CHRIST FOR INDIA

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CHRIST FOR INDIA

BEING

A PRESENTATION OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSAGE TO THE RELIGIOUS THOUGHT OF INDIA

BY

BERNARD LUCAS

AUTHOR OF

'THE FAITH OF A CHRISTIAN,' 'THE EMPIRE OF CHRIST,' ETC.

To all men I have become all things, in the hope that in every one of these ways I may save some; and I do everything for the sake of the good news, that I may share with my hearers in its benefits.—1 COR. ix. 22 and 23.

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AS A TRIBUTE TO

THE STRONG FAITH AND STRENUOUS WORK OF

THE MISSIONARIES TO INDIA

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK TO

THE FUTURE APOSTLES OF INDIA

WHO SHALL POSSESS THE LAND WE HAVE BUT SEEN FROM AFAR

AND BUILD THE WALLS OF THAT CITY OF GOD

OF WHICH WE HAVE BUT SEEN THE VISION

THE consideration of any of the problems of Indian missions thus briefly outlined strengthens the conviction that the main thing in India is not the increase of the missionary staff, nor yet the increase of the number of mission stations,—that is to say, the extensive development of missionary organisation, —but far rather is it an intellectual conflict concerning the profoundest speculations of human thought in matters of religion, of sociology, and of knowledge of mankind, a conflict in which Christianity and its representatives must give irrefutable evidence of the presence of the Spirit of might and power.—*A History of Missions in India*, Richter.

We stand on the border of a new age, when great reconstructions in world relations are imminent. . . . In these reconstructions the initiative of the East shall be felt in ways undreamed of by our fathers. The East shall come to its own again, and speak in the councils of the world. Time, the great restorer of postponed inheritances, the great adjuster of equities, shall summon the East, not to the recrudescence of old conflicts, but to new rivalries of the mind and of the spirit. The day of her visitation, the hour of her opportunity, shall come from God. Shall she know that day and be ready for that hour? The answer to that question is bound up in another: Shall the Oriental Consciousness place its sublime qualities at the service of Jesus Christ, and become unto the twentieth century what she was unto the first, a Prophet of the Highest?—*Barrows' Lectures*, 1906, Dr. Cuthbert Hall.

PREFACE

"INDIA for Christ" is the watchword of the Church's missionary activity in our great Indian Empire. It is the consummation for which the Indian missionary prays and works, the hope which inspires his early enthusiasm, and the faith which sustains him throughout the heat and burden of the day. "Christ for India," however, is the watchword which must dominate his thought and shape his methods, if the great task in which he is engaged is to be brought to a successful issue. If the missionary's work is to result in bringing India to Christ, his thought must begin, continue, and end in bringing Christ to India. This is recognised so far as the vernacular speech of India is concerned, but it is not sufficiently recognised so far as the vernacular thought of India is concerned. There are missionaries who present their message in a fluent and idiomatic vernacular, while their thought is utterly foreign to the audience they

address. There are even a greater number of Indian preachers who, while speaking in their mother tongue, invariably think their message in Western terms and shape their thought after Western patterns. This is to bring a Christ to India Whom the few may doubtless accept, but not a Christ Whom the many will welcome. The Christ is neither Eastern nor Western, it is true, but the apprehension of Him varies in proportion as the mind which apprehends is either the one or the other.

In the following pages an attempt has been made to present the Christian message in such a way that the Hindu mind may at least regard it as not necessarily foreign. The true presentation which is needed can only be made by one whose qualification is natural and not acquired. No one can be more conscious than the author of his defect in qualification, and failure in execution. His only qualification as a Western is a real sympathy with the religious mind of India and a generous appreciation of its religious thought. It is impossible for any Western to stand in the Hindu's place, as his eyes turn towards that wondrous figure of the Christ ; but it is possible to stand by his side and try to direct his gaze in the right direction. It is not possible to do so,

however, so long as one stands in front of him. One must face as he faces if one's directing is to be of any help to him. The Western reader must bear this in mind as he reads this presentation of the Christian message. The correctness of the position taken in the present work must be judged by the measure in which it faces the true Sun of all Christian thought and feeling—the Christ of God.

A good deal of misunderstanding would be avoided if it were only recognised that change of view is always due to change of position, and that change of position is the result, not of individual caprice but, of the thought-movement of the age. To face the Sun in the morning one must turn to the East, and if one would still face the Sun at eventide one must alter one's position and turn to the West. The alteration of position is not due to the whim of the individual, but to the earth-movement to which he has to accommodate himself. The beginning of each age finds some looking for Christ in the West where He was last seen, and others looking for Him in the East where alone He is visible, and the close finds them in the reverse position. The supreme concern is an orthodox position rather than an orthodox view, for the former enables us to see

Him, while the latter may hide Him from our eyes. Christ is doubtless the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, but the great thought-movements of each age slowly but surely turn the gaze from the East of the morning to the West of the evening. Can we not admit that while the Sun does not move the earth does, and, instead of regretting the necessity of adjusting our position, the rather rejoice that the movement brings the whole earth under a life-giving and life-sustaining influence?

Though the present work is a presentation of Christianity specially addressed to the Hindu mind, it may not be without its message in the West. The reconstruction of religious belief is no less needed in the West, if the West is to be retained in her allegiance to the Christ to Whom she has been won. In that reconstruction of religious belief which the modern mind demands, every type of religious thought has some contribution to offer, which, however small, may yet find a place in the temple which we are always building, but can never hope or even wish to finish.

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CHAPTER I

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF

OUR religious beliefs are so hallowed by sacred associations with the past, so intimately connected with the customs and sanctions of society, and so essential for the right conduct of life, that the question of their reconstruction is one of extreme difficulty and delicacy. Such considerations frequently lead us to bear the ills we know and recognise rather than incur the danger and difficulty which we see to be involved in any reconstruction of religious belief. The established order, whether in the realm of belief or conduct, has at least been tested ; has yielded results which, whatever may be their defects, have merits which can be recognised ; whereas to reconstruct is to embark on an unknown voyage of discovery which may end in a catastrophe. Modesty as well as timidity alike urge us to refrain from a task to which we are doubtful of being called, and the accomplishment of which may be beyond our powers. In no country are these considerations

more realised than in India, and in none are the forces of religious conservatism so powerful. All men are more or less conservatives by birth, but the Hindu is a twice-born conservative. The wealth of India's indigenous religious thinking has been so great that, while her exports have been vast, her imports have been almost nil. She has worked up her raw material into various patterns and designs suited to all tastes, and as she has rigidly kept her people in religious isolation from others, the tastes have been as indigenous as the raw material. It is the contact with Christian religious thought which has at last enabled her to perceive that there may be heights and depths in religious thinking which have not yet been scaled or sounded. The modern religious Hindu, therefore, is becoming slowly conscious of some need for the reconstruction of religious belief.

In India at the present day there are thousands of people who continue to live in houses which are utterly beyond repair, totally inadequate for their modern needs, and absolutely insanitary, simply because they have grown accustomed to them and shrink from the task of rebuilding them. They will spend money on useless patching up which would more than suffice for the erection of a modern and suitable residence. They will see their nearest and dearest succumb to disease, entirely due to the insanitary condition of their dwellings; they will suffer untold discomfort

from the wretched hovels in which they persist in living, and yet nothing will induce them to rise up and build houses which shall be homes of comfort and health. It is not with many of these that they cannot afford to rebuild; it is the natural inertia, coupled with old associations, which makes them loth to reconstruct their homes on improved and modern lines. The same thing is true of those religious beliefs which constitute the home of the soul, from the comfort and security of which we draw our inspiration and strength for the tasks which await us in the outer world of active life. Insanitary homes cannot make us strong and healthy workers; hovels cannot shelter us from the storms and tempests of life. When our religious beliefs are hollow and unsound we have no strength for the activities of life. When the home of our soul affords us no refuge from the storm of sorrow and trouble our condition is indeed pitiable. What is true of the individual is true also of the nation and of the race. The nation whose religion is in decay is the nation whose existence is in peril. Politics may usurp the place of religion, but they can never fill its place in national life and well-being. Politics are the channels along which are conveyed the national thought and feeling which await expression, but religion is the river of life which rises in the high places of the soul, and from which all true thought and feeling are derived.

The channels are necessary or the water in the river will run to waste; they must be well planned or the fields will remain uncultivated; they must be properly controlled or they will flood a few acres at the expense of the many. The irrigation channel, however, can never take the place of the river, and it can never be higher than the level of the river at its source. All which things are an allegory, the application of which to the present condition of political unrest in India to-day is a tempting subject, but one which is beyond the scope of the present inquiry.

The question of the reconstruction of religious belief in India is one which is far more vital to her true development and well-being than is at present realised. India's claim to a foremost place amongst the great nations of the world is based, not upon her contributions to political life but, upon her rich contribution to the religious life of the race. The people of India are essentially a people with a spiritual outlook upon the Universe, a people to whom the things which are seen are recognised as temporal and temporary, while the things which are unseen are alone eternal and permanent. To keep this view prominently before the minds of men; to insist upon it in the face of all opposition; to live in the light of it, in spite of the absorption of other peoples in lesser aims; this is the mission of India to the world, a mission for which she has been specially endowed, and to

which she has been specially called of God. Other interests are not thereby excluded, but if this is abandoned or relegated to a secondary place, then India will lose her special rank amongst the races of the world.

It is because of this exalted conception of the nature of India's task that the necessity for a reconstruction of her religious beliefs needs to be emphasised. A nation may linger on the results of its past achievements, but it can never truly live on them. Capital which is unemployed, however vast in amount, is slowly but surely dissipated. India has been living for centuries on her religious capital, and, immense though that capital was, no one can fail to see that it is yearly becoming more and more inadequate to sustain the religious life of the people. It is this which makes the subject of reconstruction of paramount importance. However averse we may feel to attempting the task; however loth we may be to disturbing the existing order; when the question is one of life or death, we have no alternative but to brace ourselves for the task. This is no piece of special pleading with a view to urging the necessity of an acceptance of Christianity. No doubt Christianity is destined to have an immense influence on the future of religion in India, but it is equally true that Hindu religious thought and feeling will have an immense influence on the future of Christianity. The point, however,

which is here urged is one which must be obvious to the religious man, whether Hindu or Christian, namely, that if India is to be saved from becoming irreligious and unspiritual some reconstruction of religious belief is imperative. The best and brightest of India's manhood is finding itself orphaned of its old religious beliefs; and that which has taken place in the case of the few who have been brought into touch with modern thought is slowly but surely making itself felt amongst the masses. This necessity for religious reconstruction is being recognised by many, and the various religious and semi-religious movements in India to-day are all attempts in some form or other to supply the need. The nature of these various attempts, the success or failure with which they have met, are matters of small moment. Their true significance consists in their recognition of the need of the time and the determination to attempt to meet that need. Every one to whom religious life is of supreme value, and particular creeds only of secondary importance, must rejoice in these signs of a quickened religious nature in India, whatever may be his opinion of the value and sufficiency of the attempts which are being made.

It must, however, be confessed that the number of those who thus recognise the need of the time is depressingly small, and that the great majority are either utterly unconscious or totally indifferent.

Amongst these latter the chief place must be assigned to those so-called custodians of religion, the priestly classes. We look in vain throughout the length and breadth of India for a single religious authority who appears to recognise that the long reign of unquestioned ecclesiastical supremacy, demanding a blind obedience, has passed away, and that far more in the religious than in the political sphere the people are demanding their liberty. No one who is at all acquainted with the thoughts and feelings of the masses in India can fail to realise that a slow but real revolution has taken place in the attitude of the masses to organised and official Hinduism. The spread of education and the consequent diffusion of knowledge have created a mental environment in which the old religious ideas are slowly fading away. The ancient religious rites and ceremonies are still more or less perfunctorily performed, but the life has gone out of them. Their utility is being questioned, and the answers which are vouchsafed are far from satisfactory. The very form of the questions betrays a mental attitude which is foreign to that in which the old ideas grew up and developed. Under the old order the masses left all such questions to the religious authorities, whose wisdom was unquestioned and whose authority was implicitly obeyed. The old order, however, has changed, for the people are rapidly coming of age. When the child begins

to ask the why and the wherefore of things it is time to call in the aid of the schoolmaster, that the blind obedience of childhood may give place to the wise self-control of manhood. In the religious life of India the priest will have to give place to the prophet; priestly injunctions will have to be replaced by prophetic instruction, and the chief concern of the religious authorities will have to centre, not on what can be got out of the people but, on what can be got into them. It will be a solemn day of reckoning when the masses begin to ask, as ask they assuredly will, what equivalent they have received for the lavish contributions which they and their ancestors have made for the maintenance of religion in India. Cheques which can only be presented in a future birth are not likely much longer to be accepted as equivalents for the hard cash earned by the sweat and toil incident to this present birth. The time is coming when the people will demand an account of the vast revenues attached to the temples of India which are at present being squandered, while the religious life of the people, for whose nurture and culture this great wealth was given, is perishing of starvation. We hear a great deal, far too much in fact, about the drain on India due to the pensions of retired English civilians, but we hear nothing of that far greater drain due to the sums which are being spent on priests who cannot minister and *gurus* who will not teach. The

pensioner can at least claim that he has served India through the heat and burden of the day, but these religious parasites have nothing but their well-nourished bodies to show for all the contributions they have received and the vast revenue they have expended.

The demand for the reconstruction of religious belief, while emphasised by all these various signs of the times, rests primarily on a changed mental outlook which, it is not too much to say, marks a new era in the world's upward march. This changed mental outlook is not confined to any one country, nor is its influence limited to any one branch of human knowledge. It is universal both as regards its extension and its incidence. Every land is feeling it and every branch of knowledge is being affected by it. There are two chief causes which have produced, or are rapidly producing, this changed mental outlook. The one is the discovery of the great theory of evolution and the other is the realisation of what is called the solidarity of man. It may safely be said that no discovery has had such far-reaching results as those of the evolutionary theory, and it may be safely predicted that the growing realisation of the essential oneness of humanity is destined to revolutionise our social and religious conceptions. Both these discoveries mark the nineteenth century as an epoch-making one, while it will be the distinctive feature of the twentieth century to

reconstruct our thinking and our living in the light of them.

The evolution theory, it must be noted, is a very much greater conception than that which is usually associated with the term evolution. By evolution many people seem to mean nothing more than that crude caricature of what is called Darwinism, namely, that men have descended from monkeys. Even amongst people with some knowledge of science it is usually limited to a description of the origin of species, to which the term owes its birth. The result is that its true significance is entirely lost sight of and its true effect upon our outlook on the Universe is totally unappreciated. When rightly apprehended, however, it is seen that the great discovery which Wallace and Darwin made in the sphere of natural history is nothing less than the discovery of the one great principle which appears to pervade the whole cosmic process. Since their discovery the evolutionary hypothesis has been applied to every other branch of knowledge and it has been found to explain, as no other principle does, the facts and data upon which all science is based. In that remote field of investigation, where the phenomena dealt with are at distances from the observer which baffle all human conception, the remotest stars are seen to be under this universal law of evolution. At the other pole, where the phenomena are so minute as to defy utterly our unaided powers of

observation, we find the same great law in operation. Similarly when we search the records graven by the unerring hand of Nature, which stretch back into a past so remote as to be beyond computation, the geologist comes across the same great principle. In the investigation of phenomena passing under our own immediate observation we can watch the working of the same law. If we are amongst those who believe that "the proper study of mankind is man" and confine our attention to the field of human activity, behold the same law is there. Our special study may lead us to deal with the rise and fall of great empires and peoples, whose records carry us back to the dawn of history, or it may centre upon the events which constitute the history of our own times, but in both alike we shall come across the manifestation of this same law. If our interest is confined to the working of the human mind in the spheres of philosophy and religion, we are still within the scope of this all-embracing principle. It will readily be seen, therefore, that the birth of such a conception is destined to produce a mental outlook in which all our ideas are of necessity subjected to fresh scrutiny and come forth revised and reclothed.

In speaking of the evolution theory it must not be supposed that it is any longer a mere hypothesis, the truth of which has yet to be proved. Though the terms in which it may be stated are

subject to modification, it is practically unanimously accepted by all the great leaders of scientific thought. It is not too much to say that there is not a single department of human knowledge which is not being revised and rewritten in the light of the evolutionary hypothesis. Moreover, and most important of all, its terminology is rapidly becoming the current coin of common speech. It is this last fact which is slowly producing that changed standpoint which has issued in what has been here called a new mental outlook. Language is not merely dominated by thought; it also in turn dominates thought. The employment of new words, like the employment of new servants, means eventually the pensioning of old ones. The new servant is found to be quicker and more expeditious, and before long you prefer his services, employ him on duties for which he was not originally engaged, and eventually pension the older man, who is no longer equal to the demands you make upon him. The change, however, is not limited in its effects to the servant; the master also is affected. He is compelled to adapt himself to the new servant's ways. It is precisely the same with language. New terms, which our enlarged thought has compelled us to employ, cannot be restricted to the special work for which they were originally invented. They have a way of answering the call-bell more promptly than the older words and

of fulfilling our wishes more perfectly. We employ them more and more frequently and place the older terms on the retired list. Our mind, however, has at the same time to adapt itself to the ways of the new servant, and we frequently find, that however useful and valuable he may be, he will not allow us to take the same liberties with him as we were accustomed to take with the old. The terms which the theory of evolution has provided for our use, while rendering us splendid service in every department, are at the same time rigidly exacting conditions of service with which we are bound to comply. They are changing our mental outlook, and the changed mental outlook is demanding a reconstruction of many of our old and cherished beliefs. This demand is not restricted to any one religion, or to any particular phase of religious belief. It is being felt and recognised far more in the West than in the East, because the mental outlook has been more affected in the West than it has yet been in the East. Christian belief, no less than Hindu, Mahommedan and Buddhist belief, is in need of, and is indeed undergoing, reconstruction. Every faith has to be revised in the light of this changed mental outlook.

The evolution theory means that the whole cosmic process is the gradual and ordered unfolding of that which is latent within. The theory may be variously stated as it is illustrated in the

different phenomena which we are investigating, but the general conception of an ordered development, the gradual coming to full fruition of powers and forces already held within, never varies. The present is the fruit of the past and contains within it the seed of the future. Past, present and future, that is, are merely stages through which the evolution of all things passes as the Universe unfolds from the one into the many. The great cosmic process is, in a word, the evolution in time of that which was, and is and ever shall be. Such a statement is nothing more than an approximation to the truth, but it represents, in general terms, the idea which is involved in the evolutionary theory.

It has often been said that this theory has practically dealt the death blow to all religion, and that it is only a question of time before all men recognise that the fundamental idea at the base of all religion, the conception of God, is quite untenable. Such a statement, however, has itself long since become untenable. The trend of all the best scientific thought at the present is in quite the opposite direction. That the conception of God, current before the establishment of the evolution theory, has been rendered untenable, or rather proved inadequate, is quite true, but the same can be asserted of a great number of fundamental scientific conceptions as well. Conceptions are themselves under the same law of evolution, and consequently their expression needs constant

modification. They are, however, perceptions of realities which abide, not of mere illusions which the increasing light dissipates. The evolution theory is concerned with the answer of the human mind as to the How of things, but it has only brought into greater prominence the deeper question as to the Why of things. It is with that deeper question that philosophy and religion are concerned and so long as the human mind continues to ask it so long will they remain the supreme questions for whose answer the mind for ever seeks. While the theory of evolution is concerned with the answer to the question How, it has indirectly very greatly affected the answers we have given to the question Why. It has shown us that some of the answers we have given are inconsistent with the knowledge we now possess, as the result of the question as to the How of things. In confining our study to the nature of any work which we are investigating we are not primarily concerned with the nature of the worker. The result of our knowledge of the work, however, cannot fail to affect our conception of the worker. We may be conscious, for instance, that the old conception of the Universe as the manufactured work of One Whom we call Creator does not fit in with our modern conception of what we call a process rather than a work. The change of name, however, from work to process does not replace Creator with Nemo. The Unknown, about whom we hear, is merely

the algebraical symbol x, whose value is still the problem we need to solve. The values we have hitherto substituted may, in the light of our increased knowledge of His way rather than His work, have been proved to be incorrect. The x in the equation, however, is not thereby abolished; it still remains and the problem has still to be solved. We may be far more correct in speaking of a great cosmic process and we may be able to describe with far greater accuracy the nature of that process, but our answer to the question How, has not, and never will, stop us from asking the question Why.

In the attempts we make to answer this question we can no more leave out the term God than our materialistic friends can leave out the term Matter. We may be told, and we accept the information, that we can no longer speak of the Universe as a work and of God as a worker, but must speak of it as a process. We agree, but we ask, as ask we must, why the process? Work meant action and implied a worker. Process means movement and implies a mover. You can no more banish the person, the subject of the verb, than you can banish the thing, the object of the verb. So long as the verb remains, subject and object remain also. The theory of evolution does not banish the term God from modern speech, but it does necessitate an attempt to give to the conception a more adequate meaning. Whether we call the

One, God or Matter, or any other name, all of us alike have to invest it with sufficient meaning to square with that knowledge of the Many which is the possession of the modern mind. We are all working out the value of the algebraical symbol x, and, so far as the final result is concerned, it makes no difference what other symbols we may use in the process. When the equation is solved, the answer will be the same for all. In the meantime it behoves us all to correct our working in the light of every fresh manifestation of truth which comes to us. The vastness of the great cosmic process; the wonderful all-embracing law of orderly development; the majestic heights towards which "the whole creation moves"; all tend to invest whatever term we may use to express that conception of the One, manifested in and by means of the Many, with such a wealth of meaning that any lesser term than the highest known to us is inadequate for the purpose. Whatever our formulated creed may be, our deepest self is compelled to that awe and reverence which are at the foundation of every religion. A true conception of the evolution theory, far from banishing the conception of God, does but give it a deeper and vaster meaning. In the presence of the myriad forms in which the One reveals Himself to us, as the great panorama of the Universe passes before our wondering gaze, our souls are thrilled with that awe and amazement so feelingly pictured

in the *Bhagavadgita*, where Krishna is represented as showing his divine form to Arjuna, and Arjuna in a passionate burst of enthusiasm exclaims, as words fail him to express his meaning and all known titles are realised to be inadequate, "Thou All."

Evolution has not robbed us of God; on the contrary, it has given us a greater and a grander God. It has abolished the God of Deism by revealing the God Who is at the back of Pantheistic thought, though lost in the Pantheistic system. The conception of God which modern thought demands is neither that of a transcendent Being apart from the Universe, nor yet that of an immanent Being Whose fulness is exhausted in the Universe to which He has given being, but of One Who, from everlasting to everlasting, is revealing Himself in the Universe, at once its soul and life, but Whose fulness must for ever transcend every manifestation. In the same way the conception of the Universe which is in harmony with modern thought is not that of a dead piece of mechanism, fearfully and wonderfully made, but distinct and separate from the God Who made it. It is essentially that of a living thing, developing along lines which are inherent within it and manifesting under the limitations of time and space a life which is one with the life of God. It must, of course, be understood that this is nothing more than a rough outline of the conception of God

which the modern mind demands. Every age erases some false line and adds some truer line to this great representation of the highest thought of humanity. The time is not far distant when we shall perceive that the two pictures which Theistic thought on the one hand, and Pantheistic thought on the other, have been painting through the ages are, after all, one and the same. There are lines in both pictures which will have to be erased, as well as others which will have to be filled in, before such a declaration can be truly made; but there are indications both in the East and in the West—the centres respectively of Pantheistic and Theistic thought—that such a consummation is proceeding. In the domain of religious thought East and West have been exchanging ideas and the exchange has been to the advantage of both. In this sphere, whatever may be true in other spheres, a *swadeshism*, or patriotism, whether Eastern or Western, is the greatest hindrance to true progress. Truth is found both in the East and in the West, but Truth herself is neither Eastern nor Western. In the economic and social spheres *swadeshism* may be the evidence of a patriotism deserving of all praise, though it is by no means always so. In the universal empire of Truth, however, *swadeshism*, whether Indian or British, is rank treason. To Truth we all owe the most absolute allegiance, and whenever we yield to any influence which is inimical to her

imperial and universal sway, we are guilty of betraying her sacred cause. Our minds are not to be dominated by either Eastern or Western perceptions of truth, but by Truth herself. We must listen to her voice whether she speaks to us in our own or another tongue; we must follow her guidance whether she leads us to the East or to the West.

In the West this is being increasingly realised, and in the reconstruction of religious belief which is now taking place in the West there is a growing recognition of the value of every contribution. India has made very great contributions to the religious thought and life of the world and she is destined to make still more. It must, however, be recognised that the contribution now demanded must be a living and not a dead one, the result of present thinking and not the mere accumulations which are the legacy of her past thinking. India has a mission to the world now, even as she had in the past; but she can only discharge her mission in the present, as she did it in the past, namely, by vigorous and independent thinking and earnest and whole-hearted living. There is no market in the West for the old clothes of the East; but there is a market for that wonderful weaving for which the East has always been famous, and India in particular. It is true that there are antiquarians in the West who will go into raptures over the specimens of ancient weaving displayed before

their eyes, but let not India be deceived into believing that such people represent the great buyers of the West. The demand for such goods is very limited and the market is already showing signs of being overstocked. If India wants to traffic in earnest with the West she must revive her old weaving industry and supply cloth for present use. The Indian mind is a splendid loom for the weaving of religious thought, but it has been standing unused for centuries. The world wants those fine silk and muslin garments of religious thought for which India is famous, but they must be woven in the modern loom and the threads must be the product of the present generation. India has to realise that the world has not slept while her looms have stood idle. If she wishes to take her place in the religious life and thought of the world she must weave again and produce thought which lives and moves forward.

The evolution theory has not only modified our conception of God; it has revolutionised our conception of the method in which God reveals Himself to the children of men. Nowhere has the great conception of evolution had a greater influence upon religious thought than in that branch which deals with the method of revelation. Here we are concerned, not with answers to the question Why so much as with answers to the question How. The scientific method, to which

we owe the theory of evolution, is, therefore, on its own special ground. Setting aside all preconceived theories as to how God reveals Himself, it sets to work to examine and compare everything which lays claim to the title of revelation, assured that if any scripture is a revelation it will prove its claim by actually revealing something of God. The careful comparison and examination which the scientific method has applied to man's various religious beliefs has brought to light the working of the same great law of evolution which confronts us in the physical realm. Man's knowledge of God has been a gradual evolution from the lowest depths to the highest heights. The revelation of God, that is, has advanced step by step with the development of man. A witty Frenchman once said that in the beginning God created man in His own image and ever since man has been returning the compliment by creating God in his. If by creating God we mean conceiving of God, the witticism is strict truth. The image of man has been, and indeed for ever must be, the true revelation of God. In the development of man God has been, and still is, effecting a true revelation of Himself. There is no higher revelation possible than the revelation by means of incarnation. God must be manifest in the flesh or He remains for humanity the Unknowable. We must see Him in humanity or we shall never see Him at all. The God Who remains outside the Universe

is beyond the possibility of human apprehension. It is the God Who manifests Himself in all the great cosmic process, Who is the life and soul of the Universe and the Father of our spirits, Who is alone within the reach of our minds. In the physical universe we may hear His breathing and feel, as it were, His pulse, but in humanity and human history we read His thoughts and know something of His mind. We cannot identify Him with either the Universe or humanity, for in both there is that which we recognise as Divine, and that which we are compelled to recognise as not Divine. It is the recognition of this antithesis which constitutes for us the true way of knowledge. Deny the antithesis and you shut the gate to all true knowledge.

There is a very profound truth in two verses of the Telugu poet Vemana, which contain a warning peculiarly appropriate to the Hindu religious mind. In the first the poet asks the question which is at the heart of all religion. He says :

> When man to Thee his eyes doth raise
> The self-forgotten lies ;
> On self when next he turns his gaze,
> Thy vision droops and dies.
> Then tell me how to man can be
> Knowledge of both himself and Thee ?

In the second verse he proceeds to answer the question he has here asked. He says :

When man to Thee his eyes doth raise,
Then truth full-orbed doth rise ;
They're lost in vain delusion's ways
Who fix on self their eyes.
To that man only can there be
Knowledge of self, who first knows Thee.

There is a sense in which it is true that we have to identify ourselves with God, but the true way to such an identification is, not by denying the existence of difference but, by recognising it and mortifying that within us which we see to be not Divine. To identify ourselves with God by denying difference is to follow a road which can only lead to the loss of any true knowledge of either self or God. It is not by a process of deification of the human that we arrive at a knowledge of God ; it is by a recognition of the incarnation of the Divine in humanity, and its eternal distinction from all human error and sin, that we learn to know Him Who is the All-Father. The only knowledge of God we possess has come to us through humanity and that knowledge has been directly proportioned to the extent to which man has been Godlike. Knowledge of God has progressed, and is progressing, with the progress of humanity. This is the story which the application of the scientific method in the study of religion makes clear to our gaze and it is the revelation of this same great law of evolution which operates throughout the Universe. Search the scriptures of all nations and you will find the same law in

operation. Each generation and each individual only truly knows so much of God as it incarnates in thought and life and character. Our knowledge of God can never transcend the manifestation of God and that manifestation is limited by development Godwards. It is the recognition of this truth of the evolution of man's knowledge of God which enables us to give to all scripture its true place, a place determined by no arbitrary rule, but by the simple principle of the measure in which it reveals God. We apply this principle to the scriptures of all nations, to the sacred writings of all religions. When once we have grasped this truth, that the manifestation of God advances step by step with the Godward progress of humanity, all ideas of limitation of revelation to any particular race or to any special religious system are discarded, and we are prepared to listen to any man, in any tongue, who can tell us anything which adds to our knowledge of the great God and Father of us all.

It is difficult to over-emphasise the importance of realising that our knowledge of God is conditioned by the manifestation of God under the limitations of human thought and life. And yet, when we deeply ponder the subject, it becomes plain that in this respect the knowledge of God is in harmony with all other knowledge. No law or principle is ever discovered by the human mind until it has first manifested itself in the phenomenal, that is, until it has entered the area within

the limits of which we ourselves live and move and think. The planet Neptune was unknown until it came within the range of man's telescope. It had been there all through the ages, but until man's power of thought first inferred its existence and man's power of device manufactured the necessary aid to his natural vision to enable him to see it, it was absolutely unknown. First the manifestation, then the knowledge. This is the great law of all knowledge and our knowledge of God conforms to it. We should have known nothing of God unless He had first manifested Himself to us by coming under the conditions and limitations of human thought and life. If there had been no incarnation of any kind there would have been no knowledge of God of any kind either. The measure in which we really know God is the measure in which we have seen God under the conditions and limitations of humanity.

It is this great truth which makes the supreme incarnation of God in Christ the very centre of Christianity. Without Christ, and the doctrine of incarnation which the appearance of Christ necessitates, Christianity has little to contribute to man's knowledge of God. Having Christ, it has a manifestation of the Father, which is unique amongst the religions of the world. The time has gone by for that attitude of contemptuous indifference to Christianity and its message to the world which has been so characteristic of the religious

Hindu hitherto. The time has come for him to ask, with the earnestness of soul and eagerness of spirit, which are the marks of the truly religious soul, whether the Great Father has not revealed Himself to other minds and manifested Himself in an incarnation which is not mythological, but historic? There is no need for the Hindu to turn his back upon the knowledge of God which has been vouchsafed to him in his own land and amongst his own people. There is need, however, for him to add to and correct that knowledge by the manifestation of God in the person and work of Christ. Let him look with unprejudiced eyes and say for himself how much of God he sees in Jesus the Christ.

The second great truth, which has entirely changed our mental outlook and helped to produce that wider view which we call modern thought, is the conception of the solidarity of man. This conception does not mean that all men are one in the sense of being of one kin, true though that is, but that all men form together one body, so articulated together, that the movement Godward is delayed or furthered by the general condition of the whole. Humanity, that is, is not a mere aggregate of individuals, but a body of innumerable members, with a life which circulates through all its parts. Eastern cannot say to Western, nor Western to Eastern, I have no need of thee; for they are, and always will be, members of one

body, whose individual well-being is bound up with the well-being of the whole. The moment we have fully grasped this conception we perceive that the struggles and conflicts between races and individuals, however much they may have temporarily strengthened the parts, have not given, and never can give, permanent strength to the parts, and always issue in debility to the body as a whole. In the early stages of evolution, before the body is highly organised, such conflicts are by no means fatal, but as organisation proceeds and the division of labour amongst the parts becomes more pronounced, conflict and strife become more and more injurious both to the separate members and also to the body as a whole. War at the present time is far more serious to the particular nations engaged and has a far more injurious effect upon the world as a whole than it ever had in the past. A century ago the war in Japan would have been confined to the nations concerned; to-day it affects in more or less degree every nation in the world. Similarly plague, and cholera and famine radiate influences which are felt, not merely at the centre affected but, right up to the circumference. It is not merely the evils of life, however, which reveal the great truth of the solidarity of the race; the boons and blessings reveal the same truth. Every nation shares more or less in the blessing which comes to each. Famine-stricken India feels the effect of England's generosity and America's

large-heartedness. Jamaica, staggering under the blow of earthquake and devastation is conscious of sympathy and help from lands she has never seen and from people she has never known. Every land participates in the benefits of those great discoveries of science obtained by the vast expenditure of men and money undertaken by the few. The heroic deed, the sublime self-sacrifice, exhibited in any part of the world, send a glow of enthusiasm into the breasts of men and women in the most distant country. Lowell has well expressed this sense of solidarity in his poem, "The Present Crisis"—

When a deed is done for Freedom, through the broad earth's aching breast
Runs a thrill of joy prophetic, trembling on from east to west.
. . . . . .
For mankind are one in spirit, and in instinct bears along,
Round the earth's electric circle, the swift flash of right or wrong;
Whether conscious or unconscious, yet Humanity's vast frame
Through its ocean-sundered fibres feels the gush of joy or shame;—
In the gain or loss of one race all the rest have equal claim.

This great conception, felt in the breasts of a few in the past, has come to the birth and is growing in stature day by day. It is making its voice heard in every land, though its cry at present is but that of an infant. It will, however, grow; slowly it may be, but none the less surely, and when it speaks with the man's voice it will be heard by all

and heard in order that it may be obeyed. This conception has already changed the mental outlook, and under its influence we are reconstructing both our religious and our social beliefs and remodelling our life and conduct. The priest in every land has received notice to quit; the prophet, if he be a prophet indeed, is everywhere welcomed with enthusiasm. The proselytist, whose supreme concern is to increase the number of those who think as he thinks, believe as he believes, and speak as he speaks, is yielding place to the true evangelist, whose mission it is to stimulate thought, inspire belief, and call forth speech, leaving it, as it always must be left, to the Spirit of Truth to guide men into the full truth. In India, groaning under a social tyranny, in comparison with which the political subjection of which we hear so much is but the restraining and governing hand of a mother, the conception of the solidarity of man has a great work to do and a great blessing to confer. One of the beliefs which urgently needs reconstructing is that of caste, which is hopelessly out of harmony with the modern outlook. That the four castes have sprung from different parts of Brahma's body is no longer believed by any educated Hindu, at least in its literalness. Most would regard it as a myth designed to set forth a certain truth, and would interpret it in various ways. Regarded as a myth there is a great truth in it, well worthy of belief. That truth is that there is something

Divine in every man, be he Brahmin or Pariah, and the only superiority of one over another which is of any real consequence is solely concerned with how much of the Divine there is in him. Modern thought, however, would slightly modify the myth and say that the four great classes into which it is possible to group men have not sprung from Brahma's body, but verily constitute his body, being severally members one of another; so that the head cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee, because, though the members vary both in form and function, they share a common life and contribute to a common welfare. This alteration of an old myth may seem a very slight one and some may rejoice to think how near the old myth approaches to the actual fact. Let us make no mistake however. The slight alteration in past mythology involves a mighty revolution in present history. The slight deviation from eternal verity noticeable in the old myth was not a parallel line but a curve, which, prolonged through the centuries, has resulted in a difference between the actual and the ideal which is almost as far asunder as the poles. Compare the respective positions of Brahmin and Pariah which have resulted from the acceptance of that ancient myth and ask whether the relation between belief and conduct is of no consequence and the correction of the one is as easy as the correction of the other? When we hear the modern Brahmin giving his new interpretation to old beliefs

and setting them forth revised and rewritten in the language of to-day, it is very necessary to turn aside from his paper-corrections to the effects of those beliefs in the life and conduct of the masses and ask ourselves what that same Brahmin would say if he had to live in the Pariah's hut? We can rewrite a myth, but we cannot rewrite the history of the myth. History cannot be rewritten; it has to be remade. Ink and a pen will correct a myth; blood and the sword are often needed to correct the effects of a myth. Theoretically you can put the Pariah into his true place by rewriting the myth; but to reinstate him in the position from which he has been cast out means self-sacrifice and service. The West has no such myth to rewrite, but it has none the less to atone for old errors of belief and reconstruct its social system. Both East and West, therefore, can help each other to reconstruct belief in the light of the changed modern outlook and reorganise life and conduct in harmony with the reconstructed belief.

New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth;
They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of Truth.
Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! we ourselves must Pilgrims be,
Launch our *Mayflower* and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea,
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's blood-rusted key.

CHAPTER II

THE CONCEPTION OF GOD

JUST as Man is aware of the Universe long before he is able to formulate any true conception of the Universe, so he is aware of God long before he is able to formulate any adequate conception of God. The two conceptions are the result of his awareness, and not *vice versa*. He is first of all conscious of a touch long before he is able to discover who or what it is that touches him. The difference between Theistic and atheistic systems is not due to the accuracy or inaccuracy of the reasoning process; it is due to the recognition or failure to recognise a distinction in what may be called this primitive awareness. The real divergence, that is, is not at the end of a process of reasoning; it is at the beginning and consists in the different estimate we form of the contents of our consciousness. If we once recognise in the other-than-self of our consciousness something which stands over against our own mind and our own will we are bound to make room in our

systems for some conception or other of God. Our system may not be strictly Theistic, but it cannot be atheistic. Fundamentally the conception we form of ourselves determines the conception we form of the other-than-self. Let the self be conceived of as nothing more than corporeal and the system is bound to be Materialism. Let the self be conceived of as essentially mental and the system is bound to issue in Idealism. In the same way, if, in the conception of the self there is no recognition of a will standing over against another Will, a mind standing over against another Mind whose conceptions it is able to perceive, the system which is built up must issue in such a conception of the Universe as finds no room for a conception of God of any kind. The point which is here emphasised is, not the correctness of the conclusions but, the adequacy of the premisses. To say that Reason leads us to this or that conclusion is an entirely misleading statement which has done incalculable harm. Reason does nothing more than evolve what is already involved. The conclusion of the syllogism proves nothing; it merely demonstrates the nature of the premisses. The balancing of your accounts does not make you a bankrupt; it merely reveals that you are one by showing you that your expenditure has exceeded your income. If you are dissatisfied with the state of the balance you can only alter it by adding to your income or decreas-

ing your expenditure. In the same way if the conclusions of the Reason are unsatisfactory, it is no use complaining of Reason ; you must examine your premisses. In a very real sense, no system of thought is unreasonable, because to be a system at all it must be reasonable. It is satisfactory or unsatisfactory to the mind, as it includes, or does not include all the facts in a harmonious whole. If there are facts which are omitted, or which are inconsistent with the system, it means, not that the conclusion has been incorrectly drawn but, that the premisses were inadequately stated.

Religion is not based upon the conception of God ; it is based upon our perception of Him. Man is not aware of God because he has conceived of Him ; he conceives of Him because he is aware of Him. To the modern mind, therefore, religion is man's experience of his relation to God, just as what we call common sense is man's experience of his relation to the Universe. Religion stands in no more need of proofs of the existence of God than common sense stands in need of proofs of the existence of the Universe. Common sense may be very defective ; it may be very unreasonable and incorrect ; but it is the result of Man's experience of the Universe, varies with his growing experience and is constantly undergoing revision. Religion in the same way may be very defective, very unreasonable and very incorrect, but it is none the less the result of

Man's awareness of God, varies with his growing experience, and needs constant revision. It is based on experience, built out of experience, corrected by experience. We may deny the reality of God just as we may deny the reality of the external universe, but our denial makes absolutely no difference to the reality of the experience, That experience must be explained; it cannot be explained away. Religion, therefore, to the modern mind occupies a distinct place in every system of thought. It is human experience, and whether it be regarded as perception of reality or a pure hallucination it is a real experience which cannot be ignored.

This modern standpoint has entirely altered our attitude to the various religions and religious beliefs of the world. All of them, from the crudest to the most refined, are a part of that consciousness of the Divine, out of which Man is evolving the true conception of God. Man's various and opposed conceptions of the Divine may be multitudinous, but they are all the result of the perception of the Divine, and this perception is as universal as Man. It is not the variety of the conceptions of God which is the significant thing; it is the uniformity of the perception of the Divine. The true nature of that which answers to Man's perception can only be ascertained by the fullest examination of his experience, as that has been expressed in the various conceptions

of what he has called the Divine. Religious beliefs are the result of religious experience; religious experience is not the result of religious belief. We must perceive the Divine before we can conceive God. The question, therefore, of whether there is or is not a God has receded into the background, and with it the importance of all those arguments which were once regarded as vital to religion. Man's experience brings him into touch with something which he calls Divine. Whether that something is a reality or an unreality cannot be decided on any *a priori* grounds; it must be examined. To rule out all religious experience as merely the result of hallucination is to prejudge the question.

It is characteristic of modern thought, therefore, to turn away from all attempts to elaborate proofs for the existence of God and to centre the attention upon the religious experience of the race. That experience has been formulated into the beliefs which we find expressed in the various religions and religious observances of mankind. This is not to assert that Man's religious experience, any more than his experience of the Universe, has been free from mistake and illusion. It is simply to insist that apart from an examination of his experience it is impossible to tell whether that which he has perceived is a reality or unreality. You do not prove that an experience is an hallucination by simply denying the reality

of the experience of the person who has been subject to the hallucination. The experience of the subject is the great reality. Your proof that it is an hallucination depends upon giving a satisfactory explanation of his very real experience. The traveller in the desert may mistake a mirage for a pool of water, but he would never be convinced that it was a mirage by mere argument that from the very nature of the case there could be no water. If, further, he found that the mirage satisfied his thirst, it would be absolutely impossible to convince him that it was a mirage and not water. Religious experience may be a mirage, but it can only be proved to be so by examining it fully in its aspirations and in its satisfactions. No argument for or against the existence of God can have any validity in itself. Argument has never established religion and it can never abolish it. What we want is an explanation of our experience of the Divine. What Man has called the Divine may be but another name for the Universe, but, if so, such a Universe which yields an explanation of religious experience, needs another name. A conception of the Universe which leaves no room and gives no explanation of our perception of the Divine is quite as faulty as a conception of the Divine which yields no explanation of our perception of the Universe. Whatever system we adopt must be harmonious and take in all the facts of our experience.

The age-long conflict between religion and science is by no means at an end, but to the modern mind the term "conflict" in the sense of antagonism is a misnomer. There are still, and are likely to be, differences between the two, but the conviction is growing on both sides that the differences are due to differences in the standpoints of the observers. All our knowledge is but partial, and the time has not yet come when either the scientist or the theologian can declare that his survey is complete. As each party, however, moves onward to its goal the results of its observations become more and more harmonious. The old antagonism is largely passing away from both. Both are more and more willing to modify their respective creeds in the interests of a common loyalty to Truth. The modification is by no means on one side, but on both, and there is a growing recognition that both the survey-parties are under allegiance to a common sovereign, whose empire includes both the countries that are being explored. If in the past there has been theological dogmatism there has been scientific dogmatism also. If in recent years the theologian has retreated from positions which have become untenable, the modern scientist has done the same. Such a modification of creed is in truest harmony with the scientific spirit. Our knowledge grows with the development of our faculties for acquiring knowledge, and fresh

information modifies old statements just as a fuller survey corrects old maps. We are often tyrannised over by figures of speech, and we suffer a good deal from the tyranny. In the end, however, the tyranny becomes unbearable and we throw off the yoke, only to discover that the suffering was needless and indeed for the most part self-inflicted. The symbols of war have been used to describe the differences between religion and science, and we have got accustomed to the use of such terms as "attack" and "defeat," "advance" and "retreat," with the result that people have been thrown into a panic of fear due to a purely imaginary invasion. The time has surely come for us to recognise that we are all engaged in the common search for truth, not in mortal combat for the defence of our own opinions.

A modern writer has sought to avoid the conflict between religion and science by urging the advisability of adopting a different terminology in which to express the results arrived at in their respective spheres. He would reserve the term "knowledge" for scientific truth, and the term "faith" for religious truth. He does not for a moment allow that religious truth is inferior to scientific truth, but because the subject-matter, method, and function of theology differ so considerably from those of natural science, he would designate the results in the one case as knowledge, and the results

in the other case as faith. It is difficult to see what would be gained by such a use of terms, and it is easy to see that it would lead to a disparagement of religious truth as essentially inferior to scientific truth. Our knowledge of both is equally valid or equally invalid. The history of philosophic thought in the East shows that the reality of the existence of God is regarded by the Eastern mind with just that validity which the reality of the Universe secures amongst the Western people. Whether you call this faith or knowledge is of little moment, but whatever you call it in the one case, you must call it the same in the other. The real controversy, in fact, is not between knowledge on the one hand and faith on the other; it is as to whether religious truth can rightly be called truth at all.

If you speak of truth in the religious sphere, you do so because you recognise that the true in the religious sphere is of the same nature as the true in the scientific sphere. Without going the length of attempting a definition of truth we can at least recognise that one of its essential characteristics is absolute harmony. Our thought to be true must be self-consistent; it must harmonise with everything else which we have recognised to be true. We do not arrive at religious truth in the same way as we arrive at scientific truth, but having arrived at religious truth, we feel that it must be in harmony with all other truth. From

the nature of the case every religious or scientific truth must be regarded as provisional. A new fact in either may be inconsistent with the statement of truth already formulated and the required harmony can only be secured by a restatement.

Modern thought is in sympathy with both religion and science. It recognises two poles of thought, for both of which there is equal validity. It is in this respect frankly dualistic, though it believes that a unity is the goal at which it will eventually arrive. It regards the investigations of religion and science as expeditions in the Northern or Southern hemispheres, is prepared to accept the established results of both expeditions as they come in and to modify each by the other wherever such modification is seen to be necessary.

The conception of God, therefore, with which the modern mind starts is that from which all *a priori* ideas as to nature and attributes have been rigidly excluded. All we are conscious of to start with is some One with Whom or with which the human mind is in relation, just as all we are conscious of in the other direction is some One, which we call the Universe, with which we are in relation by means of our sensations. It is the business of what we call science on the one hand and of religion on the other, to fill in the contents of these two equally unknowns, God and the Universe. Science must make use of everything within its reach in order that we may know what

that something is, which we feel to be not ourselves and to which we give the name, the Universe. Religion, in like manner, must make use of everything within its reach in order that it may reveal to us that other something, which also is not ourselves and to which we give the name God.

Many people, especially in the West, are accustomed to think that the physical realm is one with which the scientist is in direct communication, while the spiritual realm is one in which there is no direct communication. This is due to the fact that we forget that we never get out of ourselves in scientific investigation, any more than we do in mental processes. In each case we are all along dealing with our own sensations and perceptions. We recognise the touch of the Universe upon us far more readily than we recognise the touch of God. Evolution shows us that we have been in touch with the Universe for countless ages, while we have only come into touch with God, as it were, yesterday. Man, that is, has been in touch with the Universe through his evolution upward to conscious manhood. It is only on arrival at self-conscious manhood that he became conscious of the touch of God.

The field of investigation for science is easily recognised and well defined, but what about the field of investigation for religion? Here it seems as though we were at the outset met with a condition in which investigation in any real sense

were impossible. On the one hand we have a cosmos of order for our investigation; on the other a chaos of confused human thought, wild speculation, and vague feeling. This is doubtless true, and yet did not the cosmos itself arise out of chaos; and who shall say, as he studies the slow evolution of religious thought and feeling, that we are not watching a cosmos evolving out of chaos? The cosmos of law and order which the scientist to-day investigates was no less present in that far-off beginning when everything was without form and void. In the same way the full and perfect conception of God is no less present in the confused thought and wild speculation of humanity, and is none the less surely evolving into its perfect expression. We must recognise the two distinct fields of investigation, the material and the mental, using the words matter and mind provisionally as terms suited to that double relation in which we stand to God on the one hand, and to the Universe on the other. Whatever comes to us through our sensations we hand over to science to investigate; whatever comes to us through perception on the other hand, we hand over to religion and philosophy for similar investigation. Everything, that is, which functions on the material plane is subjected to science for investigation; everything which functions on what we may call the spiritual plane must be handed over to religion for investigation.

Scientific thoughts and theories are the judgments delivered in a lower Court on the evidence submitted, and they have to be confirmed in the higher Court of Reason. The higher Court, however, does not and cannot deal with questions of evidence; it can only deal with the judgment based upon the evidence. The appeal, to use a legal phrase, must be on a point of law, not on a point of fact. If the evidence is insufficient, the High Court remits the case for fresh investigation. In the same way religious truth is first of all religious experience formulated into a judgment. It comes up for appeal to the High Court of Reason, just as scientific truth does, and the High Court must confirm or reverse the judgments of the lower Court; it is not its province, however, to deal with the evidence of religious experience. The appeal to Reason, that is, can only be on a point of law. If the judgment based on religious experience seems to go beyond the evidence offered, it must refer the matter back for fresh inquiry.

This distinction seems to be lost sight of both by scientist and theologian. You will find the scientist pouring contempt on metaphysics and the theologian inveighing against reason or rationalism. Each, that is, regards the judgments pronounced in his own Court as infallible and resents any appeal to a higher tribunal. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the higher

Court has not always confined itself to its proper sphere of deciding a point of law, but has arbitrarily ruled out evidence which has been thoroughly established. Reason is the Supreme Court of Appeal both for the scientist and the theologian, but its decisions are only valid when they deal with the judgments formulated by science on the basis of the evidence of fact, and by religion on the basis of the evidence of religious experience.

In India it is particularly important that the distinction between religion and science, as well as their mutual relation to the Supreme Court of Reason, should be clearly perceived. It is no unfair representation to say that India has only recognised a Supreme Court of Reason, and has never had either a subordinate Court for the formulation of judgments based on religious experience on the one hand, or a subordinate Court for the formulation of judgments based on scientific fact on the other. This does not mean that there has been no religious experience or scientific investigation, for there have been both. There has, however, been no recognition of the true spheres of either the one or the other and no proper limitation of the true work of Reason. To continue the metaphor already employed, the High Court has not been a Court of Appeal to which the judgments arrived at by an unfettered religious experience and a free scientific inquiry could be sent. It has

rather been a Legislative Council whose decisions have been binding in the spheres of religious experience and of scientific inquiry. It has formulated judgments for both spheres and set men to work to find evidence to support its judgments. It has never asked for facts upon which to base a judgment as to what our relation to the Universe is; it has asserted what that relation is and told men to realise it. It has never asked for evidence upon which to base a judgment as to what our relation to God is; it has asserted a relation and set men the task of realising it. It has told the religious man that God is alone the great reality, and that his religious experience must conform to that statement, and has set him the task of trying to identify the self and God. It has told the investigator of the phenomena presented in the Universe the same thing, and bidden him regard all such phenomena as unreal appearance. It has resolutely refused any appeal from such a decision on the ground that there can be no appeal from its decisions. It has ignored all evidence which conflicted with such a decision, because it has held that the proper sphere of evidence was to confirm and not to question its decision.

If this is a true description of the Hindu mental standpoint it shows how entirely opposed such a standpoint is to that of the modern mind. There is sure to be unrest when the modern

Hindu, educated in Western science and influenced by the scientific spirit, brings his modern education to bear upon his religious beliefs. By far the majority seek a refuge from this unrest in trying to trace a boundary between religious and secular knowledge. A similar attempt is often made in the West, but there the boundary is between faith and knowledge. No such boundary, however, is ever anything more than an imaginary line. It never prevents, but always invites conflict between the two realms. In India the conflict is having very serious results to her religious life and thought. Religion has never been regarded by the Hindu mind as something distinct from knowledge, which might be called faith. It has ever been regarded as the triumph of Reason. The conflict, therefore, between the *a priori* and the *a posteriori* method, which is now going on, is fraught with far more serious consequences. The triumph of the *a posteriori* method means the calling in question of all that has been handed down from the past as the result of the *a priori* or ancient method. The general statements arrived at independently of the facts are being seen to be opposed to the facts upon which the modern mind concentrates its attention. The newer generation has parted company with the old method of denying reality to the facts in the interests of the authoritative statement. The whole of its education has been based upon the

reality of facts, and the general statements to which it has grown accustomed are all based upon a summary of the facts. In the school and in the college, the modern standpoint is supreme, and young India is brought up a firm believer in the *a posteriori* method. Its religion, however, is based upon the *a priori* method, and at every turn it is confronted with theories which are opposed to facts. However unwilling the modern Hindu may be to cut himself off from the religion of his land and his people, he cannot help the gradual severance which takes place in the recesses of his own mind between his actual and his professed beliefs.

As regards the conception of God, the identification of the One with the Many, which is the essence of the Pantheistic creed, is an illustration of the *a priori* method which has dominated Hindu thought. Modern Materialistic Monism, however, is, on the other hand, an illustration of the *a posteriori* method, limited, however, to a survey of the universe of matter only. Pantheism, though Monistic, is not Monism, and Monism, though Pantheistic, is not Pantheism. The Monos, at which the Monistic philosopher arrives by the *a posteriori* method, is not the Theos with which the Pantheistic philosopher starts on his *a priori* method. Similarly the Many from which the Monist starts in his search for the One, is not the Many at which the Pantheist arrives as the

result of his analysis of the One. The One of the Monist lacks the Theistic quality of the Pantheist's One and the Many of the Pantheist lacks the realistic quality of the Many of the Monist. To the Monist there is nothing Divine; to the Pantheist there is nothing which is not Divine. The Supreme Court of Appeal, Reason, cannot declare that either of these two judgments is in agreement with the truth. To the Pantheist it says, your duty is not to assert a One and explain away a Many, but to explain a Many by means of a One. To the Monist it says, your duty is not to exclude a part of the Many and bring forward a One which explains the rest, but to include all and bring forward a One which embraces all.

Modern Christian thought in the West is Theistic and not Pantheistic. It is rigidly so as regards the acceptance of the facts of that self-determination of the individual which we call the freedom of the will, and of that moral evil which is the present outcome of such freedom. It refuses absolutely to regard these facts as mere illusion and, therefore, it rejects every purely Pantheistic system. It differs, however, from the older Theism in its attitude to Pantheistic feeling, as distinguished from Pantheistic thought. It admits that this feeling is not only distinctly religious, but that it is part of that religious experience of the race out of which the full conception of God has to be formulated. The older Theism

was based upon a limited religious experience, coupled with a treatment of the religious experience of Jesus which regarded it as abnormal rather than the true norm for a perfect humanity. The newer thought draws its material from the religious experience of humanity as a whole, and treats the experience of Jesus, not as superhuman, in the sense of being abnormal, but as truly human, in the sense of being normal to an ideal humanity. The older thought, when it listened to the declaration, "I and the Father are one," interpreted it not as the conscious experience of the self of Jesus, but as the utterance of what they called His Divine nature in contradistinction to what they called His human nature. The newer thought recognises it as the utterance of a perfect and ideal humanity, a single self in perfect harmony with God. It regards the declaration, that is, not as the experience of God apart from humanity, but as the experience of God in humanity. There was not a human Jesus which was silent and a Divine Jesus Who spoke, but one perfect Divine man, conscious of perfect harmony between His Ego and the Father.

This illustration will perhaps enable us to see the difference between the older and the newer thought in their respective attitudes to what has been here described as Pantheistic feeling. The older thought heard the Pantheist's identification of the self and God with feelings which were outraged

at what it regarded as blasphemy. The newer thought, while refusing to accept the declaration as true, realises that it is not blasphemy, but a misstatement due to imperfect apprehension both of the self and of God. It is based upon a relation between the soul and God which explains, though it does not justify, the statement. Such an identification as the Pantheist asserts demands a perfection in humanity which we do not find; it ignores a distinction which is only too apparent. Let any one impartially put the Pantheist's declaration of identity side by side with Christ's statement of oneness with the Father and ask, why the one is rejected as a misstatement while the other is accepted as sublime but yet true? The simple answer is, that the known character of Jesus justifies the second statement, while no known character is able to establish the first. The Pantheistic declaration is a mere logical conclusion drawn from a given premiss. The statement of Jesus is the expression of a conscious experience of the soul. The Pantheistic statement is made in spite of the knowledge we possess both of the individual soul and of God. The declaration of Jesus is in perfect harmony with all we know both of Jesus and of God. The one is the affirmation of identity between two terms which by mistake have been regarded as distinct. The other is the declaration of a conscious unity between Son and Father. The modern Theist regards Christ's

statement, not as the utterance of the Divine apart from the human but, as the utterance of an ideal humanity which is *ipso facto* Divine. He can, therefore, understand the feeling which finds expression in Pantheistic thought. Humanity ought to be able to say, I and the Father are one, but it has never been able to say it as the expression of a conscious unity, save as it said it through the lips of Jesus. This consciousness was not an isolated experience with Jesus; it represents His normal condition. He was no Pantheist, but He has given expression to Pantheistic feeling as no one else has done, because in doing so He did not violate His self-consciousness, but correctly expressed it.

In the conception of God which is arrived at as the result of religious experience in ourselves, and in the race, the idea of personality is one which is essential to the religious life. Man can in no sense worship that which is beneath him. In the lowest forms of religious belief as well as in the highest it is always to that which is superior to himself that Man bows down. An inanimate object may be chosen as the symbol of this highest, but the worshipper at once invests it in his own mind with the very essence of his own being, personality. It is suggestive that, in Hindu thought, the process of abstraction as applied to the conception of God issues finally in a Brahma who is never worshipped. Take away the conception of personality from the

idea of God, and you may retain the word, but you have lost the thought which called forth the word.

The touch of God upon the soul, recognisable in the universal instinct to worship, abides even when a purely logical process of abstraction has robbed the object of worship of every single quality which is worshipable. Hindu thought, having divested the conception of God of all attributes and all relations, and left the word Brahma (neuter) standing destitute of all meaning, realised that its ratiocination had destroyed religion. It had set out to find God; it returned with the discovery that He was indiscoverable. It set out to know God; it returned with the knowledge that He was unknowable. The impulse, however, which had set the Hindu thinker to his task was essentially a religious one. He went forth with the conviction that the greatest discovery he could make would be the discovery of God; that the greatest knowledge he could attain to was the knowledge of God. He came back, therefore, with the feeling that he had been deluded and that such delusion was an essential part of the constitution of all phenomenal existence, his own included. He himself, however, by the pure force of reasoning had made this tremendous discovery, a discovery which he believed was not a delusion, which was, in fact, the sole thing which could be called knowledge in any real sense. This surely meant, not that he was related to Brahma,

for he had already proved that Brahma could have no relation, but that he, in the very essence of his being, must be that very Brahma itself. His consciousness of separateness was a part of the universal delusion inseparable from all phenomenal existence. This great discovery was knowledge, and the only real knowledge by means of which man attains that salvation which is the universal object of search. To keep the mind fixed on this one and only knowledge; to be freed from the sense of separateness; this was the great object of attainment.

It was soon recognised, however, that this *Gnyana marga*, or way of knowledge, was one which was possible for the elect few alone, and that for the mass of mankind a knowledge of the phenomenal was alone possible. Moreover the phenomenal had still to be explained, if not in its relation to a Brahma destitute of all relations, at least in its mutual relations as presented to consciousness. An explanation was already present in the great discovery already made and merely required unfolding in detail. The thinker himself, who by the process of pure thinking had arrived at this knowledge of his identity with Brahma, had a double existence, noumenal and phenomenal. He was persuaded that the noumenal Ego was identical with the noumenal Brahma. There was, however, a phenomenal Ego related to a phenomenal universe. The conclusion, therefore, was inevitable,—there must be a phenomenal Brahma, distinguished by the

masculine form of the word, who was identical with the phenomenal universe. The God, therefore, Whom he had set out to find, and had lost in the mere word Brahma (neuter), was found again in the word Brahma (masculine) and could be invested with all the qualities and attributes from which Brahma (neuter) had been divested. Religion, therefore, which philosophy had banished, was restored, and a theology became possible.

This slight and imperfect sketch is an attempt to set forth sympathetically the distinctive feature of that religious thought-movement of India, the effect of which is discernible in every Hindu system, however much they may vary in detail. It is the warp of Hindu religious thought, across which the Hindu mind has thrown a woof of many colours. It suggests a striking similarity and a striking difference as compared with the philosophic thought-movement of the West. In the West the movement was distinctly a philosophic one, free to proceed in two directions, towards the two poles of thought, those two unknowns—God and the Universe. The result was that Idealism never had the field to itself, but had to encounter a resolute opponent in those who felt the attraction of the opposite pole and whose system we call Realism. In India, on the other hand, the movement was essentially a religious one, and the religious conception has always dominated it. The goal at which Hindu religious thought arrived is the only

goal at which we can arrive by a purely logical process of thought. Confine yourself to the working of your own mind and of necessity you can never get to anything beyond. The idea with which you start, if your logic is correct, will be the idea with which you finish. Take the conception Brahma (neuter) destitute of all qualities and freed from all relations, the great discovery of the Hindu religious thinker, the goal at which he has arrived by pure thinking. How has he obtained such a conception? He cannot have obtained it by synthesis, for the idea cannot be described by its positive contents. He must have arrived at it by a process of abstraction, that is, by removing from it everything which he regarded as foreign to it. The principle, however, upon which the removal was effected was that of agreement with a purely negative conception of the supreme and ultimate reality. But where has this conception come from? He has it to start with. All that he has done is to make a conception, which was indefinite at the beginning, clear and definite at the end. Whether this is a real gain depends entirely on what is left at the end. To know that an indefinite idea we have at the start turns out to be no idea at all, may be preferable to thinking that it means something; but to call it a gain is very much like suggesting that the knowledge that our supposed balance at the Bank is a delusion is a most valuable asset. It may prevent us drawing cheques,

but it will hardly help us to pay our bills. To have proved that the supreme reality is utterly unknowable is doubtless a great achievement, but its chief significance lies, as Kant pointed out, in demonstrating that the path we have chosen does not lead to the goal we expected. That goal was knowledge of the unknown. To have demonstrated that so long as we confine ourselves to pure thinking the unknown is the unknowable merely tells us that we have chosen a wrong path and must try another. The Hindu religious thinker, however, would not admit this. He had limited knowledge as to the result of the operations of the Pure Reason, and he therefore insisted that the process of abstraction, to which he had submitted his conception of the supreme reality, had not resulted in a mere cipher, whose actual thought-value was blank nothingness, but that the cipher represented the only reality. When he attempted to describe the reality, he could only do so by calling it the unknowable, and adding a number of negations to specify what it was not. To say that the supreme reality is Brahma is simply to say that x equals x. Such a result would have ended in absolute scepticism in the East but for the religious nature of the Hindu and his realisation that to predicate an unknowable at all was to assert some knowledge of it. He was compelled to violate his own dictum when he made those very negations by which he sought to describe the indescribable Brahma, and he still further violated it

when he asserted a still further knowledge, namely, that he and Brahma were one.

Hindu thought has never advanced beyond the point then reached, for the simple reason that there is no beyond. The goal along the road of Pure Reason had been reached and the Hindu refused to recognise that there could be any other road. Hindu thought stops where Western thought would have stopped, if Kant had never written anything more than his *Kritik of Pure Reason* and that had been regarded as the last word of philosophy. The Hindu movement, however, being essentially religious, would not recognise the failure of the search, but proceeded to turn the result, which was purely negative from the philosophic standpoint, into a result which it made positive from the religious standpoint. The thinker who had failed to attain knowledge was regarded as having attained release from ignorance. The Brahma who had been discovered to be beyond consciousness is identified with the thinker's self. The complete failure of philosophy became the supreme triumph of religion. Such a manifest contradiction would never have survived a day but for the fact that it ministered to intellectual pride by asserting a transcendent knowledge as the goal of the *Gnyana marga*, while at the same time it appealed to the religious nature by its declaration of the oneness of God and Man as the final blessedness of the perfected saint.

One cannot but admire the strength of the religious conviction which enabled the Hindu thinker boldly to declare that the whole Universe might be unreal, but that God must be the supreme Reality. There is something magnificent in Faith thus turning the most crushing defeat which Reason has inflicted on Religion into an apparently perfect victory. It was a triumph of Faith over Reason, but it was not the victory of Truth. The defeat had been due to entrusting to Pure Reason a task for which she was incapable, and real victory could only be secured by realising this and seeking other aid. Later Hindu religious thought has attempted something in this direction in introducing the idea of the *Bhakti marga* (the way of Faith), but it has never acknowledged the failure of the *Gnyana marga*, and has always regarded the *Bhakti marga* as inferior. The effect of this upon the religious life of India has been injurious in the highest degree. It has tended to elevate knowledge above virtue ; to divorce morals from religion ; and to place the self on that throne which God alone can rightly occupy.

If the Hindu religious thought-movement is to advance it will have to recognise the insufficiency of the Pure Reason to arrive at a true knowledge of God, renounce its fictitious criterion of reality, and begin with that initial knowledge of God given to us in what Kant calls the Categorical Imperative. The mind acquires knowledge by

additions to that with which it starts. It erects a system of thought by building stone on stone, but the whole edifice rests, and for ever must rest, upon the foundation which is not made by us, but given to us. Every building rests, not upon what we call its foundations which we ourselves lay but, upon the solid earth. All true knowledge similarly rests upon that fundamental and initial knowledge given in self-consciousness. It is there that we feel the touch of the Universe on the one hand and the touch of God on the other. In the consciousness of a something which is not ourselves, and of that other something which is ourself, with the relation between the two, we have the foundation for the erection of that knowledge of the Universe which it is the province of science to rear. In the consciousness of a Will which is not our own, and of another will which is our own, living and active, with the relation between the two, we have the foundation for the erection of that knowledge of God which it is the province of religion to rear. If we cannot trust this fundamental knowledge; if this is pure illusion, then there is no foundation for any superstructure of any kind, for we have nowhere to begin. Your building may reach the clouds, but it cannot begin there. You may build so high that you even pass through the clouds and leave the solid earth completely out of sight. You can only do so, however, by building true, and to build true you must

use the plumb-line which always connects you with that solid earth which is your foundation, and for ever keeps your centre of gravity within the area covered by your base. Let your centre of gravity, however, once fall without this area, and though you have reached the clouds, you will be quickly brought back again to the solid earth, and your building will be in ruins. You may speak about a transcendental knowledge in which all thought of earth is left behind and the soul dwells far above the clouds in a glory which is indescribable. Such a transcendental knowledge is without doubt the goal of a true *Gnyana marga*. It must be a superstructure of knowledge, however, resting on the solid fact of self-consciousness, or it is merely a daring flight of the imagination which carries you to some unknown point in space and leaves you unconnected with the earth you have left, or the heaven to which you have soared. If your transcendental knowledge is a true superstructure, built with the plumb line, the force of gravity is in its favour. If it is a mere flight into space, the force of gravity will, slowly at first, but with ever increasing speed, bring you down to earth again, with results far from pleasant to contemplate.

The conception of God which is in harmony with the modern standpoint, is not that of a Brahma, who is merely the negation of all reality knowable by us and who stands out of all relation

to us, but of One Who while He transcends all our conceptions of reality, yet includes them in a fulness of reality inconceivable and inexpressible. It is the conception of One Who while He transcends all known and knowable selves, is for ever that Self or Soul in Whom we all live and move and have our being, and between Whom and ourselves there is a relationship which abides for all time. There seems to be only one term which has sufficient wealth of content to stand as a suitable predicate for that Being, in Whom all live and Who yet lives in all; Who while transcending all human knowledge is yet immanent in human thought; Who while transcending our conceptions of personality is still not impersonal. That one term is the definite and yet indefinite word, Love; definite, in that it expresses a reality of which we are all conscious, and yet indefinite, in that it suggests depths we have not yet fathomed, and heights we have not yet scaled. God is Love, is a predicate which at one and the same time gives us the idea of One Who transcends even His own self-expression, but Who is yet immanent in that self-expression. It also suggests that conception of a Self between Whom and ourselves there is a relation due to an essential unity, which, while it surpasses the mind's power to express, does not lie beyond the soul's power to feel. There is another term which expresses this relation between ourselves and God in as full and as rich a manner as

seems possible for us. It is the term Father. It unites us to that One Supreme Reality, Whose life is the life of all, and Whose love proceeding from Him to us, and returning from us to Him, is the systole and diastole movement of the vast cosmic process. All our expressions and all our thoughts prove defective so long as we seek to establish an identity between God and our perception of Him, for He must for ever transcend finite perception. God is our Father, and our Father is Love, are two predicates which formulate in the wealthiest terms which are available, our apprehension of that Self Who is not our self, but without Whom we should have no consciousness even of ourselves.

CHAPTER III

THE VEDANTIC CONCEPTION OF GOD

Of all the schools of philosophical religious thought in India the Vedantic is the one which is most characteristic of the Hindu religious thought-movement. No one who is at all acquainted with its tenets but must be struck with its acute thinking and its logical consistency. It is rightly regarded as the supreme triumph of Hindu religious thinking. It represents the goal beyond which Hindu thought cannot go, so long as it proceeds along the road which has been characteristic of every true Hindu thought-movement. If there is to be any progress at all it can only be by taking another path, for Vedantism has exhausted all the possibilities of the path which the Hindu mind has consistently followed through the whole course of its development. India has given birth to other systems, but Vedantism is in a very special sense distinctive of Hindu thought. We cannot but have a profound admiration for its absolute fidelity to the path it has chosen, and we must

acknowledge that it has rendered the greatest service by demonstrating with strict accuracy the logical goal of Hindu religious thought. It is because of this logical accuracy that we are enabled to estimate its merits as a solution of the religious problem, by concentrating our attention on the two or three fundamental postulates with which it starts and from which it deduces with wonderful accuracy its explanation of the riddle of the Universe. No thoughtful Hindu can fail to be profoundly interested in the basis upon which has been constructed a system of religious thought of which India may justly feel proud. Religious thought in the West cannot afford at the present time of theological unrest to ignore the effect, as seen in the religious life of India, of a religious thought-movement which has dominated India through the centuries and which has its attractiveness for the religious thinker even in the West.

One of the essential features in Vedantism is the distinction it draws between reality and unreality, and, therefore, it is important to discover what is the criterion which it uses to distinguish the one from the other. It is of little use to discuss whether God is the Sole Reality until we are agreed as to what we understand by reality and unreality. We cannot begin to build until we have found something solid upon which to build. God and reality are merely two terms to start with, the contents of which we have to fill in as

we proceed. We may use the term God as the synonym for that One of Whom we are in search as we stand confronting the Many, but the One is a mere cipher to start with, destitute of all contents. The Hindu thinker arrived at his One by a very different road from that travelled by his Western brother. The Hindu thinker starts with a certain conception of the One and seeks to explain the Many by means of it. The Western starts with the Many and arrives at a One. The Hindu was impressed with an unreality in the Many while the Western was equally impressed with a reality in the Many. It is very necessary to emphasise this different impression which the Many has produced on Eastern and Western minds respectively, because that impression is the dominating factor in the two thought-movements. When the Eastern thinker wishes to conceive of reality he shuts his eyes and withdraws within himself. When the Western thinker wishes to conceive of reality he opens his eyes and concentrates his attention upon that which is external to him. This contrast may be too sharply drawn, but it is necessary sharply to discriminate between the two dominating influences.

That which impressed the Hindu and started him on his quest was the transitoriness, the instability and the constant variation which confronted him in the external Universe, and the dissatisfaction, the weariness and the restlessness in

his own nature. These characteristics in the Universe and in ourselves are recognised in the West as well as in the East, but the nature of the effect which they produce in us is very different according as we dwell in the Western or the Eastern hemisphere. No one can adequately appreciate Hindu thinking unless he can realise the effect of living in an Indian climate. Similarly the Hindu cannot understand how Hindu thought must of necessity strike the Western, unless he also realises what it means to live in a Western climate. The best criticism of Western thinking, therefore, must come from the East, and the best criticism of Eastern thinking must come from the West, because the one supplies what the other lacks for an all-round view of life. If knowledge is to grow and mature, we must take advantage of the whole of human experience. The great race-movements of the past which separated man from man, driving some East and others West, have resulted in a rich and varied experience of incalculable advantage to humanity as a whole. We are now witnessing great race-movements of an entirely opposite character, which are drawing together the scattered members of a common family, who in meeting each other bring the rich results which they have severally acquired in the very diverse climates in which they have grown to manhood. Short-sighted politician and narrow-minded thinker may object to this new race-

movement and strive to prevent it, but the far-sighted statesman and the broad-minded thinker will realise that absolute prohibition is as futile as it is undesirable. We shall have to find a *modus vivendi* for Eastern and Western to dwell together, and we shall have to find a newer thought and a newer feeling in which are incorporated the results of both Eastern and Western thinking and living. The necessity will turn out to be one of those Divine compulsions which make for a richer thought and a fuller life.

To the Hindu thinker, living in an Indian climate and under ancient conditions, the effect of his experience of life inevitably led him to fasten his attention upon the transitoriness which confronted him in the external Universe and the restlessness of which he was conscious in his own nature. He accordingly sought for something which was not subject to those changes which filled him with weariness and which was unaffected by the exercise of those powers which in an Indian climate only resulted in weakness and debility. In studying Hindu thought we cannot fail to realise that life *per se* is never expressed as that intense joy which it is to the Western. It could not be, for the Indian climate and the ancient conditions of the Indo-Aryan life were against such a conception. The Western poet is giving expression to an experience which is foreign to the Eastern mind when he sings :

How beautiful it is to be alive,
To wake each morn, as if the Maker's grace
Did us afresh from nothingness derive,
That we might sing, How happy is our case,
How beautiful it is to be alive.

Not to forget, when pain and grief draw nigh,
Into the ocean of time past to dive
For memories of God's mercies ; or to try
To bear all nobly, hoping still to cry,
How beautiful it is to be alive.

Thus, ever, towards man's height of nobleness
Striving, some new progression to contrive ;
Till, just like any other friend's, we press
Death's hand ; and having died, feel none the less,
How beautiful it is to be alive.

The Hindu's view of life was doubtless true to his experience, but it is not consistent with the experience of humanity as a whole. His philosophy is a philosophy of Indian life, and of Indian life under ancient and not modern conditions. The ancient Hindu thinker did not associate joy with active sentient life, but with passive unconscious existence. His height of pure bliss is found in a profound dreamless sleep. This experience of life is reflected in the thought he conceived and in the language he constructed for the expression of his thought. Let any one compare the metaphorical and symbolical language of the East with that of the West, and he will find that, over and over again, the symbol which in the West expresses one sentiment, expresses the opposite

sentiment in the East. The sunshine, for instance, which is the symbol for prosperity in the West, is the heat and burden of the day which symbolises adversity in the East. The cloud, which the Western uses as the symbol of misfortune, the Eastern hails as deliverance from discomfort and a harbinger of blessing. When, therefore, the Hindu thinker sought for that something which was not subject to the constant vicissitudes which marked the phenomenal world in which he lived and moved, he conceived of something permanent amidst the transitory, unchangeable amidst the variations to which he and all things were subject, immovable amidst the never resting panorama which confronted his wearied gaze. Of this something it would be possible to say, "it is"; of all else you could only say, they come and they go, but they do not abide. The verb "to be" is the one verb which of all others gives the idea of permanence. You can change the two terms which it connects as often as you like, but it remains the same. Moreover, standing alone it gives us an affirmation of reality. The Hindu thinker, therefore, felt that this something which he sought for as the permanent, unchangeable and immovable, about which you could say, "it is," in a sense quite different from that which was possible of anything else, must be that reality for which his soul craved, and the only reality. To him the very absence of all those characteristics which belonged to the

phenomenal world, and to himself as a part of that world, raised it to a height beyond which his aspiration could not soar. To remain for ever unmoved while all else was subject to constant change; to abide unaffected by all those causes which operated ceaselessly on everything else, was to the Hindu thinker, whose day was a day of toil and weariness, and whose night alone brought cessation from activities which were a burden and from sentience which was suffering, the height of pure bliss. This conception of a pure, characterless, undifferentiated being, underlying all the phenomenal, eternally the same, unmoved and unaffected by anything in either space or time, is the Brahma, the One and Sole Reality. Such a conception necessarily involves the unreality of the whole phenomenal Universe, and with it the unreality of all that experience which comes to us as parts of that Universe.

The Western mind, to which such a conception is submitted for the first time, cannot help feeling that this is the exact opposite of what he regards as fact. That which the Hindu thinker describes as real is to him the unreal, and *vice versa*. He cannot help feeling so because his experience of life is the reverse of that of the Eastern. To him life is a higher, fuller and richer term than existence. The contrast between the two may be expressed by saying that the Western does not desire to exist, but to live; the Eastern does

not desire to live, but to exist. Empty life of all those characteristics which make it desirable to the Western and you have the existence for which the Eastern longs. This contrast is presented in sharp outline in order that we may understand the difference in the two great thought-movements of East and West respectively. The Western view of life doubtless needs correcting in the undue emphasis it throws upon activity and the little room it leaves for passivity. The Hindu thinker has presented a most valuable contribution to our larger view of life by emphasising, even to the extent of gross exaggeration, the passive side of life, but he needs to realise that the assumption in regard to life *per se*, with which he starts, is not true to the larger experience of humanity. This assumption has led him to attribute a reality to a conception of his mind which is not justified by the larger experience of the race, and to attribute an unreality to the phenomenal which is opposed to truth as interpreted by the consciousness of humanity.

The Brahma of Hindu thought is unknowable, not because he transcends our power of thought, but because there is nothing in the conception for us to know. The thinker has arrived at it by simply thinking away every knowable attribute. In his search for the One to explain the Many, he has simply deducted every single characteristic of which the Many is possessed. The result is not

something, but nothing. Here is a glass of water. I can conceive of the being of water and affirm that it is neither oxygen nor hydrogen. I cannot, however, subtract from the conception of this being of the water the idea of oxygen and the idea of hydrogen and of the compounding of the two and have anything left, any more than I can take away every atom of oxygen and every atom of hydrogen by the force of an electric current and have anything left in the glass. If the only thing which is real is this pure characterless being, then nothing exists which can in any sense be called real.

In our search for the One to explain the Many we must have some point of departure. If we are to reach the Great Reality, we must begin with that knowledge of reality which is given us. The only knowledge of reality of which we are absolutely certain to start with is the reality of the Ego or self. The only knowledge of existence we have to start with is that of our own existence. For purposes of thought we can isolate the various characteristics which make up the totality of ourself and regard them separately. By no process, however, can we separate being from the self, for in every act the self always is. The knowledge of the self, therefore, which is ever present with us, beyond which it is impossible to descend, is a knowledge, not of pure characterless undifferentiated being but, of that essentially

different conception of being which is present in self-consciousness. Pure undifferentiated being is a mere abstraction which may exist in my thought, but can have no other existence. It is merely the conception of "is-ness." The word "is," however, cannot stand alone; it is simply a copula which identifies one term with another. To identify Brahma with pure undifferentiated being is to take away all content from the idea of God, and leave a mere cipher in its place. Further, to call this cipher the Sole Reality is to declare that there is nothing real at all.

The conception of God, therefore, which is the foundation of Vedantism, and is more or less fundamental to all Hindu religious thought, is not that rich and full conception for which man craves, but, on the contrary, it is the most poverty-stricken conception of God to which human thought has given birth. Vedantism is wearisomely prolix in its description of what God is not, but it never commits itself to the slightest positive statement as to what God is. Even when it seems to be on the point of satisfying our longing for some clear conception of this One and Sole Reality, its ever-recurring negative is sure to turn up at the end and rob us of any positive content at which it may have hinted. The fascinating goal towards which it pointed, the true knowledge of God at which it hinted, is with strict logical consistency only to be

obtained by the absolutely impossible attempt of imagining that you have something left after thinking away from the self every single characteristic which constitutes it a self. The Vedantist starts, as it were, with two statements—God is, and I am. His method is to think away every possible characteristic from the term, God, in the one expression, and every possible characteristic from the term, I, in the other, and thereby leave nothing but what may be called "is-ness" in the one, and "am-ness" in the other. Both being nothing but the same tense of the verb, "to be," their absolute identity is established. Such an illustration is by no means a mere travesty of the Vedantic method; it is a true illustration of Vedantic thought. The only inconsistency which can be charged against the Vedantist is that his whole system is absolutely contradicted by the consciousness of humanity. He has, however, entrenched himself in the impregnable fortress of the utter untrustworthiness of self-consciousness, and until he is ready to leave that entrenchment his case is hopeless.

While Vedantism has a place in philosophic thought, its right to a place in religious thought is extremely doubtful. If it is true, then it has given the death-blow to all religion. If the Brahma of Vedantic thought is the Sole Reality, and the self rightly understood is identical with that Sole Reality, then religion, which is essentially the

relation between God and Man, has absolutely no foundation upon which to rest. There can be no relation between two which are not really two, but only one. The true Vedantist knows this, and therefore discards religion for himself, and leaves it for the ignorant masses, who, themselves illusory, sustain an illusory relation to an illusory Brahma. Religion, therefore, in any other sense than that of a purely intellectual perception of an identity of the self and Brahma, is nothing but illusion, and to minister to the religious instincts in humanity is merely to perpetuate the illusion.

An attempt has been made to reconcile the philosophic thought of Vedantism with the religious feelings, by asserting that the *Gnyana marga*, (way of knowledge) of the Vedantist and the *Bhakti marga* (way of faith) of the religious soul, both lead to the same goal. Between the *Gnyana* of the Vedantist, however, and the *Bhakti* of the religious soul, there is an antagonism which is irreconcilable. Everything which ministers to true *Bhakti* or religious devotion emphasises that consciousness of relation to God, which it is the express object of the *Gnyana*, or transcendent knowledge of the Vedantist, to get rid of. The real goal of the *Bhakti marga* is the consciousness of a oneness with God which is obtained by the growing recognition of likeness to God and the renunciation of all that in the self which is in

opposition to God. The true goal of the *Gnyana marga*, on the other hand, is the complete loss of all consciousness, in order that the delusion as to any relation between the soul and God may cease. The religious soul who follows the *Bhakti marga* may look forward to the merging of his own individual consciousness in the fuller and perfect consciousness of God, or he may believe that he will for ever retain his own consciousness of oneness with God, but in either case his goal is not unconsciousness, but a larger and fuller consciousness. The true Vedantist, on the other hand, has as his goal, not any consciousness of oneness with God but, the absolute identity of his soul and God in pure unconscious and undifferentiated being. To assert that these two paths lead to the same goal is alike inconsistent with the respective goals of each.

Though the whole tendency of Vedantic thought is thus inimical to real religion, it owes its birth to a religious rather than to a merely philosophic instinct. No one can read the long series of denials by which the Vedantist seeks to eliminate from his conception of God every inadequate and unworthy idea without feeling that we have to do, not with the merely philosophical but, with the intensely religious soul. As one after another of these ideas passes in review before him, it is his religious nature which dismisses them with the repeated phrase, "Not that, Not

that." With many of his negations we feel in sympathy. It is only when, having reduced the conception to characterless being, he asserts, "That art thou," and seeks to satisfy our aspiration after the highest life by a presentation of the lowest conception of mere existence, that the soul revolts and we feel that expectation has been aroused only to be disappointed. In our conceptions of God we are prepared to find much that is both inadequate and unworthy, and we are grateful to any one who will point this out and give us greater and nobler ideas to put in their place. We must, however, have a richer and a fuller conception than the one with which we started if our religious aspiration is to be satisfied. Vedantism gives us such an emasculated conception of God, that its identification of the self with God, far from producing an elation, fills us with a hopeless dissatisfaction. It fails to satisfy even our conception of the self, far less our conception of God. We are conscious of being much more than that now, despite our limitations and imperfections. We not only *are*; we are *alive*, possessors of all the wealth of possibilities with which conscious life, as distinct from mere unconscious existence, endows us. We are unwilling to part with the rich conception, life, until we are assured of a richer. The Vedantist's illustrations do not help us to this richer conception. The state of dreamless sleep has no

attraction for us. One hour of real life is far more than a century's dreamless sleep. We only appreciate the dreamless sleep after we are awake, and then chiefly because of the greater vigour it has given us to live. If it comes as a relief from suffering it is welcome, but if it overtakes us in the midst of the joy of true living, it is not welcome, but unwelcome. When Vedantism offers us pure unconscious being as a gift immeasurably superior to conscious life, as we are able to conceive of both, we cannot perceive the superiority. In the same way the ever-changing face of Nature, as it is seen in the phenomenal world, is infinitely preferable to the immovable and changeless marble face of pure being. We prefer the alternation of hunger and satisfaction to the total loss of all appetite. We would sooner suffer both pain and joy than have no capacity for either.

> 'Tis better to have loved and lost
> Than never to have loved at all.

In a word, Vedantism must give us more than we possess, not less; it must enrich, not impoverish, our thought. The religious nature cries, "Lift me to the Rock that is higher than I." We want a God Who transcends our highest thought, not a God Who falls infinitely below even the self; a God Whose life is fuller than our own, not a God Who has not yet risen from unconscious being into conscious life.

In filling in our conception of God we must begin with the manifestation of God which is present in the Universe and not with any *a priori* conception of our own minds. The first thing that strikes us, as we contemplate the wondrous panorama which is stretched before us in the visible Universe, is that there must be some cause for the multiform effect which we call the Universe. This uncaused Cause of all that is we are compelled to conceive of as personal, because personality is itself the highest conception of cause which we possess. It is, in fact, the only thing which gives us any adequate conception of cause at all. The fundamental idea in our conception of force, without which we are unable to give any true account of causality, is that self-expression which we call the exercise of the will. In conceiving of God as personal, however, we do not for a moment suppose that human personality is the measure of Divine personality. With the Vedantist we are prepared to say, as we contemplate the limitations and defects of human personality, "Not that, Not that." We part company, however, when he proceeds to subtract from human personality every positive content, and then to affirm that God is *that*. We are prepared to call Him supra-personal, if that means more than personal, but never impersonal. To call Him impersonal is to make the great uncaused Cause of this vast Universe, the Macrocosm, less

than the cause of all that activity in the finite Microcosm which we call Man.

In the same way, when we contemplate the wonderful reign of law, the orderly process by means of which ends are attained and the means employed for their attainment, we are compelled to associate intelligence with this great Primal Cause. Here again, however, we do not take human intelligence as the measure of that infinite wisdom which we associate with God, but we do assert that in God there is and must be that which answers to human mind, however much it transcends that mind. When we turn from the contemplation of the Universe to the contemplation of humanity, we are struck with those ethical qualities which give to man his supreme place in creation and we feel compelled to invest God with something answering to those qualities in man which are the marks of spiritual grace and beauty. It is perfectly true that in thus filling in our conception of God, we are forming that conception in our own image and after our own likeness. Until, however, we have experience of something higher than man, in the likeness of which we can conceive of the Highest, the charge of anthropomorphism is one which need not greatly concern us. Perfect humanity may be a conception which falls infinitely below what divinity really is, but divinity cannot fall below what perfect humanity is.

In following this line of thought in filling in our

conception of God, we, of course, assume that the Universe, including humanity, is a revelation or manifestation of God. It is impossible, however, to make any other assumption so long as we recognise that the Universe is an effect whose cause is God. The Vedantist is compelled to make a similar assumption when he comes to deal with the Universe and attempts to explain its existence. In Vedantic thought the phenomenal Brahma is the cause of the phenomenal Universe. Vedantism here reveals a contradiction at the very basis of its thought which is fatal to the whole system. It claims to be the most absolutely monistic system that there is. On examination, however, it turns out to be essentially dualistic. The Brahma who is conceived of as pure undifferentiated Being and regarded as the Sole Reality, has as its eternal companion Avidya or Maya, the originator of what is called the phenomenal Universe. The problem of all philosophic thought is to explain the existence of the Many by means of the One. Vedantism, instead of explaining the problem, denies the reality of the Many and insists on the Sole Reality of the One. It then proceeds to explain a purely illusory Many by means of an equally illusory One. If, however, the One is the *sole* Reality, there never could be a Many to explain. It is no answer merely to deny reality to the Many. The question simply assumes another form, and asks how the illusion arises? Vedantism replies that Maya is co-eternal

with Brahma. If this is not dualism, then we must ask Vedantism to relate this Maya to Brahma. This, however, it is unable to do from its very conception of pure undifferentiated Being. We are left, therefore, with a dualism of Brahma and Maya which is absolute, and instead of any explanation of the problem with which we started, Vedantism has merely complicated it for us. This is by no means the only thing Vedantism has done for us ; it has sapped the foundation of all religious aspiration by making God, as He is manifested to us in the Universe, a pure delusion. Let us once become convinced that Brahma is the Sole Reality, and that the Ego, the real self, is identical with that Brahma, and all religion becomes a mere phantom-show in which it is impossible for us to take the slightest interest. On the contrary, to take any interest in it does but emphasise the illusion from which it is our duty to escape.

We may agree with the Vedantist when he bids us think of God as distinct from the phenomenal Universe, but we must part company when he tells us that God is unrelated to the Universe. If there is a God at all, we can only know Him as He manifests Himself. If He has not manifested Himself, then whether He is or is not, whether our conception of a God is a pure imagination or an absolute Reality, are matters which are for ever beyond us. Knowledge necessarily implies not only a knower, but something which can be known.

There is, however, nothing to know unless it has been first manifested. Visibility is the condition of seeing and manifestation is a condition of knowing. To speak of knowing God, when our conception of God is such that any manifestation is excluded, is merely to deceive ourselves by using terms which have no meaning. In Vedantism Brahma is so conceived that any manifestation of what or who it is, is out of the question. The Vedantist never gets beyond himself and never can get beyond. He makes no distinction between knowing and thinking. All that he asks us to do is to think sufficiently hard and our thinking passes into knowledge.

Nowhere does Vedantism demonstrate its own inherent inconsistency more than in the explanation it gives of the Many. While it calls the Universe unreal, it represents it as far more real than anything else. Maya is far more of a reality than Brahma. In Vedantic thought Maya is a pure negation, as it stands contrasted with Brahma. It has no reality, for the conception of Brahma forbids it. In spite of this fundamental nothingness and unreality, however, Vedantism makes it the ground of the phenomenal Universe, the cause, that is, of all the complexity, change and movement which confront us in the Universe. It is true that you cannot say that such an account is contrary to the maxim, out of nothing nothing comes, for it is in strict harmony with the maxim. Maya is nothing, and the Universe proceeding out of it is nothing also.

The process, however, must at least be positive. We have, therefore, this curious contradiction, that the process of evolution, which is distinctly positive, is due to Maya, which is a pure negation. Moreover as Maya is co-eternal with the noumenal Brahma, and this process of becoming is caused by Maya, the process must be eternal also. We arrive, therefore, at this conclusion, that the Universe is an eternal coming into being and passing out of being; that the variation is an eternal variation, the movement an eternal movement. There is a permanence, therefore, even as regards the transitoriness, for the process is eternal; an unchangeableness even as regards the variation, for it never ceases; an "is-ness" as regards the coming and going. Where, then, is the difference between the Real Brahma, the Sole Reality, and the unreal Maya? The phenomenal Universe must have as much reality as the noumenal Brahma, for as a process it is as permanent as Brahma itself. The hope, therefore, with which we started, namely, of being delivered from any part or lot in this transitoriness, turns out to be a delusion, for if the Brahma with which the self is to be identified is for ever associated with Avidya (Ignorance) or Maya, the self also is associated with it and escape is impossible. The dualism in the one case must be accompanied by a dualism in the other. We may identify the self with Brahma, but we must also identify the Avidya associated with the self with the Avidya associated

with Brahma, and the self can no more get rid of its Avidya than Brahma can. If Vedantism wishes to remain monistic it must give up its attempt to explain the Many, for its explanation of the Many is inconsistent with its declaration of the One. If it wishes to explain the Many it must give up its description of the One. The fact is, that the Many is absolutely inexplicable by means of any definition of the One which implies absolute singleness or simplicity. Unless the One is a complexity there would be no Many to explain. A system in which there is both a One and a Many totally unrelated to each other is dualistic and not monistic. It gives an explanation of the Many and a declaration of the One, both unrelated.

While Vedantism must be regarded as inimical to the religious spirit, it was the outcome of a distinctly religious aspiration directed towards a real and true goal. It represents that aspiration after knowledge of and union with God, which is the core of all religious feeling. To attain that goal it considered no sacrifice too great to make, and we cannot but be profoundly impressed with the persistence with which it followed the path by means of which it felt this goal could be reached. We may feel that it mistook the path and reached a goal which destroys rather than satisfies the aspiration of the religious nature, but we feel compelled to pay a tribute of respect to a great attempt, even though we feel that it ends in failure.

That this conclusion is not due to mere Western prejudice is proved by the appearance of the Theistic philosophy of the *Dvaita* and *Vishishtadvaita* schools. These religious thought-movements are a protest against the tyranny of the Reason, which the Hindu religious nature has made in the interests of spiritual religion. The true goal of these movements is a pure Theism, and the reason why they have never come to their own in India is largely because they have been dominated by the intellectual rather than the ethical note and because they have never cut themselves free from the Pantheistic ideas which underlie the Vedas. Every Hindu religious thinker has felt bound to try and prove that his system is the only true interpretation of the Vedas. However opposed the various systems may be to one another, they all claim to be absolutely consistent with the religious ideas contained in the Vedas. Modern scholarship fails to discover any approach to a system of religious or philosophic thought in the Vedas at all. As in the case of the Bible, so in the case of the Vedas; their chief value lies in the fact that they are the expression of religious experience rather than the findings of philosophic or theological research. They express the free and spontaneous feelings of those who have no system by which they are bound, but who give utterance to the emotions and thoughts which the religious soul, wherever found, feels in the presence of the mystery of the

Universe. It is this religious experience expressed in the Vedic hymns which is of real value and not any supposed systematic theology. That religious experience, however, is not, as has been supposed, the experience of adult manhood, or of something even greater, but of humanity in its infancy. It is the beginning, not the end of religious inquiry. Its light is that of the early dawn, not of the noon-day. Instead, however, of treating it as such, the Hindu thinker regarded it as the highest wisdom, beyond which it was impossible to advance. The result was that a free philosophical inquiry was impossible and a very limited religious experience was made the basis of all Hindu theology. Hindu thought, therefore, started on its course handicapped by the conception that all truth was contained within the Vedas and bound by the idea that its special mission was to reconcile every one of its speculations with some special Vedic text. It closed the door against any advance in religious experience and, since the religious experience contained in the Vedas was that of the childhood of the race, its theology has never made any advance. Later Hinduism has added to the number of divinities, but it has added nothing to the knowledge of God.

The philosophic thought-movement represented in the *Upanishads* is neither true philosophy nor pure theology, but a mixture of the two. Philosophy needs a freedom which the conception of

the Vedas as *sruti* (revelation) denied it. Theology needs growing religious experience, which was suppressed by the conception of finality as applied to the Vedas. Hindu philosophy is the reasoning of the full-grown man, dealing, however, with the religious experience of the child. Hindu theology has been hampered all along its course by the imperfect and partial conception of the Divine nature found in the Vedas. The Buddhist movement was a revolt of the religious nature against a tyranny which the conception of the Vedas as *sruti* had exercised over the mind. It exerted a great influence on Hindu religious feeling, but it failed in its conflict with Brahmanism because it was deficient in theological thinking. It was conscious of the defects in the conception of God contained in the Vedas, but while rejecting such a conception it had nothing to put in its place, and, therefore, became agnostic. Against this *Agnyana* of the Buddhist, Brahmanism opposed its *Gnyana*, and the victory naturally fell to the side which had something positive to state. If Buddhism had passed on through its agnosticism to a pure Theism and had been able to present the ethical aspect of the Divine, the issue of the conflict might have been very different. In its Buddha it gave such an ethical revelation of humanity that his apotheosis was inevitable, but it gave no answer to the human soul in its cry for a revelation of Divinity.

It is this universal quest of the soul which Hindu philosophy fails to satisfy. "Show us the Father and it sufficeth us," is the expression of humanity's deepest need and most earnest longing. In the God we are for ever seeking we must see, not some one who after all is no other than our self; we must see Him in Whom we live and move and have our being. Enveloped in ignorance ourselves we can never be satisfied with a God Who equally with us is eternally associated with Avidya. Craving for richer and fuller life ourselves, we seek for One Whose life is an infinite fulness, not for One Who is mere characterless Being. Vedantism has perceived the need, but it has failed to satisfy it. It has caught a vision of the true goal of all religious aspiration, but it has followed a path which ends in the extinction of the very aspiration which sent it on its quest. The sense of oneness with God is no illusion; it is the goal of all religion worthy of the name. Man is not God, and can never be identified with Him, except by ignoring every distinction which makes Man man, and God god. While this is true, it is equally true that Man is divine, in the sense that the life which he possesses is one with the life of God. Beneath that self which delights in isolation and seeks an independent self-expression there is a truer and deeper self which craves for union with God and finds rest alone in an expression which is in harmony with the Divine

mind. It is this true and deeper self which makes us divine sons and daughters of God, for it is the expression under the limitations of humanity of the life of God Himself. That very desire for self-expression, which so often leads us astray into the paths of sin and folly, is itself the evidence to us that we share in the life of Him Who has expressed Himself in the creation of humanity, and will yet bring that self-expression to full fruition in the perfection of humanity.

This self-expression on the part of God, which is at once the highest and the truest conception of life we can possess, gives us the reason and the meaning of creation. The conception of God which we need to satisfy our religious aspiration is not that of a Brahma existing in an eternal state of dreamless sleep, unmoved and unaffected by all the vast cosmic process, but of the Living God, expressing Himself in the Universe and bringing to full fruition His vast and glorious purposes. The conception of the Universe which will alone satisfy the modern mind is not that of a purely illusory appearance, the result of Maya, but of a great cosmic process, which is the unfolding of the mind and thought of God, leading up to "one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves." The conception of the relation between the individual soul and God which will satisfy the religious instinct is not that of an isolation due to ignorance, which in some unexplained

and inexplicable way has separated us from Brahma and which will be removed when we have once realised our identity with Brahma. It is, on the contrary, the relation of loving dependence of child on parent, growing up into that fellowship and communion of soul with soul, which shall issue in a oneness of life whose bliss surpasses all our present powers of thought.

There is one characteristic of the modern mind which is destined to have a great influence on all religious thought, and especially on the conception of God which is contained in our various religious systems. It is the practical question as to the value of religion for the great and supreme purpose of life. The modern mind is convinced that, if there is one thing above all others which is guaranteed by our examination into the nature of the vast cosmic process of which we form a part, it is that the tendency manifested throughout is towards fuller life. This is the water-mark observable on every page of the great book of revelation, Nature, which we all have to study. Evolution has no meaning apart from this tendency. All history shows that religion, in spite of all its defects, has been the greatest influence in the upward progress of the race. Its influence, however, has been proportioned to the real value of its conception of God. To the modern mind, therefore, the supreme religious question is not concerned with any merely logical definition of

God but, with the value of the idea of God for the enrichment of life. In the modern world the emphasis has passed away from views, opinions, theories and speculations, and is concentrated, with an intensity never before experienced, on the power to live the fullest and richest life. The modern mind demands from philosopher, scientist, sociologist and theologian alike, that they shall bring their wares to the public assay office to be stamped with the hall-mark of value. The public assay office is open to all alike and in no age was there such a heterogeneous collection of wares. An invitation has gone into all lands, and even the rubbish heaps of the past are searched with the most minute care, on the chance of finding anything which can be stamped with the hall-mark of value.

Religion and religious conceptions cannot stand apart from this modern judgment. The conception of God which will alone satisfy our modern needs must bear this hall-mark of value, interpreted in terms of the power to live a richer life. In the conception of God immanent in the Universe, expressing Himself in the great cosmic process, and still working in humanity for a fuller expression, we have a conception of supreme value for the purposes of life. This God is not the Brahma of Hindu philosophy, but the Reality dimly perceived and earnestly longed for by the Vedic Aryan as he gazed into the vast expanse of heaven and murmured the words Dyaus-Piter,

Heaven-Father. In that early Vedic compound there is a personal and an impersonal idea, both of which are capable of expansion. It is significant that both branches of the Aryan stock, those who went West as well as those who went East, developed respectively each of the two terms. The Western branch tended in the direction of emphasising the conception of Dyaus or Zeus as the Father of gods and men, and called this personal God, Jupiter. The Eastern branch tended far more in the direction of emphasising the impersonal conception of Dyaus as infinity. The one branch more or less lost the conception of the infinite, while the other branch more or less lost the sense of the personal in their respective conceptions of God. While these two conceptions were being developed by the two great branches of the Aryan race, there sprang up in the Semitic race the conception of a present, living, personal God, Whose will constituted the norm or rule in conformity with which man had to live his life. It was this conception of a God Whom the Hebrews called Yahveh, intimately connected with their own tribe or race, and Whose will became the supreme law for their life, which developed that ethical Monotheism characteristic of the Jews, and which finally, through the consciousness of Jesus, issued in the Heavenly Father of Christianity. The Western branch of the Aryan race in the course of their history

were brought into contact with this Christian Theism, found in it the perfect fulfilment of that conception of Dyaus-Piter, which as a dim conception they had brought with them from their old Aryan home. They contributed largely to the theology which sprang out of their Christian experience and their contributions form a rich legacy to our Western Christianity. The Eastern branch of the Aryan race, after having lost for ages the conception of God as Father, and developed the conception of God as The Infinite and The Absolute, has, through contact with the Western branch, recovered this conception of Divine Fatherhood, as can be seen by an examination of all the present-day religious movements of modern India. This conception of Divine Fatherhood, however, is irreconcilable with the dominant religious philosophy of India—Vedantism. The problem which confronts the modern religious Hindu is, to formulate such a conception of God as shall satisfy his philosophic thought on the one hand, and his religious aspirations on the other, the intellectual conception of the One Sole Reality with the ethical conception of the One Supreme Will. India has its contribution to make to Christian theology, but in order to do this it will have to recognise the supremacy of the personal and the ethical.

The religious consciousness of Jesus offers to the Eastern Aryan, as it offered to his Western

brother, a conception of the Heavenly Father which is unique in the religious experience of the race. That which distinguishes religion as understood by Jesus from religion as found in other Masters is the consciousness of relation to God, a relation of Son to Father. This consciousness is not arrived at by any process of reason; it was a soul-experience. Jesus never distinguished between a self which was not Divine and a self which was Divine. The self of Jesus was a single self in perfect harmony with the self of God. This consciousness was not something to which He had attained; it was the only consciousness He possessed. The oneness to which He bears witness is not an identification in which self-consciousness is lost; it is the oneness of the Son, Who remains Son, with the Father, Who remains Father; I and the Father are one. This unique religious consciousness, without which the personality of Jesus is inexplicable, is no mere intellectual expression; it is incarnated in life. Indian religious thought cannot afford to ignore this supreme fact of the religious life, for it marks the summit of the religious experience of the race. In the consciousness of Jesus humanity finds that true knowledge, both of the self and of God, for which it has sought through the ages; and through the Son realises that religious aspiration of the soul after union with God for which it has never ceased to crave.

CHAPTER IV

MAN AND THE UNIVERSE

THE basis of Eastern thought is the reality of God ; the basis of Western thought is the reality of the Universe. In the East you will rarely come upon a man who doubts the existence of God, and in the West you will rarely come across one who doubts the existence of the Universe. This antithesis is deserving of more than a passing notice. It indicates two poles of thought towards which the human mind is attracted. Both Eastern and Western are equi-distant from either pole, but the Eastern seems to have felt the attraction of the Southern pole—God, while the Western seems to have felt the attraction of the Northern pole —the Universe. The result is that the Eastern mind seems to posit God and infer the Universe, while the Western seems to posit the Universe and infer God. The modern mind regards both conceptions as equally valid. The needle which we describe as pointing invariably to the North, does so because we have ourselves pointed that

end. It would just as surely point to the Southern pole if we pointed the other end. This, in fact, is just what Eastern and Western have respectively done. The Eastern has pointed the end which faces God, while the Western has pointed the end which faces the Universe. Let the needle only be straight and free to move, and it will point North and South with equal precision. Every magnetised needle is a miniature earth-axis, having its own North and South pole, and unless it be deflected by other causes it lies upon and coincides with the axis of the earth. The human mind is a magnetised needle, its two poles pointing out the relation in which we stand to God on the one hand and to the Universe on the other. Just as you cannot have a needle which points in one direction only, so you cannot have a truly normal mind which points in one direction only. Let the mind, like the needle, be perfectly free to move, and it will point towards God on the one hand, and the Universe on the other, as infallibly as the needle points North and South.

There can be little doubt that the Universe is man's magnetic North. It is that pole and not the Southern pole, God, which primarily affects him. The reflective mind, when once it has been brought to face God, may feel a superior attraction, but the primary attraction is the Universe. The first question which we have to decide in our attempts to fill in our conceptions of these two

unknowns, God and the Universe, is, Where we are to start. We must have something of which we are assured, some basal fact upon which we can proceed to build. Now, the fact with which we all have to start is the assurance given to us in self-consciousness. We cannot begin with any theories as to the nature either of the Universe or of God ; we must start with that which is given to us. It is important to bear in mind that we start not with unity, but with duality, the self and the other-than-self. This duality may be resolved into a unity or it may not ; but if it be, it must be a unity which explains the duality, and not one which merely denies it and leaves the existence of this apparent duality utterly unexplained. This is the true test by which all our theories are to be judged. The question is, not whether we can arrive at a unity but, the nature of the unity at which we arrive. The important fact is, not that of arrival but, whether we can return to the place from which we started. Before we are willing to plunge into the depths in search of the pearl, we must be assured that we can return to the surface ; otherwise the pearl may be gained at the sacrifice of the life. The true starting-point is self-consciousness, and we have to ask ourselves whether this initial knowledge is single or dual in its character ? Is self-consciousness merely the consciousness of the self, or is it the consciousness of the self and an other-than-self ? The term other-than-self is

used because the usual term, the not-self, seems to imply an unreality for which there is no justification. A careful examination of what we mean by self-consciousness will show us that it is not primarily a knowledge of the self but, a discrimination between a self and an other-than-self, and that this discrimination is the basis of all knowledge. The conception of self, that is, involves a conception of an other-than-self by which alone it can be defined. If the self and the other-than-self were identical, we should not be able to discriminate between them, and should, therefore, be unconscious of both. The fact that we are self-conscious proves that the self and the other-than-self are not one, but two. The bearing of this on the question of reality is of the utmost importance. It means that the reality of an other-than-self is guaranteed just as much as reality of the self. The tenure by which we hold the one belief is exactly the same as the tenure by which we hold the other. We cannot be sceptical of the other-than-self without thereby invalidating the reality of the self. To admit unreality as regards either is to impugn all knowledge, for all our knowledge comes from the perception of the relations between the self and the other-than-self. The relation between a "one" which is real and an "other" which is unreal is an unreal relation, and the collection of any number of unreal relations can never issue in real knowledge. We might just as well try to carry on

mathematics with the single conception of an indivisible one. Allow us only the figure 1 and the cipher 0, and you make mathematics an impossibility. Give us the conception of a one and another one, and the whole field of mathematics is open to us. In exactly the same way the moment the attempt is made to limit our knowledge to that of the self, the possibility of any knowledge is destroyed. If the only thing we know at the beginning is the self, addition to our knowledge is impossible, and consequently all we shall know at the end is precisely that with which we started. Not only so, however, but the so-called knowledge of the self will be a misnomer, if it implies that there is no other-than-self, from which the self can be distinguished. A knowledge of only one thing would be precisely equal to a knowledge of no thing. All knowledge is simply the perception of relations, and if there is only one thing, the self, there can be no relations and consequently knowledge is impossible. In self-consciousness there is the initial knowledge of a self and an other-than-self, and in the perception of the relations between these two lies the possibility of all knowledge.

It is customary to say that the distinguishing feature of Hindu philosophy is the assertion of the reality of the self and the unreality of everything else. Such a statement could doubtless be justified by innumerable quotations from Hindu philosophy,

but the difference is better expressed by saying that it is a distinction between the noumenal and the phenomenal. When the contrast is drawn between reality and unreality in Hindu philosophy, it is between a noumenal self, regarded as alone real, and the phenomenal other-than-self, regarded as in that sense unreal. The Hindu recognises a noumenal and a phenomenal both in the self and in the other-than-self. He does not dispute the data of self-consciousness, with its duality of self and other-than-self, but he asserts that this dualism is merely applicable to the phenomenal, while the noumenal underlying both is the One and Sole Reality. He is quite ready to admit the dualism given in self-consciousness, but he is not content to remain in this dualism, and therefore predicates a noumenal One underlying both the phenomenal self and the phenomenal other-than-self. An absolute One he is determined to have, and if it cannot be found within the limits of self-consciousness, then he is prepared to transcend the limits.

Now, such a leap into the unknown is not at all a difficult feat. The difficulty is to get back. The noumenal self may be one with the noumenal other-than-self, but the mere assertion of identity gives us no explanation of the duality given us in self-consciousness. Moreover, this hypothetical One and Sole Reality is valueless to us, even if we could grasp it, because it adds nothing to our

knowledge, but on the contrary negatives all the knowledge we can gain by the only road which is open to us. It is unrelated either to the phenomenal self or the phenomenal other-than-self, and, therefore, whether it is something or nothing, a reality or an unreality, we are precluded from either saying or knowing. The moment we make the leap from the known to the unknowable, that moment blank darkness settles on everything, and absolute silence reigns. Whatever this One and Sole Reality may be, it is certainly not the unity of which we are in search. That search is based upon the belief that we shall arrive at an explanation, and if the goal fails to give us the explanation, the search is a failure. It is vain to seek to disguise this failure by calling it a transcendental knowledge. Knowledge is transcended when the knowledge gained contains that with which we start and something more as well. It is not transcended when it is merely contradicted. There may be a One in which the dualism between the self and the other-than-self of which we are conscious is united, but if so, that One cannot be a self which is less than the self of which we are conscious, but a higher Self, Whose knowledge is not the contradiction of our own, but one which, transcending our own, contains within itself both subject and object. This One can only be that Supreme One in Whom the self and the other-than-self of consciousness live and move and have their being. In other

words it can only be God, the source alike both of the self and the other-than-self.

It is imperative, however, for us to recognise that the only conception of reality we can have is that which is given to us in self-consciousness. If the foundation is insecure, no superstructure, however well-built, is trustworthy. It is by no means asserted that the dualism with which we start is absolute and incapable of being resolved into a unity. The point which is insisted upon is that the unity must be capable of explaining the duality. The moment, however, that we seek to explain either of the two factors in terms of the other, we have practically chosen one and rejected the other. This is what every strictly Monistic system does and cannot help doing. The Monos at which it aims is a simplicity in which there is nothing but singleness. This Monos may be conceived as either Mind or Matter, but so long as it is absolute simplicity it will never explain the duality or the manifold. In Vedantism the dualism is recognised in the phenomenal self and the phenomenal Brahma or Ishwara, standing opposite to one another, the phenomenal self being the individualised self, and Ishwara being the world-framer. The Atma, as the One Sole Reality, is arrived at by a pure leap from the phenomenal self on the one hand, and the phenomenal Brahma on the other. It is, of course, quite conceivable that underlying the self of our

consciousness there is another self, and also that underlying the phenomenal other-than-self there is a noumenal other-than-self. The difficulty, however, is not solved by any such supposition, for we want to know how these two are one. Instead of getting any help from such a supposition, the matter is rendered for ever insoluble, because both these noumenals are absolutely unknowable. The knowable self and the knowable other-than-self are two and not one, while the predicated One is declared to be unknowable. Moreover, the noumenal self has no relation to the phenomenal self, and the noumenal Brahma is equally unrelated to the phenomenal Brahma. Having made the leap from the duality given in self-consciousness, to an imagined One beyond consciousness, any return to the dualism of our experience is impossible. The Vedantist being an idealist, the One at which he arrives is the self, the Atma, and not the other-than-self. In the Sankhya system, on the other hand, we have the representative of Materialism, and the One at which it arrives is the other-than-self, Prakriti, as distinguished from the self, Purusha. The two schools, that is, find the One in exactly opposite directions, and each regards as unreal that which the other regards as real. Both schools in their common search for unity arrive at a Monos, and both seek for deliverance or *moksham* in recognising the unreality of suffering. The Vedantist

makes the Atma the sole reality, and regards its suffering as due to its association with Prakriti, which he regards as a pure illusion. The Sankhya philosopher makes Prakriti the sole reality, and regards its suffering as due to its association with Purusha, which he regards as a pure illusion. The modern mind feels that there is illusion somewhere, but thinks that the true place to seek for it is in the systems which try to interpret the self in terms of the other-than-self, or the other-than-self in terms of the self. The mistake in both systems is in regarding the common goal, unity, as an absolute Monos. If the goal of all philosophic thought is an absolute simplicity, then the duality given us in self-consciousness is an illusion, and the source of that illusion is for ever inexplicable. The modern mind, recognising the contradictoriness of both the schools, and their mutual failure to explain the duality of our experience, asks whether this conception of the One as a simple Monos is the only possible conception, or rather, is it any true explanation of what we mean by unity? Does not the fact of the Many imply that the One is not and cannot be a simplicity, but must be a complexity? Is there not a real distinction between a unity and a unit? A unit excludes all difference and all possibility of difference. A unity implies mutual and harmonious relations, and therefore suggests possible differences. The

variety in the Many which has been *evolved* implies a something answering to that variety already *involved* in the One.

The point here urged is not whether the One from which we explain the Many is or is not to be identified with the Many, either in a quantitative or in a qualitative sense. That is entirely a different question. The one thing of which we can be certain is that the One cannot be less than or inferior to the Many. This means that it cannot be a Monos of absolute simplicity whether of Mind or of Matter. To put the same thing in terms of Indian philosophy, it cannot be identified either with Purusha, or with Prakriti. If we are to interpret the Universe as we know it, and not merely as we imagine it, it is inexplicable from the standpoint of a Monos which is either simply mental or simply other-than-mental. Any attempt so to explain it invalidates all knowledge of any kind, because it reduces knowledge to the perception of relations between a One which is real and a One which is unreal. If there are not really two, but only one, there are no real relations; and if there are no real relations, there is and can be no real knowledge. As long as philosophy, whether in the East or in the West, is dominated in its search for the One by the conception of a Monos of absolute simplicity, it is engaged in a task which can only be described as suicidal. The goal which it reaches as a result

of its process, is a goal which stultifies the process by which it has been reached. The conclusion of the syllogism renders each of the premisses from which it has been drawn invalid. All our knowledge is based upon the perception of the relations between subject and object. Idealism concludes its arguments with the knowledge that there is only the subject; Realism with the knowledge that there is only the object. Hindu philosophy, of whatever school, begins with the declaration that the Vedas are *sruti*, infallible revelation; it ends with the conviction that God is pure undifferentiated Being, from Whom no revelation is possible. It begins with the belief that its great task is deliverance from the suffering of life, which is the great reality starting it on its quest; it ends with the belief that suffering is a pure illusion. It starts with the belief that God can be known; it ends with the conviction that God is unknowable. It begins with the conviction that there is only One; it ends with the conviction that there are two, a Brahma who is for ever associated with another, namely Avidya. These inconsistencies are all involved in the conception that the unity the mind seeks must be a single Monos, and they are inevitable so long as that conception is retained. There is, however, no need to retain it. The One is not the starting-point; it is the goal of thought, and the true conception of the nature of the One must be determined by

the nature of the unity to which our investigation of the Many leads us. The task of philosophy is not to produce the Many out of the One; that has already been done, and confronts us in the Many of which we ourselves are a part. Our task is to get back in thought to a One from Whom or from which the Many has come. The truth or falsity of our conception of the One at which we arrive is determined by its explanation of the Many with which we start. If our conception of the One fails to represent the Many with which we are confronted, it is obvious that such a One could never have presented the Many. Presentation is prior to representation. If the presentation has been made in fact, the representation can be made in thought. The Many is the presentation in fact, and if we are justified in referring it back to a One, then that One can be so represented that the Many becomes explicable. The failure to explain the Many is the condemnation of the conception of the One.

The reality of the self and the other-than-self must be regarded as the foundation of any knowledge to which man can attain. This dualism of self-consciousness, however, is not an absolute dualism for, if it were, the two would be unrelated, and knowledge would be just as impossible as if there were only one. Two things, which though separate are related, point back to a One in which the separateness is resolved while the relationship

is retained. It is this which accounts for the universal search for unity. That search to be successful, however, is dependent upon our knowledge of both the factors, and this knowledge can only be obtained by the perception of the mutual relations between the two. In proportion, therefore, as we increase our knowledge both of the self and of the other-than-self, do we increase our knowledge of the One Who is the common cause and origin of both. The history of human thought is an illustration of this truth, and shows us the absolute necessity of a constant revision of our conception of the One. Moreover, as you cannot know either the self alone or the other-than-self alone, all real advance in knowledge necessitates a revision of these two fundamental conceptions. We may divide knowledge into different branches and concentrate attention on one or other of them, but the knowledge gained in one direction modifies, and is itself modified by, the knowledge gained in other branches. Philosophy and Theology, which are both alike concerned with the One, are consequently in more unstable equilibrium as systems than any other branch of knowledge. It is only to be expected that it should be so, because the knowledge of the nature of the Unity which we seek is only possible through the growing clearness in our perception of the nature of the Many in which it is manifested. We can have no knowledge of

the One except through the knowledge of the self and the other-than-self to which alone we have access. This statement is in no way affected by what we call revelation. All revelation must come to us through either the self or the other-than-self. There is no difference in kind, though there may be much in degree, between the manifestation of God in nature and the manifestation of God in the inspired thoughts of men. The inspired writings are for the individual a part of the other-than-self, and even for the subject of the inspiration, revelation is nothing more than the manifestation, in the region of mind, of the One Who also manifests in the region of matter. The two are not different in kind, but only in degree. We may get more knowledge of God from an inspired book than from the latest discovery of science, but it is also true that we may get a fuller revelation of God through the discoveries of science than from some books even about whose inspiration there may be no doubt. Inspiration is limited by the development of the mind which is inspired, and nothing is more certain than the progressive character of all inspired writings. Revelation is science in the region of mind and science is revelation in the region of matter. Both the self and the other-than-self are alike manifestations of the One and, apart from the knowledge of these two, absolutely no knowledge of the One is possible. The two

are both realities and any system which invalidates the knowledge of either renders any knowledge impossible. This may seem a truism, but it is a truism which philosophy, and Indian philosophy in particular, has constantly ignored.

Philosophy has often tried to draw a distinction between the knowledge of the self and the knowledge of the other-than-self, as though the one were different in kind from the other. Hindu philosophy emphasises this so-called distinction by making the self and the other-than-self of our experience both alike phenomenal. It then predicates a noumenal self, the knowledge of which is essentially different from the knowledge of the phenomenal self, and denies that the other-than-self is noumenal at all. What, however, do we exactly mean by the distinction between noumenal and phenomenal? We mean that the noumenal is the thing as it is in itself, while the phenomenal is the thing as it manifests itself. As long, however, as the noumenal is the thing-in-itself, it is absolutely unknowable. It is only when it becomes the phenomenal, that is, manifests itself, that it is possible to know anything about it. The thing-in-itself means that the thing is in itself and, therefore, does not manifest itself. So long as there is no manifestation, we neither know whether it is, or whether it is not. The moment it manifests itself we know that it is, and the nature of the manifestation tells us something of what it is.

This, however, is precisely the same with the self as it is with the other-than-self. So long as the self is in itself, we do not know whether the self is or is not, that is, we are unconscious. The moment it manifests itself in its relation to the other-than-self, we become conscious; and the nature of the relations which the self sustains to the other-than-self tells us something of what the self is. By the phenomenal, therefore, we do *not* mean the illusory, but the manifestation of something which is a reality, and which we call the self or the other-than-self. If this view of the matter be correct, it follows that the noumenal and the phenomenal are not two things, but one thing in two states, which might be called passive and active. The noumenal is the thing in a passive state, while the phenomenal is the thing in an active state. It is, of course, impossible to get any illustration of a thing in itself, as distinct from the thing as it is known. We may get some light on the matter by the analogy of the seed and the tree. The tree may be said to be in itself, *qua* tree, so long as the seed is undeveloped. You could not know the tree so long as it is in itself, that is, in the seed. The phenomenal tree, however, which has grown from the seed, is the manifestation of the noumenal tree which was in the seed. We know it as a tree, because it is no longer in itself. The phenomenal tree which you know, however, is the manifestation of the

noumenal tree in the seed. To deny that the knowledge of the phenomenal is real knowledge because it is not a knowledge of the noumenal is like denying that you can know the tree because you cannot see it in the seed. We may say that the tree is in the seed but, so long as it is in the seed, the being of the tree is pure undifferentiated being, of which we can know nothing and affirm nothing.

We are now in a position to formulate some idea of what we mean by the term Universe. As a mere term it is equivalent to the totality of the self and the other-than-self. To the individual consciousness it is a dualism, and every attempt to resolve this dualism into a unit of either mind or matter fails to explain the dualism, and makes either mind or matter unreal. The two, however, are not isolated, but in touch with one another. Mind can make its impression upon matter and matter on mind. The fact of such contact between mind and matter is indisputable, though the explanation of how the contact takes place is at present beyond us. Our inability to explain either in terms of the other, or to show how a purely physical impression can be, as it were, transformed into a mental perception, makes it impossible for us to infer that either of the two, as we know them, is the origin of the other. Mind and Matter are, as it were, twins, each of whom may be easily mistaken for the other when

looked at separately, and the actions of each may be attributed to the other if you are determined to deal with one only. They are, however, Siamese twins, joined together in our experience, and the duality can only be denied by the assertion that the one on the right or the one on the left is a pure illusion. Our inability to resolve the one into the other, or to explain the one in terms of the other, leaves us no alternative but to regard them as eternally distinct, or else to seek for a One, the source of both alike. The difficulty in regard to Dualism is that it fails to explain the correspondence and similarity. Mind and Matter are not simply two ; they are twins. We are compelled to ask for an explanation of what we may call the twinship. Such an explanation can only be obtained by positing a One, as the source alike of both mind and matter. This One, however, must be both more than and greater than the duality derived from it, since it must contain that duality and have produced it. It must transcend both the self and the other-than-self of our experience, and cannot, therefore, be identified with the totality of the self and the other-than-self, that is, the Universe. The Theist gives to this One the name of God and reserves that name for the Unity of which man has ever been in search.

It is usual to say that the Theist regards the Universe as an effect whose cause is God. This statement does not distinguish him from the Deist.

The difference may be expressed by saying that the Theist regards the Universe as an effecting whose causer is God. It is not an effect, that is, which has been once for all accomplished, and with which the cause has no longer any connection. Such an idea gives no adequate conception either of the Universe or of God. It deprives both of their essential characteristics. The Universe of the Deist is a mere machine, and the God of the Deist is a God Who once lived, but is practically now dead. The Theist conceives of both as living. God is to him the Living God and the Universe is the manifestation of His life. The Universe, however, as we have seen, is not to the human mind a unit, but a unity comprising the self and the other-than-self, one of which is conscious and the other unconscious. This difference between the two culminates in humanity, which is alone conscious of the self and the other-than-self, and of the relation between them. In humanity, therefore, God's effecting reaches a point when it passes into an effect, which owes its being to God, but becomes henceforth an effecter. This rise from dependence into self-dependence is no new departure in humanity ; it is characteristic of the whole cosmic process. The whole solar system might be described as a series of centres in which energy which has been derived concentrates itself, and passes from entire dependence upon another centre into a certain measure of dependence on its own

centre. Our own planet is another centre in which energy has gathered itself together and attained a certain dependence on itself. The living organism is a similar fresh centre in which dependence has passed into self-dependence. The mind again is a fresh centre in which the energy of direction has concentrated, and the dependence for direction on another has passed into dependence for direction on the self. This conception of centres throws much light on the great problem of evil, both physical and moral, inasmuch as it enables us to see that the whole cosmic process involves both dependence on and independence of God. Causality and responsibility are not the same thing and ought never to be confused. Responsibility is an inquiry on the part of a mind, which approves or disapproves of the effect, as to the centre to which the praise or blame must be attributed. The principle of a sufficient reason carries causality back to the primal cause; it carries responsibility back to the first real centre in which dependence has passed into self-dependence. In seeking for the cause of an explosion in a coal mine, for instance, the principle of a sufficient reason would carry us back to the sun at least, the centre of all the energy we know. In seeking for the responsibility, the inquiry stops short at the miner who opened his safety-lamp, because in him we have reached a centre in which dependence has become self-dependence.

To the Theist, then, the Universe is the self-

revelation of God. It is God living His life, and making that self-revelation also self-conscious. It is not something which has been finished, but a revelation which is proceeding. In humanity the Universe has become conscious, and, therefore, we have a fuller revelation of God in all that we can understand from that consciousness. We have no reason for supposing, however, that the self-revelation of God is complete, but, on the contrary, in the history of humanity we see more and more clearly a fuller and higher revelation. In the unconscious Universe man does but touch, as it were, the robe of God, and God does but touch, as it were, the hand of man. In humanity He speaks to us and we answer Him; our finite minds commune with His infinite mind, and our hearts are in fellowship with the heart of God. In the light of this self-revelation of the Infinite God, we feel that any identification of the self with God, or of God with the Universe of our experience is for ever impossible. He transcends, and for ever must transcend, all His manifestations. Yet we are conscious that His life is within us, the ground of our life and, that in Him we live and move and have our being. No less vivid is the consciousness of His presence in the world around us, for He too is its life and soul. We enter into the secret chamber of the mind, and in the discrimination of the true from the false we suddenly become aware that we are in the outer

courts of a temple, and the response our souls give to the supremacy of truth makes us conscious of a Divine presence. We penetrate still further into the recesses of our souls, and we become aware of a still small voice approving as right or disapproving as wrong the action we are meditating; and we know that this voice within the holy of holies is not the voice of the self, but is none other than the voice of God. It is in these feelings of the soul that self-consciousness rises into the consciousness of a deeper self, which, though distinct from, is yet akin to God Himself. The other-than-self of which this deeper self is conscious is not the Universe, but the One—the source alike both of the Universe and of ourselves. He is the Supreme, Infinite and Eternal Self, with Whom we may claim kinship, since we too are selves, but Who transcends and for ever must transcend all His manifestations, and Who must contain within Himself in perfect harmony all those relations which appear in His manifestations as differences but not as contradictions.

The question arises as to the relation of God to the Universe. It is a question which divides all the schools both of philosophy and of religion. In approaching the problem it is well for us to remember that the sole question is the formulation of such a conception of the relation as satisfies the reason. We cannot, that is, get behind the relation and ask whether there is any relation at all? The

relation is the fact which we have to explain, whose existence is given to us, and we cannot go beyond it. If there were no relation there would be nothing to explain, and neither philosophy nor religion would be needed. To conceive of the One as The Absolute and The Unconditioned, is to conceive of a One who has and can have no relation to the Many at all. We arrive at such a conception of the One in no other way than by the method of subtraction. We take away, that is, every known relation and every conceivable condition. We can do this by thinking, but the result is that we have a concept left which has no positive content. The conception of absoluteness is left, just as the conception of space is left when you have thought away all its contents. The two, however, are mere empty thought-forms and not existences. The thought-form, absoluteness, is ready to the mind, but there is no reality to fill it. To call this empty thought-form the sole reality is to abolish reality altogether. We have arrived at a conception of the One by means of the Many, only to find, however, that the Many is unreal. If the means, however, are unreal, can the goal be trustworthy?

Philosophy proper stops when it has reached the One from which the Many is to be explained; it does not deal with the nature of the One, but only with the fact of a One. The moment the mind proceeds to deal with the nature of the One

at which it has arrived, it passes on into the region of theology. Philosophy itself is neither Theistic nor atheistic, but it leads on either to Theism or atheism, or else it stops short at agnosticism. Agnosticism is the confession that the problem is insoluble. If all you are concerned with is the arrival at a One, then you can arrive at such a goal by taking either of the two roads suggested in self-consciousness, and the system which results from either will be equally logical. You have, however, settled the nature of the One at the outset, by your choice of the road. Both realism and idealism are committed at the outset, and the various forms in which they appear are merely due to more accurate methods of procedure. All Indian philosophy is but a variation of pure Vedantism or of the pure Sankhya system, and the two schools themselves are determined solely by the choice they make between the self and the other-than-self. These two are represented in the Sankhya system as Purusha and Prakriti. The Vedantist chooses Purusha, or, as he calls it, Atma as the reality, while the Sankhya philosopher chooses Prakriti as the real. Neither goal can be reached except by ignoring one or other of the two reals given us in self-consciousness. Accept both as of equal value, and a strict Monism is impossible.

Theology proper really begins with the inquiry into the nature of the One, or rather of the Unity at which philosophy has arrived. An absolute

idealism or an absolute realism can never lead on to theology at all. The question of the relation of the One to the Many, or of God to the Universe, is only relevant where God and the Universe are recognised as different. Neither the Vedantic nor the Sankhya system deal with the question, because in both the One is pure undifferentiated Being, having no relation to anything else. Pantheism does not recognise any such distinction, and, therefore, it too has no explanation to offer. The question, therefore, is one which concerns a Theistic system only. This means that the question does not arise in the mind until a Theistic position has been reached. A Theistic position is the result of the recognition of the duality of self-consciousness, and the failure of all attempts to resolve that duality into a Monos. The Pantheist avoids the difficulty in which the Theist is involved, because he will not admit the equal validity of both the factors in self-consciousness. He takes either the self or the other-than-self as the sole reality, and denies reality to the other. He avoids the task of trying to solve the problem by simply denying that there is any problem to solve. Whether the Theist succeeds or not, he at least attempts it, and in attempting it, holds fast to the data given in self-consciousness.

In Deism the Universe is related to God as an effect, the result of a creative act on the part of God in a remote past. It is regarded as a machine

or a self-contained organism with which God has no present connection, and therefore any action of God on the Universe is of the nature of an interference. Deism was a phase through which Theistic thought passed, but its inadequacy has long since been recognised, and the system has been generally discarded. The Theistic explanation consists in referring the relation between God and the Universe back to a relation within the nature of God Himself. It does this because it holds that the nature of the Unity to which the reason conducts us can only be known as it has been manifested. And inasmuch as it also holds that the manifestation is a real presentation to the human mind of that which is, it follows that the relation which the mind perceives as existing between God and the Universe must be the manifestation of a relation within the very nature of God Himself. This means that if there were no relation within the nature of God, there would have been no manifestation of a relation for the mind of man to perceive. The nature of God is for ever beyond human perception, because it is God-in-Himself. The manifestation of Himself which He has made in the Universe of mind and matter, however, is within our perception, and we are, therefore, justified in regarding the relation which we perceive as a manifestation of a relation within the nature of God which we cannot perceive. It may, of course, be said that this is to offer a

mystery in place of an explanation. This is quite true, but it reduces the mysteries to one, and when we examine the very nature of explanation we find that the whole process is never more than the reduction of the mysterious. The search for the One means and can only mean the stopping at a sufficient One. The principle of causality must stop at the First Cause, and in the First Cause the effect must co-exist with the cause, or the effect would never take place. This means that the First Cause cannot be a simplicity, but must be a complexity. The effect is the manifestation of a relation within the cause itself, which is thereby shown to be a complexity, not a simplicity. The One which the Theist had sought and finds in God is not a One which he has invented ; it is the One to which he has been led. The complexity is not something which he assumes ; it is something beyond which he cannot go. He stops at a mystery which is final, but it is a mystery which explains every other, and does not contradict the data given in self-consciousness. The Pantheist does not avoid mystery ; on the contrary he stops at a mystery which yields no explanation of other mysteries, and, unlike the mystery at which Theism stops, it contradicts the clear testimony of consciousness.

A true Theism fully recognises that the whole Universe is phenomenal, and that if we are to reach the noumenal, we must pass beyond that which is

revealed to the Revealer. Its dissatisfaction with a materialistic Monism is precisely because such a system regards the phenomenal as the sole reality, and refuses to recognise that the perception of the phenomenal as a Universe is a demonstration that Man is more than matter, in that he is capable of perceiving not only the phenomenal, but the noumenal order, relation and purpose, of which the phenomenal Universe is the manifestation. Its dissatisfaction with an absolute idealistic Monism is in just the same way due to the fact that such a system regards the phenomenal, not as the manifestation of reality, but as an illusion which conceals rather than reveals, distorts rather than represents the noumenal. It does not merely distinguish between the phenomenal and the noumenal; it makes the phenomenal incapable of revealing the noumenal, and therefore invalidates all knowledge. The materialistic Monist may be said to insist that a book is nothing more than an arrangement of various materials such as paper and ink, and is consequently capable of a complete explanation by means of the known properties of matter. The Theist says that a book is not only more than that; it is essentially different from that. It is a book because it is a manifestation of thought; the paper and ink are merely the means the writer uses to convey his thought to other minds. The Absolute Idealist says, on the other hand, that the paper and the ink are a pure illusion,

the book being nothing more than thought, and to attach any importance at all to the paper and ink is merely to delude oneself into supposing that one is in communication with the writer when one is only looking at the writing. The Theist replies that it is quite true that we have only the printing and the paper before us, and not the writer's mind, but the book is a manifestation to our mind of the thought which was in the writer's mind and, apart from some manifestation of a like kind, we should never know anything beyond the thought that is in our own mind. As a philosophy, therefore, Theism claims to be the true *via media* between an extreme realism and an extreme idealism. As a theology it claims equally to be the *via media* between a Deism which separates the Universe from God and a Pantheism which identifies the Universe with God. It regards Deism as giving us an inadequate view of the Universe and Pantheism as giving us an inadequate view of God.

A true Theism is quite prepared to admit a distinction in our thought between what may be called a noumenal and a phenomenal God—God as He is in Himself, and God as He is revealed in the Universe. In fact it insists on the necessity of such a distinction in the emphasis it has always laid on the conception of transcendence. The immanent God, that is, must never be identified, in the sense of being allowed to coalesce in our

thought, with the transcendent God. In Vedantic language we must never identify the phenomenal Brahma, Ishvara, with the noumenal Brahma, Atma. The Theist's complaint against Pantheism is that this is exactly what Pantheistic thought does, and that as a consequence it invariably degenerates into Polytheism. The strong objection to the worship of images is not that the image is a reminder of the Real God, but that it tends to draw the thought away from the noumenal to the phenomenal, and to a phenomenal which is *not* a manifestation of reality. To the Vedantist idolatry ought to be anathema, in that it replaces reality with what is essentially illusion. In Vedantism the distinction between the noumenal and the phenomenal Brahma is made absolute, with the result that any knowledge of God is rendered impossible. The identification of the self of the individual with the noumenal Brahma is a mere assertion of identity between two unknowns and unknowables. The self of the individual, the noumenal self, is unrelated to the individual's phenomenal self, just as the noumenal Brahma is unrelated to the phenomenal Brahma. The fatal objection to Vedantic thought is that it offers a conception both of a noumenal self and a noumenal Brahma which, instead of transcending the phenomenal self and the phenomenal Brahma, descends into a conception of the noumenal which is infinitely below the conception even of the

phenomenal. It is not an addition to our knowledge of God which we have obtained from the manifestation of God in the Universe; it is the subtraction of every conception of God we have obtained. It is not a correction of our imperfect knowledge; it is a contradiction of all knowledge. It makes the immanent God an illusion and the transcendent God an abstraction, the creation of our own thought.

If we try to express Theistic thought in Vedantic language, a somewhat hazardous experiment, we should have to say that God is the Atma, the Supreme Reality, from Whom all other realities are derived. The Universe is not a creation of a phenomenal Brahma, but is itself a Divine phenomenon, manifesting the Supreme Reality, and giving to us, therefore, the only knowledge which is possible of what that Reality is. The individual self in the same way is the manifestation of a noumenal self, derived from and akin to the Supreme Reality, God. Because it is self, however, it is thereby capable of manifesting its distinction from the Supreme Self, God. The beginning of self-consciousness is the recognition of our separateness from the not-self; the deeper consciousness to which we advance from that rudimentary stage is the recognition of our relation to other selves and to the Supreme Self, God. The highest knowledge, therefore, to which we can attain, is not the misnamed

knowledge of our identity with God, but the true knowledge of our relation to Him. This can be rightly called knowledge, because it is not the obliteration of all distinction between subject and object, but the recognition of the true relation between our finite selves and the Supreme Self.

CHAPTER V

MAN IN HIS RELATION TO GOD AND TO THE UNIVERSE

When the theory of evolution was first promulgated it was thought by many that religion had received its death-blow, in that all evidence of anything which could be conceived of as Divine action was believed to have been eliminated. This was largely due to the fact that the conception of Divine action which dominated current religious thought was Deistic rather than Theistic. Divine action, that is, was conceived of as action from outside the Universe, as an interference with the action of what was called in contradistinction, Nature. The facts upon which the theory of evolution was based all went in the direction of proving that the whole complex system which we call the Universe had been the gradual unfolding of differences potentially contained within that primal substance beyond which human thought could not pass. Any necessity, therefore, for interference from without was eliminated and the

whole process was shown to be an evolution, or the bringing forth into actual existence of that which potentially existed within. It was soon perceived, however, that the evolution theory was nothing more than the discovery of a principle of working, and left untouched every problem which was concerned with the reason and purpose of the process. To the question as to how the Universe has come to be what it is? the theory of evolution has given us a key, which seems fitted to every lock, and by means of it we are being constantly presented with explanations of mysteries which at one time seemed for ever beyond human ken. The principle of evolution has enabled us to fix the dates, arrange the genealogies, show the relations between events, and the action and interaction of organism and environment, which all together constitute the history of the Universe of which Man forms a part. In place of legend and myth and allegory it has written a scientific history the value of which it is impossible to overestimate. The result, however, is a history and not a philosophy, and the questions which are at the basis of religion and philosophy remain and must remain even when the complete history has been written.

All knowledge, however, is so related that advance in any one branch always means assistance in some other, and the answer to one question frequently throws light on another and different

question. The evolution theory has made plain and intelligible the process by means of which the Universe has come to be what it now is. To explain the process, however, is to throw some light at least on the reason and purpose of the process. The very fact that a process is explainable implies that at the back of it there is something which answers to mind, by virtue of which the process is an ordered march and not an unaccountable and aimless movement. The Materialist cannot appeal to evolution in support of his theory, except as he endows matter with all the properties of mind, for the process of evolution is itself the evidence of the existence of such properties. As science moves backward in its investigation of the manifold it follows a reverse order of involution, and seeks to find the evolved form in that previous stage in which it was involved. In the Universe which confronts us, mind is present and needs an explanation. It cannot be eliminated nor anything which it implies, however far the process may be carried back. The theory of evolution demands that the matter, force, or spirit, which is regarded as the ultimate, shall have involved in it all that has been evolved from it. This means, not only that all that has been evolved must have been contained within that ultimate matter or force or spirit but, that the history which the mind discovers by an examination of the process of evolution must have been

already contained within as prophecy. The life-history of the tree is the manifested life-prophecy of the seed. The wondrous story of the Universe as science reads it, had first to be written before it could be read and had first to be conceived before it could be written. In a very real sense it may be said that the more clearly science traces the history of the Universe back, the deeper the real mystery becomes. Instead of arriving at absolute simplicity, we are led back to the deepest of all mysteries to which we give the name God. No lesser term is adequate to bear the meaning of that goal to which the evolution theory carries us. It is of little consequence what name is given to this ultimate, for it is not by its name, but by its nature, as that is revealed in the process, that we can in any sense know it. The Matter of the Materialist is something which must infinitely transcend any matter of which we have any knowledge. The Universe, as an effect, leads us to a Primal Source which, as its cause, must necessarily transcend it.

Evolution has made the old Deistic conception of God impossible. It has shown us a Universe throbbing with Divine life, whose whole process demands for its explanation an indwelling God in Whose mind the whole of that which has been, and is, and shall be, is involved. It has emphasised, therefore, the conception of the immanence of God which distinguishes Theism from Deism. At the

same time it has brought into prominence the affinity which Theism has with Pantheism. The tendency of modern Theistic thought, therefore, is to interpret religious truth from the standpoint of the conception of an indwelling God. True Theistic thought, however, never identifies God with the Universe, while a strict Pantheism never fails so to do. In Theism the Universe is a manifestation of God and, therefore, a self-limitation of God. He is more than the Universe and different from the Universe, just as every manifestation is transcended by that which is manifested, and the noumenon is of necessity different from the phenomenon. These two conceptions of God as transcending the Universe and as different from the Universe are the characteristics of a pure Theism and distinguish it from pure Pantheism. Religious thought begins with the recognition of the Divine in some part or parts of the Universe, and in that stage of its development it is polytheistic. It advances to the conception that there are degrees in which the Divine is manifested and tends to regard some one or other as supreme, and in this stage it is henotheistic. A further stage is reached when the conception of the unity underlying the manifold is recognised and the Divine is identified, not with a part but, with the whole. This is characteristic of a pure Pantheism. In proportion as ethical, as distinct from purely intellectual considerations are allowed

their due weight, either a Deistic or a Theistic conception of God is reached. Theism is a *via media* between a strict Deism and a strict Pantheism. Modern Theism, in becoming less and less Deistic in its recognition of the immanence of God, is in much closer sympathy with Pantheistic religious thought and feeling than the older Theism.

It is in the conception of Man that the difference between Pantheism and Theism is most pronounced and most vital. It is here that the two characteristics of Theism, the conception of transcendence and difference, receive their justification, and enable Theism to render a more rational explanation of the facts than that which Pantheism can produce. The moral nature of Man offers an insoluble enigma to every strictly Pantheistic system. A system to be rational must not only be self-consistent, but it must be consistent with the Universe it professes to explain. Pantheism may be a perfectly self-consistent explanation of a conception of God and of a Universe, but it is not an explanation of the Universe as we know it. If Pantheism were true and the Universe could be identified with God, it would make no difference whether we started, as it were, with a conception of God and arrived at a conception of the Universe, or *vice versa.* The result would be the same in both cases and each would confirm the other. We are compelled, however, to start with the known, that is with God as He is manifested to

us in the Universe. The moment, however, that we compare the Universe of our experience with the universe as deduced from Pantheistic thought, we find that the two are essentially different. The difference is most pronounced when we concentrate our attention on that part of the Universe which we call Man. Here we find at the very centre of his being a difference between the self and the other-than-self, which cannot be resolved into anything else than a real distinction between a one and an other. We find also a will inseparably associated with the self, and another will associated with the other-than-self, which are so distinct from one another that they can be, and are opposed the one to the other. It is out of the consciousness of the authority of this other will that Man's moral nature is constituted, and apart from such a will this distinctive characteristic of humanity would be impossible. Pantheism finds no room for these facts in its conception of the Universe, and from the nature of its system can find no room for them. Its universe is not the Universe of experience, but of imagination ; its God is not the God revealed in Man's moral nature. The more it attempts to reconcile its universe with the Universe of experience, the less Divine does its conception of God become. The more it attempts to reconcile its God with the conception of the Divine, the less does its universe conform to the Universe of our experience. To the Pantheist,

God and the Universe are two sides of an equation which he is bound to show are exactly equal to, and identical with one another. If he includes all that is meant by the term God, however, it stands revealed as something more than the Universe with which it is equated. If he includes all that is meant by the term Universe, it stands revealed as something which is different from the conception of God with which it is identified. The Pantheistic equation can only stand by giving either an inadequate conception of God on the one hand, or an inaccurate account of the Universe on the other. The moment this is recognised and the facts which confront us in the Universe of experience are admitted, Pantheism gives place to Theism.

Modern Theistic thought frankly accepts the evolution theory as the best explanation, at which the mind of man has arrived, of the process by which the Universe has come into being. Whatever modifications may be necessary in the statement of the theory, it regards the theory itself as practically established. It finds in the evolutionary process, not less, but more evidence of God, and a clearer revelation of His character than is to be found in the older conception of distinct creative acts. Its chief value from the religious standpoint, however, is the emphasis it places on that continuous activity of God in the Universe, which is the vital breath of religion. To the religious mind the

evolution theory has filled the Universe with Divine activity. While this is true, the doctrine has considerably modified, if it has not indeed completely changed, our conception of the method of God's working. Under the older thought every action of God was regarded as supernatural, in the sense of being an intervention from without the natural order. The result was that, with the advance of science, the action of God was constantly being replaced by what was called in contradistinction the action of Nature. In a word, with every advance of scientific knowledge God was made to retreat, as it were, and His action was limited to an ever-decreasing area, which seemed destined to vanish into nothingness. The evolution theory has recovered the whole ground which had been lost, but it has banished the word supernatural, in the sense of external to Nature, from our vocabulary. We shall have to replace it by some such term as intranatural, and apply it to all Divine action manifested within the field of human vision. While the evolution theory has thus banished the word supernatural from all application to the method of God's working, it has forced upon us the conviction that the whole motive and directive power manifested in the upward march of creation is more truly described as supernatural than as natural. While each advance, that is, is not due to any addition from without, but is organically connected with that which has gone before, the

advance itself is evidence that the army has been reinforced from the base. The water which we see rising above its level may be the same water which we saw standing at its true level, and we know it would have stood at that level to all eternity, unless the forces hitherto acting upon it had been in some way augmented. No new water has been added from without, but the rise is due to some increase in the pressure which kept the water at the old level. Left to itself and to the force previously acting upon it, the water would never have risen. To the savage man the pump is, what he actually regards it as, supernatural; to the scientific man it is only natural, because he includes mind also within the area of the natural. The appearance of mind, however, within the area of Nature, as previously known, is even more supernatural than the appearance of the pump to the savage. The pump is supernatural in the sense that it is something above and beyond anything which Nature, apart from Man, could produce out of its own resources. The appearance of mind is similarly just as supernatural. It marks a level, that is, higher than that which has been reached, or which could be reached, if there were nothing more than the sum total of all that has preceded it. The appearance of life in the region of the inorganic is another of those alterations of level which are unaccountable on a strictly natural hypothesis. The inorganic rises into the organic;

the organic is not superimposed from without. The rise, however, is the evidence of an increased flow of energy from the primal source, and is, therefore, supernatural and not natural. This, at least, is the conclusion which a reading of the story of evolution forces upon us. Every attempt to repeat this rise by means of the powers and resources within the lower has failed, and so far as we are able to see must be regarded as impossible. The term supernatural, therefore, must be regarded, not as that which contradicts the natural, nor as that which acts apart from the natural, but as that which transcends the natural but manifests itself within the area of the natural. In this sense the whole Universe is interpenetrated with the supernatural. Not only the great lines which mark the transition from the lifeless to life and from unconscious to conscious life, but all the lines which mark the rise from lower to higher are witnesses to the indwelling of God and reveal stages in His self-manifestation. If evolution reveals to us the immanence of God it is at the same time the revelation of a God Who transcends the Universe in which He is manifested.

While evolution shows that Man is connected with all that is beneath him, it does not, when rightly interpreted, make him the product of all that is below him. He is from above, as well as from below; a part of the Universe, but akin to God. Like the whole of nature he is a manifesta-

tion of God, but he is the highest manifestation. That which we call the descent of man is, strictly speaking, the ascent of the Divine life to its present culminating point on this planet, Man. God in humanity, therefore, is the highest revelation of God which has yet been made to us. If we are to conceive of God at all, therefore, we are compelled to take the highest manifestation, Man, as the image of the invisible God. We must of necessity conceive of God as more than Man, but we cannot conceive of Him as less. Xenophanes, one of the earliest to denounce anthropomorphism, is reported to have declared that "if oxen and lions had hands with which to depict and execute human works of art, the oxen would draw the figures of the gods like oxen, and would give them bodies like their own." This, however, is extremely doubtful. It is far more likely that they would depict them as men, for the oxen have something higher than themselves by means of which they could depict their conception of the Highest. Man, however, is of necessity compelled to conceive of God in his own image, for he has no experience of anything higher in which he can conceive Him. In spite of all his imperfections, Man is the highest representation of God of which we have any experience. Even the Positive philosophy can only substitute Humanity as an object of worship, in place of the God it rejects.

While modern Theism acknowledges the relation of Man to the Universe, which the evolution theory depicts, it recognises a relation of Man to God which it is its special province to define. Whatever the relation may be, the Theist is determined to stand by the facts as they are manifested, for he realises that, apart from the revealed facts, no knowledge is possible. If the revelation cannot be trusted to give us a true knowledge of the reality underlying the manifestation, then knowledge is for ever beyond us. What, then, are the facts which are revealed in Man's constitution, and by which every theory of his relation to the Universe and to God must be judged? They are the foundation rock upon which Man's mental and moral constitution rests, and apart from which Man would not be Man. This rock is the consciousness of the self as a centre, separate and distinct from everything else, and the consciousness of a power proceeding from that centre by virtue of which the self determines its own actions within the restricted sphere of its influence. It is by virtue of the existence of a self standing in relation to an other-than-self that any knowledge is possible; and it is by virtue of a will standing in relation to another Will that any morality is possible. Theism recognises that the logic of fact is more imperative than the logic of theory. Any system, however logically deduced, which contradicts these facts of self-consciousness is *ipso*

facto untenable. Reason demands that our explanations of the Universe shall be self-consistent, but it demands with even greater insistence that they shall take in all the facts. The Theist parts company with the Pantheist because, however logical and self-consistent the Pantheistic system may be, it fails utterly to explain the facts of our consciousness. If he is compelled to choose between an illogical system of thought and an unreal universe of fact, he has no hesitation in deciding against the unreal universe. It is in this decision that the Theist differs from the Pantheist. The Pantheist is prepared to deny the validity of the facts of self-consciousness in the interests of his theory. The Theist, on the other hand, is prepared to bring his system into line with the facts.

While Theism can never consent to the identification of the human with the Divine, it has the fullest sympathy with that consciousness of likeness to God and that aspiration after union with Him, which are characteristic of Pantheistic feeling. Modern Theistic thought, therefore, rejects as inadequate all such conceptions of humanity which reduce it to a mere created work of God. It seeks for some other term which will convey a truer and more adequate conception of the likeness which exists, and the union which is desired between God and man. It recognises something which is Divine in every man, and

believes that this something, however minute or undeveloped, is the very essence of that ideal humanity which is yet to be. It does not shut its eyes to the actual man, as he is revealed both in the past and in the present, but it refuses to regard the actual as the real man. It believes that Man is in process of becoming; that his evolution is not complete, and that the ideal which his nature prophesies, is the Man that shall yet be realised. Recognising that all our conceptions must be anthropomorphic, it finds in the relation of child and parent the highest expression of the relation of man to God. Like every illustration this is imperfect, but it represents better than any other that likeness combined with difference which the relation between the human and Divine demands. We cannot identify the two, as every Pantheistic system is compelled to do, but we can and indeed we must recognise that in the truest perception of what humanity is there is something which is akin to Divinity. The highest relationship of which we have any experience is kinship. It is, of course, always possible for any one to say that our conception of God is nothing more than the conception of a magnified man. Such an assertion, however, ignores the whole spiritual experience of the race. If that spiritual experience is admitted as of equal value with all other experience, then the kinship of man and God is established. It is only through our likeness to

the Universe, the similarity, that is, between our bodies and what we call matter, that communication with it and the resulting knowledge are possible. In the same way it is only through our likeness to God, the similarity, that is, between our soul and God, that communication with Him and the knowledge resulting therefrom are possible. The basis of both is the same. The experience of the soul is just as real and just as valid as the experience of the body.

While it is necessary to recognise the likeness between Man and God, it is essential to acknowledge the difference. The distinction is just as real as the likeness. If we were unable to distinguish between the two, we should be just as much cut off from any knowledge as if there were no likeness. All true knowledge is the perception both of likeness and of difference. If our will were one with the Will of God, in the sense of being identical with it, morality would be impossible, and all distinction between right and wrong, good and evil, would vanish. Professor Deussen in his *Philosophy of the Upanishads* says: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, is the requirement of the Bible. But on what ground is this demand to be based, since feeling is in myself alone and not in another? Because the Veda here adds its explanation—thy neighbour is in truth thy very self, and what separates you from him is mere illusion." The explanation of

the duty which is here offered is of such a kind as to annihilate the duty it seeks to explain. The true reason, according to Professor Deussen, why I am to love my neighbour is that he does not really exist. If my neighbour is in truth my very self, then in loving myself I am in very truth loving my neighbour. Utter selfishness and complete altruism are consequently one and the same thing. If it be replied that to love the self in such a case would be to love a limited and not the real self, then we must ask how can we know this true self except by recognising the reality of the neighbour whose separateness from myself calls out my love? Moreover, is not the reality of the distinction essential to any expression of love at all? Have we any knowledge of a love which has no object to be loved? Professor Deussen confines himself to the first half of the moral law, but on exactly the same principle the other half of the moral law is abolished likewise. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, is the first commandment, according to Christ's summary; the second, the love of one's neighbour, being like unto it. Adopting Professor Deussen's Vedantic commentary we should have to add: Because God is in truth thy very self and what separates you from Him is mere illusion. If God is in truth my very self, then in loving myself I am in very truth loving God. The basis, therefore, of all religion, as of all morality, vanishes

completely and selfishness reigns supreme. The principle of identity between myself and God and myself and my neighbour is the absolute destruction both of religion and morality. To make the distinction a mere illusion is to make both religion and morality equally illusory.

How, then, it may be asked, does Theism, while admitting all that is at the basis of Pantheistic feeling and that finds expression in religion and in morality, avoid the rock upon which every Pantheistic system is inevitably wrecked? It does it by fully admitting the reality and validity of the fundamental facts of self-consciousness, and by constructing a theory of Man's relation to God which accounts for the distinction between them. It sees in Man's constitution a repetition of a principle which is characteristic of the whole cosmic process. That principle is the principle of centralisation. The whole Universe seems to be built up by the formation of separate and semi-independent centres, which, from the moment of their formation until their final dissolution, become what we can only describe as centres of power, to which all the operations carried on within the circle of their influence must be referred to that particular centre as their true cause. The sun is the centre of the solar system and the movements of the planets are determined by it. Each of the planets, however, is also a centre determining the movements within the area of its influence. The

earth has its own centre of gravity determining the movements of all bodies within the area of its influence. On the earth itself innumerable other centres are found, which in like manner determine all movements within the smaller area of their influence. This principle of centralisation is met with everywhere. In the case of Man it reaches its highest expression, and in the will we find a centre of directive energy with a very wide range of influence. Man is dependent, in that he is not self-originated, but he is independent, in that he is self-directed. The energy within him is both a centrifugal and a centripetal force, and in this action and reaction the character of the centre, or rather of the force at the centre, is continually undergoing modification, so that a man's character is the result both of what he is and of what he does. It is this self-determination which is meant by the freedom of the will. This freedom does not mean that a man's actions are undetermined by any motive; it means that the true cause is not without, but within the centre which we call the man. It implies that the character of that life-force which centres in the individual is not determined solely by either what it is in itself or by external influences, but by all the movements which proceed from and return to that independent centre which we call the self, which is constantly being modified in the process. Man is both an effect and a cause. As

an effect every individual is the result of all the causes to which he owes his existence from God all the way down to his immediate parents. At birth, however, he becomes a more or less independent centre, with all the possibilities and potentialities which constitute him an individual or a self.

This conception of centralisation enables us to see how the Divine and the human blend in our common humanity. Life or soul or spirit, whatever name we may apply to that which is our very essence, by virtue of which we are, is one with the life of God. It is, as it were, God's life gathered at a centre which by that very centralisation becomes distinct, contains within it the power of self-determination, and is thereby able to direct its own operations either in harmony with or in opposition to the mind and will of God. Whatever may be said for this conception of centralisation, one thing must be admitted, namely, that in the conception it gives of Man's nature it is in harmony with the facts of self-consciousness. It presents us with a self and an other-than-self, with a will and an other Will—the two foundation stones upon which all knowledge and all morality are built. At the same time it offers a feasible explanation of that Divinity which is an essential feature of humanity. It is, moreover, in harmony with all that we know of the nature of the vast cosmic process of which we form a

part. It is, of course, nothing more than an illustration, and like every illustration, it can easily be strained to the breaking point. It is useful, however, as an illustration in enabling us to see that the Theistic position is a reasonable *via media* between Pantheism and Deism.

The theory of evolution is not to be identified with any materialistic philosophy. It is a theory which Science has formulated on the basis of the facts which it has investigated, but true Science is not committed to any school of philosophy. Each school is welcome to take its theory and make what use it pleases of it so long as it does not alter the facts to suit its own special theories. Theism adopts the evolutionary theory and sees in it the clearest evidence of the Divine Mind. It regards man as the crown of the evolutionary process, not merely because of his body, but supremely because of his mind. Man, however, is not a duality of soul and body for each of which a separate origin must be sought. He is a unity of soul and body. Christian theology has conceived of the origin of the soul in three distinct ways, called respectively, the doctrines of Pre-existence, Creationism and Traducianism. Pre-existence is practically the same as the Hindu conception, apart, of course, from the theory of transmigration. Creationism regards the soul as a direct creation of God at the time of conception. Traducianism regards the soul as originated con-

temporaneously with the body, and as coming from the parents. The doctrine of Pre-existence has always had a great fascination for the speculative mind, and Origen, one of the greatest of the Greek theologians, adopted it. As a speculation it is ingenious and attractive, but it creates more difficulties than it solves.

In India, where it is associated with the doctrine of transmigration, its chief attractiveness lies in the superficial explanation it affords of the inequalities of life. The explanation, however, is merely the removal of the difficulty into a sphere which is still darker than that in which the mystery first confronts us. If we ask how the soul first contracted the sin for which its series of later existences is the expiation, no answer is forthcoming. The whole theory is based upon the supposition that everything which is regarded as unfortunate is the punishment for some transgression. Such a theory, however, is opposed to the facts of experience. Circumstances, which in themselves may be regarded as untoward, are frequently found to be distinctly beneficial, while others, which in themselves are unfavourable and undesirable, result in effects which are just as distinctly harmful both to the individual and the race. If it be said that punishment is itself remedial and that, therefore, the untoward circumstances are intended to prove beneficial, then what is to be said for the favourable circumstances

which are regarded as a reward for good conduct, since these just as often turn out to be harmful? On such a principle of rewards and punishments the sinner is helped forward and the saint is just as likely to be thrown backward. The doctrine offers an explanation of the inequalities of life which violates our sense of justice. It is a mechanical theory applied to a sphere where the mechanical is utterly out of place. The fact is, the theory is an early attempt on the part of man to solve a dark problem, and as such it is both interesting and instructive. When, however, it is put forward as the highest wisdom, a communication from superior beings, its claims must be submitted to reason and, when so submitted, are found to be fallacious. That it is a speculation of primitive man is proved by the fact that it is found amongst races whose intellectual development is of the most meagre kind. The absence of the doctrine of transmigration from the Vedas, upon which most scholars are agreed, points to the fact that its real origin is to be found among the aboriginals of India whom the Aryans replaced. In the Upanishads the crude belief has been developed into a philosophical doctrine and as such occupies a far more exalted place in Hinduism than it does in the crude beliefs of uncivilised races. Its true habitat, however, is not Aryavarta, the original home of the Aryans—whose conception of life is very

different from that found amongst their descendants in India—but India itself, where it must have existed long before the Aryans settled in the land.

Modern Theosophy has sought to enlist the services of the evolution theory in support of the doctrine of reincarnation. A careful comparison of the two conceptions, however, will show that the resemblances are purely superficial, while there is a fundamental difference which renders them irreconcilable. According to the theory of evolution Man is a unity, the resultant of a process of gradual development. The Theosophical conception of Man is essentially that of a duality of soul and body, each having a separate origin. The child is only the child of its parents so far as its body is concerned; its soul has an entirely different origin. The doctrine of reincarnation is supposed to explain, among other things, far more perfectly than the scientific theory of evolution and the law of heredity, the appearance of what is called genius. Theosophy admits that the law of heredity is capable of explaining similarities in bodily structure, but not in what are called mental faculties. The child's bodily organism is due to the parent, but his mind and soul are the result of his previous incarnation. Hence, when a musical genius appears his genius is the result of his previous life as a musician. There are cases, however, in which genius seems

to run in a family. Theosophy replies that this is due to the Lords of Karma who direct the reincarnation of the soul of the musician into a family which is musical. We are not here concerned with the ingenuity thus displayed in making use of facts when they are convenient, and dropping them when they are not, but with the principle of intervention from without, which this reference to the directing function of the Lords of Karma reveals. Such a principle is entirely inconsistent with the fundamental principle of scientific evolution. Theosophy may, of course, claim that it has a very much more adequate conception of evolution than the scientific one, and that this action of the Lords of Karma is quite consistent with such a principle of evolution. That is as it may be. We are not concerned with the theosophical theory, but with the scientific. Between this latter and Theosophy there is a fundamental difference, and consequently it is inadmissible to appeal to the scientific theory in support of the doctrine of reincarnation. Science emphasises the essential unity of man's nature and is utterly opposed to every dualistic theory of the separate origin of soul and body. It is not a question of matter *versus* spirit, nor of conceiving of man as nothing more than physical ; it is solely a question as to whether he is a unity rather than a duality, and on this question Science pronounces unhesitatingly in favour of unity.

The evolutionary hypothesis renders another great service to Theistic thought in the explanation it suggests of the difficult problem of moral evil. The Biblical doctrine of the Fall is the recognition of a fact of universal experience, whatever may be thought of its explanation of the fact, and entirely apart from the allegory in the early chapters of Genesis. The fact of moral evil is too patent to need any proof. It is the denial of the fact which taxes ingenuity to explain it away. While the fact, however, is admitted, the explanation of the fact, and the exact nature of the fact, are looked at in very different ways as a Theistic or a Non-Theistic standpoint is taken. From the Non-Theistic standpoint moral evil is nothing more than a necessary stage in human development. Sin is merely the mark of imperfect development. Whatever truth there is in this statement of the case, it is impossible to accept the statement as it stands, for it fails to give either a true description of moral evil, or a satisfactory explanation of its appearance. The chief cause of its failure is due to an inaccurate and unscientific observation of the essential distinction between a physical and a moral defect. Such a theory means that the thief is merely an imperfectly developed man, whose brain is suffering from some physical malformation which makes him insensible to the distinction between *meum* and *tuum*. He is no more to be blamed than the cow which breaks through the

hedge and feeds on the standing crops. Just as you put the blame of the trespass on the owner of the cow, and not on the cow, so if blame is legitimate at all in such a case, it ought to be put on Nature for so imperfectly developing the man. Strictly speaking, of course, on such an hypothesis there is no such thing as blame at all.

The theory has only to be stated to refute itself. It is not a theory which explains facts, but one which ignores all facts opposed to it. The very essence of moral evil is in the consciousness that the act is one which *ought not* to be done, and which there is no compulsion to do. It is only because of this sense of oughtness that the conception of blame attaches itself to the man who has either left undone what he ought to have done, or done what he ought not. Guilt is not the mere sense of imperfection and incompleteness; it is the sense of a failure which was preventable. Remorse is not the pain we feel for non-attainment; it is the sting we feel for having done what we know we need not have done. The theory which regards moral evil, therefore, as a necessity and undeserving of any blame is inconsistent with the whole of human practice in its treatment of sin and leaves unexplained the feelings of guilt and remorse. There is, however, a certain amount of truth in the theory, but it is strictly proportioned to the extent to which the

theory is in harmony with the evolutionary hypothesis. The presence of moral evil does mark a stage in human evolution, and sin is undoubtedly a mark of imperfect development. In the process of evolution the moment we reach the point where consciousness emerges, we arrive at a different plane of existence, and the facts which meet us on this plane cannot be explained by laws which confront us on a lower plane. Life-movements cannot be explained by physical laws of motion. The presence of the cow in the field of maize cannot be explained by the force of gravity acting on the cow's body so that it descended into the field down an inclined plane. The stubborn fact confronts you *that it walked uphill.* On the higher plane of conscious life again, the action of the cow in taking the grain yields no explanation of the action of the thief who walks off with the bag of rice. In dealing with physical and moral defects we are moving on different planes of existence, and the laws of the one are inapplicable to the other.

From the Theistic standpoint moral evil is a misdirection of energy from a new directing centre, Man, with his capacities for direction in his mind and will. For the origin of this misdirection, therefore, we do not go beyond the centre from which it proceeds. A telegram is sent off from some place in the West to some other place in the East, and it is subsequently

discovered that a serious error has taken place in transmission. It has probably passed through half a dozen different centres in the course of its transmission. We trace the error to, say, the third centre where the record shows that it was correctly received but incorrectly transmitted. The error originated there and the inquiry is at an end. The real reason for the misdirection at that centre may be inexplicable, but we stop the inquiry just because we know that we have arrived at a centre which is sufficient in itself to account for the error. In stopping the inquiry we are not evading a difficulty, but accepting a sufficient cause. In attributing sin to its true centre, the directing will of Man, Theism is not evading a difficulty by cutting short an inquiry. It is simply emphasising the fact that in Man you have a mind and a will which are sufficient in themselves to account for the possibility of moral evil. That the possibility is an inevitability is a pure supposition which the existence of the sense of guilt and remorse emphatically refutes. Theism, however, does not even stop the inquiry short when it affirms that sin originates with the self. It feels that the inquiry can be continued, and in the evolution theory, rightly interpreted, it finds considerable light upon the problem. Evolution shows us that while Man is more than the animal, he has been evolved from the animal and still retains many of the characteristics of the animal.

With the appearance of self-consciousness there appears the faculty of contemplating several aims and of discriminating as to their relative value. In man, therefore, mere desire is not the sole impelling force as it is in the case of the lower animals. Desire, moreover, is not simple, but complex. The mind has the power of contrasting one aim with another and of deciding between two or more desirable results. In addition to this it has also, in however small a degree, the consciousness of a Will other than and higher than its own, which sets its approval on the choice of the higher rather than the lower aim. This other Will is in no sense a compelling force, but it is distinctly an influencing power, urging always and at all times a decision in favour of the higher and nobler aim. The evolution of the moral, therefore, is a continuation of the evolution of the physical, and it proceeds by means of the same mutual action of environment and organism. The animal desires which man shares with the lower creation have their use, but they are no longer solely concerned with merely physical aims. In the higher evolution of Man the emergence of the moral ideal is a necessary stage in the process. Unless a distinction between desires, and between the various ways of satisfying them, were present, Man would remain an animal and nothing but an animal. The perception of such differences, however, would be useless unless with the percep-

tion went the ability to determine which should be followed. You cannot, however, have the capacity to choose without having also the possibility of choosing the lower rather than the higher. The evolution of the moral and spiritual means the rise of the animal into the moral and spiritual, and the very nature of the moral means that the rise must be effected, and can only be effected, by the conscious rejection of the lower in favour of the higher. Sin, therefore, is just such a rejection on the part of one who sees the higher and yet chooses the lower. It is on this account that it is always accompanied by more or less of shame and remorse. In the evil choice the self having heard the still small voice of that other Will, into the consciousness of Whose existence it has risen, decides to remain what it is and rejects the opportunity of rising to higher heights.

Such, in brief, is the explanation which Theism gives of those fundamental facts of self-consciousness which Pantheism rejects. Modern theology has modified its explanation so as to bring it into line with increased knowledge and it is prepared to modify it still more as knowledge increases. The modifications indicated show that it has approached far nearer to Pantheistic feeling than the older thought, but they emphasise quite as distinctly the essential distinction from all truly Pantheistic systems. While Theism is a *via media* between Deism and Pantheism, there is no *via media*

between Theism and Pantheism. The reason is, that there is no *via media* between accepting and rejecting the facts of self-consciousness. Modern Theism is not committed to any particular explanation of the facts, but it is absolutely committed to an acceptance of the facts. Every true Pantheistic system is just as absolutely committed to their rejection, for they can find no room in any true Pantheism. It needs to be remembered, however, that the choice between Theism and Pantheism does not turn upon religious feeling, but solely on the admission of perceived facts. The true dividing line is not a religious, but a philosophical one. True Pantheistic religious feeling finds full expression in modern Theism and not in Pantheism, for a consistent and logical Pantheism is the destruction of all religious feeling worthy of the name. Both religion and morality depend for their vitality on the real distinction between the individual self and the Supreme Self, between the individual will and the Supreme Will. To deny this real distinction is to deny the reality both of religion and morality. The various prismatic colours are no doubt all resolvable into the single ray of colourless light, but they are not on that account to be identified with each other. The prism which separates is as much a reality as the single ray of light, and the differences, therefore, are equally real. You may deny the reality of the different colours, but you cannot at the same time claim to be the patron and

guardian of Painting, which depends for its very existence on the variety of colour. There is a truth in Pantheism, but its adoption as a system means the destruction and not the preservation of both morality and religion.

CHAPTER VI

THE PERSONALITY OF JESUS

In the preceding chapters we have considered the philosophic basis of Religion conceived of as essentially Theistic. In such a basis, while there is nothing which is inconsistent with Christianity, there is nothing which is distinctive of it. It might be the Theism of a modern Mahommedan or of a modern Hindu of the type represented by the Brahmo Somaj. The religious ideas and conceptions are characteristic of Religion itself, and are not identified with any particular or special aspect of religion. We now proceed to deal with Religion as it has found expression in Christianity. The question as to whether Christianity is Religion or only one of several religions will depend entirely upon whether its facts are of universal or only of particular significance. This can only be decided by examining the facts themselves, and of these facts the supreme one is the personality of Jesus.

That which distinguishes Christianity from every religion is in its being founded on the personality of Jesus. Other religions have had founders,

but the personality of the founders has not been the foundation of the religions. Christianity, like other systems, has its theology, but that theology is based on the revelation of God in the person of Jesus. Take away the personality of Jesus from Christianity, and everything which is distinctive of Christianity vanishes. In the founding of other religions the personalities of the founders have been important factors, but as systems of religion they are independent of the personality of their founders. Confucianism is the teaching of Confucius, but it is not the interpretation of the personality of Confucius. Buddhism is the way which Sakya Muni discovered, but the Way has nothing to do with his personality. Mahommedanism is an absolute and uncompromising monotheism of which Mahommed is the prophet, but monotheism is totally unconnected with the personality of the prophet. In Christianity, on the other hand, the personality of Jesus provides the data out of which its theology is constructed. Strictly speaking Jesus is not the founder of Christianity; He is its foundation. The knowledge of God and of the relation between God and Man, which is distinctive of Christianity, is based upon the belief that while no one has seen God at any time, in Jesus we have a personality which reveals Him. Whether such a belief is admitted or not, is not the question which at present concerns us. We are seeking to define the essential feature

of Christianity, and that essential feature is the person of Jesus as the supreme manifestation of God. Christian theology has many affinities with the doctrines of other religions, but it differs from every other in the fact that the constructive element in its theology is an historic personality who is regarded as the manifestation of the invisible God. This claim, however it may be interpreted, or whatever may be thought of its validity, is the distinguishing feature of Christianity and differentiates it from other religions.

This essential feature of Christianity causes the problem of the historicity of Jesus to occupy a far more important position than the historicity of the founders of other religions. The lives of Confucius, of Buddha and of Mahommed are of great interest to their followers, but they are in no sense essential to the religions. In Christianity, on the other hand, the life of Jesus is vital to the religion. The place of the Gospels in the New Testament is not an arbitrary one. They stand first because the life they record is the true message of Christianity to the religious life and thought of the world. Apart from the life there is no gospel, and apart from the gospel of the life of Jesus there is no Christianity. In thus emphasising the importance of the life of Jesus, there is no intention of ignoring or under-estimating the teaching of Jesus. In Christianity, however, the teaching is unmistakably subordinate to the life. The teach-

ing of Jesus, of inestimable value though it is, is but the commentary; it is the life which is the text. It is significant that even in the Johannine writings, where so much is made of the exalted Christ, it is the manifested life of Jesus which is the dominating factor. "The Life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and declare unto you the Eternal Life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only-begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

The supreme position which the life of Jesus occupies in Christianity explains and justifies the importance of that critical research which has been expended on the materials which are available in the New Testament for the construction of an accurate and historical life of Jesus. If a life was manifested which was so full of grace and truth, that those who saw it felt that they beheld a glory as of the only-begotten Son, then every endeavour must be made to enable us to see what they saw and feel what they felt. It is the truest reverence which demands that the materials shall be submitted to the most searching criticism in order that we may see, not merely the Jesus of an evolved faith but, the Jesus Who evolved the faith. In a very real sense the Jesus Who created the faith is greater than any Jesus Who is merely the creation of the faith. Historical criticism is engaged in

bringing to light a greater Jesus than the Jesus of faith. To do this, however, it must, for the time being at least, set aside everything which bears evidence of later reflection, and confine itself to what may be called contemporary impression. This does not at all mean that the later reflection is unimportant, but that the foundation must be the actual revelation which was made at the time in the life that was then lived. It was upon that impression that Christian faith was built and, though the later reflection is necessary for a true Christian theology, it is the actual life which is fundamental. The reflected light of faith is of great value for theology, but it is the actual light of the glory of God, as seen in the person of Jesus, which generates the faith. Criticism is right in disregarding the halo, but a true criticism will account for the appearance of the halo in the portraits. The modern portrait of Jesus will show us the face without the halo, but to be a true portrait it must by so much the more put into the face that Divine glory of the actual Jesus which produced the halo of the ideal Christ of Art.

Questions of historical criticism lie outside the range of the present inquiry, but it is necessary to indicate the position taken in regard to them. That position is one of full acceptance of the method known as the Higher Criticism, and a frank recognition of assured results. If the supreme revelation of God has come to the world

in the person of Jesus, every effort to reproduce that revelation as it actually was, cannot but be welcome. The results, however, of the application of the critical method must themselves be tested by their ability to account for the faith which has grown up out of that supreme revelation. This question is not one upon which the expert in criticism is alone entitled to speak. The layman is equally entitled to form an opinion. Historic Christianity is indissolubly connected with the historic Jesus, and the figure of the latter must be adequate to account for the former. It is especially necessary to remember this when the meagre and fragmentary character of the materials which are available for the construction of the figure of the historic Jesus is taken into account. The Gospels are not biographies, in the modern sense of the word ; they are but character sketches. As such they are of the greatest value for the purpose of arriving at a clear conception of the personality of Jesus. Like the impressionist sketch they give us a more realistic representation of the actual than the elaborate and finished portrait in oils. The difference between the Synoptists and the Johannine writer is very much the difference between an impressionist sketch and an Academy picture. In the Synoptic Gospels the rough sketches have probably been touched up by later hands and in the light of later reflection. Attempts have been made to turn them into

more finished portraits, but underlying them there is the unmistakable sketch of the impressionist. In the Fourth Gospel, on the other hand, we have evidently the oil portrait which has been turned out of the studio. The figure is painted in the robes of office and wears the insignia of Divinity. In comparing a number of cartoons with the Academy picture of any public man, the differences and contradictions are most marked, and more so in the case of one of strong individuality. The face, however, in all is unmistakable, and the differences do but reveal the strong and varied personality of the subject.

One of the results, but by no means a necessary result, of the work of the Higher Criticism has been to over-estimate the value of the Synoptic sketches, almost to the exclusion of the Johannine and Pauline portraitures. The Synoptic sketches are invaluable, but they are only sketches. A portrait, however, is no less necessary to the twentieth than to the second century. The twentieth-century portrait, though based on the first-century sketches, may fall as much short of a true presentation of the actual Jesus, as the second- or third-century portrait may seem to exceed it. In some of the modern portraits there is not only no halo round the face; there is no glory in the face. As we look at them we wonder wherever the halo came from. In the revolt from the mere theological doctrine of the Person of

Christ, some modern writers have given us a Jesus destitute of any real personality. "The Galilean peasant" is in some cases so entirely a peasant, that the fact that he ever became anything more is inexplicable. We cannot treat the Synoptic Gospels as though they were the only sources available for a true estimate of the personality of Jesus. The whole of the New Testament writings are based upon two factors which are equally important. Those two factors are the impression which the personality of Jesus produced at the time and the reflection on the meaning of the personality. The first is the dominating factor in the Synoptists; the second is the prominent feature in the other New Testament writings. The two are equally necessary and neither can be correctly estimated apart from the other. The older theology was no doubt almost entirely dominated by the second, and in the reaction we are in danger of being enslaved by the first. We are dependent upon the disciples of Jesus for any estimate we may form of the personality of Jesus. They are the witnesses upon whose evidence we must rely. It is, however, a most extraordinary canon of criticism to rule out everything which is due to later reflection and confine the attention solely to the immediate impression. A sound criticism will take account of both, but it will be dominated by neither. A Jesus isolated from historic Chris-

tianity is as much a travesty of the original as the most idealised Christ of theological speculation. It is, of course, self-evident that the exalted Christ in Whom the disciples subsequently believed is an entirely different figure from the historic Jesus with Whom they companied, but it is equally self-evident that the former arose out of the latter. Later reflection may doubtless colour the record of the impression, but the bare impression will just as truly fail to represent the original. For proving the reality of a fact the eye-witness is essential, but for revealing the significance of the fact the reflective mind is needed. Both are found in the New Testament, and for estimating the personality of Jesus both are needed.

Historical criticism has rendered invaluable service to Christianity in rescuing the figure of Jesus from the region of myth into which an older theology had done much to consign it. It has succeeded, however, by a method of rigidly excluding everything which could possibly be regarded as due to the creation of a worshipping faith, and laying bare a substratum of indisputable fact upon which Christianity rests. In thus exposing the actual and indisputable foundation it has disposed of the mythical theory in the only successful way. Such a method, however, has furnished room for misunderstanding. Some have thought that the bare stones in the foundations are the sole reality, while others have thought that the

superstructure has been demolished. Professor Schmiedel's article in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, in which he characterised nine passages in the Synoptics as "the foundation pillars" for the construction of a truly scientific life of Jesus, has been interpreted as though these passages furnished the only materials out of which the life could be constructed. Such an idea, however, is an entire misconception. These passages are not, and were never intended to be, regarded as sufficient for enabling us to see the real Jesus. They are the incontrovertible facts with which the mythical theory is confronted, and effectually dispose of it by making a real Jesus essential to Christianity. Upon these foundation stones we have to build, and in the building other material is both admissible and available.

We are not here concerned with the construction of a truly scientific life of Jesus, but with the far less pretentious task of presenting a true conception of His personality. The reality of Jesus is practically no longer called in question in any serious study of Christianity. Taking the reality of Jesus, therefore, as a fact, we have to ask what were the distinctive features of His remarkable personality? In such a study the data necessary must be drawn from a wider area than that which is sufficient for the construction of His life. A man's personality is most truly revealed in his influence, and in none more so than the influence which follows his work. The

greater the personality, the less sufficient is the estimate of contemporaries. If the estimate of Jesus formed by His contemporaries outside the circle of His disciples had never been exceeded, there would have been no Christianity. Even in the writing of a scientific life of Jesus it would be possible so to exclude everything which could in any remote sense be due to later reflection that the result would issue in a portrait of Jesus which fell as much short of the reality as a picture painted by the most adoring faith would exceed it. We have always to remember that it was not the Jesus as seen by His contemporaries Who created Christianity, but the Jesus as known by His disciples. The Synoptic presentation of the figure of Jesus is far more realistic than the figure presented in the Fourth Gospel. Every great man, and Jesus supremely so, is more, however, than the actual which is visible. He is an incarnated ideal, and to understand the man we must understand the ideal which he incarnates. In the Fourth Gospel the ideal is plainly stated at the beginning, and the evidence of its dominance is seen throughout the portraiture. In the Synoptics, on the other hand, it is the portrayal of the actual Jesus which is the dominating factor, but even there the ideal is of necessity constantly suggested and gradually emerges. The Synoptics have no prologue like the Fourth Gospel, but they demand an epilogue

in which the incarnated ideal which they have portrayed is described. Personality is essentially the incarnation of an ideal. The ideal must not be imposed upon the portrait, but the portrait, to be a true representation, must reveal the ideal.

In attempting to represent the personality of Jesus, His perfect humanity is the foundation on which we must build. This does not imply that the question of His Divinity is thereby prejudged. The Divinity of Jesus is a conclusion to which a true criticism may be led, but it is certainly not the premiss from which it can start. The perfect humanity of Jesus is the rock against which every Docetic theory, whether characterised as orthodox or heterodox, is shattered. Whatever implications there may be in a doctrine of Incarnation, one thing is essential, namely, that the Divine must become, and not merely seem to be, man. Apart, however, from all doctrinal considerations, the fact which confronts us in the Gospels are facts which indubitably prove that Jesus was really and truly a man amongst men. In the Synoptics, though Jesus is represented as supranatural, He is at the same time represented as perfectly natural also. He is described as miraculously feeding the multitude, but He is also represented as eating and drinking like any ordinary man. He is described as once walking on the sea, but He is far more frequently represented as making use of the boats of His disciples. He raises the

dead, it is true, but He also hangs upon the Cross and yields up His last breath like any other mortal man. This blending of the ordinary and the extraordinary is done without the slightest attempt to harmonise what at first sight would certainly strike us as contradictory. The point which is here urged is, that whatever else Jesus was, His figure, as seen in the Gospels, is that of a real, even though an extraordinary, man. Even in the Fourth Gospel this is equally noticeable. The Jesus Whom the writer portrays is by no means that purely supernatural person which some critics suppose. He turns water into wine at the marriage feast, but He is represented as one of the ordinary guests partaking like them of the viands set before Him. He is described as appealing to His works as being of a similar nature to those which the Father works, but He is also represented as being wearied with the journey, resting at the well, and appealing for water to slake His thirst like any other wayfarer. He is described as summoning Lazarus from the tomb, but He is also represented as sharing with the sisters in the grief at the loss of their brother. If we are told that He claimed to have descended from heaven, the fact is not concealed that the people ask one another, whether this is not Joseph's son, with whose father and mother they are well acquainted? There is nothing in any of the Gospels which suggests that there was anything

about Him which indicated that He was anything other than purely human. On the contrary, with the exception of the miracles, everything about Him suggests that His appearance and habits were such as to cause Him to be regarded as an ordinary Galilean peasant, the son of a carpenter, and Himself a carpenter.

As regards His miracles it may be remarked that by far the majority were works of healing, which, though they reveal the possession of more than ordinary psychical powers, are by no means supernatural in the ordinary acceptation of the word, and certainly not superhuman. They lift Him above His fellows, but they do not put Him in a category apart from His fellows. There are some miracles, such as the feeding of the multitudes and the stilling of the tempest, which are of a supernatural character. They have been explained as parables which by easy transition have been mistaken for miracles. Such an explanation is certainly possible and decidedly plausible. In any case these two or three instances cannot be regarded as outweighing the abundant evidence which the Gospels supply as to the true and real humanity of Jesus. Jesus Himself distinctly and repeatedly repudiated that importance which has been attached to them as marks of the abnormal and supernatural. Far from regarding them as abnormal and peculiar, He rebuked His disciples for a lack of faith which prevented their curing

the epileptic boy, and He sent them out to perform similar healing works.

As regards His mental endowments there is exactly the same evidence that He was in no sense abnormal or supernatural. He grew up so naturally and normally that of His boyhood and early manhood hardly a single event was regarded as calling for record. His visit to the Temple is evidence of the early development of that quick spiritual insight which so distinguishes His ministry, but there is nothing abnormal about it. In His teaching there is no trace of any claim to omniscience, or of a knowledge of either science or literature which can in any sense be described as in advance of His time. On the contrary, what may be called His mental outlook, in all matters other than the religious, is the mental outlook and standpoint of His time. It may, of course, be said that though He said nothing on any of these matters, yet He knew all that there is to know, and that His silence was due to the fact that His mission was entirely different. Such a claim, however, is a pure assumption for which there is not the slightest evidence. Moreover, it involves us in moral difficulties which seriously affect that unique spiritual character which is the distinguishing feature of His life. What untold misery and suffering due to ignorance might have been prevented, if even a fraction of the knowledge thus claimed for Him had been

given to the world. The relief of human misery which His works of healing afforded pales into insignificance before the prevention of suffering which a single word from Him might have effected if He really knew merely a few of the common-places of present-day science. To imagine a Jesus possessed of such knowledge and silent in the face of the appalling needs of humanity is to present a Jesus as unlike the tender and compassionate figure of the Gospels as it is possible to conceive. Like many another Jesus of the imagination it falls very much below the Jesus of reality.

While His mental endowments, therefore, must be regarded as quite normal to His age and race, there are indications here of that blending of the ordinary and the extraordinary which we have already noticed in His works of healing. While He evidently shared in the limitations of His age and nation, there was nothing of that narrow and prejudiced view which characterised the particular race in which He was born and grew up. His horizon was limited as that of other men of His age, but His vision was normal to humanity, and showed none of those congenital defects which are peculiar to races and distinguish them from one another. Jesus was born a Jew, but He was least like what we call a born Jew as can be conceived. It would be impossible to conceive of Confucius as other than a China-

man, or of Buddha as other than an Indian, or Mahommed as other than an Arab. Of Jesus, however, it is impossible to conceive of Him as other than a Son of Man. No one has ever shown less of racial peculiarities or national characteristics than Jesus. Born in the midst of a people more distinct and separate than any other nation, known throughout their history as a peculiar people, as distinct and separate to-day as in any past period of their history, Jesus stands out isolated and alone, the Man and not the Jew. This does not make Him superhuman, for it is this essential humanity which is His distinctive feature, but it indicates a something about Him which we must call extraordinary. It would have been ordinary if He had been a born Jew; that He was not, but a true Son of Man, is an indication of the extraordinary. In this respect, therefore, His works and His words answer the one to the other. They cannot be described as unnatural, nor yet can they be fully described as natural; both transcend the natural as we know it. For a true realisation of the freedom of Jesus from the limitations of the Jew we have to compare Him in this respect with Paul. It is to Paul that Christianity owes its liberation from the slavery of Judaism, but it was to Jesus that Paul himself owed his deliverance. Of all the apostles Paul is at one and the same time the most distinctly Jewish and yet the most distinctly

cosmopolitan. He was a born Jew, a Hebrew of the Hebrews, yet he became the Apostle of the Gentiles and the Emancipator of Christianity from the thraldom of Judaism. He became so, however, because, more than all the others, he caught the spirit of his Master and interpreted the mind of Jesus.

When we come to the moral qualities and the ethical constitution of Jesus we come to a sphere where the ordinary and the extraordinary are blended as in the physical and mental spheres, but where the extraordinary is far more pronounced. The ethical transcendence of Jesus remains for all time that distinctive characteristic which distinguishes Him, as nothing else does, from humanity as known from past history and present experience. It is the moral grandeur of Jesus which so transfigures that common humanity which He shares with us, that we feel irresistibly that we have seen the light of the very glory of God in the person of Jesus. In this sphere His sovereignty is indisputable, and all nations bow in lowly obeisance before Him. Men may dispute the Divinity of Jesus, and decline to regard Him as a second Person in a Trinity, but they instinctively bow down in the deepest reverence of which they are capable before His moral grandeur. The intellect may not be satisfied as to His Divinity in a metaphysical sense, but the moral nature recognises it and bends in lowliest worship. If

the glory of God is moral beauty and the essence of God is moral worth expressed in pure and holy love, then there is no question that the supreme manifestation of that nature, of which we have any record, is that which confronts us in the character of Jesus. This aspect of His Divinity is unquestionable, for it is not dependent upon any argument; it is the judgment of the moral nature as it stands in the presence of Jesus. The higher the moral height attained, the keener is the appreciation and the deeper the reverence. The keener the sense of our own natural frailty and moral defect, the deeper is our realisation of the transcendent ethical purity of the Divine Man.

While the moral greatness of Jesus lifts Him to a height of Divine glory never before attained, the very fact that it is moral greatness links Him to humanity in the closest bonds of kinship. His ethical greatness is not and could not be a supernatural endowment; it was an acquisition. He was made perfect through suffering. It was through the stress and conflict incident to finite humanity that He learned the obedience which produced that perfection of moral character by virtue of which He is the author of an eternal salvation in those who yield through the power of His spirit a like obedience. His real humanity, therefore, is the essential condition under which His ethical greatness was alone possible. If the

ethical greatness to which He attained carries Him over that gulf which seems to separate Man from God, and reveals a Godlikeness we find nowhere else, the fact that He attained it, and attained it by the path which we all have to take, links Him to humanity by bonds which no theological considerations must be allowed to dissolve. To take away this essential condition of His transcendent moral greatness is to rob Him of His indisputable right to be regarded as the supreme revelation of God. Of absolute goodness, unconditioned holiness, and impeccable purity, as they may be supposed to exist in God, we have and can have no knowledge. If we are to know these qualities at all they must be manifested under those conditions of limitation and relativity in which we ourselves exist. A real humanity is the sole medium through which such a revelation can be made. The fact that such a revelation has been made in Jesus is the foundation of all our theories to explain His person.

The older theology concerned itself with the implications this fact suggested as to the nature of God. The newer theology is concerning itself with the implications suggested as to the nature of Man. If Jesus is the revelation of Divinity, He is equally the revelation of humanity. The first may be a justifiable inference, but the second is an indisputable fact. All religion and all theology centre in the explanation of the relation

between Man and God. The true nature of that relation is seen in Jesus, for He is supremely the highest expression of humanity the race has seen. The explanation, therefore, of the person of Jesus is the centre around which Christian theology must for ever gather. Christianity, however, must accept the fact of the personality of Jesus with its implications both as regards Man and as regards God. If the truth underlying Vedantic thought, which finds imperfect expression in the declaration of the identity of God and Man, is ever to receive its justification, it will probably be through a true interpretation of the personality of Jesus. The Vedantic declaration is contradicted by the whole moral experience of humanity, and yet the ethical sense in humanity recognises the moral transcendence of Him Whose consciousness of oneness with God found expression in the declaration: I and the Father are One. The personality of Jesus offers to Vedantic thought the one concrete reality without which its fundamental principle is a mere abstraction, a thought-form with no reality to fill it. Western theology waits for a more accurate and a more profound exposition of the personality of Jesus. When Vedantism finds the realisation of its ideal in Him Whose moral consciousness is the only one which is not violated by its declaration, it may give that interpretation of the person of Jesus for which theology is still waiting.

The ethical transcendence of Jesus, like the greatest work of Art, can be felt, but cannot be described. His character makes its appeal to the ethical sense by which alone it can be rightly appreciated. All attempts to describe its greatness in the current terms of morality do but succeed in belittling it. Our expressed appreciations are but a pricing of it in a currency to which it bears no relation. You cannot truly appreciate a work of Art by stating the number of guineas at which it is entered in the catalogue. In the presence of the work of a great artist silent admiration is the only fitting appreciation. In the presence of the ethical perfection of Jesus worship is the only true expression of worthship. While this is true there are certain contrasts which it presents to the realisation of the moral ideal in ourselves and in the race, which enable us to render that homage of the soul which is the best appreciation of which we are capable.

First among these contrasts is what is called the sinlessness of Jesus. There is, however, a good deal of misunderstanding as to what is implied when we speak of the sinlessness of Jesus. Sinlessness is a purely negative term, it is true, but it is a single negative which stands confronting a positive in humanity which is universal. It denotes the absence of flaws where universal experience leads us to expect them. It is not a question, therefore, of trying to prove a negative; it is a

question of accounting for the absence of a very positive and universal characteristic of humanity as we know it in ourselves and in the race. If we are told that we do not know enough about the life of Jesus to justify us in asserting that He was sinless, the reply is that we know enough about Him to show us that He was so perfectly human that there is plenty of room for the flaws to appear. It is the absence of the expected flaws which is emphasised in the assertion of the sinlessness of Jesus. Sinlessness does not mean impeccableness, though it has sometimes been confounded with it. What is really meant is that just in the very circumstances where we should expect the flaw or the failure, they are entirely absent and their place is taken by the perfect expression of the ethical ideal. We describe a man as honest, not because he has experienced every conceivable temptation to which honesty can be exposed, but because he has been subjected to a test which reveals that particular ethical quality and in which he might reasonably have been expected to fail. The combination of circumstances in which a temptation to dishonesty is possible is infinite, requiring an eternity in which to experience them. The character of the moral nature, however, is such that the liability to fall, which is essential to a true moral probation, passes by means of that probation into incapability of falling. Ethical freedom, that is, becomes ethical necessity. The

statement that Jesus was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin, does not mean that He experienced every temptation to which we are liable, but that temptation assailed Him in those parts of His nature which were vulnerable, just as it assails us. This is especially brought out in the accounts of the Temptation.

The question is sometimes asked, whether the Temptation is to be regarded as fact or allegory? The true answer is that it is both. The reality of the Temptation is the fact, but to convey that reality to less sensitive moral natures the allegory is needed. The allegorical form in which the event is described renders it almost certain that it was from the lips of Jesus Himself that the account was derived. The restrained simplicity of the imagery, combined with the wonderful insight it affords of the extreme subtlety of the Temptation and the delicate moral sensitiveness of Jesus, make it practically certain that it came from the same mind to which we owe the inimitable parables. An examination of the nature of the Temptation shows how extremely difficult, if not impossible, it must have been to convey to the unrefined moral sense of the disciples in any other than allegorical form the reality of the moral testing to which Jesus was subjected. Perhaps nothing gives, or can give us, such an insight into the extreme delicacy of the moral nature of Jesus as the character of the moral evil which His soul

detected, and against which it successfully struggled. It is hardly too much to say that, while the ordinary moral sense might regard failure in such a test as a flaw or defect, it would hardly regard it as sin. In the first Temptation, for instance, the evil from which the soul of Jesus recoiled is the use of personal power and endowment for purely individual ends. The good which He chose as alone consistent with the moral ideal is the renunciation of personal gain in the interests of the service of others. Is it too much to say that the evil which Jesus rejected is the very conduct which the moral consciousness of Society stamps with its approval as it sees it exhibited in the careers of those whom it characterises as successful men? While Society may profess a certain amount of admiration for the good which Jesus considered as alone consistent with the moral ideal, does it not in its heart of hearts regard it as more truly quixotic, and utterly repudiate it in the case of its own sons and daughters? Society will patronise and liberally subscribe to work in the slums, but it will regard with absolute horror and even indignation the idea of one of its own sons or daughters sacrificing a great career or a high position for the purpose of devoting talents and ability for work in the slums. This is not merely the case in the mammon-worshipping West; it is equally true in the ascetic and less materialistic East. India will readily yield honour and praise to the Sanyasi

or Fakir, provided he chooses the path of the anchorite in order that he may reach the power and position of the Saint. Let the high-caste Brahmin, however, renounce all in order to devote himself to the uplifting of the despised Pariah, and she will repudiate him with even greater scorn and contempt. In the answer of Jesus—Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God—we have the true ethical conception of life, the slightest departure from which leaves a stain upon the soul. Life cannot be interpreted in terms of the material; it must be described in terms of the spiritual. Man is not a collection of atoms; he is an incarnation of a word or thought of God, and he only truly lives as he manifests that special thought of God of which he is the expression. He is not, however, an isolated word, but a word in a sentence, and the true meaning of his life is in the relation he sustains to the other words of God, and the place he occupies in the sentence. To sustain that true relation and to fill that divinely appointed place is to realise the moral ideal. To swerve by a hairsbreadth is to fail in the realisation of the ideal.

The second Temptation, graphically described as the suggestion to throw Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, is that subtle temptation to which only the noblest souls are exposed. It consists in a flattery based upon the recognised

high ideals of life, which form the mainspring of the soul's action, and manifests itself in the suggestion that the exceptional character will justify a departure from the path of obedience marked out for the crowd, especially if it partakes of the nature of a daring faith and sublime confidence in God. The temptation represents that easy transition from exalted religious faith and fervour into an arrogant presumption and a fanatical self-assertion. The history of the noblest lives furnishes abundant evidence of the subtlety of the temptation and the ease of the transition. The case of Savonarola and the ordeal by fire is a striking illustration of this. Who can draw the line which separates childlike trust in God from that desire for a sign of Divine favour, within which lurks the hidden doubt? How easy to deceive oneself that the rash and impatient act which precipitated events, and ruined the cause, was an act of exalted faith, when all the time it was dictated by spiritual pride and ministered to self-advertisement. The heights of the spiritual life have their dangers no less than the levels have their pitfalls. A sacred profession no less than a secular calling has its temptations, and those of the former are generally far more insidious. To wait for the revelation of God's Will is far more difficult than to attempt its accomplishment. To keep one's head on the height is a greater strain than to keep one's feet on the plains. The patient

and willing endurance of the martyr's daily cross may be the true path of obedience, while the impatient snatching at the martyr's crown by some precipitate act may but reveal the unsuspected flaw in an otherwise noble soul. It is the evidence of this careful and delicate balancing of the moral issues of life, revealed in this second Temptation, which gives us an insight into the fine moral texture of the character of Jesus. His answer—Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God—is a revelation, not only of the clearness with which He detected the lurking evil but, of the depth of religious feeling which it called forth. To submit God to a test as to His faithfulness and love was an idea from which Jesus' whole soul shrank with abhorrence. It implied not merely doubt on the part of the Son as to the Father's character, but a usurpation of His position. It was a dictation of the terms upon which alone the Son will consent to walk in the path which the Father has chosen. It was the substitution, therefore, of the human for the Divine will, and as such it involved the destruction of the whole moral nature. Such a suggestion allows of no argument ; it demands from the moral nature the emphatic negative—Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

The strength of the third Temptation lies in its appeal, not to the ambition for personal success, but to the nobler ambition for the success of the cause. Under the allegorical form of a vision of

universal sovereignty to be obtained by a single act of obeisance to the paramount power, there is graphically portrayed the temptation to sacrifice the ideal by a compromise with the actual. The real sacrifice of the ideal, however, is disguised by representing it as a mere concession of a momentary character involving nothing more than the sacrifice of a personal feeling, which ought not to weigh against the success of the cause which is secured thereby. It is the insidious suggestion that the duty of personal sacrifice involves a concession which is really the sacrifice of duty. It is an attempt to delude the soul into believing that the duty of compromise involves what is essentially a compromise with duty. The nature of the temptation is such that only the greatest souls can feel its seductiveness. It is the man who has sacrificed everything and has nothing left who can alone be tempted to sacrifice his soul. For the sake of the cause he has given up everything which others hold dear. One thing, and one thing only, has he held back—his absolute loyalty to the ideal. A trifling concession, a momentary submission, and the goal is won. Can he not make the last and only concession which is demanded for the sake of the cause which means so much to the world? The success for which he has striven is within his grasp; the vision of the triumph of the cause for which he has sacrificed everything is spread out before his eyes. Shall he allow a purely personal

feeling of reverence for an unseen ideal to stand in the way of the accomplishment of the very end and purpose of His being? The high mountain, which in the allegory is the scene of the third Temptation, is suggestive of the moral height where such a Temptation is alone possible. The fierce exclamation, "Begone, Satan," reveals the vividness with which the sin is perceived, and the strong resentment of the moral nature which the Temptation called forth. Evil, stripped of all its seductiveness, stands revealed in horrible nakedness, a loathsome figure coming between the soul and God. The moral nature, in a white heat of indignation at the attempted outrage on its stainless purity, vouchsafes no other answer than an imperious "Begone." That which comes between the soul and its loyalty to God is unalloyed evil, whose instant dismissal is the sole answer which the moral nature can vouchsafe.

The accounts of the Temptation are their own guarantee of the reality of the event. In the ethical realm the power of the mind to imagine falls short of the power of the soul to experience. To attribute the accounts of the Temptation to the imagination of the disciples or of still later writers is not merely to attribute to them the greatest creation of Art; it is to attribute to them a moral insight which transcends that of their Master. To dethrone the Master in this case involves enthroning the pupil. As a creation of

Art, however, the Temptation scene is singularly deficient in technique. The artist who could have created such a scene out of his imagination would never have left it so inartistically executed. The last thing that can be said of the Synoptists is that they are literary artists. They deal with a figure which has furnished Art with its greatest subjects and its highest inspiration ; yet their presentation of the scenes can hardly be described as artistic. This characteristic is specially obvious in their treatment of the Temptation. If ever there was a scene which lent itself to the finest and most delicate treatment, it was this great scene in the life of Jesus. The Johannine writer, who is distinctly a literary artist, apparently so felt the difficulty of treating it adequately that he left it entirely out of his portrait. Its presence, especially in the form in which it appears in the Synoptics, is the strongest evidence that we have here the reality of fact and not mere imagination.

The importance of the Temptation in a delineation of the personality of Jesus arises from the fact that it calls attention to the absence of defects in just those places where and where only we might reasonably expect them. A great soul is incapable of, because he is above, the petty meannesses which characterise lesser souls. His temptations are not those of ordinary men. If the mountaineer falls it will be in scaling the inaccessible height, not in making those easy ascents

which content the man of the plains. Belief in the ethical transcendence of Jesus is due, not to the fact that He was free from the common sins, or that He possessed the ordinary virtues but, to the fact that we can discover no flaw where a flaw is not only possible, but reasonably to be expected. He walks on those dizzy heights which have been fatal to the noblest souls, and no vertigo attacks Him. He scales those peaks of the moral life which have caused the destruction of the finest moral characters, and He does not fall. The sinlessness of Jesus is no argument based on the silence of the evangelists; it is based upon the moral achievements which they record. The Temptation shows us the moral evil He resisted; the life shows us the ethical qualities He incarnated.

In the first Temptation we see Him deliberately resisting the seductions of personal ambition. In the life we see Him daily and hourly giving Himself and all that He possessed to the service of humanity. In the second Temptation we see Him rejecting the alluring voice of flattery and the insidious suggestion of spiritual pride. In the life we see Him steadily avoiding every tendency to court popular favour or to encourage the flattering adulation of both priests and people, while at the same time He waits patiently for the revealing of the Father's will. When the people desire to make Him a king, He retires into the desert. When the opposition of the religious leaders

tempts Him to precipitate events in expectation of a Divine interposition in His favour, He withdraws into retirement. It was only when it was clear that no other course than that of the Cross was open to Him that He set His face steadily to return to Jerusalem and endure the Cross which He knew awaited Him. He never courted a a violent death in the desire for the martyr's crown. He was as solicitous to save His people from the crime of His crucifixion as He was ready to ask for forgiveness for the crime they committed. In the third Temptation we see Him rejecting the secretly offered bribe of compromise and declining to tread the smooth but fatal path of a betrayal of the ideal. In the life we see Him offering the most resolute opposition to the false religious ideals which occupied the seat of authority and the throne of power. No overture from Pharisee or Sadducee, Herodian or Zealot, is allowed to influence His absolute loyalty to the ideal He represented. He will sacrifice for the truth even His life, but He will not sacrifice the truth even for His life. To Evil, whether arrayed in the regal garb of religious authority, or in the imperial purple of political power, He never bends the knee. To God, the alone Good, He will, in the loyalty of service, bow the head in the agony of death and yield up His spirit.

Another equally remarkable contrast which the personality of Jesus presents is the entire absence

of all sense of sinfulness. This is not due to any indifference in regard to the place sin holds in human life, nor to any attempt on His part to relegate it to a subordinate position in the thought of men. The reality of sin and the absolute necessity of an entire change of mind and disposition in regard to it occupy the highest place in His teaching. Of the consciousness of personal guilt, however, there is neither trace nor hint. Here again we are not dependent upon the argument from silence. The negative aspect of the question arrests the attention because the ethical sense in Jesus is so highly organised that the lack of its universal accompaniment, the sense of failure, is so remarkable. It is not that He makes the bold challenge to His enemies, "Which of you convicteth Me of sin?" that astonishes us the most. It is rather that when rebuked by scrupulous Pharisees for companying with publicans and sinners He replies, "They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick. . . ." In the presence of sufferers from a universal complaint He calmly announces not merely that He has no fear of contagion, but that He is its physician. The deliberate exclusion of Himself in such statements as, "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him," coupled with the careful inclusion of the petition for

forgiveness and deliverance from evil, in the prayer He taught His disciples, is so extraordinary that we are compelled to ask whether this lack of the universal consciousness of moral failure does not imply a consciousness of moral perfection which is unique in the history of the race?

This conclusion is supported by the positive statements, made not once nor twice in the Gospels, but frequently, that He categorically affirmed the forgiveness of sins. On these occasions He speaks with an authority which is without parallel. The very majesty of the moral law within our breasts which pronounces our own condemnation imposes an unbreakable silence in regard to the question of Divine forgiveness. Man has hoped that such forgiveness was possible; he has even believed that it was attainable; he has been willing to adopt any and every means to procure it, but he has never felt himself capable of declaring authoritatively and categorically that sin is forgiven. To do so has seemed to him a usurpation of the prerogative of God. To the charge of blasphemy which this declaration of forgiveness brought upon Jesus He gave the only possible reply by delivering the paralytic from the physical consequences of his sin. It was the precursor of that true test which Jesus has given ever since—the deliverance from sin itself. The only true guarantee of the forgiveness of sin is freedom from the sin which has been forgiven. It is sin,

in its theoretical aspect as an affront to God, which occupies the important place in much theological literature. It is sin, in its aspect of self-inflicted injury to the moral nature, which is supreme in the deeper thought of Jesus. There is a sense, indeed, in which it can be said that sin cannot inflict any injury on God, and probably the last thing that can be truly said of the sinner is that in sinning he has any consciousness of affronting God at all. Its injury, however, to the moral nature is manifest, and if this injury is repaired there can be little doubt as to the Divine attitude to the sinner. It is possible to conceive of forgiveness apart from the moral recovery of the sinner, but it is impossible to conceive of the moral recovery of the sinner apart from Divine forgiveness. The forgiveness, that is, may or may not ensure the recovery, but the recovery guarantees the forgiveness.

The point, however, which is here urged is concerned with the categorical declaration which Jesus claims to be authorised to make. If it is not blasphemy, and the whole character of Jesus negatives such a hypothesis, then it implies such an intimate knowledge of the ethical nature of God as justifies and guarantees the pronouncement. That Jesus was conscious of declaring absolute truth in thus declaring the forgiveness of sin is consistent with but one hypothesis, namely, that there was an ethical oneness between Himself and

God; that a mistake in this matter was impossible. The least shadow of doubt would have rendered such a declaration impossible. The religious experience of Christendom confirms the reality of the forgiveness of sins by the witness of renewed moral natures, the result of a belief in the power and authority of Jesus. A miraculous moral healing is still the accompaniment of the declaration of the forgiveness of sins. The paralysed moral nature is healed and restored, and the reality of the forgiveness is guaranteed by the miracle of healing. It is doubtless still possible to deny the authority of Jesus to forgive, but it is impossible to deny His power to save.

There is a final aspect of the personality of Jesus which remains to be noticed, apart from which, indeed, His religious significance for humanity is entirely misconceived. It is what we may call His consciousness of God. All mysticism bears witness to the fact, conceive of it as we may, that there is a knowledge of God which is as direct and independent of all reasoning as the consciousness of self. It is sometimes described as religious feeling rather than religious knowledge, but the description is quite inadequate, and the contrast between feeling and knowledge fails to indicate the fundamental conception underlying the claim of the mystic. To the mystic the difference between the higher and the lower knowledge of God, the difference, that is,

between the mystical and the ordinary knowledge, may be illustrated as the difference between the knowledge of the beautiful possessed respectively by the man who can see and the man who is blind. The one is direct knowledge; the other is an inference. To the mystic there are supreme moments when the eyes of the soul are opened and he catches a fleeting vision of God. The knowledge gained in these rare moments of ecstasy is that direct and immediate knowledge characteristic of sight as applied to the beautiful, in comparison with a knowledge of the beautiful which is the result of inference and the descriptions of others. This soul-vision, as it is called, is, however, the extraordinary and the exceptional. It is usually obtained when the ordinary conditions are suspended and is lost when they are re-established. Jesus cannot be regarded as a mystic in this sense. Of ecstasy, as understood by the mystic, there is not a single trace in His life or teaching. His knowledge of God, however, in its directness and immediacy is essentially that higher knowledge upon which mysticism lays emphasis. The explanation of this remarkable likeness and difference may be found in the fact that the exceptional experience of the mystic seems to have been the ordinary and normal experience of Jesus. The ecstatic state of soul seems to have existed side by side with the ordinary and regular sense perception. In the

case of the mystic, the opening of the inner eye of the soul is usually conditioned by the closing of the outer eye of the body. In the case of Jesus the inner and the outer eye were both open at the same time. His ecstasy never involved a trance. He lived at one and the same time in both the natural and the spiritual worlds, between which, instead of finding any contradiction, He found the most wonderful correspondencies.

The parables of Jesus furnish a remarkable confirmation of this. The parables are the distinctive feature of the teaching of Jesus, and they stand unrivalled as expositions of parabolic art. Though they are pre-eminently artistic, they are never artificial. He did not create the correspondencies which He depicted; He perceived them. His pictures are not fantastical or allegorical; they are interpretations of Nature rather than mere representations of Nature. The exquisite parable of the Prodigal Son, for instance, is not an allegory setting forth a conception of Divine love and forgiveness; it is an interpretation of human love and forgiveness revealing their essentially Divine character. Jesus does not invent the correspondencies which the parable reveals; He calls attention to the correspondencies which actually exist. The selfishness of the younger son and the utter disregard of his father which are described in the story are not mere figures of speech or fanciful representations of sin; they are

sin itself. The treatment of the father by the son is not something which the imagination invents as something similar to the treatment of God by the sinner; it is the actual treatment. Sin, that is, can only affect God in that way. We violate our relations to God in the violation of our relations to our fellows. Similarly the father's love and yearning after his erring child are not mere resemblances; they are actually the love and yearning of God expressed in and through humanity. Human love does not suggest to the mind that there may be something corresponding to it in God; it is the revelation to us of the actual love of God. Human forgiveness does not inspire us with a faint hope that there may possibly be such a thing as Divine forgiveness; it is a manifestation, however imperfect, of Divine forgiveness itself. It is this note in the teaching of Jesus which gives it its authority. He taught with the certainty of one who sees what actually is, not with the hesitancy of one who imagines what may possibly be.

It is this direct consciousness of God, this normal and abiding inner vision, which explains that absolute assurance which marks both His conduct and His teaching. He never wavers in His walk, nor hesitates in His talk. No teacher was ever more positive, yet He was never merely self-assertive. He does not hesitate to place His own *ipse dixit* in direct contrast to the declarations

of the inspired and venerated scriptures of His people, and to preface them with words which are not arrogant only because they are imperial. In these striking contrasts between what He has to say and what has been already said, Jesus does not assert the correctness of His own conceptions; He assures us of the accuracy of His perceptions. He speaks that which He knows or perceives; He testifies of that which He sees. The possession of the knowledge gives Him the right to assure; the fact that He sees necessitates the categorical form of the witness's statement.

It is not merely in the form of His teaching, however, that this special character of His knowledge of God is evident. The whole of His religious attitude is the outcome of this intimate, constant and immediate consciousness of God. To Jesus, God is not a Being in Whom He believes; He is the Father Whom He knows and with Whom He is in constant fellowship. God is as real and in such direct communication with the soul of Jesus as the Universe is with the bodies and minds of others. He is never isolated or cut off from communion with God, any more than men are isolated or cut off from communication with the Universe. He speaks of Divine things with the intimacy with which other men speak of material things. He looks into the face of God with the naturalness with which others look into the face of Nature. The name Father

as applied to God is not peculiar to Jesus; it is found in Judaism and in other religions. To Jesus, however, the term is in no sense a name which may be applied to God; it is the expression of a conscious relation between Himself and God. He calls God Father because He feels that He is Himself Son. His consciousness of sonship is the ground for His conception of the Divine Fatherhood, and not *vice versa*. God is not a conception to Jesus; He is a perception. This consciousness of God is as clear and definite in the case of Jesus as the consciousness of the self. There is, however, never any confusion between the two. The consciousness of the essential relation between Himself as Son and God as Father is fundamental to the whole of His thought, but He never identifies the self with God. The reason is the very important one that His knowledge of oneness with God was not a deduction of logic, but a conscious experience. The writer of the Fourth Gospel has made this fundamental consciousness of God the dominating thought in his account of the teaching of Jesus, but he has not invented it; for it is as necessary to the religious thought of the Synoptic Jesus as it is conspicuous in the Johannine discourses. The Sermon on the Mount is unintelligible in its authoritativeness apart from this underlying God-consciousness, and the parables which are the distinctive feature of the Synoptists are unaccountable without it. Express

declarations in regard to it are not wanting in the Synoptic Gospels. The statements in Matthew and Luke, "All things have been delivered unto Me of My Father"; and "No man knoweth Who the Son is save the Father"; and "Who the Father is save the Son"; and "He to whom the Son willeth to reveal Him," are as emphatic in this respect as anything to be found in the Fourth Gospel.

A study of the personality of Jesus leads us up to a mystery which it is as foolish to deny as it is presumptuous to pretend to be able to explain. The Divine and the Human element are so blended in the character of Jesus that the old antithesis, implied both in the orthodox and unorthodox positions of the older theology, can no longer be recognised. That antithesis was the outcome of a Deistic standpoint which both parties equally occupied. The unorthodox party assumed that if Jesus were real Man He could not be really Divine. The orthodox party assumed that if He were really Divine He could not be really Man. Modern theological thought has moved completely away from the Deistic standpoint of a transcendent God to the Theistic position of a God Who is both transcendent and immanent. The theological aspect of the subject does not here concern us. We have here to do with the facts which the personality of Jesus reveals. If we are to arrive at any true conception of the personality of Jesus we must study it not from the theological, but

from the historical side. The facts which such a study reveals may involve a theological doctrine of an Incarnation, but such a doctrine must be the outcome of the study of the facts. We can never arrive at a true doctrine of an Incarnation by speculations as to the nature of God. We only know God as He is revealed. The revelation, therefore, is the basis upon which we must build all our ideas of the nature of the Revealer. This is the standpoint of modern theological thought. It is necessary, however, to emphasise the fact that the basis upon which we build is not any declaration as to who Jesus was, but the actual record of what He did and said. The declaration may be quite true, but it is after all the mere label attached to the picture, while the actual record is the picture itself. It is not that the title of a great picture printed in the catalogue is official and authorised which makes it correct; it is that it expresses in a word or phrase the thought which the picture reveals with a wealth and profusion of which language is quite incapable. "The perfect humanity of Jesus" or "The essential Divinity of Jesus" are after all mere labels which we attach to the picture of the matchless face which looks out upon us in the figure of Jesus as the Gospel writers have portrayed it. Both these titles may be equally true and equally one-sided. It may be of supreme concern for the catalogue that a correct title should be given, and the discussion of the title may be of

extreme value in calling attention to the different impressions the picture produces on different minds. After all has been said and we have registered our definite vote for one or other of the titles, we all alike return to stand in front of the picture that we may perceive more clearly the glory of God as it is revealed in the face of Jesus.

CHAPTER VII

THE DIVINE INCARNATION

In the previous chapter a study of the personality of Jesus was seen to lead up to a mystery in which both the nature of Man and the nature of God lie enshrouded in darkness. It must not, however, be supposed that the personality of Jesus is the sole creator of the mystery, and that all we have to do to avoid it is carefully to exclude everything of the nature of the supranatural from our conception of His personality. Such a method doubtless avoids mystery, but it does so by rendering the personality of Jesus inexplicable. The mystery does not confront us at the end of the study, simply because we have excluded the mysterious which confronts us in the study. The personality of Jesus leads us to a mystery because all personality is mysterious, and that of Jesus supremely so. His personality does not introduce a mystery; it emphasises the mystery already introduced by the appearance of personality itself. The nature of God is not the only mystery; the

nature of Man is also mysterious. To relate the personality of Jesus to either the one or the other is not to explain the mystery. To assert that Jesus was Divine is to deepen the mystery connected with Divinity. To assert that He was simply human is to deepen the mystery connected with humanity. Moreover, both alike ignore the fact which confronts us in the true study of the personality of Jesus, namely, that it presents us with factors which show a relation to both. We cannot avoid mystery; we can only seek to reduce the mysterious.

To declare that Jesus was an ordinary man is to leave out those very characteristics which make Him different from every known man. His moral nature, as we have seen, transcends every other; His consciousness of God is a unique consciousness. To leave out these two factors is to omit those very elements which have given Him a supreme place in the religious life of the world. To admit these characteristics of Jesus and to seek to account for them involves us in a consideration, not merely of that common humanity with which Jesus has so many affinities, but with the Divinity with which He has affinities so markedly in excess of ours. This contrast between Jesus and the rest of humanity must not be taken to imply that He was necessarily different in kind from humanity, but it does imply that there was such a difference

of degree as to call for some attempt at explanation.

The older theological thought looked upon these facts presented in the personality of Jesus in exactly the same way as it looked upon the appearance of Man in the scheme of creation. It regarded both as the certain evidence of a distinct act of God having no necessary connection with that which had preceded them. Man was a separate creation, not an evolution. Jesus was a Divine generation, not a Divine creation. As the Creed puts it: He was begotten, not made. The newer theological thought has by no means repudiated the facts presented in the personality of Jesus, but it has frankly accepted an evolutionary hypothesis, with this important proviso, that for the process which evolution describes, the God which the religious consciousness perceives is demanded. It does not, therefore, look upon the appearance of Man as a descent from above, but as an ascent from below, the ascent, however, demanding more imperatively God as its cause than even a descent. In precisely the same way modern theology seeks for an explanation of the facts revealed in the personality of Jesus, not by the declaration of any distinction between a generation and a creation such as the older theology emphasised but, by such an enlargement and enrichment of the conception of the cosmic process as will include, not only the appearance of

Man as we have known him in the race, but of the ideal Man, as we see him in Jesus. It seeks, that is, to extend the evolutionary process up to Jesus, but it insists that to do so the conception of evolution must be enlarged and elevated so as to be capable of including that revelation of the nature of God which meets us in the personality of Jesus.

Such a position is capable of, and is constantly receiving, great misconception and great misrepresentation. The modern theologian is often represented as though he had no eye for the Divine in his outlook upon the Universe, and no room for God in the scheme of thought by which he seeks to explain the Universe. As a matter of fact he has no eye for anything else but the Divine in his outlook, and no room for anything but God in his explanation. This, however, in turn renders him liable to misrepresentation from an entirely opposite quarter. He is by no means atheistic, say these opponents; he is Pantheistic. The charge of atheism on the one hand, and the charge of Pantheism on the other, are probably the most effective witnesses to his true orthodoxy, by showing that he really occupies that middle position of true Theism. Atheism and Pantheism are both alike reactions from that absolute separation of God and the Universe which was characteristic of the older Deism. It was a case of one being taken and the other left. Atheism

took the Universe and left out God; Pantheism took God and left out the Universe.

The standpoint indicated in regard to the modern view of the cosmic process determines the method by which recent theological thought has sought to approach an explanation of the doctrine of the Incarnation. It regards the Incarnation as a fact, but it seeks for an explanation of the fact through the personality of Jesus which is known rather than through theological speculation as to the nature of God which is unknown. It is the personality of Jesus which explains and interprets the Incarnation, not any conception of an Incarnation which must explain and interpret the personality of Jesus. First get the principle as it is revealed in the facts, before deducing from a principle those applications which constitute the system by which the facts are explained. To the modern theologian the Incarnation is the revelation of a principle involved in the full conception of Deity, but it is so just because it is a revelation and not a speculation. It is an addition to our knowledge of God because it is an addition to the manifestation of God. The nature of that addition to our knowledge of the nature of God can only be expressed in correct terms of thought by an accurate study of the addition to our perception of God which the personality of Jesus gives us.

All the terms in which it is sought to define the difference between what is called orthodoxy

and heterodoxy are useless for the purpose in view because the difference is not so much in the result obtained as in the method employed. To contrast the Divinity of Jesus, for instance, with what is called the Deity of Jesus, is to give to the term Deity a connotation different from that which it has when applied to God. That no one, even of the most orthodox school, believes in the Deity of Jesus as that term is used when applied to God, is evident from the various kenotic theories which are introduced to emphasise the very distinction which is expressed in the contrasted terms, Divinity and Deity. The fact is that all our explanations of the person of Jesus, in whatever terms they may be couched, are descriptions of a personality which transcends our own experience. They are mere views of a glory which eludes all attempts to fix it on the canvas of our minds. Our shades of meaning and carefully compounded expression are but the mere pigments of the artist trying to paint a sunset. They are of vital importance to the theologian, just as the colours are to the artist, but the glory of the sunset and of Jesus are unaffected by them. The theological terms in which we seek to express our views of the person of Jesus are but artifices after all, important in their place no doubt, but the Divine glory which we perceive in the face of Jesus is the manifestation which secures from us all the homage and worship of the soul.

While we may repudiate the importance of the terms in which we express our conception of the personality of Jesus, it is necessary to emphasise the importance of the method of arriving at our conception. Our conceptions must be the result of our perceptions. The glory which God reveals is always far beyond the glory which Man conceives. The Logos or Word of the Fourth Gospel is a great conception, but the Life revealed in the Gospel is far greater. The exalted Christ of theology is a great conception, but the actual Incarnation of God in Jesus is greater still. The Divine would never have been conceived and expressed in human language unless it had first been perceived as it is expressed in Nature and in Man. It is a poor faith which fears that the landscape painter may have transcended the glory of the landscape. It is a mistaken faith which prefers to study the picture rather than the reality which the picture only faintly represents. The theology, even of inspired apostles, is theology only, just as the paintings of the old masters are paintings only. Religion, like Art, draws its inspiration from the presentation of the Divine, not from the representations. The conception of an Incarnation which is the outcome of our speculation as to what the nature of God implies may be a wonderful creation of theological art, but it falls infinitely below the actual Incarnation of Divine love which we perceive in the personality

of Jesus. It is, of course, true that the power of perception varies, and that there are views of the personality of Jesus which fall much below the theological conception. It must not be forgotten, however, that the theological conception is itself the outcome of a religious perception. It is here the same as it is in the case of Art. There may be many copies of the great masters in which the imaginative is more in evidence than the real, but the original itself is the result of a vision of reality, not of a mere creation of fancy.

In the modern conception of the Incarnation, therefore, it is the real humanity of Jesus which is the foundation upon which the doctrine must be constructed. An incarnation which does not result in a real man is a simulation and not a reality. The Church repudiated Docetism, but its repudiation was due rather to theological conceptions as to the work of Jesus than to any strong realisation of its contradiction of the very conception of incarnation. In almost all the controversies as to the person of Jesus, that which strikes the modern mind is the absoluteness of the distinction between Man and God which is the fundamental starting-point of orthodox and heterodox alike. That Jesus was a revelation of Divinity was accepted by both; that He was a revelation of humanity was accepted by neither. The Church held to the Divinity and the humanity of Jesus, but its conception of the absoluteness of the

gulf between the two was so pronounced that the mind, so long as it was perfectly free to think on the subject, hovered between the two, resting first on the one side and then on the other. If, however, such a gulf existed in fact as that imagined in thought, an incarnation would have been impossible. If the personality of Jesus reveals the human element in God, it also reveals the Divine element in humanity. If our conception of the nature of God is such as to exclude, not all, but any human element, and our conception of Man is such as to exclude any divine element, then an incarnation is an absolute contradiction in thought. God cannot become other than He is without ceasing to be God. If He becomes Man, it is, and indeed must be, because there is that in God which is human. If humanity is such that any Divinity is *ipso facto* excluded, then God has eternally excluded Himself from entering it.

Modern theology, however, is not chiefly concerned with such abstract reasoning. It turns to the actual facts revealed in the constitution of man and in the personality of Jesus. If our knowledge of God is to be something other than a creation of our own minds, it must be based on the manifestation of the Divine in the Universe and in ourselves. The only refuge from imposing our own conceptions of the Divine upon the Universe, which is a deification of it, is the

perception of the Divine in the Universe, and the formation of our theological conceptions out of those perceptions. There is an idolatry which consists in worshipping the creation of our own minds, just as there is an idolatry which consists in worshipping the creation of our own hands. It is the manifestation of the Divine as we perceive it in humanity which constitutes for us that highest perception of the Divine which is possible to us. To assert that that which we perceive in humanity as Divine is something essentially different, is to shut us off completely from any knowledge of God at all. To say that the love, justice, goodness and holiness we see manifested in human lives are essentially different in kind from what they are in God, is to falsify our perceptions by declaring that what we instinctively recognise as Divine is a pure illusion. Such a declaration, however, is incapable of proof, for we have no knowledge of these qualities as they may be supposed to exist in God. The only love of which we have any experience is the love which man shows to man. After formulating our conception of love we can extend it indefinitely and apply it to God. We must, however, have the conception to start with, and we only get this conception through our perception of its manifestation in man. The astronomer can deal with distances which utterly baffle all powers of perception, but he is dependent upon the three little

barleycorns which make the inch. The theologian may speak of the infinite love of God, may formulate a conception even of the Divine nature itself and declare that God is love, but he too is dependent upon the love that beams in the mother's face as she bends over her first-born. Man is the measure of all things with which he has to do, and even of God Himself so far as human thought is concerned, just as the little barleycorn is the measure by which alone we can represent those infinite distances which separate star from star and world from world.

It is the frank recognition of these facts, with all that they imply as to the constitution of man which explains the difference between the older and the newer method of approaching the question of the Incarnation. The older thought was dominated by conceptions of God which were divorced from the perception of God which had produced them. God was declared to be infinite love, but it was the adjective which dominated the thought rather than the substantive. Theologians were so taken up with the formulae by which they solved their problems connected with the Infinite and the Absolute, that they forgot the humble origin of the formulae. They were like astronomers working out their calculations of distance in infinite space, and unmindful of their entire dependence upon the humble little barleycorn whose size first furnished us with the

unit of length. Men were so intent on sounding the depths of the Divine nature that they forgot that their "fathoms" were after all nothing but outstretched human arms. They forgot that the Divine attributes of which they spoke with so much assurance were nothing more than the qualities they beheld in a Divine humanity. The charge of anthropomorphism to which this subjected them was a small thing compared with the effect it produced upon their conception of man and their formulation of a doctrine of the Incarnation. It placed a gulf between humanity and Divinity which was impassable from either side, and the bridges they attempted to construct in their endeavours to explain the personality of Jesus were attempts to build arches over distances which were unspannable. The modern mind sees in the personality of Jesus that the gulf has been bridged, but it also sees that the gulf is not the impassable gulf the older thought supposed. The two piers are much nearer together than we imagined.

The fundamental question with which we are here concerned is as to the relation of Jesus to humanity. Unless that is real the humanity is not a real humanity. The Virgin birth and the Nativity stories are matters upon which it is possible to lay far too much stress, either as regards their acceptance or rejection. The modern mind is undoubtedly sceptical as to their genuineness, while in most

cases it definitely rejects the accounts as quite unhistorical. It does this not simply as the result of historical criticism of the text, but chiefly because it does not feel the difficulty which the idea of a Virgin birth was intended to remove. Ordinary generation presents no obstacle to the idea of an Incarnation, except upon the assumption that human nature is essentially and necessarily sinful. We often forget the environment of the age in which the conception of the Virgin birth probably arose. Where man is not regarded as akin to God, the Divine kinship which is manifested in Jesus must be regarded as miraculous. Jesus can only be conceived of as Son of God from such a standpoint by the exclusion of the human father from any participation in His birth. If, as seems likely, the Nativity stories, or at least that part of them which refers to a Virgin birth, must be held to be theological creations, they were theological creations to account for psychological facts. The real humanity of Jesus, coupled with His ethical transcendence and unique God-consciousness, were the facts which had to be accounted for. To the mind of that age these facts necessitated such a presentation of His birth, whenever His birth became a subject of thought.

In Mark and John the subject of the birth is not an object of thought, and, therefore, there are no Nativity stories. Matthew, on the other hand,

is concerned with the relation of Jesus to the two great names in Jewish history and national life, Abraham and David. He, therefore, begins with a genealogy in which this relationship is satisfactorily shown, and he is therefore committed to some account of the Nativity. It must be confessed that there is an incongruity in tracing the descent through the male parent to Joseph, and then breaking the connection by the introduction of the words, "the husband of Mary who was the mother of Jesus." This incongruity would disappear if it were not for the story which follows, in which the paternity of Joseph is expressly denied. Standing alone the words might be justified on the ground that they introduced the more familiar name of the mother and would not necessarily imply that Joseph was not to be regarded as the father. The story which follows makes this, however, impossible. It is significant, however, that to Matthew the relation to David and Abraham is considered vital, and that this vital relation is traced through Joseph. Luke has evidently collected a number of Nativity stories which go back to the prediction of Elisabeth. A supernatural element is introduced even in the case of the birth of John the Baptist, and this element is still further emphasised in the case of the birth of Jesus. Both were great personalities, and the greatness is felt to demand some evidence of the extraordinary in their births. Luke's genealogy

equally traces the descent through Joseph, though it significantly carries it back to Adam, a son of God. A reconciliation of the two genealogies, upon which a great amount of ingenuity has been expended, must be regarded by an impartial mind as impossible.

Modern theology does not accept the accounts of a Virgin birth as in any true sense historical records of an actual event. Their origin, however, is not satisfactorily accounted for by assuming that they are pure myths due entirely to theological prepossessions. They are not mythical enough to be regarded as pure myths. In the mythical stories with which they are often compared, there is as much contrast as there is resemblance. There is a blending of the natural and the supernatural in the Nativity stories of the Gospels which is entirely wanting in the pure myth. The result is that the stories, though mythical, are yet destitute of the incongruous and the grotesque. The stories seem to point to something extraordinary in the circumstances of the birth of Jesus, but what that was it is impossible to say. To the age in which the conception of the Virgin birth arose Jesus seemed to be unaccountable apart from a virgin birth, and they found in the circumstances attending His birth material which suggested the account they gave of it. It must be remembered, however, that it is in the Gospels which give us the Nativity stories that we have the genealogies. These tables of

heredity show how the relation of Jesus to the family and race in which He was born was considered of prime importance. If the Virgin birth seems to separate Him from humanity, the genealogies link Him to humanity in the closest ties.

This real relation to humanity necessitates an entirely different conception of Incarnation from that which distinguishes the older thought. The difference may perhaps be best described as the difference between an ascent and a descent. The older thought regarded the Incarnation as a descent of the Divine into the human. The newer thought regards it as the ascent of the Divine through the human. There is an interesting difference between an ascent and a descent even in the Gospels. Matthew, the Jewish writer, starts his genealogical table with the great figure of Jewish history, Abraham, and brings it down step by step to Joseph, using the great word father to indicate the relationship. Luke, on the other hand, begins with Jesus Himself, and carries the relationship back step by step until he arrives at God Himself, using the great word son to indicate the kinship. The later thought of Luke is undoubtedly the richer, and its starting-point is the much more real figure of Jesus than the shadowy figure of Abraham. In much the same way the older theology, in its conception of the Incarnation, started with God and brought us down to Jesus

born of the Virgin Mary, with the result that the birth of Jesus was isolated from every other birth. The newer theology starts with a normal birth of Jesus, but carries us back even to the beginning of the vast and mighty cosmic process itself. In its thought the Incarnation is not a single miraculous event in time unconnected with and unrelated to all that has gone before. It is rather that mystery or hidden truth lying in the mind of God Who created all things with a view to the manifestation of that eternal purpose which finds its full expression in Jesus the Christ. Incarnation, therefore, is not something which has to be contrasted with evolution; it is evolution transfigured and glorified. Evolution is not an explanation of incarnation, but incarnation is rather the real explanation of evolution. The cosmic process, that is, is not a blind aimless movement; it is nothing less than a manifestation of the invisible God, a passing on from one glory to another, an unfolding of rich and ever richer beauty. It is the Word of God taking shape, Whose glory we behold reflected in the tiny dewdrop and the blade of grass, no less than in the firmament of glittering stars. This ascent of the Divine till it manifests itself in the glory of God in the face of Jesus, what is it but that the Divine first descended into the lowest depths that it might ascend through all the stages of the vast cosmic process to heights of glory which eye hath

not seen and which it hath not entered into the heart of man even to conceive? Long before evolution was discovered the theologian had come across the great principle and called it incarnation. As revealed in the personality of Jesus, however, the principle seemed so Divine that it was isolated and differentiated from all other manifestation of Divine activity. The vastness of the evolutionary process which modern Science has brought to light has broken down this barrier of separation, and the modern mind sees that through the process of the ages *one* increasing purpose runs, and that that one purpose is the manifestation of God. The process is, not an intrusion from without but, an evolution from within; it is not a descent from above but, an ascent from below.

Attempts have recently been made to differentiate the Divine manifested in the Universe from the Divine manifested in the personality of Jesus, as though the difference were not one of degree but of kind. The first is spoken of as evidence of the immanence of God, while the second is spoken of as evidence of the transcendence of God. That there is a difference in the two manifestations is, of course, admitted. The real question is as to how the difference is to be defined. Immanence and transcendence are two terms which contrast the revealed nature of God from the unrevealed but

inferred nature of God. The contrast is made to prevent the inference being drawn that the fulness of God is exhausted in the manifestation He has made. It is based upon the recognition that the noumenal is, and ever must be, more than the phenomenal. The contrast, however, does not imply that the nature of God as it is revealed is different in kind from the nature which is unrevealed. It means that the God Who reveals Himself must be greater than the God Who is revealed. God, as He is in His infinite fulness of being, must transcend even the fulness of being which is manifested in the cosmic process. We do not, however, distinguish between the revealed and the unrevealed God as though the one were real and the other unreal, as Hindu thought distinguishes between a noumenal and a phenomenal Brahma. Such a distinction would effectually exclude us from any real knowledge of God at all. Nor do we, on the other hand, identify the revealed and the unrevealed God, as though the content of the one coincided with and equalled that of the other. Such a conception would issue in an essentially Pantheistic conception of God. We mean that the God Who transcends the manifestation of Himself which He has made is the same God Who is immanent in the manifestation. Our knowledge which is derived from the manifestation is not knowledge of illusory being and therefore unreal knowledge; it is the

perception of real being and, therefore, it is real knowledge.

A clear perception of this distinction makes it impossible to sanction any attempt to distinguish between the Divine revealed in the cosmic process and the Divine revealed in the Incarnation, which involves a difference of kind rather than of degree. A difference of kind would involve the repudiation of all our knowledge of God derived from the manifestation of God revealed in the cosmic process. To set up a difference of kind between the immanent and the transcendent God, which this attempted differentiation of evolution and incarnation implies, is to set up two Gods, the Immanent and the Transcendent, the One manifesting Himself in the cosmic process and the Other in the Incarnation. Moreover, it is a misuse of the term transcendent to apply it even to the nature of God as revealed in the personality of Jesus. If the manifestation in Jesus exhausts the fulness of God's being, then He is no longer transcendent. The difference between God in Jesus and God in Nature is a difference between two mediums of manifestation and not between two Gods. One cannot be described as the Transcendent God and the other as the Immanent God, except by implying that there are two and not one. The real difference between the two manifestations must be sought, not by any arbitrary distinction in the region of

mind but, in the place where it really exists, namely, in the difference between the personality of Jesus and that of other men. To express that difference in any other terms than a difference of degree is to contradict the very conception of incarnation. If the difference in the personality of Jesus from that of other men be a difference of kind, then to speak of His humanity at all is merely to confuse thought.

It is quite possible to make a distinction between the two terms God-man and Divine-man so as to imply a difference, not merely of degree but, of kind. Such a distinction, however, must be taken with all that it carries with it. In the term God-man there are two nouns, the first of which is used as an adjective or it is not. If it is used as an adjective it can do nothing more than qualify the noun, and in that case it is merely the equivalent of the true adjective, Divine. If it is used, however, not as an adjective but as a noun, then it means that the two, God and Man, exist as it were side by side, neither being essentially affected by the other, or else that the two together form a combination which is partly one and partly the other, but actually neither the one nor the other. If the two exist side by side, the result is a duality and not a unity. If the two form a combination, the result is a something which is neither Divine nor human, but half of one and half of the other. Both these are possible as

thought-conceptions, but what is not possible is to call either of them a true Incarnation. If the Incarnation means anything at all it means that God became man. A God-man, in either of the two senses above described, is not a man, whatever else it may be. A man riding on a horse may be called a horseman, but the word horse merely qualifies the other noun, man. The horse upon which the man rides might be called a man-horse, instead of a riding-horse, but the word man would in that case be nothing more than an adjective to describe the kind of horse. The two, that is, are not two nouns, but a noun and an adjective. A centaur, on the other hand, is a definite term applicable to the conception of a figure supposed to be half man and half horse. The difficulty in the case of such a term, however, is that it is a conception and not a perception. We can only judge of what the Incarnation really is by our perception of that which we see in the personality of Jesus. That personality is neither a duality nor a combination ; it is a unity. The Divinity of Jesus involves a divinity of man as man, from which it differs in degree, but not in kind. To take away a Divinity from humanity is in the last resort to take away humanity from Jesus. If Man is in no real sense Divine, then Jesus was in no real sense human. If Jesus was in any real sense human, then Man is also in a real sense Divine. These conceptions of the

Incarnation are all involved in our perception of what is involved in the personality of Jesus.

Incarnation is a conception which is absolutely inconsistent with any Deistic conception of God. The older Unitarianism recognised this and definitely rejected the conception in the interests of a strict and consistent Deism. It rejected the Divinity of Jesus, not from any failure to recognise the Divine in Jesus, but because it felt that to attribute Divinity to Jesus was to take away His true humanity. The gulf between God and Man was regarded as impassable from either side. God could no more become Man than Man could become God. This gulf was just as absolute to the Trinitarian, who in this respect was as Deistic as the Unitarian. His conception of the Godhead, however, as a Trinity enabled him to feel that the gulf might be crossed from the Divine side by predicating an Incarnation of the second Person in the Trinity. He no more asserted, or thought of asserting, that the Godhead became Man, than the Unitarian thought of asserting that God became Man. The real distinction between the two was not in their recognition of the Divine in Jesus; it was fundamentally a distinction in their respective conceptions of God. They were both equally Deistic in their sense of the gulf between Man and God. They differed in their conception of the relation of Jesus to God, because in the Unitarian's conception of God there was no

room for a relation while in the Trinitarian's there was. Modern Unitarian and modern Trinitarian have both departed from the Deistic standpoint, and precisely for the same reason, that it is not consistent with facts. The absolute separation between God and the Universe which Deism implies makes any real connection between the two impossible. The creation of the Universe is as inconsistent with a Deistic conception of God as a providential and immanent control of the Universe. A truer perception of the facts has shown us that the whole cosmic process is inexplicable, save as we infer a something or some one working within the process which is at least equal to its production. This the religious nature recognises as God. It is no longer, however, the conception of a God Who is a *Deus ex machina*, but an immanent God, and the Universe is no longer a machine, but a body. This change in the conception of God is true both as regards Unitarian and Trinitarian, and it is the result of a clearer perception of the facts. The same thing is noticeable in regard to the personality of Jesus. In no direction has Unitarian thought shown a greater difference from the older thought than in the terms in which it now speaks of Jesus. It speaks of the Divinity of Jesus in a way which would have been fiercely repudiated by the older thought, and regarded as idolatrous. It does so, however, without in the slightest degree retracting

its declaration of belief in the correctness of its conception of the Divine nature to which it owes its name. The change is due to a clearer perception of the facts which meet us in a study of the personality of Jesus. There is that in Jesus which cannot be adequately described without using the word Divine. No *a priori* conception of the Divine nature can justify us in calling that human which we feel to be truly Divine. On the other hand, the Trinitarian has by no means stood still, either as regards his doctrine of the nature of God or of the person of Jesus. He recognises the immanence of God in a way which the older thought would have repudiated as Pantheistic. He does so without in the slightest degree admitting that he has departed from the true Theistic standpoint. Equally pronounced is the altered way in which he speaks of the real humanity of Jesus. His recognition of the real limitations of Jesus, of His participation in the incorrect and imperfect conceptions of His age and race; the repudiation of the conception of the impeccability of Jesus, and insistence on the real moral probation to which He was subjected; are matters which would have exposed him to the charge of rank heresy in the old days, and do not always keep him free from taint even in these modern days. His doctrine of the person of Jesus has been greatly modified by a study of the actual facts in the life of Jesus, as that life is presented under

the influence of a true historical criticism. Orthodox theology, however, has not yet been carefully and frankly revised. It has contented itself with making large annotations in the text, with the result that the annotations are often inconsistent with the text. This is especially the case with the chapter on the Incarnation. The text here is a Deistic text, while the annotations are all Theistic, and so pronouncedly Theistic that they contradict the text. Moreover, the annotations are so numerous, and based upon such entirely different readings, that an authorised recension of the text is the only thing that can save the orthodox position. So long as such a recension is delayed it necessitates the appearance of the many recensions of individuals which orthodoxy too often dismisses with the contemptuous remark that they are not only unauthorised, but unscientific. The latter charge may be as true as the former, but the far more excellent way is the production of a recension which is both.

Hindu religious thought has also the conception of Incarnation, and it is interesting to note the particular aspect of the doctrine which the Oriental mind has emphasised. Between the philosophical religious thought of India, as represented by Vedantism, and the spiritual religious thought which finds expression in worship of the incarnations of Vishnu, supreme amongst which is the Krishna cult, there is a contradiction which must

be regarded as absolute. Brahma, the One and Sole Reality, the One without a second, is so conceived that an incarnation is, strictly speaking, unthinkable. An incarnation of Brahma, as thus conceived, would be the establishment of relation on the part of One who is incapable of manifestation, a union between that which is alone real and that which is essentially unreal. In philosophic Hinduism, therefore, there is no incarnation of God at all, nor can there be from the nature of the conception of God characteristic of Hindu philosophic thought. The basis for any conception of incarnation is found in the idea of a phenomenal Brahma, Ishwara, the world-framer. This phenomenal Brahma is posited by Vedantic thought in order to account for the Universe, which its conception of Brahma compels it to regard as unreal. The relation of this phenomenal Brahma to the noumenal Brahma is the one and only thing which Vedantism admits to be incapable of explanation. In Vedantic thought the phenomenal Brahma is no more real than the Universe. It asserts that there are degrees of reality, one thing being more real than another, or one thing being less unreal than another. There is a contradiction here which is absolute, because if Brahma is the Sole Reality, to speak of degrees of reality or degrees of unreality is unintelligible. The contradiction is involved in the fundamental conception of a One which is

an absolute simplicity. Vedantic thought does not arrive at its conception of God by a perception of the Divine. It starts with an *a priori* conception which it is for ever imposing upon its perceptions. According to its *a priori* conception the Divine is absolutely distinct from the Universe. That which it perceives in the Universe as Divine, therefore, can be nothing more than illusory. This *a priori* conception is constantly vitiating every conclusion at which perception arrives. The Universe cannot be a manifestation of Brahma, says the Hindu philosopher, for Brahma does not manifest; Brahma simply is. The Universe, however, does reveal God, says Hindu religious thought, and it reveals nothing but God. Just so, replies the philosopher, but the God it reveals is not Brahma, the One and Sole Reality, but a phenomenal Brahma, knowing which you only know Avidya, Ignorance; perceiving which you only perceive Maya, Illusion.

Hindu philosophy allows the fullest liberty to the religious nature to formulate its perceptions derived from the relation the soul sustains with God and the Universe, but it insists that the conception of the mind as to the nature of the ultimate reality shall stamp as unreal every conclusion at which perception may arrive. The Hindu religious nature has assented to this domination of the intellect with a unanimity which is remarkable, and with a result which has been disastrous to the

religious nature. It has enthroned God, not as He is or as He has revealed Himself, but as the human mind has conceived He must be, in the supreme place, and it has robbed the manifestation of God in the Universe of all reality. It is necessary to bear this in mind in considering the Hindu idea of incarnation, because the Oriental conception, while having points of contact with the Occidental, is essentially different.

It must be understood in the construction of any theory of incarnation which will be applicable to Hindu religious thought, that the avatar (incarnation) is not an incarnation of God, as He really is, but solely of an unreal and illusory Brahma. Vishnu represents this phenomenal Brahma conceived of in that aspect of his illusory existence which is described as that of Preserver and Sustainer, while Siva is this phenomenal Brahma conceived of as Destroyer or Resolver. Creation, Preservation, and Resolution or Destruction thus constitute the Hindu Triad, which, however, is purely phenomenal and the activities are purely illusory. It is Vishnu who is conceived of as incarnating, though so-called incarnations of Brahma and of Siva are occasionally mentioned. The avatars of Vishnu, however, are the true incarnations of Hindu religious thought. It is remarkable that these incarnations reveal some sort of an ascending order, beginning with the fish, ascending to the tortoise, the boar,

the half-man and half-lion, to the dwarf, and finally to the human incarnations of Rama, Krishna, and Buddha. These lower forms of incarnation present no difficulty to Hindu thought, because the phenomenal Brahma is conceived of as pervading all things. The form of the avatar is merely a cloak which is used as a disguise. The true object is not to reveal, but to conceal the deity. In all the incarnations some object is aimed at for which it is necessary to assume a disguise, and the accomplishment of the special aim is the sole object of importance. A manifestation of the nature or character of God is apparently not even thought of, and the nature of the means adopted in accomplishing the object is equally unimportant. The religious ideas which are thus seeking to find expression in these stories of the incarnations are all vitiated and distorted by the underlying conception that the gods, and Vishnu as chief of them, are all purely phenomenal beings having no real existence. Actions and motives, therefore, which would be utterly unthinkable in connection with God, as conceived in the Western sense, are attributed to the avatars without even a suggestion of impropriety. The human avatars are more truly deifications than incarnations in the strict sense.

The contradiction between the philosophic and the religious thought of Hinduism is probably most pronounced and best illustrated in the

Krishna avatar. The Krishna of the Puranas and the Krishna of the *Bhagavadgita* are not only different figures; they are utterly inconsistent figures. The Puranic Krishna is an avatar quite after the popular Hindu conception; the Krishna of the *Gita* is a mere dramatic creation. The discourse between Krishna and Arjuna is essentially a philosophic discussion on the relation of the individual to the supreme soul. As such it is in harmony with the philosophic basis of all Hindu thought, and its prime object is the reconciliation of all the conflicting schools. The so-called historic circumstances, however, and its alleged place in the *Mahabharata* are utterly opposed to the philosophic basis on which the whole discussion rests. From the religious standpoint Krishna is an incarnation of the god Vishnu disguised as a charioteer, and he appears as the religious instructor of the Pandava warrior and hero, Arjuna, for the express purpose of showing him that salvation is attainable in the faithful discharge of the ordinary duties of life performed in whole-hearted devotion to God. This is the religious *motif* of the work, coloured with the religious ideas of Hindu Pantheism. It is this true religious *motif* which gives to the *Gita* its religious value, a value which it will never lose. From the philosophic standpoint, however, Krishna must be regarded as the Supreme Brahma, the Sole Reality, whose incarnation is unthinkable and whose

essence is pure undifferentiated Being. The whole aim of the discussion is to show the absolute identity of the individual and the Supreme Soul together with the utter unreality of the whole Universe. The philosophy and the religion, therefore, are here in hopeless contradiction. Krishna cannot both be and not be the noumenal Brahma. If he is an incarnation of Vishnu, as the religious standpoint demands, then all the references to himself must be interpreted as referring to the phenomenal Brahma, in which case they are a flat contradiction of the philosophic standpoint, and a refutation of the whole argument. On the other hand, if Krishna is the Supreme Being, as the philosophic standpoint demands, he cannot be an incarnation of Vishnu, and the whole religious purpose of the *Gita* is destroyed. It is this dilemma which is constantly presented to Hindu thought. Either the philosophy or the religion has to be abandoned, for the one is irreconcilable with the other. The Indian mind has had to choose between these two alternatives all through its history, and the effect of the choice is seen both in the past and in the present history. In the religious evolution of India a subtle metaphysical mind has contended with a sensitive religious nature, with the result that philosophy and religion have both in turn dominated rather than assisted each other. The rise of Buddhism was a revolt of the religious nature against the tyranny of Brahminical meta-

physics quite as much as against the pretensions of Brahminical priestcraft. Its so-called atheistical teaching was a protest against the value of a purely metaphysical conception of God. Buddha felt that the fundamental conception upon which the metaphysical Brahmin based religion was incapable of ministering to the religious nature. The real Brahma was a mere metaphysical conception, while the gods of the Vedas were but phenomenal and not real. Like a modern Pragmatist he turned away from mere metaphysical subtleties to a consideration of the things which had real value as a means of escaping the constant revolutions of the wheel of life. With his simple creed and his beautiful life Buddha incarnated in his own person the religious ideal of his people and, before the absolute sincerity and whole-hearted devotion of his followers, Brahmanism retreated discredited and discomfited.

For a time the religious nature of the Hindu had the field to itself, and the rapid spread of Buddhism abroad shows how strong and vigorous that nature can be when it is fed and nourished. What Brahmin metaphysical subtlety could not do, Brahmin ingenuity accomplished, and Buddhism was subjugated not by force of arms, but by diplomatic art. Buddha was incorporated in the Hindu pantheon, and represented as an incarnation of Vishnu. It is extremely probable that it was to this astute policy of Brahmanism that

Hinduism owes its elaboration of the doctrine of incarnation. Be this as it may, it is certain that the conception of incarnation is a contradiction of the conception of Brahma which underlies Hindu metaphysic. The *Bhagavadgita* was an attempt at a reconciliation of the metaphysical mind and the intensely religious nature of India. It was evidently written by one who was as intensely religious as he was subtly metaphysical. Its success, as a work of consummate art, may be judged by the fact that it is admired by all the sects, however diverse in opinion. Each sect finds in it the strongest confirmation of its own most cherished opinions and the truest refutation of the opinions of others. The dilemma, however, remains exactly where it was, and, in fact, is most pronounced in the very book which was to resolve it. Religious India takes one or other of the two alternatives offered to its choice, and divides into a metaphysical India with its *Gnyana marga* and a spiritual India with its *Bhakti marga*. The two ways, however, are not converging lines meeting at a common centre; they are parallel lines which never meet.

East and West have been confronted with the same great religious problem,—the construction of a worthy and adequate conception of God. In their manner of treating the problem there are many similarities and some striking differences. In both we see the same dominance of the mind

over the spirit, with the result that a conception of the mind has tended over and over again to nullify the perception of the spirit. In the West the Deistic *a priori* conception of God dominated religious thought and rendered the perception of the Divine in the Universe and in Man null and void. In the East the Vedantic *a priori* conception of a metaphysical Brahma has dominated the religious thought of India, rendering any perception of the Divine in the Universe impossible. There is, however, a remarkable contrast which is worth noticing. The Deistic conception of the West affected the relation of God to the Universe and to Man. The Vedantic conception of the East affected the relation of God to the Universe only. In Vedantic thought the Universe is a mere appearance, while the soul of Man is identified not with the phenomenal Brahma, but with the noumenal Brahma. In both East and West appears the conception of incarnation as distinct from mere deification. There is also a similar tendency both in the East and in the West to represent incarnation as a mere assumption of a human body, rather than as the real presence of the Divine within the limits of human personality. In the East, incarnation is the descent of the Divine with a view to the accomplishment of some object, and for that purpose the Divine is concealed and disguised. In the West, the Incarnation is with a view to the manifestation of the Divine nature

within the limits of human personality. The dominance of Vedantic thought makes the Hindu conception of incarnation to be that of the work of the phenomenal Brahma, and in no true sense a revelation of God as understood in the West.

The great aim of the human mind has been to conceive God, while the great aim of the human spirit has been to perceive God. Conception, however, has been unwilling to wait on perception. The *a priori* assumption is more attractive than the *a posteriori* conclusion. In modern religious thought, however, a true conception is the result of a real perception. God can be recognised long before He can be described. We can indicate what is Divine long before we can predicate what the Divine is. The soul erects its altar to the unknown God long before apostle or prophet arises to tell it who the unknown God is. The Incarnation of God in Jesus furnishes us with the highest manifestation of the Divine which has been made. By means of it we may hope to formulate a conception of God which is at once worthy and adequate. That Incarnation, however, is not an isolated event having no connection with anything which has preceded it. It is not a contradiction, but a confirmation of that unfolding of the Divine which evolution, rightly interpreted, reveals. It is at once a revelation both of Divinity and of humanity. No man has seen God at any time, but we have seen in the personality of Jesus,

the Divine in a measure and in a pureness which we have seen nowhere else. If the Theism of the West is to complete its emancipation from the old Deistic conception, it can only do so as it interprets the relation between the Divine and the human as that relation is revealed in the person of Jesus.

The Incarnation is not merely the manifestation of God; it is equally the revelation of ideal humanity. If as we gaze upon the glory revealed in the face of Jesus we exclaim that this must be the Son of God, it is equally true that as we look upon His perfect humanity no less revealed in His deeds and life, we are forced to exclaim that this must be the Brother for whom we have waited so long. If God is the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, He must also be the Our Father to Whom our Brother taught us to pray. If there is a humanity indissolubly joined to the Divinity in the person of Jesus, then there is a Divinity indissolubly joined to humanity in our personality too. Whatever alterations in our conception of the Divine nature these perceptions involve must be made, for it is not by confining ourselves to that which we have already comprehended that true knowledge grows, but by admitting every fresh apprehension of the truth. In the same way, if Vedantism is to complete its explanation it must emancipate itself from the true illusion created by its own mind of an unreal Universe standing over against a Brahma, who is the Sole Reality, but

with which the Universe has absolutely no relation. It can only do this as it recognises an Incarnation which reveals in an ethical radiance and a mystic consciousness which are unique the glory of the true and real God. It is in the Divine Incarnation in Jesus the Christ that the Hindu religious nature will find its true satisfaction. It is in the interpretation of that Divine Incarnation that the Hindu philosophical mind will achieve its greatest triumph and render its highest service to the world.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CROSS OF CHRIST

CHRISTIANITY is not merely the religion of The Christ; it is the religion of The Christ Who was crucified. The Cross is as essential to the religion as the Christ. It is easy to regard both as mere myths, but the religion which emerges as the result of the process is a mythical Christianity having no real connection with historic Christianity. To find a Christ and a Cross in the solar myth is not at all difficult; the difficulty is to evolve a Christianity from the solar myth which bears any resemblance to the Christianity of history. Historic Christianity may be made mythical, but mythical Christianity cannot be made historic. In the same way it is possible to represent Christianity as the religion of Jesus, the Ideal Man, and to forget the grim fact that the Ideal Man was crucified. The result may be the production of an ideal religion perfectly adapted to ideal men, but it will bear little resemblance to that historic Christianity which

exercised its wonderful influence on actual men. It is the Cross, whatever interpretation we may put upon it, which has been the distinctive feature of historic Christianity. The Cross has affected The Christ quite as much as The Christ has affected the Cross. For the explanation of the Christianity of history, a Christ without a Cross would be as inadequate as a Cross without a Christ. The death of Jesus, that is, is as significant as His life. Both mutually interpret each other, and the religion which arises as the result of the perception of the significance of the revelation, not only includes both factors but, interprets them in the light they each throw upon the other. The crucified Christ is of necessity an entirely different conception from The Christ. It must be remembered, however, that it was not the mere conception of The Christ which produced Christianity; it was essentially the conception of The Christ Who had been crucified.

The religious significance of the death of Jesus is, and must be, the result, not of any *a priori* conceptions deduced from other religious ideas but, of the interpretation of the actual facts. Theology must not impose its ideas on the historic facts; it must first perceive the real significance in the facts, and from that perception formulate its theological conception. Many theories of the Atonement are perfectly logical deductions from their premisses, but they are anything but theo-

logical inductions from the facts. They are entirely mythical, in the sense that the principles they enunciate are not found in the facts, but imposed upon them. If the death of Jesus has any religious significance, it will doubtless exhibit certain correspondencies with others to be found both in Jewish and in Gentile religions. The true significance, however, must be found in the facts and not in the correspondencies. If, for instance, there is anything more than a merely superficial resemblance between the slaying of the Paschal lamb and the crucifixion, due to the date of the crucifixion synchronising with the Passover festival, it must be sought for in the facts which led to the death, interpreted in the light of their own true significance. To explain the death of Jesus by parallels drawn from the Jewish conception of the Atonement is to impose a religious meaning on an event rather than to see the religious significance in an event.

If the religious significance in the death of Jesus is so great that it has abolished for all time the slaying of the Paschal lamb, it must itself present such distinct and different elements as will account for the effect it has undoubtedly produced. The religious thought and feeling which find expression in the sentiment that "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and of goats to take away sin," is something much deeper than a mere renunciation of animal sacrifices; it

represents an entirely different conception of sacrifice itself. The Jewish sacrificial system is the embodiment of religious conceptions in ceremonial rites which are framed with a view to illustrate these conceptions. The conceptions, that is, are primary; the sacrificial rites are secondary. The lamb is sacrificed with the consciousness on the part of the sacrificer of the symbolical character of the act. However much this symbolism may be lost sight of in later ages, it was undoubtedly present in the institution of the ceremony. In the sacrificial act, when instituted, the religious significance was not perceived as contained in the act; the religious significance was expressly put into the act. The slaying of the lamb, therefore, was no longer a mere slaughter; it became a sacrifice.

Christian theology has not infrequently treated the death of Jesus as though it were ceremonial rather than actual. This is to give an entirely fictitious character to the death and to make the whole theology based upon it utterly unreal. The death of Jesus was no more a sacrificial ceremony than the Cross was a sacrificial altar. Theology must build on an historic crucifixion, and that crucifixion was a brutal murder concealed under the disguise of a judicial execution. Religious thought and reflection may transfigure, but they must not transpose. The priests were not there to make an offering to God; they

were there to wreak their vengeance upon their victim. The victim is not the victim of an angry God; He is the victim of angry men. The Cross is not an altar; it is a scaffold. If we find in these events a deep religious significance, it must be because we see it in the facts, not because we either transpose the facts or impose religious ideas on the facts.

While it is necessary to insist that the death of Jesus must be looked at as an historic event connected with the passions and motives of the various actors in the scene, it is equally necessary to insist that it possesses unique elements which lift it above the local and temporary, and give it a significance which is universal and permanent. The true nature of any event is determined, not by the time and place in which it occurs but, by the nature of the forces whose action it discloses. John Hampden's refusal to pay ship-money cannot be understood or appreciated apart from the great struggle between King and Parliament which followed it and gave it its significance. Luther's burning of the Papal Bull cannot be estimated aright apart from the long conflict between Pope and People which issued in the Reformation. Hampden and Luther in the respective political and religious spheres were not mere individuals; they were in a very real sense incarnations of the two great nations, England and Germany. Their acts, therefore, were not

mere personal actions of a temporary and local character; they were embodiments of national movements, and as such possess national significance. The defiance of the King by the subject and of the Pope by the priest are totally misconceived unless the personal and local are subordinated to the national and universal, as seen from the wider standpoint which the subsequent history shows to be the true viewpoint.

In the same way the death of Jesus cannot be interpreted aright unless we perceive those larger issues which the unique personality of Jesus and the conflict of different ideals present. The Cross of Jesus must be seen in perspective and viewed in the light which history throws upon it. When so seen, the scaffold becomes something more than a scaffold; the execution is seen to be something more than the expiation of a political offence. The offence which the Cross presented to the religious mind is not merely removed; it is entirely transformed into a ground of glorying. The public execution has not only been redeemed from the infamy attached to it; it has been entirely altered in character, so that instead of being regarded as the exhibition of human hatred it has come to be regarded as the supreme manifestation of Divine love. To attribute all this to the alchemy of religious faith is either to deny that the change has been really effected, or else

it is merely to transfer the wonder which confronts us at the end of the process to the beginning, where it is a greater wonder still. If alchemy is the correct word, then the transmutation is not real but imaginary. In that case, however, we are confronted with the extraordinary fact that the verdict of history is on the side of the imaginary, for it shows us that the effect of the imaginary is more permanent than the effect of reality. If, on the other hand, the transmutation is admitted, then religious faith is a veritable philosopher's stone of priceless value. Is it not, however, a much more reasonable explanation to assume that instead of any transmutation we have the results of Time's assay, which shows us that what was regarded as a mere piece of rock was in reality a nugget of pure gold?

There are two points of view from which the death of Jesus, regarded as an historical event, must be looked at if we are to arrive at any correct interpretation of its meaning. We must look at it from the point of view of the actors in the scene, and also from the wider standpoint of the principles which were involved. If there is no religious significance in the actual event, then none can be got out of it. The death of Jesus was a grim and terrible tragedy, and any explanation which ignores the essential parts played in it by the real actors is artificial and unreal. The tragedy was not the tragedy of drama, in which

the actors assume parts; it was the tragedy of real life in which those who took part in it worked out their destinies. From the wider standpoint in which the scene comes before us as the conflict of principles, the dramatic element of necessity comes in, and those taking part in the actual tragedy of real life are seen to be at the same time representing a scene in the greater tragedy of universal life. Their real part in this larger tragedy, however, is determined by the actual part they played in the smaller, and not *vice versa*. The true test as to the correctness of the representation in the drama, therefore, is its agreement with the presentation made in the actual tragedy. Theology has by no means observed this essential distinction, with the result that it has imposed its dramatic readings on to its historical reading, thus converting history into drama, and drama into history. There is both drama and history, but the drama must be constructed out of the history, and not imposed upon it.

It is clear from the narratives that the leaders of the two great religious parties, Pharisees and Sadducees, in temporary alliance, were directly responsible for the death of Jesus. It is also equally clear that the people were accessories. The motives which swayed these different actors were varied, but they must at least have found some common ground of agreement. It seems

also clear from the narratives that their action was partly religious and partly political. The political, however, arose out of the religious. If we bear these facts in mind, it is not difficult to see that the common hostility, exhibited by these diverse parties amongst the actors, is founded upon a general agreement that Jesus was dangerous to the aims and purposes of each. It was not that His aims and purposes differed from those of either of the two great parties, which caused them to combine together for His destruction ; it was rather because they saw in Him something which was dangerous to their own positions and to the safety and security of the existing order. His uncompromising opposition to the religious ideals they represented was sufficient to arouse their animosity, but it was evidently the fear which His acceptance by the people as the Messiah engendered in their minds which led to their combining against Him. He was a Messiah whom none could accept with any hope of furthering their particular aims, while His own aims were of such a character as not only to be unacceptable, but in their opinion to be doomed to failure. From His success they realised they had nothing to gain, while from His failure they had everything to fear.

The political charge which was formulated against Jesus, when the case was transferred to Pilate's court, was not a mere device for securing

His death. Between the blasphemy for which the religious tribunal condemned Him, and the speaking against Caesar with which He was charged in the Roman court, there is a distinct connection. He claimed to be the Messiah, a claim which the religious leaders repudiated. He was, therefore, according to the only conception of Messiahship possible to them, a rebel against Caesar. Though the political crime of sedition would have been a merit in their eyes if He had been an acceptable and acknowledged Messiah, their repudiation of His claim made it possible for them to fall back on the political offence as a means of securing that condemnation which they had themselves pronounced on the religious offence. A non-political Messiah was from the standpoint of both Pharisee and Sadducee an impossible conception. Moreover, in the state of Jewish national life at the time, the Messianic claim could not be made without a realisation of the danger it involved. The religious idea was no doubt fundamental, but the political idea was dominant in the minds of leaders and people.

The political danger could only be avoided by the acceptance of the religious idea. It was this consideration which compelled Jesus to declare Himself. On His acceptance or rejection depended the fate of the nation itself. The political conception was a standing danger, deliverance from which could only be obtained by the acceptance

of the religious ideal for which Jesus stood. He foresaw the disaster which the political conception prognosticated. To Jesus both Pharisee and Sadducee were blind leaders of the blind, not merely as regards their religious guidance, but also as regards their political leadership. His assumption, therefore, of the rôle of Messiah was not the result of a desperate bid for personal advantage; it was a deliberate attempt to save the nation from the ruin He foresaw, a ruin which so soon followed His own death. His triumphal entry into Jerusalem is meaningless, unless we see that it was of the nature of a forlorn hope forced upon Him by the conception of Messiahship which the leaders of His nation were fomenting in the minds of the people. To both parties Jesus was a man Who had undertaken a part for which He was not fitted and which He did not at all understand. As a religious teacher and healer He was probably obnoxious to them, but He was in no sense dangerous to them. It was the political aspect of the case, which His public entry into Jerusalem and His popularity with the masses had emphasised, which turned their dislike into hatred and their contempt into violent opposition.

In their capacity as religious leaders and teachers both parties had been discredited in the public eye by every encounter they had had with Him. His open assumption of the character of

Messiah had given a political turn to events of which the two great parties did not fail to take full advantage. Their first act was to try and alienate popular sympathy which had so emphatically pronounced in His favour on the occasion of His public entry. The question as to the lawfulness of paying tribute to Caesar was designed with the greatest astuteness. It was put forward with the object of securing a definite pronouncement on the political question of the day which would resolve any doubt there might be in the minds of a few of the leaders who were inclined to think that the mission of Jesus had no political significance. Men of the stamp of Nicodemus and the young Ruler make it clear that, however few in number, there were such even amongst the leaders. The speech of Caiaphas, with its contemptuous dismissal of the scruples of conscience, makes this quite clear. The chief object of the deputation, however, was to alienate popular sympathy. The whole of His public life and teaching made it pretty certain that Jesus would not declare against the paying of tribute. They felt, therefore, that there was little risk that His popularity would be increased as the result of the deputation. While His answer covered them with confusion, it effected its main object in at least damping the enthusiasm of the people. The admiration for the answer was momentary. The fact that He had not declared against the obnoxious

Roman tribute, however, could not fail to alienate popular sympathy.

The effect amongst the leaders themselves was, doubtless, to remove the hesitation of any who shrank from taking definite action against Jesus. It emphasised the conviction that He was assuming a part for which He was quite unequal, and that nothing but trouble and possible disaster were to be expected if matters were left alone. The speech of Caiaphas is that of one who knows his audience thoroughly, and is a revelation of a good deal of the previous discussion. Its abrupt and impatient commencement—"Ye know nothing at all"—shows us how, in his opinion, the real question for which they had met together had been shirked by those who had spoken, and indicates also that many in the Council had been averse to taking any strong action in the matter. Some had, doubtless, expressed the opinion that Jesus was a negligible factor in the political sphere Whom they could easily afford to despise. Others had sought to emphasise the heretical character of His teaching with a view to showing that He ought at least to be reprimanded. A few had probably urged that not only was He harmless from the political standpoint, but that He was a good and kindly soul, Whose deeds of healing had made Him popular, and that there was no need to proceed to extreme measures in dealing with Him. Caiaphas breaks in upon these discussions in fierce

impatience at their irrelevancy. What is the use of discussing the person when it is the position He occupies which constitutes the real danger? He may be either the harmless fool some have represented Him, or the misguided heretic others have asserted, or even the kindly benefactor a few have tried to make out. What, however, has all this to do with the plain fact which stares them in the face,—that to the people He is a political figure and nothing else? Whether He has taken this position Himself, or simply been thrust into it by events makes absolutely no difference. He is not the Messiah. Of that there is no question, and no one has even suggested that He is. He can be nothing but a Messianic Pretender, therefore, in fact, whether He regards Himself as Messiah or not. From a Messianic Pretender nothing but disaster to themselves and ruin to the nation can come. Why hesitate, therefore, in the course to be taken, through scruples as to the guilt or innocence of the person who occupies the position? It is the position which is the danger, and any one occupying it, whether innocent or guilty, must bear the consequences. The alternative before them is not a question of the life or death of this man, Jesus; it is the alternative of the life and death of thousands, the ruin of an individual or the destruction of the nation.

The force of such an appeal is in the vividness with which it concentrates attention on the actual,

and the carefulness with which it studiously avoids any discussion of the ideal. It concedes every opposed claim, while making it evident that its own claim must have the preference. It is not merely a skilful appeal to self-interest; it invests self-interest with the sacredness of a duty forced upon us by the course of events. What-we-must is represented as but another form of what-we-ought, while what-we-would is courteously promised a future interview. The death of Jesus was represented as a sacrifice which political necessity imperiously demanded. Jesus was the victim Whom Fate clearly demanded; they were the priests whom Fate as clearly marked out to officiate at the sacrifice. The deed which the whole world repudiates as execrable was made to assume the guise of a sacred duty. The event which history shows to have involved the destruction of Jerusalem and of Jewish national life was represented as certain to issue in the salvation of the nation. The death of Jesus was due neither to the malice of His enemies alone, nor to the apathy of His friends alone, but to both together. It was not the result of religious bigotry alone, nor of political jealousy alone, but of both. The line of policy which the acute intellect of Caiaphas marked out was the resultant of all the forces, religious and political, which were represented in the Sanhedrin and in the nation. Jesus was rejected as the Messiah by the

nation, because He was not the Messiah for the nation. He was rejected by all parties, because He was acceptable to no party.

Important though it is to understand the motives and aims which were operative amongst those who were responsible for the crucifixion, it is of still greater importance to discover, if possible, what were the motives which led Jesus to take the path that ended at Calvary. Apart from all theological prepossessions, it is quite clear from the Synoptic narratives that, up to the time of the arrest itself, escape was perfectly easy. His nightly withdrawal from Jerusalem, coupled with the fact that His enemies had to invoke the aid of a disciple to betray Him, shows that while Jesus did not shrink from encountering His enemies, He took ordinary precautions to avoid any clandestine attempt upon His life. It is also equally clear from His teaching and public utterances during the last week of His life that He anticipated a fatal termination to His career, and that He willingly faced it.

The Johannine Gospel represents the whole of His life and work which culminated in His tragic death as the conscious carrying out of a settled programme. The Synoptic Gospels, however, make it evident that His mission and work underwent modification in conformity with the gradual development of His inner life. An impartial examination of the records forces the conclusion

that His realisation of being the fulfilment of the Messianic idea came to Him gradually as He became more and more conscious of Himself. The Messianic idea did not mould His life and character ; His character as it developed moulded in His own mind the Messianic idea. The completely different interpretation He gave to the idea is only accountable as the result of a growing conviction on His part that the consciousness of harmony with the mind and will of God which He possessed was the true authoritative exponent of the idea. Just as He interpreted the Scriptures of His people by the inner light of His own spiritual nature and did not hesitate to put His own authoritative statement side by side with, and even above, the declarations of the Law and the teaching of the Prophets, so He did not hesitate to interpret the Messianic idea by the light of that manifestation of the mind and will of the Father which He found in His own nature and character as the Son.

This conviction, however, that He was the Messiah could only be the result of long meditation and deep heart-searching. The secrecy He enjoined upon the few enthusiastic admirers who had benefited by His marvellous healing, and hailed Him as the Messiah, was due, not simply to the fact that He knew their declarations would be misinterpreted but, to the desire that His recognition should be the result of an inner conviction

born as the result of an experience of His true character as that was revealed in His words and work. This true conception of the Messiah could only be obtained by the nation in the same way as He Himself had obtained it, through the realisation that He was actually doing the true work of the Messiah. His answer to the disciples whom John the Baptist sent from his prison in the perplexity of mind which his captivity had produced is a strong confirmation of this view. He makes no categoric declaration, but appeals to His public ministry for the confirmation of His claim to the title. His careful interrogation of His disciples at Caesarea Philippi indicates His solicitude to know how far His definite resolution to prove His claim to the title by doing the Messiah's work had been successful. His unfeigned joy at Peter's emphatic statement, and the significant declaration that such a confession was the rock upon which His church would be built, show us the importance He attached to the change He was quietly effecting in the popular Messianic conception.

The public entry into Jerusalem undoubtedly marks a change in the plans of Jesus which is in striking contrast with that which had preceded it. The true reason for this change is not far to seek. His popularity amongst the masses had begun to wane, owing to the increasing bitterness and hostility of the religious leaders. The influence which His quiet ministry had produced in Galilee

was being undermined by forces which had their seat in the capital. The true success of His work depended not on a partial acceptance of a spiritual Messiah by the Galilean peasantry (while the leaders of the nation as represented in Jerusalem, and their followers constituting the bulk of the nation, still clung to a political Messiah, and directed the course of events with a view to a political crisis), but on the replacement of the political by the religious ideal. A kingdom divided against itself could not stand. The two ideals were so completely antagonistic that any compromise was impossible. The real salvation which the nation needed was moral and spiritual, while that which the leaders stood for was entirely political. Jesus never appears to have entered into the politics of the nation at all. He judged the political goal which the leaders of His people set before themselves, not by their arguments, but by their characters. Pharisees and Sadducees were not religious sects because they were political parties; they were political parties because they were religious sects. As political parties they had no interest for Jesus. His interest centred on their moral and spiritual ideas. He judged of the aims they set before themselves by the motives He saw inspiring them. A corrupt tree could not bring forth good fruit. Low motives could not inspire lofty aims. The character of the nation's leaders, being such as He perceived, presaged disaster and ruin to the nation.

Blind leadership of the blind could only issue in both falling into the ditch.

There was only one way which offered the slightest chance of saving the nation from the ruin towards which its rulers were hurrying it. The time had come for the appearance of the true Messiah, whose acceptance would, not only avert the political ruin which was looming on the horizon but, effect that moral and spiritual regeneration which the people needed. The course of events was hurrying the nation towards its fatal goal at a pace which rendered His quiet work of preparation, hindered as it was by the opposition of the national leaders, hopeless. The poison worked with greater celerity than the antidote. Jesus saw that the issue turned upon the acceptance of Himself as the nation's Messiah, in place of the leaders who were conducting it to ruin. The work of preparation was very imperfectly and very inadequately done, but the night was coming when He could no longer work. A change of plan, therefore, was absolutely necessary. He must come forth as the Messiah and risk the possibility of rejection.

The change in His plan was followed by a very deliberate and carefully conceived change in the place where His work was to be done. His work in Galilee, only partially done, must be relinquished, for acceptance to be of any value must be in the capital itself. There is the same careful

choice as to the time when the declaration must be made. He fixes on the Feast when the capital would contain numbers from His own province of Galilee, whose influence and presence would give the undertaking, desperate though indeed it was, the greatest chance of success. It was without doubt an undertaking which was hazardous in the extreme, but it was not a counsel of despair. It was a forlorn hope, but it was a hope nevertheless. Jesus Himself fully realised all that was involved in the undertaking, both for Himself and for His cause. His lament over Jerusalem on coming in sight of the city at the very time that He was making His public entry reveals the reality of His forebodings and the slenderness of His expectations. The acclamations with which He was greeted by the fickle populace might deceive the disciples, but the Master estimated them at their true worth as nothing but leaves on a barren fig tree. The disciples might admire the wonderful buildings and call His attention to them, but He could not banish from His inner vision the ruin and devastation which should not leave one stone upon another. In the loving act of the woman who was a sinner He saw the anointing of His body for the burial. He had no misconceptions as to what failure to find acceptance might mean. He realised to the full that His life was the forfeit of failure.

While all this may explain His readiness to lay

down His life for His cause, it does not explain the consciousness of final success which underlay His decision, nor does it explain those references to His death in which it is evident that He regards that death as the culmination and completion of His life's work. These references cannot be explained as after-reflections on the part of the disciples, for they are necessary to explain the remarkable fact that, after it was plain that His acceptance as Messiah was out of the question, He still remained in Jerusalem and made not the slightest attempt to escape. The leader of a forlorn hope who, after the attempt has failed, stays merely to be killed, betrays either mental or moral defect. We must look deeper for the true explanation. It is evident that there was a strong conviction on the part of Jesus that His acceptance as Messiah was not the only way in which He could save His people. It was one way, and the way which, while saving them, also absolved them from guilt. There was, however, another way, the last resort. It was the way of the Cross. They could prevent His living for them, but they could not prevent His dying for them. His dying for them would accomplish that which He would fain have effected by living for them. It was the bitter cup, however, from which His soul shrank.

The agony in the Garden of Gethsemane, so vividly described in the Synoptists and omitted in the Johannine Gospel, is inexplicable when

interpreted as the mere shrinking of a particularly sensitive nature from physical death. The agony of Gethsemane is an agony of soul for which an adequate cause must be sought. The mere fear of death is quite insufficient to account for that terrible agony of the Garden. It was evidently something from which His soul recoiled in horror, as from a participation in actual moral evil. The only thing which seems at all adequate to call forth such intense suffering is the realisation that the path which the Father was pointing out for Him to tread was one which involved Him in bringing upon His people that final event which culminated in rebellion against God and the slaying of the Lord's Anointed. That He Who had come to bring the blessing to Israel should end in bringing a curse; that He Who had come to save should finish His life's work by involving His nation in ruin and the perpetration of a crime against God without parallel in their history, was something from which His soul shrank with an agony which we can but faintly imagine. Well might He pray, "Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from Me."

It may be safely asserted that if the dominating factor in this final appeal to the nation is the desire for their national salvation in order that they may fulfil their destiny amongst the nations of the world, yet it is clear that the mind of Jesus passed beyond the national to the universal, and in that

larger survey He saw that His work, hindered and thwarted by His own people, was yet destined to accomplish the supreme purpose of a moral and spiritual regeneration. The parables uttered during this last week of His life show that the mind of Jesus was occupied with the probable rejection by His own people, a rejection that was each hour becoming more certain. He anticipates the passing away of the kingdom of God from Israel to others who shall bring forth the fruits of it. He looks forward to that turning away to the Gentiles (which His true interpreter, Paul, was later on to carry out), when in the parable of the marriage feast He represents the servants as being sent into the highways and hedges to gather in the outcasts to fill the places which the elect had refused. The account of the Greeks who came to see Him during the Feast, though only found in the Johannine Gospel, is inherently probable, and may be regarded as resting on a well-founded tradition. At the Feast a good number of such Greek proselytes would undoubtedly be present, and it is extremely unlikely that they would betray no interest in one Who, without doubt, created a great stir at the Festival. The incident is chiefly remarkable for the evident impression it made upon the mind of Jesus. It is this, and not the mere fact that the visit of these Greeks foreshadowed the accession of Gentile converts, which secures for the incident a place in the Johannine Gospel. It suggests to

Jesus, with His mind already anticipating a fatal termination to His mission, that the Father's will may involve larger issues than the salvation of the Jewish nation and, that in the carrying out of that greater purpose His own death may find a justification which it was impossible to discover from the narrower standpoint. The pregnant saying of the grain of wheat falling into the earth to die in order that it may produce much fruit is extremely suggestive as an indication of the working of the mind of Jesus as the prospect of death became more and more assured. So far as we can see, Jesus had no narrow Jewish prejudices to overcome, and He was singularly free from that national pride which caused the Jew to look down with contempt upon the whole Gentile world. From the first He centred His thought, not upon political but, on moral and spiritual salvation. The transition, therefore, from the conception of the salvation of the Jew to that of the salvation of Man as man, though a distinct advance in His thought, involved no revolution.

The distinct references which Jesus makes to His death are inexplicable from the political standpoint, because they are accompanied by the most explicit declarations as to the impending national calamity. His acceptance as Messiah might have averted this calamity, but His death by so much the more rendered it inevitable. The institution of the Lord's Supper, and the position this rite

subsequently occupied in the mind of the Church, point unmistakably to a realisation on the part of Jesus that His death would have a unique place in the spiritual regeneration of men, which was to Him the supreme work of His life. It was no mere accident that this rite, as simple in its character as it is profound in its meaning, was placed by Jesus in the position it occupies as a part of the Paschal supper. Just as He chose the Feast for His public entry into Jerusalem because it afforded the best time for an appeal to the people, so He chose the Paschal supper, with the same clear foresight as to its suitability for the purpose He had in view in instituting His own memorial service.

This distinct choice on the part of Jesus is of far more importance than any theological implications which the narrative may be thought to suggest. As a matter of fact the accounts are singularly free from such implications. It is the institution, and not the words of the institution, which is of first importance. It is the position in which Jesus placed the act, rather than any position to which the Church has elevated it, which gives it its true significance. The differences in the accounts in the Synoptists are of very slight importance, even from a theological point of view, and may be left out of account so far as the purpose which immediately concerns us is concerned.

The Lord's Supper was the last Passover and the first Eucharist. Jesus was evidently conscious that the old order was changing and that His death would entirely alter the relation in which His nation stood to God. That Old Covenant, made at the beginning of their national history, had issued in the rejection of the Lord's Anointed and was soon to culminate in His destruction. The killing of the Paschal Lamb commemorated the deliverance of the nation from the bondage of Egypt and its emergence as a political factor in the history of the world. Now, however, the very nation which had been called into existence that it might fulfil its high destiny of being a blessing to all nations is dyeing its hands in the blood of its own Messiah. With a hardness of heart far surpassing that of Pharaoh, the leaders and guides of the nation were setting themselves in opposition to the purposes of God, and the Angel of Destruction was already hovering over Jerusalem as over a doomed city. Israel was no longer the oppressed; she had become the oppressor. Her star was not rising, but setting, and setting as it had risen, in blood.

On the little band of disciples gathered in the upper room had devolved that task which the nation had rejected. They and not the Nation would go forth to found that Divine kingdom of which the Davidic kingdom had been but the symbol. A New Covenant and a New Passover were being

instituted in which the Nation, as a nation, had no part or lot. The little band of disciples would have to flee for its life, but His own death would avert from them the destruction which would overtake the city and the nation. A new lamb was about to be slain, whose blood would be the blood of a New Covenant. The connection between Himself and the Paschal lamb was too realistic to be merely fanciful. Jesus, however, was in no sense creating a new ceremony to typify spiritual realities; He was taking actual facts and using them to commemorate the spiritual realities which a true understanding of them reveals. The sacrifice which He wishes His disciples to remember is the sacrifice which He is Himself offering. The bread and the wine are not to be a new ceremony to take the place of the flesh and blood of the older ceremony; they are a memorial of the real sacrifice of His own flesh and blood which He is Himself offering. His disciples are not to be priests with a new ritual; they are to be partakers with Him in the work and cause for which He is laying down His life. They are so to identify themselves with Him in that cause, that they are to eat as it were His body, and drink as it were His blood.

Jesus had to deal with men who were slow to grasp spiritual truth and who were too much under the influence of Jewish religious and national ideas to sympathise at that time with His deeper

conceptions. The only thing He could count upon was their love and confidence in Himself. This, however, was about to be tried in a way it had never been tried before. His death threatened to stamp out the last spark of faith in His mission and to turn their love into a merely piteous lament over His fate. We cannot but be amazed at the superlative confidence with which Jesus proceeded to turn this fatal obstacle to the success of His cause into a means for its final triumph. History and our theological conceptions tend to obscure this wonderful confidence and this extraordinary foresight on the part of Jesus. History has transformed the accursed tree into a symbol which calls forth the admiring wonder of the world, and theology has turned His shameful death into a Divine sacrifice before which we bend in lowliest reverence. To Jesus, however, they stood forth in all their hideousness, threatening, not merely the triumph of His enemies but, the utter destruction of His cause. Yet, as Paul significantly remarks, "it was in the same night in which He was betrayed," that Jesus instituted a simple rite which looked forward to a triumph without parallel in human history.

Jesus made no attempt to explain the religious significance of the rite He instituted. Their minds were not open to His influence. Their hearts alone were accessible, and by this simple memorial He bound those hearts to Him, feeling

confident that they themselves would be able later on to interpret all that His death signified. By placing the rite at the end of the Paschal supper He made it evident that it possessed a religious significance, but He left it to a later and richer experience to interpret what that significance was. The one essential thing for them to understand was that His death was a sacrifice which He Himself freely offered on their behalf and that, instead of separating Him from them it united them to Him and to His cause. He gave them the bread and the wine in confident expectation that they themselves would partake of that which the symbols signified and identify themselves with Him in the fulfilment of the Father's will, to accomplish which He Himself was laying down His life. It is the religious experience which Jesus here anticipates which all theories of the Atonement are but imperfect attempts to set forth. The true nature of the sacrifice Jesus made must not be interpreted by the rite which He instituted, but by the religious experience which the rite anticipates. Jesus felt that, if His work was to go on after He had passed away, His spirit must pass into His disciples, and they must realise that His death, far from being the great obstacle to His success, was destined to be the chief means of its accomplishment.

A careful examination of the references to His death to be found in the Synoptists forces us

to the conclusion that in the thought of Jesus there is absolutely no connection between His own conception of what His death meant and the theological conceptions connected with the Jewish sacrificial system. If we are to take the thought of Jesus as our guide in the interpretation of the religious significance of the death of Jesus, we must leave out of account, as He apparently did, all reference to Jewish theological speculation as to the meaning of sacrifice. In the institution of the Last Supper there is undoubtedly a reference to Himself as occupying a place similar to that of the Paschal lamb. The New Covenant in His blood to which Jesus refers, however, shows us that the thought in His mind is historical rather than theological. The reference is to the flight from Egypt and the sprinkling of the blood upon the doorposts rather than to the much later sacrificial ideas connected with the day of atonement. Just as the night of the hurried flight from Egypt marked the beginning of Jewish national life and was signalised by the establishment of a Covenant, so the night in which He was betrayed marked a new epoch in the relation between God and the larger Israel of faith in Himself, and it is accordingly signalised by the establishment of a New Covenant. His own death, at the hands of the nation whose Messiah He was, cancelled the Old Covenant with the nation and inaugurated a New Covenant ratified in His blood. It was essential

for the establishment of that larger kingdom of God which He had striven to introduce, that His disciples should be at one with Him in the carrying on of the work He was compelled to lay aside. Jesus felt that His death would be at one and the same time the condemnation of the old order represented in the gross materialism and selfish nationalism of the Jew, and the justification of the new order of moral and spiritual regeneration represented by Himself. He seems to have anticipated that the disciples, when they had recovered from the shock of His death, would inevitably regard that death as a barrier cutting them off for ever from the false ideals of official Judaism, while at the same time it drew them to Himself in a whole-hearted loyalty. In their minds the old order would be for ever associated with His death; the new order with His self-sacrificing love. The simple rite which He instituted would be a constant reminder of the passing away of the old and the inauguration of the new order.

Thus far we have examined the aims and motives of the various actors in the world's greatest tragedy in order that we may understand what the death of Jesus actually was. We have to remember, however, that these motives and aims are representative of principles of universal application. The unique figure of Jesus changes what would otherwise have been a mere incident in an obscure part of the world into a dramatic

tragedy to which humanity turns its gaze with an interest and fascination which increase from age to age. That which gives to this scene its universal and eternal significance is not that Jesus stands here as the incarnation of Divinity, but that He stands as the incarnation of Humanity. As we gaze upon this scene we feel that we are not beholding the tragedy of a single human life; we are watching the tragedy of human life itself. Jesus is not simply a man among men; He is the Man in men. He is not one among many; He is the Many in the One. The history, therefore, presents itself to us, not as mere history but, as drama, and the greatest drama the world has ever seen. It is drama, however, just because it is history. Any treatment which lessens the historical element lessens the dramatic element. Regard the event as primarily dramatic and only secondarily as historic, and the real significance of the scene is lost. In a very real sense it may be said that the more theology you put into it, the less religious significance you get out of it. The more it is regarded as a sacrificial ceremony, the less does it become that one supreme sacrifice which abolishes the ceremonial. To make the religious significance of the event turn upon its supposed correspondences with ceremonial sacrifice is to elevate the rite above the reality which the rite does but faintly symbolise. If the death of Jesus merely replaces the slaying of

the Paschal lamb, then, however august the ceremony may be, it is ceremony only, and the reality symbolised remains greater still. If, on the other hand, the death of Jesus is the reality which human need has symbolised in its varied sacrificial systems, then the reality must be found in the actual fact, and not in any fancied resemblances.

When we have put on one side all theological presuppositions and have looked at the actual event itself, what is it that makes this conflict between Jesus and the Jewish authorities of His day possess universal significance? Is it not that we have here represented in concrete form and to a degree found nowhere else, that eternal conflict between the ideal and the actual which is the very essence of that struggle for richer and fuller life out of which comes the tragedy of human life both in the individual and in society? Whatever theological implications may be contained in such a fact, surely the fact itself is the supreme reality. It is, indeed, this fact, perceived according to the moral and spiritual evolution attained in each successive age, and expressed according to the varied theological conceptions of the great thinkers of each age, which gives to this local and temporary scene its universal and permanent significance. Sublime and beautiful though the life of Jesus is, it is its tragic ending which fascinates the mind and captivates the heart of humanity. His ethical

transcendence and His spiritual attainments reveal to us those inaccessible heights to which our aspiration so constantly soars, but which we always fail to reach. It is in His agony in the Garden, when He resists temptation even unto blood and tears, and in the mortal anguish of Calvary, when He yields back into the Father's hands the life which He has preserved unsullied and undefiled, that we feel we have One Who is fighting our battle for us, and vanquishing the enemy before whom we have so often bitten the dust and bent the knee. It is not the revelation of the ideal which has any saving power ; it is the manifestation of the suffering inflicted by the actual on the ideal which saves. It is possible to admire the ideal while we fraternise with the actual. It is no longer possible the moment we have realised that the actual is the destroyer of the ideal. Tragedy has been humanity's greatest and most effective teacher. An evil will be tolerated and even entertained for years in spite of its demonstrated character as an evil. It is only when the evil has culminated in some great tragedy that humanity rises up in its Divine might and resolves on its banishment. The Cross of Jesus derives its force from the fact that it makes its appeal to the Divine heart of humanity and enlists its sympathies on the side of the ideal as against the actual. It is not an exalted Christ of theology enthroned in the heavens, but the Jesus of history lifted

up on the Cross of Calvary Who draws all men unto Him.

From the judgment of His nation Jesus appealed to the judgment of humanity, and humanity has responded to His appeal by reversing His nation's decision, transmuting His crown of thorns into a diadem of glory and transforming His Cross of shame into a throne of dominion and power. The temporary defeat which He suffered as the result of forcing the issue between the actual and the ideal upon His nation and upon His age has been turned into a permanent and ever-increasing victory for the ideal. Ideal Man Himself, He appealed to the ideal in Man, and history has abundantly justified His reliance. Under the influence that radiates from the Cross of Calvary men consign the actual which they have realised to the Cross, and identify themselves with the ideal they see realised in Jesus the Christ. This is no mere theological dogma ; it is psychological fact, established by the verdict of history and confirmed by the testimony of experience. Conceptions of the religious significance of the Cross of Jesus vary in their expression from age to age, but the perception of the moral and spiritual influences which come from the Cross is the one saving and redeeming power in the world.

It is because this struggle between the ideal and the actual is so clearly and vividly presented in the conflict between Jesus and the leaders of

His nation that the scene is not only history but drama, and the greatest drama of the world. The presentation which meets us in the historical record is a representation of the conflict between the higher and the lower, the man from above and the man from below, which constitutes the real history of humanity. When we have once perceived this essential character of the history we are in a position to understand the cosmic significance of the drama. In the drama Jesus stands as the representative of humanity, just because in the history He is humanity incarnated. The humanity, however, in both cases is an ideal humanity—Man, not as he conceives of himself, but as God conceives of him. This representative character of Jesus which meets us in its tragic form in the death is equally present in the life. In the lowly birth, the gradual development, and the quiet ministry of Jesus we perceive the emergence of those higher ideals of individual and social life in the few elect souls; the gradual development by means of which they reach maturity; their quiet diffusion amongst the people; all of which meet us in the pages of universal history. In the transition from the Galilean ministry to the stormy scenes in the streets of Jerusalem, when the ideal comes into conflict with the prejudices and vested interests of constituted authority, a conflict culminating in the tragedy of the Cross, we are looking at a vivid

representation of those great world-movements which mark the upward progress of the race through the struggle between the actual attainment and the ideal aspiration. Nor is this representative character less pronounced as we see the actual, for which Scribes and Pharisees contended, finally yielding place to the ideal which Jesus represented, as this is presented to us in the historic replacement of the Jewish by the Christian faith. The Jewish Messiah, rejected, crucified, and apparently destroyed, gives place to the Risen Jesus, the exalted and all-conquering Christ. Finally, we see the Christ, the incarnation of the ideal, becoming incarnate in the many, and that hidden secret of the ages is at last manifested as the Christ in us, the hope of glory. This is not myth, in which principles and ideas are imagined, clothed in fictitious habiliments and characters, and placed in the midst of painted scenes; it is actual history in which ideals are incarnated, appear in real flesh and blood, and work out their destiny amidst the actualities of common life.

It is not merely and not chiefly, however, as a representation of the larger history of humanity that this conflict is of supreme importance. It is rather that it brings out into the light of day the secret struggle that has, over and over again, taken place in the recesses of our souls. At the Cross of Jesus we see a representation of the tragedy of

our own lives as we never saw it before. It is the figure of the crucified Christ which arrests our attention and makes us conscious, sometimes for the first time, of the inner history of our own lives. Our memory goes back to those birth-pangs which we suffered when, in the dissatisfaction with ourselves and the disgust of our attainments, we first felt the stirring of the ideal life within us, and cried out of the depths of our souls :—

> And oh, that the man might arise in me—
> That the man I am might cease to be!

We recall the growth of the ideal as it increased in stature, its earnest questionings and its striking answers within the inner shrine of our own breasts. The quiet Galilean ministry reminds us of the still small voice with which it wooed us to a higher life and a deeper purpose. The Jerusalem conflict and controversies bring home to us the opposition we offered and the objections we urged against the growing insistence with which the ideal within us pressed its claims upon our loyalty and devotion. We remember our own lonely vigil in the garden, and how the better nature within us wrestled in agony and bloody sweat. We recall, too, with shame and contrition how we ourselves played the traitor's part and betrayed the ideal with a kiss. From our Gethsemane we pass to our Calvary, and in the pierced hands and riven side of the Christ, we behold the Man we might

have been but for the Pharisee we have become. It is this startling revelation of the tragedy of our own lives, which thus objectified divides the seeming unity of our personality into a duality of the actual and the ideal, the what-we-are from the what-we-might-have-been, which constitutes the redeeming message of the Cross. Unconsciously we take down the crucified ideal from the cross upon which we have nailed it, and put in its place the actual which crucified it. We can do no other, for what we have become fills us with shame, and our only hope is in what we may become through the spirit of the Christ. God forbid that we should glory save in the Cross of Jesus our Lord; upon which the world is henceforth crucified unto us and we unto the world.

It is the crucified, dead and buried ideal life within us which the spirit of the risen Christ quickens into life again. Christianity is not the religion of a Jesus Who was crucified; it is the religion of a crucified but risen Christ. It recognises, that is, that in Jesus there was the perfect manifestation of that Divine life to which we give the name of The Christ. It is this same Divine life which quickens us into life. A crucified Jesus could give us no help. He would call forth men's pity, but He could render no help. It is the fact that Jesus is the Christ—Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God—which gives us hope. That in God which was mani-

fested in Jesus the Christ is the ground, too, of our Christ-life. We are not, therefore, united in the mere bonds of sympathy with a dead Jesus, but with the risen and exalted Christ, with Whom we also are raised up from the dead past in order that we may live in newness of life. That hidden life in man which is a constituent of the nature of God Himself, and of which we are ourselves conscious in the struggle of the ideal with the actual, has been manifested in its full glory and strength in Jesus the Christ. It is that mystery of the ages to which Paul refers, and which he describes as "Christ in you the hope of glory." Dead through our trespasses and sins, that hidden Christ-life within us is quickened by the spirit of the crucified Christ, in Whom we recognise the ideal we have striven for and yet failed to reach —the Christ Who has attained to that to which we have only aspired. This Christ, however, does not stand isolated from humanity in lonely grandeur; He is one with us, the firstborn, but the firstborn among many brethren. His blood is, as it were, in our veins; His life is the ground of our life. Because He lives we also shall live. Having been crucified with the Christ, we shall also rise with Him. Having suffered with Him, we shall also reign with Him. Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift.

CHAPTER IX

THE CHRISTIAN CONCEPTION OF SALVATION

THE conception of salvation which is present in various religions, and in the Christian religion at different epochs, varies according to the measure in which religious thought conceives of Man's highest good and of the hindrances in the way of its attainment. The word "salvation" is peculiarly appropriate to the Christian conception, because its root meaning is consistent with that optimistic conception of life which distinguishes Christianity from other Eastern religions. The fundamental idea of health or wholeness, which is the root meaning of the word, has often been obscured by an exaggerated emphasis on other aspects of the subject, but the dominant note in any truly Christian conception of salvation must always be the positive idea of the possession of life, fuller and more abounding, rather than a negative conception of escape from the penal consequences of sin. The negative conception is by no means absent, but unless the positive idea is prominent

and dominant, the distinctively Christian feature of salvation is lost sight of.

The importance of this is seen when we contrast it with the fundamental idea expressed in Hindu thought. The true word to express this religious thought of Hinduism is not salvation but deliverance, a deliverance from life rather than the possession of healthy life. To Hindu religious thought life is not a blessing but a curse, not a good but an ill. This is the fundamental starting-point of all Hindu thought, and the whole of its religious thinking is coloured with this conception of the evil of life. Only after it has emptied life of all its contents and degraded it to mere existence will it predicate being of God and assert that Brahma *is*. It has no conception of life apart from some form of evil, and, therefore, if man is to be delivered from all evil, it can only be by ceasing to live. Salvation, therefore, as the possession of fuller and richer life, is entirely contrary to the Hindu conception of Man's highest good.

In the idea of salvation as deliverance from evil there are doubtless points of contact between Hindu and Christian thought, but it is necessary to bear in mind that fundamentally the goals which Hinduism on the one hand, and Christianity on the other, set before themselves are, not only differently, but, in some respects, antithetically conceived. The *Nirvana* of Hindu and Buddhist

thought, even though regarded as more positive than negative, is essentially different from the Eternal Life to which Christian thought and feeling aspire. It is probably true that Hindu and Christian aspiration are one and the same desire for the satisfaction of the religious nature, but it is useless to assert that they both mean the same thing when they speak of salvation. When the Pessimist speaks of the pangs of hunger and the Optimist speaks of a splendid appetite, they are no doubt both referring to the same thing, but no one can say that the thought to which they are giving expression is the same. The reason for the different terms employed is to be found in a fundamental difference of standpoint. The *summum bonum* to the Pessimist is the cessation of desire apart from its satisfaction, while that of the Optimist is its cessation through satisfaction. Nothing but confusion can come from a failure to discriminate between ideas which are essentially different. There is a growing tendency to make use of Christian terminology to express Hindu thought and then to assert that the similarity of language means a similarity of thought. This is not to bring about an understanding between Hindu and Christian, but a misunderstanding. It is not by misunderstanding one another nor by slurring over differences that we shall arrive at that higher conception of truth in which a true harmony is to be found ; but it is in understanding

each other's standpoint and discriminating between each other's thought on the problem of life that we shall mutually assist one another.

In Christianity the controlling thought as regards salvation is entrance into a larger, fuller, and richer life; in Hindu thought the controlling idea is exit from life, the cessation of the endless births which only introduce the soul to fresh and inevitable misery, a misery which is bound up with the very conception of life itself. It is because the standpoint of each is so different that such an antithetical statement of the two conceptions is possible. This difference of standpoint is not to be ignored or set aside in the attempt either to express Hinduism in terms of Christian thought, or Christianity in terms of Hindu thought. The fundamental standpoint in regard to life itself must be examined with a view to determining whether Hindu or Christian thought has correctly perceived its essential nature. We are Pessimists or Optimists, not by reason of the conclusions at which we arrive but, by virtue of the premisses from which we set out.

The modern theory of evolution is not likely to convert the Pessimist into an Optimist, but it is undeniable that the modern outlook upon life is optimistic rather than pessimistic. The attitude of the modern mind, which the doctrine of evolution has so largely moulded, is an attitude which concentrates the attention upon the process

rather than on the actual and temporary effects, on the goal rather than on the stages by which the goal is reached. The grounds upon which Pessimism is based are just as pronounced as they ever were, but the whole process, as viewed from the evolutionary standpoint, is seen to be in the direction of the realisation of the good, the better and the best. In modern religious thought, therefore, where the theory of evolution has been accepted, the whole cosmic process is being more and more interpreted as the self-revelation of God, with the result that life, in spite of all the evils associated with its manifestation, is regarded as essentially good. Modern religious aspiration, therefore, in the West looks forward to fuller and richer life, and a deliverance from the evils and obstacles to its attainment. This is not the standpoint of the distinctive religious thought of India, though it is nearer to the religious thought of Vedic times. Post-Vedic thought in regard to human life was emphatically pessimistic rather than optimistic. The modern Hindu who comes under the influence of modern thought finds himself in opposition to that view of life which is fundamental in Hindu religious thought. The more he enters into the modern spirit, the more he feels that life is not an evil from which deliverance must be sought, but a good into the fuller possession of which an entrance must be found. To him the call of the city is deeper and truer than the call of

the woods, because life is not to him that evil which the ancient mind conceived it to be. It is, on the contrary, that supreme gift of God by virtue of which we become partakers of the Divine nature. Tennyson expresses this modern view in the well-known lines :

> 'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant ;
> 'Tis life, not death, for which we pant ;
> More life and fuller that we want.

In the Christian conception of salvation, when rightly interpreted, this positive element occupies the chief position and the negative element of deliverance is subordinate. As a Gospel to be proclaimed to men suffering from the evil of sin, the deliverance from the power and thraldom of sin must of necessity occupy the prominent position, but the primacy thus given to deliverance is merely a primacy of order. Salvation is undoubtedly deliverance, but it is a deliverance from disease which is the result of the possession of richer and healthier life. A man is raised from the living death of sin that he may walk in newness of life. The essential element in the salvation, therefore, is the vitality conferred upon him, not the mere freedom from the disease of which he was the victim. He is born from above in order that he may live the higher life ; he is raised with Christ in order that he may seek those things which are above. It is the positive rather than the negative element in salvation which is prominent

in the teaching of Jesus, Whose great word is life. Paul, on the other hand, places the emphasis on the deliverance, though he by no means omits the positive element. Jesus was conscious of the possession of life, life in perfect harmony with the mind and will of God. Of the lack of harmony resulting in a low vitality open to the inroads of the disease of sin, He seems to have had no personal experience. Paul, on the other hand, was deeply conscious of that living death which he so graphically describes in the letter to the Romans, and, therefore, the deliverance which had been effected through Christ fills his thought and causes him to place the emphasis in his Gospel message on this negative aspect of salvation. The modern mind does not deny or repudiate the importance of this negative aspect which is so conspicuous a feature of Pauline theology, but it places the emphasis where Jesus placed it,—on the possession of life. In thus shifting the emphasis from death to life, the modern mind is farther from Paul, but so much nearer to the mind of Jesus. It is easy to misrepresent this modern position and to charge it with making light of sin. Such a charge, however, is a misrepresentation, whether conscious or unconscious.

The modern mind frankly recognises that the basis of its theology is not the Bible, regarded as an infallible book whose words and thought-forms are the moulds into which its religious thoughts

must be pressed, but the religious experience of the race, and supremely of Jesus, the highest manifestation of the thought and mind of God. It finds in the Bible the richest religious experience of humanity, but it recognises that that experience has been expressed in thought-forms which are essentially temporary, representative of the age in which the writers lived, and coloured with views of the Universe which the present age has outgrown. The religious experience is of permanent value, but the expression of it is of necessity archaic. The religious experience can only be made a living reality for the modern mind in proportion as the expression of it is altered by replacing obsolete thought-forms by those in current use. To preserve the Biblical expression is often to sacrifice the reality of the religious experience, with consequences which are fatal to present-day religion.

An attempt has recently been made to claim infallibility for the theology of the New Testament writers, while repudiating the infallibility of their words. As religious thinkers, we are told, they were infallible, though as authors they were dependent upon the language of their time, and their words must not be regarded as infallible. So far as one can understand the distinction here asserted, it is that infallible inspiration is claimed for their thought, but not for their words. Such a *via media*, however, is nothing more than an imaginary line rather than a path. It is like the

boundary between two countries which can be shown on a map by a difference of colour, but it affords no room for the sole of one's foot. The infallibility of the Bible must be absolute or it is nothing at all. You cannot claim infallibility for the theology of the New Testament writers unless you also claim infallibility for the words in which that theology is expressed, or infallibility for your own interpretation of those words. It is perhaps needless to say that of these different kinds of infallibility the last is by far the worst. The modern mind does not make its choice between the infallibility of either the Church of the Roman Catholic, or the Bible of the Reformer, or the Reason of the Rationalist, or the Illumination of the Mystic. It rejects infallibility altogether and substitutes the gradual leading of the Spirit of God into fuller and fuller truth.

In formulating our conception of salvation we turn away from all theological speculations by whomsoever made, and concentrate attention on that Life which has been manifested in Jesus the Christ. It is that Life which we recognise as the ideal of human life, the destined goal of human development. The manifestation of God in humanity is *ipso facto* the manifestation of human capacity. If we wish, therefore, for an expression of the positive contents of the conception of salvation, we find it in the life of Jesus, which we recognise as the true Divine ideal of humanity.

That ideal we have seen expressed in actual human life, and seeing it we recognise the realisation of the highest aspirations of the soul. To be Christ-like; to have the mind and spirit of Christ; to realise in our own lives that ideal which found expression in His; this is to attain to the highest which we can conceive. In saying this we are not dealing with theological speculations, but with actual facts. As to the actual facts there is complete agreement between Christians of all modes of thought. There may be great difference of opinion as to the way of salvation, but as to what salvation is there can be none, for there is only one Life which realises the ideal, and every Christian admits that the life of Jesus is that Life.

The manifestation of such a life, however, stimulates human thought as to its relation to God on the one hand, and to humanity on the other. The West has been largely dominated by a Deistic conception in which God and Man are separated by an impassable gulf. The controversy as to the Person of Christ has accordingly tended in the direction of relating Him either to God alone or to humanity alone. The Church instinctively felt that each of these positions gave an inadequate explanation of the facts. The facts showed that He was equally related both to God and Man, and therefore it opposed both an exclusive Divinity and an exclusive humanity. The Church was orthodox as regards the Person

of Christ, but it was generally heterodox both as regards the nature of God and the nature of Man. So long as the Deistic conception of God prevailed, the Church's doctrine of the Person of Christ was, strictly speaking, inconsistent with its theology. It held tenaciously both to the Divinity and to the humanity of Jesus, but it sought to explain the Incarnation rather from its conception of the nature of God than from its conception of the nature of Man. Modern thought has parted company with the Deistic conception, and seeks, therefore, to explain both the nature of God and the nature of Man from the highest manifestation of both of which we have any experience, namely, the personality of Jesus. The contrast between the older and the modern thought which is here indicated may be regarded as exaggerated, but that such a contrast exists can hardly be denied.

We are not here concerned with the alteration in the conception of the nature of God, but with the alteration in the conception of the nature of Man. The revelation in Jesus has shown us not only God as He has manifested Himself in human life ; but it has shown us Man as conceived by the Divine mind. True humanity is, not the actual which confronts us in history and in our own personal experience but, the ideal as we see it in Jesus. He has shown us of what humanity is capable when its life is lived, not in isolation or in opposition to God but, in harmony with Him.

This, indeed, is the true meaning of the Incarnation. God could not become Man unless Man were capable of becoming Divine. Man cannot be a child of God unless there is something of the Divine life within him. The figure of adoption, which is often relied upon to emphasise the distinction between Jesus and humanity, does but emphasise this conception of Man's essential divinity; for the adoption is not an alteration of nature; it is merely an alteration of status, making the child, who was a stranger, one of the family. If the Fatherhood of God is anything more than a mere figure of speech, the Divine sonship of Man is equally the expression of a reality.

This conception of Man is fundamental to the thought of Jesus. In the parable of the Prodigal Son, which of all the parables has been universally recognised as embodying the very essence of His Gospel, the younger son is regarded as lost and dead while he is living his own self-centred life. The great change which marks his conversion is described as a "coming to himself,"—implying that hitherto he had not been himself, his true real self; and the suggestive remark, in which he gives expression to this return to true consciousness, shows that the regenerating influence within him is the realisation of the relationship between himself and his father, which the thought of the father's house brings to his mind. This recognition on the part of Jesus of the real and ideal

Man in every man is further illustrated in several interviews with various people, and in His generous defence of the publicans and sinners. In Nathaniel, for instance, He recognises the Israel struggling with the Jacob; in Simon, the impulsive and impressionable man, He sees the ideal Peter. In the despised publican, Zacchaeus, He recognises, underlying the grasping extortioner, the large-hearted son of Abraham, capable of returning fourfold in the true spirit of his magnanimous ancestor, who returned the tithe offered by the king of Sodom. In the humble fishermen He saw the ideal evangelists, the fishers of men; while in the Son of Thunder His eye could detect the apostle of Divine Love. Destined Himself to be the victim of the hate and selfishness of the actual man, He yet based the whole success of His cause on the appeal to the love of the highest and devotion to the noblest which is innate in the ideal man, and He did so with the utmost confidence that His appeal would be successful. It is from Jesus that humanity is slowly learning that the appeal to the highest, the noblest, and the best in Man is finally more potent and successful than the appeal to the low, the mean and the base. This is so because, as Jesus perceived and taught, there is in the most degenerate son of man that Divine life which makes him a child of the Highest. In the secret chambers of the soul, that-which-we-ought for ever takes precedence over that-which-

we-would, or even over that which an external authority tells us we must. *Noblesse oblige* is most true of a spiritual aristocracy. The possession of Divine life imposes greater obligations than the possession of blue blood.

While there is thus within every man that germ of Divine life which makes him a partaker of the Divine nature, it is a germ only. If it is to develop so that the ideal may be realised and man may become in fact that which he is potentially, it must be quickened by the all-pervading Divine Spirit. Unless it is thus quickened from above, it develops abnormally, and resembles those malignant growths which are the result of certain cells in the human body setting up an independent existence, with the result that instead of ministering to the whole they claim to be ministered unto by the whole, and as cancers become destructive instead of constructive. This abnormal cancerous growth is what is meant by sin. The life-force, derived from God and capable of developing under the influence of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus into godlikeness, sets up an independent existence, demands to be ministered unto rather than to minister, and like a cancerous growth preys upon the surrounding tissues, destroying both itself and them. Health is wholeness, as distinguished from partialness. Disease means that the part, as a cell or germ, demands that the whole should minister unto it, instead of it ministering to the whole. In

the spiritual realm sin is a similar abnormal as opposed to a normal growth. The germ of Divine life within us instead of drawing its nourishment from above, draws it from below. In Pauline language, Man instead of becoming spiritual becomes carnal. Desires which are capable of a spiritual development are satisfied in a carnal way. Lust takes the place that Love should occupy; greed usurps the place that charity should fill; self-seeking grows like a rank weed in the garden where self-giving might exhale the aroma of Divine sacrifice.

Salvation, therefore, which is the healthy development of the Divine life within us, consists in the response of the soul to the spiritual influences in the true environment of the soul, the Divine Spirit. Under these gracious influences the Divine germ is quickened into active life, issuing in the ministry of the part to the whole. This quickening of the Divine life in man is what is meant by the doctrine of regeneration. The Kingdom of God is that spiritual plane of life upon which the ideal life within us manifests itself. Entrance upon that plane is dependent upon being born from above, since that which is born of the flesh is flesh, while that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Unless the Divine germ is quickened from above it is incapable of developing normally, but seeks a satisfaction on the lower plane of mere animal life, and thereby develops

abnormally, living for the self and the part, instead of for God and the whole. In the animal that which we call instinct is the unconscious response of the organism to external stimuli calling for response on the merely physical plane, and which, broadly speaking, tends in the direction of harmony between the parts and the whole. In Man, however, the true response is one out of several, which needs, therefore, deliberation and choice. Like the animal he is subject to external stimuli which call for a response on the carnal or physical plane. Unlike the animal he is surrounded by spiritual stimuli as well, which call for a response on the spiritual plane. He has presented to him, therefore, a choice of alternatives, the one higher and the other lower. By the choice of the higher and the rejection of the lower the Divine life within him develops and he becomes in reality what he is potentially, a child of God. By the choice of the lower and the rejection of the higher the life within develops abnormally and the growth is malignant. If he were merely an animal responding to animal instincts there would be no tragedy in his life. It is because he possesses a Divine life, with its consciousness of the higher and the lower aims, that his wrong choice introduces the dark tragedy of sin and guilt and remorse. His is not a case of the animal failing to rise; it is the case of the Man who has risen falling back to a level which is unworthy of him. He is not an

animal living an animal life ; he is a celestial living a bestial life. He sees and approves the good, but he follows the worse. That which in the animal would be attainment is in him degradation. This is the true and real Fall of Man. He has risen into conscious life with all the spiritual possibilities which such conscious life implies ; he falls back again into the life of unconscious animal instinct, but he retains his consciousness, and out of this is constructed the tragedy of his life.

The realisation of the true character of his true self is the first step in the process of Man's salvation. He must come to himself, to use the expressive language of the parable of the Prodigal Son, or he will never arise and go to his father. He must feel that this Divine life within him is perishing of hunger, while he is seeking satisfaction in the mere husks that the swine do eat, while in the Father's house there is bread enough and to spare, before it is possible for him to enter the true home of his soul and have fellowship with the Father of his spirit. Modern theological thought in thus emphasising the fact that the true life within us is a Divine life, making us akin to God, is returning to the very centre and heart of the Gospel of Jesus. In the publican and sinner, in the outcast and the despised, it recognises, as Jesus recognised, a buried Divine life awaiting a resurrection. It believes, as Jesus believed, that the true appeal must be addressed to the highest

within humanity, and that the most potent regenerative force is the consciousness of the true nobility of our birth. We are children of the Highest, partakers of the Divine nature itself, and the life of sin is utterly and for ever unworthy both of ourselves and of our Father. This Gospel of Jesus is not a message awaiting confirmation in another world; it is a declaration based upon the perfect demonstration of its truth which His own life supplied. That buried life of ours, of which we are all more or less conscious, has been manifested in Him, Who is the Life which is life indeed, which we have seen, even that eternal Life which was with the Father and has been manifested unto us. Even now we too are the children of God, and though it is not yet manifested what we shall be, yet we know that when it is manifested we shall be like Him. The result of such a realisation is well expressed in the words which follow: "Every one, therefore, who has this hope within him purifies himself, even as He is pure." It may be quite true that in the New Testament writings this declaration of Divine sonship is limited to the case of those who are conscious that they have passed from death to life and are designated as believers. It is belief in Jesus as the Christ which brings about such a realisation, but it was the fact itself to which Jesus called attention and invited belief. True belief is not an alchemy which transmutes fact; it is the recognition of

fact. By His teaching and His life Jesus revealed the fact and made the fact credible. Our sonship is latent not manifest, potential not actual, but it is none the less real and in fact the true reality. He invites us to follow Him in order that the latent may become manifest, the potential may become actual, the ideal may be realised.

The coming to oneself is followed by a frank recognition that the true character of the actual self is revealed in its opposition to the ideal. The deepest conviction of sin is not the remembrance of certain outstanding offences against the moral law; it is the realisation that the whole current of our life has been set in opposition to its true goal, the doing of the will of God, the fulfilment of His Divine purpose. The conviction forces itself upon us, either suddenly or gradually, that in the battle which we have been waging, we have generally been found on the wrong side. We are, as it were, brought into the presence of the King against Whom we have been warring, but Whose face we have never seen, and we find to our dismay that He is our rightful sovereign, while the one we have hitherto followed stands revealed as a base usurper. That which we call our loyalty turns out, therefore, to be high treason, and the whole of our service, upon which we have prided ourselves, proves to be rank rebellion. The ideal, for the realisation of which we ought to have given our heart's blood, has been slain by our

own hands, and the guilt of that crime hangs heavy upon our souls. From the face of the Actual there falls the mask which has hitherto concealed it, and we find behind it the mocking face of deception and fraud. This experience is no mere theological invention; it is the deepest psychological fact. It is the chief part of that religious experience of the race out of which all our theological conceptions are formed. The particular method in which this experience of the soul finds expression varies considerably according to the religious ideas of the system under which the individual has been brought up. However crude and degraded many of its expressions may be, it is always possible to see the conception of a conflict between the ideal of aspiration and the actual of attainment, together with the sense of guilty failure in the battle of life.

A comparison between this psychological experience of the race and the tragedy of the Cross of Jesus reveals a parallel which is too striking to be accidental. The tragedy of the Cross is the objective presentation of a subjective experience which in some form or other is universal. If we wished to put into the most effective dramatic form this deepest religious experience of humanity, and to represent the essential tragedy of human life in its conflict between the ideal and the actual, it would be impossible to do it more effectively than the Synoptic Gospels present it to us in their

account of the life and death of Jesus. If we want the more artistic and conscious presentation we shall find it in the Johannine Gospel. It is, however, important for us to see that, while the historical presentation which meets us in the Gospels is in this sense the greatest drama of the ages, it is dramatic solely because it represents a religious experience which is universal, and at the same time the deepest experience of which the race is conscious. In the previous chapter this dramatic representation was arrived at solely by an examination of the historic presentation. In this chapter we arrive at the dramatic tragedy of human life by an examination of religious experience, and behold! the drama is identical with the history. The history is thus seen to be dramatic and the drama is seen to have been historic. The historic life and death of Jesus, that is, when interpreted as purely historical events, stand revealed as an epitome of the life and death of humanity. It is not, however, an allegorical representation of the conflict between the ideal and the actual, but a real presentation, by means of an historical event, of the spiritual life of the race translated into word and deed. In the same way the religious experience of humanity, interpreted not as theology but as psychology, when put into concrete form, comes out as a drama which is practically a point to point resemblance to the historic life and death of

Jesus. The drama is not something which is put into the history ; it is suggested by the history. The drama is not something which is foisted on to the religious experience ; it is suggested by the experience. The resemblance between the drama of history and the drama of religious experience is not fanciful or recondite ; it is actual and patent.

This religious experience indicated in the realisation of the conflict between the actual and the ideal is one of the distinguishing features of Christian religious experience, and there can be no question that this is entirely due to the revelation made in the life and death of Jesus. That revelation made clear and definite the vague and undefined religious feelings of the soul. It objectified the deepest subjective experience, making the unseen inner experience manifest to the eye. In the tragedy of the Cross humanity sees the real tragedy of its own life. Just because we see in Jesus the ideal Man, we recognise in Him our truer and nobler selves. He is in no sense the substitute for the actual man within us, but the representative of the ideal Man within us. His suffering is not a punishment which we escape ; it is a suffering in which we too have shared and wish to share even more fully. He was bruised, not in our stead but, on account of our sins. By His stripes we are not let off, but healed. It is His humanity and not ours

which is truly representative, and, therefore, it is upon His achievement, and not on our failure, that we desire the Divine eye to rest. If it were not for the Divine life within us we should in no true sense feel that He was our representative. If the actual humanity which we have realised satisfied us as the true expression of our real selves, we should repeat the old cry, "Not this man but Barabbas." It is because He stands as the representative of the saint within us, not as the substitute for the sinner within us, that in Him we feel that God is at one with us and we with God. He does not stand between us and an angry God, shielding us from His righteous wrath. He stands between us and a loving Father, interpreting the nature of the Father to us and our true nature to the Father. In representing perfectly the Divine idea of true sonship He justified God to Man; in representing humanity's ideal He justifies Man to God. In Him the eternal purpose of God in creation and the age-long travail of creation waiting for the revealing of the sons of God receive alike their perfect fulfilment. In interpreting God's meaning to Man, He interprets Man's meaning to himself. God's purpose and Humanity's goal and aim are thus seen to be precisely the same. This is so, however, because He is the true representative of our ideal, not the substitute for our actual. If He stood as the representative

of God's ideal and the substitute for Man's actual, no at-one-ment would be possible. The at-one-ment consists in the fact that in God's presentation of His ideal—the Son in Whom He is well-pleased, we recognise the representation of our ideal. To replace this essential feature of representation by a fictitious theory of substitution is to render a real at-one-ment impossible. The real at-one-ment becomes a fictitious atonement in which the essential feature is the propitiation of an angry God.

In the moral realm, to substitute the innocent for the guilty is a conception which subverts the moral ideal. To conceive of the punishment of the just for the unjust is not only an outrage on the moral sense of humanity; it is a subversion of the moral character of God. The suffering of the innocent for the guilty presents difficulties to our moral nature and to our belief in a beneficent God, but its arbitrary infliction as a penalty is a conception from which the modern mind absolutely revolts. The conception of the solidarity of the race may throw some light on the problem of suffering, but it throws no light on a suffering which is the penalty arbitrarily inflicted on the innocent in order that the guilty may escape. That which is bad morality cannot be good theology. That which the highest and best within us repudiates and condemns, God cannot approve and adopt.

Vicarious punishment marks a lower stage of man's moral development, in which it presented no difficulty to the moral sense. At the present day it would be an outrage to civilisation. Our theology must transcend our morality, not fall below it. We can no longer regard the sufferings of Christ as in any sense a penalty which He endured in order that we might escape. His suffering remains vicarious and remedial, but it has ceased to be regarded as a penalty for sin or a vindication of justice. It may be quite true that these ideas are to be found in the New Testament. The reply is that whether they are or are not makes no difference to the modern mind. They are simply the interpretation of the vicarious suffering as that appealed to the religious experience of the writers. The effect produced in the minds of the writers by the suffering is of far greater importance than the theory which commended itself to them as accounting for it. It was the experience which produced the theory, not the theory which produced the experience. The modern mind is conscious of the same redemptive experience, but if this theory is a hindrance rather than a help, it has no hesitation in replacing it by another.

Modern theological thought places the emphasis on the ideal in humanity, but it does not ignore the actual humanity which confronts us. The older thought was so taken up with the actual

that it overlooked the ideal. To return to our examination of religious experience : the man who has come to himself, however keenly he may realise that his real self is the ideal, cannot ignore the false self which confronts him in the actual man he knows himself to be. If, in the language of the prodigal, he is conscious that he is a son of the Father's home, by so much the more is he conscious that he has made himself a swineherd, feeding on husks and perishing of hunger. If the vision of the Father's house rises before his mind, by so much the more does he see the contrast in his present surroundings in the far country, whither, following his own inclinations, he went. In other words, by so much the more we realise that the ideal self is the true self, by that much the more do we realise that the actual self is the untrue and false self. If the desire to arise and go to the Father springs up within the breast, it is inevitably accompanied with the desire to tell Him that we have sinned against Heaven and in His sight and are no more worthy to be called His children. To acknowledge the ideal is to disavow the actual. To realise that we have joined with the actual in its conflict with the ideal means that henceforth we join with the ideal in the destruction of the actual. As we gaze upon the great drama of humanity as it is set forth in the tragedy of the Cross, the moment we become conscious that we have taken our part

with those who crucified the Christ, the incarnation of the ideal, we reverently take Him down from the Cross of shame and put the actual in His place. We can do no other; for once the realisation forces itself upon us that we have sided with the actual against the ideal, that we have rejected and crucified the Christ of God, the Divine within us protests against the crime we have committed and demands the reversal of the sentence we have pronounced. This is not theological fiction; it is psychological fact. This is that religious experience which is of more value than all our theories to explain it.

In this experience there is a substitution which, far from being opposed to the moral ideal, is its very embodiment. This substitution, however, is subjective and not objective; it is made by the sinner and not by God, and it consists in substituting as the true object of our rejection, the actual for the ideal, instead of substituting as the true object of punishment, the ideal for the actual. Such a substitution marks the regeneration of the moral nature, whereas the other would mark its degeneration. From the standpoint of Jesus His death was the crowning act of His life, that loving to the uttermost which had marked His whole career as the Saviour of His people. From the standpoint of His enemies it was the complete repudiation of His claim and the destruction of His mission. The Divine within us rises to greet

the Divine in Him, reverses the verdict of His people and pronounces its condemnation upon the actual and the full vindication of the ideal. This reversal of the condemnation pronounced upon the ideal manifestation of the Divine within humanity, which was objectified in the tragedy of the Cross, is the successful appeal to the Supreme Court of Conscience enthroned within our moral nature. In the hyperbolical but expressive language of Paul, God made Him Who knew no sin to be sin on our account, in order that in Him we may become the righteousness of God. This is hyperbole, an intentional exaggeration of the truth, and must be interpreted accordingly. God could not make the sinless one to be sinful. It is a logical as well as a moral impossibility. He could, however, allow the ideal to occupy the place which in the eternal fitness of things ought to be occupied by the actual, in order that we ourselves might feel the utter incongruity and, realising it, might dethrone the usurping actual, and enthrone the Divine ideal in the place of supremacy. This is the principle illustrated in a myriad instances during the history of humanity and familiar to us in the deepest experiences of our own souls. How many times does history reveal to us the sacrifice of the ideal to the actual, the voluntary submission on the part of the ideal to the fate which of right belongs to the actual, in order that the succeeding generation might reverse the verdict of the local

and temporary and establish that righteousness of God whose destruction had seemed assured. How often in our own experience have we crucified the ideal at the bidding of the actual, not knowing what we did, and subsequently encircled with a crown of glory the brow upon which we had set the crown of thorns. The suffering to which the Divine within us has been subjected has not been the infliction of any penalty, but it has been a vicarious suffering both remedial and salutary. Suffering which is remedial is vicarious suffering. In the measure in which it is penal it is destructive rather than remedial. It is when the highest and noblest within us suffers for the sins which the lowest and meanest within us has committed that there is hope of salvation for us. It is not the Cross, regarded as the punishment of sin, which saves; it is the Cross of the Christ of God, regarded as the vicarious suffering of the ideal at the hands of the actual, which turns the heart from its devotion to the actual to the worship of the ideal. As a victim of Divine wrath Christ would have no more power to save than as a victim of human wrath. It is as representing the Divine love that His suffering becomes remedial by appealing to the Divine within us, and we recognise in the Cross the symbol of salvation. God forbid that we should glory even in the Cross, save as by means of it we are ourselves crucified to the world and the world is crucified to us. The

Gospel of the Cross is not a miscalled gospel of the punishment of the innocent that the guilty may escape; it is that truer Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation, the Gospel of the vicarious suffering of the ideal, which saves just in proportion as it regenerates.

With the condemnation of the actual which the sacrifice endured by the ideal produces in the soul, there is always associated the consciousness of guilt and the desire for forgiveness. This confession of sin and consciousness of unworthiness is a conspicuous feature of the parable of the Prodigal Son. That which impels the prodigal to arise and go to his father, is the desire first and foremost to acknowledge his sin and obtain forgiveness. His reinstatement as a son does not enter his thoughts. He is content so long as he may be allowed to occupy the position of a servant. In this the parable is a picture true to life and in strict accord with the psychology of religious experience. It is the son who is unrepentant and still unworthy, whose mind is fixed upon his station and place, who makes much of the blood relationship, and ignores or slurs over his manifest unworthiness. Of all the cases of moral failure, the most hopeless is that of the man who presumes on his blood relationship to secure restoration and forgiveness. Such a presumption is the surest sign that the man has never really come to himself in the truest and deepest sense. Guilt and remorse

are factors in human nature which no philosophy can ignore, and of which theology must take account. The cry of the Psalmist, "Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned and done this evil in Thy sight," is a cry which the whole religious experience of humanity re-echoes. A philosophy or a theology which can find no room for this reality may be the outcome of faultless logic, but it is untrue to one of the deepest facts of life. The uprising of the Divine life within the soul is followed by the frank confession, "Father, I have sinned." Until that confession has been called forth, the son is still dead and lost, in the presence of the swine, not in the presence of the Father.

In the immortal parable of Jesus it is remarkable that the consciousness of the father's forgiveness is represented, not as the result of any declaration on the father's part but, by a restoration to the father's breast. The fullest forgiveness is involved in the reception. The true justification of the forgiveness is expressed in the reproof administered to the elder son in the words, "It was meet that we should make merry and be glad, for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." Repentance and forgiveness are thus represented as the action and reaction of the Divine Spirit, the one following the other in unbreakable succession. It was the father's nature in the son which expressed itself in the words, "Father, I have sinned." It was the

father's nature which answered, "My son was then dead; now he is alive again." Forgiveness is not the effect of repentance; repentance is the harbinger of forgiveness. The Baptist preaching repentance is always followed by the Christ announcing forgiveness. He is, however, not the cause of the coming of the Christ but, simply His herald. The real difficulty in moral reformation is not the difficulty of obtaining forgiveness from the one who has been sinned against; it is the difficulty of inducing true repentance in the one who has sinned. Forgiveness is the Divine life rising up in the one who has been aggrieved, to meet the Divine life which has already risen up in the aggressor and manifested itself in repentance. Forgiveness is the Father coming forth to meet the prodigal.

Our theology must not contradict the revelation of the Divine which we find within ourselves. God's forgiveness is neither the result of any merit on the part of the sinner, nor the effect of any punishment endured on the sinner's behalf. It springs from the very nature of God Who is Love. A forgiveness which is earned, either by the sinner or by some one acting on his behalf, is a contradiction in terms. It is entirely of grace and not of works. God does not forgive the sinner because He has already punished the sinless in his place; He forgives because, in the old but expressive phrase,—It is His *property* always to

have mercy. The Cross of Christ secures forgiveness, not because Christ bore our punishment but, because, in bearing our iniquities in His own body on the tree, He brings us to repentance, a repentance which is the sure harbinger of forgiveness. The Cross, that is, is in no sense penal; it is redemptive. It is not the symbol of justice which condemns; it is the symbol of love which saves. Punishment has very little of the redemptive element in it, and vicarious punishment still less. It is suffering which is redemptive, and vicarious suffering most of all. The mother's face in which a vicarious suffering is depicted is far more redemptive than the father's hand in which the rod is held. The saving power in the Cross of Christ is, not that it represents the satisfaction of justice but, that it manifests the very heart of God. In the face that was marred more than any man's we do not see the penalty of sin; we behold the suffering which sin inflicts on the sinless. It is not the Father's frowning brow, but the Mother's heart-broken face which meets us as we turn towards Calvary. This is its redemptive power. It saves because it redeems; it assures of forgiveness because it induces repentance; it brings us home to the Father, because it first brings us to ourselves.

It is not our theories of what the Cross of Christ means which are important; it is the influence the Cross exerts on the moral and

spiritual nature of man. The theories have changed, not merely in expression, but in substance from age to age, but the influence has continued through every age as the power which God has used for man's moral redemption. What the Cross is to the mind of God suggests depths into which we may perhaps reverently look, but which we cannot possibly fathom. We may, however, feel confident that it does not stand unrelated or isolated from the vicarious suffering with which the whole Universe is filled, nor is its purpose opposed to that which is manifest in all vicarious suffering. If the modern mind rejects absolutely the idea of vicarious punishment, it does so because such a conception, when looked at apart from all theological prepossessions, violates the very sense of justice in the interests of which it is put forward. Let any one ask himself whether his sense of justice is not more outraged by the statement that God cannot forgive the sinner unless He first punishes the sinless, or by the statement that if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. That forgiveness is not the impossibility some theologians conceive it to be is confirmed by the whole experience of the race. The demands of justice do not even here override the imperatives of mercy. The appeal of sincere repentance is irresistible to that which is likest God within the soul. No father ever yet refused

forgiveness to his truly repentant son without violating the highest within him, and incurring the condemnation of every right-feeling parent. It may be true that individuals associated together into a community may feel it necessary and advisable to refuse to pardon crimes which are not mere injuries inflicted on individuals alone, but on the community. In this sense there is truth in the statement that the interests of justice to all override the feelings of pity in the breasts of the few. Where, however, the community feels the appeal of mercy, it never hesitates to set aside the claims of justice, and in fact demands the exercise of the prerogative of mercy, which it always leaves in the hands of the supreme representative of the community. What is absolutely inconceivable to the modern mind is that mercy can be extended to all provided that some one is willing, though perfectly innocent, to bear the punishment of the offence of the guilty. Instead of the interests of justice being met by such a course, justice herself would be ruthlessly violated. To suppose that in the mind of God His forgiveness can only be exercised after His justice has executed a victim is to present a conception of the character of God which the modern mind finds it impossible to accept. There is no ground for such a view in the teaching of Jesus, but ground for an entirely opposite view. Though certain expressions in the Epistles may favour such a view, there are

others which are inconsistent with such a conception. The teaching of Jesus on the question of human forgiveness makes it certain that His parable of the Prodigal Son must be taken as the clearest exposition of His conception of Divine forgiveness. He taught His disciples to ask for forgiveness from God because they also forgave those who had sinned against them. It may be quite true that we have no right to expect to find in the parable a scheme of salvation. It is, however, even more certain that we have no right to expect to find in any scheme of salvation that which is contradictory to the essential feature of the Divine forgiveness which Jesus has so perfectly expressed in the parable. If a so-called scheme of salvation, even though derived from the Epistles, is inconsistent with the mind of Christ, as it is revealed to us in the Gospels, we have no alternative but to reject it.

While there may be great difference of opinion as to what the Cross is to the mind of God, there is very little difference of opinion as to what it has been and is to the heart of humanity. The verdict of history shows unmistakably that the influence of Calvary saves, however we may express our conceptions of what the salvation means. It redeems, however we may formulate our schemes of redemption. It makes us at one with God, whatever may be the terms in which we express our ideas of atonement. It is, there-

fore, the subjective effect which must determine the nature of the objective fact, and not *vice versa*. The true purpose is revealed, not in what we may imagine it to be to the mind of God but, in what we see it actually to be to the heart and conscience of man. We may question the statement that it reconciled God to man, but we cannot question the fact that it has reconciled man to God. We may doubt whether humanity in Christ was paying the penalty of sin, but we cannot doubt that in Christ God was reconciling the world unto Himself. If the modern mind rejects theories which commended themselves to the men of old time, the modern heart feels as keenly the saving influence of the Cross of Jesus, and in its modern mode of expression seeks not to destroy but to fulfil.

CHAPTER X

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

CHRISTIANITY is founded upon the belief in the manifestation of God in the personality of Jesus. The question, however, of supreme importance is at what point the manifestation is regarded as completing itself? Does it end with the life and death of Jesus, or does it include the phenomena known as the Resurrection? Historic Christianity undoubtedly includes the Resurrection in the manifestation, and regards it, in fact, as the true key for the interpretation of that manifestation. The Jesus, that is, in Whom it sees the perfect manifestation of God within the limits of the human, is not merely the Jesus "Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried," but the Jesus Who in addition "was raised from the dead, ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father, Almighty." That this is the Christianity of history is indisputable. The question of the Resurrection, however, introduces the extraordinary,

or as some prefer to call it the supernatural, and, therefore, those whose philosophy leaves no room for the extraordinary look upon it with suspicion, either dismiss it as pure myth, or seek to explain it from the standpoint of the ordinary. All such explanations practically limit the historical basis of Christianity to the life and death of Jesus, and treat the Resurrection, not as a part of the manifestation of God in Jesus but, as a part of the interpretation of the manifestation on the part of the disciples.

In historic Christianity we are confronted with two figures, The Jesus of the Synoptists and The Christ of the other New Testament writers, both, however, connected together as one and the same personality. The transition from the one figure to the other is marked in all the writings by the belief that Jesus had risen from the dead. Between the account of the life and death of Jesus and the account of the Christ of the Epistles, something is implied as having happened, sufficient to account for this remarkable transition of thought in regard to the personality of Jesus. That something is the Resurrection, and the question at issue is, whether the Resurrection phenomena are to be regarded as originating within or without the minds of the disciples? The great issue between the two chief schools of modern thought is a question of the true interpretation of the

phenomena of the Resurrection. There are those on the one hand, who hold that a sound criticism is capable of explaining all the phenomena on what is called the subjective hypothesis, while, on the other hand, there are those who consider that the subjective hypothesis fails completely to give a satisfactory account of that something which must have happened in the interval between the death of Jesus and the rise of that belief in an exalted Christ which is the distinguishing feature of historic Christianity. They feel compelled, therefore, to fall back on the objective reality of the Resurrection, regarding it as an essential part of the manifestation of the Divine in Jesus the Christ.

Amongst those who entirely rule out the extraordinary or the supernatural, it is interesting to note that quite recently a radical division has manifested itself. On the one hand, there are those who believe that at the basis of Christianity there is simply an ordinary personality, known as the natural Jesus, a simple but intensely religious Galilean peasant. The Christ-idea associated with Him is simply due to the adoration of His followers. In the judgment of these critics Jesus is an historical personage, while the Christ is purely mythical. On the other hand, there are those who feel that this attempt to distinguish between an historical Jesus and mythical Christ has ended in failure. They cannot find the simple

and natural Jesus, however much they may sift the evidence. The extraordinary or supernatural is, in their opinion, inextricably bound up with the figure, with the result that the attempt to separate the two must be regarded as a failure. This newer party is in full agreement with the ultra-orthodox on the question of the supernatural character of the Christ of faith, and entirely opposed to any explanation of Christianity based upon the belief in a purely natural Jesus. Instead, however, of accepting the ultra-orthodox position, they seek to explain the origin of Christianity as the growth of a myth. Pure and simple Christianity was nothing more than a Christ-cult, based upon the worship of a demigod called Christ, and any connection with an historic person called Jesus is either purely fictitious, or so remote as to be a negligible factor. The two schools of thought here referred to may be distinguished from one another by saying that the one regards Christianity as the religion of an historic Jesus Who was subsequently deified, while the other regards it as the religion of a mythical Christ Who was subsequently historicised, if we may be allowed to coin a word. The antithesis may perhaps be best expressed by saying that the one party asserts that the historic Jesus is not the Christ of historic Christianity, while the other party asserts that the Christ of historic Christianity is a pure myth, and not the so-called historic Jesus at all.

It is beyond the scope of the present inquiry to enter into any discussion as to the tenability of this recent development of thought, but it may perhaps be pointed out that the crux of the question is, not the feasibility of the theory as a theory but, its ability to explain the facts of historic Christianity. According to this theory we have a small club associated together on the model of similar clubs for the worship of some demigod. Within a very few years, however, it has developed into a religion intimately connected with the strictest monotheistic religion in the world, Judaism, while its demigod, Christ, has become associated with one Jesus, an historic personality Who had lived practically at the same period as Paul, the chief exponent of this new cult, and Who was regarded as the Messiah of the Jewish nation. Not only so, but the club contained amongst its members a number of men, recognised as pillars of the Society, who had actually companied with this Jesus, and on that account were accorded positions in the Society, which were unique in their authoritativeness. We have not here a case of the growth of legend and myth around an historic personality, but the exact opposite. A pure myth has become an historic reality. We have not a case of deification, but the exact opposite; a god has been humanised. All this has taken place practically within the lifetime of the members of the club which began with the worship of a demigod, but

ended in making that demigod's historic personality so real that in its subsequent history Christianity has been inextricably bound up with the belief in an historic manifestation of God in Jesus, and its chief doctrines based upon an historic life and death. If the theory is true, then undoubtedly fact is much stranger than fiction and Christianity is the most wonderful phenomenon the world has yet produced. The myth has hitherto been explained as the natural tendency of the mind to transform a simple historical fact into an elaborate legendary fiction, and abundant evidence has been offered in support of such natural tendency. In the newer theory the whole of this is completely set on one side and we are asked to believe that the real basis of the so-called history of Jesus of Nazareth is one out of many obscure myths associated with a kind of demigod called Christ. An almost contemptuous scorn is cast upon the attempts of modern criticism to discriminate between what is called the historical and the legendary in the Gospels, and the assertion is made that as a matter of fact there is no history at all ; that there is practically no connection worth speaking of between the Christ and an historic personality called Jesus of Nazareth. The reality underlying Christianity is said to be simply a Christ-cult, fully recognised by its founders to be the worship of a demigod, and having no real connection with any historic personality at all.

Within a very short period, however, of the establishment of this new cult, in some unexplained way, its Christ becomes so associated with an historic person, the contemporary of the chief exponent of this cult, that the myth is replaced by the historic, and the doctrines of the cult are all based upon the manifestation of the monotheistic God of Judaism in the personality of one Jesus Who is regarded as the Messiah of Jewish thought and expectation. This is the newest theory to explain Christianity, and its advocates appeal to the New Testament writings themselves to confirm the theory. Modern criticism, they tell us, has been entirely on the wrong tack in its attempts to rewrite the Gospel stories on the supposition that they are real history overlaid with a certain amount of legendary detail. The real fact is that they are not history at all, but a perfectly plain story, of the nature of fiction, setting forth under the guise of a person called Jesus, Who is merely a *dramatis persona*, the pure myth of the demigod Christ.

We may quite safely leave this theory to be combated by its best opponents, the experts in modern historical criticism, should they feel it deserving of serious consideration. The writer, however, is quite content to let the matter rest on the appeal made by its advocates to the New Testament writings themselves. If an unbiased reading of the New Testament confirms such a

theory, there is nothing more to be said, except to congratulate the readers on their acumen in discovering that that which historic Christianity through the centuries has regarded as fact is nothing more than fancy, and to express the hope that the fancy will be as effective in the regeneration of the world as the supposed fact has been.

The matter with which we are here specially concerned is one which has an important bearing upon the vital question of the true origin of Christianity, which is after all the supreme question for modern thought. The real issue to-day turns, as it has always turned, on the question of the true explanation of the phenomena connected with the Resurrection. As Paul long ago declared, "If The Christ has not been raised, then is your faith vain . . . and our preaching is also vain." Nothing is more absolutely certain than that in the New Testament writings the central fact around which the whole of Christianity gathers is the preaching that Jesus Who had been crucified, dead, and buried, had been raised from the dead, and was alive for evermore. Whether it was true or not, is not the matter which immediately concerns us. Whether it was true or untrue, there is no question that it was proclaimed, and proclaimed as the essential fact of Christianity. It must be borne in mind, however, that this fact of the Resurrection was not any mythical death

and resurrection of a god; it was the death and resurrection of a man. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians, when dealing with the subject of a resurrection of men who have died, he speaks not of any mythical resurrection of a demigod, but of the historic death and Resurrection of Jesus, which he declares is what he and all the apostles preached, and he concludes thus: "Whether then it be I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed." The Resurrection of Jesus, therefore, is vital in any discussion of Christian origins. It is absolutely fatal to the mythical theory above referred to, because as we have just shown, Paul, the chief exponent of the so-called Christ-cult, expressly connects the Resurrection with his contemporary, Jesus of Nazareth, and declares that if He has not been raised from the dead, the whole of his preaching is vain, and the faith of his hearers is vain. If the appeal is made to the New Testament, we must take what the New Testament says. The real issue between the two great schools of modern thought is on the question of the explanation of the phenomena connected with the Resurrection. There are those, on the one hand, who hold that sound criticism is capable of explaining all the phenomena on what is called a subjective basis, while, on the other hand, there are those who consider that the subjective hypothesis fails completely to give a satisfactory explanation of that something which occurred in the

interval between the death of Jesus and the rise of the worship of Christ.

The subjective hypothesis, however, needs to be discriminated from every other explanation which allows some objective reality to the Resurrection phenomena. The true distinction is perhaps best expressed by saying that the subjective hypothesis explains the phenomena as the result of the belief that Jesus was alive, while the others explain the belief as the result of the phenomena. It is a misuse of terms, only resulting in confusion, to speak of the objective character of the phenomena, if all that is meant is that the disciples objectified their subjective experience. All hallucination possesses such an objective character, but the true distinction between the two views is concerned with the origin of the phenomena. It is equally misleading to characterise all objective views of the Resurrection as necessarily implying that the phenomena are purely physical rather than psychical. The phenomena themselves are capable of being explained as either physical or psychical, but the origin of the phenomena was either in the minds of the disciples or outside of them. If the origin is found within the minds of the disciples, then the explanation is based upon a subjective hypothesis.

Nothing is more common in discussing the contrast between the Jesus of the Synoptists and the Christ of the Epistles than to call the one

natural and the other supernatural, with the implication that the one is real and historical, while the other is imaginary and mythical. The terms natural and supernatural are entirely misleading unless they are used with a full recognition of the fact that the personality of Jesus is represented as functioning on two distinct planes. In the Epistles the writers are not dealing with the personality of Jesus as it was manifested in Galilee and Jerusalem prior to the crucifixion, but with a personality which they identify with that historic Jesus, but Who functions on what, for the sake of distinction, we must call the spiritual plane. Whether they were right in their identification, or whether there is a spiritual plane on which personality can function, is not the question which here concerns us. The point urged is that the difference between the two figures is not due to any difference in the personality of Jesus, as it is conceived by the respective writers, but to a difference in the plane upon which the personality is represented as functioning. The true difference, that is, is not between a natural and a supernatural Jesus, but between a personality manifesting itself on a material and on a spiritual plane. Unless this distinction in the standpoint of the writers is recognised, the whole discussion about a natural and a supernatural Jesus is a discussion in which each side is speaking about entirely different things. This is no mere verbal distinction ; it is essential

for an understanding of the different standpoints of the writers. It would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for instance, to find in the writings of Paul a single reference to a supernatural as contrasted with a natural Jesus of Nazareth, in any passage referring to the earthly career of his Master. There is absolutely nothing in any of Paul's letters which would conflict with the figure of Jesus contained in the Synoptists, even after we have excluded everything which can be regarded as supernatural elements in the Synoptic narratives. So far as the earthly life of Jesus is concerned, the figure of what may be called a perfectly natural Jesus would be in entire agreement, not only with every reference to Jesus to be found in the Pauline Epistles but, with the historic personality upon which his theology is based. The real basis of Paul's exalted Christ is not a Jesus miraculously conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary, nor is it even a miracle-working Jesus, but a Jesus Who in His earthly life manifested that ethical transcendence characteristic of all the records, Who was crucified, dead, and buried, but Who has been raised from the dead and is seated at the right hand of God. His ethical transcendence, including as its chief expression His self-sacrificing death, together with His triumph over the grave, are the two essential features in the historic Jesus which are necessary for the construction of Paul's exalted Christ. What is true

in the case of Paul is true also in the case of the other New Testament writers. The supernatural element in the portrait of the exalted Christ is not dependent upon any so-called supernatural features in the record of His earthly career. The point which is here urged is, not that all the extraordinary features in the Gospels are to be ruled out but, that such features, whether correct or incorrect, are not essential to a real identification of the personality of Jesus with the personality of the exalted Christ. The difference between the two conceptions is entirely due to the belief that the personality of Jesus was functioning on an entirely different plane. That belief was founded on those experiences connected with the Resurrection phenomena.

If the above distinction is admitted, it will at once be seen that the supreme question is, the validity of the belief that the Jesus Whom the disciples had known during His earthly career had actually entered upon a higher and more exalted career, which we may call a heavenly one. It is this belief which explains the difference between the two figures of the historic Jesus of the Gospels and the exalted Christ of the rest of the New Testament. It is the validity of this belief which justifies the identification of the one with the other, an identification which is characteristic of all the writers. Since this belief is invariably connected with the Resurrection, and is indeed unaccountable

without a Resurrection of some kind or another, the question of the reality of this event is of paramount importance. Is the belief that Jesus was alive the origin of the phenomena connected with the Resurrection, or the result of the phenomena?

In considering this question it is important to ask ourselves what is the true problem for the twentieth-century mind? The phenomena themselves have passed away beyond the reach of any reinvestigation, and all that we have left is the testimony of the first-century witnesses. That testimony may be regarded as consistent with either a physical or a psychical explanation of the phenomena. The question as to which of these two explanations is more acceptable is unimportant as regards the reality of the event. Both are equally opposed to a purely subjective hypothesis. The true issue is not the nature of the phenomena, but their origin. Are we to seek no further than the minds of the disciples for a full explanation of the Resurrection stories, or are we to conclude that the essential feature in the stories is the personality of Jesus Himself? In the first case the phenomena are the work of the disciples; in the other they are the work of a Jesus Who is alive.

If we cannot reinvestigate the phenomena themselves so as to decide the question at issue, we can at least examine the subjective hypothesis to see if it is capable of accounting for the fact,

which is absolutely certain,—the belief on the part of the disciples in the Resurrection. The hypothesis is founded upon well known and recognised psychical experiences, and if it is sufficient to account for the belief in the Resurrection, most people would conclude that there is no need to look farther, but to rely upon an explanation which at least implies an extraordinary, if not a supernatural occurrence.

It must, however, be clearly understood what it is for which the subjective hypothesis has to account. It has not to offer a certain explanation of the phenomena connected with the Resurrection, but of the characteristic belief of the New Testament writers that Jesus had risen from the dead. It is not sufficient, that is, to show that the phenomena can all be explained as the visions of people who cannot feel that Jesus is really dead; who consequently begin to imagine that they can see Him before their eyes, and eventually pass on to the belief that the grave is empty and that He has risen from the dead. It is perfectly true that visions have been experienced by others besides the disciples, and this fact naturally suggests that it was a similar experience through which the disciples passed. The important fact, however, which is omitted in all such theories, is that the resurrection-idea is peculiar to the disciples. In no other instance on record has the vision of a deceased person ever suggested the idea that he

had risen from the grave. It is impossible to point to any other post-mortem appearances which have produced anything at all corresponding to the conception embodied in the New Testament conception of a resurrection. That conception is something entirely different from that of ghostly appearances or temporary visitations from the unseen world. We are not now concerned with the question as to whether this resurrection-idea was correct or not. The point urged is, that the belief of the disciples was one which involved that definite conception, and that the explanation of the phenomena must be capable of accounting for this unique conception. It may be frankly admitted that visions of deceased persons are not at all uncommon. What is without parallel in the case of the disciples is that what they saw produced the resurrection-idea. They did not believe that Jesus was one of the denizens of the unseen world who, like others, had revisited the earth; they conceived of Him as having been raised from the dead as no one else had ever been; that He was not a mere shade, but the glorified and exalted Son of God. They pointed to His Resurrection as differentiating Him from all the rest of mankind. They believed that He would come again in bodily form, and would raise from the dead, even as He had been raised, those of their number who, as they significantly expressed it, slept. The whole conception of the exalted

Christ rests upon this absolutely unique character of the appearance of Jesus to His disciples after His death, and is unintelligible apart from it. Whether such a conception is correct or not is not the question. The point is, that any theory which explains the Resurrection must do more than explain the mere seeing of visions; it must account for the resurrection-idea, an idea which has never been associated with any other such visions. The cause, to be sufficient, must be one which accounts for the resurrection-idea, and not merely for the idea of survival based upon the seeing of ghosts. The Risen Jesus in Whom the disciples believed was not a mere ghost or shade, with less power and vitality than He possessed before His death. He was one Who was more alive than He had ever been and able to impart power to His disciples in a way surpassing all their previous experiences. They looked forward to His immediate second-coming and the setting up of the Kingdom of God upon earth, and they anticipated an actual physical resurrection on the part of those who had fallen asleep. For the purpose of the present argument, the mistaken conceptions in this belief only strengthen its force. It is the rise of such a belief which the subjective hypothesis has to explain. The more materialistic and crudely physical this primitive belief is, the more difficult it is to account for it on the subjective hypothesis.

Before examining the phenomena with a view to finding a sufficient cause for their origin, it may be well to look a little more closely at the problem as it presents itself to the modern mind. We have, on the one hand, the figure of the historic Jesus, capable undoubtedly of being represented apart from everything of the nature of the supernatural. On the other hand, we have an exalted Christ of the Acts and the Epistles, confirmed as regards His spiritual influence on the hearts of His followers by the religious experience of the Church throughout the succeeding centuries. Between the two, however, there is a gulf which seems impassable, and appears to render any real identification of the one with the other impossible. Attempts have been made to bridge this gulf by constructing from both sides. Rationalism builds on the historic Jesus of the Synoptists, after removing all those elements in the story which seem to involve the supernatural. Religious faith builds on the Christ of religious experience, the Christ to Whose influence and power the Church bears witness. Neither party, however, succeeds in really bridging the gulf. It is as impossible to arrive at the exalted Christ of historic Christianity from the purely rationalistic side as it is to arrive at the historic Jesus from the side of religious experience. They both take us some way across, but we are compelled to take a leap at the end in order to reach either the exalted Christ or the historic Jesus.

If the gulf is really to be spanned, they must both be joined together. The true bridge, that is, is a cantilever bridge, resting on experience both of the historic Jesus and of the exalted Christ. The construction was a first century achievement and it confronts us in the pages of the New Testament. It was the phenomena connected with the Resurrection which enabled the disciples to construct their bridge, and those phenomena are essential for the construction of any bridge. Without a bridge at all the two piers are left standing, but utterly unconnected.

In considering the question of the origin of the resurrection-idea we have first to ask what was the content of the conception in the minds of the disciples? Was the resurrection-idea a development of the survival-idea, or was it the original and fundamental idea? The subjective hypothesis assumes that the resurrection-idea is secondary, and that the only conception with which the disciples started was the ideal of a survival. It does not, however, bring forward any evidence in support of this assumption. It is not too much to say that there is not a shred of evidence in any part of the New Testament which suggests that the resurrection-idea is a later development. What evidence there is, is all the other way. If the original conception was simply that of a survival in the unseen world of the Master with Whom the disciples had companied, then the resurrection-idea is a later

development, due either to misconception or intentional exaggeration on the part of the evangelists. Neumann in his little book, *Jesus*, says that if the emptiness of the tomb had been a well-known fact in Paul's time, not only would Paul have known it, but he would have been certain to use the fact as evidence to be laid before the Corinthians. Paul, however, he contends, had no information about the empty grave. Undoubtedly Paul is a most important witness in this matter, because his writings are the earliest of all the New Testament Scriptures, and are admitted as genuine. They form, therefore, the best point of departure in our investigation of this question.

Is it correct, as Neumann states, that Paul makes no mention of the empty tomb, and in fact knew nothing of it? In the well-known passage in the Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul is assuring the Corinthians, not of the Resurrection of Jesus, but of the fact of a resurrection. It is the general idea of a resurrection which has been called in question in the Corinthian church, and not any assertion as to the Resurrection of Jesus. It was a philosophical objection which had been brought forward; not a question of fact which had been called in question. It seems almost certain that the reference in the 12th verse to "some among you who say there is no resurrection" is to Gentile proselytes, and that the denial or doubt was based upon their previous Greek conceptions. It is important to

keep this in mind, because the whole point of the argument of Paul turns on the presentation of a concrete fact to refute an abstract theory. The objection was a universal negative—there is no resurrection. Paul's reply is to produce a single instance,—Christ is risen, which he knows is quite sufficient to overthrow the universal proposition of the objectors. In adducing his instance he, of course, goes into the question of its historicity, but the main line of his argument is the fundamental fact of all the preaching of Christianity,—the Resurrection of Jesus. The people to whom he is writing are not unbelievers in the Gospel, but believers, who accept the testimony of the apostles to whom he refers. He is not, therefore, primarily concerned with proving their trustworthiness and of establishing the fact of the Resurrection of Jesus. His chief concern is to remove a philosophical objection to the general idea of a resurrection in which his readers will have a share. His statements and implications, therefore, in regard to the accepted belief of the apostles, are on that very account all the more valuable.

In the course of the discussion of the question, he takes up the query of one of the Corinthians as to the manner of the resurrection, and especially as regards the kind of body with which the dead will come forth. This query is unintelligible if it does not refer to the coming forth of the actual body which has been placed in the grave. Moreover, if

the resurrection-idea did not contain, as an essential element in its contents, the idea of a coming forth out of the grave of the body which has been buried, is it likely that the question would have been asked? Let us, however, suppose that this was a mistake on the part of the objector, due to an entire misconception of the true idea, and that, as Neumann says, Paul knows nothing about the empty grave of Jesus. Then we have to ask ourselves what is the simple answer to such an objection as that raised by this unknown member in the Church at Corinth? Surely it consists in telling him that he has entirely misconceived the idea of the resurrection in supposing that it has anything to do with the actual coming forth of the body from the grave, but is a purely spiritual conception. Paul could have given an unanswerable reply by pointing to the fact, that though Christ was preached as having been raised from the dead, yet it was a well-known fact that His actual body was still in the tomb in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

Now Paul's answer is not only quite different from this; it is the exact opposite of this. He admits that the resurrection-idea does imply that the body comes forth from the tomb, though he asserts that it is a changed body, just as the grain of wheat which is reaped is not the same grain of wheat that has been sown. He then proceeds to draw a contrast between the two kinds of bodies, the one that is sown and the one that is raised.

"It is sown," he says, "in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body." Is it conceivable that in this line of argument there is absolutely no reference to the burial and Resurrection of Jesus? Is it possible to say, in the face of this discussion of the subject by Paul, that he knows nothing of the empty tomb, and makes no reference to it? Is it not far truer to say that the whole chapter is unintelligible, unless underlying the whole of Paul's thought on the subject there is both an empty tomb and an objective appearance of the Risen Jesus, quite distinct from those subjective visions about which he writes to this same Church in his second letter. His claim to apostleship is based upon his having seen the Risen Jesus as really as the other apostles. In his second letter, when writing on the subject of ecstatic visions, he speaks of the Corinthians as sharers with himself in such visions. If there were no difference between his vision of the Risen Jesus and these visions which he shared with the Corinthians, what becomes of his claim to apostleship? It seems clear, therefore, that Paul distinguishes between visions due to a subjective cause, and the vision of the Risen Jesus which was the basis of his claim to apostleship, a claim which was admitted by the other apostles.

We are, however, able to get much farther back than the writing of this letter to the Corinthians in our investigation of Paul's conception of the resurrection. In the Acts of the Apostles (xiii. 16-41) we have a report of Paul's address in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia which he visited on his first missionary journey. In this address we have a clear pronouncement on the subject of the Resurrection of Jesus which we know formed the central fact in all his preaching. He compares Jesus with David and quotes from Psalm xvi. the words, "Thou wilt not give Thy Holy One to see corruption." His contention is that the Holy One here spoken of cannot be David, but must be Jesus, and he bases his contention on the fact of the Resurrection of Jesus. It is the contrast between the two in this very respect upon which the point of the argument turns. David, he says, died and saw corruption, while Jesus died, but through the Resurrection, escaped that which David experienced, and saw no corruption. If this does not refer to an empty tomb and the escape from the corruption of the body in the grave, what force is there in the argument? In the face of this evidence as to the resurrection-idea in the mind of Paul, how can it be maintained that he knew nothing of the empty tomb and made no reference to it?

Similarly in the case of Peter, whom Neumann regards as primarily responsible for the belief that

Jesus was alive, and whose impressionable nature he considers eminently suitable for the seeing of visions, there is the evidence furnished in his address on the day of Pentecost, in which precisely the same line of argument is taken. The reference to the empty tomb is in Peter's case even more striking. He makes explicit mention of the fact that "David's tomb is with us to this day." He then proceeds to describe David, whom he regards as the author of the Psalm, as a prophet who, looking forward to his successor, declares beforehand the Resurrection of the Christ, expressly describing it as "not being left in Hades, and His flesh not seeing corruption." The reference to the tomb of David makes it absolutely certain that in the mind of Peter there is a contrast between the one which contained the dust of David, and the other which contained no remnant of the body of Jesus. Neumann considers it certain that the first appearances of Jesus were experienced in Galilee, though the proof he offers would satisfy no one who had not determined beforehand that the Jerusalem appearances must be ruled out of account. However, taking it that the appearances did originate in Galilee, he admits "that by degrees the disciples assembled once more in Jerusalem in order to visit again the spot where their Master had shed His blood. Not three days, but weeks, had passed. What now began to speak to them of the Risen One were not angels, but all the old

landmarks—the burial-place, the houses of friends, the road to the Mount of Olives—and they now sang the praise of the God Who works the great miracle of resuscitation. They justified their faith too, against gainsayers who denied the Resurrection. It was then that they conceived the idea of the empty grave, guarded against violation by a door of stone, a seal and a military guard."

Let us examine the assumptions in this passage of Neumann's and ask ourselves whether they are justified. It is assumed that within a few weeks at most of the crucifixion, the disciples returned to Jerusalem and came under the influence of the old landmarks, and amongst them the burial-place, and that these landmarks began to speak to them. This old landmark of the burial-place, which presumably they visited, must have spoken in a most extraordinary language if, while it contained the actual body of Jesus, it suggested the idea of an empty tomb which had been guarded against violation by a door of stone, a seal and a military guard. Is it conceivable that the disciples, with the actual tomb before their eyes, closed only by a stone which rolled in specially made grooves and could be moved aside with very little difficulty, were so utterly destitute either of sentiment or curiosity, that they contented themselves with concluding that it was empty and never gave a single thought to investigating it? On Neumann's hypothesis that it did contain the body

of Jesus, that it had remained unopened and undisturbed, how could the disciples, with the tomb before their eyes in such a condition, conceive of the seal broken and the stone rolled away? Moreover, on the same hypothesis, how could Peter on the day of Pentecost make the contrast above referred to between the tomb of David and the tomb of Jesus, if he did not know that the latter was an empty tomb?

It seems perfectly certain that within a few weeks at least of the death of Jesus, the disciples believed in a *Resurrection*, in which conception there was involved the idea of an empty tomb. On the subjective hypothesis this was a development of the original idea, which was merely that of survival based upon visions. If we ask for a sufficient cause for this development, which is certainly unique in the history of visions, it must be confessed that nothing is brought forward which on a fair examination suggests even the shadow of a cause. All that Neumann suggests is that it arose as the result of a return to Jerusalem and a visit to the old scenes. The open tomb of the Gospels and of tradition has to be replaced by a closed tomb in which is still lying the body of their Master, and yet the closed tomb suggests to their minds an actual physical resurrection. All that they have been conscious of in Galilee is a Jesus Who is alive and appears as a ghost. On their return to Jerusalem, and as a result of

a visit to the grave, among other old landmarks, they conceive the resurrection-idea with its conception of an empty tomb. And all this, not because the tomb is really open and empty but, because it is still closed and still retains the body of Jesus.

Neumann begins his chapter on the Resurrection Faith with these words: "Thus ended the historical life of the Master of Nazareth. With the moment of His death on the cross of Golgotha the independent history of the Church began. But if we are to see how the one developed out of the other, we must show clearly how belief in Jesus' Resurrection arose, and what this belief meant for the Christian Church." The real problem of the origin of Christianity could not be better stated than in these words, for the crux of the whole problem is just that of seeing clearly how belief in Jesus' Resurrection did arise, with all that this belief has meant to the Christian Church. The reader, however, must himself decide whether Neumann has succeeded in the task he has so well understood. Most people would be inclined to think after reading his account, that the one thing he has conclusively proved is how the belief in the Resurrection could not possibly arise. The empty tomb may involve the extraordinary or the supernatural, but it is a perfectly satisfactory explanation of the origin of the Resurrection-faith. The closed tomb may, on

the other hand, be perfectly ordinary, but it is useless to suppose that it offers any explanation of the resurrection-idea. There is, however, nothing else than this return to Jerusalem and the revisiting of the grave and other landmarks which can be offered to explain the transition from the Galilee belief in survival due to seeing visions, and the Jerusalem faith in a Resurrection and an empty tomb.

Much stress has been laid upon the question of the empty tomb because the contention here urged is that the resurrection-idea, which is common to all the New Testament writers, is one which cannot be separated from such a belief. Belief in a resurrection is no doubt capable of producing the idea of an empty tomb, but the mere belief in a survival, the outcome of pure hallucination, is not. The belief in survival can be explained as the outcome of purely subjective visions. It is not the belief in survival, however, which has to be explained, it is the very different belief in a resurrection. It is incomprehensible how this belief in a resurrection could have developed out of a belief in survival, while the actual tomb of Jesus in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem confronted the disciples and negatived the resurrection-idea. If the tomb was visited from time to time and was a closed tomb, it contradicted their belief in an empty tomb. If, on the other hand, it was not visited at all, it implies a lack both of sentiment

and of curiosity on the part of the disciples which is incredible. The only reason for such indifference on the part of the disciples which can be urged is the belief on their part that He had risen and the body was not there. Such a belief, however, is quite distinct from the mere thought that He still lives, which is all for which the theory of the Galilean visions accounts. It is true that the subjective hypothesis has not to account for the fact of an empty tomb, but it has to account for the origin of the resurrection-idea, in which such a fact is implied. It is this implication of the empty tomb contained in the resurrection-idea which the subjective hypothesis ignores, and yet this is the distinctive feature in the belief which has to be explained.

The empty grave undoubtedly suggests and supports what is called a physical resurrection, but it is not necessarily opposed to a psychical explanation of the phenomena. The disappearance of the body from the grave is essential to any real conception of a resurrection, but its reanimation is not. The reanimation of the physical body, in fact, is inconsistent with almost all the characteristics of the resurrection-phenomena. That which the disciples saw was so different from the form of Jesus, that it was not until some word or action recalled Him to their minds that they recognised Him. This is suggestive of a psychical rather than a physical appearance, a materialisation, as it

would be called, rather than the actual presence of the material body. The disappearance of the body from the tomb, however, is essential to account for the origin of the resurrection-idea. The birth of such a conception is inexplicable on the supposition that it arose and was promulgated in Jerusalem within a few weeks of the burial, while the actual grave with the body of Jesus inside confronted both those who preached and those who heard.

Before leaving the hypothesis of the Galilean origin of the appearance there is one matter connected with it which deserves consideration. Neumann dismisses all reference to the part played by the women in the stories of the Resurrection on the ground that Paul makes absolutely no reference to them, and "that in all points in which the Gospels in their accounts of the Resurrection go beyond Paul, their statements must be regarded as later additions and embellishments." We may let this remarkable canon of criticism pass for what it is worth, because we are not here concerned with the part which the women had in the story of the Resurrection, but with a part in the obsequies of Jesus in which it is certain the women would have the chief share. The burial of Jesus was without doubt a hurried one, and the story that it was hastily done on the Friday evening with the express intention of giving it that more careful attention which accorded with Jewish custom,

must be regarded as inherently probable. In Mark, the oldest source, this is definitely stated as the object of their visit on the first day of the week, and the account in Luke also confirms it. All the accounts, moreover, refer to the visit of the women to the tomb, and it may be regarded as practically certain that the tomb was visited by the women after the Sabbath had passed. The point here is not the witness of the women to the Resurrection, but their visitation of the grave. To imagine that the grave was never visited either for the purpose of further attention to the body, which owing to the approach of the Sabbath had been hurriedly interred, or to indulge those natural sentiments of loving remembrance of the departed, and sorrow for his death, is to credit the women who were the most faithful disciples of Jesus with a callousness and indifference which are wholly unnatural. The disciples had forsaken Him and fled, but the women were apparently present at the crucifixion, and the chief parties at His burial. Now if they did visit the tomb while the disciples, according to Neumann, were seeing visions in Galilee, they must have found it either open or closed. On the supposition that they carried out their intention of anointing the body on the day after the Sabbath, they must indeed have seen it on the very morning on which tradition and the Gospels say He rose. If this supposition is rejected, and the anointing took place on the Friday evening,

as the Johannine account says, one or more visits to the tomb on the part of the women may be regarded as practically certain. The disciples, it is admitted, returned to Jerusalem within a few weeks at the most and they must have brought word that the Master was alive and that they had seen Him. If they asserted that He had risen, then the emptiness of the grave which the women had visited was implied, and we have to ask how this can be reconciled with the knowledge the women possessed as to the condition of the body and of the tomb? If, however, it is said that the resurrection-idea was not involved in the statements of the disciples, then it is inconceivable that the women who had not had the visions should make no investigation as to the relation between the form which the men had seen in Galilee and the body which they had laid in the tomb in Jerusalem. In any case the rise of the resurrection-idea in Jerusalem and amongst the women who had visited the grave is unaccountable, save on the supposition that the body of Jesus had disappeared and the tomb was empty.

The difficulty of accounting for the resurrection-idea has been recognised, and attempts have been made to explain the rise of the belief by finding in the stories some perfectly ordinary incident which, through a very natural misunderstanding, gave birth to the suggestion that Jesus had risen. It should be noted, however, that all

such theories are a recognition of the inadequacy of a purely subjective hypothesis, and a witness to the truth of the contention that the only sufficient reason for the rise of the belief must lie outside the minds of the disciples. The cause, therefore, is sought outside the minds of the disciples, but within the area of the ordinary and natural. It is felt that an objective auxiliary cause is needed to give that initial push without which the subjective hypothesis will not work. One of the latest attempts to solve the problem is based upon the idea that a simple mistake on the part of Mary Magdalene is capable of supplying the measure of momentum needed to set the subjective hypothesis moving.

The burial of Jesus, it is admitted, was a hurried one, owing to the near approach of the Sabbath, and those taking part in it, amongst whom was Mary, were, in consequence of the dusk of twilight, not very clear in their recollection of the precise location of the grave. There were many rock-hewn tombs in the neighbourhood, all very similar, and there was nothing to mark the particular one in which the body of Jesus was placed. The following day being the Sabbath, the body was left undisturbed. Early on the Sunday morning Mary Magdalene came in advance of the others, drawn by her great love to the Master, and by a very natural mistake went to the wrong tomb, which, of course, was empty, as

it was a new one, with the stone rolled away, that is, not placed in position. Astonished and perplexed she stood gazing into the empty tomb. One of the garden attendants seeing her mistake, and recognising her as one of the party who had brought the body of Jesus for interment on the previous Friday, addressed her in the well-known words: "Fear not; for I know that ye seek Jesus Who hath been crucified. He is not here. . . . Come see the place where the Lord lay." Mary, however, mistook him for an angel and misunderstood his meaning. Instead of understanding that he was telling her that she had made a mistake as to the location of the tomb, and was inviting her to follow him to the real tomb, she thought he was an angel and was announcing that the Lord had risen. Hurrying away she announces to the disciples that the grave is empty and Jesus is alive. Thus the empty tomb is accounted for, and the resurrection-idea is ushered in. All the rest of the phenomena can be easily explained from the subjective standpoint. Apart from the naive way in which the resurrection-idea is assumed as already in the possession of Mary, the hypothesis is undoubtedly ingenious, and the rewriting of the story involves very little alteration in the text. The ingenuity, however, manifested in the construction of the story cannot blind us to the hopeless improbability it involves. This can be best demonstrated by constructing a modern

parallel and asking for a decision as to its probability.

Let us suppose that a very dearly loved and talented friend has been suddenly called away by death. It seems to us impossible that he whom we knew, and had just seen in the full possession of all his powers up to the very last, can really be dead. We have, however, attended his funeral and seen him laid to rest, though with that feeling of unreality which is so common an accompaniment of such an experience. The second day after the funeral we visit the cemetery for the purpose of putting a few flowers on his grave. On arrival we proceed to the place where we believe he was buried, but to our surprise instead of finding the mound marking the spot we see an open grave, which on looking in we find to be empty. While we are thus standing at the grave-side surprised and perplexed, one of the attendants of the cemetery, recognising us as of the party at the funeral two days before, and seeing our mistake as to the location of the grave, tells us that our friend is not there as we supposed, and invites us to follow him to the place where he is really laid. Now is it possible for any one to suppose that we could really mistake the sexton for an angel, and conclude at once that our friend had risen from the grave? Is it not inconceivable that we should make such an inference from the words of the sexton, when the explanation of our mistake was

so perfectly simple? It may be said that this supposed modern case takes no notice of the difference of centuries. Such a difference, however, tells rather against than in favour of the first-century conclusion. If a Christian faith, the result of nineteen centuries' familiarity with the idea of a resurrection, is incapable of drawing such a conclusion, is it *more* or is it less likely that a first-century Jewish faith would do so? The reader may be left to decide this question of probability for himself, but whether probable or improbable, the hypothesis fails entirely to account for the birth of the resurrection-idea, for it presupposes the existence of it already in the mind of Mary Magdalene; otherwise the mistake could never have been made.

Hitherto we have confined ourselves to an examination of the indirect testimony to the reality of the Resurrection, to be found in the belief of the disciples, as it is expressed in the Acts and in the Epistles, and have abstained from any examination of the accounts preserved for us in the Gospels. This has been done in order that there might be no question as to the alteration of facts to suit later conceptions. The Gospels, it is admitted, are much later, and the possibility of their having been modified in regard to the details of such an event as the Resurrection, is by no means an unlikely hypothesis. If we examine the stories as they appear in the Gospels we are no

doubt struck with discrepancies which ought not to be minimised. It is possible, however, so to concentrate the attention on details as to fail to perceive the general effect which the stories as a whole produce. We must beware of failing to see the wood for the trees. The question with which we are here concerned is not an examination of the accounts with a view to reinvestigating the phenomena. That is impossible for the twentieth century, and no scrutiny of the narratives will help us to it. We are here concerned with the true twentieth-century problem, namely, to find a sufficient cause for the rise of the belief in the Resurrection. In the solution of this problem, it is the general effect produced by the stories as a whole which is of far more consequence than the particular details.

The subjective hypothesis relegates all the stories to that class of post-mortem appearances known as apparitions, which are the result of purely mental processes in the minds of those who experience them. All such apparitions have a distinct family likeness and an equally distinct family history. Modern psychical research distinguishes between apparitions which can be explained on a subjective hypothesis, and those which cannot. It is the former only with which we are concerned, and they are best denominated as hallucinations. No one who compares the Resurrection stories in the Gospels with post-mortem appearances which

are pure hallucinations, but must admit that there are remarkable differences. We may pass over the absence of all proof that the disciples had the predisposition, or fixed ideas, or expectancy, recognised as necessary for the hallucination theory, not because such considerations have no weight, but because it is possible to regard such an argument as more or less of an argument dependent upon silence. We have no proof that they had these predisposing causes, but it is equally true that we have no proof that they had not. Let us, on the contrary, suppose that they did expect to see Jesus, and then ask ourselves whether the stories of what they did see, fit in with such an expectation?

The contention of the subjective hypothesis is that the disciples expected to see visions, and according to the well-understood psychological law of illusions, they did see what they expected to see. Now, if we examine the Resurrection phenomena the curious and remarkable thing is that it is the exact opposite of this which confronts us. In almost all the accounts there is the distinct record that they did not recognise the form before them as their Master at all, until some characteristic word or action recalled to their minds and led them to conclude that it was Jesus. Mary mistakes Him for the gardener, and the story has to be rewritten to make it appear that she mistook the gardener for an angel. The two disciples on the way to Emmaus think the person who is

talking with them is a recent arrival in Jerusalem, and are surprised that he knows nothing of what has happened. The eleven disciples in the upper room instead of at once recognising the Jesus, Whom, according to the hallucination theory, they were expecting to see, mistake Him for a ghost, and it is not until He shows them His hands and His feet that they recognise Him. The same feature meets us in the account of His appearance to the disciples on the seashore. The point here urged is, not that all these accounts must be accepted as absolutely genuine but, that in all the accounts of these so-called visions, that which the disciples saw was not what they expected to see, but on the contrary is of such a kind that they fail to recognise Him. If they were pure hallucinations, it is remarkable that however much the accounts may have been modified in transmission, there is no trace of that peculiar feature of hallucinations—the seeing what you expect to see. Surely somewhere or other we should come across a trace at least of the hopeful expectancy followed by the glad realisation which the subjective hypothesis supposes.

Another feature, not quite so pronounced but still very remarkable, is that there is hardly a trace of that ethereal and ghostly appearance which is the distinctive feature of the apparition. The form of Jesus, as it is described in the Gospels, is as normal and natural as it was before the cruci-

fixion. It is doubtless different, as the stories expressly imply, but there is nothing of the abnormal or uncanny about it. Only on one occasion is it stated that the disciples mistook it for a ghost. Such a mistake, however, followed, as it is, by the later recognition, implies a discrimination between the apparitional and the real appearance of Jesus, which confirms this very absence of the uncanny to which attention is called. In all the other cases the last conclusion the disciples could have drawn from their interviews with Jesus is that they had simply been seeing ghosts. As a rule, it is only when they recognise that it is Jesus that the sense of the extraordinary dawns upon them.

A similar contrast is also noticeable as regards the manner of the appearances. There is little or nothing of the ghostly, either as regards the time or place or manner of His appearance. There is no reference to the midnight hour, that favourite time for ghost-seeing; no mention of preliminary admonitions, and no indication of a shadowy form gradually taking shape and definiteness. In His communications with the disciples there is the same lack of the uncanny references to the spirit world and His experiences therein. He talks to the disciples as though He were one of them, as though he were the Master with Whom they had companied, and the tragedy of the crucifixion had been merely an ugly dream.

We are not here claiming for these Resurrection stories absolute accuracy, or even assuming that their historicity is unquestionable. We are simply asking that the general effect of the stories should be compared with the same general effect produced after reading accounts of hallucinations. Whatever may be said as to the reality of the Resurrection of which they give account, one thing may be safely predicated about them, namely, that they are wanting in some of the most characteristic features of hallucinations. This is doubtless very far from proving the reality of the Resurrection, but it goes a very long way towards showing that the subjective hypothesis receives no support from the general character of the stories. The moment these are set aside as untrustworthy, others have to be substituted, and the substitutes are all in the direction of the ghostly and the apparitional. If these substitutes are the originals, how can we account for the remarkable transformation they have undergone? The process of transformation is not from the simple to the more complex and elaborate apparition, but from the unnatural and the uncanny apparition to the natural, even though extraordinary, appearance. It is, of course, conceivable that later hands, under the conception of a physical resurrection, have modified them in the direction indicated. Such a hypothesis, however, implies that the resurrection-idea had

already established itself. This hypothesis we have already shown is inconsistent with the theory that the phenomena were nothing more than hallucinations. The resurrection-idea must be first accounted for, before it can be used to account for the transformation of the stories.

There is one other matter connected with the Gospel stories which needs to be noted. In all the accounts the empty grave, and not the visions, is the starting-point of the disciples' experiences. On the subjective hypothesis this is the opposite of the fact. According to the hallucination theory the visions must have come first and the empty grave second. If we are dealing with expectations on the part of the disciples, it may reasonably be asked which is more likely to have been the true order? Is it more likely that the empty grave suggested the visions, or the visions suggested the empty grave? If the appearances suggested the empty grave, there must have been something in their character which differentiated them from all other hallucinations, for no such suggestion of the emptiness of the grave is found outside the stories of the appearances of Jesus. They cannot, therefore, be regarded as pure hallucinations explainable on a strictly subjective hypothesis.

It may be suggested that the expectation on the part of the disciples was not merely an expectation that Jesus was alive, but that He would rise from the grave. In that case, however, the conception

of the empty grave would be primary and the visions would be secondary. Moreover, the flight into Galilee, and the origination of the vision there is hardly consistent with such an expectation. If the disciples really expected a Resurrection from the grave, it is hardly likely that they would go away to Galilee while their Master was expected to come out of His tomb in Jerusalem. The Gospel stories make the empty grave primary and the appearances secondary, and there can be little doubt in the mind of an impartial critic that, to account for the birth of the resurrection-idea this is the only possible order.

If we are to seek an explanation of that something which must have happened between the death of Jesus and the birth of historic Christianity, we are forced to postulate some action which carries us beyond the mere thoughts and expectations of the disciples. So long as we remain within the area of the working of the disciples' minds we have no true explanation of the rise of the resurrection-idea. We may substitute visions which are only hallucinations, and we may rewrite the stories on the basis of what we may call a strict psychology, with the result that we have a more or less satisfactory explanation of the phenomena. We have, however, not written history, the history of those few weeks which separate the Passover when Jesus was crucified, from the Feast of Weeks following it, when the Christian Church replaced the

Congregation of Israel, in the work of the world's religious development. In abolishing the Resurrection as unhistorical, we fail utterly to account for the rise of the resurrection-idea, which is absolutely historical; and we leave the subsequent evolution of historic Christian doctrine —the development of the ideas involved in the conception of the Risen Christ—totally unconnected with Jesus of Nazareth. The history of Christianity would have to be rewritten if Jesus of Nazareth is not the same personality as the exalted Christ of the Epistles. This, however, is what is necessarily involved in the supposition that the Resurrection of Jesus is unhistorical. The Christianity which the subjective hypothesis accounts for is a Christianity which has two distinct personalities in it totally unrelated, but such a Christianity is not historic. The rewriting of the Gospel stories by the help of such a hypothesis does undoubtedly account for a transition from an historic Jesus to an Ideal Christ, but unfortunately for the hypothesis such a transition is unhistoric also. If we are to rewrite history we must at least give an intelligible account of events which we know really happened. The one event which is absolutely certain, and which it is possible for us in the twentieth century to make intelligible, is *not the Resurrection*, but the birth of the resurrection-idea, and that idea indissolubly associated with Jesus of Nazareth. The twentieth-century critic is probably more

competent than the first-century writer to estimate the importance of this great event, but he cannot account for that belief by inventing hypotheses which, however much they keep within the bounds of the ordinary and the normal, fail entirely to account for the rise of the belief. The subjective hypothesis is precisely of such a character. It renders the phenomena connected with the Resurrection intelligible and plausible by bringing them all within the area of the possible and ordinary. In doing so, however, it entirely fails to account for that historic event of which we are absolutely assured, the rise of the resurrection-idea. This failure is vital and reduces its success as a theory to explain the phenomena to a triumph which is valueless. It is quite true that, if we abandon the subjective hypothesis, we are forced to an explanation of the phenomena which carries us beyond the range of the ordinary and involves us in a belief in the extraordinary. Such an explanation, however, enables us to account for the one unquestionable historic event, the birth of the resurrection-idea, with all its implications for religion. In other words it accounts for Christianity.

CHAPTER XI

THE JESUS OF HISTORY AND THE CHRIST OF THEOLOGY

THE great problem which engaged the attention of the first century of the Christian era was the identification of Jesus of Nazareth with the Christ of national hope and prophetic vision. The problem of the present century is the identification of the Christ of religious faith and experience with the Jesus of history. The first century had to recognise in the Jesus Whom it had known, the ideal Christ in Whom it believed. The present century has to recognise in the exalted Christ Whom it knows by religious experience, the historic Jesus in Whom it believes. The consciousness of the first-century Christian, that is, had to reach out to an ideal which would adequately express the result of his impression of the Jesus of history. The consciousness of the present century Christian has to go back from his experience of the Christ of religious faith, to the historic Jesus Who is its foundation. Each century has to do

with its own experience. To the first century the subject-matter of its experience was the historic Jesus, while to this century the subject-matter is the exalted Christ. The two problems are the same, but they are reversed. Between the Christ of religious faith and the historic Jesus of fact, there is an apparently impassable gulf. To the twentieth-century mind the two seem to be so absolutely distinct that an identification seems impossible. We need to remember, however, that it is indubitable fact that the first-century mind crossed the gulf and did identify them. The modern mind feels the difficulty of crossing over from the exalted Christ of theology to the Jesus of history, but it sometimes seems to forget that the passage from the Jesus of the Synoptists to the exalted Christ of the Pauline Epistles is an historic crossing, and that it must have presented its own difficulties to those who made it. Paul, for instance, could not have found it an easy task to pass over from the conception of a Jesus Who as "a servant had humbled Himself and become obedient unto death even the death of the Cross," Who had indeed been his own contemporary and Whom he had at first regarded as an impostor, to the exalted Christ of his religious faith. We ought not to magnify the twentieth-century difficulty and at the same time minimise the first-century one. The exalted Christ with Whom the twentieth century is concerned is the risen

and glorified Christ of the Pauline letters, and that glorified Christ is indissolubly connected with the historic Jesus. The connection and identification of the two are historic, and the evidence confronts us in the pages of the New Testament.

The true problem which confronts us at the present time is not the relation between an ideal Christ of twentieth-century thought and the historic Jesus; it is the relation between the Christ of historic Christian thought and religious experience, and the historic Jesus of the Synoptists. True historical criticism can make both these figures clear and definite to us. It is the relation between these two figures which constitutes the modern problem. If the exalted Christ of historic Christianity were a mere ideal standing for a religious conception, then its connection with the historic Jesus would not be merely unimportant; it would be non-essential. Such a religious ideal would possess some kind of religious value of its own, apart altogether from any connection with an historic personality. The question raised by a recent writer in the *Hibbert Journal* on "Jesus or Christ" seems to be based upon the assumption that the exalted Christ of Christianity is just such a religious conception independent altogether of any relation to Jesus of Nazareth, if indeed such a person ever really existed. The writer of the article complained that orthodox theologians identified a purely religious ideal with an alleged

historic personality, and as the result applied terms and conceptions to Jesus which were only applicable to Christ. It never seemed to occur to the writer to ask whether his ideal Christ was capable of being identified with the exalted Christ of historic Christianity? If he had done so he would have found that any true representation of this exalted Christ is based on an historic personality and cannot be separated from it.

It is necessary to emphasise the fact that an ideal of religious thought, to which the name Christ is given, is neither the exalted Christ of the New Testament nor of historic Christianity. Such a religious ideal may have its own value, but it is not the value which belongs to the exalted Christ of the historic Christian faith. The supreme difference lies in the fact that the first is merely an ideal of the human mind, which, however high and noble a conception it may be, possesses no guarantee of reality. The second, on the other hand, is the realisation of an ideal which carries us back to the mind of God Himself, and has that validity which belongs to every other manifestation of the thought of God to be met with in the Universe of fact. The first is the creation of the human imagination and may be as beautiful as any other product of the imagination, but it is imaginary only. The other is the expression of the Divine mind, and possesses that reality belonging to every other expression of the

mind of God. The Christ of historic Christianity is not a human conception surpassing every expression of the mind of God to be met with in the history of humanity; it is the perception by humanity of a thought of God which found expression in an historic personality, and of a thought which transcends the highest thought ever conceived by humanity. Man's aspiration has not exceeded God's realisation, but on the contrary God's realisation has surpassed Man's highest anticipation. The Christ of Christian faith is not simply the Messiah of Jewish hope, nor the Ideal Man of Greek thought; He transcends both, but He does so because the historic Jesus manifested in His actual life an ideal of human life which surpassed that expressed either in Jewish religious aspiration or in Greek speculative thought. The moment you remove from the conception of the Christ every element connected with an historic personality, what you have left is a mere ideal which bears no resemblance to the Christ of historic Christianity. It may be contended, as was recently done by another writer in the *Hibbert Journal*, that Christianity started with such an ideal merely, and that the connection with the historic Jesus is purely fictitious. All that need be said is that the whole of the New Testament writings, the whole of the history of Christian Doctrine, and the whole history of Christianity as a religious factor

in the world's progress, negative such a hypothesis. It will probably suffice if we mention only a few of the principal characteristics of the exalted Christ of Paul and the other New Testament writers which such a hypothesis would eliminate.

In the first place the whole conception of the manifestation of the Divine in an historic personality, involved in the conception of the Christ as an incarnation of God,—a conception which is fundamental to every New Testament writer,—has entirely disappeared, for no such manifestation in an historic personality has ever been made. Again the realisation of the moral ideal involved in the conception of the Christ Whose life and death have abolished the Law, has also disappeared, for no such life is recorded in the annals of history. Further the whole conception of an at-one-ment between Man and God, involved in the conception of the Christ in Whom "God was reconciling the world unto Himself through the death of His Son," must also be removed, for the cross of Christ is not the historic Cross of Jesus at all. Remove all these conceptions, not to mention others, with all that follows from them, from the exalted Christ of the New Testament, and what sort of an exalted Christ would be left? One thing may be said without the slightest hesitation, namely, that such an ideal Christ involves an entire rewriting of the New Testament; it makes the subsequent development of Christian doctrine

utterly unintelligible, and, we may add, it renders the rise and progress of Christianity inexplicable. Such a Christ, totally unconnected with Jesus of Nazareth, is not the Christ of Paul, nor of John, nor of any of the New Testament writers. It is not the Christ for Whom the martyrs of the first three centuries laid down their lives, nor the Christ about Whom the Nicene Fathers contended with such fierce passion. In a word it is a Christ of the twentieth century, Whose validity for religious life and faith has yet to be proved. It is the basis of a Christianity which has yet to be made historic. Such a Christ has not only nothing to do with the historic Jesus, but equally nothing to do with the Christ of historic Christianity.

If the connection between the exalted Christ and the historic Jesus is thus so essential, that to destroy the connection is to dissipate the ideal Christ into a shadow, then we must seek to follow the steps by which the first-century disciples of Jesus came to regard Him as the exalted Christ. It is indisputable that within a remarkably short period of His death, those who had known Jesus as Teacher and Friend, came to regard Him as the exalted Christ, out of which conception has been subsequently evolved the whole doctrine of the Person of Christ. Whatever opinion we may ourselves form as to the personality of Jesus, it must be admitted that the transition of thought from that of the well-known and well-loved friend

to that of the Lord of Glory sitting on the right hand of the majesty of God, is one without parallel in the history of the world. It is not, of course, implied that the full conception of the exalted Christ was attained at a bound, and has received no subsequent development; but it is certain that such a transition had passed over the thought of the disciples about their Master within a few years of His death, that later additions are nothing more than a development of the conception they formed, and involve no radical alteration in the fundamental idea expressed in the exalted Christ of their religious faith and experience.

The discussion of the resurrection-idea in the previous chapter sufficiently emphasises the fact that their starting-point was the consciousness that Jesus was not dead but alive. We cannot advance a single step along the path they travelled, except we recognise that this consciousness of a living Jesus involved the idea of a risen Jesus, and not merely the idea of a Jesus Who was an inhabitant of the unseen world. It is the resurrection-idea and not the survival-idea which is operative in their thought. Associated with the first there is the realisation that Jesus is possessed of a power and authority which would be entirely lacking in the second. It is this realisation of what was involved in the Resurrection which is emphasised by the experiences of the day of Pentecost in the

endowment of the gifts of the Spirit, which are so distinct a feature of the early Church. The sudden influx of spiritual life of which they became conscious was invariably attributed to the Risen Jesus, and the mighty works which they performed were ascribed to the power of His name.

The extraordinary and abnormal features of the day of Pentecost have attracted far more attention than they deserve, with the result that its true place in what may be called the psychological history of the movement has been largely overlooked. A connection between the Ascension and the day of Pentecost is clearly indicated in the narrative, and the connection is psychologically a necessity. Whatever explanation we may give of the very literal and graphical description of the Ascension described in the first chapter of the Acts, there is no doubt that it marks a recognition on the part of the disciples that the appearances of the Risen Jesus, whether regarded as physical or psychical, were essentially of a temporary character and had consequently ceased. Moreover, the words of the angels in the eleventh verse clearly indicate the beginning of that anticipation of the second coming of Jesus which formed so important a part in the belief of the early Church. Leaving on one side all literal interpretation of the Ascension, it is clear that the event marks a transition in the belief of the disciples as to the course of events in which

they were called to take their part. The essential feature in that transition is that the Master's part and their part were henceforth to be on different planes. His was to be with the Father, or as they expressed it, at the right hand of God, while theirs was to be on earth, as His witnesses. They were, however, not to be left alone, but to expect the coming of the Holy Spirit which He had promised to send them. This coming would result in an influx of power which would enable them to do the work which fell to their lot in the preparation for the establishment of the Kingdom. This is clearly what is indicated in the account in the Acts. Looking at the matter from the point of view of the actual sequence of events, the appearances of the Risen Jesus did cease ; the cessation was followed by an activity on the part of the disciples in the proclamation of the Messiahship of Jesus which resulted in the establishment of the Church of Christ, whose numerical strength was greatly increased by large accessions from amongst Jews and Jewish proselytes. This activity was signalised by the extraordinary spiritual movement inaugurated on the Day of Pentecost.

It is evident that we have here the beginning of the conception of Jesus as the exalted Christ. The appearances of Jesus had assured the disciples that He was not dead but alive; not inactive in the grave but active upon earth ; not a mere denizen of the unseen world cut off from all communication

with them, but one who could come into their midst and hold communion with them. These appearances, however, were only temporary, and before long they ceased. They were followed, however, by a sudden and remarkable inrush of spiritual power and exaltation, which transformed the disciples who had forsaken their Master in the hour of His need into His apostles and witnesses, boldly proclaiming before the very men who had put their Master to death that He was the Messiah of national hope and prophetic vision. The connection between these two events, the cessation of the appearances and the sudden influx of spiritual life, is obvious. Jesus is no longer seen, but from His seat at the right hand of God He is still manifesting His activity, as is evident by the signs and wonders of the day of Pentecost. This is the contention of Peter in his address, and the conclusion he draws is the deduction which the logic of actual events necessitates, "Therefore let the whole House of Israel know without doubt that God has made Him both Lord and Christ,—this Jesus Whom ye crucified."

The reality of the Resurrection and the subsequent endowment with power which they experienced enabled the disciples to realise that Jesus was not merely alive, in the sense that He had survived death, but that He was alive for evermore. He had conquered death; death had no more dominion over Him; He was for ever beyond its

reach. He had suffered all that the opposition of men could inflict, and He had triumphed. The grave had not been able to hold Him. This surely differentiated Him from all other men, and caused Peter in his address to the multitude after the cure of the lame man to describe Him not merely as Christ and Lord, but as the Prince of Life.

The moment, however, the disciples began preaching their faith, they found that the death of Jesus was the prominent feature in the minds of their Jewish listeners. Impressed themselves with the greater fact of His triumph over the grave and of the crime of their rulers in rejecting and crucifying the Messiah, they soon found that their audience completely reversed this order, and put the crucifixion in the forefront, with the result that Jesus and not the rulers occupied the position of the criminal. The disciples might bear witness to Resurrection, but the ugly fact confronting the listener was that Jesus had been executed as a common criminal who had been condemned by the highest religious tribunal of the nation. In Peter's address above referred to there is an interesting reference which indicates the early working of the mind of the disciples on this problem. Peter says that it was doubtless in ignorance that the rulers had put Jesus to death, and this is doubtless the first thought which would arise in their minds when they began to think of the problem. He

goes on to add, however, that it was through this ignorance on the part of the rulers that God had fulfilled the declarations made to the prophets that His Christ should suffer. This is a slight advance on the thought previously expressed on the day of Pentecost,—that Jesus had been delivered up according to the purpose and foreknowledge of God,—inasmuch as the idea of a suffering Messiah is introduced.

The first thought is the very natural one that the rulers had made a mistake, but the Jewish mind, with its conception of the control exercised by Jehovah over the nation's destiny, could not fail to recognise that the mistake had been foreseen and worked into the purpose of God. To seek, therefore, for some explanation of this purpose by indications in the prophets was the next step, and hence arose that distinctively Christian interpretation of those passages in which the sufferings of Israel as the servant of Jehovah are applied to Jesus. Peter had already indicated his own conception of what the effect of a realisation of their mistake ought to have on the minds of the rulers of the nation, in his appeal to them to repent so that they might participate in the salvation which Jesus was to effect. It needed, however, one who had himself actually participated, at least in will, if not in act, in that crime, to develop the thought thus suggested, and in Paul we have exactly the man who was needed. It is to him beyond all the

others that we owe the transformation of the Cross of shame into the Cross of glory, and it was in the interpretation of his own religious experience that Paul accomplished the task, and thus laid the foundation for that further development of the idea of the exalted Christ as the Saviour and Redeemer of the world.

If the above is in any sense a true sketch of the history of the development of the idea of the exalted Christ in its initial stages, it will be noticed that the underlying motive was not mere speculation, but the interpretation of a very real spiritual experience. The Theology of the New Testament is not mere philosophical speculation working on lines suggested by either Rabbinical theology or Greek philosophy ; it is essentially the interpretation of religious experience, and a religious experience which is the result of intercourse with Jesus, both before and after His death. In seeking to interpret their experience Jewish theology and Greek thought both offered terms and ideas which were eagerly seized upon and used, but the dominating influence was neither the one nor the other ; that was found in their own unique religious experience. In examining the conception of the exalted Christ of the New Testament a number of points of contact with Jewish and Greek thought confront us, but the distinctively Christian conception of the Christ is unintelligible either as a development of the Jewish conception of a Messiah, or of the Logos of Philo,

or as a synthesis of both. It is indebted for its language and its terms to both; but for the substance of its thought it is dependent upon the personality of Jesus Whose history does not stop at Calvary, but includes the Easter phenomena.

In the subsequent development of the conception of the exalted Christ a basis of religious experience is also discernible. It was inevitable that the minds of the disciples should return to their experience of the earthly life of their Master and reflect upon its meaning in the light of subsequent events. In that reflection the outstanding feature which impressed them was the moral grandeur of His character, which still impresses, and ever must impress, those who reflect upon it. As early as the history of the cure of the lame man, Peter speaks of Jesus as the Holy and Just One. Stephen, in his address to the Sanhedrin, speaks of Him as the Righteous One. This feature is prominent throughout the whole of the New Testament, not merely in the direct references but, still more in the religious conceptions based upon the personality of Jesus which gather around the conception of the Christ. These reflections were stimulated by their own experience of the regenerating influence in themselves and in their converts, which was the outcome of that inflow of Divine life of which they were conscious. Moral weakness and failure were replaced by a strength of character and a growth in Christlike-

ness which it was impossible to mistake. If Jesus was no longer present with them in bodily form, His spirit of holiness and love manifested itself in their own and their brethren's lives with a force which constantly brought back to their remembrance Him Who had dwelt amongst them full of grace and truth. At the same time their own failures, when they were overtaken in a fault, emphasised the contrast that He had done no sin, neither was any guile found in His mouth. When we remember the ethical character of God which the Jewish faith so strongly emphasised, coupled with the recognition of human depravity, the contrast presented to their minds by this reflection on the character of Jesus, enables us to see how their thoughts of the exalted Christ of necessity began to connect Jesus more with the Divine than with the human. Here again, however, it was not mere speculation on religious ideas which was the formative influence, but the character of the earthly Jesus connected in their religious experience with the Risen and exalted Jesus.

Religious experience, however, needs forms of thought in which to express itself, and such forms of thought are found in those already existing before new ones are coined. In Judaism the vague and indefinite Messianic terms which they had inherited provided a suitable religious terminology for the expression of the new religious consciousness. To the disciples Jesus was the

fulfilment of this distinctly Jewish conception of a Messiah—human yet Divine, Divine yet not God. There was much speculation in Jewish apocalyptic literature which offered a rich terminology in which to express the results of Christian thought and reflection. Empty thought-forms received contents; vague conceptions were made definite; yearnings and expectations were seen to have been fulfilled in wonderful and unexpected ways, when looked at in the light of their religious experience both of the earthly and of the Risen Jesus. In the same way the contact of Jewish and Greek thought had already provided a rich vocabulary which was readily seized upon by those who had come under the spell of this new religious experience.

Christian theology, however, was in the process of manufacture, and those who embraced the new faith brought with them ideals and conceptions which had come from many lands and from different religions. Nothing, however, is clearer than that the dominating factor in the formation of a Christian theology was the personality of Jesus, as that personality had been manifested in His earthly life and as it was still impressing itself through His continued influence upon their hearts and lives. The terminology which was available no doubt considerably influenced the form which the doctrine of the exalted Christ took, but it had absolutely nothing to do with deciding the question as to whether there should

be a doctrine of the exalted Christ? That was settled by the religious experience of the influence of Jesus. The design of a bridge is largely determined by the nature of the materials which are available for its construction, but the question of the erection of a particular bridge has nothing to do with the supply of stone and iron to be found in the neighbourhood. To read some accounts of Christian origins one would imagine that bridges are always erected wherever and whenever a plentiful supply of materials for their construction can be found. The bridge which connects the historic Jesus with the exalted Christ was constructed because religious experience demanded it, not because there were a number of conceptions and ideas lying about and mutely appealing to be made into a bridge. In the religious experience of the disciples, the Jesus with Whom they had companied during His earthly ministry was indissolubly connected with the risen Jesus with Whom they were still in contact, and the mind was compelled to trace the path which the soul had already taken. The doctrine of the exalted Christ was the bridge which the mind constructed in order that its twofold experience of the personality of Jesus might be related together.

It is, however, essential to remember that the theology of the New Testament is neither systematic, nor based upon a systematic theology. It is merely the attempt to interpret and make

intelligible its own religious experience. Too frequently it is read as though it were Post-Nicene literature, and its expressions are judged in the light of the decisions of Councils three or four centuries later. It is sometimes forgotten that all the New Testament writers are Monotheists of the strictest kind, upon whose horizon a metaphysical doctrine of a Trinity has not even dawned. A Divinity is undoubtedly predicated of the exalted Christ, but it has nothing to do with any formulated conception of a second Person in a Trinity. It had to grow up under the dominating belief in the unity of God, which was characteristic of Jewish monotheism. There is not the slightest trace in the pages of the New Testament of the suspicion that the place assigned to the Christ was in any sense inconsistent with the strictest monotheism, or even that it involved a modification of that strict monotheism. With the possible exception of Romans ix. 5 it would be difficult to find any place in Paul's letters in which Christ is ever identified with God. On the other hand, there are numerous passages in which He is definitely distinguished from God and subordinate to God. We are not here concerned with the question of the validity of those later views of the Person of Christ founded upon the phraseology of the New Testament, but with the conceptions in the New Testament itself. These are not, and ought not to be interpreted as

expressions of a systematic theology, but as attempts to set forth an interpretation of the personality of the Risen Jesus, which would do justice to the experience which contact with that personality produced. They called Jesus Lord, not because the word, Lord, was the name used for the sacred and not-to-be-pronounced Jehovah, but because their inmost soul bowed in lowliest reverence before His moral purity and was re-created by His mighty power. In their religious experience they had drawn nigh to God and God had drawn nigh to them, and, therefore, He was the mediator between God and Man. A new and living way of approach to God had been opened up to their experience, and all the rich spiritual life of which they were conscious had come to them through Him. They had seen what they felt to be the very glory of God in the face of Jesus, and, therefore, the highest Name was the only suitable one in which to express their conception of His personality.

All through the New Testament, however, it is what we may call a relative Divinity which is the prevailing thought of the writers. Metaphysical conceptions of God had nothing to do with moulding the conception of the Person of Christ, as that found expression in their theology. It is God in relation to humanity, and not God as He may be conceived in Himself, which regulates their conception of Divinity when they are

speaking of Jesus. In that relation between Man and God they felt that Jesus occupied a unique position. The transcendent God of Judaism, Whom no man had seen at any time, Who dwelt in unapproachable light, had revealed Himself in Jesus the Christ. He had made those thoughts about God which they had inherited from the past clear and definite; He had manifested in Himself, and was manifesting in themselves, qualities which belonged to God. The God in Whom they had been taught to believe was made visible in the Jesus with Whom they had companied during His earthly career, and He was still communing with them from His heavenly seat of exaltation.

It was the religious significance of Jesus which constituted the problem of early Christian thought. The disciples felt that Jesus had fulfilled in a remarkable and unexpected way the religious aspirations of their race, and in fulfilling them had introduced ideas which altered the old religious outlook. The conception of God which characterised Jewish thought was that of a transcendent God Whose holiness separated God and Man by a gulf which was impassable. The personality of Jesus rendered such a belief no longer possible. It emphasised the immanence of God which Jewish thought had more or less ignored, but which the Jewish religious nature had recognised and craved for. It had done so in the only way which was

possible—by the manifestation of a holiness and purity which had hitherto been regarded as the prerogative of God. Such a manifestation, emphasised, as it was, by the sanctifying influence which still issued from the Risen Lord, lifted His personality above that of ordinary humanity and suggested a relation to God which the writers of the New Testament seek to express in their doctrine of the exalted Christ. It is the personality of Jesus, however, and not the conception of God, with which they are concerned. Their interpretation of that personality involved a radical alteration in the dominant Jewish conception of God, but of this the writers themselves are unconscious. The time for systematising Christian thought had not yet come; it was the time for classifying and arranging the new religious factors which the personality of Jesus had introduced.

In the sub-apostolic age began that systematising of Christian thought which has continued to the present day. The contribution which Christianity had to offer to the religious thought of the Western world was the religious significance of Jesus. In the New Testament His personality had been defined on the basis of His influence upon the religious life. Christian theology had to explain that experience with the modifications in the conception of God which it involved. Whatever view may be taken of the personality

of Jesus, it is a matter of history that it has brought into human thought a manifestation of God. To Jewish thought it made the Holy God an immanent God, and to Greek thought it made the immanent God a Holy God. The absolute separation of God and Man which the conception of holiness involved to Jewish thought was negatived by the appearance of Jesus. The unmoral character of the immanent God of Greek thought was similarly negatived by the moral character of Jesus.

The question which concerns modern thought is precisely the same as that which confronted Jewish and Greek thought, namely, the interpretation of the personality of Jesus. The modern conception of God is radically different from that under which the personality of Jesus was explained by the Greek and Latin Fathers. The interpretation, therefore, which suited them is not the interpretation which is suitable for us. The personality of Jesus remains, but it has to be interpreted so as to fit in with our altered conceptions. The Jewish and Greek mind each contributed to that interpretation of Jesus which the age demanded, but, just in proportion as they solved their own problem, they left our problem untouched. They worked on the basis of the religious experience which came from the influence of the personality of Jesus. That experience is recorded in the pages of the New Testament, and

together with our own experience forms the basis upon which we have to give our interpretation. Just as the Jewish and Greek mind made use of the religious ideas of their age in setting forth their views of the Person of Christ, so the modern mind must bring under contribution the newer and larger terms which our age provides. We cannot possibly be bound by a terminology of the first and second century, even though it be hallowed by the usage of the apostles themselves. It is the historic Jesus Whose personality introduced a new factor in the religious thought of the world, Who is the fact which remains unchanged ; the interpretation of that fact must of necessity vary from age to age.

In considering, therefore, the interpretation which the first century gave of this fact, and which meets us in the conception of the exalted Christ, the important question is its validity for first-century thought rather than its validity for us. We must get behind the mere terms used to the thought which was trying to find expression. A doctrine of the Person of Christ may be based upon the exact phraseology of the New Testament, and yet be entirely foreign to the theology of the New Testament. The validity of the New Testament conception of the Christ depends upon the fact that it gave an interpretation of the personality of Jesus which fitted in with the mental and spiritual outlook of the age, and agreed with the

religious experience upon which it was based. The New Testament writers, in interpreting the religious significance of Jesus, were not conscious of the modification in the Jewish conception of God which it involved, nor were they hampered by the question as to whether the place they assigned to Him was consistent with that conception. It was left for the following centuries to attempt that reconciliation with monotheism which the Divinity assigned to Jesus appeared to contradict. The reconciliation which was effected was determined by a modified conception of God, the result of both Jewish and Greek thought.

If we are to be true to the spirit of the movement thus indicated, we must depart from the mere letter, and, in the light of our altered conceptions of the nature of God and of His relation to the Universe, recast our interpretation and reconcile it with those altered conceptions. The world is a larger place than the first century dreamed of; religion and the religious life of humanity is more varied than the first century realised, and the cosmic process is a vaster and lengthier one than the first-century mind was in a position to realise. We have been brought into contact with the religious thought and life of an East which was unknown, or practically unknown, to the first century, while scientific investigation has opened to our gaze the story of that process of the ages which has replaced the six days' work

of creation which dominated the thoughts of the New Testament writers.

The true object of the criticism which has been expended on the records in the New Testament is to take us back to that historic manifestation of God in the personality of Jesus upon which the writers based their Christian theology. Its present results are many and varied, but it is becoming increasingly evident that the real personality of Jesus is emerging into greater distinctness, and, in proportion as a clearer vision is obtained, the personality is calling for a fresh interpretation. The modern mind no less than the Jewish and Greek mind will have to find room for that personality, which the modern, no less than the ancient mind, recognises as Divine. We must as boldly and as readily give new meanings to the old titles, and gladly welcome new ones, in our interpretation. It is not the interpretations of the personality of Jesus, but the personality itself which remains the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, because it is, not an ideal Christ but, the historic Jesus Who is the foundation of the Christian faith.

What has just been said with regard to the altered mental attitude of the West, applies with greater force to the East. Throughout the ages India has been evolving a conception of God which is as distinct as the Jewish, and as vital as the Greek conceptions, with which Christian

thought had to relate its interpretation of the personality of Jesus. When we reach India we enter an entirely different mental hemisphere with a verbal flora of its own, bearing but slight resemblance to that to be found in the West. The real religious problem in India to-day, little though it may at present be perceived by Hindus themselves, is the interpretation of the personality of Jesus, and its relation to Hindu religious thought. That religious thought can never be the same as it was before it was brought into contact with Christianity. The great law of evolution is as operative in the religious as in every other sphere. Christianity has entered into India, and it is bound to produce variations in the religious thought of India and to receive variation in turn. Already Hinduism is being Christianised to an extent to which the Christianisation of Hindus bears no relation. It is not merely that specifically Christian ideas have been discovered in Hinduism, but that a religious attitude and a religious atmosphere have been introduced, which are distinctively Christian. It is not implied that the discovery of Christian ideas in Hinduism is purely imaginary. Many of them are undoubtedly there and can be recognised by a sympathetic student. It is the presence of Christianity and acquaintance with Christian thought, however, which have led to the discovery.

The true importance of the historicity of Jesus has not yet been realised by the Hindu. The conception of history as the record of the gradual unfolding of the meaning of the great cosmic process is practically unknown to Hindu thought. The separation between the noumenal Brahma, the only reality, and the phenomenal Brahma is absolute, and, therefore, the Hindu mind has not looked, or thought of looking, for any real manifestation of a Divine purpose in the sphere of the phenomenal. For its religious thought, therefore, the mythological and the historical are of equal value. Both are but a clothing of ideas, and the idea set forth in the myth has as much validity as the idea expressed in history. In the *Bhagavadgita*, for instance, it makes absolutely no difference to Hindu religious thought whether Krishna's presence on the great battle-field of Kurukshetra and his discourse with Arjuna are historic or not. The ideas expressed do not depend upon the historicity of the incidents at all; the ideas are alone important.

The importance of the historic basis of Christianity—the revelation of the Divine character through the medium of the personality of Jesus—as this is likely to affect Indian thought can hardly be exaggerated. The Hindu mind has been occupied with ideals of its own conception throughout the ages, and the mere addition of another religious ideal under the name of The

Christ, would mean very little, if anything, to the religious life of India. What that religious life supremely needs is a realised ideal, an ideal realised, not in the domain of mythology but, in the sphere of actual historic fact. The Hindu mind needs to occupy itself, not with fanciful representations of what a god masquerading as a man might be supposed to do but, with that presentation of what God through the personality of Jesus actually did. The Puranas show us what the Hindu mind is capable of in the way of religious fiction, but India has had a surfeit of that kind of literature. Greek mythology was far more elevated than Hindu mythology, but it did nothing to regenerate the Western world. That which revivified the West was the plain history, not of a God, called Christos, but of the Man Christ Jesus, Whose life and death were, not an allegorical representation of some imaginary deity but, the actual presentation within the limits of human life of the mind and heart of God.

In the *Gita* we have an elevated and exalted view of the religious life as it may be theoretically conceived from the standpoint of the Divine mind. Krishna unfolds a high and lofty conception of man's duty which he urges Arjuna to carry out. All along, however, he speaks, not as man to man but, as God to man. He sketches an ideal, but in no sense does he present a realisation of the ideal. It is what Arjuna must himself realise, not what

Krishna has realised. In the Puranas, on the other hand, we have a representation of what purports to be the life of Krishna himself under the conditions of human existence, and we turn away from it in utter loathing and disgust. The two Krishnas are utterly irreconcilable with one another. The Krishna of the *Gita* could not have lived as the Krishna of the Puranas; and the Krishna of the Puranas could not have discoursed as the Krishna of the *Gita*. This, however, is what we get when the Hindu mind seeks to represent its own ideas of an incarnation of a god. The actual life of Buddha is infinitely nobler and loftier than anything which the Hindu mind has conceived when it has set itself to represent an incarnation. Is it not significant that the pure and noble life of the man, Buddha, secured for him in later ages a place in the Hindu pantheon as an incarnation, and yet when the Hindu mind sets itself to represent God in the flesh, it is the carnal and not the Divine which dominates the whole conception? History is greater and nobler than fiction. That which God presented to the Hindu religious nature in the actual life of Buddha infinitely surpasses anything which the Hindu mind can represent as its own ideal of God as Man.

Modern India is learning the real meaning of history and is becoming more and more conscious of the value of facts which have been definitely

expressed in the past as distinct from the mere fancies which have been imposed upon the past. Scientific training is having an immense influence in modifying that conception of the phenomenal which is such an integral part of Hindu religious thinking. The phenomenal has never been regarded as in any true sense a manifestation of the noumenal. It will probably be found that the introduction of the study of History and Science has done more to revolutionise the East than anything else. That study has been a revelation to the Hindu mind of the superiority of fact over fiction. The study of History has played a very large part in the birth of the national idea, with its new conception for India of a goal towards which she is being led rather than a destiny which she is working out.

Under these circumstances the historic fact of Jesus upon which Christianity is based is one of incalculable importance for Hindu religious thinking. It introduces an entirely new element into Hindu thought, the moment the significance of its claim is recognised. That element is the true manifestation within the phenomenal of the Divine reality. Such a conception is no doubt inconsistent with the typical Hindu conception of God, but it is the fulfilment of Hindu religious aspiration. It is not the noumenal Brahma of Hindu philosophic thought who has ministered to the religious life of India; it is the phenomenal

Brahma, as set forth in the incarnations. Hindu thought, in spite of its ceaseless and untiring efforts, has never reconciled the essential duality of its noumenal and phenomenal Brahma. The thinker has accepted the noumenal Brahma and neglected the phenomenal; the saint has accepted the phenomenal Brahma and ignored the noumenal.

Modern conditions which have sprung up from contact with Western ideals of life have already produced a revolution in the relative conceptions of the noumenal and the phenomenal, which cannot fail to have far-reaching effects on the religious thought and life of India. The vital interest in modern India is not Indian religion, but Indian politics; the absorbing pursuit is not spiritual, but material gain. The India which is alive, which is throbbing with new vigour, is an India in which the phenomenal and not the noumenal occupies the chief place. Such an India, however, is not the India of the Upanishads and the Puranas. It is this shifting of the centre of gravity in Hindu thought which is significant. It has started the pendulum of intellectual life swinging again in the political, social and religious spheres, and whatever may be the outcome, one thing is certain—the resting-point of this New India will not and cannot be the old resting-point. The mind of India will have to adjust itself to the recognition of the phenomenal as the true and real medium for the manifestation of the Divine mind and purpose.

The problem to which the religious thought of India will have to address itself, when once it has perceived the significance of the personality of Jesus, is precisely the same problem which confronts us in the West, and the same problem which confronted Jewish and Greek thought in the first three centuries. It matters not whether the personality of Jesus is explained from the standpoint of its relation to the Divine or to the human; in both cases it is bound to modify our conceptions both of God and of Man. As a manifestation either of God or of Man or of both, Jesus introduces new conceptions which have to be related to the religious thought of the race. Religious thought in the East will have to find a place for Him just as religious thought in the West has had to do. It is His personality which is the compelling fact. He is a manifestation of personality, whether human or Divine, Who demands an explanation which all our systems are bound to give. An ideal Christ, however beautiful and sublime, would present no problem to Indian religious thought. Such an ideal would find plenty of room in the Hindu pantheon. It is the historic Jesus, the religious significance of His personality, which presents the problem. He modifies every conception under which we try to bring Him, or to which we try to relate Him. If we regard Him as purely human, then we have to enlarge and deepen our conception of the human in order to

embrace Him. If we regard Him as the incarnation of God, then we have to alter the conception of incarnation and the conception of God in order to explain Him. His personality has introduced into the world a new standard which modifies the conception of personality both human and Divine. This has been the history of religious thought in the West, and it will be the same in the East. The conceptions of the Divine and the human which are characteristic of Hindu thought are as inadequate, in the light of the personality of Jesus, as those of the West. His appearance on the horizon of Indian religious thought foreshadows the rise of a New Vedanta in which the old dualism of a noumenal and a phenomenal Brahma is resolved.

India, however, must be left to give her own interpretation of the personality of Jesus, and to relate His religious significance to her own religious thought. The West cannot, and ought not to attempt to impose upon India its own distinctively Western interpretation. On the contrary it should anticipate an enrichment of its own religious thought when once the Indian mind has perceived the religious value of His personality and interpreted it in terms of Indian thought. Theology, like every other science, is the attempt of the mind to explain the facts which confront us in the religious experience of the race. Of all these facts the personality of Jesus, under any interpretation

which is at all adequate, is the supreme fact in the religious life of the world. At the lowest estimate which may be formed of Him, He is the highest and best expression of humanity, and, therefore, the fullest revelation of Divinity the world has seen. It is this which constitutes His religious significance, and it is this which makes that significance universal. The gods and goddesses of the West succumbed to the Man Christ Jesus, because the Divinity He revealed in His own personality was greater and higher and mightier than the conceptions of the Divine which they embodied. The religious thought of the West found in His personality a revelation which carried it beyond the heights to which it had soared in its efforts to find God and to understand the relations between God and Man. Christian theology was constituted out of the thought-forms which the Jewish and Greek mind had produced, but it transcended the religious thought of both because it was concerned with the greatest factor in the religious experience of humanity,—the personality of Jesus. It may be freely admitted that Indian religious thought has soared to even a higher height than that attained by Greek thought, though its ethical thought has been singularly deficient when compared with Jewish thought. The Indian mind, however, has also to face the fact of the personality of Jesus, if its religious thought is to be of universal significance. Religions vary, but Religion is one. Christianity,

viewed as a system of doctrines, is rightly classified as one of many religions. Viewed, however, as the interpretation of the Universal Christ revealed in the personality of Jesus, it is not a religion, but Religion itself. The interpretation can be enriched by contributions from every land, but the supreme revelation which religious thought interprets is the revelation of God in the person of Jesus. This abides the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, the supreme revelation both of God and Man.

In bringing Christianity to India, the West is presenting to the East that which she has first received from the East. She presents it with the conviction, born of centuries of strenuous religious life and thought, that it will prove to India what it has proved to the West, the inspiration of all that is highest and best in true living and deep thinking. It is, however, the fact of the personality of Jesus, with the religious significance involved in it, and not the interpretation of the fact by the Western mind, which India is urged to look at and interpret according to her own mind. The rich contribution which India has made to the religious thought of the world justifies the anticipation that this fact of religious experience which has been so fruitful in the West will be even more fruitful in the East. India's religious thinking has been stagnant for centuries; her speculative faculty seems to have exhausted

itself through the very richness of its production. The mind of India needs, not a stimulus for more speculative thought but, some great fact of religious experience, in the light of which, and in conformity with which, it may reduce the vast mass of its speculative thought to coherence and consistency. The West found such a fact in the personality of Jesus and for nineteen centuries the interpretation of the significance of that fact has occupied the attention of its best and noblest minds. The greatness and importance of the fact may be realised when we bear in mind that all through the centuries, and at the present time no less than in all past crises in the religious thinking of the West, the reinterpretation, and not the rejection of this fact, is the result which invariably follows those periodical unsettlements which mark the growth and development of the intellectual and religious life. Christianity is not a new religion ; it is Religion itself, based upon the interpretation of the greatest fact in the religious experience of the world. Rightly understood, its mission is to reveal the essential oneness of all religions by pointing to a unique religious experience, which by its freedom from all racial and partial peculiarities presents a common centre towards which every religious movement is seen to converge. That common centre is the Universal Christ as manifested in the personality of Jesus.

The Church of Christ is not, and never really

has been, a Church with a particular creed fixed and unchangeable, though the churches have all along tried to make it so. It is a body composed of many members differing from each other as pronouncedly in organization and in function as the limbs of the human body, and yet united through sharing a common life. That common life is the same Divine life revealed in the personality of Jesus. The one and only distinctive mark which it bears is the mark of the Christ-spirit. It can admit all creeds provided the creeds do not dominate the Christ-spirit, but are dominated by it ; it will welcome all castes, provided caste does not usurp the place of the Christ-spirit, but is subject to it ; it will accept all colours provided each colour is pervaded by the Christ-spirit and recognises the brotherhood of the Christ. The real Church, therefore, is nothing less than the whole human family conscious of their relation to one another and to God, through the possession of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. India has her place in this universal Church of the Christ, and into it she can bring the riches of her own past and the wealth of her own religious life and thought. The Christ came into the world not to destroy any religion but, to fulfil all, not to impoverish any religious life but, to give fuller and more abounding life to all. It is because the West has found that her own religious life has been quickened, her own soul has been, as it

were, raised from the dead, that she bids India behold the Christ of God and the Saviour of the World.

Yea thro' life, death, thro' sorrow and thro' sinning,
He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed :
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.

CHAPTER XII

FAITH AND DUTY

To the Western, India is a land full of the most perplexing contradictions. At one time he is inclined to think that there is no country in the world in which belief has such little influence on conduct as in India. At another time he feels that there is no country in which belief exercises a greater tyranny over a man's freedom than in India. Both opinions are equally correct, contradictory though they may seem. The explanation is probably to be found in the fact that, while the connection between belief and conduct has been fully recognised, no allowance has been made for the growth of the Hindu's belief. The caste system of India is founded upon a recognition of the necessary connection between belief and conduct, and in no country in the world is the tyranny of custom so oppressive. India looks for authority in the matter of belief to the past and not to the present, to the voice which spake in old times, not to the voice which is speaking

to-day. Religious belief, therefore, is recognised as fixed for all time, and conduct has accordingly been determined for all time by the code of rules and regulations known as the caste system. Within a certain prescribed area there has been plenty of room in India for intellectual activity, and, so long as that prescribed area is not transgressed, faith and duty do not come into conflict. The moment, however, the mind passes beyond the boundary prescribed by Hindu belief, that moment it discovers that caste is a slavery from which there is no escape, save by actual or metaphorical death. Just as leaving the shores of India and crossing the ocean are regarded as involving of necessity a breach of caste, so to depart from the shores of Hindu religious belief, and embark upon the ocean of a wider intellectual and religious life is to be guilty of the one unpardonable fault which cuts the man off for ever from his fellows and his nation. To leave religious India is like the leaving of geographical India,—a sin for which there is no forgiveness until the man has returned and made atonement. The only way to avoid the difficulty is to give a metaphorical interpretation to the ocean you are forbidden to cross, and to regard the whole world as India. In the same way the intellectual difficulty can be got over by regarding the whole domain of truth as of necessity included in what is called Hinduism, and denying that there can be any truth which is not to be found

in Hinduism. Both these fictions are very prevalent in India at the present time, and are producing anything but salutary results in Hindu character.

In the truly modern India, however, the adoption of such fictions has been abandoned as both childish and unworthy. There is an increasing number of honest souls who will have nothing to do with the subterfuge of an allegorical ocean which they must not cross, nor with the equally dishonest confession of a sin which they do not feel. They frankly declare that there are other lands beside India to which an Indian can go without ceasing to be an Indian, and they repudiate the social custom which would restrict their legitimate freedom. Unfortunately this only applies at present to those journeys to foreign lands and residence therein for the sake of intellectual and material prosperity. The religious soul, whatever may be his desire for a larger and richer spiritual life, must on no account leave the shores of Hinduism and cross the ocean in search of spiritual truth. Let him attempt to do so and he will be the subject of the bitterest persecution, in which those of his fellows who have profited most by foreign education will probably be the most active agents. The time, however, is undoubtedly coming when liberty will be granted, not merely for the sake of intellectual and material gain but, for spiritual profit. The time will come when the Hindu will recognise that a man may

go outside religious India without thereby ceasing to be a Hindu, and they will accord as warm a welcome to the spiritual pilgrim who has come back with a richer life as they do to the returned traveller who has come back with a bigger purse.

The narrow limits within which India's intellectual life has been hitherto confined are being broken through in all directions, with the result that the fetters of the caste system are becoming more and more galling day by day. The caste system was intended to secure a due relation between belief and conduct. In modern India it is resulting in a divorce between the two which is fatal to healthy living. The necessity for some measure of modification in the system is widely acknowledged, and various attempts at reform are being more or less earnestly made. The need for reform is recognised as the result of two distinct influences, the intellectual and the social. There are, on the one hand, those who feel that they have passed the limits of that restricted area of Hindu thought under which the rules of the caste system were framed, and that consequently many matters which, according to caste custom, are of supreme and vital importance have sunk into matters of complete indifference or have become actually inimical to the larger life into which they have entered. On the other hand, there are those who, while quite at home and content within the area of Hindu thought, are conscious of a restricted

social life which is inconsistent with the wider social instincts to which life under modern conditions has given birth. The first is really a revolt against the system itself, while the second is merely a demand for a reform in the system. The one is a demand for real freedom; the other is a request for more liberty. Between these two extremes there are doubtless a great number who have sympathies with both, but cannot ally themselves with either. Outside all these, entrenched in the apparently impregnable fortress of Divine sanction, sits orthodoxy hurling her maledictions on all alike.

It is only those whose intellectual life has passed beyond the bounds prescribed for it by Hindu thought who are confronted with the real problem of the relation between faith and conduct. To these, however, the problem is one of the most perplexing with which they have to deal, and they have a claim on the sympathy of the West which unfortunately is not always given. The battle of freedom of thought which the West has fought and won took place under very different conditions from those which obtain in India to-day. The West had no caste system to contend with. Freedom to act according to one's conviction was recognised as involved in the question of freedom to think for oneself. In India, on the other hand, a certain measure of freedom to think has always been accorded, and the caste system never interfered

with that freedom so long as the limits of a very wide Hindu orthodoxy were not transgressed. Moreover, in Hindu philosophy the supreme place has been assigned to knowledge, and to knowledge of a purely intellectual kind. That compulsion which the Western feels to make his conduct square with his convictions has hardly been felt in India at all. Good actions are felt to be better than bad actions, but inaction is best of all. The law of *Karma* deals out impartially the fit reward of all conduct, but to escape from its influence altogether by the path of knowledge is the only true salvation for man. These ideas are the very web and woof of Hindu thought, and their influence on Hindu character accounts for much of what the Western cannot but regard as weakness of moral fibre. You cannot really believe that knowledge is superior to virtue without making virtue of less account than knowledge. It is because these ideas are fundamental in Hindu philosophy, that inconsistencies between belief and conduct are not looked upon in the same light by the Hindu as they are by his Western brother. To him, thinking belongs to the real world, while doing belongs to the relatively unreal world, and, therefore, correct thinking is of far more importance than right doing.

The first question which the modern Hindu who finds himself in revolt against the tyranny of caste has to settle is the supremacy of the

imperative of the moral consciousness. Once deny the reality of the feeling of oughtness, and you cut the tap-root of all virtue. Once question the validity of this fundamental datum of self-consciousness, and you open the gate wide to an absolute scepticism from which there is no escape. If we cannot trust this voice, which speaks in the inner shrine of the soul with an authority from which there is no appeal, we can trust no voice at all. If we allow a contradiction here, we have no criterion of certainty anywhere. If the witness of the moral consciousness is untrustworthy, we have no assurance that in following the guidance of consciousness in the domain of the pure reason we are being led aright. The goal to which it leads, and which it assures us is the supreme reality, may turn out to be as illusory as the whole of that which in contradistinction it declares to be unreal. Consciousness cannot in the same breath both deny and affirm its trustworthiness. If the voice which whispers "You ought" is a deluding voice, then we must refuse to believe it when it utters its seductive promise, "You shall know."

The absolute supremacy of conscience being admitted, we are brought into agreement with the highest thought and the noblest action of humanity. If there is one thing which a careful study of History reveals, it is the tendency everywhere manifested, for that which is eternally right

to triumph over that which is merely expedient. The driving force which has pushed humanity upward has not been the mere desire to know, but the desire to do. If we are to judge humanity by the records it has left behind it through the ages, the conclusion is forced upon us that the goal towards which it has ever been advancing is, not merely the triumph of knowledge over ignorance but, the triumph of right over wrong. The triumph of knowledge over ignorance has been the goal of the few; the triumph of right over wrong has been the goal of humanity as a whole. They have often mistaken the direction in which the goal lay, but they have consistently pressed on towards it. The attainment of knowledge is never the final goal; it is only a stage on the road. That which the mind sees, the soul desires to realise. Man desires to know in order that he may do or become that which his knowledge shows him to be right or true. Perfect satisfaction is never attained until the final goal of realisation has been reached. It is to this feeling of oughtness that humanity owes all that is noblest and best in its history. Into the unknown in the realm of thought, and into the unrealised in the realm of action, men, under the all-compelling influence of the sense of ought have gone forth as the heroes of the race, to discover the true and to realise the good. They have felt that no sacrifice was too great and no hardship too severe, so long as it

was incurred in the service of the Highest Whose voice speaks the command which it is treason to disobey.

It is in the domain of religious knowledge that the revolt against the caste system is most pronounced. Religious faith is the perception of the relation in which we stand both to God and to our fellows. Our conduct resulting from this relation is that course of life which we feel we ought to realise. To separate faith from conduct, therefore, is to bring discord and not harmony, unrest and not rest to our souls. When religious faith has once turned its searchlight upon our relations to God and our fellowmen, revealing to us that our actual is not the ideal, there is no rest for us save in the effort to turn the actual into the ideal. However difficult the task may be, and however much it may demand from us, the doing of it brings a joy and satisfaction with which nothing else can be compared.

The question as to the best means for replacing the actual by the ideal is one of extreme difficulty. There are two distinct paths, both of which lead to the same goal. One is the steep and rugged path of self-sacrifice; the other is the smoother and easier path of personal influence. Perfectly sincere souls are to be found in both these paths. There is the man who feels that, whatever others may or may not do, he at least must, so far as lies within his power, replace the actual by the ideal,

at any rate so far as his own life and conduct are concerned. There is the other man who feels that his true task is concerned not merely, and not chiefly, with his own individual life, but with the life of the society of which he is a member, and that the actual can only be truly replaced by the ideal in proportion as the society and not merely the individual essays the task. The two paths thus indicated are both sincere attempts to change the actual into the ideal. The one is by the self-sacrifice of the individual, while the other is by the exercise of his personal influence on the community.

There is undoubtedly a legitimate sphere for each method, and it rests with the individual soul to settle which is the path he is called upon to tread. There are times and circumstances when the rugged path of sacrifice is the only one which a true and honest soul can take. There are others when the smoother path of quiet influence is the one which is clearly marked out for us. Some men can accomplish more by their life than by their death, while others can accomplish more by sacrifice and death than by life and service. In the life of Jesus we see both paths taken with absolute consistency. At the commencement of His ministry He sought to influence both the people and their religious leaders; He made use of the recognised methods of religious influence; and He even conformed to customs sanctioned

by usage so long as they did not conflict with the voice of God in the soul. He carefully avoided conflict wherever and whenever no principle was at stake. It was not until the marked and pronounced hostility of the religious leaders closed the path of quiet teaching and influence against Him that He chose the rugged path which ended at the Cross of Calvary. He avoided a contest so long as no sacrifice of the truth was involved. He endured the Cross, despising its shame, when its avoidance meant saving Himself by the sacrifice of the truth. It was His meat and drink to do the will of the Father, and He earnestly prayed that if it were possible the cup of suffering and death might pass from Him. When, however, He found that obedience to the Father's will involved the drinking of the cup, He passed out unfalteringly from the Gethsemane garden to Golgotha, the place of a skull.

The true principle upon which decision turns is here clearly indicated. The transformation of the actual into the ideal is that work which the Father has given to all His children to do. If it can be accomplished by our earnest teaching and quiet influence, that is clearly the path marked out for our feet, and we ought to avoid an open rupture so long as we can do so without sacrificing the ideal to the actual. If, however, we are prevented from doing this, and the opposition of those whose interests are bound up with the maintenance of the

actual forces a conflict upon us, our loyalty to truth and to the ideal leaves us no alternative but to take the steep and rugged path which leads to Calvary. The work which God has given us to do must ever take the supreme place, and we ourselves the subordinate place. We may freely sacrifice our own ease and comfort for the sake of the work, never the work for the sake of our own ease and comfort. Not every martyr puts the work first and himself second, even when he sacrifices his life for the cause. There are some who will more readily sacrifice their lives than themselves. While it is true that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church," it by no means follows that every martyrdom helps on the coming of the Kingdom of God. The truth is that both methods are needed and, that where the self is subordinate and the cause supreme, there is never much difficulty in deciding which path ought to be taken. One distinction, however, is of paramount importance, the distinction between absolute fidelity to the ideal and a compromise with the actual. If the smoother path, as is so frequently the case, involves the compromise between right and wrong, it involves a sacrifice of the ideal, a sacrifice to which the soul which has once seen the ideal can never consent. In the ethical realm a compromise between the true and the false is high treason. No argument is here admissible; no sophistry must be allowed to silence the oracle of the soul.

Lowell strikes the true note to which every sincere soul responds when he says :

We see dimly in the Present what is small and what is great,
Slow of faith, how weak an arm can turn the iron helm of Fate :
But the soul is still oracular ; amid the market's din,
List the ominous stern whisper from the Delphic cave within,—
"They enslave their children's children who make compromise with sin."

The cause of Right is never really advanced by entering into an alliance with Wrong. On the contrary we rivet the chains of slavery and suffering on the race to the second and third generation after us. So long as we are free to work for the realisation of the ideal ; so long as we are free to labour for the emancipation of our children, we may consent to endure the fetters with which we ourselves are bound. We must, however, never falter in our loyalty to the ideal by compromising with the actual, lest we consign to slavery our children's children. It is this supremacy of the conscience which has been the very salt of the earth in the history of humanity. All honour to those heroic souls whose fidelity never wavered, who denying themselves, took up the Cross, and followed the gleam of the ideal they had seen, even though a Gethsemane of agony and a Calvary of suffering lay before them. Scorning all offers of compromise with wrong ; exhibiting unswerving devotion to the truth, they chose the path of

suffering that they might free their children from the chains with which they themselves were bound, and conferred upon them those rights and privileges which they saw only as ideals. The progress of humanity upward has rarely been a gentle gradient along which it could be borne with little effort. Deep chasms have had to be filled and huge boulders have had to be blasted ere the gentle ascent along which the main body is carried so smoothly was rendered possible. The chasm over which we pass to-day is filled with the bodies of those heroes of the race who laid down their lives that we might pass over. The boulders which have been blasted have exacted their toll of noble lives who sacrificed themselves that we might mount upward.

Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes—they were souls that stood alone,
While the men they agonised for hurled the contumelious stone,
Stood serene, and down the future saw the golden beam incline
To the side of perfect justice, mastered by their faith divine,
By one man's plain truth to manhood and to God's supreme design.

By the light of burning heretics Christ's bleeding feet I track,
Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the Cross that turns not back,
And these mounts of anguish number how each generation learned
One new word of that grand *Credo* which in prophet-hearts hath burned
Since the first man stood God-conquered with his face to heaven upturned.

The cause of social and religious reform in India to-day is loudly calling for heroic and loyal souls who will be prepared to tread both the paths here indicated. In spite of the claims which are made by some of the tolerance of Hinduism, no one who whole-heartedly consecrates himself to the cause of either social or religious reform will be in doubt as to the opposition and persecution which await him the moment he steps outside the limited area which orthodoxy has prescribed. Many a Hindu has been called upon in loyalty to what he conceived to be the truth, whether in social or religious matters, to take his place by the side of the Christ in the garden of Gethsemane, and share His agony and bloody sweat, praying that if possible the bitter cup of sacrifice might pass from him, and has had grace to add, "Nevertheless not my will but Thine be done." From his Gethsemane he has had to pass on to his Calvary, there to endure the Cross of the outcaste, despising the shame attached to it, and has found in the moment of his supreme agony that like Christ he has had to look upon the heart-broken face of his mother who has stood by his Cross weeping. A Peter may be inclined to say out of real sympathy, "This be far from thee," but the feeling of the friend must not be allowed to delude us into accepting what may be the very devil of cowardice, to which there is no other reply from an honest soul than, "Get thee behind me, Satan." When

the voice of God is speaking in the soul, to listen to any other voice is to be guilty of treachery. The Cross must never be courted, but always avoided if it be possible. It is never possible, however, when the price demanded means the sacrifice of the ideal. The thorns and the nails, which are the price of loyalty, may blanch the cheek, but the twenty pieces of silver, which are the reward of treachery, will most assuredly blast the soul that accepts them.

This is the great lesson also of the *Bhagavadgita.* Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra shrinks, as every noble soul shrinks, from inflicting pain and anguish on those who are bound to him by the sacred ties of relationship. He finds himself called upon to contend in fierce hostility with those who ought to be recipients of his love and service. No personal gain can possibly compensate for the loss of love, while he clearly foresees the vast evils which such a conflict is bound to produce.

> In such a massacre are lost
> Antique traditions of the clan ;
> These noble customs gone, the clan
> Entire is whelmed in anarchy.

Krishna's answer, the recurring burden of the whole *Gita,* is that the duty of one's caste overrides every other consideration, and that to fail in that is to fail irretrievably.

Better one's thankless duty far,
Than alien task though well-performed.
Better to die at one's own post;
Another's is a fearsome risk.

The position thus given to the duty of one's caste is only true when caste is interpreted, not in the sense of the fictitious position assigned to each by the caste system, but as the true position into which each man is born and for which he has been specially endowed by God. It is that conviction in the soul that the position we occupy is the God-appointed one, and that the responsibilities it entails are the special burden which we are called upon to take up. As Jesus said, standing before the Roman tribunal which condemned Him to death; "For this cause was I born, and for this purpose came I unto this hour." So understood, the great message of the *Gita* is an eternal message of truth. Every man has his Kurukshetra when he is brought face to face with his Divinely-appointed task, and finds that to accomplish it he has to fight even with those whom he loves, and discovers, as Jesus said, that a man's foes are those of his own household. In the religious and social regeneration of India Kurukshetras have still to be fought and Arjunas are still needed.

To shrink would be disloyalty, to falter would be sin.

This principle of the absolute supremacy of conscience is one which is readily admitted by

every right-feeling Hindu. He may not be able to see that in a given case such a principle is involved, but the principle he will freely admit. The difficulty, however, which the majority feel is concerned with the complete break with the past and the absolute isolation from the present which a definite stand for social and religious freedom involves. Why, for instance, should a man's faith in the larger social gospel or in the religious message of Christianity compel him to separate himself from the ties which bind him to the family in which he was born and the bonds of the particular social organism of which he is a member? His own belief and his own feelings are no doubt of vital importance to him, but is he to be wholly unmindful of the feelings of others, who are so intimately connected with him in family and social life, and take a step which, while it may bring satisfaction to his own mind, brings pain and anguish to all those connected with him? Is he not after all setting his own satisfaction in the supreme place and the happiness and peace of mind of those near and dear to him in a secondary place? This is probably a fair representation of the position of a great number of Hindus who are deeply interested in the larger social gospel or have a deep appreciation of the value of Christianity. They are by no means bigoted opponents of either social or religious reform, but sincere sympathisers. It is a position deserving

of every respect and demanding every consideration which it is possible to show to it.

From the true reformer's point of view, which is also the missionary's standpoint, it should be frankly admitted that the position above indicated is deserving of so much respect that everything which is possible should be done before a rupture with social and family life is either encouraged or sanctioned. There is absolutely no virtue in the mere breaking of caste, and there is no necessary connection between acceptance of Christianity and an absolute break with a man's religious and social past. A Hindu may be a true follower of Jesus Christ without being either baptised or breaking his caste. By this is not meant a secret disciple who conceals his loyalty, but one who openly acknowledges that he has come under the influence of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. From the true Christian standpoint both baptism and the breaking of caste are matters of quite secondary importance. On the other hand, the sanctities of family life are of paramount importance, to be guarded at all cost except that of the sacrifice of a man's most sacred possession, his conscience.

In view of such a declaration it may reasonably be asked whether it does not follow that in practical mission work missionaries ought to relegate baptism to this secondary position and ignore those caste distinctions which are so necessary a feature of Hindu social life? This is

a plain issue which ought not to be shirked, for it is one of supreme importance both to the missionary and to the Hindu. So far as the question of baptism is concerned there need be little difficulty in the answer. Baptism should be regarded as the sign of admission into the Christian community of those who through their acceptance of Christianity have either definitely left or been excluded from the Hindu community of which they were members. So long as the Hindu community is prepared to allow the Hindu who accepts Christianity to remain as a free man in its midst, there is no necessity for him to leave it. If baptism would involve an excommunication from the Hindu community, then such a man should not be baptised. The same applies to the woman as well as to the man, though in the case of the woman the remaining is even more imperative. Christianity is not meant to destroy but, to fulfil ; not to break up homes by introducing hate and bitterness but, to establish them by enriching the moral and spiritual life of those who constitute the home. The missionary's supreme concern is with the richness of the religious life of the Hindu, and not by any means with the mere enrolling of a number of names as converts. Through the influence of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus he has a spiritual experience of priceless value which he wishes to share with his Hindu brother. If his Hindu brother does share in that

religious experience, it ought to be a matter of pure indifference to the missionary whether the Hindu receives baptism at his hand or at the hand of any one else, or even whether he receives it at all. Far from urging the Hindu to break with his past, leave his family, and cut himself off from his community, he should counsel him to stay amongst them and share with them any spiritual blessing he has received through the Christianity he has accepted.

Most Hindus would doubtless find little to object to in the position above described, and would be ready to say that if missionary practice agreed with such a theory there would be no trouble. The position, however, needs to be looked at, not merely from the missionary standpoint but, from that of the Hindu community as well. Suppose a Hindu who is in full sympathy with the above sentiments finds that the Christian ideal of the religious life attracts him, and that under the influence of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, his own spiritual life is strengthened and enriched. He is sincerely anxious to avoid breaking his caste by being baptised and leaving the Hindu community of which he is a member. He accordingly resolves to try to live the true Christian life in his own home and among his own people. For this purpose he is willing to forego many of the privileges of Christian fellowship and Christian liberty in order that he may

not cut himself off from fellowship with his own people. In all matters of purely social custom he is quite prepared to conform to the rules of his community. Suppose, however, that the Hindu community insists that instead of worshipping with Christians he shall worship with Hindus, and participate in practices which to him are, not only meaningless and devoid of spiritual helpfulness but, idolatrous. Suppose, further, that it also demands that he shall disavow any sympathy with Christianity, and in public pass for an orthodox Hindu, which he knows and feels he is not. Suppose also that he finds his religious liberty refused, and discovers that attempts are being made to compel him to rule his life and conduct, not by that which he feels to be right but, by that which his friends and relatives consider to be right. What should the missionary who occupies the position above described advise in such a case? There is but one answer which is consistent with such a position. He should advise such a man to leave a social organisation which refuses to allow him to carry out the supreme duty of every man,—to obey the dictates of his own conscience,—and he should offer him every facility for so doing. In such a case the break with the past, even though it entails anguish and suffering on the part of those nearest and dearest to him, is perfectly justified. The responsibility for such sorrow is not his, but the

community's which makes conditions such as no true and honest soul can submit to. So long as it is a question between their wishes and his own inclination he is justified in putting their wishes first. The moment they convert it into a question between their wishes and the will of God revealed in his own soul, they must take the second place.

> Whoso hath felt the Spirit of the Highest
> Cannot confound nor doubt Him nor deny:
> Yea with one voice, o world, tho' thou deniest,
> Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.

It will doubtless be urged that after all this is the issue which sooner or later is forced upon every Hindu who accepts Christianity, and that it is inevitable so long as Hinduism is Hinduism and caste is caste. It may be admitted that in the majority of cases this is so, as things are at present. It is not, however, universally so, and it is by no means necessarily so. The true difficulty is not a religious one at all; it is essentially a social difficulty. Within what is recognised as orthodox Hinduism there is probably more diversity of thought and belief than there is between Christianity and Hinduism. There need be no difficulty, therefore, from the religious standpoint in a Hindu holding Christian views. It is said, however, that caste is essentially a religious institution, and that being so, the social difficulty is after all a religious one. It cannot

be denied that this has been so, and that it is still largely so, but it may be confidently asserted that it will be less and less so as the years pass. There are many indications that Hindus themselves are repudiating the tyranny of caste, even when they are far from repudiating either Hinduism or caste restrictions. The tyranny is entirely due to a purely fictitious connection between religion and caste. In the minds of thousands of true Hindus to-day caste is no longer regarded as a religious institution at all; it is recognised as a purely social institution. They may consider it advantageous or the reverse, but they have ceased to regard it as having a Divine sanction. Amongst the educated classes this is the attitude of by far the greater number, whether they believe in Hinduism, or whether unfortunately they believe in nothing. Amongst the masses in a good part of India, while caste is still regarded as religious, the emphasis is every day passing over from the religious to the purely social side. That which really puts a man out of caste is, not a departure from the religious beliefs and practices of his fathers but, a departure from the social habits and customs of his caste brethren. If it were the former and not the latter, three-fourths of the educated Hindus would have to be excommunicated, and a very large percentage of the masses. If neglect of Hindu worship and renunciation of idolatry were regarded as a breach

of caste rules, there would probably be more outcastes than caste people.

The recognition of caste as a purely social institution would place the religious question on an entirely different footing. In the first place, it would restore to the individual that liberty of thought which is his by Divine right, a right which is prior as regards time and superior as regards authority to his duty to society. This right is conferred upon him by God, and to God alone he is responsible for its use. In the second place, it would restore caste to its true place as an institution which society has created to control the rights of the individual as against the equal rights of his fellows. So long as the individual remains a member, his own wishes and his own inclinations have to be subordinated to those of the society to which he belongs. The position and privileges which are his as a member of the community are conferred upon him by the community, and can only be retained so long as he is willing to subordinate himself to the community. These two principles of the right of the individual as against the community in the region of conscience, and the right of the community as against the individual in the region of social manners, furnish the ground for a mutual understanding between missionaries and social reformers on the one hand, and orthodox Hindus on the other. For the individual perfect religious liberty

and freedom to worship God as the conscience dictates must be granted, and the right of caste to interfere in the slightest degree with this freedom must be repudiated. Let that be granted and the Hindu who accepts Christianity has no need to leave his family or break his caste. There may be a few cases in which a man's conscience may force him to such a step, but they would be the exception rather than the rule.

It will probably be said by some that, in taking such a position support is being given to that very caste spirit which is utterly opposed to the spirit of Christ. It should be remembered, however, that caste distinctions are one thing and the caste spirit is another and very different thing. There are caste distinctions which are without doubt prejudicial and harmful to the spirit of brotherhood which should be diffused throughout the whole community. The same, however, is equally true of the class distinctions to be found in the West. We do not, however, refuse the name Christian to the Western who observes them, and there is still less reason for refusing it to the Hindu who also observes them. In the case which is here under discussion, the Hindu Christian's attitude may be the result of a perfectly sincere desire to cause no offence to relatives and friends to whom he is bound by the most tender and sacred ties. The attitude of the Western, on the other hand, may be the result of an unadulterated

snobbishness, utterly regardless of those very claims of friendship and kindred for which the Hindu Christian remains in caste. The position here taken, therefore, in regard to a Hindu remaining in caste gives no support whatever to the caste spirit, which, whether it be found in the East or in the West, is irreconcilably opposed to the spirit of Christ. So long as the distinction between caste as a social, and caste as a religious institution is recognised, and caste distinctions resolve themselves into matters which are chiefly concerned with inter-dining and inter-marrying, a Hindu Christian may observe the rules of his caste in such matters without thereby ceasing to be a true Christian. If by remaining in caste the social or the religious reformer can use his position for the furtherance of the cause, he is not only justified, but called upon to remain in that sphere in which he can best do the will of God. It must, however, be understood that the determining factor is, not personal feeling but, the possibility of personal influence.

In the past missionaries have undoubtedly been more in favour of encouraging a Hindu to sever his connection with the caste community and join the Christian community. This, however, has been largely due to their experience of the hostility of the Hindu community to any acceptance on the part of its members of the Christian religion. A change, however, is coming over the

Hindu community in this respect, which demands a corresponding change on the part of missionaries. Christianity is not one religion which must be regarded as hostile to every other, though it has often been so represented. It is Religion itself, the fulfilment of all religions. To be so, however, it must receive as well as give. The Hindu who finds in it a satisfaction of his religious nature which he has not found in Hinduism, must also find that, instead of cutting him off from the religious development of his race, it brings to full fruition that special type of religious thought and life which the Divine Spirit has evolved in the Hindu nature. Christian theology has yet to be enriched by that contribution to its full development for which the Hindu mind has been specially prepared in the providence of God. These considerations make it necessary that the Christian attitude towards the religious thought and life of India should be one of genuine sympathy and friendly recognition. So long as the conception of different religions prevails, our attitude is more or less hostile and our creeds are divisive. The moment we realise that religion is one and universal, hostility changes to friendliness, and our different creeds become a means of revealing the unity underlying the variety. If this is so in the domain of thought, it is much more so in the domain of feeling. Hindu and Christian may differ in the expression of their

religious thought, but in the matter of religious feeling they are brothers whose relations with one another ought above all else to be brotherly.

There are doubtless some missionaries who would dissent entirely from the position here taken up, and would consider that true loyalty demands a complete severance from Hinduism, whether regarded as social or religious. They occupy a position so entirely different from that here set forth that any agreement is impossible. The author can but ask that they should credit him with the same loyalty to what he conceives to be the spirit of Christ which he is quite prepared to believe actuates them. There are others, however, whose standpoint is not so very different from that of the author, but who at the same time cannot acquiesce in what looks like a compromise with the caste spirit, and who may very reasonably fear its influence in the Christian Church. For such it is necessary, therefore, to point out that the course which has been advocated above does not apply, and is not intended to apply, to those who have definitely associated themselves with the Christian rather than with the Hindu community. It is distinctly a concession for the sake of relatives and friends, and is demanded so long as, and only so long as, the Hindu Christian remains among his own people. The moment he finds that loyalty to truth and the cause of social and religious reform demand his severance from the Hindu

community and union with fellow-sympathisers, then caste rules are for ever abolished, and he joins a social organism in which there is neither caste nor outcaste, bond nor free, but all are one brotherhood. To introduce caste distinctions into the Christian community in India is high treason against Christ, which the Christian Church must repudiate at all costs.

To those who question the rightness of making such a concession the attitude of the great missionary apostle, Paul, in a matter which has a strong resemblance to the one under discussion, may be of value. Paul never had to do with caste, it is true, but he had to do with a question which seemed to involve a very similar disloyalty to truth as the one we are here considering. In dealing with the question of food offered to idols, Paul laid down a great principle which is in true agreement with the position above indicated. He admitted that the strong-minded Christians who claimed the right to partake of such food, on the ground that its connection with idolatry was purely fictitious, were perfectly correct in their contention, and that the weaker brethren who condemned them were wrong. At the same time he urged the strong to give way in the interests of the weak, and to submit to restrictions out of regard to the frailty of their brethren. He did so on the ground that the law of love and unselfishness is supreme. "If your brother," he says, "is pained

by your action in partaking of the food, your conduct in thus causing him pain is no longer controlled by love. Take care, therefore, lest by your action you lead to ruin a brother for whom the Christ laid down His life." And then he adds the great principle, "The kingdom of God does not consist in eating and drinking, but in right conduct, peace and joy through the Holy Spirit."

It may be freely admitted that the question here discussed is quite different from that upon which Paul gave his advice, and that he was dealing with the relation of Christians to one another. It is the principle which Paul lays down as the one governing Christian conduct which is important. The fellow casteman to whom the question of eating and drinking is of vital importance bears such a striking resemblance to the weak brother that we can hardly be wrong in applying the law of love to his case. To the Hindu Christian, caste restrictions have absolutely no religious significance whatever, and so far as he personally is concerned he is ready to eat with any one. His relatives and fellow castemen, however, regard such a course with abhorrence, and his conduct, therefore, would cause them the deepest offence. They are pained, not so much with the food he eats but, with his action in eating it with those outside his own caste. If he persists in so doing, his conduct, as regards them, is no longer con-

trolled by love. He may be putting himself before his brethren, and in so doing he may be inflicting an injury on those for whom the Christ, Whom he wishes to serve, laid down His life. In the case of the weak brethren for whose sake the apostle wrote, it was tradition and old associations which caused the weakness for which Paul asks the consideration of the strong. These causes produce the weakness in the matter of eating on the part of the caste-bound man. The law of love, than which there is no higher, demands a similar consideration on the part of the strong for the weak. The law of love, however, which sanctions the observance of caste rules for the sake of caste brethren, demands when once the caste community has been left, the observance of that love of the brethren in which there is neither caste nor creed nor colour.

In the main the position above indicated applies equally to both men and women, though it is far more binding on the woman that she should, if at all possible, remain in her family and caste. A Hindu woman should never leave the Hindu community except as a last resort, and only when the opposition is of such a character as to threaten her moral or physical well-being. Whatever opinion may be held as to the absolute equality of the sexes, the fact remains that in India the conditions of society are such that the woman's responsibilities connected with home and family

are more complicated than the man's, and any change in those relations leaves her far more exposed and helpless. The true principle which should guide the decision in all cases in which the cause of social or religious reform may involve a separation is, that the responsibility for the separation should rest upon the one who remains in caste and not upon the one who leaves. Husband and wife are both bound to remain within the social organism in which the marriage relation was established, so long as that social organisation does not interfere with full liberty of conscience. Where such liberty is refused to either, the choice between loyalty to the society and loyalty to the marriage relation is forced upon them by the society to which they both belong. The one who elects to remain within such a society thereby places the obligations of the society above that of the marriage relation, and is, therefore, responsible for the separation which the other party may feel to be thereby necessitated. If the Hindu partner is willing, that is, to regard the marriage relation as supreme, it is the duty of the Christian partner to make every sacrifice, save that of conscience, to fulfil the obligations which were incurred when they were both Hindus. The sanctity of the Hindu marriage bond must be recognised by the Christian community, on the one hand, and the sanctity of religious liberty must be recognised by the Hindu community, on the other hand.

As regards the question of young people who are still under the charge of parents and guardians responsible for their welfare, it may be laid down as a general rule that the wishes of the parents and guardians must be recognised as supreme. An exception may here and there be met with, and in every case in which a girl is threatened with a life of sanctioned immorality as in dedication to a temple, the exception is *ipso facto* established. With such few exceptions, however, young people who are under guardianship should take no step which separates them from family and caste without the full consent of those in charge of them. The duty of the child to its parents is so sacred that its obligations take precedence over all others. Paul's injunction, "Children obey your parents in all things," stands rightly as absolute, with no exception suggested. It admits, indeed, of no exception in any matter of conflict between the child's conception of its own welfare and the parent's conception. The question of the length of time during which this absolute right of the parent over the child extends is legally settled, but the mere age is not the sole determining factor. The law fixes the minimum, not the maximum. To keep within the letter of the law is not necessarily to keep within the spirit of the law. In the case of all scholars attending Mission schools the parents have a right to expect that no attempt shall be made even to induce the child to

leave either home or caste. Christian instruction to Hindu children should never take the form of proselytism. The true object of missionary education is not to make proselytes; it is to make high-souled and pure-minded men and women, who as the coming fathers and mothers of India shall enrich and ennoble the homes they establish, and elevate the tone of the society in which they move. To have a share in moulding the character of those in whose charge will be the future of the coming race, is sufficient reason for the educational work of missionaries and needs no other justification. To make use of education as a means for proselytising is a prostitution of a high and sacred calling, and a violation of the confidence of Hindu parents and guardians. The tone and atmosphere of a Mission school ought to be distinctly Christian in character, or it ceases to be a Mission school. The moment, however, the breath of proselytism enters it, the atmosphere is vitiated and the influence is prejudicial to healthy life. True education and pure proselytism are incompatible with one another. The true educationist cannot proselytise, and the pure proselytist cannot educate. The child cannot be forced to undertake the task of the adult without in some way injuring its constitution. The mature thought needed for such a step as conversion; the independent judgment needed for the task of deciding upon a separation from past heritage and present environment, are the

characteristics of the adult and not of the child. The action, therefore, which is only justified by the exercise of these faculties must wait on, and not anticipate, their development.

While the Hindu community may rightly ask for a more considerate treatment on the part of the missionary in the matter of missionary propaganda, they must also be willing to accord a more generous treatment of those of their number who feel drawn towards the Christian religion. The toleration which it is claimed Hinduism extends to every form of faith must be freed from the intolerance with which it regards any departure from its fold. Whatever of truth there is in Hinduism will not be lost to the world through the influence of Christ on the soul of India. On the contrary it is through the medium of Christianity, interpreted through the Indian mind, that India will come to her own as one of the greatest religious teachers of the world. The time has surely come for the calling of a real truce of God between the warring sects, and a free and frank discussion of those various aspects of the Truth which each great nation has perceived. Western Christianity must be prepared to receive as well as to give, and the Indian religious mind must be prepared to accept as well as to contribute. There is a real place reserved for India's contribution to the religious thought of the world, but that place is dependent, not merely, and not chiefly,

on the treasures she has received from the past in the development of her own special type of religious thought but, on the capacity for fresh religious thinking which is lying dormant within her. It was Christianity which awoke the West from the sleep which followed the mighty activity of the Greek mind, and set her feet in the path of true progress. It is Christianity which has stirred India from her still longer sleep, and it will be Christianity which will offer to her the material for a spiritual life and thought which will bring untold blessing to the world. Before she can teach the world, however, she must learn that the world's religious needs are vaster and more varied than those to which she has hitherto ministered, and that the revelation which God has made to the world includes more than that which is found within her own scriptures. Above all she must realise that in the life and death of Jesus the Christ there is a manifestation of the character of God which is of vital importance for her own religious life, and to whose interpretation India has a contribution to make for which the world still waits.

The divorce which has hitherto separated the Indian Christian from the religious life and thought of his countrymen is neither good for his nationality nor for his Christianity. It is doubtless more or less inevitable in the past, but it is neither necessary nor desirable now. Wider views of Christianity, and a more generous appreciation of Hindu

religious life and thought, ought to result in an entirely changed attitude on the part of Indian Christians. They are called upon to take a large share in moulding the future of their land, and if they are to discharge this responsibility aright they must see to it that they are national in the deepest sense and Christian in the widest sense. There is a growing disposition on the part of the younger generation to recognise the claims of country as well as the claims of Christ. The interest in mere politics, however, good and right though that is, is by no means the point which is here urged. Their patriotism to be of real value to India must be infused with the spirit of Christ, and their Christianity to be of any service to their country must be infused with the spirit of India. The patriotism of the Indian Christian is above suspicion, because he is convinced that the true advance of India is bound up with the position of India as an integral part of the British Empire. He believes that separation would result in ruin and disintegration. His Christianity must equally be above suspicion, because he must believe that the future religious welfare of India is bound up with the world-wide Empire of Christ. It must, however, be equally evident that he recognises that Indian religious thought and life have a distinct and glorious place within that Empire. His true position must be one which can be described as neither extreme nor moderate, but national in the

best and highest sense. He must wed the spirit of Christ to the spirit of India, so that from that happy union a true Christian nationalism and a true national Christianity may spring, which shall help to raise India to a foremost place in the service of God and of humanity. His two watch-words, therefore, must be "India for Christ," and "Christ for India."

THE END

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