messiah, but only of a prophet, Elijah or Jeremiah, who was popularly expected to come and tell the people what they were to do. And although in the Sibylline Oracles it is said that God will send a King who shall confirm the faithful, and stay the whole earth from war, it is now generally agreed that the allusion is not to a Messianic King, but to the Maccabean High Priest Simon who crushed the remnant of the Syrian party in Palestine, confirmed treaties with Sparta and Rome, and gave to the people a season of profound peace. In these Oracles, too, it is not the Messiah but the Prophets who are to be judges and just leaders of men. And so we see that in the Maccabean period, as well as in the Pre-exilic, the Exilic, the

Persian, and the Grecian, the nature of the Ideal Kingdom of the Jews reflects the fortunes of the nation like a mirror, or attends them like a shadow.

During the next period, that is to say during the hundred years or more that elapsed between the struggles of the Maccabees and the accession of Herod, nothing had appeared on the political horizon to alter in any way the conception of the Ideal Kingdom, unless, indeed, it were the rise into greater influence and authority, of the Scribes and Pharisees. The Scribes now had seats along with the Priests and Elders in the governing body of the Sanhedrim, and so had become all-powerful; while the Pharisees were beloved by the people, like the early mendicant Friars of the Middle Ages, as Holy Men of God. Now it was by the influence of the Scribes and the Pharisees mainly that the Prophets and Psalms had been added to the Canon of Scripture and were accorded the same kind of authority and respect as the Books of the Law themselves. And the effect of this admission of the Prophets into the Sacred Book was to throw back the minds of the Jews to the contemplation of the conception of the Messiah as a King of the line of David as set forth by the Prophets,—an idea which had fallen into abeyance for the last four hundred years. So that although the political outlook had not materially changed, and the Jews were still a nation free from political or religious oppression, we find in writers like Enoch a recrudescence of the old idea of the Messiah, although in a different form and one more suited to the character of the times. For we always have to bear in mind that since the time of the older prophets the doctrine of the resurrection and of a future life had been introduced into the Jewish religion by the writer of the Book of Daniel. The consequence of this was, that the function of judging as to who were to be considered worthy of reward in a future life, had been added to the original and natural function of the Messiah, which was that of establishing the earthly Kingdom of God. In Daniel, while God Himself

was to be King, to the Saints of the Most High was committed the office of deciding what was to be the future destiny of those who were to arise from the dead. Since then, however, the doctrine had advanced several stages. In Daniel the resurrection is a partial one, being confined to the martyrs and the renegade Jews; in the Second Book of the Maccabees it is confined to the Chosen People as a whole. But by the time that Enoch wrote, the resurrection had become almost general, including, besides the Jews, the Heathen powers also; and instead of being a resurrection of the material body was a resurrection of the spiritual body or soul. These souls are confined in four separate compartments, occupied respectively by the souls of the martyrs, of the good, of the ordinary sinners, and of the reprobates. God Himself sits as judge on a high mountain and sends the wicked to the Valley of Hinnom, or Gehenna, where the sight of their torments forms no small part of the pleasure of the righteous in the Paradise close by. In Enoch, then, although the ideal Kingdom of the Future is to be established by a Messiah, God Himself is to carry on the work of judgment and salvation.

But when the Romans were at last called on to interfere in the struggles between the rival brothers Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, and Pompey after taking Jerusalem had desecrated the Temple by entering the Holy of Holies, the Messianic conception of the Old Prophets, which had slept for 400 years, revived in all its force. In the Psalter of Solomon, written about this time, the blessings of the future were to be brought in by a Davidic King, who was to carry out the judgments of God by destroying the Heathen who had desecrated the Holy City, and by driving sinners out of the Jewish inheritance. Like the Messiah of the old prophets, he was to rule the people in righteousness and spread the knowledge of God among the nations. Here we have the revival of the old prophetic idea of the Messiah in all its fulness—a Davidic King anointed by God and filled with His

Holy Spirit, who shall destroy his enemies, and cause the Lord to be honoured at Jerusalem by all nations; his own people not only being righteous, but, now that the Scribes and Pharisees are all-powerful, devoted as well to the observance of the ceremonial law.

As the strain between the Jews and Romans became the more intense, the more intensely burned the desire for vengeance, and the more did the coming of the Messiah who was to deliver Israel and to restore the Earthly Kingdom announced by the Prophets, become the desire of every heart. This was especially the case after the deposition of Archelaus the son of Herod by the Romans, when Judæa was made a part of the Roman province of Syria under the rule of a procurator; and still more so when the Jewish religion was outraged by the putting up of the golden shields dedicated to Tiberius in the palace of Herod close to the Temple, and the bringing of the Roman standards bearing the image of Cæsar, into the city. And the conception of the Messianic Kingdom to which these outrages gave rise, was the conception current among the Jews at the time of Christ, as we have it reflected in the Gospel narratives,—viz., a King of the line of David, born at Bethlehem and anointed by God and filled with His Spirit, who should be heralded either by Elias, as we have it in Malachi and the Son of Sirach, or by the Prophet spoken of in the First Book of the Maccabees; a King who should deliver the Jews from the yoke of the heathen, and should reign a thousand years, during which time the old Jerusalem was to pass away and be replaced by a New Jerusalem, to be followed by a resurrection and judgment of all who had lived. So deeply, indeed, had the Messianic kingdom of the Prophets entered into the Jewish consciousness, that the authors of the early Gospels felt it necessary, if their message was to be received by the Jews, to represent Jesus as having been born at Bethlehem, and to construct long genealogies for him, demonstrating his descent from David.

Further than this, the Evolution of the Messiah and the Messianic kingdom could not go. The National Hopes were satisfied by the Messiah's coming as an earthly King of the line of David, subduing the nations, and bringing back glory and material prosperity to Israel. The hopes of the individual Jew were satisfied by a judgment and resurrection in which the good should be rewarded with the good things of this world, while the wicked should burn in their sight in the valley of Hinnom. The religious ideal of the Prophets was satisfied by the righteousness and justice which the Messiah was to bring with him; while that of the Scribes and Pharisees was satisfied by the holy ordinances of their religion—Sabbaths, feasts, purifications, etc.—being embraced by all nations. And this view of the Messianic kingdom, varying in detail according to the temper of the writer, remains almost constant up to the break-up of the Jewish State and the final dispersion of its people. In Fourth Ezra and Baruch the Messianic kingdom lasts through a world-period and then comes to an end,—to be followed by the consummation of the hopes of individuals in an eternal life, in which the paradise of delights lies always in sight of the fires of Gehenna. So that the Messianic kingdom, which at first was all that the Jews looked forward to, became at last but a prelude and preliminary to a future immortality of reward and punishment to the individual Jew. In the same way, too, this resurrection to a future of reward and punishment, which began by being a *limited* resurrection in Daniel, goes on in Enoch to embrace the heathen, until by the time of Christ it has become a general one of all those who have lived. To sum up then we may say that the Ideal Element in the Jewish religion, that on which the imagination dwelt and which was the heaven of all their dreams,—the Kingdom of the Messiah,—varied at the different periods of their history with the conditions under which the people found themselves. Beginning with a glorious future of a purely earthly and material prosperity

which under a King of the House of David was to be enjoyed, if not by the existing generation, then by their posterity, it ended by becoming, about the time of Christ, an earthly kingdom of the Messiah for the nation, with a resurrection and future kingdom of Heaven for the individuals who had kept the commandments of God—these commandments being resolvable mainly into the more strict observance of the ceremonial law. In the Sibyl, too, this future kingdom is a moral kingdom, consisting mainly of sacrifices and ritual observances; while in the Book of Jubilees and the Targums it is also to consist in the stricter observance of the ceremonial law.

As regards the admission of the Gentiles into this future kingdom of God—in the Sibyl and Enoch they are allowed, in the Psalter of Solomon they are excluded, while in Ezra and Baruch nothing but hatred and vengeance is to be shown them. In the Talmud, again, all Gentile proselytes may come in of their own accord; in the Targums all peoples whatsoever. And in all, the agency, it is to be observed, is the Holy Spirit, or Spirit of God, as it was in the old prophets,—in Isaiah, Zechariah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Deutero-Isaiah, and Joel.

But it is in the opinions of the Rabbis that we get the best conception of the differences that existed between the Jews and Jesus in reference to the nature of the Messiah, and of the Kingdom of God. With the Jews as with the Christians there was to be an *universal* resurrection of the righteous and the wicked, but with the Jews they were to be raised clothed, and to be judged by the Messiah in Jerusalem, the wicked being sent to the fires of Gehenna close by in the Valley of Hinnom, while the faces of the righteous were to shine, and they themselves, with crowns on their heads, were to enjoy the light of the Shekinah. There were to be only a few exceptions to the absolute universality of this resurrection, and these were as follows:—Those who denied the resurrection; those who said the Law was not from Heaven;

the Epicureans; the readers of books outside the Canon of Scripture; the makers of incantations; the generation that died in the wilderness; the Assembly of Korah; the men of a city destroyed for idolatry; and those who had kept themselves away from the Law.

As for the Messiah himself, he was to be mortal like other men, but filled with the spirit of God, and was to die at the end of a triumphant reign. The Rabbis admitted that the Messiah might have to suffer, but never that he should be crucified, as that was a mode of death accursed by God Himself. That the celebrated Rabbi Aquiba should have believed that Bar Cocheba who led the insurrection in the time of Hadrian, was the Messiah, proves that the Messiah was believed by the Jewish Rabbis to be only a man among men, although a man more than usually endowed with the Spirit of God.

And finally we have to remark that in all the Apocalypses, Jewish and Christian, the coming of the Messiah is heralded in much the same way, viz. by portents, such as swords in the sky, blood trickling from rocks, the desecration of the Temple, sun and moon, day and night, and the seasons, changing their courses and functions, the nations drunk with idolatry and wickedness till the cup of their iniquity was full.

PART IV.

THE EVOLUTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

HISTORY OF INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT.

PART IV.

LIST OF AUTHORITIES FOR THE FOLLOWING CHAPTERS ON THE

EVOLUTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

Original Authorities:—

NEW TESTAMENT
1ST AND 2ND EPISTLES OF CLEMENT
BARNABAS
SHEPHERD OF HERMAS
PAPIAS
IGNATIUS
POLYCARP
TEACHING OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES
ACTS OF THECLA
JUSTIN MARTYR
PISTIS SOPHIA
EPISTLE OF PTOLEMY
ATHENAGORAS
TATIAN
THEOPHILUS
CLEMENTINES
CYPRIAN
CLEMENT
ORIGEN
IRENAEUS
TERTULLIAN
HIPPOLYTUS
TACITUS
LETTERS OF PLINY
EUSEBIUS
SOCRATES
SOZOMEN
EPIPHANIUS

Modern Guides:—

BAUR
BEYSCHLAG
BIGG
BOISSIER
BRIGHT
BRUCE
CARPENTER
DALE
DAVIDSON
DIDON
DORNER
FAIRBAIRN
GIBBON
HARDY
HARNACK
HATCH
HAUSRATH
HAVET
HOLTZMAN
HORT
KEIM
LIGHTFOOT
MARCUS DOD
MARTINEAU
MOMMSEN
MOSHEIM
NEANDER
NEWMAN
NITZSCH
PFLEIDERER
PRESSENSÉ
RAMSAY
RÉNAN
RÉVILLE
RITSCHL
SCHILLER
SCHÜRER
SEELEY
STRAUSS
VOLKMANN
WEISS
WEIZSÄCKER
WENDT
WESTCOTT

CHAPTER I.

THE TWO METHODS IN CIVILIZATION.

STANDING as we here do at the parting of the ways between the Ancient and the Modern World, it is necessary if we would understand aright the part played in Civilization by Christianity, that we should at the outset endeavour to distinguish with something like precision between the parts played in the complex result by the Spirit of Christ on the one hand, and by the Doctrines and Institutions of the Church on the other.

To begin with then we may remark that just as at the end of all investigations into life-processes generally, however profound and exhaustive these investigations may be, a mysterious something has to be assumed to account for that residuum of unexplained phenomena which neither physical, mechanical, nor chemical principles will fully explain; so in all enquiries into the history of civilization we are bound to assume, if only for purposes of distinction and clearness, some great Power,—call it Providence, Fate, the Order of Nature, or what you will,—which has brought the world from its rude unconscious forms up to man, from man savage and uncivilized up to man cultured and refined, and which is working steadily and unweariedly upwards to its end of a perfected humanity athwart all the to-and-fro confusion and conflict of individuals and of races which would seem as if they must baulk and

defeat it—we are bound, I say, to distinguish between this great Disposing Power which co-ordinates the works of individuals and of races and subdues them to its own ends, knitting together into one single evolution the work of successive ages and generations, and these same ephemeral individuals and races themselves, who are the means and *instruments* used by the World-Spirit to work out its own ends step by step and stage by stage without a link intermitted in the long chain, but who, far from having any conception that they are working for these ends, are conscious only of working for their own individual and personal ends, good or bad—the wars, the conquests, the patriotisms, the self-interests, the personal ambitions, or what not, of the age or hour. Or to put it in another way, we may say that while men and races considered as *individual units* are engaged in working out their own private and particular ends, the Presiding Genius of the World has so arranged it that by these self-same actions they shall, quite unconsciously to themselves, work out its ends also—ends more vast and sublime than those they know.

With this difference then between the work of the World-Spirit in civilization, and the work of the individual units, kept well in mind if only for the sake of clearness, we shall now be enabled to advance to the first of the main propositions which it is the object of this chapter to illustrate and uphold, the position, viz., that just as Nature though steady to her own aim of fertilizing the plants and flowers at any cost, still uses *different* means for that end according to the requirements of the different species;—now using the bees, now the wind, now birds, and so on;—so the Genius of the World moves to its steady end of a perfected civilization, not by *one* stereotyped and invariable method, but by quite different and even antagonistic methods, according to the necessities of the time, the age of the world, and the stage of culture and progress reached. These methods, however they may vary in their minutiæ, may for practical purposes all be reduced to two, the *direct* and the

indirect method,—the method of the Ancient, and the method of the Modern World. Christianity, which is the most important product of the Ancient World, naturally did the work appointed it in civilization on the indirect or ancient method, but as this method is *toto cœlo* different from the method by which civilization is advanced in Modern Times, it is evident that no account of the rise and triumph of Christianity can be regarded as true or final in which these methods are confounded. And as this is precisely what has been done in a greater or less degree by many who have hitherto written on the rise of Christianity, I shall make no apology to the reader for asking him to accompany me in the attempt to understand precisely what these two different methods of Civilization are, and how they work. I shall take what I have called the *direct* method first,—the method used by the Genius of the World in Modern Times.

It will be noticed that at the present day when good men and women become fired with a noble enthusiasm to leave the world better than they found it, they set to work to accomplish their object by the *direct* propaganda of the reforms they wish to see established; advocating them and urging their acceptance on men, not because they are prescribed by any religious code, but for their power to lead *naturally* and inevitably to the higher life they have in view. Hence we find them proclaiming abroad without further recommendation than the good results on civilization and morality which they believe must flow from them, such reforms as the abolition of slavery, the extension of the suffrage, socialism, the closing of public-houses, the eight-hours day, and the 'living wage.' That is to say they aim *directly* at the mark they wish to hit, and not indirectly through the medium of something else,—as through Religion. If they want democracy, they preach democracy; if they want socialism, they preach socialism; if they want the abolition of slavery, or the 'living wage,' they preach the abolition of slavery or the 'living wage.' This course seems, indeed, so natural to us at the present day that we can

scarcely realize that it could ever have been otherwise. And yet, strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that in ancient times no one would have dreamt of trying to carry any serious social, moral, or political reform by the mere demonstration of its power to correct some abuse, or to promote human welfare generally. For Morality in ancient times was as intimately bound up with Religion as an infant with its mother, and you could no more reach Morality without first striking at Religion than you could reach an infant without first striking at the mother at whose breast it hung. To inculcate a higher morality, therefore, you must begin by destroying the old religion which safe-guarded and sanctioned the inferior morality and customs you wished to reform, and putting a new religion in its place; making the practice of the new morality which it was your object to introduce, the indispensable *condition* to the entrance on the supernatural joys which the new religion held out to its votaries;—much in the same way as Nature by its cunning expedients makes the cross-fertilization of the flowers the condition obligatory on the bee before it can enjoy the honey they conceal. To extirpate, for example, the type of civilization which grew up under and was sanctioned and upheld by the Brahmins in India,—with its degrading superstitions, its human sacrifices, its widow-burnings, its idolatries, its sensual orgies, and its iron system of caste within which the human spirit was confined as in a prison—and to replace it by a régime of celibacy, temperance, gentleness, and equality, it was necessary for a new religion like Buddhism to arise, which should abolish the gods in whose honour and by whose authority these degrading immoralities were instituted, and should deny the very existence of souls in men to be distributed into a hierarchy of caste-inequality according as they were believed to spring from the head, the limbs, the body, or the feet of Brahm. Buddhism, it is true, failed in the end, but in so far as it succeeded, it changed the primitive type of

Hindoo custom, morality, and life. Again, to break up the Arab civilization before Mahomet,—with its superstitions, its idolatries, its licentiousness, and its internecine feuds,—and to allow civilization to advance another stage, a new religion had to arise which in place of the Black Stone and the painted idols, substituted One God terrible and sublime as Fate; and in place of an uncertain future, opened up a new and assured Heaven of smiling oases and dark-eyed houris for the delectation of those who were prepared to follow out the precepts of its more simple and pure, though still far from ideal morality. Even the corruptions of society under the Mediæval Church, where payment in money was sufficient to cover and condone the most scarlet sins, could only be removed and a new and higher morality introduced, by what was practically the new religion of Calvinism and the Reformation,—where the sinner having at last obtained personal access to the Scripture, found himself confronted, not with a Church which in ceasing to be independent of Emperors and Kings and Nobles, had become too often, it is to be feared, the mere echo of their vices, but with the terribly real and immediate judgments of God. So difficult is it for mankind to make even the simplest advance in Morality and Civilization! To get the Ten Commandments respected and observed as they are by the majority of respectable people to-day, hundreds of generations of men and women had to be whipped and scourged and stoned; and to be tortured by supernal and infernal terrors through long ages. A new and higher code of morality differing in any degree from that to which men have been accustomed, is a pure burden laid on the neck of the unregenerate spirit; and the *masses of men* will no more embrace it for its own sake, or for the sake of its effects on civilization, or indeed for any stimulus less potent than some personal hope or fear, than they will clear forests or drain morasses for their own sake.

If then in Ancient Times the great moral and social reforms of advancing civilization could only be carried out *indirectly*

under cover of Religion, while at the present time they can be carried out *directly* by the simple demonstration of their power to effect the end in view,—we have now to ask what those great general causes are which made so great a transformation of method inevitable.

To begin with, in Ancient Times none of those great laws of Nature which have so profoundly revolutionized our views of the Universe and Man, had as yet been discovered, no laws by which the course of Nature and of Human Society could be satisfactorily explained,—no law of gravitation, no Copernican Astronomy, no law of the connexion between thought and the state of the brain and nervous system, no law of Evolution, of the correlation of forces, and the like. Stoicism and Epicureanism, it is true, as well as Buddhism, taught the inviolability and constancy of the laws of Nature, but only in *general* terms; and in the absence of knowledge of the particular laws by which things were to be explained, men were forced to refer what they did not understand to the agency of the only other kind of cause of which they had immediate evidence, viz., to wills, good or bad,—and so to the agency of gods, demons, and the like. Not only were all unexplained natural phenomena such as thunder, lightning, earthquakes, comets, etc., referred to the agency of the gods, but in the absence of any knowledge beyond that of dim and uncertain tradition, the origins of States also, and their continued existence and preservation, were necessarily referred to the special care and protection of tutelary deities who were believed to watch over them. These deities were not only believed to have founded these Cities and States, but to have settled their institutions, their orders and hierarchies of men, their morals and customs, the laws they were to obey, the relations of the different classes to each other, what the citizens were to do and avoid, the number of wives they were allowed to marry, and so on; so that when national calamities and misfortunes threatened or overtook the State,—famine, pestilence, earthquake, defeats in war, etc.,—they were believed to

be due to the anger of the offended deity at the interference with these institutions which he had established. It is evident, therefore, that you could no more alter or destroy these institutions (in which, be it remembered, the stage of civilization reached by a people at any given time consists), by the mere demonstration of their effect in retarding development, without first of all destroying or discrediting the Religion and the gods which were believed to have instituted them and still continued to countenance and support them, than you could destroy or alter the institutions of a Russian village or province, without first of all discrediting the authority or discarding the allegiance of the Czar. How true this is will be apparent if we consider those Eastern countries in which Religion continues at the present day to preserve the same relation to the institutions of society as it did in Ancient Times, and reflect how hopeless it would be to attempt to reform their moral and social institutions, without first of all destroying or reforming the religion which gave rise to and sanctioned them, and on which they depend. How hopeless, for example, to dream of abolishing (unless by physical force) the Caste system of India with its widow-burning, child marriages, Siva orgies, Juggernaut immolations, Thuggee and the rest, without first abolishing the Religion of Hindooism which originated and perpetuated them? How vain to dream of convincing the Mahommedan of the evil of his concubinage and polygamy, his belief in the sword, and his contempt for Science and the Arts, without first convincing him of the falsehood of the Koran and its Prophet! How convince the Jew that his tribal exclusiveness, his circumcision, his abstinence from meats, his Sabbaths, and the rest, are not the goal of civilization and culture, without first of all destroying the letter of the Law, with its Messianic hopes and the promises given to the Fathers? It was a true though unconscious instinct that led the missionaries of the Gospel in foreign lands, to begin their propaganda by trying to change the religion of the heathen before attempting to change his civilization or morality.

And thus we see that the method by which the Genius of the World got its work of civilization done in Ancient Times corresponds, as we have said, to the method by which Nature gets the work of fertilization done by the bees. The supernatural Ideals of the various religions—the Paradise of Mahomet, the second coming of Christ in his Kingdom on Earth, and the like—all of which were calculated to dazzle the minds and draw on the hearts and imaginations of men, correspond in our analogy to the honey by which the bees are attracted, and of which alone they are in quest. The new Codes of Morality again which these religions prescribed—the Sermon on the Mount, of Jesus; the alms, prayers, ablutions, limitations of polygamy, etc., of Mahomet, and the like—and which men must obey if they would enter these delightful realms, correspond to the seed which the bees must scatter if they would enjoy the honey which the flowers conceal. They are the real ends, these Codes of Morality, which the Genius of the World has at heart, and for which all this apparatus of supernatural machinery is but the means; in the same way as the scattering of the seed and the fertilizing of the flowers are, in their purely physical aspect at least, the real ends for which all this beauty and sweetness of honey and flower exist. And thus we see how profound is the error of those Theologians and religious teachers of the present day, who taking for granted that the method by which civilization is advanced must be the *same* in all ages (instead of being as we have seen, exactly opposite in Ancient and Modern times), naturally enough imagine that a superior Code of Morality like the Sermon on the Mount must have been as effective in drawing on the hearts and imaginations of men in the time of Christ, as a like propaganda would be To-day. In consequence of this error they represent the sublime ethics of the Sermon on the Mount as the chief cause of the rise and triumph of Christianity,—whereas in reality the chief cause of that rise was the belief that Jesus was the Messiah, and that His followers

would sit with Him, in their own life-time perhaps, in His earthly Kingdom of God. The effort to live up to his high moral ideal (which was the real *end* the World-Spirit had at heart) was merely the price they were willing to pay for this glorious privilege of sitting with the Messiah in his Kingdom, which had so filled and fascinated their imaginations and hearts. To imagine otherwise, and to believe that a number of peasants, publicans, and fishermen, would leave their work, throw down their nets, and rise as by a common impulse to establish a few very high but also very abstract moral principles and precepts about the blessedness of the poor and the meek, and the duty of forgiveness, charity, and love—for their own sake alone,—is a dream of the pulpit and the closet merely.

And now we come to the problem so important to Humanity from its bearing on the part played in Civilization by Religion, the problem, viz., as to the causes which have made it possible in Modern Times for the great ends of civilization and progress to be advanced by the *direct* method of attacking abuses or advocating reforms on the ground of their natural results alone, instead of, as in Ancient Times, *indirectly* through the medium of Religion. These causes then may be reduced to two. The first, the active and positive cause, is the prevalence in Modern Times of what is called *the Scientific Spirit.* This spirit is now so extensively diffused, the uniformity and constancy of the Laws of Nature are so recognized and taken for granted by the most active and influential minds, that when once men have decided that any particular material, moral, or social condition —as for example slavery, despotism, polygamy, intemperance, or poverty—is by its very nature an obstacle to a higher state of civilization and culture, they no longer allow former religions or theological rulings on the point to stand in their way, but unhampered and undeterred by ancient dogma, go straight to their mark and attack the enemy openly and in full face, and for its own evil effects alone. This first cause, viz., the Scientific Spirit, is already a potent one, and is daily

exercising more and more influence over the most intelligent and cultured minds.

But the second cause is more important still, for without it the Scientific Spirit would have been strangled at its birth, or if allowed to live at all would have met with little or no sympathy from the great mass of the people, and would have exercised as little authority over the affairs of life as it does to-day among a population of Turks and Hindoos. This second cause is *the spirit of the Religion of Jesus, as distinguished from the dogmas of the Christian Church.*

Now Christianity, so far as its supernatural organization and structure are concerned, is a religion of Ancient Times, and had it followed the example of the other religions of antiquity, we should expect to find it laying down a number of fixed, definite, and inelastic rules of conduct and behaviour for all the relationships of life. But in reality it did quite the opposite, and set itself from the outset to emancipate men from existing forms and ceremonies rather than to impose on them new ones. Fully one half of Christ's teaching consists in inculcating a morality not of the *letter* but of the *spirit*, not of outward mechanical observances but of the inward condition of the heart. It did not, that is to say, profess to lay down a fixed and written code of moral and social relations, of what men were to do or avoid in all the relationships of life, as Judaism had done before it, and as Mahommedanism was to do after it; nor did it fix once for all the hierarchy of personal and social relations in which men were to stand to each other, as in the Caste-system of Hindooism. On the contrary its deliberate purpose was to counteract all this, and once for all to put an end to it by leaving Morality so freely and flexibly moveable that it would offer no obstruction to any course of action or conduct which could be shown to be for the spiritual well-being of man. Now this morality of the spirit, if we may call it so, is connected as we shall see by an inner and necessary logic with the very soul and core of Christ's teaching; but as

this connexion has not, in my judgment, been sufficiently dwelt upon, and as on it will depend the view we are to take of the part played in Civilization by Christianity, I may ask the reader to pause with me here for a while to consider it.

Taking the Ten Commandments and the other precepts of the Mosaic Law as his point of departure, Jesus began his propaganda by shifting the emphasis of his teaching from the *acts* a man does to his *motives* in doing them; from the words of his mouth to the thoughts and intents of his heart—and in so doing raised at a bound the whole plane of Ancient morality. Not only were you not to kill, but you were not to think of killing; not only not to commit adultery, but not to dream of committing adultery; not only not to covet your neighbour's goods, but not to set your mind on earthly goods at all. But he went farther, and pushing boldly across the frontier that separates this more or less passive and Buddhistic attitude of the spirit from the active powers and the will, unfurled his banner of positive reform by boldly proclaiming his new Gospel of universal benevolence, forgiveness, and love,—with its ideal of a self-renunciation so lofty and intense that when struck on the one cheek men should glory in turning the other also, when asked for their cloak should joyfully give their coat also; rising at last to heights so difficult for poor human nature to scale, as the loving of one's enemies, the blessing of those that curse you, the doing good to those that hate you,—in a word to the becoming perfect even as your Father in Heaven is perfect.

Such was the burning enthusiasm aroused in the heart of Christ and his disciples by the fierce light of the near approach of the Kingdom of God on Earth; and one sees at once that the morality it enjoined was in its nature purely *ideal*, in the sense, that is to say, that it cannot be reached by poor humanity all at once and at a bound, but only slowly and by successive approximations through long periods of time. Now it was precisely from these two facts, viz., first that the

morality preached by Jesus was an *internal* morality, a morality of the will and intention and not of the external act, and secondly that it was an *ideal* morality, that all the characteristics of his teaching are strictly and logically deducible. To begin with, being ideal, the high self-renunciation it demanded is as difficult for the unregenerate heart to reach as are the high ideals of poetry and art by the untrained intelligence. In the second place being a thing of the heart and imagination and not of the mere outward act, one has only to consider the infinite variety of character, temperament, genius and bias among men, to see that the conditions necessary to the great act of renunciation are as inscrutable and difficult to determine in any given case as those needed to rouse the passion of human love; and that, like love, this act of renunciation can only be reached by each individual, by secret affinities peculiar to himself and known to himself alone. It follows therefore that if men are to arrive at the goal at all, no set forms or prescribed rules of conduct and behaviour will avail, but each must be permitted to reach it by the path most suitable to his particular character, temperament, or genius. And hence it was that Jesus if he would see his ideal become a reality in the lives of men, was as logically obliged to allow them the utmost *liberty of choice* as to the ways and means by which they were to attain to it, as one would be if one were to insist that every man should experience in his life-time the passion of love. And thus it was that the spiritual ideal of Jesus carried logically with it the law of perfect liberty; the only condition imposed by him being that the mode of life or course of conduct pursued by individuals should be felt by them to be a help towards the realization of this ideal, and not a drawback or obstruction. And accordingly we see in the earlier days of Christianity the disciples of Jesus making their way to the same goal by quite different routes, and through quite different modes of life and thought. Some, like Jesus himself, found the greatest help and stimulus in cheerful intercourse

with the world and their fellow men, and in going about doing good. Others, like St. Paul, found in a mild but not excessive asceticism the condition most favourable to their life in the ideal, and to their steady growth in grace. Some, again, like St. John, got most help from imagination and meditation, and from hanging on the discourses of the Master; others, like St. James, in an even more scrupulous and careful observance of every detail of the Law than before. And hence also we find Jesus proclaiming as his constant theme that neither sabbaths nor new moons, neither first fruits nor alms, neither sacrifices nor public prayers, neither things clean nor things unclean, can have any binding authority whatever, except on such individuals as feel that they are being helped by the performance or observance of them to the ideal life. It was the first time in the history of the world that a religion had appeared which liberated men from their bondage to the letter, to fixed and inelastic external acts and observances, and allowed them to freely find their way to the moral ideal through an inner experience based on individual peculiarities of character, temperament, or genius; and was as great an advance in the moral sphere on all that had gone before it, as the free reason of man was, over the fixed, rigid, and inelastic instinct of the brutes in the intellectual. And it all followed, as we have seen, in strictly logical sequence from the fact that the morality of Jesus was an *ideal* one, and that it was an affair not of the *outer* act, but of the *inner* condition of the will, imagination and heart. And if going further we ask why the morality of Jesus was *ideal*, the answer can scarcely be doubtful; it was due to the belief that the Kingdom of God was *near at hand*. To believe otherwise and to imagine that society could have been kept at this high pitch of tension for long ages and centuries would be to credit poor humanity with a higher degree of virtue than it can fairly lay claim to. It will be interesting to see how this doctrine, fitted and indeed intended for a short spurt only, became adapted to the

needs of a society which should have an existence through indefinite ages.

For it is probable that in preaching this morality of the spirit and not of the letter, Jesus had in view the salvation of the individual merely; as it is unlikely that with his belief that the Kingdom of God and the end of the World were almost within sight, he should have given a thought to the effect of his Gospel on the long evolution of society that was to follow him. Be this as it may, it is certain that the same doctrine that led to the salvation of the individual, led, when once embraced, to the salvation of Society also—and so revolutionized the world. For in the same way as Nature, if she is to reach her end by the process of 'natural selection' in Time, must take advantage of every the smallest variation in the long process of upward development, and so must give free scope to every flower, animal, and tree, to bring forth its special and peculiar quality of fruit, to yield up its special and peculiar beauty of structure or form; so in the moral world if you set up an ideal standard of life which society can only reach after long ages of painful and laborious effort, you must be prepared to welcome and embrace every the smallest increment of goodness, beauty, or truth that may chance to arise, as material for the next advance; and so must suffer no new truth to be crushed under the brutal weight of authority and dogma, no new sentiment to be chilled and repressed by the traditions of an outworn and obstructive past. And hence it was that Christianity by the very logic of its ideal aim, which was always being approached but never reached, was pledged to open up before men an infinite horizon, and to give free and untrammelled range and expansion to the human spirit.

And so it came about that a doctrine which was originally devised for another purpose, which was intended only for a comparatively few individuals and for a very limited period of time, was seized on by the Genius of the World as the very variation it wanted for its own ends, and became when

expanded, modified, and transformed to meet the needs of *Society as a whole*, a doctrine for all men and for all times.

And now we see why it is that Christianity in its essential spirit and genius as it existed in its Founder's mind, not only offers no obstruction to, but actually encourages the *direct* preaching of political, moral, and social reforms for themselves alone, and without reference to Religion; and why, when those purely secular reforms which took their rise in the Scientific Spirit began to be agitated, it was able to aid and abet them and not to thwart them as other religions must have done—provided always, of course, that these reforms could be shewn to lead directly, and by their own nature, to the amelioration of the material, social, or spiritual condition of man.

And here we may pause for a moment to answer an objection that must have occurred to the mind of the reader—the objection, viz., that the morality and precepts of Jesus had already been anticipated by Buddhism. Now Buddhism denying as it did the existence of all gods whatever, as well as the existence of souls in men, was rather a system of Atheistic Philosophy than a Religion; and its sole aim and inspiration was the purely negative one of escaping from the rounds of re-birth and sorrow which all evil whether of thought or deed entailed. Its only means of salvation, accordingly, was to lay up a sufficient stock of 'merit,' not only by reducing all evil thoughts and deeds to a minimum, but by the cultivation and exercise of deeds of goodness, justice, and charity to all men. In so far then, it may seem to resemble, if not to be identical with, the precepts of Christianity. But the resemblance is no more real than is the resemblance between the sleep of death and the sleep of fullest life, between the goodness of the criminal who is trying to shorten his term of imprisonment, and the goodness of the man who goes about his work as "ever in his great task-master's eye." And labouring as Buddhism does for the extinction of the individual and of humanity, instead of for their ultimate enlargement and perfection, its spirit is purely

passive and inert, and could no more unite with the forward spirit of Modern Science, as Christianity can and does, than the wheels of an engine can unite with a boiler filled with ice instead of steam.

But before going farther it is necessary to remark that although Christianity by reason of the nature of its moral ideal has in effect withdrawn Morality from the fixed and positive dogmas and precepts of Religion, and has handed it over to knowledge and experience, or in a word to Science, it must not therefore be imagined that in its origin this morality was scientific and secular. On the contrary like all other systems of Morality of the Ancient World, it grew up under the wing and protection of Religion; and it is not too much to say that without the burning hopes aroused by the belief in the coming of the Kingdom of God in the life-time of men then alive, it could never have got a foothold with the masses of men at all. So difficult is it, as we have said, and so vast an expenditure of supernatural hopes and fears is necessary, for Humanity to take even the smallest step in Morality! The truth is, Christianity in spite of its higher representation of God as a Father and God of Love was not so much a purely ideal religion, as it was a purely ideal morality, adapted to all time, but growing up under the stimulus of the now outgrown belief in the immediate coming of the Messiah to establish on earth the Kingdom of God.

So far then we have regarded Christianity as it existed in its primitive purity and simplicity in the mind of its founder Jesus Christ himself. To fully realize what an immense step was taken in civilization when Jesus for the first time in history implicitly handed over Morality to Science, Knowledge, and Experience, and withdrew it from the fixed and rigid decrees and ordinances of Religion, we have only to reflect for a moment on the disasters that befell Christianity itself, when the Early Church, as much from necessity as choice, was betrayed into the very error from which it was the special mission of Christ to for ever deliver it, the error, viz., of giving fixed and rigid

answers to questions of belief and practice, which from their very nature ought to have been kept fluid, flexible, and free to mould and adapt themselves to the continually changing needs of life and society. Instead of allowing these doctrines and practices to stand freely around the religion of Jesus as so many temporary props to be taken up, used, and laid aside again when they were no longer suited to new times and conditions, the Early Church in order to prevent divisions that would have been fatal to its unity, and so to its very existence, was obliged to build these doctrines and practices into its own structure, as part of a supernatural revelation from God. In so doing it gave them that absolute, fixed, and unalterable character which made them sacred in the minds of men, and would have perpetuated them as eternal truths for all time.

The first of these great, though, as I have admitted, necessary and inevitable errors was committed when the disciples and early converts took over from the Old Testament of their fathers the Mosaic Cosmogony, and permitted it to be built into the structure of the new creed. Jesus himself, in his recorded utterances, taught no special doctrine of Creation, no special philosophy of the origin and genesis of men and things; and it is probable that his mind being turned entirely on the future, and on the speedy coming of the Kingdom of God, he gave little thought to the matter, but accepted without question the traditional account of Creation and the Fall of Man that had come down to him in the Scriptures of his own people. But as every religion must give some account of the Origin and Destiny of Man, must embody in itself some philosophy of the World and of Human Life; and as no religion can continue to exist unless it makes that philosophy binding on all; Christianity was obliged first to choose for itself some philosophy from among those current at the time, and having chosen it, to make it authoritative by representing it as an absolute and eternal truth. And this it could only do by making it part of a Supernatural Revelation from God. As to the particular philosophy

and cosmogony which would be chosen there could be little doubt. Most of the early converts to the new religion were either Jews or Greek proselytes to Judaism—and indeed but for the influence of St. Paul who threw open Christianity to all the world, the broad emancipating spirit of the Gospel would have been crushed under the weight of Jewish tradition. It was inevitable, therefore, that when a cosmogony was wanted for the infant Church, none but the Mosaic one in which they all already believed, could have been for a moment entertained. Besides, what other cosmogony was there in the field, that on its own merits was qualified to compete with it? If they turned to the cosmogony of the Greek Philosophers, of Plato, for example, or Aristotle, or the Stoics, they found there the Supreme Cause of the World, although represented as spiritual and intelligent, yet too much of the nature of a philosophic abstraction to be suitable for the purposes of Religion—which always requires in the Supreme Being a will and personality like that of man. The Greek and Roman and Egyptian mythologies on the other hand which furnished the religion of the *masses* of the Roman World, were polytheisms, and therefore altogether impossible. Buddhism, again, had no cosmogony at all, having swept the Heavens of all the gods as it had swept away the souls of men, and was, as we have seen, more a system of atheistic philosophy than a religion; while the Persian religion, with its good and evil Principles, its God of Light and God of Darkness, was already represented in the Mosaic Cosmogony (derived like it from a common Chaldean source) by the parallel though no longer co-equal powers of God and the Devil. There was practically, therefore, no cosmogony in the field that could seriously compete with the cosmogony of Genesis in the minds of the early converts, and it was inevitable that it should become bound up and incorporated under one Divine Revelation in the structure of the rising creed. Once so incorporated, it thenceforth assumed for all time the character of an absolute truth—fixed, unchanging, and

beyond the reach of human doubt as part of a written revelation from God. And so it came to pass that instead of man's beliefs as to the origin, nature, and constitution of the world being left freely open to his intellectual integrity and to the progress of Physical Science (as we have just seen, his moral, social, and spiritual welfare were left freely open by Jesus to his moral integrity and the progress of Moral Science), they were kept tightly in the hands of Religion; and were thenceforth imposed on man as fixed, absolute, and eternal truths, from which there was no appeal. What a curse this became when Physical Science many centuries afterwards began to make inroads into this cosmogony, and when in consequence it could no longer be genuinely believed as it had been in the earlier time, the long history of religious persecution from the days of Bruno and Galileo onwards almost to our own times, only too sorrowfully bears witness.

But this adoption of the Mosaic Cosmogony into the Christian Religion, and the imposing of it on the minds of men by binding it up under one cover with the rest of the Scriptures as a single Divine Revelation, had effects of a different but no less momentous kind. St. Paul made its doctrine of the Fall of Man one of the pillars of his great "Scheme of Redemption" ("As in Adam all die," etc.), and on it founded that doctrine of the Atonement which, the same in substance although slightly different in form, was passed on from himself to St. Augustine, from St. Augustine to Calvin, and from Calvin again down to the orthodox believer of our own time; and it is only within recent years that this harsh and gloomy doctrine which overshadowed the Christian conscience for centuries, has been discarded by the best minds in the Church and allowed quietly to drop into oblivion.

The next series of errors committed by the Early Church arose from the giving Supernatural Authority to replies made by the Disciples and Apostles to personal questions on social or

political matters—replies which, however just and expedient under the circumstances of the age and time, became false and pernicious when bound up afterwards as part of the Word of God, and so made sacred and binding on all men, under all circumstances, and for all time. Fortunately, however, as these replies were comparatively few in number and only in answer to questions of the most urgent and personal concern, and as they often ran in the line of advancing civilization, the harm they did under the changed conditions of later times was not as great as it might have been. But unfortunately the results were most disastrous precisely where the replies were most simple and ingenuous, and most in harmony with the Spirit of Jesus—as in reference to Slavery for example—and the reason of this unlikely phenomenon it will not be wholly irrelevant or uninteresting to discover.

The teaching of Jesus, although as applicable in the long run, as we have seen, to society as to the individual, was in the first instance a gospel of *personal* and not of *social* or *national* salvation or regeneration. It was intended not so much to put national society right (for this was believed to have but few years to last) as to give to individuals on certain conditions, passports which would admit them, perhaps in their own life-time, into the Kingdom of God. Hence it was that Jesus preached a communism which could only have been possible among little bands of men wandering about and preaching from place to place during the comparatively short interval that must elapse before the second coming of Christ in His Kingdom. Indeed were there nothing else to prove that the Gospel was not intended by Jesus either for society as a whole or for after ages of the world, these communistic views of his would of themselves be sufficient. For when once Jesus had gone from among them, and the time of his coming began to loom vague and uncertain in the minds of the early converts—many of whom, indeed, had already died without seeing that glorious day of the Lord—St. Paul, setting aside the question of the

second coming, although not doubting its reality, conceived the great design of meantime making the Spirit of Christ a Gospel of Salvation for the whole Roman world; and from that time forward we hear no more of Communism. Conversions were now to be made on the great scale; and with this object in view the labours of the Church were to be restricted entirely to the work of securing personal salvation to the individual, politics being left entirely alone; all the more so indeed as the high ideal morality of Jesus in which you were to turn the other cheek also, could be obtained with as much ease under one form of political or social institutions as under another—as easily under the lash of the slave-driver as under the full liberty of Roman citizenship. The consequence was that when asked by the faithful as to what they were to do under this or that political or social régime, as, for example, under Slavery, the reply of the teacher or apostle was quite straightforward and unembarrassed. They were to accept the existing social and political situation in all humility and without murmuring or complaint, their sole concern being to do their duty in it in the Spirit of Christ. In a word, they were in all ways, except in matters of faith and belief, to endeavour not to *overturn* institutions, but to *moralize* them. And it was not until the State united itself with the Church under Constantine, that the Church, except in the dreams of some of the Apologists, so much as dreamt of interfering with the institutions of the State. And now what was the effect of this tolerance of the Apostles for the political institutions of the time, this non-interference of the Church with the affairs of State, when once the letters or speeches of the Apostles were bound up as parts of the Word of God? This, viz., that political or social institutions which had hitherto been *tolerated* because of the inexpediency of trying to remove them, were now *legitimized* for all countries and all times. When St. Paul, for example, who had grasped the spirit of Jesus more fully than any of the other apostles, gave his countenance to the Slave System which lay at the base of

the Roman State, and which could not have been abolished without shaking society to its foundation;—when St. Paul insisted only that the relation of master and slave should be moralized on both sides in the Spirit of Christ, his words, from the time that they were made part of the Divine Revelation, gave the world liberty and authority to perpetuate slavery to all time. What a curse this became in other times and under other social conditions, the great war of liberation in America when slavery was defended by the ministers of the South from the mouth of St. Paul himself, will be our witness. It was the same, too, with the prohibition of the practice of Usury which Christianity had accepted from the Old Testament, and which, if it could have been enforced, would have destroyed the nascent industries of the world and put back the progress of Civilization for a thousand years. It was the same even in personal matters. When St. Paul from his own personal predilection enjoined a state of celibacy as preferable to that of marriage, he little thought of the consequences to civilization that hung on his words. And yet what great results for good and evil came out of them! What retreats on the one hand for the pious and contemplative, what asylums for the oppressed in ages of violence; and on the other, what haunts of vice, gluttony, corruption, and all uncleanness! We might go on multiplying instances of the same kind, but the above perhaps are sufficient to show what a dangerous experiment it is to fasten on the neck of Civilization *obiter dicta* like these, which under the wing of Religion are made authoritative and final as Divine Revelations, and which thenceforth are stereotyped and made sacred for all time.

With the exception of instances like the above, created as I have said by the necessities of the Early Church, Christianity was in its essence a religion of the Spirit and not of the Letter; and it was because it was so, and because the masses have always assimilated the spirit of a religion more than its dogmas, that (to revert to the problem with which we set out)

it has offered no obstacle to the open and direct preaching of social and moral reforms for themselves alone, and by direct appeal to experience, knowledge, and Science—instead of, as in Ancient Times, by the appeal to fixed dogmas made sacred and binding by the supernatural authority of Religion.

It is true, of course, that an ideal spirituality like that of Jesus, with its morality of the spirit and not of the letter, if it is to unite men into a lasting Church must, as Cardinal Newman says, have some authority to interpret and apply it to the varying circumstances and conditions of life; the only dispute is, who is to be the interpreter? On the one hand to truly apply the spirit of Jesus to the varying circumstances and conditions of differing times and places, would require a complete and perfect *knowledge* of physical, mental, moral, and social laws—that is to say a complete and perfected Science. On the other to have waited until such perfected knowledge appeared, would have been to have dissipated and destroyed the nascent religious community altogether. There was nothing for it, therefore, but for the Church itself to assume the authority; and in order that its decisions might be placed beyond the reach of cavil or dispute, they must be represented not as temporary expedients to be altered as circumstances altered, but as eternal verities true for all time. The first act of the Church accordingly was, as we have seen, to bind the sayings and doings of the apostles and disciples into a book, and to make that book sacred. Then when the Church became too extended, and discipline too elaborate for the Bible to cover and meet all the complications that arose, difficult questions were handed over to Synods and Councils to decide—and these decisions in turn became sacred. And when at last these Councils and Synods themselves became so distracted by divisions of opinion as to threaten the unity of Christendom, the final authority in all debated questions of faith and morals was handed over to the Pope when sitting in his chair of St. Peter. But it was inevitable that with such poor

and imperfect knowledge as this, masquerading as complete knowledge by the simple expedient of fathering it at each stage on the Divine Spirit, these doctrines and practices built up around the simple faith of Jesus would at some point of time be found to be incompatible with the scientific knowledge which had been slowly accumulating during the centuries. The Mosaic Cosmogony which had satisfied the early disciples was felt to be untrue to fact; such laws as those against Usury which were well enough among the little community of Judea, were seen to be entirely unsuited to the industrial necessities of the world. And finally that great body of doctrine and practice which had been added by the Papacy, and which was conceived as but the logical extension and development of the doctrine of the Incarnation—all those doctrines and practices, viz. which were believed capable of communicating Divine Grace by reason of their participating like Christ himself in the Divine Spirit, as, for example, the authority of the Pope, of the Church, of the Sacraments, of Purgatory, of Baptism; the worship of the Holy Mother, of the Saints and Angels, of the blessed Martyrs, of images, of relics, and the like—all these were beginning to be denied when it was felt that "the Spirit bloweth where it listeth," and that if there be any depositary of the Divine Spirit among men, it must be in the men of genius in the intellectual world, and in the men of uprightness and purity of heart in the moral world, and not in the bread and wine, the relics, the Holy Water, etc., which have been touched by priest or Pope, or in priest or Pope who have been touched by those who in turn have been touched by him to whom Jesus himself gave the keys. But as these decisions of disciples and apostles, of synods and popes, once given, were inflexible and could never again be revoked, Civilization itself and the progress of knowledge would have been strangled by them had they not at last been rudely set aside. And then began the slow dismantling of the grand and imposing edifice

which Mediæval Catholicism had erected above the simple shrine of Jesus. The first to fall was the great superstructure of dogma, ritual, and practice, which, as we have seen, had grown out of the doctrine of the Incarnation and the efficacy of Sacramental Grace, viz.—the authority of the Pope, the doctrine of transubstantiation, of purgatory, the worship of images, of the Virgin, of Saints and Angels, of relics and the rest. These the Reformation and Calvinism rudely destroyed, but left still standing for some centuries yet the old Mosaic Cosmogony, with the doctrine of the Atonement resting on it; the verbal inspiration; and the belief in a *material* Heaven and Hell. And now that these too, within living memory, have begun to crumble and are slowly dropping from the beliefs and imaginations of men, is it too much to hope that the universal cry of the new century will be 'Back to Jesus'—back to his pure and sublime spirituality, and to that morality of the spirit which, although it has to be interpreted by the growing and ever widening Science and experience of the world, is itself applicable to all places and true for all time.

CHAPTER II.

JESUS CHRIST.

IN the following chapters I propose to make use of the results we have just gained from our study of the history and evolution of Judaism, to throw light on those points in the doctrine and development of Jesus which are still unresolved, as well as on the general evolution of that Christianity to which the history of Judaism is prolegomena and preparation. And if in our study we have been successful in seizing the state of religious thought and feeling among the Jews at the time of the birth of Jesus, in the three primary essentials—viz., its Conception of God, its Code of Morality, and its Supernatural Ideal—we ought to be able to bring the reader by a single step forward, to those essential elements of Christianity which are destined to carry the future with them.

To begin with then, the reader will remember that in a former chapter we tried to show that the vital and seminal element in all religions, the element which for ever fixes and defines their essential character, is the conception which they present to us of the nature of God or the gods. We also saw that it was not necessary to determine in any particular case whether this conception had arisen in the mind of the Founder as a re-action against the conception of God set forth in the prevailing religion, or whether it had arisen from disgust with the code of morality bound up with that religion—and for this reason,

that give it but a little time, and a new and higher conception of God must inevitably draw after it a new and higher morality, as, on the other hand, a new and higher conception of morality must inevitably act and re-act on the conception of God, until it has moulded it into conformity with itself. But we went farther, and showed that in whatever way a religion may take its rise, it cannot be said to be fully equipped for entering on its conquering career, until it has formed for itself a fixed and definite conception of the nature of God. As an instance of this we saw that before the Unity of God could be sufficiently firmly established for there to be no danger of its being eaten away by the surrounding Paganism, before it could be so firmly held that on it as on an axiom of thought new and higher conceptions of the nature of God could afterwards be built, the Jewish Religion had for four hundred years to stoop from the sublime conceptions of God and Morality of the Prophets, to the ceremonial puerilities and absurdities of the Scribes and Pharisees. Now the conception of God that corresponded to these puerilities and absurdities was that of a stern and inflexible Censor and Judge, of such majesty, aloofness, and purity, that offences against his dignity or honour could only be atoned for by appropriate acts of purification and propitiation. It is true he was believed to love his own people, but this love was so bound down by the multiplied restrictions, exactions, and ceremonial rites with which the Scribes had surrounded it, that instead of turning towards the sinner on the slightest show of contrition or repentance, as was the case with the God of the Prophets and Psalms, He presented the fixed and stony gaze of the exacting Tyrant and Judge, who yields nothing of grace but all in consideration of compensation given; and His love was of that cast-iron quality that for the goodness and mercy it dispensed, an exact legal equivalent in the shape of sacrifices, fasts, devotions, etc., had to be supplied it. Now it was this Pharisaic conception of God that enveloped the youth and

early manhood of Jesus like an atmosphere; it was an echo of this that he heard from the official expositors of religion on every hand, as, in youthful meditation, he wandered pensive and serene among the flower-strewn fields of Galilee—and his gentle heart would not believe it. For there was another God of whom he had also heard, a God of kingly majesty, too, it is true, but one whose love for His children was so full and free that it flowed out to them as from a living stream. It was the God of the Prophets and the Psalms. This was no stern and inflexible tyrant, demanding for his satisfaction hecatombs of sacrifices and burnt offerings, but a God of Love and Mercy, whose ear was ever ready, His heart ever open to the cries of those who put their trust in Him. And yet had Jesus gone no farther than this God of the Prophets and the Psalms, Christianity would have remained unborn. But in reality he had shot beyond this, and had got a vision of a Father under the robes of the King; of One whose loving care for all His creatures was so all-pervasive and all-embracing that without His will not even a sparrow could fall. And this loving Father it was that he found everywhere reflected to him from the peaceful face of earth and sky, from the sunshine and refreshing rain dispensed alike to the evil and the good, from the up-springing lilies in their chaste and modest beauty, from the gentle cooing doves, and from the religion of simple faith and pious hearts in the humble folk about him.

The difference between this God of Jesus and the God of Prophets and Psalmist, although apparently slight is yet real, and in its effects far-reaching. With the Prophets and Psalmist, God is primarily the King, whose honour demands that the first advance towards reconciliation shall be on the side of the sinner; with Jesus, God is primarily the Father whose dignity and honour are lost in His joy at the return of the prodigal. With the Prophets and Psalmist alike, God's love is always *conditional;* with Jesus, it is practically unconditional and a matter of free grace and favour originating in

His own heart. That with the Prophets and Psalmist God's love is always conditional on obedience and on their attitude towards Himself, a few texts will show. Among the Pre-exilian Prophets this love, as we saw in the last chapter, is, like all other relations between Jehovah and Israel, a relation between Him and the nation as a whole. In Amos iii. 2, for example, Jehovah is made to say, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." Repentance and return to Him are the conditions of His mercy and pardon. Hosea says, chap. xiv. 1, "O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God, for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity." In chap. vi. 1, "Come and let us return unto the Lord, for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up." So, too, in Joel ii. 12, we read "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to Me with all your heart, and with fasting and with weeping and with mourning; and rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness." And lastly, Micah vii. 18, asks "Who is a God like unto Thee that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage. . . . Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which Thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old." If we turn now to the Prophets who wrote during the Exile, we shall find that a new note is beginning to be heard, and that the promises of Jehovah begin to be addressed to each individual Jew. But the mercy and pardon though real, are, it is to be observed, still conditional. Deutero-Isaiah says, in chap. lv., 7, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon him." But this personal note of the love of Jehovah for each individual Jew is most distinctly heard in the post-exilian Psalms, which, though Christian in spirit in many passages, always make it conditional on the attitude

which the individual assumes towards God. Take Psalm ciii., 11 as example, "For as the Heaven is high above the Earth, so great is His mercy towards them that fear Him;" verse 13, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him;" verse 17, "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children to such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His commandments to do them." Now in all these texts we see that while the conception of God is of a God of love and mercy to His own chosen people, that love is still conditional on repentance and submission. In a certain sense, of course, it may be said to be the same with Jesus—but there is this difference, that while with the Prophets and Psalmist, Jehovah, like a King, wears his front of Justice and Majesty towards the world, while His Love is always ready to swing round to the front on the least show of repentance; with Jesus, on the contrary, God, like a Father, wears His front of Love towards the world, while His Justice, turned inwards as it were, is but the means by which He would persuade His errant children to return to Him. This new conception of God as Father came over Jesus as an inspiration, an illumination, a revelation; and borne along with it and the inner joy and ecstasy it caused, He moved over the dewy morning grass with such light and airy step, that the flowers sprang up again behind Him as if but bent by the wandering breeze. And then it was that He saw that the old Mosaic Law, with its Sabbaths and fasts, its feasts and sacrifices (to all of which He seems to have had an instinctive aversion, especially when put forward as the true worship of God), was given the Jews, as he said later of the Mosaic Law of Divorce, on account of the hardness of their hearts—given, as Paul afterwards saw, because of their proneness to idolatry, and not because God Himself wished these outward observances for His own honour and glory. And accordingly he felt himself free henceforth to re-construct those older ordinances contained in the Mosaic Law

according to the new conception of God that had been revealed to him; and was ready when the time came, not only to clear away by a stroke all the multiplied oral traditions with which the Scribes had overlaid the Mosaic Law, but to lay hands, as we shall see in his treatment of Sabbath and divorce, on the Sacred Law itself; so that although the "men of olden time," as he called them, may have said this or that, he, seeing that their words were only of temporary validity and not final and full expressions of the truth, could boldly brush them aside, and with equal authority substitute his "But I say unto you." It was when his heart and imagination were filled with this new life-giving vision of God and human duty, that he first heard of the preaching of John the Baptist; and he was immediately drawn to him. For the first time in his life he heard his own thoughts in a measure reverberated back to him from this fiery preacher of the Wilderness; and his meeting with the young prophet marked the opening of a new epoch in his life. As to the mental history of John, one must in the scantiness of the records be content to remain in doubt. Many authorities have considered him to have been connected with the sect of the Essenes, but in the way of this theory there are many and serious difficulties. The Essenes were a simple, harmless, Quaker-like kind of folk, plain in dress, lovers of peace, averse to oaths, speaking the simple truth, and given to long periods of silence; John, on the other hand, was a fiery orator full of fierce invective, and abounding in denunciations of the evils of the time. They lived in a community together and had all things in common; John was a hermit. They believed, like the Greeks and Hindoos, in the immortality of the soul, and its separate existence from the body after death; John was thoroughly Jewish in his psychology—to him men were total entities either good or bad, and would after death be rewarded or punished for their actions in both soul and body, without too curiously inquiring as to which was the guilty member of the partnership. The Essenes, again, lived in a community

together, and were remarkable for their personal purity and Sabbath observances; John was an ascetic, living in caves and feeding on locusts and wild honey—and in all probability cared as little for Sabbath observance as Jesus himself. They were sticklers for the Mosaic Law; John preached baptism and repentance only. Nor did he belong to the sect of the Pharisees; for these Pharisees were not ascetics, and they spent most of their time in the contemplation of the deliverance of Israel from a foreign yoke. John, on the contrary, abstained entirely from Politics, urging men to repentance as a condition of entrance into the Messianic Kingdom. It is probable that he was of priestly origin; and what with his sincerity, inflexibility, and general elevation of aim, it is not unlikely that he had of his own initiative taken to this kind of life in order to play the *rôle* of prophet in imitation of Elijah; and, like the mendicants of the Middle Ages, retained in his retreat the spirit of his religion without its organized ritual. That the conception John had formed of God was not essentially different from that of Jesus is proved first of all by the fact that Jesus consented to be baptized by him, and secondly from the similarity in their views of morality. They both preached repentance for the remission of sins, and not ceremonial purity and observances; a change of heart, and not of mere outward action and behaviour. They both had collected the same sort of people around them—the poor, the outcast, the despised, publicans, soldiers, tax-gatherers, etc.—and both heartily hated the Pharisees, whom they characterized as a generation of vipers. But when the people asked them what they were to do after repentance, a difference for the first time makes itself visible. John told those who had two coats to give one to him who had none, and to do the same with food. He told the publicans not to exact more than was their due; the soldiers not to do violence to any man, or to bear false witness against any man, and, moreover, to be content with their condition. Now this itself is good

Christian morality—as good indeed as you can expect to find in a world which has to go on existing from age to age and from century to century—but Jesus raised this morality, for reasons which we shall see presently, to a higher power if I may say so, to a *transcendental* or ideal height. Not only were you to give one of your coats to him who had none, but you were to give both your cloak and your coat also. But what we have to point out here is that both these codes of morality resulted, and could only result, from the idea of a God of Love—the only difference between them being that while with John, God was rather the God of the old Prophets, that is to say a God with a stern face of Justice towards the world; with Jesus, God carried His face of love towards the world, the Justice being but means and instrument of it. The consequence was that while John came mortifying himself with every form of austerity and asceticism, as a propitiation of God's justice preliminary to the out-pouring of God's love; Jesus came, as his enemies said, eating and drinking—and that because in all the creations of a God of Love he found beauty, harmony, and joy, but no asceticism.

And now occurred the incident which of all others had in the view I am presenting the most momentous effects on the future of Jesus. He had gone to John to be baptized, and on coming out of the water he saw in vision the heavens open, and heard the voice of God himself saying, 'Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.' Now in those pre-scientific days the one thing of all others which had the power of crystallizing a vague uncertainty of opinion or belief into a perfect assurance, or what Cardinal Newman would have called a real 'assent,' was the vision. Nearly all the great and fiery propagandists of the early ages of Christianity were converted by visions; St. Paul, for example, by the vision of the risen Christ on his way to Damascus; Augustine, who had wandered for years in the perplexing mazes of Neo-Platonism and Manicheeism, ever drawn to Christianity and yet never quite

able to accept it, by a voice he heard from a neighbouring garden saying and oft repeating the words, 'Take, read.' Tertullian indeed declares that nearly all the conversions of his time from Paganism to Christianity, were brought about by visions, sleeping or waking. Now Jesus must long have felt that, in the language of the time, the Spirit of God was upon him to reveal to others the good tidings that had been vouchsafed to himself, viz., that God was a God of Love, and not merely of stern and inflexible justice; a God of the poor, and not of the proud, sanctimonious Pharisee. But it is probable, from the circumstance of his going to John the Baptist to be baptized, that it had not yet occurred to him that he was himself the Messiah. It is more probable that, like John, he had only felt himself called upon to preach the good news that had been revealed to him of the nature of God. But when he heard John with all the authority of a prophet, announcing that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand, and perhaps that the Messiah was even now in their midst, it is probable that he felt within himself that if the Messiah were, as was believed, a man more endowed with the spirit of God than were other men, and if the Kingdom of God as a God of Love were coming, who so likely to inaugurate that kingdom as the man to whom the true nature of God had been revealed.

That Jesus was recognized by John as the Messiah is improbable, and is perhaps one of those pious legends that arose after the fact; for when John afterwards sent his disciples to ask him plainly whether he were indeed the Messiah or no, it is evident he must still have been in doubt. It is more than likely that John still held to the old conception of the Messiah of the Prophets, as one who was to come in earthly power and glory, a king of the line of David; and it is not at all improbable that Jesus, in spite of His new-born conception of God as a God of Love, a conception which demanded a different kind of Messiah from the popular one, should nevertheless have still been deeply imbued with that idea of the Messiah which he had drunk in

with his mother's milk. So that the vision in which he saw the Heavens opened and heard the voice of God Himself proclaiming him to be the Messiah, must have been to him at first the source of no little perplexity. The Rabbis, it will be remembered, taught that the Messiah would lie perdu in some out of the way place, until suddenly emerging from his hiding-place, he would be clothed with majesty and power, and coming on the clouds of Heaven would destroy his enemies by the breath of his nostrils. Could it really be possible then, that he, the carpenter's son, who had grown up among the people from his infancy, and who had followed his father's trade openly and in the sight of all from his youth upwards, could be the Messiah? It seemed unlikely from the point of view of the current conception of the Messiah. But besides the lordly conquering Messiah of Scripture, was there not another; the lowly, loving Messiah, that lay concealed in Isaiah, Zechariah, and the Psalms—the Messiah of the poor, of the humble, of the wretched? This latter view, which was first announced by Jesus himself, was the only view of the Messiah, it is to be observed, which was consistent with his new-born conception of God as a God of pure Love. Or might it not be still possible that God should intend him to enact the *rôle* of both these Messiahs—to inaugurate the Kingdom of God, as the first, the lordly and conquering Messiah, and to continue it as the second, the peaceful, the loving Messiah, the Messiah of Zechariah, who should enter Jerusalem on an ass, bringing peace and salvation with him? He was perplexed, and, like Mahomet, retired to the Wilderness to consider himself, and by fasting, prayer, and pondering the words of Scripture to wait and learn what God should be pleased to vouchsafe to him.

The result was decisive. With the passages and texts of Scripture bearing on both types of Messiah filling his mind and heart, it first seemed to him in his fasting state that if God intended him for the *rôle* of a Conquering Messiah He would command the stones to be made bread for him. But no miracle

being performed, he remembered the words of Deuteronomy that man "should not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He next imagined himself taken up into a high mountain, and being shown all the kingdoms of the World which the Conquering Messiah was to make his own; and the thought, perhaps the wish, crossed his mind of how glorious it would be to possess them. It may have been but for a moment; but if the real Messiah were to come to exhibit not God's Power, but rather His conquering Love, this was clearly a temptation of his lower nature, a temptation of the Devil as it was called, and must not for a moment be entertained. For he immediately remembered the words of Deuteronomy, "Thou shalt worship the Lord Thy God"—the God of Love—"and Him only shalt thou serve," that is to say, he realized that the Kingdom of God, as he had newly conceived it, must be his aim—and not a material and earthly, conquering kingdom, the kingdom of the Devil. Again, in his trance or ecstasy he remembered the passage in Psalm xci. 11, 12, where it is said of the Messiah, "He shall give His Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up lest thou dash thy foot against a stone," and immediately imagined himself on the pinnacle of the Temple, only to wake up to recoil at what seemed like an attempt to force the hand of God in his doubts as to whether His word could be relied on. He remembered how the children of Israel at Massah, when they were disappointed at finding no food, began to question whether the Lord were really with them or not, and the words of Deuteronomy referring to that event came to his mind (chap. vi. 16); "Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God." Once and for all he put behind him the base thought and the struggle was over. It was clear that the Messianic *rôle* he had to play was that of the gentle, lowly Messiah, come to reveal the nature and heart of God, and not the kingly Conquering Messiah of the great mass of his countrymen—and from that hour he never wavered in his

belief, or, except perhaps at the very last. shrank from the sacrifices it demanded of him.

Accordingly, in his first act on his return to Galilee after his baptism by John, he struck the keynote of his whole future mission. Entering the synagogue at Nazareth (Luke iv. 18), and taking up the Old Testament roll, he opened at Isaiah (chap. lxi. 1) and read, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because He hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,' and closing the book returned it to the attendant, remarking as he sat down, 'This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears.' In these few words we have his view of what the Messiah should be; this was the kind of Messiah he himself professed to be; and from this conception he never again swerved. For when John, as we have seen, afterwards sent his disciples to ask him whether he really were the Messiah or no, he simply said, 'Go and show John those things which ye do hear and see, the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.' Indeed, the more he pondered, the more he was convinced that the only kind of Messiah that could possibly be sent from a God of Love must be a comforter of the poor, the weak, the lowly, the broken-hearted; a healer of the deaf, the lame, the blind; a teacher and preacher of the good news of the coming of a kingdom of the people of God, the organizer of that kingdom and judge of the fitness or unfitness of those who sought to enter it. To him the old conception of the Messiah as a Conquering King was now an anachronism, an absurdity, a contradiction in terms. So deeply, indeed, was he convinced, not only that the Old Testament would bear him out in his new view of the Messiah, but also (especially after his marvellous miracles of healing) that it would bear him out in

his assertion that he himself was the Messiah, that he could refer the Jews who rejected him, with the utmost confidence, to the Scriptures for confirmation. Now of all the Scriptures, the passages relating to the Messiah that harmonized most with his conception of a God of Universal Love, and seemed as time went on more peculiarly to refer to himself, and had the deepest influence in shaping his course, were those we have quoted from Isaiah—as well as the whole of chapter liii. beginning with the third verse, "He is despised and rejected of men;" and those, again, which Matthew quotes, chapter xii., 18, as having guided the conduct of Jesus at a certain juncture, "Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased; I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust."

Here it were well to pause for a moment to consider the deep significance the words of the Old Testament had, not only for the Jews, but for Jesus himself. To begin with then, we may say that from the time the Canon of Scripture was closed, the words of the Old Testament were believed by all the Jews to contain the complete will of God in regard to every thought and action of their lives. So much indeed was this the case that when the plain obvious sense of a passage was exhausted, secondary meanings of all kinds which could be construed into figures and types, hints and forecasts of things to come, were supposed to lurk behind the superficial sense, ready to be extracted from it by the skilled interpreter. Now to this purpose certain parts of Scripture lent themselves more readily than others, either because they were couched in language more mystic and unintelligible, or because the meaning they had had for the people to whom they were originally addressed was now

from lapse of time quite irrecoverable. Such, more especially, were the Prophets and Psalms, which accordingly, when interpreted in a mystic, allegorical sense, could be shown by the ingenious interpreter to yield solutions to all the perplexing problems of the time. Of these problems none were more interesting than the nature of the Messiah, the time of his coming, and the *rôle* he was to play; and on them all the Rabbis were full of the most ingenious subtleties. With Jesus, too, the Old Testament, especially in its prophetic portions, was of unimpeachable authority, and especially on the question of the nature and functions of the Messiah. Accordingly, when it had been revealed to him that God was a God of Love, and in *general* terms that he himself was the Messiah, there was no way by which he could learn what *specially* he ought to do at critical junctures of his life, but by searching the Scriptures for passages that seemed to bear on these situations. And hence the meaning of the constantly repeated assertions of the Evangelists that Jesus did this or that "in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled" is that he did it in obedience to the will of God as laid down beforehand for his guidance in the Scriptures.

But to return. If any further test were required to convince Jesus that he was indeed the Messiah of God, it could only be the degree to which he was supported in his action as the Messiah of the poor and the wretched, by God Himself. And here the result again was decisive. For if God would not interfere to justify his claim to the Messiahship after the old type, that is to say as a Conquering King of the line of David, Jesus yet found himself supported in his true *rôle* of the teaching and healing Messiah by the whole power of the Almighty. If his Heavenly Father had failed to turn stones into bread for him, to bear him up if he threw himself into space, or to give him all the kingdoms of the world; on the other hand, as the Messiah of the poor, of the afflicted, of the oppressed, he found himself backed by invincible power. Simple hearts

flocked to him in crowds to hear the blessed words that he spoke; at his lightest word the lame walked, the blind saw, the dumb spoke, the dead rose, the demons were cast out; and amid all the dangers which surrounded him from the populace, the priests, the Scribes and Pharisees, he walked in and out unharmed.

With this confirmation in the external world of that of which he was already convinced in his own mind, his belief in himself and his mission was now complete; and justly so, for all the tests which in a pre-scientific age could be appealed to as witnesses to truth had held good in his own case. First and most important was the vision itself after his baptism, in which he saw the heavens open and heard the voice of God Himself proclaiming him as the Messiah. This direct declaration and testimony of God Himself to his Messiahship would naturally have been the strongest evidence, the most unimpeachable certificate of truth; but falling on a mind imbued with the traditional idea of the Messiah as a king, coming in earthly power and glory, it produced only bewilderment and perplexity, and gave rise to a world of doubts, hesitations and uncertainties which it needed the experiences of the Wilderness to resolve. These doubts as to which kind of Messiah God intended him to be having been resolved in the Wilderness in the way we have seen, he again emerged clearly convinced—first that he was the Messiah of God, and secondly that he was not the kingly Messiah of the Pharisees, in whose kingdom the Priests and Scribes should have the first place, but the lowly Messiah of the prophets, with whom the poor, the outcast, the simple-minded should occupy the chief seats, together with all those still capable of that child-like love of God which with the Pharisees had been eaten out by formalism and spiritual pride. And this conviction was still further deepened, as we have seen, not only by the testimony of Scripture itself, but by the marvellous success that attended his labours, and the train of miracles and wonders that accompanied him. With the Word

of God Himself out of Heaven, with the Word of God in Scripture, and with the Word of God fulfilled in works of mercy and power—with all these uniting their assurance that he was the Messiah of God, the faith of Jesus in himself was henceforth unclouded, and his confidence in his own power of imparting his spirit to those whom he should choose, unbounded. So entirely indeed had the event justified his own faith that he expected like results to follow when it was communicated to others. He told his disciples that if their faith was but as a grain of mustard-seed they should be able to remove mountains; and he straightway, and without the least hesitation, proceeded to confer on them the power of handling deadly serpents, of treading on scorpions, of drinking poison without being harmed, as well as of healing the sick, casting out devils and the like—and all without betraying the least doubt of the efficacy of his gift or of his power to communicate it to others.

With this deep and well-founded belief in his own Messiahship went an equally clear conception of the functions of the Messiah and of the nature of the Messianic Kingdom; and as his belief in the one strengthened, so his conception of the others cleared—all thought of the one involving some corresponding thought of the other. And here again his beliefs were the outcome at once of historical evolution and of his new conception of the nature of God. But to see this distinctly we must again refer to our studies of Judaism in the preceding chapters. To begin with then, it will be remembered that up to the time of the Maccabees the Messianic Kingdom was to be a period of peace and wordly prosperity for the Jews as a nation, and was to be inaugurated either by God Himself or by a Messiah of the line of David. But either way it was an Earthly Kingdom under a sovereign exercising earthly sway. After the time of the Maccabean revolt, when the doctrine of the resurrection had come in with the prophet Daniel, the Messianic kingdom, while still an earthly one, was to be inaugurated by a Messiah who should play the double *rôle*, first

of King, to put down the heathen powers around, and then of Judge, to sit in judgment on those who had died before the Messianic Age, and who were to rise again in their bodies to receive punishment or reward for the deeds done in their former earthly existence. In both the old and the new conception the Paradise was an Earthly one and situated in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, while the Hell was in the Valley of Hinnom or Gehenna, close by the western valley of the city.

The next stage of evolution we should expect then would be that of a purely Judicial Messiah, as the first had been a purely kingly and the second a kingly and judicial combined. Still there was the work of organizing the kingdom to be done before the world could be judged; and without a temporal king it was most natural that the judicial Messiah should himself do the work of organizing and directing. And for a merely judicial and organizing Messiah to be believed in at that time when all hearts were waiting for a kingly and conquering one, the nature of God must change, so that His kingdom, to be one with that nature, should be one not of secular power but of mercy and love. And this, which was the next step in evolution, is precisely the position into which Jesus was forced by his new conception of God as a God of Love. And as in the kingdom of the proud Jewish Jehovah the Chief Priests, Elders, Scribes and Pharisees would naturally have the supreme place, as they had already as members of the Sanhedrim in the existing Jewish State; so the Messiah of a God of Love would so organize his kingdom that the weak, the lowly, the wretched and all who were still capable of reciprocating that love should have the supreme seats. Both the function, therefore, of the Messiah and the nature of the Messianic Kingdom had been marked out for Jesus beforehand, as it were, by the course of evolution, which demanded as its next step a total change in the conception men had of the nature of God.

The Kingdom of God, then, as we shall see more clearly in the next chapter, was a kingdom that was to be established on

earth by God Himself in the near future, and was to consist of all those who were capable of reciprocating the Father's love, whether Jew or Gentile—the poor, the humble, the down-trodden, the outcast, the broken-hearted, and the slave. Jesus himself as the Messiah, was to be the organizer of this kingdom, and his function was to teach men what were the characteristics of mind and heart necessary to enter it—he himself being their exemplar, as well as being the judge as to who should be considered worthy of a place in it. This Kingdom of God was not only at hand, as it was with John, but from the moment that Jesus himself set out to organize it, it could be said in a sense to be already here; and when it should have been preached to all nations, and those who were worthy had been got together, it would then be ushered in in its visible aspect by God Himself, to the sound of trumpets and with every demonstration of majesty and power. Jesus would then take his place on the throne, and on his right and left would sit his disciples as judges of the twelve tribes of Israel; the good being rewarded by the society of angels and saints, the bad being punished in their sight in the fires eternally smouldering in the Valley of Gehenna. To go about among men preaching the reality of this kingdom, which it is probable Jesus believed would come in his own life-time, and, like a schoolmaster, to prepare men to pass into it by his own example, was henceforth his one all-absorbing function in his capacity of Messiah of a God of Love.

And now we have to ask what the Code of Morality was that was necessary to all those who should strive to enter this kingdom of God? To begin with, we may remark that as we saw in a former chapter, it must have been a deduction from the conception which Jesus had formed to himself of the nature of God. And as for the first time in the history of the world, God had proclaimed Himself by Jesus to be a God of Love, so for the first time, love to God and to all God's people, Gentile and Samaritan as well as Jew, became the supreme duty of

man. But John the Baptist, it will be remembered, had already preached the practical doctrine of loving your neighbour; for when asked by his followers what they were to do, he replied (Luke iii. 11) that those who had two coats were to give one to him who had none, and the same in regard to food. Now not only is this good, sound morality, but, as we have said, good Christian morality as well; and indeed it is probably as high a code as can ever practically be realized in the existing state of human nature, and in a world that is expected to *continue*. But Jesus had heard from John the Baptist that the Kingdom of God was at hand, even at the door; and believing that he himself was the Messiah, and that it should be brought in during his own life-time, he was compelled to go a step farther and to preach a morality adapted not to a world that might continue indefinitely, but to a kingdom of God—a world unhampered by earthly restrictions, where the heart was free to follow its own better nature, free from all the temptations and necessities which in this life for ever pull it down. It was a *transcendental* morality in a word, a morality too high for the present world, and fitted only, as indeed it was intended, for a world where there was, as Jesus said, neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but where men should be as the angels in Heaven. This code of morality Jesus illustrated by every variety of concrete image. Instead of giving one of your coats to the man who had none, as John had enjoined, you were to give both cloak and coat. With him who compelled you to go a mile you should go twain. You were not only not to kill, but not even to be angry with your fellow-man, not even to call him a good-for-nothing, much less a fool. Not only must you not commit adultery, but you must not even be tempted to it. You must not only not forswear yourself, but you must not swear at all; not only not resist evil, but turn the other cheek also. You must not only love your friends, you must love your enemies. And why? That you may be perfect like your Father in Heaven. So, too, all exhibitions of vanity,

self-love, ambition, were to be repressed as inconsistent with the conception of the kingdom of God. You were not to give alms in the sight of men and to the sound of trumpets as the Pharisees were wont to do, but in secret; not to pray standing in the market-place or synagogue to be seen of men, but in your closet; not to make long prayers nor put on a long face when you fasted, but to wash the face and anoint the head as if going to a festival. And with the Kingdom of God even at the door, you were not to lay up money, nor take thought for your life, your food, or your raiment, but to leave all, like the birds and beasts, to your heavenly Father. Such, in brief, was the Code of Morality that Jesus demanded of all those who were candidates for entrance into the Kingdom of God—a Code of Morality not for the present world or for mortal flesh and blood, but for a future world and the companionship of angels and saints; not for a wordly but for a millenial kingdom; not for a world which has to climb to its goal by slow stages of civilization and progress, but for a world-consummation close at hand; not for a society where political economy rules, but for a society where money is of no value and where, in the language of one of the old Apocalyptic writers, the earth is so fruitful that one vine produces a thousand branches, one branch a thousand bunches, one bunch a thousand grapes, and one grape a thousand measures of wine; not for a society where pride, vanity and ambition rule, but for one where the last shall be first and the first last, and he that is greatest of all shall be the servant of all—and all following as corollaries from the two-fold fact that God was a God of Love, and that the kingdom for which the morality was designed was *close at hand*, even at the very door. And with this the Religion of Jesus becomes a complete, consistent, and harmonious whole. It contains each of the elements which we have seen to be essential to all religions, a new Conception of God, a new Code of morality, and a new Supernatural Ideal. The new conception of God was

of a God of Love, and not merely a God capable of Love on commandments kept, or on consideration given, as in Judaism. The new Code of Morality corresponded to this conception of God, and consisted in the duty not merely of universal love, but of a love raised to the transcendental pitch and fitted rather for the society of angels and saints for which it was instituted, than for the work-a-day world of fallible men and women. The new Supernatural Ideal, again, was the Kingdom of God which was to be inaugurated in the immediate future not by a conquering kingly Messiah, but by a lowly suffering one; and was to consist not of Priests and Pharisees, but of the poor, the outcast, the weary, the heavy-laden, and all the wretched. This kingdom was to be ushered in by some great manifestation of Divine power in the life-time of Jesus, and Jesus himself was to be the judge as to who were or were not to be received as its members.

Such was the new religion of Jesus Christ, with the new and ideal Code of Morality founded on it—a code of morality, we may remark in passing, which was not laid aside like an old coat of mail when the kingdom for which it was intended and fitted failed to appear, but was emblazoned on high, as an ideal, to draw on the nations to higher and higher reaches of civilization and progress—like a star which, although always approached, is never reached.

So far then the religion of Jesus was consistent, harmonious, and complete in itself. But changes were now to be made in it which, although in no way affecting its essential character, were destined to furnish the starting-point for an evolution which was to alter the whole future of Christianity. For both external events and the progress of his own thought necessitated a further and more advanced position than that which he had up to now held. At the outset it is probable that Jesus was imbued with the idea that the Kingdom of God would come *in his own life-time*. But the reception he met with from the rulers of the people, from the priests, the elders,

and the Pharisees, and the knowledge of the violent end that must befall all those who could be proved to have tampered in any way with the Mosaic Law, or attempted to alter the established worship;—he himself having publicly declared that it was part of his mission to set aside the Mosaic ritual as well as many of the ordinances in reference to the Sabbath, divorce, etc., even while fulfilling them in a higher sense and carrying them to a higher and more ideal completion,—all this was more and more borne in on his mind as time went on, and made him forebode that his life might be forfeited before his mission was fulfilled. But this, although an operative, was not the only or indeed the main factor in determining the new course of action on which he was about to enter. For, as we saw, from the time that he heard God's own voice out of heaven proclaiming him the Messiah, he had no way of knowing what *specially* he was expected to do at the different junctures of his life, except by searching the Scriptures for the supposed references to the Messiah. Of these, all those passages that referred to a kingly Messiah might now be rejected at once as unworthy of the new conception of the nature of God which had been revealed to him, but all those passages that seemed to point to a peaceful Messiah, to a Messiah of the poor and the lowly, to a teaching, organizing, and judging Messiah, all these he felt to have a direct and peculiar reference to himself; and these he pondered deeply at each stage of his work and mission, in order to learn what the will of God in reference to himself and his future course of conduct specially was. Now of all these references, those in Isaiah on the suffering "Servant of God" seemed to him to be the most explicit and pointed. It is probable that, at the outset of his ministry, he considered himself commissioned to bring salvation to the Jews alone. At any rate, he is reported to have said to his disciples that they were not to go into the cities of the Gentiles or to the Samaritans; and to the Canaanitish woman, who wished him to heal her daughter, he said that he was sent only to the lost

sheep of the house of Israel. But the more he pondered the supposed references to himself in Isaiah, as well as the logical implications that flowed from his new view of the nature of God, the more he became convinced of two things. First, that his mission was to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews; and secondly, that he must suffer and perhaps die for the cause. In Isaiah, chap. xlii. is written, "I, the Lord, have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light to the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house," etc. Again, in Hosea, vi. 2, it says, "In the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." In Isaiah, chap. liii. 5, 12, "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses. . . . He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities," etc. "And he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors," etc.

Accordingly, for about six months or a year before his death, he began to announce to his disciples his intention of going up to Jerusalem to carry out the programme marked out for him by the Prophets. This programme is given in almost the same words by all the Evangelists, and, according to them, was as follows: He was to be delivered up to the chief priests and scribes, who were to condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles, who in turn would mock and scourge him, and spit upon him, and kill him, and the third day he should rise again. Now, as with the exception of the passage from Hosea, where he was to rise on the third day, the other details of his being delivered to the *Gentiles* to be mocked, and scourged, and spat upon, and crucified, are nowhere definitively stated by the Prophets, it is probable that they were not foreseen by Jesus, but were added by the Evangelists after the event. But, be this as it may, it is certain that the thought that he was to go up to Jerusalem to suffer, and

perhaps to die, now took entire possession of his mind. Not that this new plan made any difference in his religious scheme. His conception of God remained the same; his Code of Morality the same; the Kingdom of God on earth the same; and Himself, as judge of those who were to be admitted into it, the same. The only difference was that instead of living to see it and inaugurate it, he should first suffer death and go up into heaven, to return again, as he told the High Priest, "on the clouds of heaven and seated on the right hand of power."

But although this new conviction of Jesus that he should have to suffer and perhaps to die before the Kingdom of God could come, made no difference in his scheme of salvation for men, still when his suffering and death actually came to pass, they had the most profound effect on the future of Christianity. His resurrection and ascension into Heaven, there to remain with God until his second coming, had this as its first result,—that it gave Jesus a relationship to God, the relation of Son, peculiar to himself alone; and when this had had time to sink into the minds of men, it was inevitable that it should raise the conception of the Messiah from that of a man more highly endowed with the Spirit of God than other men, to that of a God himself. That a man should die for other men would have been glorious, but that God Himself should die for men (unlike all the Pagan deities who lived only to exploit them),—this it was that made the future of Christianity. Not Jesus the mediator, organizer, and inaugurator of the kingdom of God, but Christ crucified and risen—this was the thought that contained within itself the germ of all future developments. The mere abstract idea of a God of Love would have soon been eaten away, as it was in the case of Job, by the corroding spectacle of the injustice and evil in the world; but the conception of a God dying for man, while it admitted the existence of evil in the world (with which an omnipotent God of pure Love would have been inconsistent) showed man also the way to conquer it, viz., by reinforcing himself against the

evil both in himself and others by calling into the field the great Captain of his Salvation who had suffered and died for Him. But this which made the fortune of Christianity in the Pagan world, rent it violently from Judaism; for a crucified Messiah was to the Jews a stumbling block, an absurdity and an impossibility. For did not God Himself lay it down in His own Law (Deuteronomy, chap. xxi., 23), "He that is hanged on a tree is accursed of God." And yet in this crucified and risen Christ the whole of Pauline Christianity, as we shall see in a following chapter, and the entire future of the Church lay concealed.

But to return:—let us now consider the effect of this new conviction of Jesus as to his sufferings and death on his disciples. It is probable that it was only shortly before he went up to Jerusalem for the last time, that the disciples fully realized that Jesus was himself the Messiah that should come, and not merely, like John, the preacher of his coming; and this belief they had reached by the most gradual stages. It was only, indeed, after the exhibition of his marvellous powers as a miracle-worker that Jesus could venture to declare that He was himself the Messiah. Before that, there was nothing to suggest any connexion; and you might as well have seized the first man you met and expected them to believe that he was the traditional Messiah as that Jesus was. He was a poor carpenter's son, known of all from his youth upwards, without wealth, connexions, birth, or personal appearance to distinguish him from the miscellaneous multitude of his countrymen. He had not come on the clouds of Heaven to the sound of trumpets, but had been born in their midst and had walked in and out among them from his boyhood upwards. And it would appear almost certain that even after the vision in which he had heard the voice of God saying to him "Thou art my beloved son," he had kept his conviction of his Messiahship in his own breast, and had gone about ostensibly as the preacher and announcer of the kingdom of God merely. For the train

of thought by which he had been led to a belief in his own Messiahship was all so personal and peculiar to himself, that without a long novitiate it was not easily transferable to other minds. The new conception he had formed of the nature of God, for example, which was the starting-point from which all else followed, was in a manner incommunicable; and, except in connexion with after circumstances and events, was not demonstrable by any human arguments. The vision, too, in which he saw the spirit of God descending on him, and heard the voice from Heaven proclaiming him the Messiah, was a quite peculiar and personal experience not transferable to others. So, too, the conception which he had formed of the Messiah as a lowly, humble, and unwarlike Saviour, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, had to be extracted piecemeal from detached passages in the Psalms, minor Prophets, and Isaiah. The suffering "Servant of God" in Isaiah, to which Jesus appealed in support of his claim to be the Messiah, was believed by the Jews then, as it is by modern critics, not to refer to the Messiah at all, but to the Jewish remnant, the ideal Israel, the Israel of God. It is reasonable to believe, therefore, that this conception of the Messiah could only have been very gradually instilled into the minds of the disciples. Indeed, had it been boldly announced by Jesus from the first, and before his wonderful success as a Healer had prepared the minds of the disciples for it, he would probably have been taken for a madman rather than for the Messiah. Not only was his character of wonder-worker the mainstay of the belief of the early Christians in his Messiahship (as we see from the earliest Gospel, that of Mark, where the Sermon on the Mount is entirely absent, and where he figures mainly as the great Thaumaturgist), but it has been, together with the resurrection, the mainstay of the faith of the Church in his Messiahship down to this day.

It was, then, only after his preternatural powers had been demonstrated to the belief and satisfaction of all, that he felt

himself justified in hinting to his disciples that he himself was the Messiah who was to come. It came about in this way. He was on the way to Cæsarea Philippi just before his last journey to Jerusalem, when he suddenly turned to his disciples and asked them who the people thought he was. They replied that some thought him to be John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets that were to precede the advent of the Messiah. He then went on to ask more pointedly who they thought he was, to which Peter, speaking probably for the others as well as himself, replied, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." So pleased was Jesus with this reply, which he felt could only have come from the Spirit of God putting it into the mind of Peter, and that flesh and blood could never have imagined it, that he forthwith blessed him and gave him the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, that is to say, made him the judge along with himself of those who were to enter the coming Kingdom of God. And now that this was understood by his disciples, he began to unfold to them those portions of his scheme which had long been silently maturing in his mind, and which referred to the course events were taking, as well as to the *rôle* which the Scriptures had mapped out for him. For from this time, according to the testimony of Matthew, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go up to Jerusalem, there to suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and Scribes, and to be killed, and to rise again the third day. But the disciples, although able without too great a shock to their traditional prejudices to exchange a Kingly Messiah for a Miracle-working one, were not prepared to accept with the same readiness a Messiah who, with all these miraculous powers, should allow himself to suffer and die at the hands of the people,—much less at the hands of the Gentiles. For on any hypothesis, whether as King or Wonder-worker, the Messiah was one who was to deliver Israel from Gentile domination, as well as to introduce a reign of justice and righteousness on the earth.

Accordingly when this remark of Jesus as to his suffering and death was made to the people standing round, Peter, who was unable to conceive of a Messiah who should die, feeling that it would ruin the cause and prevent people from believing him to be the Messiah at all, took him aside and expostulated with him on the imprudence of speaking thus openly of his sufferings and death, as being sure to alienate from him the sympathy of many of his followers. But Jesus turned on him and said, "Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savourest not the things of God, but the things of men." And then it was that the effect of this change of outlook began to show itself in his relations with his disciples. The tone was no longer pitched in the joyous, happy strain of the early days of Galilee, when he sent them out into the world on their evangelical mission, telling them to take with them neither money nor changes of garment, to have no care or anxiety for the morrow, but to go from door to door joyously proclaiming the glad tidings of the coming Kingdom of God, and lightly shaking the dust off their feet from those places that would not receive them—ready when the Lord should come to rush in with impetuous violence, and in triumph to take the Kingdom of Heaven by force, and to seat themselves on the right and left hand of Jesus as judges of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Now all was changed, and the tone was one of gloom, foreboding and sorrow. They were told that they, like himself, would have to pass through much tribulation before the Kingdom of God should come; that they would have to take up their cross, prepared like him to lose their life now, if they were to attain to life eternal in the Kingdom of God, when he should return with his angels to establish it in the glory of his Father. And so they journeyed up to Jerusalem, pausing here and there, while Jesus worked miracles of healing as he went along, or discussed with his disciples his future prospects; still in his uncertainty charging them not to make known to the multitude that he was the Messiah. In this way they journeyed on, he firmly resolved in

his own mind to carry out to the letter the course marked out for him by the Prophets, while leaving the means and the issue to God ; they, hopeful and confident in their Master's power. When they came within sight of the city the difficulty the disciples felt in understanding the attitude of Jesus does not seem to have lessened. They were convinced, in spite of his repeated protestations to the contrary, that the Messiah would not be permitted to die either at the hands of the Jews or of the Gentiles. There was no warrant, either in popular tradition or in Scripture, for a Messiah who should have to come a second time to complete a work left unfinished at the first coming; and this was what his death would mean. Jesus was either, therefore, not the Messiah at all, or if he were, he would not be permitted by God to die. But since Cæsarea Philippi they had no longer the least shade of doubt as to his Messiahship. The conclusion then was obvious—he was not to die.

Jesus, on the other hand, although filled with the conception of the suffering that lay before him, if not of his death, was more or less perplexed and distracted by the conflicting bearings of the various texts which he believed to refer to himself—and it is in this perplexity, as we shall now see, that I find the key to his whole subsequent procedure. The general tenor of most of them was that he should suffer and probably die; and if so, his second advent, although foreign to the Jewish conception of the Messiah, would be rendered certain by the prophecy in Daniel which he now often quoted as referring to himself, the prophecy, viz., in which the Son of Man was to come on the clouds of Heaven. Accordingly, when the little party had come in sight of Jerusalem, and the disciples began to exult in the immediate prospect of the kingdom being ushered in (Luke xix. 11), Jesus was again obliged to repress their ardour by assuring them that he should have to die and leave them for a while, and that much would have to be done and endured both by them and himself before the Kingdom of God should come. To enforce the lesson he told them the parable of the nobleman

who on going into a far country, left his servants ten, five, and one pound respectively, with the charge that they were to occupy till he returned, and pointed out to the disciples, who apparently imagined that there was nothing for them to do but to enter in and take their seats beside him, that like the man who hid his one pound in a napkin, they would be punished for any slackening of their efforts in the cause by exclusion from the Kingdom. But he hastened to give them assurance that he would not leave them always, but would soon again return, by adding, "Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the Kingdom of God come with power" (Mark ix. 1). So far all seemed clear and explicit. But observe there were other passages which seemed to imply that the kingdom would be established by God Himself without the necessity of the death of the Messiah; and it so happened that the passages suggesting this view were precisely the ones which Jesus had selected for himself to regulate the mode of his public entry into Jerusalem. One of the passages in question is Zech. ix. 9, where it is said, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." And that it was to be a peaceful kingdom established by God Himself without any necessity for the Messiah's suffering and death, is apparent from the next verse, where it is said, "And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle-bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." So deeply indeed was Jesus convinced that this prophecy referred to himself, that he had an ass brought him, and rode into Jerusalem on it amid the shoutings and hosannas and waving of palm-branches of his disciples and followers; and when reproached by the Pharisees

for permitting this demonstration, he replied that it was out of the mouths of simple folk like these that God proclaimed the truth, and that, were they to be silent, the very stones would cry out that he was the Messiah.

Here then were two series of apparently conflicting prophecies, bearing evidently each on himself; and between the two he seems to have fluctuated in restless alternation; now, in his happier moments, and perhaps under the stimulus of his disciples' hopes, seeming to feel that God would come to his assistance and bring in the kingdom without the necessity of his death; and now, in his deeper and probably more habitual mood, resigning himself to those that seemed clearly to foreshadow his suffering and death. The effect of this strain and tension of mind, of this uncertainty as to what amid these cross-currents of prophecy should next befall him, was a state of agitation, anxiety, exaltation, and impatience, which was unknown in his earlier time, when as the simple bringer of the good tidings he walked calm and serene among the fields and beneath the skies of his beloved Galilee, not yet having assumed his high Messianic *rôle*. He became uncertain and capricious in his moods, stormy gusts of violence and suspicion alternated with and passed again into his old habitual calm; the old sweetness, dignity, and serenity intervening as lull and pause between the conflicting and rapidly alternating fits of violence, pathos, exaltation, and despair. The first recorded outbreak was shortly after he had entered the city, when going to the Temple and seeing the money-changers and sellers of beasts of sacrifice chaffering and haggling over the gains which the Temple brought them, and remembering the words of Isaiah that God's house was a "house of prayer for all people," and of Jeremiah that they had made it "a den of thieves," he forthwith proceeded to violently overturn the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those engaged in selling doves, and stopped all those who were to be seen carrying vessels through the Temple Courts. All his actions are now

performed in this high state of tension and exaltation. He goes out to Bethany and coming to a fig-tree with leaves on it and no fruit, he, being hungry, condemns it as if it had been a conscious offender, to a state of sterility for ever. Highly-strained metaphors and strong hyperboles can alone express the intensity of his feelings. The Scribes and Pharisees he denounces as serpents, vipers, hypocrites, whose chance of entering the kingdom of God, when compared with that of the very publicans and harlots, is small. Even the Temple he speaks of with scant respect; and its perpetuity, which to the Jews was as secure as if its foundations were rooted in eternity, he disposes of by a wave of his hand, as if it were an air-castle or a dream. His ideas are so boundless, his exaltation so intense and keen, that he feels himself equal to a world in arms. He talks much and frequently of his coming on the clouds of Heaven; parries and thrusts with the Pharisees and Saducees with the greatest lightness and dexterity; disposing with the ease of a skilled fencer of all attempts to entrap or puzzle him on such questions as the authority of Cæsar, the resurrection in relation to the Levirate law, etc., going into the infinite subtleties of the Jewish law, and meeting the objection that the Messiah was to be the Son of David, etc., with a zest and subtlety worthy of the Scribes themselves.

But as time went on, and still no sign of the intervention of God anywhere appeared, the intermittent hope of a continuous, peaceful triumph, which the Zechariah prophesy had inspired, began to grow dim and cold; and the old habitual feeling that he must suffer and die, with all the texts in which he was to give his life a ransom for many, came back to him in all its force, bringing with it all the old sweetness, dignity, pathos and resignation. With the sure premonition of his doom he prepared his last meal with his disciples; breaking the bread and drinking the wine with words ever memorable for their dignity, beauty, and sweet serenity. But his feelings were at too high a pitch of tension to maintain except for moments this

serenity and repose; and before they had well sat down he had begun again, while admitting the necessity of his death, to heap denunciations of woe on those who should betray him. The meal finished, after singing a hymn they went out into the street, and as they wandered along, Jesus knowing the shock of horror and disappointment with which his disciples would receive the news that he had been taken, said to them, "All ye shall be offended in me this night," justifying himself, however, as usual, by the words of prophesy which he felt were intended for him, "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad" (Matt. xxvi. 31). But at the same time to recover the ground which, in spite of their protestations, he knew must be lost by his admission, he appealed to the Jewish belief that none could rise from the dead but the elect of God, by adding, "But after I am raised up I will go before you into Galilee." And when they had all begun protesting their undying allegiance and devotion (Peter, as usual, with special ardour), he turned on him and said, "Before the cock crows thou shalt deny me thrice." Arrived at the Garden of Gethsemane, his suspicions heightened to the preternatural pitch by the movements of Judas, he charged the rest of them to watch and pray, lest they, too, should enter into temptation to betray or desert him. In this extreme agitation of mind he completely loses for moments his self-control, twice falling on his knees, praying fervently to God that He would take away this cup of bitterness and death from him, and only completely resigning himself to the Divine Will when he saw the armed multitude with Judas at their head approaching him from the distance. This tone of resignation he maintained throughout his trial, claiming for himself with great dignity and impressiveness, when challenged by the High Priest, the title of King of the Jews which he had received from Zechariah; but exhibiting a glimpse of the burning fanaticism which had now become a settled conviction of his life, when he quietly but proudly added, "And

henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven." But however violent and sudden may have been the fluctuations and alternations of mood during these last hours, Jesus never seems to have let go the secure thread of Prophecy as guide in the maze of conflicting alternatives, but at each juncture up to the very gate of death, if we are to believe the Evangelists, let his conduct and action be guided by it down even to the most trivial particulars; as, for example, when on the cross, knowing, as the Evangelist says, that all things were accomplished, he said "I thirst," in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, which says, "In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." All, however, was now soon to be over, and Jesus, still hoping against hope that the Zechariah prophecies would prove true and that God would even yet intervene for his rescue and release, but finding that it was not so to be, with the loud cry of despair on his lips, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" expired.

And so passed away in his prime and with a cry of anguish and despair, this great and beautiful spirit, more fruitful for humanity in his death than in his life; leaving his poor disciples not only mourning and forsaken but utterly dumbfounded and perplexed. For a Messiah to die had seemed to them simply impossible, and now that he was dead, his resurrection would have been to their minds an equal impossibility. But this mood did not last long, for the resurrection, in which they firmly believed, following closely after, swiftly reassured them. It was the one thing needed to enable them to weave together the scattered threads of his eventful life and teaching, never before really understood by them, into a single, continuous, harmonious, and consistent whole. It was the last proof needed to convince them of his Messiahship; for, as we have said, no one could be conceived as rising from the dead before the Judgment, unless he were indeed like Enoch and Elijah one of the elect of God; and

they were satisfied. And this it was, which now uniting with the memories of his miraculous powers and of those appeals to Scripture in which they now saw every action of his life foreshadowed; this with the remembrance of his beautiful character, his serene wisdom, and the new and blessed emotion inspired by his revelation of the Father's love; this, together with the aroma left behind by it all, and which has sweetened the centuries—all this, with the steady light shining in the surrounding gloom, of his return in glory when they should take their seats by the side of their beloved Master, united to produce a conviction which never again wavered or grew dim, but kept alive by the Holy Spirit and the very presence of Jesus himself in the ever-recurring sacramental meals, launched Christianity on its world-conquering career. How it fared with it afterwards, what evolution it underwent in the minds of men as time went on, and what the principles were which guided the course of that evolution—all this will appear in the following chapters.

CHAPTER III.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

NOTHING now remains to complete our study of the doctrine of Jesus, in so far, that is, as is necessary for the purposes of this history, but the attempt to settle from the standpoint we have gained, the outstanding dispute as to the precise meaning attached by Jesus and his disciples to the phrase the 'Kingdom of God.' To do this satisfactorily it is necessary at the outset to put out of our minds the ideas which we ourselves have been accustomed to attach to the phrase; as these ideas, like so many of those we hold in reference to various doctrines of the Church, are not the reflection of the original ideas of Jesus and his immediate disciples, but the highly elaborated product of many ages or centuries of modification and evolution. The first question is one that exercised chiefly the mind of the Early Church, viz., as to whether by the Kingdom of God was meant a kingdom on earth or a kingdom in heaven; the second is one that divides the opinions of men in our own time, viz., as to whether it was a visible or outward kingdom at all, either earthly or heavenly, that was meant, and not rather a moral state, an inner condition of the mind and heart.

Now if we are to get the advantage of any light thrown on these questions by our studies in the foregoing chapters, we must first ask what is the view of the Kingdom of God which

would naturally arise out of the Jewish conception of the Messianic Kingdom when that conception was modified by the new view of Jesus as to the nature of God, by his new Code of Morality, and by his new conception of the Messianic functions.

To begin with then we may say that so far as the new conception of Jesus as to the nature of God is concerned, that is to say his conception that God is a God of Love making His rain and sunshine to fall alike on the just and the unjust—this of itself would not necessarily have had any influence in modifying the traditional view of the Messianic kingdom, viz., as an outward, visible, earthly kingdom; except in so far perhaps as this, that instead of being a powerful and triumphant kingdom of outward pomp and pride, under a prince of the house of David reigning at Jerusalem, and with other nations as its vassals, it would be a kingdom of the poor and the lowly, of righteousness, piety and peace. It will be remembered that in the Messianic reign the earth was of itself and without labour to produce all things in abundance for the use of man; and as all stimulus, in consequence, to the acquisition of money or to worldly ambition and power would be withdrawn, the kingdom, although a kingdom of righteousness and peace, need not necessarily be a kingdom in the heavens, but might with equal propriety be a kingdom on the earth.

It is not till we come to the Moral Code of Jesus as embodied in the Sermon on the Mount, that we are confronted with any serious difficulty and perplexity. For when we remember that the Sermon on the Mount was not so much a code of morals for the existing world of fallible men and women, as a transcendental code, fitted rather, like a counsel of perfection, for the society of angels and saints; and when we further remember that Jesus himself said that in his kingdom there would neither be marrying nor giving in marriage, but that men should be like the angels in heaven; and when, lastly, we find him in the passage in which he gives the keys to Peter, giving him along with them the power of binding or loosing in heaven

those whom he bound or loosed on earth; it would seem as if in the mind of Jesus at least, the Kingdom of God was a heavenly and not an earthly kingdom. And this conclusion receives additional support from the fact that Matthew in his Gospel deliberately uses the phrase 'Kingdom of Heaven' in those instances where 'Kingdom of God' is used by the other Evangelists; as, for example, when in describing the mission of John the Baptist, he uses the words "repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," for the parallel passage of Mark, "repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand." And this again is still further strengthened by the reply of Paul to the question asked him by the Corinthians as to the kind of body with which the believers should rise, when he says (I. Corinthians xv., 35 seq.) that those alive on earth at the time will have their bodies changed from natural bodies to what he calls spiritual bodies, as if to fit them for some other sphere of existence than this world; or again, when in I. Thessalonians iv., 16, he says that "at the Last Day the Lord Himself will descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first, while those alive at his coming are to be caught up with them into the clouds to meet the Lord in the air and so be for ever with the Lord"—where the implication again would seem to be that the kingdom of God was to be established not on the earth, but somewhere in the heavens.

Now this convergence of authority so strong, would at first sight leave little room for doubt that the Kingdom of God was a heavenly and not an earthly kingdom; and yet I am convinced that a wider survey of all the evidence will reverse this conclusion and lead us back to the belief that in the minds at least of Jesus and his disciples, the Kingdom of God was a kingdom not of heaven but of earth.

But before entering on this it may be well perhaps to consider first what can be legitimately said in a general way with the

view of minimizing or destroying the force of the above. And in the first place we may affirm that although the Sermon on the Mount contains a code of morality adapted rather to a society of angels and saints than to the work-a-day world of imperfect human beings, and therefore to a heavenly rather than to an earthly kingdom, still it does not follow that this code should not find a fitting place on the rejuvenated earth which, according to all the apocalyptic writers, was to be the scene of the Messianic reign—an earth on which, in the language of one writer, men were to lead a life of easy blessedness under green trees, in magnificent fields, with joyous feeding flocks and flying angels clothed in white. On the contrary there are several considerations which directly support the view that it was intended for an earthly kingdom, and that, too, in spite of the express declaration of Jesus himself that his kingdom was not of this world, and that in it there should be neither marrying nor giving in marriage, but that men should be like the angels in heaven. The first is that Jesus as a Jew in all probability untinctured with Greek thought, and therefore a believer in the resurrection of the body as well as the soul, could scarcely have dreamt of a kingdom in Heaven, as that would only have been a fitting abode for angels and spirits. The second is that in his Moral Code Jesus did not propose to eradicate the natural desires by bodily asceticism, as he would have done had he intended to train men for a kingdom in Heaven (and as the ascetics of the Middle Ages did when once the hopes of the immediate coming of Christ had vanished); on the contrary he came eating and drinking, as his enemies said, leading a joyous but purely natural life, and proposing rather to fit men for a better life on earth by the power of a transfiguring love, than to prepare them for a future life above, by the mortification of the body while here on earth. Again, as for the use of the phrase 'the Kingdom of Heaven' by Matthew, instead of the corresponding phrase 'Kingdom of God' used by the other Evangelists—this, under all the circumstances, need carry but little weight in the

solution of the question; for as the faithful at the time this Gospel was written were in hourly expectation of the coming of Christ from heaven, it was not unnatural that the kingdom which he was to bring down with him from heaven should be described by a disciple as the Kingdom of Heaven. Then again, as to St. Paul's conception that the dead in Christ were to be raised with incorruptible bodies to meet the Lord in the air—this may be regarded rather as the first stage in the evolution of the doctrine, than as the original doctrine itself as it existed in the mind of Jesus and the disciples. Indeed some such evolution must almost inevitably have taken place so soon as the Jewish conception of the resurrection should come in contact with Greek thought. With the Jews, as we have seen, the resurrection was always conceived as a resurrection of the whole man, body as well as soul; of a being, therefore, fitted for life in the natural world. With the Greeks, on the contrary, the after-life was a life of the soul alone, which was fitted only for the abode of souls, viz., for Heaven. Now Paul was imbued with the Greek conception of immortality as well as with the Jewish conception of the resurrection, as is seen in his accepting the Greek division of man into body, soul, and spirit. The consequence was that in the endeavour to gain some clear conception of the matter for himself, as well as to adapt it to the comprehension of his Greek converts, he was forced to a compromise in which, while retaining the Jewish resurrection of the body, he at the same time changed that body into a ghost-like incorruptible one, whose natural abode was neither frankly on earth nor yet among the pure spirits in heaven, but at that intermediate point in the air where the incorruptible bodies of the saints should in their ascent meet Jesus in his descent from the throne of God. As a compromise, therefore, it cannot fairly be regarded as representing the original view of Jesus himself and his disciples, but rather as the first stage in the evolution of the doctrine, when impregnated and modified by ideas familiar to Greek thought. And lastly, as to the passage

in which Jesus in giving the keys to Peter, gives him the power as well of loosing and binding in heaven those whom he had loosened and bound on earth—I can only suggest that if not a later interpolation, the words were probably used metaphorically, to express the *moral* distinction existing between the two worlds of earth and heaven, rather than to indicate their topographical distribution; much in the same way as when he said that his kingdom was not of this world, it is open to us to believe that he was referring to a kingdom not of outward power and pride like that of Cæsar, but to a kingdom of righteousness, piety, and love.

If then the difficulties suggested by the above passages have been more or less satisfactorily met by the arguments we have ventured to bring forward, we may now proceed to consider the positive proofs that may be adduced in support of the proposition that the Kingdom of God was not a heavenly but an earthly one. And here, perhaps, the most general considerations will be found, as is so often the case in questions of this kind, to have the greatest weight. To begin with, then, it will be remembered that it is said by Luke (chap. xix. 11), that the disciples just before the final entry into Jerusalem were convinced that the Kingdom of God was immediately about to appear, and that Jesus to dispel the illusion was obliged to narrate to them the parable of the nobleman, who before going away to a far country to receive a kingdom that had been given him, called his servants together and gave them each a sum of money which they were to put out to some productive use until his return. Now as in the parable the analogy evidently was that Jesus was to go to Heaven to receive his kingdom, it is clear that it was to the earth that he was to return in glory to establish it. Again it is related immediately after, that when they came in sight of Jerusalem, Jesus to carry out the prophecy of Zechariah, sent for an ass on which to ride into the city to establish there his kingdom of righteousness and peace. And as it was in Jerusalem that the kingdom of

Zechariah was to have its seat, it is surely just to infer that in the mind of Jesus it was in Jerusalem that his kingdom was to be established also. Again, in Acts i. 6, we find it recorded, that when Jesus appeared to his disciples after his resurrection, they asked him whether he were now going to restore the kingdom to Israel. Now if this account be true, it is scarcely possible to believe that the question coming as it did, after his death and after his many expositions of the Kingdom of God, could have been asked, had it not been taken for granted by all, that the Kingdom of God was to be an earthly and not a heavenly one. Indeed the general fact that Jesus after having ascended into Heaven was for generations hourly expected to return to earth, ought of itself to be sufficient to convince us that in the mind of the Early Church the Kingdom of God was a kingdom on earth and not a kingdom in Heaven. Even John, who must have known the mind of Jesus as intimately as any other, has, if the Book of Revelations which was written some thirty or forty years after the death of Christ, be his, represented the New Jerusalem, that is to say, the Kingdom of God, as descending from heaven to be established on earth, and not *vice versâ*. But it may be asked why, if by the Kingdom of God an earthly kingdom were really intended, it should ever have come to be represented as a heavenly one; the answer will, I imagine, be found in the following circumstances. Firstly, that as Jesus did not return to earth as he had promised, men's minds naturally sought consolation in the idea that perhaps after all a heavenly kingdom rather than an earthly one had been intended, and laid stress on those texts which supported the view that the kingdom was to be a heavenly one, to the neglect of those which represented it as an earthly one. And secondly, that as the Saviour who should give his life a ransom for many, must himself, as we shall see in the next chapter, be a God, and not merely a man more fully endowed with the Spirit of God than other men, it was more natural that as a reward for

virtue men should have the privilege of going to him, than that he should come to them.

If then we have made good our contention that in the mind of Jesus the Kingdom of God was meant to be an earthly and not a heavenly kingdom, we may now pass on to consider the arguments of those who hold that by it was meant neither an earthly nor a heavenly kingdom, nor indeed any outward visible kingdom at all, but only a *state of the soul, an inner condition of the mind and heart.* This view, it may be said in passing, is one that is held largely by that great body of rationalistic thinkers of the present day, who, otherwise sound in the faith, feel that neither a Heaven nor a Hell in the old materialistic sense in which our forefathers believed in them, is any longer tenable. But just as we have maintained in opposition to the orthodox view, that the Kingdom of God was to be an earthly and not a heavenly kingdom, so in opposition to the above-mentioned thinkers we shall have to maintain that it was an outward, visible kingdom; and that the condition of the soul referred to, and on which so much stress has been laid, was not the kingdom itself, but the *means*, the indispensable condition, of entrance into it. It may perhaps serve to make our demonstration more conclusive, if we first clear the way by asking on what authority these thinkers rely, in their assertion that by the kingdom of God, Jesus meant, not an outward, visible kingdom, but an inner condition of the mind and heart. The main authority, I believe, is to be found in that passage in Luke (xvii. 21), where Jesus on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was expected to appear, replied that it would not come with observation, that is to say with outward show or demonstration; that they were not to look here or there for it, because it was within them or in the midst of them. And as corroboration and support of this view, the appeal is made to the authority of St. Paul, who when rebuking those of the Judaizing party of the Church who laid so much stress on whether what they ate was ceremonially clean or no, said

(Romans xiv. 17) "the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Now I must confess that at first sight these passages do indeed support the view that the kingdom of God is not something outward and visible, something in the future, but is something at present existing, some condition of the mind and heart. And in face of testimonies so conflicting as those we have considered, and on each side so distinct and decided, I should despair by any mere collating and comparing of passages of ever arriving at any conclusion. My aim is rather to see if some general statement cannot be found, which will exhibit these conflicting and apparently contradictory passages, as merely different aspects of one harmonious whole. In attempting this, an analogy will perhaps help to make our position the more clear. If then we picture to ourselves a detachment of the Salvation Army going for the first time into the slums of some great city, it is evident that although the salvation which they offer is really something to be enjoyed in a future life, it may still in a secondary sense be said to have come nigh to their hearers, to be something present and in the midst of them, and to already exist where a certain disposition or attitude of mind and heart is found. Now the same may be said with equal and indeed with greater truth of the Kingdom of God. For whereas with the Salvation Army the continuity of the offered salvation is broken by the change of place from this world to the heavenly world after death, with the kingdom of God there is no such break; for if we are right in believing it to have been a kingdom on earth, the promised kingdom is conterminous as it were with the preparatory kingdom; the men who are members of the Church and who are alive at the coming of the Messiah, being the same men who after his coming will make up the kingdom of God, no change of place or *personnel* having occurred, nothing having happened save the sudden advent of the Messiah in their midst together with the

changes in Nature and in the conditions of human life which he was to bring with him. All the metaphors and analogies therefore which can be used by the Salvation Army as descriptive of their mission, could with even greater appropriateness be used by Jesus of the Kingdom of God—as for example, when thinking of its small *beginnings* from himself and a few followers and its rapid growth and spread, he compared it to a mustard seed which from the smallest of seeds grows till it becomes a tree, or to a piece of leaven which mixed in among the meal will in time leaven the whole lump. Or again looking at the Kingdom of God from the point of view of its *composition and quality*, and figuring it to himself in its progress growing like a snowball and drawing into itself from all sides the bad as well as the good, as an army draws after it camp-followers and adventurers, he could appropriately compare it to a man who sowed good seed, but in whose field tares were sown also, which must continue to grow along with it until the harvest; or to a net cast into the sea, which drew up fishes of all kinds, the good being kept and the bad thrown away. Or thinking of its priceless *value* he could compare it to a treasure hid in a field which, to get, you sell all you have to buy the field; or to a pearl of great price, which to possess men are willing to give all they are worth. In the same way, too, the kingdom may be defined in reference to those qualities of *mind and heart* necessary for entrance into it—and which, as we have seen, our modern commentators imagine to have been the kingdom itself. These qualities have been abundantly indicated by Jesus by a number of concrete types and contrasts—as for example the mental attitude of the poor, the sorrowing, the peace-maker, in contrast with that of the vulgar, purse-proud rich; of the self-righteous Scribes and Pharisees in contrast with the publicans and harlots conscious of sin and open to a higher life; of those who do the will of the Father in contrast with those who cry Lord! Lord! but do not do it; of the repentant prodigal in contrast with his immaculate

brother; of the Good Samaritan and the unneighbourly Levite and Priest who passed on the other side; of the Virgins who had kept their lamps trimmed in contrast with those who had fallen asleep; of those who make use of their gifts and opportunities in contrast with those who hide them in a napkin—in all of which types and contrasts one sees clearly mirrored the qualities of mind and heart necessary for admittance into the kingdom. And yet although the kingdom may in a secondary sense be said to consist of these qualities, it is evident that they are the *conditions* necessary for entering it, and not the Kingdom of God itself.

But that the Kingdom of God was no present thing, neither an existing organization, nor existing qualities of mind and heart, but was a future condition of man either in heaven or on the earth, may be clearly seen if we apply to the problem the simple principle that although what is future may be spoken of metaphorically as present if, like a tree, its germ is already here, no present reality can by any metaphor be spoken of as exclusively in the future. If then we remember that by the hypothesis which we are discussing, the Kingdom of God was already present among the disciples, that they already *had* the kingdom both as having the qualities required and as being members of the Christian Community—it would be absurd for them to ask, as they did in Matthew xxiv. 3, what were the signs of its coming, as it would also be for Jesus to say as he did (Matthew xvi. 28), that there were some standing there who should not taste of death till they saw the Son of Man coming in his kingdom; or again as in Matthew xxvi. 29, at the Last Supper, where he gave the cup to his disciples, saying "I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom." Or how on the same hypothesis could it be reported of the disciples that they (who were the kingdom) should expect the kingdom to appear after their entry into Jerusalem; or that they should ask Jesus for permission to sit down with him on

the right hand and on the left in the Kingdom of God; or more than all that Jesus himself should say of a kingdom that was already here, that no one but God knew when the coming of the kingdom should be?

But if no other reason were to be found for believing that by the Kingdom of God was not meant any inward moral state, this of itself would be sufficient, viz., that the great masses of men of every age (and it was these that made the fortune of Christianity), are led not by any merely abstract moral perfections however high, but always by some composite concrete ideal, some objective future world that leads captive the imagination by blending into a harmonious whole all those motives that appeal to the composite nature of man. The truth is, all mere codes of morality or abstract virtues, failing as they do to inspire the longings which these concrete ideals arouse, are felt as an infliction and a bore by the unregenerate human spirit, and can no more be used as a lever with which to move the torpid imaginations of men, than can the catalogues of virtues, of the philsophers. To imagine therefore that the kingdom of God could have meant to the disciples and the Early Church merely some internal state of the soul which was to be pursued as an end in itself, and for its own perfections, is a dream of the modern mind. Such a doctrine is a product of evolution, and not the original idea as it existed in the minds of Jesus and his disciples. The condition of the mind and heart was a *means* merely of entrance into the kingdom of God, and not the kingdom itself.

CHAPTER IV.

PRIMITIVE JEWISH CHRISTIANITY.

HAVING in the preceding chapters attempted to exhibit the views which Jesus had formed to himself of the nature of God and of his own Messiahship, as well as those with which he had indoctrinated his disciples in regard to himself and the coming kingdom of God, we have now to consider the changes which these beliefs were destined to undergo in the minds of men, before in their developed form as Christianity they were fully equipped for their great mission of giving a new and higher morality to the world. By changes I mean not so much changes in the essential spirit of Christianity as changes in its outward form—those changes in doctrine that were needed to remove the contradictions, limitations, and imperfections of statement which interfered with its success, and which had to be removed before it could satisfactorily meet the full demands of the intellect and heart of that great Pagan world which it was ultimately to subjugate and subdue. I propose accordingly to trace these changes from stage to stage, exhibiting first the difficulties to be overcome and then the manner in which the Church overcame them—beginning with a few words of recapitulation and introduction in order that the full scope of the problems before us may be clearly seen. It will be remembered, then, that we laid it down at the outset that one of the main purposes of this history was to show that the

great end and aim of Civilization was the gradual establishment among men of higher and higher codes of morality, of intellectual, moral, and social expansion; and that to this end religions, philosophies, and political systems are but the means—much in the same way as in the cross-fertilization of flowers by bees, the sweetness of the honey, the brightness of the flower, and the fragrance of the perfume are but cunningly devised means of attraction and allurement, while the real end is the scattering of the seed and the propagation of the species. Now the great work done by Christianity we defined to be the carrying of the Pagan world across the gulf which intervened between a state of society in which politics, custom, social life, jurisprudence, private morality, and indeed the entire *ensemble* of relations between man and man, were all alike founded on the type of the moral relation between master and slave, to a state of society founded on the type of the moral relation of parent and child, in which men being children of a common father are all alike brothers and moral equals. Not that if we were to cut a section out of the Pagan and Christian worlds respectively at any given time, and were to subject each of them to a minute and careful scrutiny, we should find this result verified in every individual. On the contrary we should find that personal generosity and kindness of heart, and the Stoic doctrine of 'natural rights' with which the later Roman jurisprudence was imbued, operated as powerfully in the Ancient World in mitigating the harshness of the real spiritual relations in which men stood to each other founded on the relationship of master and slave, as in the Modern World the division of classes, and the inequalities of political, social, and industrial power have operated to postpone the reign of moral justice and brotherly love between man and man. But we cannot proceed in this way by a comparison of individual instances. To do so would be to confound all categories of social and moral judgment—to confound the laws which regulate the lives and actions of *individuals* with the laws

that regulate the movements and activities of communities or *men in the mass*,—a prime error in political speculation and one which gives your opponent the opportunity of stepping like a circus-rider from one argument to the other as occasion or necessity requires, to the confusion of all sound and just thought. No, if we are ever to reach a true philosophic view of the progress of Civilization, it is necessary not that we should dissect and curiously compare the actions of particular individuals of one age with those of particular individuals of another, but rather that we should compare the *spirit* of one age with that of another—by which I mean that spiritual something which surrounds individuals like an atmosphere, which approves or disapproves, applauds or censures, urges on or restrains, and by the ideal it sets before them either draws them upwards and onwards to higher reaches, or confirms them in their immorality, superstition, or stagnation. Now that there was when viewed in this way a moral gulf between Paganism and Christianity as great almost as the entire breadth of heaven, is scarcely open to doubt; and may be seen on the most casual glance at the great characteristics separating the society of the Middle Ages from the society of the Roman World. At the time of Augustus the civilized world consisted of a number of separate nationalities kept in the unity of outward peace by the gigantic despotism of the Cæsars, but sunk in the lowest and most debasing immoralities,—the unnatural vices of Greece and Rome; the abominations of Syrian Nature worship with its Bacchanalian rites, its obscene orgies and mystery cults; universal slavery with the consequent absence of respect for man as man,—all not only tolerated, it is to be remembered, but encouraged and even consecrated by the religions of the Ancient World. So much so, indeed, that Seneca in his own time could say that "in Rome the intending sinner addressed to the deity of the vice which he contemplated a prayer for the success of his design; the adulterer imploring of Venus the favours of his paramour; the thief praying to Hermes for

aid in his enterprise, or offering up to him the first fruits of his plunder; youths entreating Hercules to expedite the death of a rich uncle," etc. If from a state of morality like this we jump to the Middle Ages, we shall find that although there was as yet no policeman like the Cæsars to keep the formal and merely external and political peace among nations, still, under the beneficent despotism of the Church all alike were kept up to a single and uniform standard of high morality—a morality always and everywhere the same, recognized by all, binding on all, restraining all, judging all, and impelling all to realize on earth as far as possible the Kingdom of God as it is in Heaven—and this religion far from encouraging and consecrating vice, as was the case with Paganism, execrated and condemned it, and was everywhere and always its relentless and untiring foe. The difference between the morality of Paganism and the morality of Christianity is well exemplified in the difference between the morality of the native States of India under the British rule, and the morality of Europe at the present day. In British India as in Europe in the time of the Cæsars, we see a vast Empire composed of the most heterogeneous nationalities and kept in a more than Roman peace under the mild despotism of British Rule, but which long covered the most abject superstitions and moral abominations,—Nature-worship as immoral as that of Ancient Syria, with rites as obscene; wife-burnings, Thugee, etc.—a state of morality encouraged, like that of Paganism, by Religion instead of being repressed by it, and unknown in Europe since the break up of the Roman Empire.

If this be so, and the above comparison and contrast fairly characterize the immense moral advance made in the world by the genius and spirit of Christianity, we have now to enquire whether any, and if so what, changes in the externals of Christianity—in its doctrinal creed, its special applications of morality, the peculiarities of its supernatural ideal and the like—are necessary to enable its spirit to have free course

through all the quicksands of Pagan philosophy, politics, and morality that it has to encounter from stage to stage as it comes down the ages; and whether by a careful examination of its structure and composition any law can be discovered along the line of which these changes will be found to have proceeded. This task I am now to undertake, and in the present and succeeding chapters of this volume I shall endeavour to trace these changes in detail down to the point where the great common elements of the Christian creed received that dogmatic impress which through all the schisms and heresies that have arisen, they still retain. But here again a few words of summary and recapitulation by way of keeping the various threads together, are necessary as introduction to what is to follow.

To begin with, then, we have seen that before Humanity could traverse the vast moral interval which separates Paganism as typified in the relation of master and slave, from Christianity as typified in the relation of parent and children, it must first have reached the conception of, and belief in, One Supreme God the common Father of all mankind. We have seen, too, that Polytheism or the belief in many gods, each of them presiding over his own special department of Nature and of human life, could give rise neither to a high code of morality nor even to a single, uniform, and universal one. Not to a high code—for the relationship of the gods to men being that of so many tyrants to subject populations who existed for their good pleasure and profit, and who were as much subject to their caprices as dogs to the caprice of their owners, could only be one of arbitrary power on the one hand, and fear on the other—that is to say of master and slave, tempered perhaps by the casual good nature and generosity of the masters or gods. Not to a single, universally recognized code—for as there were as many gods as there were aspects, angles, and turning-points in life, and as the modes of propitiating them were of necessity as various as their appetites were peculiar, no common rule of life could equally satisfy all; and in consequence no commonly

recognized uniform code of morality was possible throughout the whole society over which they bore sway. But by the time that Jesus arrived on the scene, the Jews had already given to Humanity the conception of a single Supreme God and Father—a belief up till then held by themselves alone. This itself was a precious possession for the world, and on it Christianity entered as on its own peculiar inheritance; its task being so to enlarge and extend this conception that from a single favoured people it should be made to embrace all mankind. This was the special work of the Apostles and the Early Church, and we have now to ask how and by what stages it was accomplished.

To begin with we may remark that all the elements necessary to the composition of a single code of high universal morality already lay in germ in the original deposit of Jesus to his followers and successors. But the conception of God as the loving Father of all His children would, as we have seen, have been gradually swallowed up again and lost, eaten away by the accumulated sorrows, evils, and miseries of the world, had it been left to depend for its continued existence on its own merits as an abstract speculation. Something more was necessary to the doctrine if it were to prove an enduring buttress and support to a permanent universal code of high morality; and we have now to consider what it was that had to be added to it to make it as sure and certain a belief for all the world, as it had already been in a more limited sense for many ages for the Jews themselves. And as the source of the belief that God was the loving Father of all mankind was the authoritative testimony of Jesus himself—as being sent from God to proclaim it—it is obvious that the fortunes of the doctrine, so far as the world was concerned, must turn entirely on the opinions men formed of the character, nature, function, and authority of Jesus himself. We have seen that the new faith was almost wrecked at the outset by the death of Jesus, and that it was only saved by his resurrection and ascension.

The death of a Messiah, or of one specially commissioned by God Himself to reveal His nature and will, was as contrary to the whole conception of the disciples as it was to the rest of the Jews. At the very mention of it by Jesus they were amazed and perplexed, and as it came within visible distance they became utterly demoralized. One of them betrayed him; another denied him; and many of the rest forsook him and fled. But the resurrection and especially the ascension, by giving them assurance that the man who had returned to God must have been sent by God, stopped the demoralization and rout, and by proving to them that he was the Messiah, and in consequence that the account he gave of the nature and will of God was true, gave to their belief such a burning intensity as to fairly start the Church on its conquering way, and prevented the little band, after its dispersion at the death of Stephen, from being gradually swallowed up and absorbed in Judaism again. But this belief in the Messiahship of Jesus although it might have availed with the Jew, could under no circumstances have had in itself any weight with the great Pagan world that lay around. For it must not be forgotten that the Messiah, whether he were conceived as the conquering Messiah of the old Prophets and of Daniel, the suffering Messiah of Isaiah, or the peaceful Messiah of Zechariah, was regarded by all the Jews, the disciples included, as a man—a man it is true more highly endowed with the Spirit of God than other men, and specially equipped by God for his mission, but still only a man, and by no means God. With the Jews there was only one God; all other beings were merely His creatures; and the mere fact of Jesus having ascended to Heaven would no more have convinced them that he was a God than it convinced them that Enoch and Elijah were gods. But the great Pagan and Gentile world knew nothing of a Jewish Messiah; and the mere announcement that a man had after his death ascended to Heaven would only have put him among the number of other men—heroes, emperors, etc.—who had ascended to Heaven after their death to swell the

ranks of the immortals; and so would not have disturbed in the least the prevailing Polytheism. With the Jews on the other hand, the difficulty was in believing Jesus to have been the true Messiah—Scripture and tradition alike having familiarized them only with the idea of a kingly, conquering Messiah and not with that of a lowly, suffering One, which was an entirely new idea, originating with Jesus himself. Could the Jews once have convinced themselves that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, there can be no doubt that his new code of morality and his dream of a universal brotherhood of men under the common fatherhood of God, would have been accepted by them. Indeed their whole controversy with the disciples turned precisely on this point, as to whether Jesus were really the Messiah or no. Now to decide this there was but one court of appeal, and that was Holy Scripture itself—and especially the books of the Prophets who had announced him and to whom they were indebted for all that was known or believed about him. The battle accordingly resolved itself into a conflict of opposing texts rained by each on the heads of the others like hailstones, until at last what with the number of them, their contradictory character, and especially the allegoric interpretation that was allowed to each minutest word and phrase of Holy Writ, the air was filled with a whirlwind of dust that obscured the very sky and made all chance of agreement impossible. In the face of confusion like this, the issue so far as the Jews as a *nation* were concerned was inevitable. To imagine that as a nation they would consent to admit that a man who proclaimed to them that all men and nations were equally with themselves children of a common Father, could be their long expected Messiah, was a dream of unsophisticated enthusiasm, and in the nature of things could not be. National pride itself, were it nothing else, would for ever have forbidden it—as indeed it would under like circumstances with any other nation or people. And when one remembers that with the admission of the common and equal brotherhood of all men

under a common Father, would have gone never to return all the glorious traditions of their past, all that through centuries of persecution had made them what they were—their Holy City and Temple, their priests and altars, their circumcisions and Sabbaths, their Book of the Law, and their very Scribes and Pharisees, all of which had as their very genius and soul that God was especially their God and they especially His children —one sees that it must have been impossible. But although in the nature of things it was impossible that in their collective capacity as a *nation* they should have regarded a man with such a history, coming with such credentials, and preaching such a doctrine, as the Messiah of God; it was not necessarily so with individuals. There will always be found men in every age and nation to welcome alike the highest or the lowest innovations of the time. Incredible as it must have seemed to a Jew of the time of Jesus, it is nevertheless true that in the age of the Maccabees, as we have seen, many individuals, nay whole families, and those too of the priestly class, were ashamed of their religion, their nationality, and their customs, and would gladly have welcomed any change that would have assimilated their institutions to those of the Greek world around them; much as in our day there are to be found individual English Buddhists and Mahommedans among ourselves, Mormons among Americans, Christian Turks, Protestant Spaniards and infidels and atheists everywhere. So too among the Jews at the time of Christ there were to be found those who believed that Jesus was the Messiah of God. But the question we have to ask is, what it was that in opposition to such an array of national prejudice, passion, and pride, kept these individuals (few in number it is true) constant in their conviction that Jesus was the Messiah, and, in consequence, constant in their loyalty and devotion to the new Code of Morality which it was part of his mission to proclaim.

To begin with the Disciples themselves—with them there was no difficulty; they had been eye-witnesses, or believed

themselves to have been so, of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus ; and on comparing in retrospect the particulars of his life and death with what they found written in the Prophets concerning the Messiah, they found the two to correspond. Nothing could be more convincing, and indeed to a Jew nothing more was needed. A more important question is, by what were those Jews converted who had not known Jesus in the flesh? To begin with there were still living among them the eye-witnesses themselves who were vouchers for the truth of the resurrection and ascension, for the miracles of healing, for the casting out of devils and the like—all of which, if true, proclaimed Jesus to be a man sent from God. Of equal importance was the close correspondence and agreement of the texts adduced by the disciples from Prophecy, with the admitted incidents of the life of Jesus. And lastly, and as explaining the hold which the new faith had taken on the simple-minded, the lowly, the pious, the poor—who indeed formed the bulk of the converts, and whom by a secret affinity as of a magnet it drew from among the worldly Jewish masses—was the bright Heaven it opened up before the weary eyes of the down-trodden and heavy-laden ; the object of ideal love it gave them in the person of the Saviour, when contrasted with the austerity of the Jewish Jehovah ; as well as the hourly expectation of the return of Jesus to earth to establish the kingdom in which they were to sit as honoured guests.

But before we can use these considerations to throw light on the well-known differences between Jewish and Pauline Christianity, it is necessary to pause here and remark that given in the hearers the particular frame of mind and temper of heart to which Christianity was adapted and for which it had an affinity, nothing more was needed in this early stage of the new belief to convince men of its truth, than the application of the ordinary and *natural* canons of belief and probability. The belief was a quite natural and human one, and required no help of a supernatural kind as it did later, as we shall see, when

it was presented for acceptance to the Pagan world. And now observe the effect of all this on primitive Jewish Christianity. All things being left just as they were before the death of the Master, and no strain being put on natural belief, the conditions of entering the kingdom were the same as during his life-time, viz., obedience to his commands and imitation of his example. Now this note of *obedience* is the key-note of all Jewish Christianity as distinguished from Pauline Christianity whose watchword was *faith*. This 'faith,' containing as it did a *supernatural* element which had to be communicated by Divine Grace, would have been an unnecessary and unmeaning pre-requisite with the Jewish Christians, but was absolutely indispensable, for reasons which we shall presently see, before Christianity could make its way with the Pagan world.

This is perhaps best seen in the Epistle of James, one of the earliest documents of Jewish Christianity. Here one sees as in a mirror the ideas with which Jesus had indoctrinated his little band of disciples and followers during his life-time almost entirely unaffected by the fact of his death. His second coming is eagerly waited for, not without grumbling and impatience it is true, and a tendency to fall into temptation, but still with their faith and hope sure and strong. The watchword of their lives is still the same as when Jesus was with them, viz., obedience to his precepts and imitation of his example. The Epistle, accordingly, is practically a *résumé* of his teaching in the Synoptics in reference to all such matters as prayer, confession, the taking of oaths, judging, the not taking thought for the morrow, meekness, patience, humility, forgiveness, and the like. The poor, as with Jesus, are practically the sole inheritors of the kingdom, and the rich are reprimanded and unceremoniously warned off. All the old piety, humility, and purity of life of the disciples in the life-time of Jesus are still noticeable, but the sweetness and charm of Jesus are not felt as a pervasive atmosphere in the picture; while his occasional harshness has

degenerated here, especially when the rich are mentioned, into a kind of envious, puritanic sourness, mingled with a querulous impatience at the delay in the second coming. The emphasis laid by James on Works rather than Faith is no mere re-action against the one-sided teaching of Paul, but is a direct corollary from the doctrine of Obedience which as we have said, is the key-note of all Jewish Christianity—although doubtless it was made more pointed and brought into more direct antagonism by the echoes of Pauline teaching which reached the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem from the outlying Gentile World. Indeed to the members of the Church of Jerusalem, many of whom had been eye-witnesses of the miracles and of the death and ascension of Jesus, the 'faith' which Paul demanded must have seemed as much a matter of supererogation as a means of salvation, as it would if demanded as a means of seeing the sun at noonday.

In the first Epistle of Peter, again, the standpoint is still the same, viz. that of the Jewish Christian, and of one besides who had been himself an eye-witness of the miracles and of the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Master. The key-note, accordingly, is still Obedience—obedience to the precepts of Jesus as well as imitation of his example. In waiting for the second coming they were to imitate his patience, and in the midst of persecution and trials his forbearance; when reviled they were not to revile again; and hypocrisy and guile they were to put far from them. They were to abstain from fleshly lusts, to love the brethren, and to honour the king—and besides were to offer up to God for the gift of salvation obtained for them by the sacrifice of his precious blood, their own lives holy and pure.

But in the ideas of Peter there is a certain evolution noticeable over and above those of James. The blood of Jesus is set forth more distinctly and firmly as a sacrifice for sin, not only for past sins but for Sin in general. Jesus himself, besides being a man 'exalted' by God for his obedience and

death to a seat in glory at His right hand, is represented also as 'pre-existing' with God before the world began. And writing as Peter does to the distant churches of the Jewish Dispersion in the midst of Pagan populations far beyond the immediate circle of eye-witnesses, his doctrine of Obedience is dashed to a certain extent with a doctrine of Faith as well. But it is not the faith demanded by Paul of his Pagan converts which, as we shall see, is a gift of God—a supernatural virtue to be imparted by the Holy Ghost to the believer. It is rather an extension of ordinary belief, if I may say so, to things which they were to take on trust from him as an eye-witness. Owing probably to the influence of Paul, his devotion to the observances of the Mosaic ritual was less marked than was the case with James, for he charges his readers especially not to let their freedom from the Law be made a cloak for license and sin, but rather to let it be an opportunity for transferring their allegiance from the service of Moses to the service of Christ—to the end that by obedience and patience and the imitation of the example of Jesus they may grow in grace and become living stones in the temple which they were to have ready for him at his coming.

The Epistle to the Hebrews again, written, as many believe, by Apollos or Barnabas immediately after the Neronian persecutions, is thoroughly Jewish in texture, but so inwrought and overlaid with elements drawn from Paul as to be with difficulty distinguishable from the writings of that Apostle. It was a highly evolved, elaborately polished, and carefully constructed document, intended to span like an arch the two great separate and frowning pillars of Jewish and Pauline Christianity, and to build them into a compact, harmonious whole. Although its deep Jewish substratum everywhere crops up like a rock through the light surface soil, it is both in method and substance a compromise between the two. A compromise in method—for while on the one hand the ordinary laws of probability were ground good enough for the belief of the

Jewish Christians, and while on the other hand a supernatural grace was essential to the faith required by Paul, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews draws on both, without altogether identifying himself with either. His readers were too far off both in time and place for the events recorded of Jesus to be accepted in a natural way without question; and some measure of faith or trust was in consequence necessary. But this faith spanned the entire interspace between the faith of Peter and the faith of Paul, that is to say between a faith which is a mere extension of ordinary belief—a taking on trust the things hoped for in the belief that events will justify the trust—and an act of blind trust which required the supernatural grace of Paul to justify it. As examples of the first kind he adduces the cases of Abel whose sacrifice was proved to be more excellent than that of Cain by the fact of its having been accepted; of Enoch who was proved to have been well-pleasing to God by the fact of his having been translated; and of Noah whose faith was justified by the events of the flood—all of whom lived to prove in their own persons that their faith was justified. As instances of the second kind of faith he adduces that of Abraham and Sarah, of Isaac and Jacob, of Joseph and Moses, of Rahab and Gideon, of Barak and Jephthah, of David and Samuel, of the Prophets and of the Martyrs who died in the Jewish persecutions;—all of whom having died without having themselves received the promises, served as exemplars for a faith which would almost demand as a pre-requisite a special manifestation of divine grace.

In matter and substance, too, the Epistle is a compromise between the extremes of Jewish and Gentile Christianity. It is an attempt to effect a reconciliation between these two hostile camps by shifting the controversy from the question of the observance or non-observance of the Jewish Law in reference to circumcision, Sabbath observance, meats, etc.—a question on which the cleavage was so deep as not to be bridged over—to the question of Sacrifice, about which little

controversy had as yet arisen; and thus to build a bridge by which not only the Jewish Christians could meet their Gentile brethren, but by which unconverted Jews themselves if so disposed might find their way to Christianity. Jesus himself, it will be remembered, followed the older Prophets in degrading sacrifice to a secondary position; and of his own initiative minimized the importance of many provisions of the Mosaic Law. After his death, James and the Jerusalem Church who now regarded Jesus himself as the perfect and all-sufficient sacrifice, could afford to dispense with the imperfect sacrifices of the Law, but continued rigidly to conform to its ceremonial observances in reference to food, to personal purity, to the Sabbath, to circumcision and the like—at the same time that they carried out faithfully in addition the precepts and commands of Jesus in reference to patience, meekness, poverty, humility, brotherly love, forgiveness, and so on. With Peter too, as with James, the sacrifices of the Mosaic Law were superseded and abolished in the greater sacrifice of Jesus, but the obligation of observing the ceremonial part of the Law was, doubtless under the influence of Paul, greatly relaxed if not altogether abrogated. Paul himself swept away as by a wave of his hand both the sacrificial system and the ceremonial law as hindrances rather than furtherances of salvation; holding that the only merit they ever had was the merely negative one of forcing those who practised them to see how impotent they really were for their purpose.

Now to the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews who is addressing Jewish Christians who have been in the habit of carrying out faithfully the Jewish ordinances in reference to circumcision and the like, this extreme position of Paul—which had a tendency to alienate completely the Jewish from the Pagan proselytes to Christianity—is avoided, and stress is laid on Sacrifice, and especially on that aspect of it in which the idea of *purity* is the central point, as on this not only has there been no dispute, but it is the point on which the most harmonious scheme of Christianity having a Jewish basis, can be built.

Accordingly the sacrificial parts of the Law (and doubtless also the ceremonial parts), instead of being represented, as by Paul, as positively detrimental to salvation, and as even hiding it from men as if it were in eclipse, are represented by the writer of this Epistle as having had in their time and place a real and positive value, although now superseded by the greater sacrifice of Jesus himself. They are represented as being good in themselves, although but imperfect and blurred copies of the perfect sacrifice of Christ—as shadows when compared with the perfect image. Besides, by taking the point of sacrificial purity as the point of compromise, and by representing Jesus himself as the pure and spotless High Priest who was slain for our redemption, he is obliged to represent God as a God of Purity after the manner of the Jews, rather than as the God of Love of Jesus. The Epistle, in short, is as we have said a highly evolved product of Jewish Christianity interwoven with Pauline elements, the whole being clipped and trimmed like a close-cut hedge, and polished to an almost perfect symmetry and proportion. Jesus, for example, who in the Synoptics exhibits many a human trait, who is weary, and hungry, and tempted, and depressed, and angry, and does not know when the day of the Son of Man will be, becomes with the author of our Epistle, the holy, the unspotted, the sinless, the perfect—almost a god in his abstract perfections. Indeed, instead of the man exalted by God, of James, and the man 'fore-known' by God from the beginning, of Peter, he has now become the very image of God Himself and the effulgence of His Glory. Instead of the Jewish atonement of bulls and goats which had to be repeated once a year on the great Day of Atonement, you have the sacrifice of the pure and spotless High Priest himself, which once done, remains complete, perfect, and efficacious for all time. And instead of the new Law of Liberty in Christ being mixed up with the old Mosaic Law, as in James and Peter, like new wine in old bottles, it is kept sedulously apart in bottles of its own—the old Law being

a preliminary, inferior, and imperfect distillation which is to be thrown away now that the new and better has come. The whole Epistle, indeed, is a blend of Jewish and Pauline elements, of Pauline Christianity on a Jewish basis; and seemed once and for all to bind together into an indivisible unity and as parts of a progressive Divine plan, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament—a unity which the Pauline Theology would, when pushed to its extreme point, have destroyed (as we see in the heresy of Marcion which nearly wrecked the Church in the second century), and to which the teaching of the Jerusalem Church, with its doctrine of Jesus as a mere man like the other prophets of the Old Testament, would have been equally fatal—had it not, as Ebionitism, been left isolated as a heresy on the soil of Palestine, to lose itself as the centuries advanced in the desert sands, there to become the parent of that Mahommedanism which was afterwards destined to play so great a part in the history of the World.

But to return to early Jewish Christianity and the simple natural belief which resting on the testimony of eye-witnesses and the fulfilment of prophecy—and founded therefore on the *ordinary* laws of probability—was sufficient to keep the hopes of the faithful alive and aglow, their brotherly love warm, and their patience and endurance strong, during the short period that must elapse before the return of the Master. Now this natural belief although sufficient for the Jews of Palestine, was of little or no avail when the scene was shifted to the great Pagan world outside. With Greeks and Romans who knew little and cared less for the affairs or persons of a distant and despised dependency, neither the disciples nor the ordinary eye-witnesses had any influence whatever; while as for the Old Testament and its prophets and prophecies which with the Jews were the seat of all authority, the touchstone of all truth—with the Pagans these had no authority at all. The problem, accordingly, of the conversion of the Pagan world was quite a different one from that of the Jewish world, and required an

entirely different set of considerations to successfully meet it. To convert a Jew to Christianity it was not necessary to prove to him that there was One Supreme God who loved His children—for that he already knew and believed. But it was necessary to prove to him that the Messiah he should look for was not the conquering Messiah of the older prophets, but the lowly, suffering Messiah of Isaiah, and that this Messiah had already come in the person of the man Jesus, to make by his death atonement for the sins of all. To convert a Pagan, on the other hand, it was necessary first of all to show him that there was only one true God, and that this God loved him; and that his own gods who exploited him were either no gods at all, or else were bad gods whom the Supreme God was permitting for the time to work their evil will on him. But how was this to be proved? Clearly it would go a long way if it were shown that the sin and evil and misery of the world were not a natural condition of things (as was proved by the revolt of the conscience against them), but that they were something extraneous, something that had been fastened like a foreign yoke on the human soul; and that the gods to whom men prayed for deliverance were the very demons by whom they had been enthralled. So far, well. But how know that the Supreme God, if there were such a Being, had either the power or the will to deliver them? It would go far to solve this question, too, if it were possible that the Supreme God should send a man who on the one hand could defy the power of their gods or demons by a life free from sin, and on the other could defy death by raising his own body from the grave. And if this deliverer of men, who thus suffered and died for them to deliver them from the power of the gods, were the son of the Supreme God Himself—would this not prove that He not only had the power, but that He wished to save men, rather than to exploit them as the gods did; in a word that He loved them? And if, further, credible information had reached the Pagan world that a man proclaiming himself to be the Son of God had come into the world and

had announced that he had come to save men from the tyranny of their gods; and to give proof of the truth of his mission had lived without sin and died only to defy the power of death to keep him in the grave—would not the report of this add greatly to the probability that it all was true? And when it came over the mind, would it not come like a sudden illumination in the darkness, which would leave behind it dim visions of something that would haunt the memory? And yet what proof that there was any truth in it? Had the events recorded occurred within recent memory and in the presence of accredited eye-witnesses, they might have been believed and laid to heart as other natural facts; but as the years waned and faded, and the Second Coming was still delayed, and the actual eye-witnesses sank one by one to their rest, the belief which had arisen in a natural way with them would have died out with them. At each remove the tradition would have become fainter, the evidence more and more hollow and uncertain—the faith of the original believers being more and more untransferable to their descendants of the new generations,—until soon it would have been swallowed up again in the great Pagan night that surrounded all. How then was the belief to be kept alive and aglow so as to be able to propagate itself down the centuries? Evidently primarily by its own inner illumination—by that something which would so light up the mind that the darkness of itself would seem to lift and all become clear; that something which was so strong in itself that instead of depending as Jewish Christianity did on evidence, it could exist on the barest minimum of fact, being sufficient of itself alone—a *supernatural* rather than a natural belief. This is what St. Paul means when he says "by faith are ye saved, it is not of yourselves, it is a gift of God." In the next chapter we shall see the part this illumination by the Holy Spirit, as Paul conceives it, plays in his scheme of salvation as adapted by him to meet the intellectual and moral wants of the Pagan or Gentile world.

CHAPTER V.

PAULINE CHRISTIANITY.

A FEW years after the death of Jesus, Paul was converted by a vision,—a form of evidence, as we have said, more convincing perhaps in the Ancient World than any other, and one which in itself and without further accessory was sufficient to engender the most fixed and enduring belief. But being a purely personal and private experience it was not transferable to other minds, and the consequence was that if he wished the world to believe his doctrine with the same fervent intensity and assurance with which he believed it himself, he would be obliged to draw on other sources of conviction. The upshot of his meditation was, as we know, a body of doctrine which for subtlety, penetration, harmony, and completeness, is unsurpassed in the history of religious speculation. It bears the same relation to dogmatic Christianity that Platonism does to Greek Philosophy, being the source to which Christianity has had to return for refreshment and renewal at every crisis of her history. It proceeds on the assumption that if Christianity is to be fitted for universal acceptance, it must rely on something more than the mere testimony of eye-witnesses, or the demonstrations of fulfilled prophecy—or even of such chance

visions as he himself had had, which however important and convincing to himself could have availed little with the great Pagan world which it was his mission to convert. Any doctrine which aimed at being embraced by the world in after ages, must be one mainly *à priori*, that is to say it must be one which by its own *inner* illumination carried its credentials with it, needing only sufficient historical guarantee to bring it down from the region of vague hypothesis to that of credible authenticated fact.

The Pauline Scheme of Salvation, it is to be premised, is constructed entirely on a Jewish framework, into which Pagan ideas and pre-suppositions could with a few necessary modifications be logically fitted and arranged so as to form one great and harmonious whole. It began with the assumption of all Jewish theology, viz., that there was One Supreme God who, good Himself, made all things good; and that all things whatever, whether devils or angels, goodness or sin, whether made by him or not, could only come into being and continue in it by His permission and at His good pleasure. Man himself was created by God, and like all else was created good, but owing to the weakness of the flesh in which his spirit was confined, he fell when exposed to temptation into disobedience and sin, and so incurred the penalty of death. This disobedience and sin were not, it is to be observed, a matter of compulsion or necessity (for the flesh although weak is not necessarily evil) but were a matter of man's own free will—the seductive agent in his fall being represented by Paul when addressing Jewish audiences, as the Devil, when addressing Pagans, as the demons whom they worshipped as gods. And furthermore this sin which perenially reproduced itself by heredity and by the weakness of the will under the influence of temptation, was the source of all the sorrow, misery and degradation under which the world lay groaning. This condition of things, according to Paul, had been permitted by God for His own good purpose for a time; but at last He had determined Himself to undertake the redemption of man.

The process was to involve several stages, and in a general way might be said to follow the lines of the Fall; that is to say, as that had been brought about by man's own free will under the temptation of the Evil One, so his redemption should be brought about by his own free will under the inspiration of the Spirit of God Himself. The first stage consisted in selecting from among the fallen nations some one man who should be the father of the race of men through whom salvation for the world was to be achieved. That man was Abraham, who by the inspiration of God received in simple trust and faith the promises made to him. This faith was not an ordinary faith depending on ordinary laws of probability. On the contrary, it being quite against all probability that at his age he should become the father of a race of men, it was a *supernatural* faith rather, a faith inspired by the grace of God—and it is this kind of faith that is the key-note of the whole Pauline scheme of salvation. But the descendants of Abraham, to whom the promises had been given, having fallen into unbelief, and from unbelief into idolatry, that is to say, having gone over to the belief in and worship of those very gods or demons who had originally been the cause of their ruin, there was no help for it but for God Himself to intervene to save them from plunging deeper and deeper into degradation and sin. This time it was a Law which He gave them for their guidance—the Law of Moses, viz., with rewards and penalties attached to obedience and disobedience of its precepts. The object of this Law was, according to Paul, not their salvation; but so to deepen the sense of sin on every infraction of its manifold injunctions, as to keep the fear of God ever before their eyes. In other words it was to prevent idolatry and the forgetfulness of God, until the time was ripe for Salvation itself to be offered to mankind. For observe, it did not help men to break the power of Sin as such,—that was so deeply rooted in the weakness of the flesh as to be beyond the power of man without outside help—the most it could do was to enable men to atone in a way for each

particular sin as it arose, by some outward act of observance or sacrifice, the great body of sin remaining the same as before—much in the same way as the bubbles thrown up on the surface of a stream, although extinguished one by one as they arose, would still leave the great body of water rolling onward as before. It was evidently only a make-shift therefore, operating piece-meal and in a hand-to-mouth kind of way until the real scheme of redemption should be ushered in. As to its actual value there was, as we have seen, a difference between the view of Paul and that of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. With the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews the Law was good in its time and place, although useless and to be abolished now that the more perfect sacrifice of Christ himself had been accomplished. It was, in his own words, a shadow rather than an image of the better things to come. In Paul's opinion on the contrary, it had proved an obstruction throughout to the people to whom it had been given, a pure hindrance rather than an aid to their salvation. Leaving, as it did, the great body of sin untouched, while labouring desperately to make atonement for particular sins after the penalty had been incurred, its operation was like that of a treadmill, on which when you have once started you neither can make any progress nor can you get off it again without danger of falling into a deeper abyss. The more the Jews became conscious of sin, the more desperately they struggled to hold on to the Law, for fear of falling off into eternal perdition if they left go. Hence it was that Paul felt that his own people were practically hopeless, and that the future of Salvation lay with the Gentiles—as indeed it proved. How then, according to Paul, was the Redemption of the World to be brought about?

The problem being how to break the power of Sin in itself, rather than how to atone for each particular sin after it had been committed, it is evident that redemption could not come from the side of the flesh, which, although not in itself evil, was very weak, and now that it had given itself into the hands

of the devil or demons could of itself do nothing. If help were to come, it would have to come through some influence that would so reinforce the higher nature of man and so fortify his will that he would be able to resist the solicitations alike of the flesh and the devil. There were various possible ways in which this could be done, the most simple perhaps being that men should rest and trust in the power of God in simple faith, as children in their father. This was the method of Jesus, but although quite right and natural to men who were in the very sight, as it were, of the Kingdom of God, it was unsuitable as a means of World-redemption; for without the constant intervention of Providence to ensure its continued influx and presence, this trust could not sustain itself in face of the colossal iniquities and evils of the world. What was wanted, therefore, was something more abiding and permanent, something which would ensure the continued presence of the Spirit of God in the soul, and not leave it either to the ebb and flow of mere subjective feeling, or to casual and capricious human inspiration,—some objective fact or facts in short which could not be dissolved by doubt or frittered away in speculation and hypothesis, but like the Serpent in the Wilderness would always be there to give refreshment to the weary spirit, and to heal and save whosoever should look thereon. Something of this kind we now see must have been indispensable to the success of any scheme of redemption which was to be suited to all men and to all times. But it is not probable that the various abstractly possible modes of man's redemption had occurred to Paul. So far as he was concerned the matter had already been taken out of the region of speculation and theory, and been brought home to his mind and heart in the shape of concrete experience and fact. He had come to Jerusalem shortly after the death of Jesus and found that it was a matter of common notoriety there that a man named Jesus had some years before given out that he was the "man of sorrows" of the Prophet Isaiah; and that he had been sent by God to redeem men from their sins.

This man had suffered death by crucifixion, had risen the third day according to prophecy and according also to his own prediction and promise, and had appeared after his resurrection to his disciples—who now went about Judæa preaching salvation and the remission of sins in his name. Paul himself had not seen Jesus in the flesh, but on the way to Damascus to persecute the rising Church he was confronted by him in a vision, and from that moment to doubt that the man Jesus had really risen was impossible. The question for him now became who was this Jesus who had been raised from the dead, and what was the *modus operandi* of the scheme of salvation which he professed to have brought to men?

To begin with, it was within the knowledge of Paul that the Rabbis had all along held that there was a primitive representative and Archetypal Man of whom the actual Adam was but the inferior copy and image. This was the Heavenly Adam of the first chapter of Genesis, who was made in the image of God and who had a spiritual body, as distinguished from the Earthly Adam of the second chapter, who was made out of the dust of the ground. It was this primitive Archetypal Man whom we find represented in the later books of the Old Testament as the Word, the Wisdom, the Angel who stood by the throne of God and who was the instrument used by God in executing His Will. It was he and not God Himself who had appeared to Abraham and to Moses, and who, according to Daniel, was to come as Messiah on the clouds of Heaven. And it was this Second Adam, this Lord from Heaven, with whom Paul now identified the Jesus whom he had seen in vision and who had risen from the dead. We now have to see how, in Paul's view, this Jesus was instrumental in bringing salvation to men.

The problem, as we have said, was how to get rid of the great body of Sin from which, as from some tap-root, the particular sins that arise from hour to hour, perennially flow. Now according to Paul, the flesh although not itself necessarily evil,

was the root of all evil. So long as that evil was unconscious it was, as in the case of the lower animals, not sin. To become sin it must be a transgression of some Divine Command. Adam disobeyed God's Command and was therefore guilty of sin; and from this sin came the death which was bequeathed to all his descendants. When the Law of God was given by Moses to the people of Israel, it still further deepened the sense of sin by the multiplicity of the demands it made on men's consciences and lives. The Gentiles, on the contrary, who had not received any Divine Law, although participating in the evil which sprang from the body of flesh and from Adam's transgression, were not in Paul's view technically guilty of sin. But sin or evil, the problem of redemption for both Jew and Gentile was practically the same; and the question, as we have said, for Paul was, how did the death and resurrection of Jesus as the Archetypal Man, the Christ, the Messiah, the Word, the Wisdom of God, etc., bring redemption and salvation to men? The fitness and completeness of the answer given by Paul will best be seen by a series of progressive suppositions. If we suppose, for example, that the Archetypal Man, the Messiah who had a spiritual body, were to come in his representative capacity as Ideal Man, and to assume a body of flesh, be born of woman, and go through life as a man; if we suppose further that he should conquer the flesh, keep the Law, and remain through life pure and free from sin; and so in his own person having gained an exemption from the death which was the penalty of sin, should ascend again to God,—how, we ask, would this help mankind? Clearly, not at all. It would have been a single-part play with only a single actor, a drama in which no one would be interested or affected but the Archetypal Man himself; and so far from helping Man, would by the very fact of its having been carried out by a being who was aided in the combat against evil by all the power of a Divine nature, have had for poor human souls, weak in flesh, tempted of devils, and tainted by

sin, no interest whatever. But now if we suppose further that having subdued the flesh, and kept the Law, and so found reconciliation with God and immunity from the penalty of death, he had nevertheless voluntarily suffered the death which he had not deserved, and laid down his life as the Representative Man for his suffering fellow men and in their stead—how, we now ask, would this added fact of his death and resurrection affect the result? In every way. To begin with, in Jewish Law ordinary sin could be atoned for vicariously by the blood of some innocent animal that was without spot or blemish. Much more, then, would this be the case if instead of an animal it were the life of some pure and spotless man; and still more if it were the life of some angel or Divine being. And if the death of some pure and good man was regarded as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of other men, the death of the Representative Man, the Archetypal Man, might justly be regarded as an atonement for Sin itself, and for the sins of all men. Now this is precisely the point of view taken by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews who, like Paul, figures Jesus as the Archetypal Man, the effulgence of his Father's Glory and the express image of His person; as the pure and spotless High Priest who, in contrast to the bulls and goats of the Jewish sacrifices, gives his own life once and for all for Sin itself and the sins of all men; and who having come down from heaven for this purpose has again ascended thither, and now sits as of old at the right hand of God. Now were God conceived by Paul as He is by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, viz., as a God primarily of Purity, Holiness, and Righteousness, with whom all sins must be expiated before reconciliation was possible or approach to Him permissible, this solution of the Archetypal Man, the Word, the Messiah, who assumed a body of flesh, appeared in the form of man, kept the Law intact and himself free from sin, and then died for the sins of others, would have been complete, and adequate, and logic-proof at all points. But with Paul, God, as with Jesus,

is primarily a God of Love and only secondly and indirectly, as it were, a God of strict unbending Righteousness and Justice; and we now have to ask how the conception of the incarnation, death, and resurrection of the Archetypal Man or Messiah had to be modified for Paul by this change of view? Mainly in this way—that instead of God being represented as standing coldly looking on while another offered up his own life for man, inexorably exacting His dues in the shape of sacrifices, etc., for sins committed, but careless of the sinner, so long as His own honour and purity were untouched, He will now have to be represented as longing like a father for someone or something to take away the dark wall of sin that stands like a screen between Him and His erring children. And the effect of this again will be to turn the suffering and death of the Messiah from an *expiation* or sacrifice needed to redeem men from sin and the wrath of God—and in which the initiative need not necessarily come from God at all—to an act of *obedience;* the Messiah being represented as having been sent by God to remove the Sin which prevents the sinner from seeing Him as He is—a God of Love yearning by His Divine grace to take him again to His heart. That is to say, while with the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, God is represented mainly as a God of Purity and Holiness, and the suffering and death of Jesus mainly as an expiation and sacrifice, with Paul He is represented as mainly a God of Love, and the suffering and death of Jesus as an act of obedience having its origin in the Will and Love of God. But this is perhaps too rigid and stringent an estimate, and needs some modification to bring it into accurate correspondence with the truth. For, from the recurrence of such phrases as that Jesus was a "propitiation for our sins," that he was a "sin offering," that he was "made a curse for us," that we were "bought with a price," etc., it is evident that there was still a very large element of old Jewish theology in Paul, and that although God with him as with Jesus. was mainly a God of Love, He was, as with the

Psalmist and Prophets and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, a God of Justice also. If then we unite these two conceptions we shall probably come nearer to Paul's full view of the work of Jesus, and shall have to remodel our hypothesis thus—that Jesus, while being sent by God to exhibit the Father's love, also laid down his life willingly and cheerfully of his own great love to men.

And here perhaps it may be as well to pause for a moment to clearly define the relation in which this 'Scheme of Salvation' of Paul stands to the work and teaching of Jesus.

With Jesus, God as we have seen was a God of pure Love who made His sunshine and rain to fall alike on the just and the unjust. The only thing he required from men as a condition of entering the Kingdom of God then almost in sight, was simple trust in God, and the turning away from sin to do that which was well-pleasing in His sight. He could therefore brush away the Law altogether, as a mere temporary make-shift given to men, as he said, because of the hardness of their hearts. Now this simple scheme of Jesus, it will be observed, was quite independent of his own death, and would have been the same had he not died at all, but had lived on until God should have come in glory to inaugurate the Kingdom with himself as Messiah. The scheme of Paul, on the contrary, was necessarily quite different. It was based on and took its rise in the death and resurrection of Jesus, and had to be so constructed as to embrace this death and resurrection as essential elements in the problem of salvation. So that even had the God of Paul been a God of pure Love as He was with Jesus, still the plan of salvation of Paul must necessarily have been different from the plan of salvation of Jesus. The plan of Jesus was adapted as it were to an emergency; that of Paul having a historical basis and being the end of a series of historical stages, was adapted to all time. But to return:—If this scheme of Paul besides its power of inner illumination, its logical completeness and adequacy to the problem to be solved, could also be shown to

have been realized in an actual historical transaction, to rest on a fact, that is, that was not within the power of imagination to colour, of speculation to undermine, or of sophistry to fritter away—that simple cross of Christ, viz., to which the soul of man could always turn amid a sea of doubts and perplexities—would it not enable the human spirit in its gratitude and joy at its new-born deliverance from sin, to rise above the temptations of the flesh and the devil, and to at last find salvation and reconciliation with God? All of course turned on whether the incident on which Paul's scheme was based had really occurred; and of this he had not the slightest doubt, nor indeed, in that age of the world was it likely that he should have doubted. For had he not actually had a vision of the risen Jesus—and what could be more convincing evidence that he was really the Messiah of God? Besides, that Jesus had been crucified and had risen again the third day and been seen of his disciples, he had heard proclaimed from the mouths of hundreds of eye-witnesses within a few years of these events; and the words of the dying Stephen when that martyr looked up to Heaven and cried out that he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God, still rang in his ears. When he turned to the Prophets to whom the disciples perpetually appealed, there again he found confirmation of his belief. To Paul, Jesus was indeed the 'man of sorrows' of Isaiah and the Psalms; and with evidence so patent from eye-witnesses and prophecy, all of which must have been working on his conscience before the vision, he realized how appropriate were the words of Jesus, "it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks." And when he remembered the teaching of the Rabbis as to the Archetypal Man, the Word, the Messiah, the Son of Man, the feeling that Jesus was he, must have come on him as by a flash of illumination, lighting up all the obscurities and perplexities of Jewish prophecy and history. Fact and theory, inner illumination and outward testimony, intellect, imagination, and heart, all alike conspired, all alike said Amen

to a belief which was henceforth for Paul unshakeable by man. And then it was that he saw that the Gospel which had converted him, had all the requisites for converting that great Pagan world which lay around him. He saw that the gods whom the Pagans so worshipped and feared, were only other names for the devil or demons—mere creatures of God, subordinate beings who had themselves fallen like man from their high estate through disobedience, and whom God had permitted for His own good purposes to work for a time their wicked wills upon men, until now at last their power was broken and for ever shattered by the death and resurrection of His only Son. He saw that this would be to the Pagan world, as to himself, a real illumination, something hitherto undreamt of in their philosophy, something that by the longings it satisfied, the hopes it raised, the anxieties it appeased, the explanation it offered to the mysteries and enigmas of their lives, would realize the ideal of their dreams, and shooting like an electric flash across their mental sky, would lighten up the darkness of their minds and hearts. And as this inner illumination was referred by Paul to the direct action of the Holy Spirit of God, he saw that the consciousness of this presence of God in the heart of each, comforting and consoling, and strengthening and supporting, would add infinitely to the sense of gratitude and love. And as the historical facts themselves on which it was based, were as well accredited as any other historical facts, and did not then run counter, as they would now, to any popular prejudice against the occurrence of miracles, he felt that the belief in Jesus and his mission of salvation for the world was assured. But although this scheme of salvation of Paul was well fitted in itself to weather the storms of Pagan religion and philosophy which in its voyage down the ages it was fated to encounter; and although it remains the basis of all Christian theology, even to our own time; still it was not sufficiently definite in the view it presented of the nature of Christ in his

relation to God to be entirely satisfactory, when once the several parts of the scheme had been brought into relation with each other and with the whole. In the next chapter I shall endeavour to lay down the line which the evolution of belief as to the nature of Jesus is likely to follow, and shall trace the history of the changes in that belief up to Apostolic and post-Apostolic times—a task to which this study of Paul may serve as a fitting introduction.

CHAPTER VI.

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIANITY.

IT would seem impossible that any scheme of salvation founded on Pauline lines, that is to say on the work of a Mediator between God and man, should be complete and harmonious at all points until the Mediator who is to reconcile God and Man is possessed of a truly *representative* nature and character. He must, that is to say, be both very Man and very God, perfect ideal Man and infinite eternal God. Very man he must be, if his sufferings and death are to win for him the sympathy of suffering human souls; perfect man he must be if he is to stand before a Pure and Holy God to make intercession for the sins of men. Very God, again, he must be if his suffering and humiliation are to take the deepest hold on the heart of humanity; Eternal God he must be if his mediatorial function is to resist the encroachments of all-devouring Time which in its onward flux washes away with it the memory of all mortal things. If this be true, we should expect to find Apostolic Christianity bridging in its evolution the gulf that separates the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels who is represented as subject to temptation, to weakness, to passion, to anger, ignorance and despair, from the Jesus of John, who is the Eternal Logos of God come down to earth as complete and perfect man. This interval, it is needless to say, was not bridged by a single step, but its successive stages may be seen

gradually evolving themselves all along the course of the first and second centuries. Beginning with the conception of Jesus as a man more filled with the Spirit of God than other men, but made *lower* than the angels, we pass to the conception of him as a man exalted after his resurrection and ascension to a position *above* the angels. From a man exalted after death to a position above the angels and at the right hand of God, we pass to the conception of him as a man who occupied that position before his birth into this lower world—that is to say who had 'pre-existence' as the Archetypal Man. From this Archetypal Man pre-existing with God and *created* by God, we pass to the Son of God *begotten* by God from all eternity; and from that to God Himself. This brings us to the point reached in the Gospel according to John, after which we pass to the doctrine of the evolution of the Trinity itself.

To begin with, then, we may say that the advance in the conception of Jesus from that of a virtuous man highly endowed with the Spirit of God for a particular mission to mankind, to that of a perfect ideal man, took place very early, probably immediately after his death and resurrection—so early indeed that it is implied in all the abstract characterizations of him from the earliest times. It resulted from the light thrown back upon Jesus from the fulfilled prophecies respecting him; and is well seen in the difference between the accounts given of the actual Jesus in the Synoptics—who at times, as we have said, was weary, and angry, and violent, and suspicious, and despairing—and the accounts given by Peter, for example, who in chapter i. 19 of his Epistle speaks of him as a "Lamb without blemish and without spot," and in chapter ii. 23 as one who, "when he was reviled reviled not again, when he suffered threatened not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously." From this perfect, sinless man, the next stage of evolution was initiated by the fact of his ascension to Heaven *after* the resurrection; and made of him a man exalted and glorified and given a position *above* the angels at the right

hand of God. But it is still a *man* that is exalted, it is to be observed, and not a God. Peter still speaks of him in Acts ii. 22, as "a *man* approved of God unto you by mighty works, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you;" and afterwards (chapter iii. 22) quotes Moses as saying in allusion to Jesus that a prophet like unto himself would God raise up, whom they were to hear. Nor is the present exaltation what it afterwards became, viz. co-existence with the Father before the world began, but it is a new dignity conferred on the man Jesus since his death for his obedience and virtue. Peter in Acts ii. 36, distinctly states that this Jesus whom ye crucified, God hath *made* both Lord and Christ. In Acts ii. 32, he speaks of God raising Jesus from the dead and exalting him; and again in chapter v. 30, in his answer to the High Priest he reiterates that God had raised up Jesus whom they slew and had "exalted him to be a Prince and a Saviour," and (chapter ii. 33) that it was then only that he received the promise of the Holy Ghost which he poured forth on Pentecost—in other words he was not Prince and Saviour, Lord and Christ, until after his death. Before this he was merely a servant. Peter speaks in Acts iii, 13, of God having glorified his *servant* Jesus, and again in chapter iv. 30, the Apostles pray that signs and wonders may be done "through the name of Thy Holy servant Jesus." Indeed with some of the Apostolic Fathers Jesus still remains far into the second century the *man* who was chosen by God for his virtue to perform a special mission to mankind, and who for his obedience was *afterwards* exalted to glory and honour far above the angels, to a seat at the right hand of God. This opinion was held not merely by the Ebionites who were eventually denounced as heretics, but by men like the Shepherd of Hermas who was held in the highest esteem, and was much quoted by the Fathers of the early Church all through the second century. With him (Similitude v.), curiously enough, it is the Holy Ghost who is the Son of God—Jesus remaining,

as with the Early Christians, merely the virtuous man chosen by God and to whom the Spirit of God had been given in larger measure than to other men. Indeed the fact of the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist for ever precluded in the minds of many Christians of the first and second centuries any other conception of Jesus than that of a man specially favoured by God and endowed with His Spirit. And yet one would know beforehand that if Christianity was to have a future, the doctrine could not be permitted to rest here. For in the human mind there is always and ever a vague perception, an unconscious but ineradicable and instinctive recognition of the great law of change, a feeling that nothing that is done or transacted at a particular time and place can keep its original significance undimmed, but must in its relations with after ages in its perspective and outline undergo enlargement and exaggeration or suffer diminution and loss; and furthermore that if in human things any particular circumstance or event is to maintain its lustre untarnished, it must be raised above time and place and be given an immutable, fixed, and eternal character. So long as the coming of Jesus was expected from day to day, almost from hour to hour, the question as to what he specially was before his birth on earth, if indeed he had any pre-existence at all, was not likely to arise—except perhaps with a man like Paul who being a thinker of commanding genius could not rest till he had planned a scheme complete and harmonious at all points. But as decade after decade passed away and those to whom Jesus had said that they should not taste death until they saw him returning in the clouds of Heaven sank one by one to their rest, it was inevitable if his death and resurrection were not to grow dim and pale in the receding years until at last they passed out of sight altogether; and if the Father's love and the new morality it carried with it (of which all this paraphernalia of doctrine was but the protecting sheath) were not to be swallowed up in Paganism again; it was inevitable,

I say, that the relation of Jesus to God on the one hand and to mankind in general on the other should be given a fixed, determined, and immutable character, and one quite independent of his life-history at a given time and place on earth. And accordingly signs soon begin to appear of a movement ascribing to Jesus not only an existence with the Father in Heaven after his death, but an existence with Him before his birth, and this movement went on increasing until, long before the century had closed, the new doctrine had matured in orthodox Christendom into a fixed article of faith. It first makes its appearance in the Epistles of Peter and Paul, but then only in an early stage of evolution and in a form quite rudimentary when compared with that which it afterwards assumed. For just as in the first stage the exaltation of Jesus after the resurrection and ascension to a place at the right hand of God was his exaltation as a man, so in the next stage, again, his exaltation to the same place before his appearance on earth, was also as a man. This, indeed, is precisely the form that his pre-existence would naturally take in the Jewish mind. For as Harnack has so admirably shown, 'pre-existence' with the Jews was always a pre-existence of the object as a whole, whether man or thing, and not merely, as was the case with the Greeks, of its invisible spirit or soul. The object, that is to say, had with the Jews the same outward and visible form in Heaven as it afterwards had on earth, whereas with the Greeks it had no outward or visible form at all until it was united with the Matter of this lower world. Jerusalem, the Temple, the Tabernacle whose furniture Moses was instructed to make after the pattern shown him on the Mount, all existed beforehand in heaven precisely in the same form in which they afterwards appeared on earth; in other words the earthly object was with the Jews a "manifestation" or *copy* of its heavenly original, whereas with the Greeks it was an "incarnation" or *embodiment* of it. And hence it is that we find that when Peter and Paul and John as Jews attribute pre-existence to Jesus, they always

picture him as a man. Paul, it will be remembered, represents Jesus as the Archetypal Man, the man from heaven, the second Adam in contradistinction to the first Adam, our progenitor who was his earthly counterpart. So, too, John, in Revelations, (chapter xiii. 8,) speaks of Jesus, not as a pre-existing spirit, but as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world;" in the same way as in the old Apocalypses of Ezra and Enoch the Messiah is represented as lying hid with God until the time was ripe for his manifestation on earth. So, too, Peter in chapter i. 20, of his Epistle speaks of Jesus as being "foreknown" from the foundation of the world, but as "manifested" at the end of the times for your sakes,—adding with a characteristic Jewish touch "that your faith and hope might be in God." Farther, indeed, than this of Jesus as a Pre-existent Man, Jewish Christianity of itself cannot go.

But, as we have seen, before Jesus could be a true Mediator between God and Man he must become God as well as man. It was an absolute necessity of thought, therefore, that the doctrine should not be permitted to rest at this temporary halting-place, but should be pushed on until Jesus became God, or rather a side, aspect, or part of the Godhead. Up to the present point he was, as we have seen, still man,—however exalted he may have been,—and therefore a *creation* of God; whereas what was wanted was that he should share the very nature and life of God, and so in a way be himself God. Now this point was not fully reached until the appearance of the Gospel of John at the end of the first or beginning of the second century, but the first transition and approaches to it are perhaps to be seen in Paul, who, while figuring the Christ as in essential nature a Man, and as such, a creation of God, figures him also as having an incorruptible body. Indeed in I. Corinthians xv. 45, he distinctly declares that he is a life-giving Spirit. But it was impossible that the doctrine should remain long at this ambiguous, indeterminate, and transitional point, as indeed we see the moment it came seriously into

contact with Greek modes of thought. It is no part of my intention here to discuss the question as to the authorship of the Epistles to the Colossians, Philippians, and Ephesians; but if they really are genuine works of the Apostle Paul, it is evident that his doctrine has in them made a great advance, viz. from his old conception of Jesus as the Archetypal Man with a spiritualized body *created* by God, to the conception of him as a spiritual being *begotten* of God. In Colossians (chapter i. 15) Jesus is represented as "the image of the invisible God," "the *first-born* of all creation," all other things having been *created* through him and by him. The early Pauline idea of the Archetypal Man could only be "manifested" not "incarnated," but in Philippians, (chapter ii. 6,) Jesus Christ, it is said, being originally in the form of God, took the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man; that is to say he was a spiritual being who became incarnate as a man.

Now from the time of the Apostles onwards this advance in the evolution of the nature of Jesus from being a pre-existent man to being a pre-existent God, that is to say from a Being created by God to a Being begotten by God, nowhere retrogresses, but excepting in the case of the Shepherd of Hermas, who as we have seen regards Jesus as a man exalted by God for his virtue, is everywhere steadily maintained. Clement, for example, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians says (chapter xvi. 2) that "Christ is the Son of God exalted above the angels," and in chapter xxii. 1 "that he is he who spoke in the Old Testament through the Holy Spirit." Barnabas, too, in his Catholic Epistle says (chapter xii. 10), "Jesus is not the Son of man but the Son of God made manifest in a type and in the flesh," and (in chapter v. 5) "that Jesus is Lord of the whole earth and is he to whom God said before the beginning of the world, Let us make men after our own image and likeness." In the second Epistle to the Corinthians, too, Clement says (chapter ix. 5) that "Christ was a spirit who took flesh and

saved us." So that up to this point the evolution of the nature of Jesus has arrived at the stage in which he is the Son of God, begotten by God, and having pre-existence with God from before the foundation of the world. Only a single step more is necessary to bring us to his being a part of God Himself, an inseparable part, aspect, or function of the Deity; and this step accordingly was taken by John. With him Jesus becomes as a real personality, what the Logos was in the abstract systems of the philosophers, viz., the Reason of God, who not only was begotten by God, but was in the beginning with God and indeed was God. He was at once both the means and the end of creation, both the life of the world and the light and life of men. And accordingly the metaphor used to describe his nature now suddenly changes. From being in the Acts, a Servant; in Peter and John, a Lamb; in the Hebrews, an eternal High Priest; in Corinthians, the Man from Heaven; in the Ephesians, Colossians and Philippians, the Son of God—all of which imply a Being inferior to and apart from God—he now becomes the Light of the World, the Eternal Logos, and the Bread of Life; that is to say he becomes a part as it were of God Himself, though still, it is true, not quite equal in dignity to God the Father, inasmuch as his manifestation and incarnation take their rise in the will and on the initiative of the Father. This view of his nature and office is continued by Ignatius the disciple of John, who in his Epistle to the Magnesians (chapter viii. 2) says, "There is one God who has manifested Himself by Jesus Christ His Son, who is the Eternal Logos;" and in chapter vii. 2, "There is one Jesus Christ who proceeded from the Father, and exists in One, and is returned to One." Again, in his letter to the Ephesians (chapter vii. 2), he says, "There is one Physician Jesus Christ our Lord, both fleshly and spiritual; made and not made; God incarnate and true Life in Death; both of Mary and of God; first passable and then impassable," etc.

But before this point was reached many enemies had to be put under foot; indeed although in the end inevitable these successive stages in the evolution of the doctrine did not take place spontaneously, but were drawn forth by hostile opinions current at the time—opinions which had to be met not only by argument but by Holy Writ embodied in texts which were freighted with all the weight of a Divine Authority. And it will be observed that in no point of this evolution, from a good man to a perfect man; from a man lower than the angels to a man exalted above the angels; from a man glorified and exalted after death to a man glorified and exalted before birth; from a Being in the image of God but created by God, to a Being begotten of God and therefore the Son of God; from the Son of God to God Himself—at no point in this evolution is the full personality of God, or the full personality of Christ broken, at no point does God the Father become dissolved into a philosophical abstraction like the Supreme Good of Plato, or the Abyss of Gnosticism; or God the Son, into the Logos of the Neo-Platonists, or into one of the æons of the Gnostic sects. In the next chapter I shall endeavour to exhibit some of the phases of the conflict of the Church with Gnosticism; in the meanwhile we may deal with another great obstruction which had to be overcome in raising the conception of Jesus from that of a man largely endowed with the Spirit of God, to that of a God, viz., the popular belief in Angels and other heavenly powers, who were not only supposed to bear rule over the different departments of Nature and human life, but, under the designation of Principalities and Powers, were believed to belong to a higher race of beings and to have more power than men, or indeed than any mere man, even Christ himself. This struggle first makes its appearance perhaps in Paul, who in writing to the Romans says (chap. viii. 38), "I am persuaded that neither angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Peter, too, in impressing

on the readers of his Epistle the great exaltation and dignity conferred on Jesus after his resurrection as he sits at the right hand of God, feels it necessary to add (I. Peter iii. 22), that "angels and authorities and powers were made subject to him." So deeply is this difficulty realized by the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that he feels obliged to demonstrate to his readers by a variety of considerations that Jesus is indeed higher than and has more power than the angels. In the first place he says (chap. i. 5) that Jesus is called the Son of God, whereas the angels were only creations of God and ministering servants to those who were to be saved through Christ. Besides, he was anointed by God above his fellows, and the angels are commanded to worship him; then again he has a position at the right hand of God with his enemies as his footstool; and while the angels are ministering spirits Jesus has a throne for ever and ever, etc,—from all of which he argues that if the Law which was given by these angels was steadfast, so that none escaped punishment who violated its provisions, much more would those be punished who neglected the greater salvation brought by Jesus.

But not only were the Apostles obliged to vindicate the superiority of Jesus over these heavenly beings, but they were obliged if people were not to be drawn away by them, to assert also his power over them. In Colossians ii. 15, it is said that Jesus having put off from himself the principalities and the powers made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in his cross. And again (ver. 18), "Let no man rob you of your prize by a voluntary humility and worshipping of the angels," instead of holding fast by Christ the Head. Of the universal belief in the power of these angels and principalities and powers, no doubt can be left after the declaration (Ephesians vi. 12), that "our wrestling is not against flesh and blood but against the principalities and powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." But that Christ has power over them

notwithstanding, is further made good by a text from Colossians where it is said (chapter i. 16) that he created them, and existed before them. And that this authority might be seen to embrace not only the angels and principalities of the Jewish heavens, but the æons and emanations which made up the fulness of the Godhead in the various systems of Gnosticism, the writer of the Epistle to the Colossians after warning the believers against philosophy and the vain conceits of men, winds up with the declaration (Colossians ii. 9), "for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in him ye are made full who is the head of all principality and power." Having in this way got rid of the hosts of angels and heavenly spirits who, in the popular mind, stood in the way of the full recognition of the supreme power and Godhead of Christ, we have now to see how the Church disposed of the subtleties of Pagan philosophy which were imported into it by the more intellectual and cultured of the Pagan converts, and which by dissolving the personality both of God and Christ into abstractions, would have strangled Christianity before its triumph had yet begun.

CHAPTER VII.

GNOSTICISM.

IN the evolution of the conception of Jesus from the point in which he was primarily a man to that in which he was primarily a God, Early Christianity had more dangerous foes to deal with than those Angels, Principalities, and Powers of the popular belief, which so exercised the minds of the Apostles and the Apostolic Fathers. Men of culture drawn on the one hand to Christianity by the spectacle of its sublime and glorious martyrdoms, and repelled from it on the other by what they conceived to be its simple and unsophisticated philosophy—a philosophy in which God, as with children, does everything and makes everything at His own will and pleasure—felt impelled to seek some scheme of salvation which while including Jesus and his work as a main or important factor, should at the same time be more in harmony with the enlightenment and culture of the time. And as result we have those heresies which in the history of the Church are included under the general name of Gnosticism. So complicated, however, are the details of many of these systems that it would be as useless as it would be tedious to enter into any minute description of them here. The purpose of this chapter will be sufficiently served, if I shall succeed in indicating in a general way the main features of their structure, and the elements out of which they were composed.

To begin with, then, we may say that the general framework of them all was that great system of Platonic Philosophy which ruled the Pagan world from its inception by Plato until its absorption by and extinction in Christianity—that great system to which nearly all the schools except the Materialists were indebted, and to which as to a fountain they had again and again to return to replenish their exhausted streams—a system, it may be said in passing, without a knowledge of which no understanding of intellectual Paganism is possible. In its reach and magnificence it often seems to me to resemble the great scheme of Pauline Christianity to which the Church has had to revert at every crisis of its history for weapons either of offence or of defence, and to which orthodox and heretic alike, whether it be a Marcion, an Augustine, or a Luther, have triumphantly appealed. Now Gnosticism was the latest of those semi-religious, semi-philosophical systems which were fitted into this colossal framework and mould of Platonism. It consisted of various and complex elements, drawn not only from Syrian and Egyptian Nature-worship, but from Pythagorean philosophy, from Judaism, and from Christianity; and all so subtly and ingeniously compounded, so skilfully and harmoniously inlaid, as to form a figure not only of Oriental richness and complexity, but also in some of its systems (as for example in that of Valentinus) of rare poetic beauty. To bring out the meaning and significance which these systems had for Christianity, as well as their connexions with other forms of Platonism, a few general remarks drawn from former chapters will perhaps be necessary. In the chapters on the Evolution of Greek Thought we saw that the reason why Ancient Philosophy could never get beyond the great framework of Platonism, and why the utmost it could do was to unite by different causal principles the original elements drawn from Platonism, was because Platonism was at once the most comprehensive and the most subtle analysis of the statical constituents of the world and the human mind, possible before

the great discoveries of Modern Physical Science. Plato himself had laid all his predecessors under contribution, taking from one and another some old element or principle, but so modifying, re-arranging and co-ordinating them all as to produce not only a most logical and symmetrical but a most beautiful and poetic whole. From Anaximander he got his great basal principle of the ἄπειρον, the vague indefinite principle of all Matter, but, as we saw in a former chapter, instead of conceiving it as made up of tangible masses of fire, air, earth, and water as Empedocles had done, he figured it rather with Democritus and Anaxagoras as made up of invisible atoms or particles; modifying these in the way we have seen. His second principle, viz., that of Number, not only combined these atoms into the tangible elements of fire, air, earth, and water, but these elements again into the different forms and figures of the visible world. This he got from Pythagoras, but he so extended it as to make it explain ideal and artistic forms also. His third and still higher principle, his system of Ideas, that is to say the inner and invisible *natures* of things as distinct from their outward and visible *forms*, he arrived at by taking the general ideas of man, dog, horse, tree, etc., which Socrates had got by *abstraction* from particular men, dogs, horses, trees, etc., and giving to them an independent, objective existence of their own as real individual *entities*. So, too, his last and highest principle of all, the Supreme Good as he called it, which corresponded to our idea of God, he got from Anaxagoras; but in his hands it grew from a mere arranging and disposing principle to be the Soul also of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True. Now these four principles of the Supreme Good, the system of Ideas, Number and the ἄπειρον were believed by Plato himself to have lain in the still eternity as so many isolated and separate existences until Time began, when they were mixed and compounded by the Supreme Good or First Principle—in his capacity of Demiurge—into the immense

miscellany of things known as the world. But although as a *statical* theory of the world, that is to say as an analysis of the existing constitution and elements of things at any given point of time, as for example, of a horse, a tree, a dog, a man, this is as just and comprehensive a scheme perhaps as could possibly have been framed in the absence of Physical Science, still there was in it no principle of evolution, nothing to explain the *regulated changes* gone through by things in their progress through birth, maturity, and decay. It was, as we have said, a mechanical union merely, the only pretence of a principle of change in it being the *unregulated* movements among the little triangular atoms of the ἄπειρον, caused like the movements of the pieces of ice in a bag, by outside pressure merely. Now it was to remedy this *dynamical* deficiency in the philosophy of Plato that Aristotle entered on his labours. Taking his stand on the great elements bequeathed to him by Plato, he tried to introduce among them a principle of evolution, that is to say of orderly and regulated change—or in a word, of physical causation. To do this he had recourse to the ordinary laws of motion, and so arranged it that by their own movements alone Matter (the fourth principle of Plato) and the system of Ideas (the second principle) would by their action and interaction mutually generate each other as they rolled on together. But in doing this he sacrificed entirely Plato's great principle of Number; and so while explaining by his new theory the orderly movement and progression of things, he left the entire range of phenomena included under outer visible form quite unaccounted for. The Stoics who followed him fell into a different error. In their anxiety to get a pure Pantheism, with Matter on one side and Spirit on the other, they mixed and confounded together the carefully distinguished elements of Plato, and used such heterogeneous and widely different categories as God, Ideas, Fire, Ether, Motion, and Fate, as if they were interchangeable terms—a fatal confusion of thought. It was evident that there was no way of getting a theory of

the world that should be at once statically and dynamically satisfactory on the *ordinary* laws of Causation and Motion, without sacrificing one or other of the great statical principles of Plato, or confounding them together. There was no alternative left to Philosophy therefore but to go back to these principles of Plato, and to try and find some *new* principle of Causation or Motion to account for their dynamics, that is to say for their regulated evolution and change. This new principle Neo-Platonism found in the theory of Emanation which was drawn from the analogy of Light and differed from the ordinary laws of causation in this, that whereas in ordinary causation the cause is lost, as it were, in the effect and *passes over* into it—as for example fire and wood into smoke and ashes—in Emanation the cause still remains as cause even after it has produced its effect, as the light even after it has reached the earth still remains, and as the Ancients believed undiminished, in the Sun. So that in the Neo-Platonic theory we have the first principle of Plato—the Supreme Good—for ever radiating from itself the second principle, viz., the System of Ideas, or the invisible and inner natures of things; and from these again, the 'vital principles' or 'souls' of things, which were always conceived as having extension like ghosts; which again are radiated outward until they are embodied in Matter, the fourth principle, to give them their physical characteristics of solidity, texture, and so on. Now this philosophy of Neo-Platonism was the rising philosophy of the Schools at the time of which I am writing, viz., about the beginning and middle of the second century; but being a pure philosophy dealing with essences and abstractions, and not a religion dealing with personal wills, it held its course alongside of Christianity and parallel to it, without being absorbed by it. It was not until Christianity, partly by its own inner development, and partly by borrowing from its rival, had developed a Trinity of Wills (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), corresponding to the Neo-Platonic Trinity of Essences (the Supreme Cause, the Logos, and the World-Soul), that it was

able to absorb Neo-Platonism into itself. And in passing it may not be unnecessary to remark that the reason why a system of personal Wills must for ever displace in the popular mind a parallel system of Essences or Abstractions, and Religion therefore must displace every form of Metaphysical Philosophy when it comes into collision with it, is because the only conception or experience which the human mind has of cause is that of will—all other causes, however fantastically dressed up by philosophers to look like real causes, being names merely for *orderly effects* doing duty as causes for the time being, and for convenience only.

But to return. In Gnosticism we have still the same framework of Platonism, but with its great elements connected together by yet another principle of Causation. This time it is the principle of *generation*, a principle which operates through pairs of opposites, male and female, and which was adopted from the Syrian and Egyptian Nature-worship as seen in the worship of the popular deities Baal and Astarte, Isis and Osiris, and the rest. And here we may observe that whatever proceeds on the analogy of generation and has male and female elements in it, is susceptible of being invested with a kind of quasi-personality, and so any system of thought founded on it, unlike one founded on the mere emanation of abstract essences as in Neo-Platonism, is capable of being incorporated with Religion. And hence it was that while Neo-Platonism pursued an independent existence alongside of the Church until the time was ripe for the Church to absorb it, Gnosticism crept into the Church from the very first, and had to be violently expelled if Christianity were not to come to a sudden end. A brief description of the most influential and ingenious of the Gnostic systems, that, viz., of Valentinus, will serve to bring out the main characteristics of their structure, and the subtle poison which lay concealed at their heart. But first a word or two of contrast with Neo-Platonism may be useful, perhaps, to exhibit more clearly the purely religious side of Gnosticism.

In Neo-Platonism from a single ineffable centre of Light, rays are shot out to an indefinite distance into the surrounding darkness. It is evident, therefore, that at no definite point can Evil or Sin be said to have suddenly entered the world. In this system, accordingly, there can be nothing catastrophic like the Fall of Man, which in Christianity resulted from a momentary and conscious act of the will in choosing evil rather than good; at most there can only be a greater or lesser admixture of the rays of light with the darkness which surrounds them and which makes itself felt the more, the farther the distance from their source. Evil, in consequence, enters softly and imperceptibly like the gradual passage of noon into evening and evening into twilight and night. The problem of redemption, accordingly, in this system consists not in any sudden right-about-face of the heart and will as in the 'conversion' of Christianity, but in getting hold of those enfeebled rays which, farthest from their source, are sunk and embedded in the darkness of the material world around us, holding on to these until by thought and abstraction we climb successively through their vital principles or souls to the invisible, archetypal ideas and principles at their core (the farthest point that can be reached by conscious thought), and then by asceticism, mortification, and subjugation of the body, so etherealizing the soul as to reach that state of ecstasy through which alone a glimpse may be had of the ineffable Centre of Light itself.

And now if we substitute for this Neo-Platonic principle of Emanation, the Gnostic principle of Generation from male and female opposites, it is evident that in the normal process of generation Evil could not enter at all, for what is bred of the pure elements must always be pure and true. It is also evident that if evil did enter, it must enter by some flaw in the process of generation; and moreover it must enter as in Christianity suddenly at the point where the flaw in generation occurs, and not, as in Neo-Platonism, gradually and imperceptibly from the

greater and greater admixture of darkness with the light. Accordingly in the system of Valentinus which these preliminaries will have prepared the reader to follow without difficulty, instead of a single Ineffable Being and Centre of Light, we have a double Supreme Cause, as it were, made up of male and female elements. The male element is known as the Abyss, the female, his partner, as Silence, and from the union of these two issue the second couple, viz., Intellect and Truth, and from these two the Logos and Life. Now these three couples constitute a Gnostic Trinity as it were, corresponding to the Supreme One, the Logos, and the World-Soul of Neo-Platonism, and to what was afterwards to become the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in orthodox Christianity. From these again proceeded in regular genealogical succession ten or twelve couples of æons as they were called, male and female—spiritual existences, half personal, half abstract, who corresponded in their way to the angelic hosts of Christianity, and who with the Trinity above-mentioned made up the Pleroma or fulness of the heavenly existences and powers. And now we have to ask, how in this system did our sublunary world arise, with its evil, imperfections, and sin? It did not arise as in orthodox Christianity from the rebellious will of one of the angelic spirits, and the subsequent weakness of will of the first man; nor did it arise as in Neo-Platonism from the darkness closing in more and more around the pure effulgence of the Supreme Cause; but was due to the aspiration of the female partner of the last and lowest of the couples of æons or angels of the Heavenly World (Sophia, she was called) to know the Supreme Cause of all, the Abyss Himself, and to be united with Him, instead of resting satisfied with her own partner;—a hopeless aspiration, for the Supreme Cause could be known by one of the Trinity, His own first-born offspring Intellect, and by him alone. Now the result of this unsatisfied desire of the female angel Sophia, was the birth of an abortion named Achamoth, who being sprung from the female alone was a

thing of mere desire and passion without knowledge, and in consequence had to be flung out beyond the bounds of Heaven and the circle of light and glory, like Satan the rebel angel of orthodox Christianity. It was from the feelings of this offspring of a fallen angel that the world, in the Gnostic system of Valentinus, was believed to have been precipitated; his sadness forming its material element; his tears the streams, rivers, and fountains; his joy, the light; and his despair, the empire of the demons, and so on. But the actual mingling and compounding of these elements into separate concrete existences, —men, animals, and things,—was the work of a special creation of Achamoth called the Demiurge, whom some Gnostics believed to be the same Being as the Jehovah of the Jews, but whom others identified with the Devil himself. But as some sparks of the heavenly nature which Achamoth had inherited from Sophia had got mixed up with the other elements in the compounding of Man, the whole problem of Redemption was centred in how to get this Divine spark released from its bondage to the Demiurge who had created man and was now his lord and master, and to re-unite it with the Divine Beings from whom it sprang in the Heavenly Pleroma. And this was done by the whole company of the æons or angels combining to produce the perfect Christ who descending on the man Jesus at his baptism, came to give men a glimpse of their heavenly home. But in these Gnostic systems a different destiny was in store for the different classes of believers. To the ignorant and vulgar who accepted Christ and his work in simple faith, and to those who were converted by his miracles, a lower position was assigned; it was only to the elect, to the cultured, and to those who were indoctrinated with the scheme which I have now presented, and who, in consequence, *knew* the mystery never unfolded before, viz., that the Supreme God, first revealed by Christ to the chosen few, was a different Being from the Demiurge or Jehovah of the Jews whom until now they had believed him to be;—it was only to these that

permission was given to unite each with his or her angelic partner in the Highest Heaven, and to have a place, as it were, in the immediate presence of God.

The above is only a rough general sketch of one of the most important of the Gnostic systems, but it is quite sufficiently detailed for my purpose here, which is to so exhibit their general structure that their relations to orthodox Christianity may be clearly seen. There were many of these systems, associated with such names as that of Basilides, Ptolomæus, Cerdo, Heracleon, etc., all of them differing more or less in detail, and each with its own circle of influence and authority. What we have now to do is so to exhibit their main elements that, when compared with the corresponding doctrines of Christianity, the reason why the Church was obliged for its own preservation to extrude Gnosticism from its midst may be clearly seen.

To begin with then we may say that Religions in general are Philosophies of the World constructed out of the elements of Personal Wills rather than out of Essences and Abstractions as in Metaphysics, or out of general Laws of Nature as in Science; and further that other things being equal, that religion is the most perfect in which these Wills are most nearly reduced to a connected unity, to a single complete and harmonious whole. From this point of view Christianity may be said to be the most perfect of all extant religions, having had all its parts moulded into harmony in the course of many centuries by the most ingenious, subtle, and original minds. For although the very essence of Will is that it should be able to do as it chooses, the most superficial glance at the structure of Christianity will show that in it are no altogether unrelated wills, but that however wide may be their range and however errant their course, they are all rounded in by some controlling Will at the centre of things; like comets which, however far they may seem to stray beyond the planetary range, must all in the end be drawn

back to the Sun again. It was by the Will of God, for example, that the world was made; it was by His Will too that angels and men were created. It was by the rebellious wills of these same angels and men that Evil and Sin entered the world, and by their wills too that it is perpetuated. But it was only by the Will of God that they were permitted to have their will in rebelling; and it is still by God's Will that a scheme of redemption has been devised which shall ensure that these rebellious wills shall be drawn back to harmony and accord with His own again. It was the Will of God that made the body and passions of Man; and these same passions that are the ministers of Evil can be transformed by His will (or by the will of Man wrought upon by His Spirit) into ministers of Good. At all points the unity is unbroken, the harmony complete. There are three Wills in the Trinity, and yet these three Wills are but One Will. Jesus is matter and spirit, body and soul, Man and God, and yet, being animated by one will, these are one and not two; having one will, his humanity is all Godlike, and his Godhead all human, and so on. And lastly, Salvation is not a matter of trying to separate the soul from the body, but is merely the turning from evil to good of the *one* will which is common to both.

And now we have to see how this scheme of harmonious unity would be rent in twain by Gnosticism. To begin with, the God who created the world and man, viz., the Demiurge, is not the same but a different and inferior God to the Supreme God who created the angels and the heavenly powers; and is a Being over whose will the will of the Supreme God has no control. He was the God of the Jews and of the Old Testament, while the Supreme God was the God of Jesus and of the New Testament—and that too at a time when the proofs of the truth of the New Dispensation had mainly to be drawn from the Old Testament Scriptures, and when, in consequence, the same God must be the inspirer of both. And further, while

this inferior God, this Demiurge, this Jehovah, had a real personality and could be worshipped, the Supreme God in spite of male and female elements had none, but was an abstract Being whom it would be as difficult to worship as the Law of Gravitation or the North Pole. So, too, the body with its passions being made by one God, and the soul or spirit by another, there was no possibility of the sin and evil of the one being acted upon by the spiritual nature of the other. And accordingly in these Gnostic systems Jesus is never a single undivided personality, the God-Man, but is either as with the Ebionites a mere man on whom the spirit of God descended at his baptism, to leave him again before the passion; or a mere Spirit, as with the Docetists, a ghost, a phantom, an appearance merely, whose body had no existence at all. In the same way the body and soul of man being the creation of two different Gods, Salvation could not be accomplished as in orthodoxy by the Spirit of the one God transforming both body and soul through the will common to both, but only by first mortifying the body and extirpating its passions by maceration and asceticism, and then relying on the effect which the mere knowledge of the existence of another and a holier God than the one who made the body, would have on the character and life.

The function of Jesus, therefore, in these systems was not to put down the kingdom of Satan or the Demiurge by a change of the heart and will through the transforming Spirit of God; but only to draw off the minds of men, as it were, from the Devil and all his works by concentrating them on the ineffable Being or Abstraction who was only to be known through his teaching. The Gnostic scheme of salvation, in a word, was not for the world at large, but only for superior persons; not for the simple-minded, but for the intellectual, the cultured, the elect. So that whereas in orthodox Christianity we have a hierarchy of wills so related as to form a consistent and harmonious whole—a scheme in which although all wills are

free yet none are isolated or independent; where the same will that made the soul of man made the world; the same will that conferred free-will on man and so permitted evil, arranged also for the suppression and extinction of that evil; where the same will that constituted the spirit of Jesus God-like and pure, kept his flesh also God-like and pure; a scheme where it is the same will in man that having enlisted his spirit to the service of Christ, has power to enlist his flesh also;—in Gnosticism instead of this union and harmony of wills we have everywhere distinction and division; the God of Nature and Man different from the Supreme God; the body of Christ divided from his Spirit and beyond its influence; the body of man separated from his spirit and outside its control; a different scheme of salvation for the vulgar and the elect; a different destiny for those who are saved by faith and for those saved by knowledge; a Code of Morality not depending on the support which the Holy Spirit can lend to the human mind in overcoming temptation, but left to the mere impulses of nature; and a destiny, in consequence, not within the reach of all, but depending on the ability and capacity which were only vouchsafed to the few. One sees, in fine, that had Gnosticism not been extruded from the bosom of the Church, it would have torn it to pieces. By its two different Gods it would have brought back the Polytheism and Devil-worship of Paganism; by its contempt of the body, the extremes of asceticism or sensuality; and by its separation of the body from the spirit it would have made of Christ either a God or a Man, but not the God-Man.

And now to return to the more immediate object of this chapter, which is to show how it was that Gnosticism stood in the way of the evolution of the conception of Jesus as a man to the conception of him as a God equal to the Father. From the above outline of the doctrine it is at once apparent that in this system Jesus far from being the only Being who knows the Father and is on an equality with Him, as in orthodox

Christianity, is subordinate even to the thirty æons or angels who hold the lowest rank in the hierarchy of the heavenly powers. He is formed by them and so is inferior to them; as they in turn are immeasureably inferior to the persons of the Godhead, one of whom alone, Monogenes or Intellect, knows the mind of the highest God of all.

Now Gnosticism while easily creeping into the Church on account of the semi-personality of its active agents, male and female, its æons, etc., was when seen to be dangerous, easily expelled again, on account of the metaphysical, half-unreal nature of these same powers. It was not until its hierarchy of lifeless emanations and abstractions were swept away and their place taken by real personalities, that it became a standing menace to the Church. This transformation was effected during the middle of the second century by Marcion, the most dangerous enemy the Church had yet known, and the one whose influence was the deepest and most far-reaching. What he did was to take the general framework of Gnosticism such as I have described it, and brushing away all the impalpable emanations of male and female essences which made up the Godhead, to put in their place the Supreme God alone—a full and living personality. This Supreme God was all Love and Mercy, but had created nothing; our world of sin and evil and imperfection being the work of the Demiurge whom Marcion identified with the Jehovah of the Jews. With this as basis and skeleton he then follows the Apostle Paul—especially in his distinction between Law and Gospel, Nature and Grace, Works and Faith, Flesh and Spirit, Sin and Righteousness, the Old Dispensation and the New. But instead of seeing with Paul that these were but different stages, an earlier and a later, a preliminary and a final, in one *single* scheme of salvation for men, the work of one and the same God adapting His means to different stages of civilization and culture, he boldly cut the process in two, ascribing the sin and misery of the world, together with the Mosaic Law and the ordinances devised to

remedy the existing state of things, to the Demiurge or Jewish Jehovah, whom he figured as the God of Nature, of Law and Justice, etc.; while reserving salvation to a Supreme God unknown until Jesus came to reveal Him; a God of Love and Mercy quite different from the other; a God not of Works but of Faith; not of Wrath and Justice but of Love; not of Creation but of Redemption. And accordingly he refused to consider Jesus as the Jewish Messiah, who as he believed was still to come as an earthly potentate. Now from these main positions all the rest of Marcion's system naturally follows—Matter and Flesh being entirely the creation of the Demiurge or Jehovah, it followed that Jesus who came to reveal the true God could have had no real material body, for this would have been a degradation; he was a pure Spirit, he alleged, who came down from Heaven in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius, having a body which was one only in appearance. In reality he was a pure æon or heavenly Spirit who neither was born, suffered, nor died. Salvation accordingly was in this system, as in the other Gnostic systems, a matter of *knowledge* and illumination, and not, as in orthodoxy, a matter of *faith* and trust in the sacrifice of one who while he was the Son of God and himself God, was at the same time a man like ourselves.

Such was the heresy of Marcion, a heresy especially dangerous from the narrow line that separated it from orthodoxy and from the teaching of the Apostle Paul. Had it succeeded in establishing itself it would have rent the Church in twain, as indeed for the time being it was well nigh doing. It would have separated the God of Creation from the God of Redemption, the Earthly nature of Christ from his Divine nature, the body of man from his spirit and soul. It had to be expelled, and we have now to ask how this was accomplished. The main instrument and authority in putting down this as well as all the other Gnostic systems was the Gospel of St. John, which although written before many of these systems were

promulgated, contained, especially in its prologue, texts which while framed in the first instance to meet earlier systems of Gnosticism, were equally decisive against these later and more elaborate forms. In Gnosticism it will be remembered, Christ is not one of the Godhead nor did he exist in the beginning with God, but is merely the offspring of the subordinate æons or angels. This was at once swept away by the first words of the first chapter of John: "In the beginning was the Word" or Christ, "and the Word was with God and the Word was God, the same was in the beginning with God." In Gnosticism, again, Intellect is the only begotten of the Father; in John (chapter i. 14) Christ is the only begotten of the Father. With both the Gnostics and Marcion, again, it is the Demiurge who is the Creator of the World; with John (chapter i. 3) all things are made by Christ. In Gnosticism Christ is not the light and life of the world but only the revealer and announcer of the light; in John (chapter i. 4) he is himself the light and life of men. In Gnosticism and with Marcion the body of Jesus was either separate from his Spirit or was only an appearance; John identifies the Logos, the Light and Life of men, with the man Jesus Christ as a whole man, body, soul, and spirit, a single undivided personality.

But besides heresies like that of Gnosticism, which hindered the ascent in evolution of Jesus from a man to a God by reason of the angels and æons who thronged the upper flights of the staircase of existence, there were other heresies that hindered his ascent by reason of the heavy human clogs with which they weighted his humanity—heresies, viz., that refused him any higher status than that of a man highly favoured by God, but still a man. These were a survival of the old original Christianity of the primitive Jerusalem Church whom the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Titus had driven for refuge beyond the Jordan. There in the little town of Pella, they continued to teach the doctrines which had been delivered to them by the personal disciples of the Lord—doctrines which the longer they

lasted reverted more and more to the Judaism from which they originally sprang. These doctrines although varying in detail among the different sects, and in the degree to which they approximated to pure Judaism, were afterwards lumped together under the general name of the Ebionitic Heresy. The ground common to nearly all of them was that Jesus was a mere man born of Joseph and Mary who had been raised by his piety to his present exalted position, but whose life-work and teaching formed no break, but were a mere continuation of the Law of Moses which still remained as binding as before. The stricter of these sects, the Ebionites proper—those who had remained beyond the Jordan far from the contact of the Gentile world, and who accepted the traditions of the Pharisees as well as the Law of Moses—made circumcision and the other rites of the Law binding on Gentile as well as Jew. But the more moderate of them, the Nazarenes as they were called—those who had returned to Jerusalem after the re-building of the city by Hadrian and who had come in consequence more into contact with the Gentile Christians—rejected the traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees, and made circumcision obligatory only on converts of Jewish birth. A third section again, represented by the author of the Clementine Homilies, was allied in many points of doctrine to the Essenes, of which sect, indeed, they were in all probability an offshoot. Their doctrines might be described as a kind of universalist Judaism, as that of St. Paul was a kind of universalist Christianity. According to them there was only one Divine religion, the same throughout from Adam to Jesus, (except that it had been now and then corrupted by false prophecy) and that religion was Judaism; Christianity being only a part of it, an extension of it. Jesus himself was not divine, but was a prophet and perfectly holy man. He had appeared before in history; first as the ideal Adam of Paradise who was made in the image of God; then as Moses; and now in these later times as Jesus. In this system baptism took the place of circumcision; ablutions as with the

Essenes the place of sacrifice; and salvation was a matter of legal observances and not of faith. The system was in framework a kind of Gnosticism, filled in with Jewish rather than with Pagan elements. For instead of a Godhead consisting of sets of Divine principles male and female, there was but one God, who however had a body and was enclosed in a vast void. Instead of Evil existing outside of Him, it was contained within Him. Indeed, they believed He was made up of good and bad elements, male and female, Wisdom and Satan; and in this way they accounted for the dualism that bisects Nature and runs through all existence; Heaven and Earth, Day and Night, Angels and Demons, Judaism and Paganism, Monotheism and Polytheism, and so on.

Now these Ebionite heresies, again, like those of Gnosticism, were all alike brushed aside by the authority of the gospel of St. John, as enforced and interpreted by Irenæus, Tertullian, and others of the early Fathers, where Jesus instead of being represented as a man, is everywhere represented as the incarnate Logos, as God Himself and the Son of God. In chapter x. 30, it is said, "I and my Father are One." In chapter xiv. 9, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" in verse 10, "I am in the Father and the Father in me," etc.

And so, with this ascent of Jesus from being a man to being the Son of God and a Person of the Godhead—and the consequent abolition of all angels, principalities, æons, and the like who stood in the way of his full Divinity—the age of Apostolic Christianity closes. The next stage will consist in the evolution of Jesus from being the Son of God begotten of God but not yet equal or co-eternal with God, to the point where he is both co-equal and co-eternal with Him; and in the evolution of the Holy Ghost from being an emanation or effluence of God merely, to being a Person of the Godhead co-equal and co-eternal with both the Father and the Son.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON.

AT this point it may be as well perhaps to pause with the view of bringing into line certain aspects in the Evolution of Christianity which have unavoidably been allowed to lag behind in the course of this history, as preliminary to a further advance. Many if not all of these will most fitly find their place in connexion with the formation of the New Testament Canon, some account of which it is now necessary that I should lay before the reader. It will be remembered that our uniform contention throughout this work has been that the supreme importance of Christianity to the world lay not so much in the present or prospective joys which it opened up before the imaginations of men for their contemplation and delight, stimulating and sustaining as these have been, as in the precious cargo of morality with which it was freighted as trustee for the whole human race. And it has been our further contention that before it could supplant the high civilization and culture of the Pagan world, it was necessary that its 'Scheme of Salvation' should not only be harmonious and logic-proof at all points, but that it should be capable of being given like some rare gem an appropriate setting in a great scheme of World-thought—that is to say that it should be capable of being expanded into a World-philosophy as well —as into a World-religion. But on enquiring as to how this

was to be effected, it was found that it could only be done by taking the life and work of Jesus and lifting them out of their relations to time and place, to circumstance and environment, and making them a mere episode as it were in some great Scheme of Redemption let down from on high for the salvation of men; and so giving them an immutable, fixed, and eternal character. And yet when one came to consider it carefully, it seemed clear that however necessary some scheme of this kind might be for the subjugation of the great Pagan world, still the truth or falsehood of Christianity must primarily and always be a question of *historical fact;* and further that before any philosophical framework in which it could be set could have the least chance of success, not only the facts of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, but above all the meaning and significance of these facts, must be so safe-guarded at all points as to be put beyond the reach of change, cavil, or decay. But it soon became evident that what with the deep-lying scepticism with which the pretensions and claims of one coming in the humble guise and environment of Jesus were sure to be met among the cultured both of the Jews and Greeks; what with the corroding effects of Time in dulling the impact and obliterating the memory of all mortal things;—it was evident that when once the original eye-witnesses and the generation immediately in touch with them had passed away, something more than the mere traditions of the Church, or even the personal memoirs left by the Apostles, was necessary if the precious facts of the life and death of Jesus with all they meant for the world and mankind were to retain their original integrity and purity undimmed. And yet where else was the Church to look for proof—to what else could she appeal? Many of the converts, it was well known, as well as many who had been in doubt and perplexity, had been vouchsafed visions of the risen Jesus, persuading, comforting, and consoling; but although many conversions had been due to these visitations, and the faith of many had been indefinitely strengthened

thereby, still in spite of the burning enthusiasm and belief which they engendered in those thus privileged (as notably in the case of Paul), they were at best but individual and personal experiences, and so were untransferable in their full impressiveness to other minds. Some external evidence or authority more relevant than this was clearly needed if the doubts and perplexities of the Pagan world were to be removed.

Now if it could be shown that some person or persons laying claim to supernatural vision or acknowledged to be the recipients of Divine communications, had in writings accessible to all, and of undoubted antiquity, predicted that the facts of the life and death of Jesus should take place in the way in which they had taken place, and with the meaning and significance which Jesus himself had claimed for them—would not this be a form of proof which if it could be substantiated ought to and would carry conviction to Jew and Greek alike—and all the more so if the facts and their significance were of that exceptional character which removed them from the range and power of all merely natural human penetration and insight? Clearly it ought and would; and hence it was that the 'proof from prophecy' as it was called, which had been of first importance for the Church from the earliest ages, became now that the eye-witnesses and the first generation of believers had passed away, the very citadel of the faith. And hence, too, it was that the Old Testament Scriptures which safe-guarded and enbalmed these prophecies, retained with the Christians as with the Jews, their character as a first-hand Revelation from God. Indeed, for the Church to have repudiated the Jewish Scriptures along with the Jewish Religion would have been to have destroyed the very foundation on which Christianity itself reposed; and must not and could not be. For if one circumstance more than another could show how essential the proof from prophecy was to the very existence of Christianity it was this—that these early Christians should in the face of the bitter persecutions which they met with at the hands of

the Jews, have consented to receive in all humility and on bended knee these Scriptures of their dearest foes along with the kicks and curses with which they were accompanied. As well expect the souls of the Armenians butchered by the Turks, to approach the throne of Grace with the words of the Koran on their lips! From all of which it will be readily understood that compared with the Old Testament Scriptures which was the source of these prophecies, even the memoirs of the Apostles themselves must have held in the esteem of the Church a position of quite secondary and subordinate importance.

Of secondary authority too, when compared with the Old Testament—although of very high importance to the Church itself in all that concerned disputed questions of doctrine and practice—must have been the Epistles of those Apostles who had been the bosom companions of the Master, or who had received their authority and commission from him. And yet curiously enough, the Epistles of Paul which as the ages rolled on became more and more the mainstay of the Church—so far that is to say as its dogma was concerned—were in his own time and so long as the eye-witnesses were alive (and especially so long as the safe-guarding of the historical facts was of life and death moment for the Church), held in comparatively little esteem except of course in those mother-churches which he had himself founded, or those daughter-churches which had sprung from them. And this for several reasons. In the first place he had not himself personally known Jesus in the flesh—a point of much moment with these early Christians and one not lightly to be countervailed. In the second place although his ethical teaching generally was one with that of Jesus, he nowhere dwells lovingly like the other Evangelists on the facts of the Life, and scarcely, if at all on those proofs from Prophecy which alone could give these facts their real significance either for the Church itself or for the world at large. On the contrary he everywhere in his writings regards the mission

of Jesus and his appearance among men as but mere episodes in a great world-scheme of redemption planned in Heaven and having its full significance only in the secret Councils of God. And hence it was that during the long period in which the historical facts of the Life and the Proofs from Prophecy were the most pressing necessities for the Church, his writings were relegated to an inferior and subordinate position—inferior not only to the memoirs of the Evangelists, but to all those other writings in which the facts of the Life and the proofs from Prophecy were insisted upon. What befell them subsequently we shall see further on.

In the meantime, with the second generation of believers a new necessity had arisen for the Church—and that was that the Historical Facts of the Life and Death should be given such a setting as would enable them to dovetail harmoniously into some larger scheme of Thought, that is to say, into a system of World-Philosophy. Now to meet this necessity the Gnostics had already anticipated the Church, and had endeavoured in the way we have already seen, to fit the Gospel into a complex syncretic scheme made up of Platonism, Pythagoreanism, and Oriental Mysticism generally—a scheme however which brought with it from Egyptian and Syrian Nature-Worship so many impure and divergent elements, so many elements that were incapable of amalgamating with the simple faith of the Gospel, that had these heretics succeeded in their endeavour to erect Christianity into a harmonious system of philosophy, they would have wrecked it as a religion. And accordingly we find that the Apostolic Fathers who belong to this period—Clement, Barnabas, Hermas, Ignatius, Polycarp, Diognetus, Papias and the rest—were so distracted by the confused whirlwind of opinion blowing in on them from all sides, that while holding on desperately in their extremity to the Church Tradition as embodied in the 'Rule of Faith' of the Baptismal Confession, and clutching convulsively now at this and now at that aspect of the faith, they managed to lose

both the whole-heartedness and simplicity of the Evangelists and the all-round symmetry and completeness of Paul. Some like Barnabas, for example, while clinging to the Proof from Prophecy, degraded into a mere allegory the very Old Testament which was the basis of that prophecy! Others again like Papias clung to the Second Coming and the immediate hopes of the Millenium, and ignored Paul and his scheme of Salvation altogether. Some, again, like Ignatius and Polycarp, imitated Paul in parts, but showed no signs of having accepted his doctrines as a whole. But it is significant of the trend that Christian thought was beginning to take, that the only document perhaps to which all alike were agreed in paying homage and respect, and on which they all seem to have based their faith, was the Epistle to the Hebrews—in which, it will be remembered, Jesus as the central point in the Scheme of Redemption is figured as a Sacrifice—the perfect sacrifice who had 'shed his blood for us' after the manner of, and as an analogy with the old Jewish sacrifices.

In the meantime a vast Apocryphal Literature had been springing up, rank and luxuriant as a Brazilian forest, and overspreading the whole field of tradition, threatening by its very thickness and density to bury out of sight the simple idylls of the Gospel. These writings were for the most part based on our own Gospels, and were constructed generally on the simple plan of taking the names of those characters who had received bare mention in the Gospel narratives, tricking them out in all manner of fantastic and legendary guises after the manner of the Jewish Haggada, and filling in their original baldness of incident with all manner of sentimental or pious details drawn from the writers' own imaginations. Such were the histories of Joseph, of Nicodemus; the Acts of Pilate, of Philip, of Thomas, of Paul and Thecla, and many others. One of the favourite themes for the pens of these romancers, and around which a world of fables hung, was the Infancy of Jesus—the wonders which he performed in his cradle far out-doing the

classic exploit of the strangling of snakes by the infant Hercules. But all these histories were purely apocryphal, and were, as Renan says, more like the verbiage of old gossips, and the familiarity and vulgarity of nursery maids and wet-nurses, than serious contributions to Christian Thought. Yet like the legends of the Saints and Martyrs of Mediæval Catholicism, they pleased the people by the free play they gave to sentiment, imagination, and piety; and it was from these Apocrypha that the Apostles received each those special characteristics which clung to their names down through the Middle Ages. It was from them, too, that came the Church Festivals of the Assumption, the Presentation of the Virgin, and the rest, as well as those beautiful legends which have made the Christmas season the joy of the year. Then again there were the Apocalypses which were constructed on the model of the books of Daniel and Enoch—Apocalypses of Ezekiel, of Elias, of Moses, of Abraham, of Seth, of Paul, of Peter, of John, and indeed of nearly every prominent figure in the Old and New Testaments—of all of which only the Apocalypse of John received a place in the New Testament Canon. Sooner or later of course all this legendary and apocryphal literature would have had to be put under a ban by the Church, and its further manufacture suppressed, if Christianity were not to become the laughing-stock of the whole cultured world. But its multiplication might have gone on for an indefinite period yet, had it not been for a crisis which occurred in the history of the Church, and which brought it all to a sudden termination.

It appears that Marcion—the most dangerous of the heretics—on finding himself unable to bring over the bishops of the Church, and in consequence the great body of their flocks, to his own peculiar views, had hit on the ingenious expedient of selecting from the great mass of Christian literature then in circulation, such works only as lent support to his own side in the controversy; binding these into a Canon of his own; and rejecting and condemning all the rest as being

either apocryphal, un-apostolic, or in some way wanting in real authority. In making his selection of books he had restricted himself entirely, it is true, to writings of apostolic origin and of unquestionable authenticity—admitting none that were not afterwards admitted into the orthodox Canon, although indeed excluding many that were regarded by the Church as of vital importance to the faith. In these exclusions he seems to have been guided practically by one consideration only, viz. as to whether the documents in question did or did not lend countenance and support to the Old Testament. If they did, they were ruthlessly excluded; if not, they were admitted. Acting on this principle he excluded Matthew and Mark because of the way in which they had connected the facts of the Life of Jesus with the fulfilment of Old Testament Prophecy. The Epistle to the Hebrews, again, he excluded because of the recognition accorded by that document to the Old Testament Dispensation as having had for its time and place in its system of sacrifices a real atoning efficacy; while the Acts of the Apostles were excluded, because of the recognition that was accorded in them to the Jewish party in the Church, in the account given of the Council at Jerusalem.

Meantime the Gnostics also had been busy with other schemes. Finding themselves excluded from communion by the power and authority of the bishops, they had hit on a different expedient from that of Marcion, the expedient, viz., of denying that the traditional interpretation of the Gospels was the true one, and maintaining on the contrary that it was adapted only to those simple souls who indeed formed the bulk of the Church, but who they alleged could only be made to feel by means of sensuous symbols, and only be led by sensuous satisfactions, here or hereafter. To get at the real truth hidden in the letter of the Old, and what was afterwards to be the New Testament, these works, they said, had to be interpreted allegorically, and even cabalistically, partly by means of numbers, and partly through a mystic and

secret process to which they alone had the key. They further professed that they were the recipients of a secret and esoteric tradition which had descended to them by a kind of free-masonry through a long line of initiates from Jesus himself—who it was affirmed had communicated these precious secrets to those of his disciples who were capable of receiving them, and by whom they had again been passed on through a chosen number of the *illuminati* from generation to generation until they had reached these latter-day Gnostics themselves, and by them had been given to the world. Among books of theirs, one—the Pistis Sophia—has come down to us, and in it the curious can still see the great part played in these systems by those numbers and symbols which were so dear to the genius of the East.

Now in taking up this aggressive attitude towards the Church, the Heretics do not seem to have perceived that had they been successful they would not only have destroyed the Church and orthodoxy, but would by the same act have annihilated themselves and their own heresies as well. For they would have torn up by the roots the only proofs on which a Christianity of any kind could rest,—the proof from Tradition and the proof from Prophecy; the Gnostics, by supplanting the Church tradition by a secret unprovable tradition of their own; Marcion, by repudiating the authority of that Old Testament which gave to the proof from Prophecy all its value.

Now it was to checkmate these moves on the part of the heretics, that the New Testament Canon was compiled. The principles which guided the unknown compilers in the selection of the books which were to be included in it may practically be reduced to three. The first was the necessity of safe-guarding the Historical Facts by documents supporting the open traditions of the Church as against the secret tradition of the Gnostics. The second was the necessity of safe-guarding the authority of the Old Testament from which the

proof from Prophecy was drawn, as against the repudiation of both by Marcion. The third was the necessity, now becoming every day more urgent, of giving to the facts of the Life such a philosophical setting as would commend them to the culture of that great Pagan World which it was the mission of Christianity ultimately to subdue. There were other minor considerations to which we shall have to refer presently, but the above were the three most consciously present to the minds of the compilers—and we now have to ask what those special considerations were which in each case guided them in the choice of the particular books of the New Testament.

To begin with then we may say that in all probability the Gospel of Matthew was selected for the first place not so much for the testimony which it bore to the facts of the Life of Jesus, nor yet for the very complete account it gave of his moral teaching as recorded in the Sermon on the Mount—for in a general way both the details of the Life and the Sermon on the Mount were given by Luke also—but it was given the first place rather because of the persistence with which Matthew everywhere connects the main episodes of the Life and Death with Old Testament Prophecy in his ever recurring phrase "that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." Mark, again, the earliest in time as well as the most simple, *naïve*, and unsophisticated of the Evangelists was given a second place in the Canon in all probability because he has everywhere kept in the foreground of his narrative those purely thaumaturgic and miraculous powers of Jesus which have been found so necessary in all ages and times for securing at once the awe and the admiration of the multitude. Luke, again, in spite of his variation and in parts divergence from the other Synoptists, was given a place in the Canon in all probability because he had everywhere extended the privileges and promises of the Gospel to the great outlying Gentile world—in contra-distinction to Matthew who in several passages had definitively restricted them to the Jews, and in all had given the Jews the

first place in the heirship to the kingdom. He had also in harmony with this view emphasized the fact that the original Gospel of Jesus was a gospel for the poor and the hungry, rather than for the 'poor in spirit' and the 'hungry and thirsty after righteousness'—which was the gloss that Matthew had given to it. As a further testimony to this broad and universal spirit of Luke, it may be noted in passing that while Matthew traces the pedigree of Jesus up to David and Abraham, the fathers of the Jews alone; Luke carries it back to Adam himself, the father of all mankind.

The Gospel of John again is assigned the fourth place in the Canon, not so much on account of its age or its doctrine, for in both these respects its natural place would have been at the very end, but rather because being mainly a record of the Life, it naturally found its place among the other memoirs of the Life. Of its real significance we shall see more in another place.

The Acts of the Apostles, again, were admitted into the Canon, to meet a want which was unexpectedly sprung on the Compilers when confronted with the necessity of constructing a Canon which should be complete and satisfactory at all points. For it was a matter of the first importance, it is to be remembered, if all gaps for the entrance of heresy were to be closed, that each and every article of faith, doctrine, or tradition, should have had the unanimous support of *all* the Twelve Apostles. Now it had been a tradition in the Church from very early times, that the split alleged to have occurred between the original Church of Jerusalem and the Apostle Paul on the question of circumcision and other observances of the Jewish Law, as well as of the extension of the Gospel to the Gentiles, was in reality only a myth, and had no existence in fact at all. But when the Compilers came to look for documents of the Twelve to support this contention, it was found that many of the Apostles had left no authentic documents of any kind behind them. What then was to be done?

After some search it was discovered that there was a work in existence which in part at least was of undoubted age and authority and which went far to meet the difficulty. This was the Acts of the Apostles. For although it is now all but universally agreed that this document is a very mixed and heterogeneous one, it is also all but universally agreed that the log-book giving us an account of the journeys of the Apostle Paul is authentic, and that the doctrine of the early chapters—in which Jesus is figured rather as a man chosen by God and exalted for his obedience, than as God Himself or the Son of God—could only have been a production of the Apostolic Age. But the immediate and pressing interest the Acts of the Apostles had for the Compilers of the Canon was that it contained just such an account of the reconciliation between Paul on the one hand, and the Twelve as represented in the Council of Jerusalem by Peter, James, and John, on the other—on this matter of circumcision and of the extension of the Gospel to the Gentiles—as was fitted to meet the difficulty. It was accordingly added to the Canon.

The question of whether or not the Epistles of Paul should be included offered less difficulty to the Compilers. For it was not now with Paul as it had been in the earlier days when owing to his not having known Jesus in the flesh, and not having lent much support to the proof from Prophecy, his writings had been a source of some perplexity, and had been regarded with very mixed feelings by the Church at large. The time had now come when, as we have said, it was a vital necessity to the Church that the significance for mankind of the Life and Death of Jesus should be so exhibited as to be capable of fitting harmoniously into some scheme of Philosophy adapted both to Jews and Greeks, and able to enter the lists as a rival to the other philosophies of the time. In our next chapter we shall see that it was in its character as a Philosophy, that Justin and the other Apologists laid their views of Christianity before the great Pagan Emperors and

philosophers, the Antonines, for their serious consideration and judgment; and it was as supplying a partial basis for such a Philosophy that the writings of Paul now laid claim to the distinction and prominence which as the ages rolled on they were more and more to receive from the Church. Only partially, I have said, not fully; for with him Jesus is still only a *creation* of God—the second Adam, the man from Heaven, having a body although a glorified and ethereal one, the Angel and Wisdom of God who stood at His right hand to do His will—but not a Being spiritually *begotten* of God, the Son of God, the Logos, a pure Spiritual Essence, as he afterwards became with the author of the Fourth Gospel. In the writings of Paul therefore, Christ could not as yet take his place as one of a Trinity of pure spiritual essences;—and this he must become if Christianity were ever to hope to take over and absorb into itself the highest production of Pagan Philosophy, the Neo-Platonic, viz. which was now running in full sail alongside of Christianity, but gradually approaching it, and presently to be amalgamated with it. It was only partially, therefore, that Paul could fulfil the necessity laid on the Church by the spirit of the time. His real merit consisted in this, that when once the writer of the Fourth Gospel had taken the step which made of Christ not a pre-existent man—the second Adam, the man from Heaven, created by God—but a pure Spirit, the Logos, the Son of God; when once, I say, the scheme of Paul was re-constituted with this alteration and addition, it became the most complete and harmonious scheme of the World which the Church had yet known, the great model to which Augustine and Luther alike had to return when they sought to repair the breaches that had been made in the faith, or had to bring its theology more into harmony with the needs of the time.

But apart from this, the writings of Paul must have been added to the Canon to meet an even more pressing and immediately urgent necessity, viz., to checkmate Marcion. Now to

appreciate fully the wariness and sagacity with which the Church moved in its life and death struggle with this great heretic, a few observations to bring clearly into view the points in the dispute, and the difficulties that had to be overcome, will perhaps be necessary.

It will be remembered that Paul while abolishing the old Jewish Law in favour of the Law of Liberty in Christ Jesus, still held that both the Jewish and the Christian Dispensations were but different stages in a single Divine plan, the work of *one and the same God*. But Marcion finding that the God of the Old Testament was represented as a Being quite different in nature from the God of the New—being rather a God of stern justice, and even of cruelty and revenge than a God of mercy and of love—and perceiving that Paul by the very fact of his having set aside the Law of the Old Testament Jehovah in favour of the Law revealed by Jesus in the New (and more especially by his having denied the efficacy of the Old Law for the remission of sin), had practically admitted a difference of authority in the authors of them, boldly advanced to the natural and in its way logical conclusion, that the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New could not be one and the same Being, as Paul had implied, but must be two different Beings. And as a consequence of this he declared further that Jesus was not the Messiah of the Old Testament at all—for that Messiah being a conquering, kingly Messiah, was still to come—and indeed that he had no connexion whatever either with the Old Testament, its Prophecies, or its Messiah. Now in taking up this position it is obvious that Marcion had quite overleapt the fence of orthodoxy within which Paul had managed to confine himself, and had fallen on the other side. For in thus denying the authority of the Old Testament, he tore up by the roots that proof from Prophecy on which, as we have seen, not only orthodoxy but even his own heterodoxy must ultimately repose if it should ever hope to remove the scepticism or escape the destructive criticism of the great

Pagan World. To arrest this imminent danger to the faith, the Church accordingly, wary as usual, executed one of those strategetical movements for which in all ages she has been so justly celebrated. Unable to take Marcion in front by making a direct breach in his logic, she managed effectually to turn his flank by inserting in the new Canon those very writings of Paul on which he had relied for the support of his heresy! In this way the Compilers brought divine authority to the support of orthodoxy, which by making the Old and New Dispensation *stages* merely in the providential plan of One God adapting his means to the different stages of moral advance of different ages and peoples, had stopped short just at the point where the proof from Prophecy was still available. And here again we may pause to remark that if yet another proof were wanted (beyond that of their accepting their Bible at the hands of their greatest enemies the Jews)—of how essential to the very existence of the Church was this proof from Prophecy, it would be found in the promptness with which she expelled Marcion as a heretic in spite of the fact that the deductions which he drew both from the Old Testament Scriptures themselves and from the avowal of Paul, were at once logical and reasonable, and must have been accepted were it not for the blow which their admission would have struck at the very foundations of the Faith.

And now, returning to the Fourth Gospel, we are in a position to appreciate more fully the reasons which made it so important an addition to the Canon. It was not only because by advancing the conception of Christ from that of a *creation* of God, the man from Heaven—where it had been left by Paul—to that of a pure spirit *begotten* by God, the Logos or Son of God, it first made possible, although as yet only in general terms, that future evolution of the Trinity which received its final and perfect shape from Athanasius, and which was absolutely necessary if Christianity were ever to absorb and replace the thought of the Ancient World. This no doubt

was the ultimate and final reason for its inclusion in the Canon; but, as in the case of Paul, there were other reasons of more immediate and pressing importance. Of these the most important was that it had identified Christ not only with God but with the real man Jesus—the Jesus of the Synoptics—and so had swept away at a stroke all those heresies which still hung like Cossacks on the flanks of the Church to perplex and harass her. Besides sweeping away the Ebionites—who believed that Jesus was a man and not a God—by its doctrine of the Logos; it now by identifying Christ with the real man Jesus swept away the Docetists and Marcionites who regarded the body of Christ as a phantom, a spectacular illusion, and not real flesh and blood at all; as well as the Gnostics, who regarded the body and soul of Jesus as two distinct and separate entities, with different origin and destination, occupying like lodgers the same dwelling-house for a season, but unable to combine so as to form a real *human* personality. For although in the Fourth Gospel the facts of the Life are everywhere given such a setting as shall keep in evidence the Divinity of Jesus rather than his humanity, and although the human weaknesses so patent in the other Evangelists are studiously kept in the background in John, and only such traits of love and mercy as are consistent with a Divine nature are permitted to appear; still throughout the Gospel, the Son of God is so identified with the man Jesus as to leave no doubt of his real and true manhood; and so for the first time in the history of the Church, Christ appears not as the man sent from God, or as the angel that appeared to Abraham, Moses, and Joshua, but as the God-man. In our next chapter we shall see Irenæus starting from this new conception of the God-man, and after fitting it into the great framework of Pauline Thought, constructing out of it a new system of Theology.

With the Four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles of Paul, as its mainstay, the Canon might so far as the chief doctrines of the faith are concerned, have been

practically closed. But the necessity for an uniformity of *discipline* was in its way almost as pressing as the necessity for an unity of doctrine. Among other problems there was the great political one of the relation of the Church to the Empire, as well as the social one of the relations of the members of the Church to the Pagan world by which they were surrounded and in which they still lived as strangers and aliens. Then again there were the perplexing questions as to the relation of master and slave when one only was a Christian, and between husband and wife when the marriage was a mixed one. There were the problems too of Church Government, of the authority of the Bishops, and of the duties of the members to each other; as well as of husband to wife, parent to child, and *vice versâ*. Then again there was the whole field of practical morality to be considered, and answers to be given to such questions as whether marriage or celibacy, moderation or asceticism, temperance or total abstinence were preferable, and so on,—to all of which the Church, holding on as usual to that wise moderation, that golden mean in all things which has always characterized her when circumstances were not too strong for her, replied by the inclusion of the Pastoral Epistles—the Epistles to Timothy and Titus—in the Canon.

If evidence were wanted of how important it was to the Church to have the hall-mark of Apostolicity stamped on all its documents, it could nowhere be better seen than in the inclusion of the Epistles of Peter, James, and John, in the Canon. There is nothing distinctive in doctrine in any of these productions; at the same time there is nothing heretical, and nothing to stand in the way of further development. The Ethics of them all, too, are sound and orthodox; and in James and Peter the hopes of the Second Coming are strong. The style, tone, and sentiment of the Epistles of John, which mark them out as in all probability productions of the author of the Fourth Gospel, strengthened rather than otherwise the authority of that Gospel now that it was added

to the Canon. Otherwise there was nothing distinctive about any of these writings. Whether they were the genuine productions of the authors whose names they bore was but of secondary importance to the Compilers. It was enough that they had long been in circulation as such, and that they contained nothing that was incompatible with the then existing standard of orthodoxy. This may seem a strange assertion, but if proof were wanted that mere authenticity alone was not sufficient to ensure admission into the Canon, and that nothing, however old or sacred, could be allowed to stand in the way of the existing requirements of orthodoxy, it would be found in the fact that the 'Gospel of the Hebrews,' which was the earliest of all the documents of the Apostolic Age and is regarded as the original of our Matthew, which had been in circulation from the very earliest times, and from which many of the quotations from the Fathers not to be found in our Gospels were believed to be drawn—this Gospel, which on every ground of age, authenticity, and authority, ought to have occupied the first place in the Canon, was excluded from it and ruthlessly suppressed. And for what reason? Because it supported what had indeed been the doctrine of the immediate followers of Jesus, but which by the time the Canon was compiled had become the damnable doctrine of the Ebionites, that is to say of those who denied the Divinity of Christ.

And lastly there was the great body of the faithful to be considered—simple souls who had been living all these years in the delusive expectation of the second coming of Christ to establish his kingdom at Jerusalem on the ruins of the Roman Empire, now believed to be given over entirely to the power of Satan. These hopes had been growing more and more dim and uncertain as the years passed away, and much murmuring in consequence was to be heard among the faithful at the delay, but the slightest breeze on the political horizon had always been sufficient to fan them into life again. In this way

they had been kept aglow far into the second century, and long after the generation to whom the promises had originally been given by the Master had sunk to rest. To meet the hopes of so many earnest and pious souls who had staked their all on it, and to fulfil promises of which the Synoptics and the Epistles of Paul, now that they were included in the Canon, were the perpetuated pledge and reminder, the Book of Revelations—an old Jewish Apocalypse with a Christian beginning and ending superadded, and with some internal alterations made in it to suit Christian sentiment—was added to the Canon. Other books again like the Apocalypse of Peter, for many ages yet hung uncertain, partly within and partly without the Canon, as it were, but in the end, somewhere in the fourth or fifth century, were either positively excluded, or quietly allowed to drop out of the divinely inspired circle of the faith.

The Canon thus compiled, the Church was now not only safe-guarded at all points from the enemies within her fold, but was prepared to confront the Pagan World with a scheme which should account for the World and for Human Life in a manner not possible to the other philosophies of the time. The historical facts of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus were safe-guarded by the Synoptics; and their meaning and significance for mankind by the 'Old Guard' of the faith —the proof from Prophecy. The authority of the Old Testament, again, on which this proof from Prophecy itself reposed, was secured by the authority of Paul and the Synoptics. The Fourth Gospel answered for the full Divinity of Christ as well as for his real and true manhood; while the Acts threw over all the common mantle of the Twelve Apostles. The Politics of the Church, too, in its relation to the Empire, its internal organization and the code of morality it was to follow amid the difficulties and complexities of its environment, were made uniform and final by the Pastoral Epistles and by the genuine Epistles of Paul; while the Second Coming to which all with varying degrees of longing looked forward, was guaranteed, in

a way that could be literally or allegorically construed according as the event turned out, by the Book of Revelations.

And now we have to ask what effect the compilation of the Canon had on the future of the Church and her Theology? To begin with we may say that its most immediate effect was to weed out from the congregations those heresies that had grown up among them, and to compel the heretics to cut themselves off from communion with the Church, prior to their final condemnation a century or two later by the great Councils. Its next effect was to put a stop once and for all to the manufacture of that Apocryphal Literature on which these heresies had so long lived and thrived; and, by making the Canon alone of divine inspiration, to degrade all other Christian literature to a subordinate rank as merely human productions, good or bad as the case might be, according as they did or did not lend support to the current orthodoxy. But not only did the Canon degrade all Church literature outside of itself to a secondary and merely human rank; it relegated even the Old Testament Scriptures to a place in the dim and shadowy background. For although both Testaments were theoretically of equal authority as being both divinely inspired, it was found as time went on that while the New Testament could be interpreted literally for purposes of instruction in doctrine or discipline, the Old Testament could only be applied through the most far-fetched, strained, and allegorical interpretations, which would unsettle everything and could settle nothing. The consequence, again, of this decline in the relative authority of the Old Testament, was in the first place to divert the future evolution of doctrine from the old Jewish channels within which it must more or less have continued to be confined so long as Old Testament Scripture alone counted for anything, and to throw Christianity freely open to the reception of as much Greek Thought and influence as could be made to harmonize with its own creed. Another effect was to lower the value of the proof from Prophecy—now that the Gospel

of Jesus Christ could stand alone on documents of its own, and which were dictated by the very Spirit of God Himself. Another important result of the formation of the New Testament Canon was to make it the main theatre and battle-ground on which all future heresies were to be fought out, and from which all sides alike drew as from an armoury weapons for the fray. The Montanists, for example, drew support for their belief that the Holy Spirit had descended on some of their members and had made them the medium for Divine revelations, from the promise of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel that he would send the Paraclete after he had gone. The Monarchians, as we shall see in a following chapter, appealed to the passages in John and Paul where the Son is made subordinate to the Father in all things; the Trinitarians, again, to those in which the Father and Son are assumed to be co-equal and co-eternal. And thus it would appear at first sight that the formation of the New Canon and the subordination of the Old to it was calculated to deflect the even course of evolution from its old path on to new lines; but in reality it was practically preserved from this by three main influences. The first was the persistency with which the Church clung to the 'rule of faith' and the simple facts of the gospel as a clue to guide it through all its perplexities. The second was that, although interpreting all things by the words of the New Testament texts, the Church still claimed that the meaning of these texts was to be got only through her own Tradition. And the last was that as the Canon had been formed of documents embodying each and every stage of Christian doctrine from the time of Jesus onwards, so passages were always to be found *somewhere* that would support any or every view which could be taken of the Trinity, of the nature of God or of Christ, of Redemption, of Sin and Grace, of Faith and Works, and so on.

But the compilation of the Canon, although a matter of the most pressing necessity for the Church at the time,

nevertheless carried in itself the germs of future mischief. For by its doctrine of the verbal inspiration of each and every part, the Church consecrated the bad as well as the good, the transient and local, as well as the universal and abiding; and so gave fixedness and perpetuity to contradictions and errors that in after ages were to be fatal to her peace. Besides, by making it appear that the Book had been dictated by the Spirit of God Himself, it entirely destroyed its character as a historical document, the product of different ages, of many minds, and of various phases and stages of thought and development—all of which will more clearly appear as the course of this evolution proceeds.

But before closing this chapter a word is necessary, perhaps, on the evolution of the centre of authority in the Church during the period we have been traversing, and up to the formation of the Canon—but only a word. For what happened with the Church was what happens with every association, society, community, or nation, which originally voluntarily formed finds itself obliged to protect itself either against internal enemies or foreign foes. It had to organize itself, and the method of doing this is practically the same whether it be in a joint-stock enterprise, a revolutionary movement, or an established government. Beginning as a pure democracy in which all its members (always of course excepting the Apostles) had an equal voice, the Church passed to the stage where a number of elders were elected from the rest with a purely delegated authority and for the purpose of doing the necessary business connected with the society; and from that again to the stage where a president appointed from among these elders took the initiative and retained the casting vote—the great body of the Church being only occasionally consulted on matters of more than ordinary importance. From that again it is but a step to the point where this President or Bishop has full administrative and executive powers given him in the name and on behalf of the Church; and but another (especially when heresy begins to

appear) to his being invested with full Apostolic power by the gift of the Spirit, for the decision of all questions of faith and morals. The Bishops thus set apart as an order by themselves, the same process repeats itself with them as had taken place with the Church at large. Beginning at first as equal in authority among themselves, presently to one of the Sees—either from its age, its historical or political associations, its geographical position, or its economic resources—is yielded the position of referee in any disputes that may chance to arise. From this it is but a step to its becoming the initiator of new policies, and the referee in disputed questions of doctrine or discipline; and from this, again, but a single step to the Popedom. After the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Jerusalem Church, the Churches of Rome, Alexandria, and Ephesus took the lead; but presently among these again, Rome became first the mediator, then the referee, then the Dictator. But at the time of the compilation of the Canon these latter developments had not yet arisen; and the bishops although supreme in their own dioceses were still more or less on an equality among themselves; the lead being in the hands of the Bishops of Rome, Alexandria, Ephesus, or Antioch, but already with a pronounced tendency in favour of Rome.

CHAPTER IX.

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THE PAGAN PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

BUT before proceeding further with our History, another important and much disputed question remains to be considered, viz., as to how it was that of all the religions of the time the Christian religion alone was persecuted by the Roman State? Historians have in the main been inclined to regard the problem as one connected with Religion and not with Politics, misled in this doubtless by the fact that the persecutions ensued on the refusal of the Christians to offer up prayers to the Pagan gods or burn incense before the images of Cæsar, as well as by the fact that it was ever a main article of the Christian creed to render unto Cæsar the things that were Cæsar's, a doctrine which would naturally have made them politically inoffensive. But as I believe the question to have been a purely political one and one not bearing on religion at all, I must ask the reader's indulgence while I make a few observations with the view of clearing the subject from the complications which surround and obscure it.

At the outset then we may lay it down as a general principle that Polytheisms by their very nature tend to religious toleration, as Monotheisms do to religious persecution. In Monotheisms, where the very existence of more gods than one is denied, the worship of any other god is a direct insult to the

Deity, and is of itself sufficient to arouse the deepest passions of the human heart. But in Polytheisms, where the existence of other gods is freely admitted, this difficulty does not arise; and where the conquest of another people carries with it the conception of the conquest of the gods of that people, it is evident that if you wish to incorporate that people and not to exterminate it, there is no more reason for suppressing its peculiar worship than for suppressing its peculiar manners, customs, and laws. It is enough if the gods of the conquered people are admitted into the Pantheon of the conquerors on a lower footing and with subordinate rank. And indeed this has been the policy of all the great Polytheistic Empires of the world. When the Assyrians and Babylonians, for example, incorporated a subject people, they gave the gods of that people a place among their own; and it was because the last king of Babylon attempted to confine the worship of the conquered gods to the Capital, and to suppress it altogether in their native homes, that the invasion of Cyrus was regarded by the people as a deliverance, and his entry into Babylon as a triumphal progress with open gates, rather than a conquest. The Romans, too, before besieging a city were in the habit of propitiating the gods of the city; and when they had taken it by assault they usually left behind a number of their own priests to keep up the sacrifices in honour of these gods after their departure. So natural to polytheisms is the practice of religious toleration. Nor was the Empire itself any exception to the rule. Owing to the extensive colonizations first of the Greeks and then of the Romans, the gods of Greece and Rome were worshipped everywhere throughout the wide dominions of the Empire; but besides these gods there were the gods peculiar to the separate nationalities—Syrian gods, Egyptian gods, Phœnician gods—and all alike enjoying full and equal toleration. It is true that in Republican times some of these foreign cults, notably those of Isis, Serapis, and Bacchus, were driven out of Rome—but that was because

of the immoralities connected with their worship, and not from motives of religious intolerance. It is true, too, that the early Cæsars, Augustus, Tiberius, and Claudius, looked with disfavour on the swarming of these foreign cults to Rome, and that they did all that was possible to discourage and suppress them—but that was because they were aggressive and propagandizing. Even the Jews, who, if they had had the power, would, like all other monotheists, have remorselessly suppressed the worship of all other gods but their own Jehovah, were equally with the rest protected in the worship peculiar to them. It was only when they entered on an active religious propaganda in Rome itself, as was the case under Domitian, that they roused the Imperial jealousy and were persecuted. They had originally been favoured by Alexander the Great and by the Syrian Kings who followed him; even the persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes, which called forth the noble patriotism of the Maccabees, being instigated not so much by religious motives as by political, and being really the attempt to gain political ends through religious means. In Egypt, too, the Jews under the Ptolemies enjoyed exceptional privileges; the Jewish quarters in Alexandria and Cyrene being under the local control of their own judges and administrators. Julius Cæsar, too, confirmed them in their privileges both in Alexandria and Rome; and not only protected them in their peculiar worship, but exempted them from service on the Sabbath. From all of which it would seem, in spite of appearances to the contrary, that the Christians who were not more stiff-necked in their religious opinions than the Jews, could not have been persecuted for these opinions. On the contrary I have now to show that they were really persecuted for political reasons only.

We may begin then by pointing out that the Romans constructed their gods out of the abstract virtues found to be essential to the welfare and prosperity of the State, whether

for defence against foreign aggression or for internal well-being. There were the gods of Public Honour, of Commercial Integrity, of Landmarks and Boundaries, of Domestic Purity; and to these we may add the gods or goddesses of Patrician Modesty, of Plebeian Modesty, of the Safety of the Age, of the Genius of the Custom House, of the Safety of the Roman People, and the like. Hence it was that when any new duty or function had to be assumed by the State it had to have a new god to consecrate it and to give it permanence and stability. Now when the Empire succeeded to the Republic, it directly assumed two additional functions. The first of these, which if not absolutely new was now for the first time brought into distinct prominence, was the duty of keeping the peace among the many and diverse nationalities that made up the Empire; of protecting the rights of Roman citizens everywhere throughout these vast populations and regions; and of administering the principles of equity, the *jus gentium*, in all cases which fell outside and beyond the range of the local jurisdictions. In all other respects the Empire allowed these nations to freely follow their own religions, customs, laws, and modes of life; the only exceptions, perhaps, being in those cases where the religious rites were of a brutal and inhuman character—as for instance human sacrifices—or where the religious code was of unnatural harshness— as among the Jews, who in consequence were not allowed to carry out the death penalty prescribed in the Laws of Moses without the prior sanction of the Imperial authorities.

The second duty assumed by the Empire was an entirely new one, viz., that of securing the allegiance of all the subject peoples to the Roman State and to the person of its living representative, the reigning Cæsar.

Now the assumption of these two new duties or functions was as we should naturally expect attended by the creation of two new deities to represent them, viz., the Goddess of Rome

and the Genius of the Emperor. And as these two new functions could not be localized, but were co-extensive with the Empire itself, the statues of the two new deities who were to consecrate them were erected everywhere throughout the length and breadth of the Empire—in the market-places of cities and towns, and around the chimney-corners and hearths of private houses. The worship of these deities either by supplicating the goddess of Rome, or by burning incense and pouring libations of wine before the image of the Emperor, was accordingly made, like our oath of allegiance, the test of political loyalty. From all of which it would appear that in spite of appearances to the contrary this was not a religious act at all but a purely political one.

Our next question then is, what were those political suspicions which attached to Christianity and which caused it to be persecuted by the State?

To begin with then we may say that the suspicions and misunderstandings which gave colour to the persecution of Christianity must to the Roman official mind have been many and cumulative. The Christians were constantly repeating that Christ was their King, and constantly giving umbrage to the Imperial authorities by declaring that he had been raised to the position of a God—an honour then practically reserved for the Cæsars alone. This apparent rivalry to the reigning Emperor was still further accentuated by their predictions, as in the Apocalypse, of the near destruction of the Empire and the triumphal return of Christ in glory to take over the government of the world. So deeply, indeed, were the Imperial authorities affected by these predictions that Domitian himself had the two grandsons of Jude the brother of Christ, who were living in Batanea, brought to Rome to be personally interrogated by himself as to their claims. And it was only when he found that they were poor peasants, their hands gnarled with toil, and who on being questioned as to whether Christ was their King replied simply that he was, but that his

kingdom was not of this world, that the Emperor dismissed them with contempt as beneath his notice. But a still graver element of suspicion and one that brought them directly into conflict with the laws of the State was that they were a secret society or confraternity—the being a member of which, unless by special license, was to subject oneself to the penalty of death. That Christianity was not only a confraternity but a secret confraternity was evident from this, that for several centuries the catachumens as they were called, were allowed to be present at the meetings only during prayers and the reading and exposition of the Scriptures, but were excluded when the real mystery, the mystery of the Eucharist, was celebrated. Now these secret societies or confraternities were for political reasons watched by the authorities with the most jealous eye. They were only permitted, when permitted at all, to the lowest and poorest classes of the population, including the slaves, and only for certain harmless and defined ends such as burial, etc. Even then they were only legal when they had been licensed by the authorities; when their membership was limited in number; when they contained no patrician elements; when they had no common fund and no continuous president; when they were attended by no religious performances; and when no common vows were taken. Now in all these particulars it is clear that Christianity as then constituted was an illegal confraternity. Its meetings were unlicensed, its membership unlimited; they had both a common fund and a continuous president; its members met for religious observances and took vows in common, although only for such harmless and praiseworthy objects as abstaining from theft, from adultery, from highway robbery, from false swearing and the like. They carried on, too, an active religious propaganda through all parts of the Empire; their most sacred mysteries, as we have seen, were conducted in secret; and it was extensively believed among the populace that when the lamps were overturned, horrid orgies of incest and adultery, and even

banquets of human flesh, wound up the proceedings of the night. And when in the face of all these accusations and illegalities—the claim that Jesus was king, his apotheosis, the expectation of his second coming, the secret meetings, the active propaganda, the wide ramifications of the society—they obstinately refused to remove the suspicions of infamy and treason entertained against them by burning incense and pouring out wine before the image of the Emperor, what could the authorities when pushed on by popular suspicion and hatred do, even if like Pliny they had found no evidence of any crime against them, but punish them for their obstinacy and perversity in defying the law? It is true that the Jews were equally obstinate, but then they were a privileged people who for ages had been protected in the exercise of their own peculiar worship and observances by numerous edicts and enactments. Besides they met openly in their synagogues; they were insignificant in numbers when compared with the vast populations of the Empire; their habits and customs were repellent to the Gentiles; they lived in separate quarters of their own in the great cities and towns; were a distinct race easily identified; and were not given like the Christians to an active propaganda. They were not, in consequence, a source of political danger, and were not persecuted, except indeed for personal reasons and from preternatural suspicion, as under the Emperor Domitian. Their motives being well known and their fanaticism being purely religious in character, they were not required to salute the Pagan gods or to offer incense to the images of the Emperor. And even had they done so there would have been no danger of the action being mistaken for other than a merely formal acknowledgment of political allegiance, without religious significance. To have imagined that a Jew would have put any man, even the great Cæsar himself, in the same category with Jehovah the One and only God of all the earth, would have been felt both by Jew and Gentile to be ludicrous.

With the Christians, however, it was quite otherwise. For however much they may have wished to testify their political allegiance to the Emperor—as indeed in all their apologies from Justin and Athenagoras to Minucius Felix and Tertullian they did most humbly—it was impossible that they should do so in the only way recognized by the State, viz. by burning incense and pouring out libations before the goddess of Rome and the Genius of the Emperor. For a Christian to worship the image of any man, however exalted, would have been felt by himself, if not by others, to be a disloyalty and treachery to the one man of all others to whom his love and reverence were due, the man Christ Jesus. And when, as was generally the case, the Christians were asked not only to worship the image of the Emperor, but to curse the name of Christ as well, it is evident to what an *impasse* matters had been brought. Between Christianity and the Roman Government, therefore, no compromise on these terms was possible; and with the new religion spreading through the Empire with ever-increasing rapidity, there was but this alternative—either the extermination of the Religion or the submission of the State. The result is well known. With Constantine the persecutions ended; Christianity entered into an alliance with the State and became persecutor in her turn—with results which we have yet to see.

CHAPTER X.

THE APOLOGISTS.

WITH the New Testament Canon as a permanent rampart against the Heretics who had by its means been extruded from the Church, but who still hung on her outskirts ready to seize and carry off any stragglers who might chance to wander beyond the fold, the Fathers of the Church who had all along, like the builders of the walls of Jerusalem, been equipped with both trowel and sword, now set seriously to work to repair those breaches in its internal structure which the heretics had made, as well as to give to its doctrine such a philosophical presentation and setting as should commend it to the great Pagan World that lay around. The first of these objects was accomplished by the Old Church Fathers as they are called—Irenæus, Tertullian, and others—and consisted in giving to the great questions of the nature of the Godhead, and of the union of the human and Divine Nature in Christ, a greater definitiveness and completeness of statement than they had yet received—a statement however which only received its perfect and final form at the hands of Athanasius and the great Councils of the Church. The second was accomplished by the Apologists—Justin, Athenagoras, Tatian, Tertullian, and the rest—and consisted in showing that even as a philosophy Christianity was superior in depth and truth, in harmony and completeness, to all the Pagan philosophies of the time. Now

of these Apologies—written usually in the form of appeals to the Roman Emperors deprecating the persecutions from which the Church was still suffering—some it is true had been written before the Canon was formed; but as in a controversy on the relative merits of philosophic Paganism and Christianity only the most general characteristics of each could be compared, the finer subtleties which came in after the Canon, could lend no additional weight to the broad general argument, and so were not employed. So great, in consequence, was the similarity in the line of argument adopted by those Apologists who wrote before and those who wrote after the formation of the Canon, that in the generalized form which I am about to give it, it may fittingly find its place at this point in our history.

At the outset then it is necessary to remark that the main speculative object of these Apologies was not to controvert or to set aside the doctrines of the great Pagan Schools on the questions of God, Virtue, and Immortality; for on these great problems the best of the Pagan Philosophies were *so far as they went* in accord with the doctrines of Christianity. The Stoics, for example, and notably in the persons of their latest representatives, Seneca and Marcus Aurelius, were believers in God; and in Virtue and Righteousness as the highest good; while the Platonists following their great Master had all along held to the doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul. It is true, indeed, that Christianity had raised the conception of God from that of the vague and cloudy Abstraction of the Stoics and Platonists, to that of a Creator and Father of all men; that it had added to the list of high virtues of the Stoics the still higher ones of renunciation, forgiveness, and self-sacrifice; and that instead of leaving Immortality as a vague and shadowy hope to be entertained or not according as the balance of argument and opinion swayed to this side or that, it had erected it into a fixed dogma, a sure and certain hope, a precious possession within the reach of all. Of all this the Apologists were well aware, and they were prepared when

opportunity offered to enter the lists in defence of their own views; but what they specially set themselves to do in these letters to the Emperors was not this, but something of much more value and importance, viz., to prove to them that these beliefs of the Pagan philosophers were even in their imperfect state not mere opinions to be put on or off like garments according as the arguments swayed this way or that, but were living and burning realities. For, as I have contended throughout this work, no mere Philosophy as such can ever be relied on either to deeply stir the imaginations or to radically affect the lives and actions of men, and for this reason—that except in individual instances of over-weening vanity, presumption, or fanaticism, the human mind with its restricted outlook through its paltry five senses and their adjuncts, can never feel sufficient confidence in itself to rely on its own unaided powers to comprehend in all its vastness, subtlety, and complexity, this great Universe of which it is but an infinitesimal part, and which stretches on all sides of it into an infinitude where neither the microscope nor telescope, neither the outer senses nor the inner vision can follow it. And hence it was that the Pagan Philosophers although holding in a misty, vague, and imperfect way, those general doctrines on God, Virtue, and Immortality, which to the Christians were sun-clear and eternal truths, could get neither out of their philosophies nor out of their mode of proof that *something* which was necessary to convert their opinions into burning beliefs, on the issues of which they were prepared to stake their lives for time and for eternity. Now this was precisely what the Early Christians believed they had secured—and it was this that the Apologists proposed to demonstrate to the great Pagan Emperors, the philosophic Antonines.

The form of proof, then, which was to work this marvellous transformation in their thoughts and feelings was, as might have been expected, the same proof that had converted the Apologists themselves and indeed the Church generally, the old

sheet-anchor of the faith—the Proof from Prophecy. But as this proof depended rather on certain exceptional incidents and experiences rising like mountain peaks above the ordinary plane of human life, than on the generalized uniformities and sequences of Philosophy, it was necessary in refurbishing it for the consideration of men of the philosophical eminence of the Antonines, to give it the form and semblance at least of a scientific demonstration. And accordingly it was necessary to impress on the Emperors at the outset that the Logos which they in common with the whole Stoic and Platonic Schools regarded as the active life-principle of things—inasmuch as it contained the seeds and principles of which men and animals and all the multiplex variety of Nature were alike the offspring or emanation;—that this Logos was in reality not the mere abstract and shadowy essence which they had imagined it to be, but was a real Being, a real Person, and no other than the Son of God. In testimony whereof they appealed to the Sacred Scriptures of an ancient race wherein his actual appearances among men were recorded. These appearances and visitations were casual and intermittent it is true, but their object was always the same, viz., to instruct men in the knowledge of things of supreme importance to them, but which they could not find out for themselves. Among other things this Being had told them what God was, both in His own nature and in His relation to man; that He was not the shadowy essence whose ghost-like reflection was all that men could catch of Him by their own natural faculties, but that He was a Father, that He was his own Father as well as the Father of all mankind. He had told them, too, what men's duties were; and it was he who had instructed them in those very virtues which they, the Emperors, as Stoics prized so highly, and to which, without knowing why, they yielded so sincere a homage. These duties and virtues he had first announced to Moses, who recorded them in the Sacred Scriptures of his nation faithfully as they had been

delivered to him; and from these Scriptures they had been copied and adopted as models by the rest of the world—and notably by those philosophers and sages of Greece from whose writings the Emperors had themselves derived them. This Being had further instructed men by the mouths of the Prophets as to the reason why God, who was their Father and friend, had yet made them subject to that Death which they so feared and hated:—that it was because they had been disobedient to His commandments and had broken His laws. But how were the Emperors to know that this Being had really come from God, and that all this was not a mere fable? By consulting these same Scriptures, said the Apologists, where, in writings of an antiquity going far back beyond their own recorded annals, they would find that he had inspired these prophets to utter predictions about himself and others which centuries later had been literally and exactly fulfilled. Among other things he had announced to these Ancient Prophets that when the time was ripe, and when the Moral Code, which he had formerly given to Moses as a preliminary and imperfect instalment adapted to the low stage of culture and morality of the times, had run its appointed course, and men tempted by the demons still fell into idolatry, still continued the slaves of sin, and still suffered in consequence the penalty of death;—he had told these Prophets that in due time he would come in person to the earth to give men a New Law, and one which should make good the deficiencies of the Old; one, too, which should have the power not only to deliver men from idolatry and sin, but from death. But for the natural operation of this law two conditions were necessary. The first was that the deep-dyed stain of sin should be washed away; the second, that the demons, who tempted men to sin and kept them in consequence under the fear and dominion of death, should themselves be overcome, and should henceforth lose their power. Now the old dye of Sin was washed

out by the blood of Christ on the Cross; while the power of the demons was broken by his leading a sinless life and by his resurrection from the dead. And all this had been literally and exactly fulfilled just as it had been foretold in those old Scriptures which he had himself inspired. Now the man in whom the Logos appeared and took flesh, continued the Apologists, was the man Jesus Christ, who suffered death in the reign of Tiberius, and whose every act, as can still be read in the memoirs of the disciples who were his constant companions, was thus the fulfilment of what he had himself foretold through the Prophets some centuries before. And as for the demons over whom in his life and death he triumphed, and in whose interests you are now persecuting us—these, added they, are your Pagan gods!

Now as the power of prediction is admittedly the highest test of Scientific or Philosophic Truth, the Apologists as philosophers addressing philosophers might have stopped here, but in addressing the Emperors who were men of the world and of affairs as well, something more was necessary before their demonstration could be said to be complete at all points. Christianity was an existing fact, and a very stubborn and significant one; and it might well occur to the Apologists that it was still necessary to prove that the *moral* results which were to flow from the alleged redemption brought to men by the death and resurrection of Christ had actually been realized in their lives and conduct. This then they now proposed to demonstrate by a direct appeal to facts within the reach of all; and to show that the Spirit which Christ promised to send his followers after his death to keep them from sin was everywhere at work in the minds and hearts of his followers; that the freedom of soul to which the Stoics aspired, but which they rarely reached, had been achieved; that the sin to which they so often succumbed had been overcome; and that the death which was so feared and hated had lost its terrors and was welcomed as an entrance into that immortal life for which all

longed, and which was now an abiding possession. To prove all this, the Apologists in face of the false and terrible accusations under which the Christians lay—of incest, the eating of children, and other nameless atrocities—boldly challenged the Emperors to the most severe and searching scrutiny of their lives and morality. They asked them to consider well what was an unquestionable fact, that men and women many of whom had once been criminal, reprobate, and vile, most of whom were poor and illiterate, and nearly all of whom were drawn from the lowest and most despised of the population—barbarians and freedmen, cooks, cobblers and slaves—that these men and women were to be seen exhibiting in their daily lives a purity, virtue, and simplicity, a joyous elation and exaltation of soul, a reliance on God, and in the face of martyrdom and death an inward serenity and peace, which had been the very ideal of the Stoic's dream. All this they invited the Emperors to contemplate and consider, and if on satisfying themselves of its truth they should still desire further proof that the Spirit of God was with these persecuted, despised, and rejected people, they would find it in the open challenge which the bolder of their leaders proudly flaunted before their Pagan persecutors, viz., that the humblest of these Christians would without sorcery, magic, or other unlawful aid cast out demons and evil spirits from all and sundry who were afflicted with them—and that too after all the priests and philosophers, all the professional sorcerers and magicians of Paganism had tried in vain.

Such in rough outline and with its matter more or less re-arranged to suit our present purpose, was the chain of demonstration which the Church submitted to the philosophers of the Pagan world as proof that the doctrines which in an imperfect form the best of them held on the great problems of God, of Virtue, and of Immortality, were living and eternal truths. It was this chain of demonstration that had converted the Apologists themselves, most of whom had been philosophers and had worn the *pallium* or philosopher's cloak; and it was

this that they believed ought to, and in the end must, convert the world. And indeed it must be confessed that if each link in this chain should prove to be strong enough to stand any strain which criticism might bring to bear on it, the chain as a whole ought in the then state of culture, when the belief in miracles, omens, prophecies, demons, and supernatural interferences generally was as prevalent among the cultured as it is to-day only among the lowest and most ignorant of the population—this chain of demonstration ought to have been accepted as conclusive and convincing, ought to have been embraced not only as a true Religion but as a true Philosophy.

But the Emperors remained unconvinced and obdurate—even the good Marcus Aurelius. Whether it were that they felt that the whole demonstration was more like a chain of air-balloons held together by a continuous thread, than a solid and well-jointed structure; and that a series of predictions in which the Old Testament drew on the New for support, at the same time that the New was drawing on the Old for the same purpose, were of no more value as proof than those present-day 'accommodation' notes drawn by business men on each other, which, mimicking as they do the forms of business transactions, have all the appearance of genuineness without the reality; whether it was that they saw or suspected that much of the New Testament had been consciously enacted for the very purpose of fulfilling these Old Testament prophecies so that its value as testimony was lost; or whether indeed they ever read them at all—cannot be known. But certain it is that the Emperors rejected the proffered demonstration; and Christianity delivered over again to her enemies to wade for another century and a half through martyrdom and blood before her final triumph was assured, had no alternative but to retire into herself again, and using the trowel rather than the sword of controversy, to seek to repair her own internal structure and to make it harmonious and logic-proof at all points. In the remaining chapters of this volume we shall see in detail how this work went on.

CHAPTER XI.

IRENÆUS; TERTULLIAN; ORIGEN.

UP to the time of the compilation of the Canon, say, roughly, about 180 A.D., what with the multiplicity of documents and doctrines all laying claim to the allegiance of the faithful—Apostolic Memoirs, open Church Traditions, secret Gnostic Traditions, Old Testament Scriptures, Ebionite and Marcionite Gospels, Pauline Theology, and the endless apocryphal writings—and what with the difficulty of finding any common standpoint amid this bewildering and distracting promiscuity, no general 'scheme of salvation' was possible; and the Church was obliged, as we have seen, to rely for her propaganda on the 'Rule of Faith' as embodied in the Baptismal Confession, and on the 'Proof from Prophecy.' Now in putting these into the forefront of her teaching, the Church bore testimony only to the *general* fact that salvation had been brought to men by Christ Jesus; but as to how or in what way—as to who or what Christ was in his essential nature, how he was related on the one side to God and on the other to Man, or as to how the human and Divine in him were united—all this in the confused medley of doctrines and traditions had to be left unresolved. It is true that Paul had formulated his great 'Scheme of Redemption' from the very earliest days of the Church; but owing partly to its being only one among a number of other schemes claiming to

be of equal, if not greater, authority, and partly to the fact that it was constructed on the basis of the insufficiency of the Old Jewish Law for the purposes of salvation, and not on the Proof from Prophecy, it could not, and in fact did not, take effect. That it had not as yet been adopted by the Church as the basis of Orthodoxy will appear from a number of considerations. In the first place, Justin, who wrote his Apology to the Emperors shortly before the compilation of the Canon, distinctly declares that the Jewish Christians who held that Jesus was only a man who had been adopted by God and afterwards 'exalted' for his obedience, were, equally with those Gentile Christians who believed with Paul that he had had 'pre-existence' with God before the World began, entitled to the privileges of Communion, provided only that they did not insist on the Gentile Christians conforming to their peculiarly Jewish rites and traditions. The Church, therefore, could not be said as yet to have taken Paul as the standard of Orthodoxy. In the second place this same Justin represents salvation as conditioned by *repentance* and *obedience* to the new and higher Law of God as revealed by Christ, and not as depending on *supernatural grace* as was the case with Paul. And in harmony with this, too, we find him representing Baptism, not as a *means* of grace as it was with Paul, and as it continued to be with the Church after the formation of the Canon, but as a *sign* of repentance merely. And further, as we saw in our last chapter, it was on its conveying a more full, perfect, and complete *knowledge* of God and of Human Duty than Pagan Philosophy did, that the Apologists in their appeals to the Emperors rested their claims for the truth of Christianity, and not on its being a means of grace through *faith* and the operation of the Holy Spirit, as it was with Paul,—and, indeed, as it has ever been with the Catholic Church since the Canon became authoritative.

But from the time that the Canon had thinned and reduced the dense and bewildering thicket of Christian Literature to the comparatively few books of the New Testament, it was possible for the Church, with the area of controversy thus narrowed and brought within manageable compass, to construct out of the materials before it, a *general* scheme of salvation which should be at once apostolic in origin and authority, and divinely inspired; and one too that should be more or less complete and harmonious in itself. And all the more so indeed when the Fathers on setting to work to sift the documents before them, found that practically the scheme of salvation rested mainly on two authorities only—the Gospel of John and the Epistles of Paul; Paul supplying the general basis of the scheme, and John the conception of Christ as the Logos or God-man, in the place of Paul's conception of him as the Archetypal Man, the Second Adam. On these two sets of documents, accordingly, with the other books of the New Testament as running commentary and illustration, the Old Church Fathers, as they are called, some of whom were themselves Bishops, and all of whom were more or less in touch theologically with the Bishops, set to work to construct each in his own way a general scheme of salvation which should be felt to be on a level with the feelings and necessities of the time. A general scheme I have said—for until the scheme *as a whole* had been presented to the Church from different points of view, it was hardly probable that the Fathers should proceed to the more exact definition of the relations of the different persons of the Godhead to each other, or to the mode of union of the divine and human natures in Christ—problems on which we shall find them engaged in our next chapter, and which were definitively settled for the Christian Church for all time by the great Councils of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon.

The first of the Fathers, then, to undertake the task was Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, and his work consisted essentially

in what we may call the *simple union* of Paul and John, without further attempt at differentiation or development. He took, that is to say, the Jewish 'Scheme of Redemption' of Paul, founded, as we have seen, on the inadequacy of the Jewish Law for purposes of salvation, and taking out of it the conception of Christ as the Archetypal Man, the Second Adam—a creation of God—replaced it by the Greek conception of Christ as the Logos, or Son of God, of John; and having pared off the rough edges, attempted to give to the whole such a setting as should bring it into harmony with the rest of Christian doctrine and tradition. His first position, accordingly, is that the Being, Christ, who was with God from all eternity and who created the World, was not a purely Spiritual Being, the Logos of John, who came to Earth and entered a body of flesh at a particular point in Time; nor yet the Second Adam of Paul, who was a purely abstract Human Entity or figure-head, if one may say so; but was the *identical* Jesus who was born of the Virgin Mary, who passed through life, was crucified, rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven—a combination, as it were, of the two conceptions of John and of Paul. This is the first distinctive feature of Irenæus' Theology, and by its very absence of definition it saved him, it may be observed in passing, from that modified Gnosticism into which Tertullian, Origen, and nearly all the other Ante-Nicene Fathers fell, when they tried to separate and define the relative parts played in the life and work of Jesus by his human and by his Divine natures respectively.

His next main position, and one too in harmony with the last as arising out of the union of Paul and John, was to give to the *personal acts* of Jesus an importance and significance which they had not hitherto received. But for this a word or two of preliminary is necessary, to bring out fully the contents of his thought.

It will be remembered, then, that Paul, the object of whose writings was to press on the acceptance of men his scheme of

salvation as *a whole*, naturally regarded Jesus as the mere abstract organ or instrument of God for bringing that salvation to men, and in consequence considered the detailed actions of his living and working life as having in themselves little or no importance or significance. Indeed except in the most general way he rarely refers to them at all. John, on the contrary, whose object it was to prove that the man Jesus was the Logos and a Divine Being, naturally laid special emphasis on those particular incidents in his life which went to demonstrate his divinity—notably his exceptional miracles of the raising of the dead, and of the converting of water into wine, as well as on those speeches in which he enforces at great length the fact that what he does and says is what his Father in Heaven had sent him to do and to say, and so on. The Apologists, again, who as we saw in our last chapter made salvation depend on the fuller and more complete *knowledge* of God, Duty, and Immortality revealed by Jesus, (on the ground that Jesus had received the full Logos or mind of God, whereas the Pagan Philosophers and Hebrew Prophets had only received what Justin calls 'the seed of the Logos;')—the Apologists naturally regarded Jesus as the mere vehicle or pipe by which this knowledge was to be distributed, and so, like Paul, looked upon the particular acts of his life as having little or no significance in themselves, always excepting of course the great facts of the Crucifixion and Resurrection;—another proof, indeed, if one were wanted, that until the compilation of the Canon brought John and Paul together, no further evolution of Christian doctrine was possible.

But when the Canon was compiled, and Irenæus came to unite the doctrine of John with that of Paul, and when Christ, in consequence, figured no longer as a mere abstract organ or vehicle, but as a living flesh and blood Divinity, Irenæus found that he had not only a general scheme of salvation in the *death* and *resurrection* of Jesus, but a model of obedience and imitation as well, in his *life*. And hence it was that in

representing Christ, not as the mere abstract, grace-conferring Redeemer of Paul, nor yet as the mere Teacher and Revealer of Justin and the other Apologists, but as the Teacher, Redeemer, and Exemplar of Paul and John combined, Irenæus was enabled to give a fresh start to the Christian Scheme of Salvation on its way to further stages of evolution.

The general outline of his scheme will perhaps be best seen by an analogy. For in the same way as in a railway train which is about to run into an obstruction on the line, the salvation of the passengers will depend on the driver's reversing the engine and returning from point to point by the way he came; so in the scheme of Irenæus, Jesus is made to take the first and main step towards the salvation of men by reversing the incidents of the Fall, point by point. Irenæus draws out the parallel at length, and with almost mystic significance. Among other particulars he tells us that just as Adam proceeded from the Virgin Earth, so Jesus proceeded from the Virgin Mary; as Eve was disobedient, so Mary was obedient; as Adam was tempted in the Garden, so Jesus was tempted in the Wilderness; as Adam succumbed to temptation and thereby transmitted to us mortality, so Jesus triumphed over temptation and brought to us everlasting life. Again, as Adam fell through unbelief and disobedience to the God who made him, so Jesus conquered through faith and obedience to the Father who sent him. While Satan, again, worked through guile, villainy, and hate; Jesus worked through truth, sincerity, and love, and so on. Jesus having done all this for us, and having, as Irenæus is so fond of reiterating, become man for us in order that we might become as he is, *our* part in salvation accordingly consists in our following in his footsteps and 'recapitulating,' as it were, his example of obedience and virtue point for point at each and every stage of our lives, in childhood, youth, and maturity; and so reversing like him the disobedience of our First Parents. And the power which is to enable us to effect this is to come not through *knowledge* as

with the Apologists who preceded Irenæus, but through Faith, Baptism, Grace, and Love, as with John and Paul.

On the problem, again, of the relation of Christ to God, the doctrine of Irenæus may be briefly stated thus:—that God being a God of Love, Christ, or Jesus, must have been co-eternal with Him as the eternal object of that love, and not, as with Tertullian and most of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, a Being begotten only before Time began, for the purpose of creating the World. In taking up this position he lent, it may be remarked, the weight of his authority in after times to the doctrine of Athanasius as against the Arians, and so remained an orthodox Father.

As to the problem, again, of how the human and Divine were united in Christ, Irenæus contents himself like John with the simple statement of the fact, without any attempt at explanation. It is a secret, he says, for God alone, and not for mortal men to know. And here again we see that by refraining from all attempts at explanation he avoids the difficulties both of those who, as we shall see in the next chapter, held the two natures so loosely apart that they could not be made to combine into a *single personality*, and of those who, in their efforts to knit them into an unity, confounded them together, and so made of Christ neither a God nor a Man, but a kind of *tertium quid*, a something different from both—and so, useless for Salvation, which if it were to be effective, and Christianity were not to fall to pieces, demanded that Christ should be at once very God and very Man. And here again in simply affirming the unity of God and Man in the person of Christ, and refraining from all attempts to explain it, he lent support to that doctrine of the Fathers which received its final settlement at Chalcedon; and so remained orthodox. But his orthodoxy, it is necessary to repeat, is the faith of the child who simply believes and affirms without further attempt to distinguish or define, as distinct from the faith of the grown man, who in his anxiety to

inquire too curiously into the nature of mysteries beyond his reach is apt to fall into pitfalls on this hand and on that—and so into heresy.

His scheme, in a word, forms a simple, homogeneous, and undifferentiated unity—the first as it was the last that the Church was to know until her great Councils gave exact definitions to the problems of the nature of the Godhead, and of the nature of the union of the human and Divine in Christ, and so brought Church doctrine into unity and harmony again after a long period of confusion, contradiction, differentiation, and complexity. The scheme of Irenæus is mainly a mixture or amalgam of old elements, rather than a new product; and gets most of its value for orthodoxy from the absence in it of any attempt at definition, and not from its having resolved all the difficulties and contradictions into a higher unity. It were easy to point to the many instances in which this simple unsophisticated scheme breaks down when pressed by criticism—and of some of these, indeed, Irenæus was himself conscious—but they need not detain us here; and we may now pass on to remark that before Christianity could hope to conquer the entire culture of the Pagan world it must first show itself arrayed in turn in the trappings of the different Pagan Philosophies of the time. These may practically be summed up in the Stoic and the Neo-Platonic respectively. We have now to see the figure it presents when it has received the Stoic impress of the brilliant and eloquent Tertullian.

Now the key to the theological position of Tertullian as distinct from that of Irenæus, and from what was afterwards to become the orthodox doctrine, is to be found in the one broad distinction which separates the Philosophy of Stoicism along its entire length from each and every form of Platonism. And that distinction is this;—that whereas in Platonism there are always three elements entering into the constitution of things —Body, Soul, and Spirit—of which one only, Spirit (an

indivisible and immaterial entity) is pure and good, the other two, Body and Soul (both, we may observe, having extension,) being the source of all evil; in Stoicism there are two elements only—Body and Soul—of which Soul is good and pure, and Body alone evil. The effect of this on the respective theologies of Irenæus and Tertullian is, that whereas with Irenæus who is a Platonist—inasmuch as he holds by the Pauline distinction of body, soul, and spirit,—besides the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Bible alone as due to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is pure and good; with Tertullian not only Father, Son, Holy Ghost, and the Bible are pure and good, but Nature, the Soul of Man, and the Conscience in Man also. In a word, while with Irenæus, all earthly things are evil, only heavenly ones being good; with Tertullian, all earthly things are naturally good—as all alike are pervaded and informed by Soul; and if, with him, since the Fall, Man is bad, it is because the demons, or the Devil, have enslaved his will to the pleasures of the body, and because his soul has become weakened through hereditary taint and transmission. And accordingly while with Irenæus the truth necessary for salvation can only come from the *ideal* world—from Heaven, the realm of pure Spirit, and therefore from Revelation alone and fresh infusions of Supernatural grace through the Holy Spirit; with Tertullian, (now that Christ by His death and resurrection has overthrown the demons), it comes from the *real* world,—from the will of Man himself, reinforced and strengthened, it is true, by the Holy Spirit as well as by certain *material* means of grace. But if we ask what specially those real things are, which according to Tertullian contain the truth necessary for our salvation, and how and where they are to be found and recognized, his reply is that as all things are *in the beginning* good, the oldest and earliest of written records are those which contain the truth. Antiquity and Prescription therefore are his watchwords and his criteria of truth. And hence we have him declaring that the Old

Testament Scriptures are the record of the Truth, because of their antiquity alone; having all been written, as he thinks, (very erroneously as we now know) before the Greeks who tried to embody their wisdom, began to philosophise. Church Tradition, too, contains the Truth, because it can be traced back through the Apostolic Churches to Jesus Christ himself; whereas all the various forms of Heresy have sprung up since then. The New Testament Canon, on the other hand, he does not regard as *by itself* authoritative; for although containing *in itself* all the truth, it can, he thinks, be made to support anything or nothing—a fact for us Modern Protestants to consider! Miracles, again, are proofs of the truth of Christianity, as being real and palpable witnesses to the presence of the Holy Spirit. Baptism, too, has real efficacy, because, among other things, the water used in it contains part of that original Soul breathed into it at the Creation! Indeed to so gross a point does he carry his Stoic Realism, that we find him laying stress on the Crucifixion, mainly because it was 'the blood of God' that was shed; while its spiritual efficacy counts with him for little or nothing;—that mode of death being merely the form of obedience to God's will which was best adapted to impress the carnal mind.

Another important variation made by Tertullian on the Theology of Irenæus and the Church, and one too which followed directly out of his Stoic doctrine that Soul has extension, is this,—that while with Irenæus, as with all the Platonist Theologians, God is a Spirit; with Tertullian, He is a Corporeal Being; and not He alone, but the Son and Holy Ghost as well. So strongly, indeed, does he hold to this opinion, that we find him figuring the Son and Holy Ghost as being detached and cast off from the substance of God the Father, in a sense almost as real and palpable as the successive detachments of the rings of Saturn from the body of that planet. The Word, he says, who, as Reason, had all along been in the bosom of God the Father, was first cast off as a separate entity for the purpose of

creating the World; and the Holy Ghost, from the Word in turn after his ascension, for the purpose of keeping the Church up to its high vocation and guiding it by new revelations from time to time as necessity arose. And here it was that the peculiar views of Tertullian led him into that heresy with which his name will ever be associated in the history of the Church—the heresy of Montanism. But to see clearly the stages by which he was led to this, we must remember that it was part of his doctrine of Antiquity and Prescription that the Bishops were merely the guardians and depositaries of Church Tradition, with no right to add to, or take away from, the sacred deposit in any particular. If, therefore, the Holy Spirit had really been detached from Christ after His ascension, and if its presence were to be looked for, as he had promised, for the guidance of the Church, it must of necessity find for itself new organs. And, accordingly, when Montanus announced that he and his two prophetesses, Prisca and Maximilla, had received the Holy Ghost, and that the message the Spirit had commissioned them to deliver was that men should fast, pray, remain unmarried, and welcome martyrdom with joy, while waiting for the New Jerusalem which was shortly to descend from the clouds and to establish itself in the city of Pepuza in Phrygia; Tertullian who had long looked with horror on the increasing laxity of Christian morals, who was himself a believer in the Millenium, in martyrdom, and in bodily asceticism, and who felt that if the Spirit blew where it listed, as it did of old in the days of the 'gift of tongues,' there was no reason why Montanus and his prophetesses should not be the organs chosen for these communications, gave in his adhesion to the new movement—and so fell into heresy. For now that the Canon was compiled, and all truth present and future as well as past, was to be found within its sacred rolls—to have allowed these unlicensed vagaries of the imagination to intrude themselves into the finely-poised and delicately-adjusted wheel-work of orthodoxy would have been to have wrecked

the Church and to have thrown all its orderly doctrines and practices into chaos and anarchy again,—another proof, if one were wanted, that the Christian Scheme of Salvation which carried in its bosom the precious jewel of a higher Morality for the World, must be safeguarded at all hazards, however natural or logical might be the doctrines or practices that would have upset it, however strongly supported by early precedent or by Scripture, and however praiseworthy in themselves. But the Bishops as usual soon found a way to turn all this to the advantage of the Church. For perceiving with their accustomed sagacity that fresh revelations of the Divine Spirit were continually being called for by the increasing complexity, laxity, and confusion of the times,—in which new questions both of faith and of morals were continually demanding solution,—they boldly stepped into the gap left by the expulsion of the Montanists, and saying in effect, 'Not Montanus, Prisca, and Maximilla, but *we* are the organs of the Holy Spirit,' quietly annexed the new territory, and added it to their own domain. For although they had always secretly modelled the faith, as well as the discipline and practice of the Church, in conformity with the necessities of the times, they had never openly avowed it. But from this time forward they claimed the right, as the legitimate organs of Divine Inspiration for the Church, to give fresh definitions to all questions of Faith and Morals as they arose.

On the problem, again, of the union of the divine and human natures in Christ, Tertullian in endeavouring to distinguish and define the relative parts played by each in the life and work of Jesus—as for example when he says that it was the human nature only that suffered on the Cross, while the divine remained untouched; that it was the human nature that appeared in his weaknesses and weariness, and the divine in his miracles, and his words of wisdom and power—fell into a dualism and heresy, from which Irenæus saved himself by the simple expedient of refusing to make any attempt at definition or distinction at all!

The last peculiarity of Tertullian which we have to mention here is, that he was the first to pave the way for an entire change both in the doctrine and in the discipline of the Church, by drawing certain preliminary conclusions from a doctrine which he himself held with great tenacity, and propagated with great eloquence and fervour,—the doctrine, namely, that God was a God of Justice as well as of Love. Marcion, it will be remembered, had declared that God was a God of pure Love, but not of Justice. Justice, he said, was an attribute of the Jewish God, Jehovah,—an inferior agent of the true God, and a God with whom the Christians had nothing whatever to do. But Tertullian to prevent the fatal divorce between the Old and New Testaments which would have ensued on the acceptance of this doctrine by the Church, boldly announced in opposition to Marcion, that God was a God of Justice also, and that evidences of this justice were to be seen on every hand in the Works of Nature as well as in the Conscience of Man; and moreover that without it, Love which is holy and condemns its opposite, would cease to be love. But the controversy with Marcion, and the way in which that heretic had united the Justice of Jehovah with his Cruelty and Revenge, and had lumped them together in one condemnation, were too recent for the Church boldly to advance to the conclusion that the offended Justice of God, equally with his Love, had to be satisfied by the death of Jesus on the Cross. That step accordingly was left for much later Theologians to take, in the doctrine of the Vicarious Sacrifice. In the meantime Tertullian contented himself with taking the first step only towards that goal, by declaring that penance, fasting, alms-giving, public confession, celibacy, martyrdom, etc., equally with love and prayer (which up till then had been the only sacrifices required of a Christian) were not only accessory 'means of grace,' but were 'propitiations' for sins as well; and so by his Stoic Realism opened the door to the doctrine not only of the efficacy of Baptism as a means of grace, and of the Lord's

Supper as a sacrifice, but to the efficacy of 'meritorious works' also; and from this to a Priesthood as the spiritual medium for dispensing the forgiveness of sins through these sacraments and works, was but a step—a step which his successor Cyprian was not slow to take.

We have now to see the variations which were made in the general scheme of Salvation when it was passed through the Neo-Platonic mould of Origen, the great Alexandrian Father. Now, in reading Origen we have not gone far before we perceive that the extent of his departure from the Theology of Irenæus and Tertullian, is greater than can be legitimately accounted for by the differences between his Neo-Platonism and their Platonism and Stoicism respectively. And on searching for the causes of this divergence, we discover it to lie in the broad fact that whereas Irenæus and Tertullian have taken the Pauline scheme of Salvation as their basis, and have inwrought it, the one with Platonism and the other with Stoicism; Origen on the contrary has taken the philosophy of Neo-Platonism as his basis, and has worked into it only as much of the Gospel scheme of Salvation as it would allow—a radical difference of procedure, it is to be observed, and one that will give rise to the widest divergences of doctrine. When once this is recognized, and when the causes that have given rise to it are clearly seen, we shall then have found the key to the Theology of Origen, and can almost anticipate his particular doctrines point by point. Now the first observation we have to make bearing on this question is, that a very considerable period of time must have elapsed before the New Testament Canon which was the work mainly of the Churches of Rome, Asia Minor, and the West, was accepted as authoritative at Alexandria. This was chiefly owing to the circumstance that Gnosticism and other forms of heresy were so strongly massed and entrenched in that city, that the authority of the Bishop alone was not sufficient to expel them. And as Gnosticism, especially Egyptian Gnosticism, held, as

we have seen, by Philosophy and Knowledge, rather than by Faith, which was the watchword of Paul, it was with great difficulty that a Canon which made the Pauline scheme its basis of Salvation, could make its way amid surroundings so hostile. And accordingly in the interval that elapsed between the formation of the Canon and its full acceptance at Alexandria, a School of Theologians holding to the simple facts of Gospel History (and so, unlike the Gnostics, orthodox) had time to arise; and basing their theology on the Gospel of John rather than on Paul, on knowledge *and* faith rather than on faith alone, had, before they could be put down by the orthodoxy of the West, constructed vast and far-reaching systems of their own. These men had originally come to Christianity from the Schools of Neo-Platonic Philosophy which had made Alexandria their home, and which, indeed, had so many points of affinity with Christianity that it was quite easy to pass from the one to the other. But as John had formulated no scheme of salvation, and had contented himself mainly with identifying Jesus with the Logos of God, it was natural that these Neo-Platonic Thinkers, with the Scheme of Salvation left open for them as it were, should construct one for themselves; and that they should do this rather by pouring their religion into the mould of the Neo-Platonic Philosophy in which they had been brought up, and which prevailed everywhere around them, than by pouring their Philosophy into the mould of a purely Jewish scheme of Salvation like that of Paul, which was alien to their entire mode of thought, which they had scarcely heard of, and which had had no great authority anywhere until the Canon had stamped it with the mark of Divine Authority. And they were still more disposed to take this course, inasmuch as between their own philosophy and the Logos Christology of John there was no wide gap in crossing which their whole past would have to be abandoned, but only the simple and easy step of turning the abstractions of the one into the wills of the other,—the Supreme One of

Neo-Platonism into God the Father, the Logos into Jesus Christ, and the Soul of the World into the Holy Ghost. Now had the Canon been regarded as authoritative in Alexandria before they began their labours, they would have been blocked on the threshold; and the Alexandrian Theology, it may confidently be affirmed, could not have arisen at all. As it was, it had scarcely had time to over-run the East—as it quickly did by reason of its profundity and subtlety, by the vast amount of simple Christianity which it contained—when the Canon overtook it, as it were, and the great Origen who had been the pride of the Church and the teacher and guide of so many of its dignitaries and leaders, was deposed from his throne, and condemned to a lower circle in the Inferno of Heretics than any of his predecessors. For in the meantime, the doctrine of 'sacramental grace' which was started by the Stoic Realism of Tertullian, had been extended by succeeding Fathers until it embraced not only the water and the bread and wine, but relics and images as well; and was soon to over-spread the whole field of ecclesiastical discipline and ritual. But the Stoicism of Tertullian which ought to have accompanied the extension of these practices as their theoretical basis, was inconvenient, by reason of its insistence on the corporeality of God. It was replaced, accordingly, by the Philosophy of Aristotle, which, while it possessed the advantage of everywhere making bodily things instinct with spiritual power, at the same time made of God a Spirit, and not a body. It became, in consequence, the official philosophy of the Catholic Church, and has remained so, down through the Middle Ages to our own time.

With these preliminary observations, we are now in a position to proceed to consider the variations which were made by Origen in the theology of the time. And perhaps we cannot better bring out their peculiar features than by instituting a running comparison between them and the Neo-Platonism which moves throughout on parallel lines with them, and in

the mould of which he consciously cast them. If, then, we begin with his view of the great problem of the nature of the Godhead which was soon to rend the Church in twain, we shall find that just as in Neo-Platonism the Logos and the World are both emanations from the Supreme One, and are, on the analogy of rays from their central source, co-eternal with that Supreme One; so with Origen, God the Father must always have been a Creator, and the World always have had an existence; and, therefore, God the Son as the creator of the World must also have been co-eternal with the Father—and not, as with Tertullian and most of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, begotten by God, only when he was wanted for the creation of the World. In taking up this position, Origen happens to fall into line with orthodoxy. In his second position, however, he is less fortunate. For, again, just as in Neo-Platonism the Logos was inferior to the Supreme One, and the Soul of the World to the Logos—as being emanations at the first and second removes respectively—so with Origen, God the Son is inferior to God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost to God the Son—and here he falls into heresy. But by reason of this very inferiority of the Son and the Holy Ghost to the Father, Origen is enabled logically to assign a division of labour to each of the three Persons, which greatly reduces the complexity of the Problem of Salvation; for in accordance with this idea of inequality and inferiority, he makes God the Father preside over the Universe *as a whole*, God the Son over the narrower field of *rational souls*—the special province of salvation—and God the Holy Ghost over the *members of the Church* only. Having in this way thrown out the Universe as a whole from his purview, we find that just as in Neo-Platonism the reasonable souls of the Universe—stars, planets, sun, and moon (all of whom are gods), demons, men, etc.—are all of the same substance and nature as the Logos from whom they are emanations; so too with Origen, his rational souls, who consist of gods, thrones, principalities,

powers, stars, angels, demons, and men, are of the same nature as God the Son who created them and bears sway over them. And as, further, in Neo-Platonism, the *number* of these souls is strictly limited, so too is it with Origen—the only distinction being, that whereas in Neo-Platonism the angels and men who fell did so because of the mixture of *matter* in their composition; with Origen they fell, because of their rebellious and disobedient *wills*. And just as in Neo-Platonism, too, bodies were given these fallen spirits, of a nature and quality corresponding to the depth of their fall, and the amount of matter in their composition; so, too, is it with Origen—the angels having bodies of ether given them, men bodies of flesh, and demons bodies of darkness. And so the parallel between Neo-Platonism and the theology of Origen, goes on with almost wearying monotony. For just as with Plato, again, human souls have to purify themselves by successive rounds of re-incarnation*; so, too, is it with Origen—the only difference being that whereas with Plato these re-incarnating souls have to plod their weary eternal rounds of punishment and sorrow, until bitter experience has purged them of the last trace of injustice, disobedience, and folly, and so they regain their lost homes among the stars; with Origen, the process of re-incarnation which had been going on until the appearance of Christ on the scene, is then suddenly arrested; for by the work he has accomplished by his death on their behalf, he lifts fallen angels and fallen men alike from their degradation, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to their homes in Heaven. But instead of this being done through *faith*—as with Paul, Irenæus, and Tertullian—it is done through *knowledge* primarily, as with the Gnostics, by the knowledge of who and what we are; and secondly, by the ransom which was paid by the death of Christ, not to the offended *justice* of God as in later theology, but to the demons for setting men free. Indeed, if the death of

*See Appendix.

Christ is with Origen a sacrifice at all, it is in the sense, as he says, in which the martyrdom of the faithful is a sacrifice, namely, as a victory over the demons.

On the problem, again, of the nature of the union of the divine and human in Christ—Origen, like Tertullian and all the other Ante-Nicene Fathers, is unable to make the two unite without falling into heresy. He tries to solve the difficulty by making the Logos unite himself only with a *pure* and *spotless* human soul to form the man Jesus; but as the souls of men needing redemption are by no means pure and spotless, it is evident that unless the Logos took on himself our *impure* nature, for the purpose of making it pure and good by irradiating it with his own perfect purity and obedience, his victory would for fallen human souls be a barren one—and so void of effect for purposes of Salvation. In this, too, Origen is heretical.

On the question of Church Government, again, Origen who, after the manner of Neo-Platonism, regards the visible Earthly Church as but the copy of an Invisible Heavenly one, is in consequence not disposed to submit it—except in mere exoteric matters of Church tradition and administration—to the guidance of the Bishops; but only to that esoteric wisdom of divine things, which can come from *knowledge* alone. As regards those who have been guilty of 'mortal sins,' they cannot receive pardon on Earth, but can appeal only to that Invisible Church which is in Heaven.

As for the second coming of Christ on Earth—it had no place with the Alexandrian Fathers, as it had with Irenæus, Tertullian, and the Fathers of the West. Montanus, with his prophetesses and his New Jerusalem descending on Pepuza, had well-nigh killed it; and the theology of Clement and Origen practically extinguished it in the East. Caius the Presbyter made an attempt to extinguish it in the West; but it was premature; and the expectation of the Millennium lingered on there until the end of the Third Century, when it seems to have died a natural death.

In the meantime the Bishops of the Great Metropolitan Sees were drawing to themselves more and more power and authority over all matters of faith, discipline, and morals; while the great See of Rome was slowly but steadily and surely marching to supremacy. But practical difficulties of administration were constantly arising, and tending to push the Church further and further from her old landmarks. In the early days, when Catechumens were not allowed to be baptized until after a long and searching novitiate, Baptism itself was believed to be sufficient to preserve the believer ever after from the commission of 'mortal sins.' But from the time that raw and unseasoned converts began to pour into the Church from all sides—and especially when the sword of persecution swooped down upon them—many of those who had been baptized were found to fall away in the time of trial, and to deny their Lord and Master—and so fell into what was regarded as the most heinous of mortal sins. To meet crises like these, the Church was obliged to abandon her old position—of the efficacy of Baptism to protect from sin—and accordingly after a number of preliminary and tentative deliverances of the same nature on the part of other Fathers, we find Cyprian boldly coming forward and declaring, that only sins committed *before* baptism were washed away by it, but that those sins committed after baptism were left untouched by its cleansing efficacy. What then was to be done with those who had been guilty of these post-baptismal sins? After the Decian persecutions, it would appear that the number of those who had been guilty of abjuring the faith and denying their Lord, was so great, that to have extruded them wholesale from the Church—leaving them to the tender mercies of God, as Novation and others of the stricter sort recommended, or to the Invisible Church in Heaven, as Origen had advised—would have been to have driven hundreds back into Paganism again. After much controversy and even schism in consequence, the difficulty was met by Cyprian, who, acting on a theory of 'meritorious works' let fall by his great

master Tertullian, freely opened a way of pardon to all, by announcing that these meritorious works were to be regarded as so much to the credit side, as it were, in the balance sheet of good and evil; on the one hand, as atonements for sin, and on the other as laying up a store of rewards for the future; making the distinction, however, that while ordinary good works such as Almsgiving were efficacious as a set-off against 'venial sins;' Penances, and the more rigorous mortifications were absolutely essential for the atonement of the mortal sins which were now mainly in question, viz., the sacrificing to the Pagan gods, and the denying of Christ. And he further contended that when these penances had been accepted by the Church as satisfactory, the Bishops had the right, on the theory of 'the power of the keys,' to grant absolution. They had already claimed and exercised the right to allow repentant heretics to enter the Church without re-baptism, provided only that they underwent the ceremony of Confirmation or 'the laying on of hands'—a ceremony which was valid only when performed by the Bishops themselves. Absolution, in consequence, had now become a means of grace equal in value to Baptism; but this absolution, requiring a priest, is still qualified by the belief in the efficacy of Penance and Meritorious Works also. From this time, then, the Bishops had become a Priesthood, after the manner of the old Jewish Priesthood, as the necessary intermediaries between God and Man for the remission of Sins.

With these variations in the matter of Ecclesiastical Authority, the theory of the Lord's Supper had to keep pace. With Ignatius, it had been a real conversion of the elements into the very body and blood of Christ; with Justin and Irenæus, it had been an offering of thanksgiving for the fruits of the earth, getting all its value from the *disposition* of the believer, quite apart from the intervention of any priesthood to administer it; with Tertullian, it had been at once a spiritual communication, and (in accordance with his Stoic Realism) a *supernatural* influence produced on the body by the ingestion

of the elements, and preparing it for immortality. But with Cyprian, it became a *sacrifice*—a duplicate in miniature of the suffering of Christ on the Cross, and having in itself all the virtue that attached to that sacred sacrifice. It had not only a special, but a general expiatory value, as incorporating the Church and all its members with Christ. But with him, the Lord's Supper is more than a sacrifice; it is an imparting of Divine gifts as well—a pledge of the incorruptibility of the body, of the resurrection, and of the union of the flesh with the Holy Spirit; it is the nourishment of the soul; and, as containing Christ, is the bearer of truth, of knowledge, and of sanctification—and out of this speedily arose the celebration of the Mass. With Origen, on the contrary, it remained a feeding of the soul on the Son of God merely; bearing the same relation to Christ that the symbol does to the thing symbolized.

CHAPTER XII.

THE TRINITY.

UP to this point in our history we have seen that the line of development of Christian doctrine, especially in reference to the *person* of Christ was marked out beforehand by necessities inherent in the mediatorial scheme of Redemption and Salvation; so that if that Scheme were to be complete and logic-proof at all points, Christ *must* be regarded as at once Eternal God and complete and perfect Man. But at the point now reached, with the Gospel of John in the Canon, and Christ from being as he was originally a man more specially favoured by God than other men, now become God or the Son of God, quite a new element enters to determine the future course of evolution of Christian doctrine,—the necessity, viz., of maintaining the Unity and Sovereignty of God. The necessity of enforcing this doctrine did not arise so long as Jesus was regarded as the Messiah and a man, but now that he was proclaimed to be a God, it was felt that in the midst of Pagan polytheism the doctrine of the unity and sovereignty of the Deity must be upheld at all costs. For the period accordingly on which we are now entering, it is evident that the narrow line along which orthodoxy must travel, will be bounded on the one hand by the doctrine of the unity and sovereignty of God the Father, and on the other by that of the co-eternity and co-equality of the Son; and that the tendency

of heresy in consequence will be to overweight the unity and sovereignty at the expense of the co-eternity and co-equality, either by overloading and aggrandizing the person and office of the Father, or by degrading the nature of the Son. The first of these errors took form in the heresy of the Sabellians, the latter in that of the Arians.

The feature common to all forms of the Sabellian heresy is that it was God the Father Himself who assumed our flesh and suffered and died for us, and not a historical person known as the Son; and for this reason the adherents of this doctrine were in the West called Patripassians. In taking up this position they professed to be able to preserve the unity of God without derogating from the full divinity of Christ. This heresy first made its appearance in Rome and Asia Minor about the year 200 A.D. and is associated with the names of Noëtus, Praxeas, Cleomenes, and Sabellius. Its simplest form perhaps was the doctrine of Noëtus, who contended that the Christ who suffered and died was the Father Himself; the passages by which he supported this view being mainly those of John, x. 30, "I and my Father are One;" and John xiv. 9, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Cleomenes took up practically the same position and contended that it was the same God who was now visible, now invisible; now tangible, now intangible; now mortal, now immortal; and that when He was unborn He was the Father, when born He was the Christ. To support this view he appealed to the Theophanies of the Old Testament where God appeared to Abraham, Moses, Jacob, and Joshua. Praxeas, again, declared that there was no difference between Father and Son but the flesh of the man Jesus, and appealed in proof to the same text to which Noëtus had appealed, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" as well as to Isaiah, xlv. 22, "I am God, and there is none else." And lastly Sabellius from whom the heresy took its name, preferred to say that it was the same God who played like an actor the successive parts of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In

adding the Holy Ghost to the Father and Son, and so giving the appearance of equality to the Father, Son, and Spirit, Sabellius we may remark in passing, prepared the way for the recognition of the real equality of these three Persons of the Godhead when the question at last came up for discussion during the Arian controversy.

And thus it was that in their anxiety to safeguard the unity and sovereignty of God, the Sabellians so aggrandized the part played by God the Father as to destroy the mediatorial efficacy of Christ in the scheme of Redemption and Salvation. For not only was the incarnation of God the Father too great a shock to traditional feeling, but the belief in the separate existence and personality of the Son as distinct from the Father had by this time become so deeply embedded in the doctrine of the Church, that the heresy although a wide-spread and a tenacious one, was easily enough put down when once its real significance and the havoc it would make in the scheme of Salvation began to be clearly seen.

Meanwhile another heresy which had the same aim and object as that of the Sabellians,—the safeguarding of the unity and monarchy of God,—was arising, but this time from the opposite quarter of the theological field. For while Sabellianism tried to gain its end by aggrandizing the Father, the new heresy tried to gain it by depreciating the Son. This heresy was Arianism. The broad general position which it took up was that the Son far from being co-equal and co-eternal with God the Father was only a creature, made like other creatures out of Nothing, and liable to error and change; that he was the Son of God in name only and by adoption, and not by nature; and that he differed from angels, men, and other created beings only in this, that he was nearer to God the Father than they.

Now this doctrine had its historical root far back in the days of the primitive Church, at a time when it was believed that Jesus was a man who had been glorified and exalted to the

right hand of God for his obedience and good works, and would soon come again as Judge under the Kingship of God Himself. But now that the Son had in the Gospel of John attained to the rank of a God, jealousy for the unity and sovereignty of God the Father was for the first time definitively aroused; and a determined attempt was in consequence made to degrade the Son to the rank of a man again. This attempt was first made at Rome by one Theodotus, a leather-dresser from Byzantium, who, while admitting that Christ had grown up under the special influence of the Holy Spirit, nevertheless boldly denied his Divinity; appealing in support of this position to the Old Testament prophecies, which declared that the Messiah should be born of a woman, and to the Gospel declarations of his humanity; and affirming that the union between the Divine and human in Jesus was a *moral* union merely, and that only a moral superiority separated him from other men. Artemon, too, allowed the moral and spiritual oneness of Jesus with the Father, but denied his Divinity; while Paul of Samosata who was afterwards deposed for heresy by a Council at Antioch, contended that instead of having any real pre-existence with the Father, Christ only pre-existed as an *idea* in the mind of God the Father, not existing in his own proper essence until his appearance on earth. Jesus could therefore only be called the Son of God through holiness, and not in his own proper nature; and the truth was that instead of God becoming Man in the person of Jesus, Jesus the man had become God. All this led up to Arianism proper, which descended traditionally through this same Paul of Samosata to Arius by way of Lucian his teacher who was himself a pupil of Paul. But it was not until Origen and the Alexandrian School, building on St. John's Gospel and with the support of the Western Fathers, had enunciated the doctrine that the Logos or Son had come forth from the bosom of the Father for the purpose of creating the world, that Arianism assumed its own proper expression, which was that the Son although

with the Father before the world and for the purpose of creating the world, was nevertheless only a creature made by God, and neither co-equal nor co-eternal with Him. As was naturally to be expected during the long continuance of the controversy various stages of degradation were observable. The pure Arians would not even admit that the Son was like the Father in nature; the Eusebians or Court party, again, while admitting a general likeness of nature denied any likeness of substance; while the Semi-Arians going so far as to admit a *likeness* of substance (homoiousion) refused to admit the *identity* of substance (homoousion) which was the test of orthodoxy. Now this heresy unlike Sabellianism which was refuted by the explicit declaration both of Scripture and the tradition of the Fathers that the Son was a distinct personality separated from the Father, found such abundant support not only in the Gospel of John, in Tradition, and in unguarded expressions of the Fathers, but also in the reigning philosophy of Neo-Platonism, that before it was finally expelled it had well-nigh rent the Church in twain.

The Gospel of John it will be remembered, although opening boldly with the broad declaration that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," nevertheless contains so many detached passages pointing to the subordination of the Son to the Father, as to neutralize the force of the original declaration, or afford room for interpreting it in a spiritual or allegorical rather than in a literal sense. It was said that the identity of the Son with the Father was a moral rather than a natural identity; and that "in the beginning" meant not from everlasting but from a point of time immediately prior to the creation of the world. And indeed these views are largely borne out, not only by many isolated passages, but by the general spirit and impression of the whole gospel. For although it nowhere definitively countenances the heresy that the Son is different in nature or substance from the Father, still

in all that concerns the speech or action of the Son we find distinctly stated there that the Father suggests the words which the Son is to utter, and gives the command which the Son is to obey; so much so, indeed, that the impression is everywhere left that the Son is the purely passive instrument in the hands of the Father, or else His echo and mouthpiece. Among other instances, for example, we may take John v. 19, where Jesus states that he can do nothing of himself but what he sees the Father do; or again, John xii. 49, where he says "I spake not from myself; but the Father which sent me, He hath given me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak." In everything he follows the Father's initiative. "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you into the world" he says in reference to his disciples (John xx. 21). Even his life is derivative. "For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in himself" (John v. 26). It is nowhere said, as Dr. Martineau points out, "that all things that the Father *is* am I," but only "all things that the Father *hath* are mine." And although it is said that the Father is in the Son (John x. 38), it is also said (xiv. 28) "the Father is greater than I;" and (xvii. 3) that to the Father alone belongs the name of true God.

But besides these passages from the Gospel of John, the Arian heresy of the inferiority of the Son to the Father receives support from many passages scattered throughout the Old and New Testaments. In Matthew xix. 17, for example, Jesus himself is made to say "why callest thou me good, there is none good but One, that is God." In Mark xiii. 32 again he goes so far as to declare that no one knows the time of his second advent, neither the angels in heaven, nor himself, but only the Father. So too again in I. Corinthians xv. 28, Paul declares that in the last times the Son himself shall be subject to "Him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Athanasius in his orations against the Arians singles

out for refutation many passages quoted by them in support of their doctrine. Among others he mentions Hebrews i. 4 where it is said Christ was made so much better than the angels—the implication being that he is a creature and inferior to God the Father. Also Hebrews iii. 2 where his faithfulness is compared to that of Moses, as if he were merely a man like him. Again Acts ii. 36 where it is said that God had *made* Jesus both Lord and Christ. And a favourite passage of the Arians to prove that Christ was not co-eternal with God, viz., Proverbs viii. 22 "the Lord created me in the beginning of his ways for his works," and so on. Now although many of these passages may be said to have an allegorical interpretation, or to refer exclusively to the *human* nature of Christ, still they were sufficient in number and importance to justify the existence of the heresy when once the question of the relation of the Son to Father had been definitively raised.

But besides being strongly supported by Scripture, the Arian heresy received the support in one or other of its main positions, of practically all the earlier Fathers of the Church both in the East and West. The heresy, as we have seen, differed from what was afterwards to be the orthodox doctrine mainly in two points, viz., in its denial of the co-eternity of the Son with the Father, and in its denial of his co-equality—the Western and Asiatic Fathers denying the co-eternity, the Alexandrian Fathers the co-equality. A few words on the causes of this phenomenon may not be out of place here, and will help perhaps to make the nature of the controversy more clear.

At the outset then it is necessary to remark that it was the Neo-Platonic Philosophy which furnished the mould or frame-work into which the Fathers of the Church cast their speculations on the Godhead, when once Christ had been elevated to the position of a God, and the three persons of the Trinity,—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,—were seen to correspond in nature and function to the three abstractions of

Neo-Platonism,—the Supreme One, the Logos, and the World-Spirit, respectively. This Neo-Platonic philosophy it may be mentioned in passing had been inaugurated at Alexandria by a Jew named Philo, about the time of Christ; and its main contentions were that the Logos emanated from the Supreme One at a first remove, and the World-Spirit from the Logos again at a second remove,—much in the way in which a ray of light emanates from the sun, or a spring from its fountain head—and being like these coeval with their central source. Now it was the author of the fourth Gospel who was the first to definitively identify Christ with the Logos of Neo-Platonism; but whether it were from the general impression left by that Gospel, or from the tradition of the Church, or from the difficulty of conceiving a Being possessed of will and personality like Christ without a definite beginning; certain it is that with both the Western and Eastern Fathers, with Justin, Tatian, Tertullian, Novation, Hilary, and the rest, it was taken for granted that although the Logos might have existed with the Father from eternity, the Son had not, but on the contrary had come into existence only when he was wanted as the instrument of the Father for creating the World. Tertullian put the matter in his direct and pregnant way when he affirmed that there was no need of a Son before there was a world to create or sinners to judge; from which he argued (contra Hermog, iii.), that there must have been a time when the Son was not—a main position of what was afterwards to be the Arian heresy.

With the Alexandrian Fathers, again, the case was different. They were more deeply imbued and interpenetrated with the Neo-Platonic philosophy which flourished side by side with them at Alexandria than were the Western and Asiatic Fathers; and accordingly more closely identified the Father, Son, and Spirit with the Supreme One, the Logos, and the World-Spirit of Neo-Platonism. The consequence was that just as the Logos was co-eternal with the Supreme One in Neo-Platonism, so they

made the Son co-eternal with the Father in their theology—and not, like the Western and Asiatic Fathers, dating merely from before the creation of the world. But while thus keeping clear of heresy on the question of the co-eternity of the Son with the Father, they fell into it on the question of the co-equality. For with their passion for carrying out to its full extent the analogies between the Trinity of the Godhead and the Trinity of Neo-Platonism, they made the Son inferior to the Father as being begotten of Him, in the same way as the Neo-Platonists made the Logos inferior to the Supreme One as being an emanation at the first remove from it. They thus denied the co-equality of the Son with the Father, and so fell into what when once the question was raised, became a heresy. In this way then the Western and Asiatic Fathers by denying the co-eternity of the Son with the Father, and the Alexandrian Fathers by denying the co-equality, lent, either directly or by implication, either wittingly or unwittingly, the weight of their great authority to the Arian heresy. But a main support of the heresy, especially with the thoughtful, was its logical consistency if it may be so called, its harmony with the laws of just thinking; whereas the orthodox view was encompassed with difficulties on every hand, and outraged all the laws of ordinary human thought. If, for example, the very conception of a son is of one born later than his father how could it be said that the Son was co-eternal with the Father? To be co-eternal he would have to be an emanation, he could not be a personality, and so not one of the persons of the Godhead. On the other hand if he were a person and not a mere emanation, he must have had a beginning of existence, and if so then there must have been a time when he was not. In other words he must have been created by the Father, and so could have been God in name only or by adoption, and not in nature and essence. If on the other hand he really were God, then there must be two Gods, and so on. And the same kind of reasoning applied equally to the Holy Ghost.

And yet in spite of the fact that Scripture, the tradition of the Fathers, and human reason itself were all arrayed on the side of the Arian heresy, so deep was the necessity if the Scheme of Salvation were not to perish, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost should be one God and not three, and that the Son and Holy Ghost should be of one substance and one with the Father, should be co-equal and co-eternal with Him, that the heresy had to be put down and refuted at all hazards. Now it was to Athanasius that the Church was indebted for this service; and it must be confessed that he did it with an originality, penetration, and acuteness that left nothing to be desired, and with a fulness and completeness of thought and argument which have left all the succeeding Fathers but pensioners on his bounty. We have now to see how this was done.

We may begin by frankly admitting that the Arian arguments when applied to the ordinary world of Time and Space are irrefragable. A son being born after his father cannot be co-equal in age with him, nor among a people to whom the Roman Law of the absolute power of a father over his children was an axiom of thought, can he be co-equal in power and authority with him. But Athanasius pointed out that Time and Space themselves are but creations of God, having their beginning with the creation of the world; and are not, therefore, co-eternal with Him. A logic of Time and Space therefore is only applicable to questions involving the relation of the Son to the world of Time and Space which he created; but not at all to questions involving the relation of the Son to the Father who by the hypothesis exists in an Ever-present Eternity beyond the realm of Time and Space. So that instead of figuring Existence as the Arians did, as having a beginning in Time with the Father, and going on in Time to the creation of the world, Athanasius figured it as an eternal *Now*,—tapering off at the creation of the world into the little drawn-out tail as it were of Time and Space in which we now dwell. He argues

accordingly that to all existences lying before this point of creation the logic of Eternity alone is applicable; and only to those existing after it the logic of Time and Space, that is to say the logic of the ordinary human understanding. Now the relation of the Father to the Son, lying as it does before this point, is a relation of Eternity, and is to be determined by the logic of Eternity, and not by that of Time. Athanasius accordingly taking the Arian doctrine of the relation of the Son to the Father as that of posterior to anterior in Time, and eliminating the element of Time as illegitimate, got instead a relation of co-eternity. Again, taking the Arian doctrine of the separation of the Son from the Father in Space as a ray is separated in place from its source, and eliminating the element of Space, he got from it a relation of co-inherence; that is to say a relation in which the Son is in the Father and the Father in the Son—a relation which to ordinary logic is as incomprehensible as a box which at one and the same time is *inside* another and yet *outside* of it! And now observe that as superiority in point of dignity or authority is a matter quite independent of Time and Space, the Church has always been able without contradiction to uphold the primacy of the Father while admitting the equality and sameness in nature of the Son—a position expressed by Hilary in the paradox that "the Father is the greater without the Son being less," and explained by Gregory Nazianzen as follows:—That the Father was both equal to and greater than the Son, greater in reference to His being the initiator and cause, but equal as to His nature. In this way then Athanasius defended the unity, co-eternity, co-equality, and co-inherence of the Father, Son, and Spirit against all attacks from Scripture, Tradition, and the laws of ordinary human thought; and so prevented Christianity from becoming disintegrated by the degradation of the Son to a creature, or by a return to a modified Polytheism.

But in stationing the Son at the point between the eternal Now of the Father on the one side, and the World of Time

and Space on the other, Athanasius was able to account as well for those passages in Scripture which were adduced in support of the Arian heresy. For while that side or aspect of the Son which is turned towards the Father explains his real nature, viz., his unity, co-equality and co-eternity with the Father; the side or aspect turned to the World of Time and Space accounts for what Scripture says of him in his relations with the World. It explains all those instances of grace and condescension on the part of the Son, in which he appears less than he is in his real nature;—indeed without this very condescension of his in framing the world, we should not, as Newman says, have been here to be instructed in the mystery of the Godhead. It accounts for his appearance in the form of an angel to the patriarchs of the Old Testament. It accounts for the numerous passages quoted by the Arians to show that he was a creature born in Time, as for example when, in Proverbs viii. 22, it is said that "God created him in the beginning of his ways for his works;" or when Paul, in Romans viii. 29, says he was the "First-born among many brethren;" or again, in Colossians i. 15, where he calls him the "First-born of creation;" or again, in Revelations iii. 14, where he is called the "Beginning of the creation of God," and so on; in all such passages it will be observed he is not called the first-born of God but the first-born of creation. When he is spoken of in relation to God it is always as the Only-begotten.

By this distinction between what the Son was in his essential nature and what he was in relation to the world of Time, Athanasius completely outflanked his opponents, and placed the mystery of the Trinity on a basis which, so far as Christian thought is concerned, it securely occupies to this day. He established the doctrine of the unity, co-eternity and co-equality of the Father, Son, and Spirit against the apparent sense at least of Scripture, the traditions of the Fathers, and even the logic of human reason itself; against Sabellianism and Patripassianism, which would have reduced

the Son and the Spirit to the merely temporary manifestations or masks behind which the same God the Father appeared; and against the Arianism which would have made of the Trinity a polytheism of three separate Gods, of whom the Father alone would be real and the other two degraded to the rank of mere creatures.

The full godhead of the Son having been settled by Athanasius, it was inevitable almost that controversy should next centre on the question of his Manhood; and this naturally turned on the difficulty of conceiving how the Divine and human could exist side by side in one personality without some sacrifice either of the full divinity or of the full manhood. The full divinity having been conceded, doubt was accordingly next thrown on his complete manhood; and Apollinaris of Laodicea broke ground on this issue by boldly declaring that although Christ had a human body and passions he had no human mind or will,—that principle being supplied him by the Logos of God Himself. But as it was nēcessary if the scheme of Redemption was to be efficacious that Christ should be full and complete man as well as full and complete God, this emasculated conception of Apollinaris was condemned as heresy by the Council of Constantinople, 381, A.D.

The attempt to make the human and the Divine in Christ dovetail more harmoniously by paring away parts of his humanity, having failed, there was nothing left but to determine how the full divinity and full humanity could conceivably be bound up in a single personality. And in this only two alternatives were open for heresy. Either the two natures could be kept so distinct that sufficient interpenetration to keep them parts of one single personality was not possible, or else the two natures could be so confounded as to lose all that was distinctive in either. The first was the Nestorian heresy, and among other things it asserted that although Mary was the mother of Christ she was the mother not of the God in Christ but only of the

human part of his nature. In the same way while admitting that it was Christ who suffered and died and was buried and rose again, it held that as God was impassable and incapable of suffering, it could only be the human part of Christ that underwent these experiences. And in this it was supported by John ii. 19, where the temple of his body is distinguished from him who should raise it up. Then again, while admitting that worship was due to Christ, it held that it was only to the God in him and not to the man. In this way by keeping the Divine and human in Christ so far apart that like oil and water they could not interpenetrate, it made it impossible for the 'Scheme of Salvation' in which Christ died for man to have any efficacy. It was accordingly condemned as a heresy at the Council of Ephesus, 431 A.D.

Nestorius having failed, by keeping the two natures in Christ so far apart that it was impossible to unite them for any object in which both were needed, Eutyches next attempted to solve the problem by combining the two so intimately that, as in a chemical compound, although the different elements were there in full, they formed a compound nature different from either. To this compound nature each and every act of Christ was referred. But in taking up this position Eutyches practically admitted that the human nature which Christ came to redeem was different from his own, and so made the scheme of redemption of no effect. Accordingly this too had to be condemned as heresy at the Council of Chalcedon 451 A.D. The only position left to occupy was the one on which this Council put the seal of orthodoxy. The dual nature of Christ as settled by this Council may be compared to electricity which, itself one, exists equally in two independent and opposite poles. In this Council it was declared that "one and the same Son and Lord Jesus Christ is to be acknowledged as being perfect in his Godhead and perfect in his humanity; truly God and truly man with a natural soul and body; of like essence with the Father as to his Godhead, and of like essence with us as to manhood;

in all things like us, sin excepted; begotten of the Father from all eternity as to his Godhead, and of Mary the mother of God in these last days for us and for our salvation, as to his manhood; recognized as one Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten; of two natures, unconfounded, unchanged, undivided, inseparable, the distinction of natures not all done away by the union, but rather the peculiarity of each nature preserved and combined into one substance, not separated or divided into two persons, but One Son, Only-begotten God, One Word, the Lord Jesus Christ, as the prophets before taught concerning him, so he the Lord Jesus Christ hath taught us and the creed of the Fathers hath transmitted to us."

And so the first four General Councils, viz., of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon having placed beyond the reach of attack the great doctrines of the Trinity, and of the full Divinity and full humanity of the person of Christ; the Scheme of Salvation which carried in its bosom the precious freight of Christian Morality which was the *condition* of entrance on the joys of that salvation, and was the great end the World-Spirit had at heart, was at last secure;—and with it the Intellectual Development of Antiquity practically reaches its close. Such minor modifications of Christian dogma as were made by Augustine and succeeding Fathers will, in so far as they are necessary to connect Catholicism with the Reformation and the rise of Modern Thought, receive attention in the next volume of this History. In the meantime a chapter or two exhibiting in rough outline the insufficiency of the successive codes of Pagan morality to advance Civilization, as well as the impossibility of their holding the field in the presence of the new and higher morality of Christianity, is still necessary if we would fully realize that Christianity in taking over all that was true in Pagan philosophy, took over also all that was good in its morality, at the same time that it raised Morality itself to a higher plane.

CHAPTER XIII.

PAGAN MORALITY.

IN the immediately preceding chapters we have traced from stage to stage the changes which were necessary to be made in the original deposit left by Jesus to his disciples before the Gospel scheme of Redemption was secure against attack from within and from without. These changes we traced in strict connexion with their immediate natural causes and with the intellectual and moral necessities of the place and hour which called them forth, until at last they were all merged in the fully developed doctrine of the Trinity. But before the task which we have set before us is finished, it is necessary that we should also briefly trace the evolution of Pagan Morality, account for some of its anomalies, and indicate some of the considerations which made it inevitable that in one or all of its forms it should at last be swallowed up in Christianity. And that this may be presented with the greater clearness, it may be well to gather up into a compact and orderly sequence some of those general principles which lie scattered here and there in the course of this History.

In a general way then we saw to begin with that the great end which the Genius of the World—call it Providence, Fate, or what you will—has at heart in Civilization; is the establishment of higher and higher codes of morality and of social relations among men. These codes we saw, too, were laid

down like geological strata in the most regular and orderly manner, no step or stage being intermitted or lost, but each having its representative somewhere in this or that tribe or nation. But the agencies, on the other hand, by which these moral deposits were brought about, we saw to be various, and like the different modes of cross-fertilization in flowers—now by bees and other insects, now by the wind, now by animals —to be different in different ages and stages of culture. In Ancient Times, the main agency in initiating and establishing new codes of morality was Religion ; in Modern Times, and among the most civilized nations, it is Science and Social Utility. Now in our study of the two religions that presided over the evolution of Morality in the ancient world, viz., Paganism and Christianity, we saw that the genius of Paganism upheld and tended to perpetuate the moral relation of master and slave in every department of life; Christianity, the relationship of father and children. And we saw further that if the orderly evolution of Morality was not to come to a standstill, the former must in some way or other be got to pass over into the latter. But on enquiring how this was to be done, it became apparent that it was as impossible for Pagan Polytheism of itself to evolve into Christianity, as it would be for a population of negroes of themselves to give rise to a population of whites. We saw, therefore, that if it were to be done at all, it would have to be done by impregnation from *without*, as it were; by the selection of the most favoured of the offspring, as in animals; and by the breeding from them again in turn; until at last the whole society had become impregnated with the new moral ideas. And on considering the various possibilities of the case, we found that for many reasons it was likely that the agent employed for the purpose of impregnating the great Pagan world with a higher moral ideal, would be some small tribe with its single tribal god—which tribe should itself by a variety of exceptional experiences first be led on to a pure Monotheism. This tribe, as we now

know, was the tribe of Israel. And having traced those changes in its fortunes which advanced the evolution of its god from one among other gods to the sole God of all the earth; from a revengeful God to a God of Justice; from a just God to the God of Love of Christianity; we next proceeded in our study of Christianity to exhibit those changes in the doctrine concerning the nature and person of Christ which were necessary to make the Gospel Scheme of Redemption, and the New Morality it carried in its bosom, good against the world;—changes which, beginning with the conception of Jesus as a man more highly favoured by God than other men, gradually advanced from point to point as the doctrine was pushed on by the attacks of Judaism and Gnosticism within, and of Paganism without, until it ended in the fully elaborated scheme of the Trinity on which at last it could rest secure.

With the foregoing summary we are now in a position to approach some of the problems connected with Pagan Morality. The first that arises is as to how it was that the early Greeks and Romans should have attained to so high a standard of morality, public and private, under a Polytheism which by our hypothesis ought to have engendered a low one? To answer this question we may begin by remarking that just as individuals may have the seeds and principles of vice so deeply implanted in their nature as to bring them in the end to moral bankruptcy, and yet under the special stimulus of love of children or home may flash out on occasion into great and unexpected virtues—so the morality of the early Greeks and Romans, although linked to a Polytheism which in the end must bring it to stagnation or corruption, was, by reason of exceptional circumstances, for a time raised above itself into a world-historic grandeur and significance. This was due mainly to the pressure put on these peoples by an all-absorbing Patriotism, which in the struggle of the infant States to maintain their independence and even their very existence in the face of threatening and

relentless foes, had the effect of counteracting for the time being the corroding and deteriorating influences of Polytheism. And the way it operated was by compelling the morality of the gods to take the colour and form for the time being of the virtues needed for the well-being of the people, instead of, as in ordinary times, the morality of the people taking its form and colour from the morality of the gods. It was as if these races had been cut off from the Homeric Heaven by a dome on which were painted for their veneration and love, not the pranks of the gods with their feastings and love-makings, their adulteries, treacheries, and revenges, but the strong practical virtues needed for internal solidarity and external resistance in the presence of untiring foes—personal honour and respect for oaths, courage, manliness, and simplicity. In this way Patriotism acted for the time as a filter, and allowed only such religious influences as were a stimulus to heroism and virtue to pass as it were into the current of the nation's life. In Greece, for a variety of reasons, this period of high practical virtue was of much shorter duration than the corresponding period in Rome, and compared with it, was but as a transient and passing gleam to a long unclouded morning. This was due not only to the earlier extinction of the national independence in the case of Greece, and to the natural decay of the patriotic virtues dependent on it, but to differences in the form of their religion, and in the temper of the peoples themselves. In Greece the gods who were practically the same gods as those of the Homeric Olympus, themselves set the example, as Plato complained, of adultery, treachery, and immorality; and when once the little dome of Patriotism which for the time being had shut them out was shattered, their malign influences streamed down on the people with a fatal seductiveness. In Rome, on the other hand, the gods, as we have seen, were from very early times endowed with the virtues, public and private, which were wanted for the well-being of the State. Jupiter was sovereign protector,

Juno the goddess of conjugal fidelity, Argentarius of honesty in trade, Fides of public honour, Vesta of domestic purity, Terminus of landmarks and boundaries, and so on; and they lent in turn to the virtues of which they were the concrete embodiment, all the weight and influence of Divine authority. Like a pure as distinguished from a corrupt Court, they put a premium on, and gave an impetus to, public and private virtue and morality, instead of discountenancing and undermining them, as did the gods of Greece.

But besides this difference of Religion between the two nations, there were differences in the *character* and *temper* of the peoples themselves which directly affected the duration of the virtues which Patriotism had engendered. The Greeks, especially the Athenian Greeks whose influence was afterwards to be so paramount in the Roman world, were an æsthetic, imaginative, pleasure-loving people, fond of having their own way in all things, and with a tendency to subordinate everything to personal and individual caprice. In their play of imagination, nothing could remain fixed and rigid, but was subject to infinite extension and enlargement, so that in the hands of their rhetoricians and orators a very broomstick would have blossomed like a rose; neither the authority of the gods, therefore, nor of the laws and constitution of the State, the Family, or the Home, could long retain their original severity of outline, but were subject to endless transformations according to the whim or caprice of the time and hour. The consequence was that when the Macedonians had destroyed the liberty of the Greek States, and the severe traditions of honour and virtue were no longer kept aglow by the Patriotism which had engendered them; when Philosophy, now turned to Scepticism, had reduced everything to a mere matter of personal opinion and caprice; and when Sophists and Rhetoricians undertook to show that wrong was right and right was wrong, and to make the worse appear the better reason on every topic human or divine—Morality, with its heart thus

eaten out of it by political dependence and philosophical scepticism, could find no point of resistance in the minds of the people to the seductions of immoralities stimulated and sanctioned by the example of the gods themselves.

The Romans on the contrary were a gloomy, morose, unimaginative, and severely practical people, more inclined to yield obedience to authority than to indulge their merely private and personal inclinations and caprices. With them a broomstick would always remain a broomstick; and the consequence was that having originally made their gods to correspond to the abstract virtues needed for their own stability and preservation as a State, they would have kept these gods fixed and rigid in their outlines, and confined to the special functions over which they were called to preside, to all time, had nothing occurred to shake them. And as their gods, unlike the gods of Greece, were from the earliest times of the Republic the inspirers of virtue, so they continued to favour it long after the circumstances which called forth these special virtues, and so determined the characters of these gods, had passed away. From these several causes, then,—viz., the longer duration of militant Patriotism in Rome than in Greece; the difference in the nature and character of their respective gods; and the differences of national temperament and character,—we may explain the longer duration of high virtue in Rome than in Greece.

And now we have to remark that these Roman virtues even in their morning glory were never virtues of universal humanity. They were hard and loveless, limited in range and at best strictly *legal* in character; so that in the highest ages of Roman morality we find Cato the elder selling off his old and worn-out slaves with as little concern or after-thought as if they had been cattle. They were the virtues of war, not of peace; of aristocracies, not of peoples; of a society founded on the relationship of master and slaves, not of one founded on the brotherhood of men. So that even had the Roman gods

retained throughout their original form and character as representatives of public and private honour and virtue, they must in the end have been swept away in the rising tide of Christianity. But when Rome, gorged to repletion by the wealth that poured into her from her conquered provinces, had ruined Italian agriculture by her importation of cheap foreign corn, so that the small independent proprietors, pressed by debt and taxes and otherwise exploited, were forced to sell their estates to the great nobles who worked them with gangs of slaves; when the population of the kingdom, thus divided, consisted of a few thousand families, many of them rich as kings, on the one hand, and a miscellaneous multitude of freedmen, clients, and slaves, on the other; when the aristocracy corrupted by riches and the slave-system, fell into effeminacy and luxury and then into debt, dissipation, and corruption; when the State as the result of its successful wars became so strong, and the ruling class so rich, that they were able to dispense with the high patriotic virtues which had originally made them what they were, and to rely largely on hirelings for the support of the national honour; when all industry being carried on by slaves, Usury was the only legitimate business, and, in consequence, the traditions of commercial honour and integrity had no soil in which to take root—when a State thus bankrupt of morality, as the mere outcome of its material and social conditions, at last adopted the gods of Greece along with the rest of Greek culture, and thus infected its own gods with the immoralities of the corresponding Greek Gods; Morality both civic and private, deprived of its last refuge and support, soon decayed and died out among the vast populations of the Roman world, and left the field open and uncontested to the new and higher influences of Christianity.

But in the Roman World which Christianity was ultimately destined to subdue, there were other cults besides the official ones; religions within these religions as it were, rising sweet

and refreshing as the Groves of Daphne out of the arid rocky soil of Paganism; little islets of the heart, where the weary and suffering and sorrowing, shut out for the time from the stony stare of Olympian despots intent on sacrifices and offerings mainly, found respite from their sorrows. These were the Mystery Cults and the imported Foreign Cults of Egypt, Syria, and the East. In origin they differed from the religions of Greece and Rome in this, that while these religions took their rise in the worship of the heavenly bodies, of those fixed stars and planets who controlled the years and destinies of mortal life but who by their union with the daughters of men had given rise to a race of gods standing to the race of men in the same relation as capricious and irresponsible despots do to a nation of slaves; the Mysteries, the Syrian and Egyptian cults grew originally out of the phenomena and processes or Nature—that Mother Nature who has ever somewhere in her bosom a healing balm for the sufferings and sorrows of her children, and who in the phenomena of the return of Spring after Winter, of morning after night, and of life after death, gives fresh hope to human souls, and is to them a perpetual reminder of immortality. But at the time of which we are writing, these phenomena of Nature had long been transformed and personified into myths of human suffering and destiny—into little dramas of gods and goddesses, in the representation of whose griefs and sorrows the mass of the people found comfort and solace for their own. There was the natural phenomenon of the earth dying down in Winter and being restored to new life again in the Spring,—this was transformed into the little drama of Cybele mourning for her beloved Attis, and rejoicing again when he had been found. Then there was the phenomenon of the Dawn dispelling the Darkness—this was transformed into the Persian myth of the Sun-god Mithra striking the evil spirits, the spirits of Darkness, with his club. Again there was the great fact of the Unity of Nature torn to distraction by the multiplicity of

individual objects, and only to be restored to harmony again by poetic sympathy, insight, and imagination—this was transformed into the cult of the Thracian Dionysus who was torn to pieces by the Titans but whose heart preserved by Athena was given a new divine body by Demeter, while the Titans amid the rejoicing of the worshippers were destroyed by the bolts of Jove. And lastly there was the worship of Isis which had its origin in the phenomenon of the periodical overflowing of the Nile, whose stream dried up by the summer heat was believed to disappear into the under-world, returning again in due season to revivify the parched and exhausted soil. This natural fact was transformed into the tragedy of Osiris, who being murdered by Typhon is mourned for by Isis who wanders up and down the shades in search of his dismembered limbs, and when she has found them returns with them rejoicing to the upper world. Now in all these myths one sees the same story repeated,—the story of gods and goddesses in distress. And in the contemplation and representation of their sorrows, their worshippers found comfort and solace for their own,—together with the hopes common to them all, of immortality after death. Compared with the gods of Olympus, with their lust, greed, cruelty, and revenge, and with Hades and its departed shades—here, indeed, was comfort for the lonely and despairing heart. It is not surprising, therefore, that these Mysteries should have so quickly over-run the whole Roman world; and there can be little doubt that but for the advent of Christianity on the scene, they would in the end have replaced the old Greek and Roman Paganism altogether. It is true, indeed, that in the old orthodox Paganism there were gods who had received their apotheosis for their sympathy with men and for their exertions on their behalf—as for example, Hercules for his labours, Æsculapius for his care of the sick, and so on; but these were but episodes in the colossal tyranny and extortions of the gods, and had little or no influence on the minds of men.

But although these Foreign Cults, with their mystic and occult rites, exhibited a sympathy with human suffering and sorrow unknown to Greek and Roman Paganism; and although this sympathy could be paralleled only by that of the suffering Jesus of Christianity; still there were circumstances connected with these cults which for ever prevented them from becoming serious rivals to Christianity when once that religion had appeared upon the scene. In the first place Christianity not only offered solace to the sufferings and sorrows of men by the spectacle of a God in distress, but it aroused in them feelings of love and gratitude by the reflection that he had voluntarily given his life for men,—and that, too, not as the passive instrument of a cruel and relentless Fate, as in the Mystery Cults, but by the Father's Will, and as an expression of the Father's Love. In the second place, Christianity not only lifted the burden of human sorrow by its sympathy with the sufferings of a sorrowing God; it lifted also the burden of human guilt by the sacrifice which Christ had made for the sins of men, and so satisfied not only the heart, but the conscience as well. Now this the Mystery Cults did not attempt to do, nor could they have done it had they wished; for having their roots, one and all, in the phenomena of Nature transformed into little dramas of personal joy and sorrow, they could not jump their origin and free themselves from 'their birth's invidious bar;' and as the very genius of Nature's operations and of that fertilizing of earth, animal, and tree on which man depends, lies in the union of the male and female elements; and as in the celebration of these Mysteries sexual symbols were everywhere in evidence to stimulate and excite the passions; Immorality in consequence received a kind of consecration, instead of being the main object of detestation and censure, as it was in Christianity. And further as there can be no general advance in morality until the relations between the sexes are put on a pedestal far beyond the reach of caprice, and receive from men reverence and respect; it is

evident that these Mystery Cults took away in morality with the one hand what they added in sympathy with the other—and so could not resolve the perplexities of the time. Indeed in the days of republican simplicity and before the Romans had lost their early virtues, some of these cults, notably those of Isis and of Bacchus, had been expelled the city on account of the immoralities which they brought in their train, and which their rites stimulated and encouraged. It was with a just insight, therefore, that the Early Church placed unchastity among its deadly sins. Indeed in reading Tertullian, Clement, and the Early Fathers one seems to feel that with them all immorality is but another name for unchastity. It is identified with it by them in a way which we who have entered into their labours can scarcely now be made to understand. If then without some refuge from sin as well as from suffering, the human heart could not be at rest; and if the Mystery Cults instead of being a refuge from sin supplied direct motives to it; it is evident that with the appearance on the horizon of Christianity, with its destruction of the power of sin as well as its sympathy with and worship of suffering and sorrow, these Mystery Cults were doomed to decay and to ultimate extinction—all alike being swallowed up in the greater mystery of the Cross of Christ.

But besides Patriotism, with the high virtues it called forth in the early Greeks and Romans, and which for a time obscured the real effects of Polytheism on the human mind; besides the Mystery Cults and the Oriental Religions, with their refreshing waters springing up in the harsh and barren soil of Græco-Roman Paganism—there were the Moral Systems of the Philosophers, which for a time threatened to become, among the cultivated at least, formidable rivals to the nascent Christianity. These systems may for all practical purposes here be summed up in the Epicurean, the Stoic, and the Platonic, respectively. The Epicurean which represented the World as the result of the fortuitous concourse of

atoms jostling each other to form by their infinite combinations the vast multiplicity of Nature and Life, frankly made Pleasure as such the end and aim of human life. And although it stipulated that the range and scope of this Pleasure should include intellectual and moral as well as sensuous enjoyments; and although its one concern was how to arrange our lives so as to get not so much the greatest amount of pleasure at any given point, as the greatest amount compatible with its continuance over the longest period of time; still it raised no lofty ideal, evoked no deep enthusiasm; and may, therefore, like the ethics of the average sensuous man everywhere, for the purposes of this History, be practically left out of account.

It was different with Stoicism. For although much abused by impostors, it was nevertheless the religion of nearly all the great and noble spirits of the Roman decadence—of the men who retiring into themselves in defiance of a world which they were impotent to subdue, found in its proud contempt of tyranny and death the only defence against the evils of the time. But relying as it did entirely on the unaided strength of the individual soul, it could at best only have been a religion of the nobler spirits and not of the great masses of men. Besides it was founded on Philosophy, not on Supernaturalism; on human reason, and not on divine authority. And just as all Philosophy properly so called, being the attempt of the limited human understanding, with its limited range of senses and its limited avenues of knowledge, to gauge and impound the infinite possibilities of Nature and Life, must for ever be as impotent and hopeless as would be the attempt of the part to comprehend or enclose the organized whole of which it is a part, or of the conditioned product to comprehend the Unconditioned Cause which has produced it; so all systems of Morality founded on Philosophy merely, and resting therefore on the mere strength of the unaided human spirit, must prove in the end as impotent to wrestle with Time and measure themselves against the forces

of Nature and Fate, as is the human body itself. For however bravely men may set out on the conquest of the world in the heyday of youth and hope, the invincible years will slowly but surely grind them down, will stoop their backs and bend their heads until they are forced to bite the dust at last. Although therefore Stoicism in taking its stand on Nature and Virtue alone, occupied a position in its nature unassailable by gods or men, and one good for all time; still as it took up an attitude of antagonism to the world and not of sympathy, and depended for its success on the varying strengths of individuals to maintain this lofty isolation, it could do nothing in the event of that strength proving insufficient, but set its teeth firm, protest, and die. While good therefore for men like Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, and the more nobly constituted spirits; and while for certain types of disposition and character good even to-day; it nevertheless in the absence of any external support, wanted that universality of application necessary to make it a religion for the great masses of mankind. Indeed it is only by striking out from the purview of our dreams at the outset all attempt to comprehend the great circumambient Universe with its deep unfathomable night of mystery and gloom; and instead of opposing the course of Providence or Fate, drawing the curtains close, and in full sympathy and brotherhood with our fellow-men, in the belief that all goes well, trusting like Jesus and little children in a Father's love and care,—it is only thus that the great masses of men can in the unequal fight with Fate and Death find in their short sojourn here the solace necessary to enable them to lie down to sleep and rest.

Neo-Platonism again, having a different system of Philosophy from Stoicism, had in consequence a different system of morals growing out of it. In our section on Greek Philosophy we saw that Stoicism was a Pantheistic system, having Matter as one side and an Universal Soul diffused through Matter as the other. This Soul was got by knocking together and confounding in a single indivisible unity, the great separate and independent

categories of Plato, viz., the Good, the System of Ideas, Number, and Matter. And as the human soul was a part of this Universal Soul, it too was a single indivisible unity. If therefore it permitted itself to be overcome by Matter, it was bad; if on the other hand it was able to overcome Matter, it was good; but it could not be partly good and partly bad at the same time. And being the Universal Soul confined within the limits of an individual being, it followed that if in one person it proved too weak to resist the solicitations of the flesh, it might be strong enough in another. There was nothing therefore for it, if you felt yourself too weak to live up to the lofty principles of the school, but to die and leave it to others who were more favoured by Nature than yourself to carry aloft the torch of virtue as an example to mankind. In the Neo-Platonic system on the other hand, the Soul was not a single indivisible unity, but was made up of a higher Divine part and a lower sensuous one. Instead therefore of attempting like the Stoics to solve the problem of the World by a desperate effort of the will which should lift the whole soul at a bound into the realm of virtue, or succumb in the attempt—Platonism sought to do it by a double movement; first starving out the passions by Asceticism, and then rising through this asceticism by contemplation to the ecstatic vision of the Supreme One. But as this could be done only by killing out the natural instincts instead of yoking them in the service of virtue, the difficulty was solved only in the sense in which death is a solution of the difficulties of life; and the ecstatic vision even when attained, which at best was only at rare intervals in the course of a life —Plotinus only rose into it on four occasions—could give, as Augustine found, no steady and abiding support to the human spirit in its single-handed conflict with the world. The consequence was that when Christianity appeared, and reinforced the human soul in its conflict with sin by a power not its own; when it enabled its followers to encounter martyrdom with the firmness of the Stoic and with the joy of the Neo-Platonist

lost in his mystic dreams—when it did all this not in a state of death-in-life from emaciation and asceticism, but in the joy of the fullest life; Stoicism and Neo-Platonism alike and all the other systems which depended on the unaided strength of the individual soul had to go down before it.

And finally we come to the Moral Systems of what we may call the Religious Philosophers—of the men who in their systems find a place for the activity or interference of the old Pagan gods. Such were Seneca, Plutarch, Marcus Aurelius, Porphyry, Iamblicus, Proclus, and others. They were all primarily philosophers, more or less closely identified with the reigning schools. Seneca was almost a pure Stoic, but he was deeply imbued with the feeling that the stars were of the nature of gods and must therefore play some part in the phenomena of the world and of human life—although exactly what part he was not prepared to say. Plutarch, again, was mainly a Platonist; Marcus Aurelius a Stoic; Iamblicus and Proclus, Neo-Platonists, and so on. But unlike the older philosophers who explained the world on purely philosophical principles—unlike Plato himself, for example, who explained the world as we have seen, as a mixture in various proportions and relations of such abstract essences as the Good, Ideas, Number, and Matter; or the Stoics who explained it as resulting from abstract laws of Nature or Fate—unlike these philosophers who if not denying the existence of the gods, at any rate gave them no place in their systems, the Religious Thinkers with whom we are now dealing regarded the world as constituted both of warp and woof, as it were; the warp having indeed its origin and explanation in natural and philosophical causes, but being everywhere in-worked with patterns traced by the fingers of the gods. Like a hieroglyphic all scrawled over with hidden and symbolic meanings, it not only had to be *explained* by natural laws and causes, but it had to be *interpreted* also. This was the position taken up by Plutarch, who compared the world to a sun-dial which had not only a natural

cause as reason for its existence, but a symbolical one as well, as a mode of indicating time. God manifests Himself, he declares, not only in the natural world and in the conscience and heart, but by dreams, omens, and those trance-like states into which the priestesses of Apollo, for instance, were thrown by the intoxicating fumes of the Delphic cave. The world, accordingly, is to be interpreted not only by Natural Science but by the Science which more especially holds the key to these secrets,—the Science of Divination. Hence he regrets the decay of the Oracles which in his time had become dumb in his own native land of Bœotia, and which even at Delphi employed now only one priestess instead of three, and delivered responses in plain prose and no longer in verse as formerly. But there is no more reason, he thinks, for denying that the responses were the result of Divine inspiration, merely because of the bad verse or prose in which they were expressed, than for denying that a man's thoughts were the results of a true judgment because they were expressed in bad style. The decay of the Oracles he thought was due, not as was generally believed to their convicted imposture, but to some interference with the subterranean fumes, or perhaps to the death of the Demon himself who was the agent of Apollo, but who at the same time was mortal like man. As for the gods themselves, they were not identical with the popular gods of Paganism; on the contrary the popular gods were allegorical representations of them, or like the rainbow, broken and refracted lights reflected through a semi-barbarous medium from the real gods who were all pure and good. It was only the demons who waited on the gods, and who had sprung from the unhallowed union of the lowest gods with the daughters of men, who were bad, and for whom bloody sacrifices and obscene rites were the natural modes of propitiation. From the true gods themselves men had nothing to fear; and the only service they required of man was that of a pure heart and an upright life. But the advantage which Plutarch got from thus uniting

Religion with Philosophy was lost again from the impossibility of moralizing the gods by any process of explaining away or allegorizing their vices; and the impossibility in consequence of getting from them any help or refreshment for the human spirit. So that the purity of heart and uprightness of life which Plutarch enjoined must rest at last on the unsupported strength of the individual soul. Like Stoicism and Neo-Platonism, therefore, his was a religion for the strong and pure not for the weak and worldly souls, and like them it had to go down before the superior genius and attractions of Christianity.

The last of the Pagan Philosophers whose moral systems were more or less intended to rival or supersede the rising sun of Christianity, were the degenerate Neo-Platonists,—Porphyry, Iamblichus, Proclus, and the rest. They were the last representatives of Philosophy left in the Græco-Roman world before the final closing of the Schools of Athens by Justinian; and it was their disciples who persuaded Julian to re-establish Paganism for a time throughout the Empire. But for the better understanding of their systems it may be as well to recall to the reader's mind for a moment the colossal skeleton of the world devised by Plato. In this system all things were represented as being the result of the mixing and compounding in various combinations of four great principles, the Supreme Being or the Good, the System of Ideas, Number, and Matter or the ἄπειρον. In the system of the Neo-Platonists on the contrary the world is regarded as due not to the mixing and compounding of these four great principles, but to the emanation or radiation of these principles from one another; the system of Ideas being the emanation from the Supreme One at the top, the Soul of the World (as extended by Number) from the System of Ideas, and all at last embedded at the bottom in Matter as a common matrix in which they take bodily shape, tangibility, and visibility. Now although both these systems are severely scientific and philosophical in

character, nevertheless, at the back of their skeleton figures may be seen looming in shadowy outline the forms of the popular gods of Paganism; and indeed it is in the relations which these gods are made to hold to the purely philosophical framework of the systems of Platonism, that the key to the evolution of the later degenerate systems of Neo-Platonism is to be found. With Plato himself, it will be remembered, the gods, although allowed a formal existence in the Timæus, were evidently regarded as pure myths which had been handed down by tradition from the earlier times. With Plotinus the chief of the Neo-Platonists, they were accorded a real existence it is true as higher embodiments of the Divine Intelligence than man, but they were allowed to play no part in his scheme of the World; the sole object of his philosophy being to discover how to climb up the Chain of Ideas by means of Intelligence, and thence to catch a sight of the Supreme One by ecstatic Vision and Asceticism. But in the meantime Plutarch, as we have seen, had let fall the idea that the world was not only the result of natural causes and principles, but was all scrawled over as well with characters written by the fingers of the gods, and surcharged in consequence with mystic and symbolical meanings for the instruction of men. This hint of Plutarch's took root in the minds of the later and degenerate Neo-Platonists—Porphyry, Iamblichus, Proclus, and the rest—who felt themselves justified accordingly in bringing the gods forward from the background in which they had been kept by Plotinus, and giving them a part to play in the main action. To effect this object they even went so far as to lay sacreligious hands on the colossal figure which Plato himself had bequeathed to the world, and which in the great elements of its structure had remained unaltered since his time. Both Porphyry and Iamblichus it is true kept the head, the Supreme One, but Iamblichus cut away the very body of Plato's system, viz. his Chain of Ideas,

and replaced it by the chain or hierarchy of the Pagan gods. But as the Supreme One still stood as head above all these lower deities, and so was apt to divert attention and worship from them, both Porphyry and Iamblichus declared that the soul in its ecstatic vision could never hope to reach the Supreme One, but stopped short at these created deities. The Supreme One having thus become an empty figure-head, Proclus took the next step in the work of decomposition of the Platonic philosophy, and declared that the Pagan gods were themselves the Absolute, the Supreme Being. The colossal skeleton-figure of Plato's philosophy having thus melted away and been replaced by the old gods of Paganism, there was nothing for it but to relegate it to the background of consciousness, where no longer ministering to the intellectual or moral life of the individual soul it at last faded away altogether. And so were left standing in place of the splendid figure which the genius of Plato had given to the world and which had weathered untouched the stormy seas of philosophical speculation for a thousand years, the old figures of the Pagan gods as the last word both of Philosophy and Religion! And with them came back all the old paraphernalia of divination, magic, Chaldean sorcery, and the black arts, in the stead of morality and virtue, as the best means of pleasing the gods and solving the problem of life. But Christianity meanwhile had already advanced far on the road to the conquest of the world. Constantine had prohibited all sacrifices, and Constantius going still farther had ordered all temples to be closed on pain of confiscation and death. With the exception of Rome, Alexandria, and Athens, the towns had become Christian; and before the death of Valentinus, Paganism survived only in the country districts. After the death of Gratian, the title of Pontifex Maximus ceased to appear on the imperial coins, and the statue and altar of Victory were removed from the Senate House in Rome. In the reign of Theodosius, the Senate formally declared its adhesion to Christianity; and in Alexandria the

world-famed Serapion was razed to the ground. Shortly after, the gladiatorial shows were abolished; Paganism was suppressed in Alexandria; the offering of incense and libations was punished by confiscation of goods; sacrifices and divination with death; and by the year 420 A.D. Paganism was extinct in the Græco-Roman world. And with men like Origen, Athanasius, and Augustine to replace the degenerate race of thinkers who had degraded the noble philosophy of Plato into the mere body-slave of an old, toothless, and decrepit Paganism,—there was nothing for it but for Justinian in 529 A.D. to shut the Schools of Athens and bring to a close the Ancient World.

In the succeeding volumes I shall treat of Mahommedanism, Mediæval Catholicism, the Revival of Learning, the Reformation, Modern Metaphysics, and Modern Science, with the Doctrine of Evolution; and shall bring the results of our long survey of Intellectual Development to bear on the great problems of to-day in Religion, Philosophy, Politics, Political Economy, and Sociology.

END OF VOLUME I.

OF

HISTORY OF INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

PLATONISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

PART I.

IN the following study of Platonism and Christianity I have endeavoured to compass a number of ends, all of them from one cause or another more or less important and interesting at the present time. In the first place I have attempted to show how it was that a great scheme of the World and of Human Life like that of Plato—a scheme so much more highly evolved and subtle, so superior intellectually speaking to the simple scheme of Christianity—should nevertheless have been superseded and driven from the field by Christianity, not only in the minds of the vulgar, which one can in a way understand, but in the minds of the cultured and enlightened also. My second endeavour has been to meet, as far as I may be able, a want, which has long been felt in the literature of Platonism, by exhibiting his system in such a way that the connexion of its different parts may be more clearly seen. And now that a revival of interest in Plato seems to have set in, it has seemed to me that if the younger students of Plato could be supplied at the outset with a skeleton of his philosophy as a whole, so that they could bring the conception of this whole to the understanding of each part, they would be enabled to push their studies into the details of his scheme with much greater facility and advantage. My third object has been to extract from this study of Platonism and Christianity those lessons and warnings, those philosophical pitfalls and fallacies, which must ever be kept in mind by all those who in this new time would solve for themselves the problem of the world.

Many years ago when suffering from a prolonged period of mental depression consequent on the perusal of Mr. Spencer's "Principles of Psychology" and on the ensuing conviction that however much the materialism inculcated in his pages might revolt the higher intuitions of

the mind, it was nevertheless logically irrefutable, I began to cast about me on all hands for something that might be of use to me in my mental perplexity. Orthodox Religion I had already discarded, as much perhaps from what is called 'the spirit of the time' as from any special attention I had given to the subject; and, indeed, had it been otherwise, any remnant of authority that might yet have remained to it from my early traditions, would have been completely discredited by Mr. Spencer's teachings. Accordingly, not knowing very well where to look for assistance, I fell back on the circle of literary influences that lay nearest me—the prominent reputations of the time—and began with men like Mill and Ruskin, who were sufficiently serious to encourage the hope that somewhere in them I might find a solution to my difficulties. But as in this I was disappointed, I next tried the philosophic poets and novelists—writers like Matthew Arnold, Tennyson, Wordsworth, and George Eliot—but finding that they gave for the most part but a plaintive, melancholy, or pessimistic echo and expression to my own doubts and perplexities, instead of resolutely setting to work to solve them, I was again obliged to turn elsewhere. Into Carlyle and Emerson I had only just dipped, for finding that at that time I could neither understand the 'Sartor Resartus' of the one, nor the 'Essays' of the other, I put them aside as mystics, with the feeling that whatever truth they might have for men, that truth was not conveyed in a way that would reach and convince me. And then it was that I bethought me of what ought to have occurred to me from the beginning—that the best chance of finding a reply to philosophic doubts was the study of the great Thinkers of the World; and, accordingly, with fresh access of hope and determined to leave nothing unread that might assist me in the solution of my difficulties, I started at the beginning, and opened, I remember, with Plato. But I had not gone far before a fresh crop of complications and perplexities arose in my path, although of a somewhat different nature from those through which I had just passed. For a long time, as I have said, I had flattered myself that I had left Religion behind me as an useless and outworn garment with which I had no further concern, when, to my surprise, here in Plato I was suddenly confronted by what looked to me as much like a religion as a philosophy. Now Religion and Philosophy I had always regarded as things quite separate and apart, as quite different in nature, and as appealing to distinct faculties of the human mind; but I now discovered to my surprise that Plato had his 'scheme of salvation' and redemption as well as the Bible, and (what I had not thought of before) that the Bible contained in its Mosaic account of Creation, a Philosophy of the World and of human life as well as Plato. That it was not unnatural that I should have imagined Philosophy to be something distinct and separate from Religion is shown by the experience of all ages, in which philosophers have been accused of sneering at the religions of the vulgar, while the vulgar in turn have uniformly pelted or crucified the philosophers. It is shown also in that discontinuity of culture in the various strata of Society whereby you have

such a curious spectacle as that of Ancient Rome, where the masses sunk in religious superstitions listened to the mummeries of the augurs as if they were Divine oracles, while these same augurs winked at one another as they passed in the streets. It was the same in ancient Greece, where the philosophers, sitting high and apart in haughty isolation, looked down on the religious multitudes at their feet as on beings of a lower order, while these again in turn, to punish the philosophers for their insolence and for their temerity in denying or satirizing their gods, made one or other of them every now and again wander about the world in hopeless exile or drain the cup of hemlock to the lees. In our own time the case is still worse, for there is now as wide an intellectual gulf between the religion of the cultured and the same religion when held by the vulgar, as there formerly was between the churches and the philosophers. For just as for centuries after Christianity had become the religion of the Roman world, the people in country districts still continued to worship the old gods of the Pantheon as if Christ and his gospel had not yet appeared; so at the present day you have the spectacle of Salvationists, Revivalists, and other orthodox believers, sitting on a brood of spurious or doubtful texts, and with a pathetic sincerity still hoping by prayer and devotion to warm them into life, long after the leaders of their own Churches have given them up as hopeless; still lifting up their voices and lilting their hymns by the sea long after the guides whose fathers had brought them thither have lifted anchor and sailed away in other ships and to other shores. Now, that in the same community and at the same time, classes of men should be so sedulously kept apart from each other not only in thought and culture, but in the veriest rudiments of knowledge and criticism; that they should have to look at each other through prison windows athwart a gulf, across which no word is permitted to pass; so that you have whole populations of believers who have never even heard that there is any doubt as to the authenticity of this or that portion of the gospels or prophecies;—that in the nineteenth century this should be still possible has always seemed to me, as I have watched these poor confiding souls looking up from their texts in all simplicity and nothing doubting, to be a real tragedy; and I have been tempted to ask in indignation who has done all this; who has connived at this deception, and how long is it to continue?

All this of course was a fresh source of perplexity to me, and, in my then humour, I felt that I could not advance until I had removed it out of the way. I have thought it advisable, therefore, for the benefit of readers who are in the same predicament, to endeavour to clear up this confusion between Religion and Philosophy by a concrete presentation of their essential differences as seen at the outset of Western Civilization in Platonism and Christianity respectively; and to show why Platonism in spite of its vast superiority to the Christian scheme in subtlety and refinement, in philosophic and poetic insight and harmony, should have been driven from the field by Christianity.

Now in the Mosaic account of Creation which was afterwards adopted by Christianity as the basis of its Philosophy of the World and of Human Life, we have three elements out of which all the varied phenomena of the world are composed, three strings from whose mingled tones all the harmonies and discords of human life are produced. These three are on the one hand God and the Devil, and on the other that wide waste of uncreated possibility, that empty void of vast and unrelieved vacancy which from its intangible, viewless, and incorporeal character may be fitly called Nothing. Of these three, God and the Devil are the active spirits, and Nothing and what afterwards comes out of Nothing, the plastic and passive background of Being on which one or other of these high-contending powers plots his unhallowed schemes, or works out his inscrutable decrees. And as in the following pages it will be necessary to draw a detailed comparison between Platonism and Christianity, a light pictorial outline of the latter, although it can contain nothing but what is familiar to the reader, may prove serviceable perhaps for the after purposes of our argument and accordingly I have inserted it here.

Beginning then with Nothing, that void and empty Nothing over which from all eternity the Almighty had sat brooding, the World of Time by a fiat of His will is ushered in, and presently the empty void is seen to stir and move, then to cloud and thicken, and anon to seethe and roll, a turbid tempest-tossed sea of confused and conflicting elements; over which again the Almighty moving, works by a second fiat, a second transformation; and the troubled elements are seen to lift and clarify above into the wide and blue expanse of firmament and sky, in which are afterwards set the sun, the moon, and the stars. But all below is still confused; and over this again the Almighty passing, stoops, and with His wide and invisible wings parts it into land and sea, still standing in the gap between to keep them there, until each is on its own foundation fixed; and then withdrawn apart, looks round and smiles to see the earth in beauty clad, and from the ground upspringing, fruit, and flower and tree. With joy still unconstrained He views His work and finds it good; and then once more His will goes forth; and straightway from the earth and sea that gender them, myriads of moving populations teem; from the waters fish, and from the earth, fowl and beast and creeping thing; and last of all from the dust beneath, and in the image and likeness of Himself, He moulds the form of Man. To this with sweetest joy as crown and consummation of His high ideal He again draws near, and bending o'er it breathes into it a living soul. Thus fashioned, thus created, Man stands in unfallen grandeur in the morning of the world in pristine innocence undimmed, and all the woods and earth around with gladness filled return to him his silent hallowed joy, and breathe forth peace, and harmony, and rest.

And now begins the second act of the great Mosaic drama; for from among the angelic host which from all eternity had quired their immortal harmonies round the Eternal Throne, one Spirit more degenerate

than the rest, bitten by envious pride, turns recreant; and at the very gates of Heaven and in the face of God Himself, all unabashed sets up his standard of revolt. Recruited by an impious crew of fallen Spirits, he boldly marches on the Eternal Throne, but is in the end discomfited and put to flight; after which considering with himself how best to spite and thwart the Eternal in His work, filled with his new design, he springs from the threshold of Heaven into the dark abyss of Space, and sailing through the empty night, threads his way downwards through the Universe of Stars, until the green and flower-enbosomed earth in morning freshness opens on his sight. Over this, pausing awhile and looking round, he then alights, and making his way across the glistening morning grass to the threshold of Eden, enters, and disguised in a serpent's form creeps close to the ear of Eve; and in an unguarded hour whispers treason to her heart. She falls, and with her falls her husband; and both alike confounded in their shame the Almighty then surprising drives from the bowers of Eden,—their minds defiled and all the purity of their immortal spirits smirched and besoiled,—to roam the wide world the prey of death, and to transmit through all the succeeding ages their devil-tainted and sin-begotten progeny, the fruitful parents of cruelty and crime, of vice, of misery, and of shame.

This is the Fall of Man; and in its curse and bondage long continuing, the unhappy ages pass away; when the Almighty moved again by eternal love and the confounding of his own decrees, once more descends to earth, and taking on Himself the form of Man again confronts the Tempter; not now as then on the high battlements of Heaven, but in the invisible arena of the human heart; and by walking sinless through the sin-spotted world of human souls, and rising deathless from their death-doomed destiny, He, in death itself victorious, returns again triumphant to the skies. And now that He has gone, He leaves behind Him as sweet and precious possession to all succeeding times, the deathless image of Himself fixed and graven on the soul: an image which by its silent presence there, like an altar crucifix, breathes inward to the heart; shedding comfort on those who mourn, consolation on those who weep, and everywhere to the weary and heavy-laden, giving rest; an image too which raised on high as a battle-standard, gives fresh courage to the drooping heart, fresh spirit to the despairing, and to which by Divine Grace of their own free will turning, the sin-oppressed of every land may be enabled to vanquish inborn sin, and rise above themselves; and thus regain once more their lost estate—that blissful Eden which they knew.

Such is a rough pictorial outline of the Philosophy of the World and of Human Life with which Christianity has familiarized us; but though rough and general, it will have served its purpose if it have brought into clear prominence the two important points to which before proceeding to the parallel view of Plato I especially desire to direct the reader's attention. The first of these is that the whole scheme is absolutely *unscientific* in the modern sense of that term; that is to say, that while telling us *what* is done at each stage of the World-process, it nowhere

gives us any hint as to *how* it is done; and it is in this *how*, it must be remembered, that all scientific explanation consists; not in the absolute how, for that is inscrutable to mortal men, but in that relative how which links together the particular facts or processes in question with others of a like kind, so as to bring them into the same category with them. Out of Nothing, the Almighty first makes Something; out of this Something, other things; and out of these, others again, and so on; but as to *how* it all comes about, no explanation is given, and indeed it is impossible, scientifically speaking, to understand. But more important than this is the second point to which I would draw attention—the deep and wide-ranging influence of which will only become manifest farther on—and that is that each particular scene in this world-drama is made the direct outcome and effect, not of what are called scientific causes, as motion, force, affinity attraction, repulsion and the rest, nor yet of metaphysical abstractions, as spirits, essences, or vital principles, but of real personal beings, God and the Devil respectively—beings who in the first instance at least have bodily form, and like ourselves are endued with passion, sentiment, and will, to be moved by supplication or prayer, by love or hate, by jealousy or revenge. That is to say these world-processes are represented as being the effects of the only kind of cause of which we can have any immediate knowledge or experience, the only kind therefore which is entirely human and realizable, viz., that of *personal will.*

Carrying with us then these two conceptions of the Christian Philosophy of the World, viz., its *unscientific* character and its making the world the outcome and result of the intervention at each stage and point of the process of *personal wills*, we may now turn to Plato, when it will at once become apparent that the speculative world in the interval has not been idle, but that in the exchange and intercourse of nations the crude conceptions of the Mosaic Cosmogony have been gradually replaced by a much more subtle and complex, more highly evolved and differentiated range of conceptions—conceptions which in their combination at once of breadth and subtlety reach their flowerage and consummation in Plato. For in place of the three crude elements or strings with which as we have seen the Philosophy of Christianity produces all the harmonies and discords of the world—God, the Devil, and Nothing—Plato begins with at least four singularly complex and refined ones, each of which in its many-sidedness, blends and unites in itself various shades and semi-tones, so that from the whole, as from some exquisitely modulated harp, all the more subtle harmonies of nature and life are seen to be produced.

Of these four, the first is what he calls *the Good*, which in a rough general way we may call the Spirit of God. Like God, this Good not only includes the essence of the Good itself, but of the True; not only of the True, but of the Beautiful; not only of the Beautiful, but of the Just; thus uniting within itself the separate and peculiar essence and fragrance of all those aspects of the soul that are distinctive of man as man; stretching like an eternal sky athwart the entire belt and compass of the faculties

from horizon to horizon, and free from all that is subject to mutation and decay, to time and change, to passion, discord, and death. But to give it a link of connexion with the second great factor, viz., the Chain and System of *Ideas*, Plato is obliged to figure it not only as an Emperor sitting high aloof, from whom all the other elements take their initiative and word of command, falling into line and order with each other to form the world; but also like a Constitutional King at the head of his Court, as the first and highest link in that hierarchy of Ideas which lead up to it and which partake of its essence, as being of like nature with itself.

What then is this chain or system of *Ideas* which is the second great element with which Plato works, and from which he constructs the World. It is a chain or hierarchy each link of which may be regarded as the essence of one or other of the endless species of created things—essence of man, of horse, of dog, of the oak, the olive, or the rose—it corresponds in a word to what we mean when we speak of the *inner nature* of a thing, of a man, a horse, a dog, or the *idea* of a thing, as of a bed or a table, and not of the visible *form* in which it is embodied; to that which can neither be perceived by the senses, nor seen by the bodily eye nor the eye of the imagination, but can only be apprehended by abstract thought; that essence in a word of which all visible bodily form, all imagined *ideal* form, is but the expression and manifestation. Before Time began, these Ideas lay like the Good in the still Eternity as invisible uncreated essences—formless, colourless, incorporeal, intangible, indivisible—having neither parts nor magnitude, and like a ring of hoops one within the other, quite independent of each other, yet so related that each wider ring partakes of the nature of all within it; so that when Time begins, and they are separately drawn out into a figure like a hoop skirt or crinoline, you would have the smallest and topmost hoop representing the Good itself, and each lower and wider one partaking in the nature of all those above it, but with something added that is special and peculiar to itself, until the one lowest and widest would contain the essences of all those above it, and be itself the most complex and highly differentiated of them all. This system of Ideas indeed may be compared to an inverted zoological tree; with the root at the top corresponding to the Good, the next lower division corresponding to and containing within itself the two great branches of the Vertebrate and Invertebrate; the next again containing the Classes into which each of these sub-kingdoms is split; the next the Orders into which each class is broken up; then the Families of each order, and the Species of each family; until you come down at last to the individuals themselves of which these species are composed; the only difference between this zoological tree and Plato's chain of Ideas being that while the zoological divisions are founded on *physical* resemblances of form and structure, the Ideas are the *inner natures* of which these forms are the mere embodiment; or say rather, they are the complex internal unities of which in the fox, for example, cunning would be the most prominent characteristic; or in the lion, boldness; and of which every

detail of bodily form and structure is either the instrument or the expression. But these Ideas of Plato are not limited to merely intellectual categories, but like the Good stretch athwart the entire range of the faculties; so that you have a parallel hierarchy in the moral and æsthetic order, each quality partaking in the nature of those above it, as for example self-reliance of courage, and courage of justice, and all at last of the nature of the Good. And here it is important to remark that these Ideas, like the relation of species before Darwin, although arranged in an orderly logical chain, each partaking in the nature of those above it, are nevertheless quite independent of each other, and have none of that organic or vital connexion by which from one you can by a process of thought generate the next, and from this the next again, and so on. To do this indeed is the aim of all speculation, and the successive approximations made towards it in the field of cognition, constitute the history of Philosophy from Plato to Hegel and Herbert Spencer.

The third element with which Plato works is *Number*, which differs from his system of Ideas in this—that whereas the Ideas are the very essence and soul of things, their innermost invisible nature which can be perceived only by abstract thought, Number deals with their external and visible figure, not as it is actually seen in any particular thing (for each individual object is mixed with a portion of the fourth element—the formless—which offers resistance to its perfection), but rather in the *ideal figure* or type of that thing, in the perfect form of round or square with which Mathematics deals, the perfect form of man or horse which it is the function of Art, as of the sculptor, to discern. Now these Numbers, like the system of Ideas and the Good of which they are the visible expression, have many shades of meaning, and are stretched so as to cover not only figure and form, but all that concerns magnitude, number, position, parts, distance, and the like. Like Ideas and the Good, too, they lay through all Eternity in a sphere of their own, until they were aroused by their Lord and Emperor the Good, and bidden to come forth and take their place as elements in the composite and visible world of Time.

The fourth and last element of Plato is what he calls the ἄπειρον or the Formless, the Illimitable, the Indefinite, the womb and matrix of all that is visible and tangible—or, in a word, of Matter. This, too, like the other elements, the Good, Ideas, and Number, stretches athwart the entire breadth of that aspect of life with which it is spiritually, if not scientifically, identified, and includes on its *physical* side such poetically and spiritually similar (but scientifically very different) conceptions as the blank field of extension or Space on the one hand and the empty principle of Time and change, of vague and indefinite Motion, on the other; all that range of conceptions which are comprised in 'coming into being' and 'ceasing to be'; the raw material in a word of all that is vague and chaotic, multitudinous and formless, extended and divisible. On its *moral* side again it covers such various shades of meaning as

vague sensation, vague pleasure and pain without thought, vague emotion without object of love or hate, blind energy of will without direction or goal; it is the basis and raw material of Evil, of ugliness, of stupidity, of deformity, of necessity; in the same way as Number is the basis of the *outward* harmony and beauty of things, the Ideas of their *inner* harmony and beauty, and the Good itself of all that is Beautiful, and Just, and True.

Now from these four leading elements, pigments, or strings, or by whatever metaphor we choose to designate them—the Good, the Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον or Formless—it is easy to see how, according to Plato, the physical and moral characteristics of the World and Human Life are compounded, their harmonies and discords evoked, their beauties and deformities blended; and still more easy when we come to consider what World it was which these elements by their union and admixture were deemed adequate to explain. It was not the world to which the long intervening years have brought us at the present day—with its scientific Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Psychology, and the rest—but a world in which the Earth as in the old Ptolemaic Astronomy was still believed to be the fixed centre of the Universe, with the sun, moon, planets, and stars revolving around it; a world in which (except perhaps among the Jews, owing to their early Monotheism) these planets and stars were believed to be created Gods, either Angels or Demons, who shed their baleful or beneficent influence like a Fate over the whole course of human life. It was a world in which the Sciences, except Mathematics, were in their infancy; in which Physics and Chemistry had practically no existence; and in which scientific Physiology and Psychology as we know them were still unborn. It was a world in which mind and thought and feeling, instead of being indissolubly associated in Time with a brain and nervous system, were regarded as being separate and independent existences, entirely distinct and apart from them. All the other parts of the soul, as the will, the passions, the appetites and desires were known as 'animal spirits,' and were believed to be made up of the finer parts of the blood mixed with ether to give it lightness and vivacity, and so were figured as occupying space, and having extension, like other material things. It was this world then—a world to modern eyes practically as simple as the world of Genesis—which Plato had to explain by the union and admixture of his four primary elements, the Good, Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον or Formless;—all of which, existing apart as they did from all Eternity, were now called on by the Good to come together and form the world of Time.

Before however we can fully see the deep inner harmonies of Plato's great Scheme of the World and of Human Life, we must take it to pieces and reconstruct it in terms of modern thought; and to do this it is necessary that we should clearly seize his peculiar point of view; a point of view indeed so peculiar that to it all the troubles and perplexities of his commentators are mainly due. We are so accustomed

ourselves to think of God as a pure Spirit, that in spite of the Mosaic account of his walking in the garden in the cool of the evening, and of his appearing to Moses on the Mount, we can scarcely realize that until long after Plato's time, indeed until Christianity had purged the earlier conceptions of God of most of their grossness, the gods of almost all nations and peoples were believed to exist in the form of Man, except indeed when as with the Bull of the Egyptians, the Sun of the Persians, and the Stocks and Stones of the Fetish worshippers of Africa and the East, they were embodied in still lower forms. They were in a word anthropomorphic, that is to say, they were constructed in the image and configuration of man; and in precise proportion to the grossness of the peoples by whom they were worshipped, was the emphasis laid on the physical prowess, the stature, senses, appetites and passions of their gods. The gods of the savages for example were and still are, it is scarcely necessary to remark, merely great chiefs, bigger, braver, fiercer, more powerful, or more revengeful than the rest of the tribe; and their anger had to be appeased, and their good will secured like that of living chiefs, by food and drink, by incense and flattery, by women and slaves. As civilization and culture advanced, the gods of the nations were constructed less exclusively on the model of the merely physical and sensuous elements of man's nature; and—as we see among the Homeric Gods—to their physical prowess were superadded large endowments of intelligence, of refinement, and of beauty. In the Mosaic Jehovah too we have the God still represented in the form of a man, still jealous and revengeful; but as time goes on, more and more emphasis is laid on His justice and mercy, and less on His jealousy and revenge; until in Christianity the sensuous side of His nature entirely disappears and the God in Christ becomes the pure ideal of all the virtues.

In the above and other the like instances, the Deity, we at once perceive, is constructed and conceived in the image and from the standpoint of Man. But with Plato all this is reversed. For although he believes—for reasons which will appear further on—that if the Deity is to have life and movement at all, He must be more than a mere Spirit, and must have a body, like the gods of the Greeks and of neighbouring nations; still, taking his stand as he does, not on the nature of Man, but on that of God (or the god-like in man), and seeing things not from the point of view of Time, but under what Spinoza would call 'the form of Eternity,' he feels that if the Deity is to include within Himself all essences of all forms, and all forms of all creatures, so that in Him all things shall live, move, and have their being, it would be absurd to give Him the shape of a poor creature crawling between heaven and earth, even although that creature were privileged to be the highest of created things. For these organs and structures of man's body which make up his physical frame—his eyes, his nose, his hands, his feet, etc.—are not of this or that shape or form primarily on their own account, or from any abstract beauty they may chance to have (as we are too apt indeed to imagine when we isolate and idealize him in works of art),

but because man has an environment *outside* of himself, on his nice adaptation to which his very existence from moment to moment depends; and because these organs are precisely the forms that are best adapted to that environment;—legs and feet to carry him from place to place; nose and eyes and ears and hands to enable him to analyse, examine, and test the qualities of things about him, and to appropriate them or put them away from him according as he finds them beneficial or injurious; voice and tongue and expression to enable him to unite with his fellow-men in mutual sympathy and labour, or to protest against and defy these same fellow-men in their unscrupulousness, injustice, or oppression. Indeed were there no environment outside of man, or were that environment as in the case of the fish or bird different from what it is, he would either have none of these organs at all, or they would be entirely different in shape and form from what they are. Now this is precisely the case, Plato thinks, with the Deity. Being by the hypothesis co-extensive with the Universe and with the uttermost extremities of Space, He can have no environment outside of Himself, and can have no need, therefore, of eyes, or mouth, or nose, or hands, or any other organ; and as He fills all Space, and can, therefore, neither move forward nor backward, upwards or downwards, or from side to side, He can have no need of feet or legs to carry Him about. It would be as absurd, therefore, Plato thinks, to give him the form of man, as it would that of bull, or goat, or crocodile. What form of body then, the reader asks, would Plato give the Deity, if He must have a body and is to have life and motion? Nothing simpler says Plato, for embracing as He does and containing within Himself the essences of all created things, and, of necessity therefore, the forms of these essences, we should know beforehand that His bodily form would be that most perfect of all forms, the form which contains all other forms within itself, viz., the spherical, and that His movement, all other movement being impossible, must be that most beautiful and comprehensive of all movements, viz. the circular, or movement on Himself.

And how are the parts of His body disposed in relation to each other? As His body has to be eternal and beyond the reach of decay, it cannot be like the bodies of man and other animals, a mere composite of fire and air and earth and water all mixed together, and by their incessant movements and fluctuations running into each other and destroying each other, and so dooming the creature to dissolution; but each element must be kept apart in its own sphere, so that the whole, like the layers of brick and mortar, earth and concrete, in a well-ordered building, may be placed beyond the reach of time and change, of dissolution and decay.

But what about the soul, and where ought its seat to be in the body of the Deity? Nowhere, says Plato, but on the contrary the body ought to have its seat in the soul. It is one of the chief illusions that result from our taking our stand on Man and not on the Deity, that because the soul in ourselves is supposed to be placed *somewhere* in the body,

and therefore shares in a way the fortunes of the body, we imagine that it is the same with the soul of the Deity. Plato on the contrary conceives it to be just the reverse. For as the soul of the Deity must exist before the body which it rules, and which is only an afterthought and appendage, as it were, by which it manifests its existence, thus making visible the Deity to His creatures, it is evident that instead of existing in some corner or other of His body, it on the contrary ought to pervade the body from centre to circumference, and surround and enclose it like an atmosphere with its own life-giving spirit.

But as knowledge pertains to the soul of the Deity, and not to His body, and as this soul is to pervade the body and enclose it all round; and as further, as we have just seen, it can have no organs like the senses of sight, touch, smell, and hearing which by their contact with the environment are the sources of knowledge for human souls—how then the reader asks almost in despair, can the soul of the Deity attain to that complete and perfect knowledge and wisdom which by the hypothesis is demanded of it? Nothing simpler, says Plato; for all you have to do is to imagine this spherical soul to consist of two envelopes and a central core, and that the outermost of these envelopes which occupies the circumference should contain within itself those *eternal laws, principles, and essences* of things which are the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; that the inner envelope should represent the infinite variety of *forms* which exhibit and express these principles in time-pictures or symbols like variations of a musical theme; while the centre or core should be the womb or matrix in which these essences and ideal forms become manifest and *visible to the senses*, for ever coming into being and for ever passing away; and if further you make the outermost envelope, that which represents *eternal sameness*, revolve in one way, and the inner one representing the *eternal differences* in their time-pictures or symbols, revolve in the opposite, while the core or centre in which they appear and pass away remains fixed—is it not evident, asks Plato, that a soul composed of these different circles which meet one another in their opposite courses like travellers on the way, and touch each every other with, as it were, the spiritual eyes, should and must contain within itself all wisdom, all knowledge, all insight? And if to glorify and enjoy this Deity, you were to strew the different envelopes with children native and appropriate to each element; the outermost envelope with offspring who should carry those eternal laws and principles that are *ever the same*, round and round in circles of eternal harmony and joy; and the inner envelope with offspring who should meet these in the opposite direction, carrying on high the ideal time-symbols and representations in which those laws are to have *visible* manifestation; and if in the core and centre of all, these eternal ideas and their time-symbols in the form of beast and bird and creeping thing and man himself, were to take shape and visibility in an element of change and decay, ever coming into being and ever ceasing to be—would not this, asks Plato, be just what we should expect the Deity to be, if by the

hypothesis He was to contain within Himself all essences of all forms, all laws of all phenomena, all principles of all facts, all mind of all intelligence, all species of all things; and if besides He was to be rendered visible to His children who should live, move, and have their being in Him?

But has such a Deity any existence in fact, asks the astonished reader? Yes, says Plato, the visible Universe is that Deity; and indeed if we bear in mind the astronomical conceptions of the time, it corresponds to it point to point. For look you on a starry night at the wide concave of Heaven, and see how perfect is its sphere as it turns for ever on itself, built and lined from earth to sky in alternating expanse of earth and air and fire, moving freely on themselves, but so yoked and harnessed to their appointed spheres that they keep for ever their eternal round unwearied, secure against the inroads of mutation and decay. Then look again and see how thick its outmost rim of fire is strewn with stars—a race of heavenly Gods indeed, immortal as their Sire, within whose ample bosom as, unborn of Time, with noiseless foot He in eternal sameness moves, they are borne around; still turning inwards on themselves in virgin purity, as in joy and contemplation lost, they see the eternal form of Beauty as she is. Then note again how on the inner border of this fiery sphere the wandering planets with unequal pace meet and traverse the outer stars by whom they are controlled; and with sun and moon among them to light up the world and mark out the months and years for mortal souls, make of Time itself which they create and carry on, the moving image of Eternity. And then again within this inner rim of fire behold twixt us and it the vacant realm of air, and nearer still the waters of the clouds above, and last of all, as inner core, the Earth itself on which we move, fixed and rooted in eternal rest. But *on* this Earth how great a change! For on its surface mark how earth and air and sea and fire (in their masses, elsewhere kept apart,) meet and mingle in perpetual flux as if the very genius of vicissitude bore rule, and as wind and frost, fire and flood, scorch and quench and wither; so that not man alone but the birds and beasts and creeping things embarked and floated on its ever-moving tides are seen hastening through Nature to decay; and not eternal Beauty only and the eternal laws of Truth and Right, but the Ideal Forms in which they seek to clothe themselves in Time, have to be snatched from these fleeting shadows as they pass, or smelted from the soulless dross in which they lie, like veins of finest gold, through long years of patient human toil.

Such is the Universe as seen by the eye of Plato and, in a general way, by his contemporaries, and is it not clear, he asks, that corresponding as it does point to point to what we should expect the Deity to be when looked at from the standpoint of what is Godlike in man and not from what is merely human, from the standpoint of Eternity and not of Time, from the standpoint of the Creator and not of the creature; is it not clear that this Universe is and must be the one and only God?

Now that the Universe, which we moderns figure as a vast realm of Extension and Space strewn with gross masses of mere inorganic Matter called stars and planets and suns and earth—that this Universe should be conceived of as in any sense a Deity does indeed sound strange to modern ears. And even more astounding perhaps is it when we hear Plato speaking of the Deity, whom we regard as the Creator of all things, as being Himself created! But if we consider how in man the soul pervades and unites organs and parts of the body so different and apart in composition, structure, and function, as heart and liver, lungs and limbs; there is no reason in the nature of things why the soul of the Deity should not also pervade, and have as its body, elements so different and apart, as stars, and suns, and planets, together with earth, air, and sea and all the races with which they are peopled. And as for the Deity being Himself created, in this, too, Plato is essentially harmonious and coherent with himself. For drawing his analogies from created things while taking his stand on the Creator's thought, he sees no reason why, if in man that continuous thread of consciousness which we call his soul may be figured as made up of a succession of definite thoughts and feelings floated on an indefinite basis of motion or change to carry them on and give them life and movement, it should not be so too with the soul of the Deity. And as with Plato, as we have seen, the chain of Ideas, Number or Form, and the principle of indefinite Motion or Change would, if not brought together by some extrinsic cause, lie as primordial and independent elements or principles in their original isolation, separate and apart to all eternity; so it is evident to him that the Good which, as we shall see, brings them together and so disposes them that they shall be a living, active Being or God, must be the one and only Creator, and that the Deity thus formed, mixed, and compounded, must be Himself created.

With these preliminaries to put the reader at the right angle and point of view for seeing the harmony, beauty, and profundity of Plato's great scheme of the World, it is necessary perhaps, before passing to his views on Human Life and his 'scheme of salvation' for Man, to say a few words as to how this great Deity—the Universe—is compounded by him out of the four original elements with which he works, viz., the Good, the system of Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον or principle of mutation and change.

Now these original elements were, as we have seen, conceived by Plato to be separate independent existences that had lain in their repose from all eternity, and would indeed have continued to lie to all eternity, had it not been that the Good—the only one of the four that has executive power and initiative—being free from envy and desiring that everything should as far as possible resemble Himself, induced the rest to come forth from their repose and allow themselves to be united into a body and soul so as to form a Deity or Universe which should be visible and tangible to the offspring who were to be created to enjoy it. And the first question we have to ask is, how does He compound this Soul of the Universe or Deity out of these four original elements? He does it in

this way: He first takes the chain and system of Ideas, or the Eternal principles, laws, and essences of things, and mixes them with the ἄπειρον on that side of it which represents indefinite *motion* or change, and so by setting Ideas on the wings of motion, forms what we call a continued consciousness. He then takes the same element of the ἄπειρον but on that side of it which represents vague and indefinite *extension*, and mixes it with Number or that system and gradation of ideal forms in which these Ideas are afterwards to take visible shape (as when the Idea of cunning, for example, is represented in the extended but ideal figure of a fox), and by again mixing these two separate mixtures he gets a spirit or soul that has both movement and extension although invisible, a soul that shall be made up equally of eternal Ideas always the same, their ideal Time figures, symbols, or appearances, and the ἄπειρον or blank principle of motion and change which is to give them life and movement. This Universal Soul, accordingly, which although invisible has extension, is then spread out by the Good or Creator into a great globe or sphere, and is so arranged that although each and every part of it shall be made up of Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον, these elements shall be more heaped up and concentrated in one part of the sphere than in another. As for the eternal Ideas they are to be concentrated on the outermost rim and circumference and, as we should expect, this part of the circumference is made all of a piece, undivided, and moving in one direction in a perfect circle on the principle of eternal sameness, but with just sufficient Number and ἄπειρον to give it movement, and that movement in the definite form of a circle. The inner portion of this rim and circumference again is dedicated to the pure element of Number, to those purely ideal forms and figures, in a word, which unlike the Ideas have extension, and occupy space, and accordingly move in the exactly opposite direction, on the principle of difference. This part of the soul is divided by Plato into different minor circles moving in different periods and at different distances apart, but so arranged that like the gradations of form in the different allied species of animals, the intervals between them shall, like a number of musical strings struck in unison, give out a complete and Divine orchestration and harmony. As for the core or central part of this Universal Soul, it is set apart for the ἄπειρον, or principle of incessant fluctuation and change, as on our own Earth; but with sufficient Ideas and Number mixed with it to ensure that in the end, out of it order will be educed.

So far, however, this Universal Soul is invisible and intangible. To give it visibility and tangibility therefore, so that it may be seen, touched, and handled by the mortal and immortal creatures that are about to be created, the Creator—the Good—plants, according to Plato, in its various circles visible bodies—fire, air, earth, and water—and so distributes them in their respective circles that they cannot intermix to dissipate, quench, or otherwise destroy each other.

How then, we have now to ask, does Plato compound this fire, air, earth, and water out of the original elements of the Good, the Ideas,

Numbers, and the ἄπειρον with which he constructs his system of the World? To begin with he makes the Creator—the Good—take as his basis and matrix the ἄπειρον and this ἄπειρον as he now with more particularity explains consists not of chemical atoms or molecules like the primitive atoms of later philosophers, but of an infinite number of triangles—equilateral, isosceles, and scalene right-angled—all huddled together, all having extension and occupying space, but so small as to be as invisible as blank Space itself, and yet so subject to external pressure as to be kept in a chaotic and incessant movement and change. But by mixing Number with these, that is to say by binding them into bundles with regular crystalline forms, they become according to Plato large enough to be visible; those that are built up into the form of pyramids being seen by us as fire, those in the form of cubes as earth, those in the form of dodecahedrons as air, and those in the form of icosahedrons as water; and thus a body is given to this Universal Soul.

Body having thus been given to the Soul of the Universe by the implanting within it of earth, air, fire, and water, the Creator according to Plato has now to do two things further—He has to light it all up as by a kind of general illumination in order that it may be seen by the creatures, his offspring, who have still to he created; and this he does by the special creation out of fire of the Sun and Moon, which are then placed in the inner ring of the outer circle of fire. He has also to give that time, periodicity, and regularity to all the movements of the Universe which are necessary if His creatures both mortal and immortal are to have a standard of order according to which they shall regulate and conform their lives; and this he does, as we should expect, not by interfering with the outermost region of the Universal Soul which is the seat of those Eternal Ideas which by their nature are beyond Time, but by adding Number to the movements of the inner circle which is peopled with the Sun, Moon, and Planets that are concerned with those ideal time-figures in which the Eternal Ideas are to clothe themselves—Time itself being formed out of Number united with that Eternal Unity of which it henceforth becomes the moving image. As for the gods of his own country, Zeus, Hera, and the rest, Plato can find no place for them in his system of the World, and accordingly contemptuously dismisses them as the mongrel descendants of the union of Heaven and Earth; having strength and beauty, indeed, superior to mortals, but with none of the purity of the Heavenly Gods; and to be believed in by men not because of any evidence that is forthcoming for their existence, but because it is so ordered by the laws of the State!

The Soul and Body of the Deity, the Universe, being thus illuminated, regulated, and prepared to receive the creatures who are to inhabit its different circles of fire, air, earth, and water—we have now to ask who and what are these creatures and how are they mixed and compounded? The outermost rim of the circle of fire was peopled, as we have seen, with the fixed stars, a race of heavenly gods, pure, immortal children of the Good, or Creator Himself, and made up of fire, the purest of the

elements, mixed with the Spirit of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True. The innermost rim of this same circle of fire is peopled, as we have seen, with the planets (including the sun and moon) made up of fire and Number, and on these are to be distributed the *mortal* souls afterwards to be created, including Man himself. As for the birds which are the children of the air, the fish of the waters, and the beasts and creeping things of our Earth itself; and how with Plato they are all the transmigrating souls of men who have fallen from grace and are expiating their sins in these lower forms—all this introduces us at once to the most important part of Plato's Philosophy, the part too which we shall more especially have to contrast with the Christian scheme, viz. his doctrine of the Origin of Man, his Fall, and the Scheme of Salvation by which he is to be redeemed;—and to this, having already sufficiently prepared the way, I now desire to direct the reader's attention.

PLATONISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

PART II.

BEFORE entering, however, on Plato's views of the Origin of Man (as preliminary to the thorough understanding of his doctrine of the Fall and Redemption), it is necessary to premise that the Creator does not with Plato as with the author of the Mosaic Cosmogony make Man simply and frankly in his own image, both body and soul, but only the immortal part of his soul; leaving his body with its appetites, passions, and desires, to be made by those fixed stars or junior gods as he calls them, who correspond in a way to the angels of the Christian Cosmogony, and who are carried around the eternal throne hymning like them their Creator's praise. And we have now to show how, according to Plato, both the body and soul of Man are compounded.

It would appear from his account, then, that the Creator, or the Good, after having formed the Soul of the One and Only Deity, the Universe, in the manner we have seen, found that He had some of the original elements or ingredients—the Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον—left over; and that by mixing these in the same bowl in which He had compounded the Soul of the Deity, He produced a soul of the same composition indeed, but somewhat weaker in strength, owing to the disproportionate share of the ἄπειρον—the wayward and turbulent element—in its composition, and one, therefore, that was less able to resist the solicitations of temptation and desire. This diluted soul He then cut up into as many immortal souls of men as there were fixed stars or angels, and seating them each beside one of these angels to be carried round the outermost rim of Heaven, pointed out to them the harmonies of the created Universe and the eternal laws of Fate. This done, He then informed these immortal souls of men that they were destined to be planted on the earth, moon, and other planets, but in bodies subject to decay and death; and that in order that they might be able to protect themselves from fire and flood, from frost and wind and storm without them, and from all manner of distemperatures of their own

bodies within, and so be enabled to pick their way through this thorny thicket-encompassed world and keep their footing for a few brief years on its ever-rolling tide, they were to be equipped with a whole armoury of instincts, passions, appetites, and desires, which, moving in unison with the bodily changes, should by the feelings of pleasure or pain which accompany these changes apprise the reason—or immortal part—of what is going on in the body, of what is good or bad for it, and of what it ought to pursue or avoid. But as these pleasures which are thus but the *means* to the one supreme end of right living, are apt to be made ends in themselves, and so to degenerate into folly and excess; and as these pains, which are normally to be avoided, may yet be so ignobly avoided as to lead to moral cowardice and the desertion of what is good; it is evident that the undue pursuit of pleasure, instead of making for man's welfare, may become his greatest bane and lure his soul from its highest good. The Creator accordingly announced, both as encouragement and warning, that those who should succeed in subduing the excessive pleasures of appetite and sense should, after living their appointed time on earth, return to their home in Heaven with the angels or fixed stars; but that those on the other hand who should be subdued by their appetites and passions should be compelled to wander in painful exile through lower forms of life—of beast, of fish, and of bird—in successive transmigrations, until taught by stern necessity they should come to themselves again, and return to a life of reason and virtue; that they should in their first transmigration after death take the form of woman (such was the want of gallantry of the time), but, should they not cease from evil even then, in their next life they should be changed into those brutes whose natures most resembled the various kinds of excesses to which they were addicted;—those for example who, although free from vice, were light-minded and curious about things above, and who imagined that they could see into Divine things by the mere eye of sense, being changed into birds; those again who, from following their lower appetites, ceased to care for Philosophy or to know the nature of the Universe, being turned into quadrupeds with heads turned to the earth as suited their proper nature, the more unwise of them even grovelling on the earth with their bellies, in the form of reptiles; while the most ignorant and unthinking of all, whose souls were so saturated with sin that they were not worthy to breathe the pure air of beasts, were driven into the water to lead the lives of oysters or fish; all alike continuing to migrate into each other according to the measure of their intellect or folly;—and so the world was peopled with animals as the temporary forms of fallen human souls passing through it, and expiating their sins in these rounds of unceasing transmigration.

The Creator or the Good having thus legislated for the immortal souls of men, and having placed them on the Earth and other planets, then delivered them over to his offspring, the junior gods or fixed stars, to be fitted not only with mortal bodies but with mortal passions, appetites,

and desires; after which, like Jehovah when his six days work was done, He returned to His repose, leaving His faithful children to complete His task. They accordingly after the manner of the Creator, whose work in compounding the Deity or Universe they were instructed to imitate, took portions of fire, air, earth, and water, from the body of the Universe, on the understanding that these would be restored again when the creatures died, and out of these elements they compounded the bodies of men. But these human bodies differed from the body of the Universe in two important particulars, so important indeed that, as we shall now see, they became to man the fruitful parent of all his woes. In the first place, unlike the body of the Universe which as we saw had no environment, the bodies of men were surrounded by an environment of fire and frost, of flood and wind and storm, to whose ravages they were a prey; and in the second place the fire, air, earth, and water, of which they were composed, instead of being kept distinct and apart each in its own proper sphere, as in the body of the Universe, were all mixed together, or kept in their places only by the finest invisible tacks or nails as Plato calls them; so that when fire or frost or storm burnt or pinched or drenched them from without, or when from within the least disturbance agitated them, they were in danger of running into each other as it were,—the fire of running into the solid structures and inflaming them, the cold into the moist ones and freezing or stagnating them, and the water into them all, and soaking them with dropsies and other disorders,—and so in the end, of bringing the body to disease, decay, and inevitable death. Now it was this tendency to disease and decay, that by rendering necessary some more special medium of communication between body and soul than existed in the body of the Universe (which as we saw was able from its compact structure and the distribution of its parts into distinct and separate zones which cannot intermingle, to exist eternally of itself); it was this tendency to disease and decay that necessitated the presence of those mortal passions, appetites, and desires which in the Deity or Universe, as not being needed, were absent. And furthermore it was to the existence of these appetites and desires, or rather to the pleasure and pain which accompanied them (and through which alone the immortal soul or reason could get to know how it was faring with the body); it was owing to the existence of these pleasures and pains, I say, and to the tendency to pursue or avoid them on their own account and to erect the pleasures into ends of themselves, that all kinds of wickedness, folly, and excess ensued for Man; and so what was intended to be a light to his feet, and a guide to his path, became to him the source of all his miseries, and the predisposing cause of his Fall.

But before exhibiting the way in which, according to Plato, this Fall was brought about, we must ask how the junior gods compounded these mortal passions and desires? Now to answer this it is necessary to remember that the difference between mind and matter, body and soul, was with Plato, as with the ancients generally, much less accentuated

than with us moderns. The Soul of the Deity or Universe, we may remember, was spread abroad on all sides to the extremities of Space, and moved in rotation on itself, and so had both extension and movement just as Matter has; the only difference between them being that while Matter or Body is made up of the little invisible triangles of the ἄπειρον bound up by Number into various figures—pyramids, cubes, octohedrons and the rest—which are large enough to be visible, and are known to us as fire, air, earth and water; Soul is made up of the same invisible ἄπειρον in the restless movement of whose little triangles Ideas are floated which are also invisible; and also Number, in the sense of ideal but invisible Time-symbols, is carried along; and so although having, like Body, both movement and extension, Soul is itself quite invisible. All therefore that the junior gods had to do in constructing the *mortal soul* as Plato calls it, *i.e.*, the passions, appetites, and desires of men, was to take the ἄπειρον, in the sense of vague movement and change, and leaving out Ideas, to float Number on it to give it regularity and rhythm (instead of binding its particles together by Number which would have made body), and so to unite it with the human body that all the changes going on in the body should be faithfully transmitted to the immortal soul or Reason; as when in some electric conductor or telephone the shoutings of the voice at one end are faithfully reproduced in the ear at the other.

Having in this way compounded the appetites, passions, and desires of men as well as their bodies, and having located courage in the chest, and the other passions in the abdomen; the junior gods then took the immortal soul which they had received from their Father and Creator, the Good, and dividing it like the Soul of the Universe into two circles, one of eternal ideas, principles, or essences, always the same, and the other of the different Time-symbols in which these ideas are to be embodied, placed it in the head; and this head again as it was to contain a soul of the same nature though weaker in strength than the soul of the Deity or Universe, they made round in shape like the immortal Body of this Universe itself. And so at last Man was formed, complete and entire in all his parts, and for the first time became what in the language of Scripture is called a living soul. But no sooner had all these various elements come together, than the immortal part or Reason, consisting of the two circles of Eternal Truths and their Time-symbols, was so stormed in on from all sides, both from within and from without, that in only a few favoured natures could it hold its own. In all infants, indeed, without exception, the stream of bodily nutrition was so overpowering as practically for the time being to quite overwhelm the reason and intelligence; but as these infants grew to childhood and youth, and the stream slackened and became more calm, reason began to emerge and give signs of its existence, asserting itself more and more as they grew into manhood and maturity, although never (except in a few men) overcoming the weakness of its original composition sufficiently to resist the temptations of sense or to see through its illusions, and so to attain that goal which its Creator, the Good, had prescribed for it. So badly indeed

did it fare with this immortal soul of Man that it at last began for its own comfort and satisfaction to entertain delusions and to hug them as if they were realities; began, for example, to imagine that the glamour of the senses and passions which had so misled it, was itself the true criterion of right and wrong; so that at last, like a man looking at the world from between his legs, it saw things upside down, calling that which was prudent and expedient, right and just; that which was merely painful, wrong; that which was agreeable, beautiful; that which was unusual, miraculous; regarding that which had might as also having right; and worst of all, that only which could be seen, touched, or handled, as having any existence or reality at all! Now it is in these illusions of the *intellect*, and not in the corruption of his *will*, that the Fall of Man, according to Plato, primarily consists; and from this fact, as we shall see, his great scheme of Redemption, on which I am now about to enter, is easily and logically deducible.

If the Fall of Man, then, his misery and sin, is with Plato due not as in Christianity to any vice of the will, whereby a being originally entirely good and made in the image of his Creator, becomes by a sudden turn of the will under the influence of the Tempter entirely evil and a child of the Devil; but is due rather to the mixture in his original composition of the ἄπειρον, of that blank principle of change which appearing in life, as it does, in the form of unregulated passion and desire, continually alienates the mind by its glitter and illusion from the simplicity and purity of the Right, the Beautiful, and the True;—if this be so, it is evident that, with Plato, the redemption and salvation of Man must be secured, not as in Christianity by transferring the allegiance of the mind back again from the Devil to God by Divine Grace (whether through an Apostolic succession residing in a visible Church and its Priests as in Catholicism, or through the power of the Word as in Protestantism, or even through the Holy Spirit Himself whispering to the private heart when the will is on the turn, as in the most subtle and refined form of Modern Christianity), but only by stripping off those illusions of sense by which the pure intellect is led astray, and by climbing up the chain of Ideas to the First Cause—the Eternal Good—through long and laborious stages of thought. And this, unlike the right-about-face of the will in Christian 'conversion,' cannot by its very nature be a sudden impulse, but must for the majority of ignorant sense-beridden and often semi-brutish human souls be a matter of time, and involve successive lives of transmigration and re-incarnation.

But what, it may be asked, is the stimulus which incites man to make this attempt to reach the Good by scaling the world of Intellect and Thought? Love, says Plato—love of those divine Ideas which the immortal part of his soul remembers to have seen when, sitting with the angels or fixed stars on the outermost rim of the world, it was carried around with them in their revolutions, to watch the eternal harmonies of the Universe and behold as it were the face of the Creator Himself. And this Remembrance or Reminiscence, as Plato calls it, by what is it

suggested or awakened? By the images, says Plato, of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True, which the mind sees as in a glass darkly in their maimed and imperfect human types—those Ideas or Eternal Essence or Principle of eternal Law and harmonious Number, which the immortal soul of Man bears trailing with it into this dusky, confused, and ever-shifting and vanishing existence. It is these divine Ideas, according to Plato, or in a word what we should call these Ideals, that by their own inherent and unsullied beauty, and by the hungering desire we have to realize them, fire the spirits of fallen human souls to reach them, and so to regain once more their immortal seats in that bright Heaven from which they came.

With Love then as impelling power, and this love kindled and set on fire by the remembrance of divine Ideas caught from or suggested by their glancing intermittent apparitions in earthly things, we have now again to ask how, according to Plato, the Redemption and Salvation of Man, his return to his first estate among the stars, is to be accomplished; and to answer this our already too long introductory exposition of his general Theory of the World has sufficiently prepared us.

The Universe, as we have seen, was pictured by Plato as compounded of four original elements or principles—the Good, which alone like the God of Christianity has initiative and creative power; the Chain of Ideas; Number; and the ἄπειρον or formless principle of extension and change—and that each of these in their order was necessary to give variety or expression to those that preceded it; that the differentiated chain (or family-tree rather) of Ideas was necessary to give variety to the different sides of the unity of the Supreme Cause—the Good—in whose essence these Ideas all participate; that Number was necessary to give *ideal* expression (in symbolic form as it were) to the Ideas; and that the ἄπειρον with which the others were mixed, was necessary to give visible and tangible reality to the whole. If then we reverse this order and begin from the outside, as it were, *i.e.*, from visible tangible creatures of flesh and blood, it is evident that in order to reach the Good or Supreme Cause—the Spirit of the Right, the Beautiful, and the True—we must be led on by ascending love from the desire for the merely sensuous beauty of Bodily Form which by its glitter and illusion misleads the soul and when too hotly pursued and indulged in turns to gall and bitterness, breeding vexation and disgust—we must be pushed on, I say, from this merely sensuous beauty which, as slave of the tyrannous years, fades and withers, yielding no solid fixture on which the immortal soul of man may rest, to the love of the Beautiful Soul inhabiting this body, of which this passing bodily form, being mixed as it is with the ἄπειρον, is but the fleeting and imperfect embodiment—that Beauty of Soul, in a word, which is not a merely saintly or ascetic beauty, but the harmonious blending and combination of the mortal and immortal parts in due subordination; of courage and self-restraint and noble passion, as well as the pure devotion to the Right, the Beautiful, and the True; that pure beauty of soul, in short, which it is the object of Art to seize with the eye of the

imagination and to embody in all the glory of form and colour to the eyes and senses of men. But this Beauty of Soul, made up as it is of mortal as well as immortal parts, is closely dependent, it must be remembered, on youth and strength—in a word on the body with which it is bound up—and with the failure and decay of the body must lose much of its morning freshness and charm; so that here, too, there is no rest for the weary wing of love until all that is merely mortal and human is stripped from the soul, and we come in sight of those pure eternal Ideas with which Philosophy deals; those Ideas which give to these beautiful souls all they have of beauty and charm, and which can neither be seen by the bodily eye, nor pictured by the eye of the imagination, but can be apprehended by pure Thought alone. And these the soul of man once beholding, it cannot rest until it has scaled them to their summit and come in sight of that august eternal Cause in whose essence they are all alike participant, the Good, viz., or the Spirit of the Right, the Beautiful, and the True. And this, in turn, once seen, like the God in Christ of Christian conversion, henceforth becomes the most precious possession of the soul and the one most immediate to the heart, the sight of which, indeed, is man's highest privilege, his most blessed and entrancing delight; for in it not Art and Science only, but Philosophy and Religion also find their final and eternal rest.

This Supreme Good once attained, Man is then invited to *descend* again along the path by which he came, along the chain of eternal Ideas to the infinite variety of forms into which they break and split themselves—forms which mixed as they are with Number and the ἄπειρον constitute the world of Time; to enjoy them, to live in them, and to participate in the eternal beauty which they symbolize. And with this our next question becomes, how according to Plato are we by the most easy, natural, and spontaneous evolution to pass through the successive stages of culture necessary to come in sight of the Supreme Good?

To begin with, it is evident that as Plato makes each of the four elements with which he deals, only the symbol or *expression* of the next in order, the ἄπειρον of Number, Number of the Ideas, and the Ideas of the Good; or to put it differently, makes each end only a temporary *means*, as it were, to a higher end,—beautiful Body a means to lead us to beautiful Soul, beautiful Soul to the beauty of Ideas, and beautiful Ideas to the Good—it is evident, I say, that if we are to reach the final end of all, viz., the Creator or the Good, in the surest, most complete, and most systematic way, each of these temporary ends, before we can be weaned from it or it can fall off, as it were, and be superseded by a higher end, must, like the different envelopes surrounding the seeds of a flower, be made to realize its entire function and to reach its full fruition and development. Now, as the first of these ends to be brought to its highest development is the Human Body, this as far as merely physical beauty goes can be done by Gymnastics and Athletics alone; but as Plato thinks it impossible to have true bodily beauty with a low and degraded soul, he would, to produce beauty of face and expression, true beauty of

attitude and figure, employ Music, which with him is the art of arts, and the one which as being the purest expression of Number and Ideas combined, is the most calculated to keep all parts of the soul, composed as it is of mortal and immortal parts, in their due and natural subordination and harmony. This part of education completed, and the youth whom we are supposed to be training, having received from Music and Gymnastics not only a sound body, but also right habits and customs, those true modes of thinking and feeling which, when he attains to years of conscious reflection, he will not be obliged to unlearn or discard; having arrived too at a period of manhood when his former ideals, Athletics on the one hand and merely natural or customary Human Virtue on the other, have received from him their due meed of admiration and culture; he is now, according to Plato, ready to pass from the unconscious or but semi-conscious love of beautiful things to their conscious *scientific* analysis and investigation, to those abstract truths of Eternal Number and Eternal Ideas which have given those beautiful human souls all they have of beauty, loveliness, or charm; to pass, in short, from the Arts to the Sciences. And what are these Sciences, we have now to ask? The two great sciences, says Plato, of Mathematics and Logic or Dialectic—the only two, indeed, practically known in his time—the one, Mathematics, dealing with number and figure and magnitude and all things having extension; the other, Dialectic, dealing with the eternal Ideas, Principles, or Essences, of which these figures of Mathematics are but the Time-symbols and expression. Now, as to Geometry or Mathematics—Plato argues that as its deductions, however true in their way, are founded on axioms and definitions, all of which, relating as they do to figure and magnitude, assume as their basis the blank field of extension or space; and as this extension or space belongs, as we have seen, to the ἄπειρον; and as the ἄπειρον possesses only that *negative* or hypothetical reality, which pertains to it as the matrix or background for the exhibition of those essences which, though invisible, alone have positive reality, viz., the Good, Number, and the system of Ideas; from all this it is evident, he thinks, that even the deepest and most comprehensive deductions of Geometry or Mathematics can have only the same negative or hypothetical character as the definitions and axioms on which they are based; and that to get across to those pure eternal Ideas or Essences of things which have neither parts nor magnitude, neither form nor colour, neither body, tangibility, nor divisibility, Geometry, with its diagrams and Time-figures, cannot avail us, and we must have recourse to some other Science or method entirely different in nature. And what is this method? Dialectic, says Plato, or the Logic of the Ideas.

Now to illustrate the way in which this method of Dialectics works, we may begin with any merely hypothetical Time-figure, say a dog, and if we proceed from its outward bodily existence to its inner nature or essence, we come to something that is not merely hypothetical

but real; and this is what Plato would call the Idea of the dog. Once having found this link in the chain of Ideas, all we have to do is to ascend to that quality which is common to the dog with other allied species, and which constitutes what we call the genus dog. This common quality once reached, before proceeding farther, we then turn round and run down all the other branches which spring from it and participate in it, as, for example, the canis wolf, the canis fox, and the like; leaving out no natural branch or division. Then starting afresh, but this time from the genus, we ascend to the Family to which it belongs, after which we turn around as before and run down into all the other genera of the same Family; leaving out no natural branch or division. Now, if we do the same in turn with the Order, the Class, the Sub-kingdom, and the rest, it is evident that we must at last reach an essence in this Zoological tree which is common to every individual of every species, of every genus, of every family, of every order, of every class, of every sub-kingdom, of every kingdom of Nature; and this essence is what Plato calls the Good, or the Spirit of the Right, the Beautiful, and the True. Now these classifications which we get from the outside are precisely the classifications of the modern Science of Zoology; and it must be remembered that as all the Physical Sciences, had they existed in the time of Plato, would equally with Mathematics have been debarred by him from the sight of real essence or existence, inasmuch as being concerned only with the relations of Matter, Motion, and Force, all of which involve extension or space, they can in consequence, like the diagrams of geometry, have only a hypothetical and negative, not a real and positive existence;—it is evident that to get a true conception of Plato's system of Ideas, we must substitute, as I have said, for these outward bodily figures with which Zoology deals, their inner or mental attributes; so that for fox, for example, you would read cunning; for the lion, boldness; and so on; and that we must use the bodily classifications only as hints, as it were, to guide us to the inner classifications, on the principle that likeness of visible organization must naturally involve a likeness of inner essence.

The above is the way in which we reach the Supreme Good by Dialectics, from the outside as it were, but if, with Plato, we regard the whole animal kingdom as the visible embodiment of the passions, appetites, ambitions, and desires of what were once active living principles in degenerate human souls, it is evident that we can equally begin from *within*, and taking the first mental quality we happen to alight on, say Boldness, we can run it up to a quality common to it and other allied attributes, say Courage, and then run down again into all these allied attributes, omitting none; then starting afresh with Courage, we can run it up say to Justice, then Justice down again into all its varieties; and beginning again with Justice run it up into the Good itself. Or we can begin with an æsthetic quality, say Taste, run it up into the Beautiful, then the Beautiful down again into all its varieties, and up again into the

Good, and so on. In this way, begin where you will, all qualities will at last by successive distillations of their common essence on higher and higher planes, land you in sight of the Supreme Good as the soul and apex of them all, and of whose nature in greater or less degree all things partake. Once arrived by this severe intellectual process at the Supreme Good, who is not only the highest link in the chain of Ideas but is the Creative Power who persuaded the Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον to come together to form the Universe, we can then run down at our ease this inverted world-tree of Ideas to its remotest extremity in individual existences; giving ourselves up in freest abandonment to the harmony and beauty which everywhere pervade it; and seeing everywhere shining through it the image of the Supreme Good in one or other of its aspects of the Right, the Beautiful, or the True.

The above is Plato's 'scheme of salvation' for Man, and in it, as we see, men having fallen from their first estate in Heaven, not as in Christianity by yielding their wills to the solicitations of the Tempter, but through the excess of waywardness or ἄπειρον in their original composition, can still in their degeneration regain their blest estate, not by a sudden change of the will through Divine Grace, but by long years, successive lives rather, of patient and protracted Thought.

As for Plato's scheme of Retribution:—Should men fail in their first life to reach the Supreme Good, they are to be degraded in their second incarnation, as I have said, to the forms of women; and if they fail a second time, to the forms of those different species of brutes with whose natures their own evil dispositions are most allied. Between these successive incarnations a thousand years are supposed to elapse, during which period they must descend to the shades for expiation, experience, and purification; and there they have to suffer ten-fold for each sin or evil act committed during their sojourn on earth. At the end of each of these periods another chance is given them, and they are called upon to choose the kind of life which they desire next to lead on earth, whether in the form of man or brute; there being no restriction on their freedom of choice except, indeed, that with the life they choose they must take its natural surroundings, so that if they should choose the life of a dog or a slave, they cannot at the same time have the trappings and *entourage* of a king; or of a king, not the accessories and environment of a slave. Having made their free choice, their destinies are then hitched on to the Spindle of Necessity, and the junior gods—the Planets and Stars to whom this Spindle is attached—weave out for them their fates. In this way, choice after choice having been given them, they continue to wander like belated spirits from transmigration to transmigration until the last illusions of sense, appetite, and desire, having been scourged out of them by bitter experience, they are at last found fitted to resume their ancient seats among the stars. But this can only be attained, it is important to remark, by devotion to Science and Philosophy. No

devotion to Art or Poetry will suffice, for however beautiful the products of these may be, they are still the result of what Plato calls a Divine Madness; the artists themselves being sunk in the illusion of appearances, as not having consciously arrived by Mathematics and Dialectics at that chain of Ideas which leads up to the Good. Nor will a merely good disposition or desire to do right avail, unless this desire is irradiated and enlightened by conscious knowledge, laboriously bought by successive lives devoted to Philosophy. So strongly indeed does Plato feel that mere noble impulse, good will, high aspiration, steady habits, and the like are of no avail for getting on the track of Ideas (if they hit the mark one day, they miss it the next, he says), that he contemptuously declares that such people will be found in their next incarnation, inhabiting the bodies of bees, ants, and other steady-going, well-meaning, industrious, and harmoniously-working creatures!

Should mortal men, however, in spite of the experiences got in these successive transmigrations, prove entirely recreant and incorrigible, they are thenceforth to be confined for ever, as in Christianity, to the kingdom of perpetual night, never more to behold the blessed sun or taste again the poor ephemeral joys of their debased and besotted lives.

Such is Plato's great scheme of the World and Human Life; of the Origin, the Fall, and the Redemption of Man; as well as of the retribution that awaits him if he gives himself up to the solicitations of temptation and desire. And now, returning to the problem with which we set out, we have to ask how it was that a scheme like this, which is as superior in point of evolution and subtlety to the crude conceptions of the Mosaic and Christian schemes, as the many-stopped organ of to-day is to the rude tomtom of the savage; how was it that this highly-evolved product of Greek civilization and genius, was superseded by a plain, simple, and unsophisticated creed like Christianity, not only in the minds of the vulgar and uncultivated, which one might naturally expect, but in the minds of the cultured and enlightened also? And to answer this fully we must draw more tightly together the great cardinal principles of each from the general body of doctrine which we have just passed in review.

But before the points which I more specially desire to emphasize can be plainly seen, it is necessary to clear the ground by a few preliminary remarks on what is now almost the sole topic of modern philosophical controversy—the reconciliation of Science and Religion. How little chance there is of this reconciliation ever being effected from the peculiar standpoint of either side of the controversy will be apparent when I point to a fact which up to this time has been neglected by both, the fact, viz., that the kind of causes by which Science and Religion respectively seek to explain the phenomena of the World and of the Human Mind, although called by the same name, 'cause,' are as I have elsewhere pointed out, in essential nature mutually antithetic to, and exclusive of, each other, belonging as they do to different categories of the human mind. The kind of 'cause' with which Science deals is

always of the nature of a physical antecedent, and has besides, this characteristic, that there must always be a complete *equivalence* established between it and its consequent or effect; so that if the effect, for example, to be explained be represented numerically by, say, the number five, the antecedent cause must be the numerical equivalent of five, say three and two, four and one, two and two and one, and so on. And hence when the Scientist is asked 'what is the Cause of this Universe which we see lying around us To-day?' he answers unhesitatingly and almost instinctively, the Universe of Yesterday, where the forces involved were exactly the same in quantity as in the Universe of To-day, only in changed form; and if asked the Cause of that again, would again reply the Universe of the day before, and so on. So that speaking purely from the standpoint of Physical Science, the Cause of the Universe as it exists at any given moment is to be found in the Universe of the moment before, and not in something underlying it or lying behind it as it were; and the Universe itself, in consequence, figures itself to the purely scientific mind as a fixed quantity of Physical Force evolving and changing from all Time, and going on evolving and changing to all Time. The kind of 'cause' with which Religion deals on the other hand is always of the nature of *will*, whether of gods, of God or of Devil; and the Cause of the Universe, in consequence, is regarded not as a physical antecedent that *precedes* but as a Supernatural Will that *underlies*, as it were, the whole procession of the phenomena of the Universe, alike in Present, Past, and Future.

Now it is evident that between these entirely different kinds of cause, viz., a *physical antecedent* on the one hand, and a *personal will* on the other —both to the confusion of men expressed by the one word 'cause'— there is and can be no community whatever either of nature or attribute on which a reconciliation can be based; for the reason that the former being the passage from a physical antecedent to a physical consequent, is a passage from matter to matter, whereas the latter being a passage from the mental act of will to a physical condition, is a passage from mind to matter—which is entirely different. Between Science and Religion therefore, as dealing with these respective causes, it is evident that no reconciliation is possible from the exclusive standpoint of either, and that the reconciliation, if it is to come at all, must come from some neutral ground, which will include both, and yet keep each apart in its own sphere.

Now it is owing to this use of the word 'cause' to cover two opposite and contradictory conceptions—of antecedent and consequent on the one hand, and of will on the other—and to the consequent failure to separate clearly in thought the respective spheres of each, that all the many attempts to reconcile Science and Religion, so characteristic of the speculations of the present day, have alike proved futile.

Mr. Spencer, for example, believing that if Religion and Science are ever to be reconciled, they must in some way or other be shewn to rest ultimately on one and the same basis and not on two different bases, in

his endeavour to snatch a cheap and easy reconciliation where from his Physical standpoint no such reconciliation was possible, was beguiled, as I have elsewhere pointed out,* into making the same fixed quantity of Physical Force which exists in the Universe to-day, which was there yesterday, and will be there to-morrow (and which with its equivalence of antecedent and consequent is the basis of Physical Science) the basis of Religion also. In this way by giving to that Religious Cause which lies alike behind the phenomena of Present, Past, and Future, the character of a Physical Force or Energy instead of that of a Will, he has mixed and confounded those two different conceptions of 'Cause' which it was his province as a philosopher to have kept apart; and so has in a measure weakened his otherwise great and splendid, though one-sided system of Philosophy. With the thorough-going Supernaturalist on the other hand, no cause is regarded as a true cause which is not of the nature of a personal will, good or evil; and accordingly we find him declaring not only that the actions of men are the results of the ever-present promptings of the Holy Spirit and of the Devil respectively, whispering suggestions to the heart, good or evil, but that the movements of Matter whether in the mass or in the particle, whether as seen in the attraction of the planets, or in the affinity of chemical compounds, are under *spiritual* guidance and are explicable only on the supposition of an ever-present Supernatural Will. In thus attempting to show that the uniform antecedents and consequents of Scientific Causation are after all only the effects or phenomena of Supernatural Wills operative at every point, the Supernaturalist too, like Spencer, mixes and confounds two entirely different conceptions, two entirely different mental categories, and so helps still further to perplex the intellects of men.

With the above preliminary remarks in passing, on the relation between Science and Religion, we may now return all the better equipped to confront the problem before us, viz., why it was that Platonism with its highly-evolved Philosophy of the World and of Human Life, was driven from the field by the crude Mosaic Cosmogony and the simple unsophisticated scheme of Christianity?

To begin with one may remark in passing, that Plato, although evidently priding himself on his knowledge of all the Physical Science of his time, and although in his scheme of the Universe, as unfolded in the Timæus, exhibiting a subtlety and originality, a power of purely physical combination as remarkable in its way as that of Herbert Spencer, did not owe his greatness as a philosopher to any mere knowledge of Physical Science as such, or to any deductions founded on that knowledge, but rather, like Bacon and Shakespeare, to that wide-eyed comprehension and capaciousness of understanding which enabled him to map out as on a globe all the belts and kingdoms of the human spirit as they are seen reflected in the great world of Nature and of Human Life, and to give to each of them its true and natural relation and subordination. His genius in a word lies in his knowledge of mental

* "Civilization and Progress," pages 65-67.

things, rather than of physical. He may be said indeed to have set up once for all a framework or skeleton figure of the human spirit, so articulated and proportioned, so just and true, that to this hour he has left the Physical Scientists and Metaphysicians little else to do than to fill up more accurately, with the increase of scientific knowledge, the great framework of categories which he has erected for them. For the World to-day is still made up as it was in the time of Plato of the Good, or the Soul of the Just, the Beautiful, and the True; of Ideas, or the inner essences, the inner natures of every order and genus and species of existence; of Number, or the ideal Time-figures which are the essences of every kind of figure or extension; and of the ἄπειρον or principle of restlessness and change which gives visible actuality and flesh and blood relations to these forms, but by which at the same time their pure ideal quality is in every individual instance more or less marred and defaced, more or less deflected from the true line of beauty. So truly indeed are all things compounded of these categories of Plato, that we may confidently ask what in fact has Religion been doing since his time, but trying to disinter and uncover the Spirit of God or the Good from the obscurations and obstructions of sense, from the clouds of illusion by which His pure nature is obscured? And what has Philosophy been doing, but trying to separate the inner natures of things, or Ideas, from the outward bodily forms in which they are imprisoned? What Science and Mathematics, but trying to unfold the eternal laws and relations of these forms? What Art, but trying to catch the ideal eternal patterns of these same ever-shifting, ever-changing, and ephemeral existences? And we may further ask, who of the moderns up to the time of Goethe, with the exception perhaps of Bacon and Shakespeare, has added anything to these great and eternal categories of the mind? Who has seen like Plato that this complex unity known as the human mind is built up of a hierarchy or series of turrets as it were, rising one above another on whichever side of the mind you choose to look; whether on the side of the feelings, where on a basis of pure selfishness you have erected at the first stage a kind of half-and-half morality of custom, respectability, and good habit, and on this again a still higher stage of the love of the Right for its own sake; or on the side of Sentiment, where on a basis of pure sensual beauty you have erected at the first stage an æsthetic dilettantism, a conventional decorum and standard of taste, and on this again a still higher stage of the love of the Beautiful for itself alone; or again on the side of the intelligence, where on a basis of pure vulgar use, as in the growing of corn, the working of iron and wood, you have erected on the first stage the common-sense maxims of business and prudence which deal with these things, on this again a higher stage where the laws of Science,—of Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, and the like—are seen playing through them, and on this again the pure eternal laws of the Good itself—of morality, of justice, of compensation,—of which all that have gone before are but the subordinate ministers, teachers, or interpreters;

so that each end is only a means to a higher end; each grade of feeling but a stepping stone to lead us to a higher kind of feeling. The beautiful body, for example, exists to lead us to the beautiful soul, the beautiful soul to the beauty of the pure Ideas that animate it and give it all it has of charm, and the beauty of Ideas to the fountain-head of all beauty, viz., the Good Itself. The common uses of things, again, exist to lead us to the maxims of prudence, common sense, and worldly wisdom which their handling involves, and these again to lead us to the abstract and eternal laws and principles of things which lie behind them all. The common forms of action, viz., of what is good for ourselves alone, exist as stepping-stones to actions that are courteous and do not offend our fellows, these again to the love of our neighbours as ourselves, and this again to the eternal fount of Love.

Or again, who of the Moderns has seen that each of this hierarchy of means requires an intellectual organ for its apprehension; that the Senses, for example, exist only to give us knowledge of the gross and tangible qualities of things, and there stop; that Mathematics and Physical Science in general exist to give us the laws and principles of all things having figure, extension, and body, and there their function ends; and that the Reason or inner intuition exists to give us the soul, essence, or inner nature of these forms, and to lead us along their ascending chain up to the Good itself? Who, I ask, of the Moderns, with the exceptions I have mentioned, has given us these insights? None; not Descartes, not Locke, not Hume, not Kant, not Hegel, not Schopenhauer, not Herbert Spencer; none but the Poetic Thinkers—Bacon, Shakespeare, Goethe, Emerson, and Carlyle.

But highly evolved and intellectual as is this World-scheme of Plato, and distinguished as it everywhere is by the greatest penetration and genius, it is nevertheless founded on a basis of Physical Science of the most primitive and rudimentary character. Mathematics and Mechanics were practically the only Sciences known in his time; almost the entire body of the laws of Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, and Biology, lying still undiscovered in the distant future. The consequence was that as a philosopher anxious to give a rational interpretation of the World, and one free from the superstitions of the prevailing religions, Plato was reduced in his interpretation of things to the most primitive form of mechanical relation, mere mechanical mixtures in short, which like that of wine and water have no other relation but that of simple juxtaposition. But as the gods or devils with which Religion explains the phenomena of the World, being in their nature Wills, will not admit of even the simplest mechanical mixture, their only possible relation being that of command and obedience, of self-assertion on the one hand and self-renunciation or self-effacement on the other; Plato was obliged to strip off from these Supernatural Powers all that was personal and concrete, in order that they might the better combine to form the World; much in the same way as to get quinine to unite with morphia, for example, you have first to extract the quinine from the crude bark, and the morphia from the

poppies. Accordingly taking such deities as the Jehovah of the Jews, and the higher gods of his own country, he strips them of all that is personal and concrete—their bodily forms, their appetites, passions, and all the other appurtenances of a personal Will—and presents us with their pure essence or abstraction unmixed with baser matter, in the Spirit of God, or the Good, as he calls it—the essence of the Beautiful, the Just, and the True. In the same way, taking the Devil and the other evil deities of the different nations, he strips them not only of their bodily forms, the hoofs, horns and tail, of the popular imagination, but of every *definite* form of evil disposition; of envy, of jealousy, of revenge, and the like; and presents us with their pure essence in the ἄπειρον that spirit of vague and unregulated desire, of lawless restlessness and change, which is the fountain of all evil. So too he takes individual beautiful things whether animals or men, and stripping them of all that is personal or particular, of all that is fleeting and transitory, he presents us in Number with their pure bodily types, and in his System of Ideas with their pure inner essences or natures, free from the imperfections that cling to them owing to the admixture in their composition of the ἄπειρον or principle of change and decay. In this way he gets the four elements out of which as we have seen, he compounds the Universe, viz., the Good or Spirit of God, Ideas or the soul of created intelligences, Number or the pure types of all that has bodily form and extension, and the ἄπειρον or Spirit of evil and change. And although these will really no more mix and combine scientifically than the gods and devils of which they are the essences and abstractions, still men conceived them as able to do so, much in the same way as they saw the spirit of wine or the spirit of salt unite with water, and the like. And now we are coming in sight of the reason why Christianity superseded Platonism in spite of the intellectual superiority of the latter in subtlety and analysis. For just as no mere catalogue of the organs of the body can give us any insight into the changes which will take place in that body, unless the laws and principles by which these organs act and react on one another are known—so no mere catalogue of the elements of which the Universe or any creature in it is compounded, however true the analysis may be, can give us any insight into the changes that take place in that Universe or that creature, unless the laws and relations which connect the elements of which it is composed, are known. But as Plato only mixes his elements mechanically and flings them together, as it were, and has nowhere attempted to connect them by any laws of relationship; has nowhere given us any law of connexion between his Ideas and Number, or between Number and the ἄπειρον or general principle of change; and as it is only the *changes* occurring in the Universe or in any object in it, and not the mere *composition* of the Universe or its creatures for which men demand a cause,—the cause of the hurricane or storm, and not the composition of air or water; the cause of the volcano, and not the composition of fire; the cause of disease, and not a catalogue of the organs of the body; the cause of the act of murder or revenge, of the

jealousy or the falling in love, and not the composition or catalogue of the faculties of the human mind—from all this it is evident that Platonism, which with all its appearance of scientific analysis supplied no answer to any of these things, had in consequence no advantage even scientifically over Christianity. And at what a sacrifice was all this subtlety and analysis, all this appearance of scientific procedure, procured! For in order to get his original elements to come together and form by their admixture the Universe as we know it, Plato was obliged, as we have seen, to strip from the gods and devils who figured so largely in the prevailing religions, all that gave them weight or value in the minds of men, viz., their personal Wills. And as the Will is not only, as we have seen, as legitimate a kind of 'cause' as the uniform antecedents and consequents of Science, but is in strict reality the only kind of cause of which we have any personal experience;—the uniform antecedents and consequents of Science being only an answer to the question of *how* or *in what order* things happen, not *why* they happen;—it is evident that Platonism by stripping the gods and devils of the prevailing religions, of all personality and will, and reducing them to such mere abstractions as the Spirit of God, or the Good, the Spirit of intelligence or Ideas, the Spirit of change or the ἄπειρον, and the like—abstractions which can neither satisfy the Religious conception of cause, as will, nor the Scientific one of pure uniformity of antecedent and consequent, but are rather a hybrid and impotent mixture of the two—it is evident that Platonism lost in this way more than all it seemed to have gained by its purely rationalistic procedure; and so went down before the new idea of Christianity, which furnished men with a scheme of the Universe founded on the belief in Wills as causes, and one which in the absence of scientific knowledge was complete and harmonious at every point. How subtly, indeed, Christianity manipulates its system of Supernatural Wills, and with what singleness and purity of aim it everywhere keeps them in the ascendant, alike in its scheme of the Universe, and in the Fall, the Redemption, and Salvation of Man, will be seen at a glance if we for a moment run over its main features. At every point and link you will observe, a Will is the active and efficient cause, whether it be a Supernatural Will as imposing, or a Human Will as accepting the necessary conditions. The Universe, for example, and all that it contains, including Man himself, is made out of Nothing or what comes from Nothing, by the fiat or will of God; the will of the Devil, again, acquiesced in by man, is the cause of the Fall of Man; and it is through God's will in Christ, that man's Redemption is accomplished. What God's will is, again, man knows from Revelation; and it is by his accepting this will, and turning by his own free will from the service of the Devil to the service of God, that his salvation is secured. In all this, one sees how complete and harmonious is Christianity as a scheme of the World and of Human Life, linked and jointed as it is at every point and turn by religious causes—by wills, and by

wills alone. Compared with it, and with the wide scope it affords for the play and satisfaction of every side and aspect of the human spirit – for love, for prayer, for rest, for trust, for solace—how poor must Platonism have seemed, with all its subtlety and penetration, its poetic insight and genius, not only to the uncultivated, but to the cultured also. How disappointing, with all its pretence of scientific rigour, must have been its inability to explain not only the ordinary physical, chemical, and biological changes of Nature, but those more awe-inspiring phenomena which most impress the imaginations of men—comets, earthquakes, eclipses, volcanoes, thunderbolts, plagues, famines, and storms, as well as such diseases as madness, convulsions, and the like—all of which Christianity disposed of with the greatest ease, and in an unscientific age in the most natural way, by referring them to the agency of the Devil, or the anger of the offended Deity. How poor, again, must Platonism have seemed when, instead of a God and Devil actively present at every point in man's life—and as the sufficient explanation to him in his ignorance of brain function of every good or evil thought and desire that entered his mind—he was left to such sublimated essences as Ideas, Number, and the ἄπειρον, essences which though explaining the *composition* of things in general with marvellous penetration and truth, could not and did not profess to explain the *changes* occurring in either these things or in the passions and affections of the mind, which to the majority of men are alone of interest. How little had Platonism to offer in comparison to a religion which not only explained all this, but which, founded on an authoritative Revelation, accounted—in its 'Fall of Man'—for all the war and strife of Nature, all the sin and misery of human life; as well as taught men what they were to believe as to what was true and what was false, what was right and what was wrong, what they were to do and what avoid; no longer leaving them as did Platonism to grope about by the light of their mere natural faculties, unable in the then state of Science to understand any but the most simple and ordinary phenomena of Nature. How little in fine was Platonism to be preferred to a Religion in which Salvation was to be attained by a simple right-about-face of the will from the service of the Devil to the service of God, instead of by wading through an abstruse system of Philosophy from whose abstractions all that could engage the imagination and heart had been sedulously purged away; and for the realization of whose dream of getting salvation by climbing up the chain of Ideas to the Good, not the brief term of a single mortal life but whole ages and milleniums were required. And thus it was that while Christianity, which would as little have dreamt of analyzing or decomposing the world and the mind into their elements before proceeding to deal with them, as it would of grinding bricks into dust before beginning to build with them, was nevertheless by making wills the active factors in its scheme of the World and of man's Salvation and Redemption, enabled to give completeness, harmony, and satisfaction to every part of man's nature, his intellect, his heart,

his passion, his imagination; Platonism, on the contrary, although splitting up the World and the Mind into their component parts with great subtlety and insight, yet by failing to reunite these parts into a whole again (either in the case of the mind by the unifying bond of will, or in the case of both Nature and Mind by showing the laws of relationship that connected together the elements of which they were composed) produced indeed a magnificent monument for the delectation of the pure abstract intelligence, but cold and lifeless; and dealing as it did with neither Religious Causes, or Wills, on the one hand, nor yet with Scientific Causes, or Laws of Nature, on the other, was unable to satisfy fully either the intellect, the imagination, or the heart. It is true, indeed, that Plato with his usual penetration saw the necessity of having something of the nature of a will as the Final Cause of all things, and accordingly in his scheme of the World he makes the Good, or Creator as He calls Him, the active agent in bringing the other elements together to form the Universe; but as this Good or Spirit of God is wanting in all the flesh and blood reality of the gods of the time, it could not, like them, take hold of the hearts or imaginations of men, but partook of the spectral character of Plato's other essences; remaining to the last what indeed it always had been, merely the highest link in his chain or system of Ideas.

But before closing this appendix it may be as well perhaps to extract from the foregoing survey the philosophical lessons it has to teach us, and to endeavour to bring into clear prominence those fallacies against which all must guard who in this new time would solve the Problem of the World.

It is necessary then at the outset to remember that there are and always have been at least four distinct types and orders of Thinkers in the world, all of whom with equal good faith believe themselves able by their own method to solve for us the Problem of the World. There are first the pure Religious Thinkers, men like St. Paul and the early Christian Theologians, who, as we have seen, take their stand on the Will as their great organizing basis, and who see, in consequence, in the Problem of the World only the action and interaction, the harmony or discord of Personal Wills—of God, the Devil, and of Man respectively. There are secondly the purely Scientific Thinkers, men like Democritus and Epicurus in ancient, and Herbert Spencer in modern times, who take their stand on physical antecedents and consequents—the latter, indeed, seeing in the Universe and in human life only the ever-changing phenomena of a fixed quantity of Physical Force moving along the lines of least resistance, a force ever varying in its form, but in its quantity ever remaining the same. Then, again, there are the pure Metaphysicians who have their consummation in Hegel, for example, who, taking his stand on what he calls the facts of 'self-consciousness,' and squeezing and compressing all the infinite diversity of thought and sentiment, of poetry, imagination, and feeling, up into this one point, sees in the Problem of the World only a question of how, under this narrow peaked hat, as it were, of Self-consciousness, the stupendous

antagonism of Mind and Matter, of the Soul and the World, of the Material and the Spiritual, may be made to lie down in peace and harmony. Now these three types of Thinkers are in essential nature antagonistic to each other, and, as we may see any day, would, if they could, each push the others from their stools; and as each of them gives echo to some necessary intuition of the mind, responds to some overpowering demand of our nature or to some necessary work of analysis to be done, it is evident that no scheme of the World can ever pretend to anything like harmony and completeness until it has given to each of them their due relation and subordination. And this introduces us to the fourth and last class, viz., the Poetic Thinkers, the philosophers of the philosophers as we may call them, men like Bacon, Shakespeare, Goethe, Emerson, and Carlyle, who, taking their stand on the full-orbed unity and completeness of the mind *as an organic whole*, will neither permit its infinite richness and complexity to be represented by a mere crude unity of Will without any attempt at analysis, as with the Religious Thinkers; nor its vitality to be choked by a mere husk of physical antecedent and consequent without an informing Soul, as with the purely Scientific Thinkers; nor yet again its infinite range of categories to be screwed and squeezed up into a mere formal and barren 'Unity of Self-consciousness,' as with the pure Metaphysicians; but who, while analyzing the mind like Plato into all its constituent elements and on all its sides (and not merely on its formal intellectual side as with the Metaphysicians) and tracing the laws that connect each part with every other, still cannot rest until they find some connecting bond other than the crude unity of the Will, which will reunite all these parts into a living whole. In my next volume I propose to give the reader a glimpse of the World as seen through the spectacles of these Poetic Thinkers, and also as seen through the spectacles of the pure Metaphysicians, and shall then endeavour to draw out in detail such lessons as they have to teach us. In the meantime, however, I must confine myself to the more immediate task before us, viz. of gathering up the lessons to be learned from this long study of Plato and Christianity; and which it is necessary we should ever have present to our minds and carry along with us as we proceed.

The first point we may mention then is that as there are two distinct kinds of 'cause' equally authoritative in their own separate spheres, but mutually antagonistic and exclusive in the same sphere of thought, viz., the 'Wills' with which Religion deals, and the Physical 'antecedents and consequents' with which Science deals, no Scheme of the World which may arise in the future can pretend to completeness, unless it makes provision *somewhere* for both. Not that it is necessary that these causes should always hold the same relative place in the scheme. In the early days of Christianity, for example, nearly all the phenomena of the world and of human life were believed to hang on the nod of Supernatural Wills, of God or the Devil. In the present day, on the contrary, these

phenomena are known to be explicable by the natural operation of physical causes. There is no more reason, therefore, for our still continuing to look for their causes in the region of wills, than for our still looking for tails in men because our ancestors once needed them to hang from the trees with! And just as any Religion which would seek to ignore or deny the palpable influence of physical causes in the production of events, and to explain them by the interposition of Supernatural Wills, must become more and more discredited; so no System of Philosophy however convincingly it may have unified all the phenomena of Nature and Life according to the physical laws of Matter, Motion, and Force, can hope for permanence unless it rests these again on something which must be conceived of as of the nature of an informing and Superintending Will (rather than a mere Force as with Spencer), however impossible it may be to represent to ourselves this Will in terms of thought. To believe otherwise were to imagine that by a mere juggle of words you could convince men of the identity of two things which the universal intuitions of men (our last criterion of truth) have for ever kept apart.

The second philosophical lesson which we may draw from our survey of Platonism and Christianity is perhaps of equal importance. We saw that Christianity without troubling itself to analyze the mind into its elements or faculties, took its stand boldly on the simple act of will, which may in a way be said to represent their united activity, being as it is the visible outcome of their inner working; much in the same way as the movement of a locomotive is the result of the hidden working of its valves and wheels, or the honey of the unseen activity of the bees. And we saw further that even this simple, crude, and unsophisticated mode of giving unity and vitality to the mind by asking only what is its will, was sufficient to drive from the field a philosophy like Platonism which, in spite of its great breadth and subtlety of analysis, failed to give to the parts which it had so carefully sorted out that last touch necessary to restore them to unity and life. From all which we may infer that no Scheme of the World which does not deal with the mind of man as a full-orbed *unity*, however scientifically it may have analyzed it and reduced it to its constituent elements, can yield any substantial materials with which to build. As well attempt to build a house with the dust into which you have reduced your bricks, or to give the characteristic signs of life to any arrangement of the parts into which the body has been dissected. It is this breaking up of organized wholes into their constituent parts and seeking to build with these parts without reuniting them into a vital unity, that is the unpardonable sin of speculation; and this has been carried to its extreme length perhaps by the pure Metaphysicians who fill up the interval between Plato and Herbert Spencer. For Plato, as we may remember, really did include every side and aspect of the mind in his comprehensive analysis, pointing out that the gradation of sense, understanding, and reason, in the intellectual domain was paralleled by an analagous gradation on the side of Morality, and

again on the side of Beauty. So that although he did not construct his system of Philosophy on a consideration of the mind as a full and round organic unity, he did what indeed was perhaps the next best thing to do; he reared it on the triple pillars of intellect, æsthetic sentiment, and morality. But the pure Metaphysicians, with the exception of one or two who only prove the rule, did not even include these different sides of the mind in their analysis, but restricted themselves entirely to analyzing the faculty of Knowledge and the categories of the Logical Understanding. Instead, therefore, of resting on a three-legged stool, as it were, like Plato, and so having at least a secure seat, they tried to stand on a single leg only, and that the wrong one, viz., the Logical Understanding! For it must never be forgotten that without those categories of *quality*, which can be got only from the different grades of *feeling*—as, for example, the difference between lust and love, fear and reverence, self-indulgence and self-renunciation—you could not get any intellectual scale at all; some things indeed might be more differentiated than others, but could not be higher or nobler; the senses would be as authoritative as the understanding, and the understanding as the higher intuitions of the mind. And hence we may predict that not only pure Metaphysics, which has practically already run its course, but that Scientific Materialism also which will permit of no other instrument of investigation but the Senses and the Understanding is hopelessly doomed to decay.

To sum up then;—If Platonism in its broad insight into the World was superior to the schemes of the pure Metaphysicians, inasmuch as it rested on a broader basis and a wider range of mental categories, on three legs, in short, instead of one; and if it again was superseded by Christianity, because Christianity rested on the full-orbed unity of the mind itself as represented by the Will, instead of on this triple Platonic division of it; it is evident that any Scheme of the World which in the future may be destined to supersede Christianity, must while analyzing the mind into its elements on each and every side, and showing the relations of each part to every other and to the whole, at the same time reunite those parts (before it begins to build with them) into a *living unity;* not the mere crude *external* unity of the will as in Christianity, but a principle of *inner* unity which shall bind them into one complete and living whole.

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