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THE

CHRISTIAN VIEW OF GOD

AND THE WORLD

AS CENTRING

IN THE INCARNATION

BEING THE

FIRST SERIES OF KERR LECTURES

BY JAMES ORR, D.D.

PROFESSOR OF APOLOGETICS AND SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY,

UNITED FREE CHURCH COLLEGE, GLASGOW

"For of Him, and through Him, and unto Him, are all things.

To Him be the glory for ever. Amen."--ROM. xi. 36.

NINTH EDITION

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1908

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THE KERR LECTURESHIP.

The "Kerr Lectureship" was founded by the Trustees of the late Miss

Joan Kerr, of Sanquhar, under her Deed of Settlement, and formally

adopted by the United Presbyterian Synod in May 1886. In the following

year, May 1887, the provisions and conditions of the Lectureship, as

finally adjusted, were adopted by the Synod, and embodied in a

Memorandum, printed in the Appendix to the Synod Minutes, p. 489. From

these the following excerpts are here given:-- II. The amount to be

invested shall be �3000. III. The object of the Lectureship is the

promotion of the study of Scientific Theology in the United

Presbyterian Church. The Lectures shall be upon some such subjects as

the following, vis.:--A. Historic Theology--(1) Biblical Theology, (2)

History of Doctrine, (3) Patristics, with special reference to the

significance and authority of the first three centuries. B. Systematic

Theology--(1) Christian Doctrine--(a) Philosophy of Religion (b)

Comparative Theology, (c) Anthropology, (d) Christology, (e)

Soteriology, (f) Eschatology; (2) Christian Ethics--(a) Doctrine of

Sin, (b) Individual and Social Ethics, (c) The Sacraments, (d) The

Place of Art in Religions Life and Worship. Farther, the Committee of

Selection shall from time to time, as they think fit appoint as the

subject of the Lectures any important Phases of Modern Religious

Thought, or Scientific Theories in their bearing upon Evangelical

Theology. The Committee may also appoint a subject connected with the

practical work of the Ministry as subject of Lecture, but in no case

shall this be admissible more than once in every five appointments. IV.

The appointments to this Lectureship shall be made in the first

instance from among the Licentiates or Ministers of the United

Presbyterian Church of Scotland, of whom no one shall be eligible who,

when the appointment falls to be made, shall have been licensed for

more than twenty-five years, and who is not a graduate of a British

University, preferential regard being had to those who have for some

time been connected with a Continental University. V. Appointments not

subject to the conditions in Section IV. may also from time to time, at

the discretion of the Committee, be made from among eminent members of

the Ministry of any of the Nonconformist Churches of Great Britain and

Ireland, America, and the Colonies, or of the Protestant Evangelical

Churches of the Continent. VI. The Lecturer shall hold the appointment

for three years. VIII. The Lectures shall be published at the

Lecturer's own expense within one year after their delivery. IX. The

Lectures shall be delivered to the Students of the United Presbyterian

Hall. XII. The public shall be admitted to the Lectures.

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PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION.

This Third Edition is a reprint of the First and Second, with the

exception of a few verbal corrections and alterations, and slight

adjustments and curtailments in certain of the Notes. The analysis of

Contents also has been abridged. The author is indebted to the Rev.

Alexander Mair, D.D., for kindly assisting him in the correction of the

proofs.

Edinburgh, July 1897.

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.

These Lectures, the first on the Kerr Foundation, are published in

fulfilment of the conditions of the Trust under which they were

delivered. Their publication has been delayed owing to the author's

appointment to the Chair of Church History in the Theological College

of the United Presbyterian Church, at the Synod of May 1891. They have

now been made ready for the press under the burden of labour and

anxiety connected with the preparation of a second winter's course.

This may excuse the minor oversights which, in handling so large a mass

of material, must inevitably occur.

The Lectures are printed substantially as delivered in the spring of

1891--the chief exception being that portions of the Lectures which had

to be omitted in the spoken delivery, through the limits of time, are

here restored in their proper connection. Material which could not

conveniently be incorporated in the Lectures has been wrought into

Appendices and Notes. The latter are designed to furnish not simply

references to authorities, but illustrations, corroborations, and what

may be termed generally "assonances" of thought, drawn from a wide

range of literature, which it is hoped will aid the reader who is

disposed to pursue his study of the subject further, by guiding him to

the best sources of knowledge. Since the Lectures were delivered,

important books have appeared, both in this country and on the

Continent, dealing with parts or aspects of the field here traversed,

such, e.g., among English works, as Mr. Gore's valuable Bampton

Lectures on The Incarnation, Principal Chapman's Pre-organic Evolution,

Mr. Kennedy's Donnellan Lectures on Natural Theology and Modern

Thought. Occasional references to these and some other works are

likewise included in the Notes.

The author's best thanks are due to the Rev. Professor Johnston, D.D.,

of the United Presbyterian College, and to the Rev. Thomas Kennedy,

D.D., Clerk of Synod, for their kind assistance in the revision of the

proofs.

Edinburgh, February l893.

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The Christian View of God and the World

by James Orr

"Jesus Christ is the centre of all, and the goal to which all

tends."--PASCAL.

"If we carry back the antagonisms of the present to their ultimate

principle, we are obliged to confess that it is of a religious kind.

The way in which a man thinks of God and the world, and their relation

to one another, is decisive for the whole tendency of his thought, and

even in the questions of the purely natural life."--Luthardt.

"The Christian truth, with the certifying of which we have to do, is

essentially only one, compact in itself, vitally interconnected, as

such at the same time organic,--and it is therefore not possible one

should possess and retain a portion of the same, while yet not

possessing, or rejecting, the other portions. On the contrary, the

member or portion of the truth, which it had been thought to

appropriate or maintain alone, would by this isolating cease to be that

which it was or is in itself; it would become an empty form or husk,

from which the life, the Christian reality, has escaped."--F. H. R.

Frank.

"In no case can true Reason and a right Faith oppose each

other."--Coleridge.

LECTURE I.

THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF THE WORLD IN GENERAL.

Introductory

I Might briefly define the object of the present Lectures by saying

that they aim at the exhibition, and, as far as possible within the

limits assigned me, at the rational vindication, of what I have called

in the title, "The Christian View of the World." This expression,

however, is itself one which calls for definition and explanation, and

I proceed, in the first place, to give the explanation that is needed.

The Idea of the "Weltanschauung."

A reader of the higher class of works in German theology--especially

those that deal with the philosophy of religion--cannot fail to be

struck with the constant recurrence of a word for which he finds it

difficult to get a precise equivalent in English. It is the word

"Weltanschauung," sometimes interchanged with another compound of the

same signification, "Weltansicht." Both words mean literally "view of

the world," but whereas the phrase in English is limited by

associations which connect it predominatingly with physical nature, in

German the word is not thus limited, but has almost the force of a

technical term, denoting the widest view which the mind can take of

things in the effort to grasp them together as a whole from the

standpoint of some particular philosophy or theology. To speak,

therefore, of a "Christian view of the world" implies that Christianity

also has its highest point of view, and its view of life connected

therewith, and that this, when developed, constitutes an ordered whole.

[1]

To some the subject which I have thus chosen may seem unduly wide and

vague. I can only reply that I have deliberately chosen it for this

very reason, that it enables me to deal with Christianity in its

entirety or as a system, instead of dealing with particular aspects or

doctrines of it. Both methods have their advantages; but no one I

think, whose eyes are open to the signs of the times, can fail to

perceive that if Christianity is to be effectually defended from the

attacks made upon it, it is the comprehensive method which is rapidly

becoming the more urgent. The opposition which Christianity has to

encounter is no longer confined to special doctrines or to points of

supposed conflict with the natural sciences,--for example, the

relations of Genesis and geology,--but extends to the whole manner of

conceiving of the world, and of man's place in it, the manner of

conceiving of the entire system of things, natural and moral, of which

we form a part. It is no longer an opposition of detail, but of

principle. This circumstance necessitates an equal extension of the

line of the defence. It is the Christian view of things in general

which is attacked, and it is by an exposition and vindication of the

Christian view of things as a whole that the attack can most

successfully be met.

Everything here, of course, depends on the view we take of Christianity

itself. The view indicated in the title is that which has its centre in

the Divine and human Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. It implies the

true Divinity as well as the true humanity of the Christian Redeemer.

This is a view of Christianity, I know, which I am not at liberty to

take for granted, but must be prepared in due course to vindicate. I

shall not shrink from the task which this imposes on me, but would only

at present point out that, for him who does accept it, a very definite

view of things emerges. He who with his whole heart believes in Jesus

as the Son of God is thereby committed to much else besides. He is

committed to a view of God, to a view of man, to a view of sin, to a

view of Redemption, to a view of the purpose of God in creation and

history, to a view of human destiny, found only in Christianity. This

forms a "Weltanschauung," or "Christian view of the world," which

stands in marked contrast within theories wrought out from a purely

philosophical or scientific standpoint.

The idea of the "Weltanschauung" may be said to have entered

prominently into modern thought through the influence of Kant, who

derives what he calls the "Weltbegriff" from the second of his Ideas of

Pure Reason to which is assigned the function of the systematic

connection of all our experiences into a unity of a world-whole

(Weltganz). [2] But the thing itself is as old as the dawn of

reflection, and is found in a cruder or more advanced form in every

religion and philosophy with any pretensions to a historical character.

The simplest form in which we meet with it is in the rude, tentative

efforts at a general explanation of things in the cosmogonies and

theogonies of most ancient religions, the mythological character of

which need not blind us to the rational motive which operates in them.

[3] With the growth of philosophy, a new type of world-view is

developed--that which attempts to explain the universe as a system by

the help of some general principle or principles (water, air, number,

etc.), accompanied by the use of terms which imply the conception of an

All or Whole of things (ta panta, kosmos--attributed to the

Pythagoreans--mundus, universum, etc.) [4] An example from ancient

thought may be given from Lucretius, who, in his famous poem, "De Rerum

Natura," proposes "to discourse of the most high system of heaven and

the gods, and to open up the first-beginnings of things, out of which

nature gives birth to all things and increase and nourishment, and into

which nature likewise resolves them back after their destruction." [5]

The outlines of his system are well known. By the aid of certain first

principles atoms and the void and of certain assumed laws of motion and

development, he seeks to account for the existing universe, and

constructs for himself a theory on the lines of Epicurus which he

thinks satisfies his intellectual necessities. This is his

Weltanschauung--the progeny of which is seen in the materialistic

systems of the present day. A modern example may be taken from the

philosophy of Comte, which, theoretically one of pure phenomenalism,

only the more strikingly illustrates the necessity which thought is

under to attempting some form a synthesis of its experience. Comte's

standpoint is that of despair of absolute knowledge. Yet he recognises

the tendency in the mind which prompts it to organise its knowledge,

and thinks it possible to construct a scheme of existence which shall

give practical unity to life--imagination eking out the deficiencies of

the intellect. In the words of a recent interpreter, "Beneath and

beyond all the details in our ideas of things, there is a certain

esprit d'ensemble, a general conception of the world without and the

world within, in which these details gather to a head." [6] It would

not be easy to get a better description of what is meant by a

"Weltanschauung" than in these words. The centre of unity in this new

conception of the universe is Man. Knowledge is to be organised solely

with reference to its bearings on the well-being and progress of

Humanity. A religion even is provided for the satisfaction of the

emotional and imaginative wants of man in the worship of the same

abstraction--Humanity, which is to be viewed with affection and

gratitude as a beneficent providence interposed between man and the

hard pressure of his outward conditions. In a moral respect the

individual is to find his all-comprehensive end in the "service of

Humanity." Thus, again, we have a "Weltanschauung" in which knowledge

and action are knit up together, and organised into a single view of

life.

The causes which lead to the formation of "Weltanschauungen," that is,

of general theories of the universe, explanatory of what it is, how it

has come to be what it is, and whither it tends, lie deep in the

constitution of human nature. They are twofold--speculative and

practical, corresponding to the twofold aspect of human nature as

thinking and active. On the theoretical side, the mind seeks unity in

its representations. It is not content with fragmentary knowledge, but

tends constantly to rise from facts to laws, from laws to higher laws,

from these to the highest generalisations possible. [7] Ultimately it

abuts on questions of origin, purpose, and destiny, which as questions

set by reason to itself, it cannot, from its very nature refuse at

least to attempt to answer. [8] Even to prove that an answer to them is

impossible, it is found necessary to discuss them, and it will be

strange if, in the course of the discussion, the discovery is not made,

that underneath the profession of nescience a positive theory of some

kind after all lurks. [9] But there is likewise a practical motive

urging to the consideration of these well-worn questions of the why,

whence, and whither? Looking out on the universe, men cannot but desire

to know their place in the system of things of which they form a part,

if only that they may know how rightly to determine themselves thereto

[10] Is the constitution of things good or evil? By what ultimate

principles ought man to be guided in the framing and ordering of his

life? What is the true end of existence? What rational justification

does the nature of things afford for the higher sentiments of duty and

religion? If it be the case, as the Agnostic affirms, that light

absolutely fails us on questions of origin, cause, and end, what

conception of life remains? Or, assuming that no higher origin for life

and mind can be postulated than matter and force what revision is

necessary of current conceptions of private morality and social duty?

It is a singular circumstance that, with all the distaste of the age

for metaphysics, the tendency to the formation of world-systems, or

general theories of the universe, was never more powerful than at the

present day. One cause of this, no doubt, is the feeling which modern

science itself has done so much to engender, of the unity which

pervades all orders of existence. The naive Polytheism of pagan times,

when every hill and fountain was supposed to have its special divinity,

is no longer possible with modern notions of the coherence of the

universe. Everywhere the minds of men are opening to the conception

that, whatever else the universe is, it is one--one set of laws holds

the whole together--one order reigns through all. Everywhere,

accordingly, we see a straining after a universal point of view--a

grouping and grasping of things together in their unity. [11] The

philosophy of Mr. Spencer, for example, is as truly an attempt at the

unification of all knowledge as the philosophy of a Hegel; the

evolutionist is as confident of being able to embrace all that is, or

ever has been, or will be--all existing phenomena of nature, history,

or mind--in the range of a few ultimate formulas, as if he had already

seen how the task was to be accomplished; the Comtist urges to an

imaginative in default of a real and objective synthesis, and rears on

this basis at once a social theory and religion. The mind, grows bolder

with the advance of knowledge, and hopes, if not to reach a final

solution of the ultimate mystery of existence, at least to bring

thoroughly under its dominion the sphere of the knowable." [12]

What now, it may be asked, has Christianity to do with theories, and

questions, and speculations of this sort? As a doctrine of salvation,

perhaps, not much, but in its logical presuppositions and consequences

a great deal indeed. Christianity, it is granted, is not a scientific

system, though, if its views of the world be true, it must be

reconcilable with all that is certain and established in the results of

science. It is not a philosophy, though, if it be valid, its

fundamental assumptions will be found to be in harmony with the

conclusions at which sound reason, attacking its own problems,

independently arrives. It is a religion, historical in its origin, and

claiming to rest on Divine Revelation. But though Christianity is

neither a scientific system, nor a philosophy, it has yet a world-view

of its own, to which it stands committed, alike by its fundamental

postulate of a personal, holy, self-revealing God, and by its content

as a religion of Redemption which, therefore, necessarily brings it

into comparison with the world-views already referred to. [13] It has

as every religions should and must have, its own peculiar

interpretation to give of the facts of existence; its own way of look

in at, and accounting for, the existing natural and moral order; its

own idea of a world--aim, and of that "one far-off Divine event," to

which, through slow and painful travail, "the whole creation moves."

[14] As thus binding together the natural and moral worlds in their

highest unity, through reference to their ultimate principle, God it

involves a "Weltanschauung."

It need not further be denied that between this view of the world

involved in Christianity, and what is sometimes termed "the modern view

of the world" there exists a deep and radical antagonism. [15] This so

called "modern view of the world," indeed, and it is important to

observe it, is strictly speaking, not one view, but many view, a group

of views--most of them as exclusive of one another as they together are

of Christianity. [16] The phrase, nevertheless, does point to a

homogeneity of these, various systems to a bond of unity which runs

through them all and holds them together in spite of their many

differences. This common feature is their thoroughgoing opposition to

the supernatural,--at least of the specifically miraculous, their

refusal to recognise anything in nature, life, or history, outside the

lines of natural development. Between such a view of the world and

Christianity, it is perfectly correct to say that there can be no

kindredship. Those who think otherwise speculative Theists, e.g., like

Pfleiderer can only make good their contention by fundamentally

altering the idea of Christianity it self--robbing it also of its

miraculous essence and accompaniments. Whether this is tenable we shall

consider afterwards. Meanwhile it is to be noted that this at least is

not the Christianity of the New Testament. It may be an improved and

purified form of Christianity, but it is not the Christianity of Christ

and His apostles. Even if, with the newer criticism, we distinguish

between the theology of Christ and that of His apostles--between the

Synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John--between the earlier form of

the synoptic tradition and supposed later embellishments--it is still

not to be disputed that, in the simplest view we can take of it, Jesus

held and acted on a view of things totally different from the

rationalistic conception; while for him who accepts the view of

Christianity indicated in the title of these Lectures, it has already

been pointed out that a view of things emerges with which the denial of

the supernatural is wholly incompatible.

The position here taken, that the question at issue between the

opponents and defenders of the Christian view of the world at bottom

the question of the supernatural, needs to be guarded against a not

uncommon misconception. A good deal of controversy has recently taken

place in regard to certain statements of Professor Max M�ller, as to

whether "miracles" are essential to Christianity. [17] But the issue we

have to face is totally misconceived when it is turned into a question

of belief in this or that particular miracle--or of miracles in

general--regarded as mere external appendages to Christianity. The

question is not about isolated "miracles," but about the whole

conception of Christianity--what it is, and whether the supernatural

does not enter into the very essence of it? It is the general question

of a supernatural or non-supernatural conception of the universe. Is

there a supernatural Being--God? Is there a supernatural government of

the world? Is there a supernatural relation of God and man, so that God

and man may have communion with one another? Is there a supernatural

Revelation? Has that Revelation culminated in a supernatural

Person--Christ? Is there a supernatural work in the souls of men? Is

there a supernatural Redemption? Is there a supernatural hereafter? It

is these larger questions that have to be settled first, and then the

question of particular miracles will fall into its proper place.

Neander has given admirable expression to the conception of

Christianity which is really at stake, in the following words in the

commencement of his History of the Church--"Now we look upon

Christianity not as a power that has sprung up out of the hidden depths

of man s nature, but as one that descended from above, when heaven

opened itself anew to man's long alienated race; a power which, as both

in its origin and its essence it is exalted above all that human nature

can create out of its own resources, was designed to impart to that

nature a new life, and to change it in its inmost principles. The prime

source of this power is He whose power exhibits to us the manifestation

of it--Jesus of Nazareth--the Redeemer of mankind when estranged from

God by sin. In the devotion of faith in Him, and the appropriation of

the truth which He revealed, consists the essence of Christianity and

of that fellowship of the Divine life resulting from it, which we

designate by the name of the Church." [18] It is this conception of

Christianity we have to come to an understanding with, before the

question of particular miracles can profitably be discussed.

While, from the nature of the case this side of opposition of the

Christian view of the world to certain "modern" conceptions must

necessarily receive prominence I ought, on the other hand, to remark

that it is far from my intention to represent the relation of

Christianity to these opposing systems as one of mere negation. This

would be to overlook the fact, which cannot be too carefully borne in

mind, that no theory which has obtained wide currency, and held

powerful sway over the minds of men, is ever wholly false; that, on the

contrary, it derives what strength it has from some side or aspect of

truth which it embodies, and for which it is in Providence a witness

against the suppression or denial of it in some countertheory, or in

the general doctrine of the age. No duty is more imperative on the

Christian teacher than that of showing that instead of Christianity

being simply one theory among the rest, it is really the higher truth

which is the synthesis and completion of all the other, that view

which, rejecting the error, takes up the vitalising elements in all

other systems and religions, and unites them into a living organism

with Christ as head. [19] We are reminded of Milton's famous figure in

the "Areopagitica," of the dismemberment of truth,--how truth was torn

limb from limb, and her members were scattered to the four winds; and

how the lovers of truth, imitating the careful search of Isis for the

body of Osiris, have been engaged ever since in gathering together the

severed parts, in order to unite them again into a perfect whole. [20]

If apologetic is to be spoken of, this surely is the truest and best

form of Christian apology--to show that in Christianity, as nowhere

else, the severed portions of truth found in all other systems are

organically united, while it completes the body of truth by discoveries

peculiar to itself. The Christian doctrine of God, for example, may

fairly claim to be the synthesis of all the separate elements of truth

found in Agnosticism, Pantheism, and Deism, which by their very

antagonisms reveal themselves as one-sidednesses, requiring to be

brought into some higher harmony. If Agnosticism affirms that there is

that in God--in His infinite and absolute existence--which transcends

finite comprehension, Christian theology does the same. If Pantheism

affirms the absolute immanence of God in the world, and Deism His

absolute transcendence over it, Christianity unites the two sides of

the truth in a higher concept, maintaining at the same time the Divine

immanence and the Divine transcendence. [21] Even Polytheism in its

nobler forms is in its own dark way a witness for a truth which a hard,

abstract Monotheism, such as we have in the later (not the Biblical)

Judaism, and in Mohammedanism, ignores--the truth, namely, that God is

plurality as well as unity--that in Him there is a manifoldness of

life, a fulness and diversity of powers and manifestations, such as is

expressed by the word Elohim. This element of truth in Polytheism

Christianity also takes up, and sets in its proper relation to the

unity of God in its doctrine of Tri-unity--the concept of God which is

distinctively the Christian one, and which furnishes the surest

safeguard of a living Theism against the extremes of both Pantheism and

Deism. [22] Optimism and Pessimism are an other pair of contrasts--each

in abstraction an error, yet each a witness for a truth which the other

overlooks, and Christianity is the reconciliation of both. To take a

last example, Positivism a very direct negation of Christianity; yet in

its strange "worship of Humanity" is there not that which stretches

across the gulf and touches hands with a religion which meets the

cravings of the heart for the human in God by the doctrine of the

Incarnation? It is the province of a true and wise Christian theology

to take account of all this, and to seek, with ever increasing

enlargement of vision, the comprehensive view in which all factors of

the truth are combined. The practical inference I would draw--the very

opposite of that drawn by others from the same premises--is, that it is

the unwisest way possible of dealing with Christianity to pare it down,

or seek to sublimate it away, as if it had no positive content of its

own; or, by lavish compromise and concession, to part with that which

belongs to its essence. It is not in a blunted and toned down

Christianity, but in the exhibition of the Christian view in the

greatest fulness and completeness possible, that the ultimate synthesis

of the conflicting elements in the clash of systems around us is to be

found.

Relation of Christianity to world-theories.

This is perhaps the place to point out that, whatever the character of

the world-view involved in Christianity, it is not one in all respects

absolutely new. It rests upon, and carries forward to its completion,

the richly concrete view of the world already found in the Old

Testament. As an able expounder of Old Testament theology, Hermann

Schultz, has justly said--"There is absolutely no New Testament view

which does not approve itself as a sound and definitive formation from

an Old Testament germ--no truly Old Testament view which did not

inwardly press forward to its New Testament fulfilment." [23] This is a

phenomenon which, I think, has not always received the attention it

deserves. What are the main characteristics of this Old Testament

conception? At its root is the idea of a holy, spiritual,

self-revealing God, the free Creator of the world, and its continual

Preserver. As correlative to this, and springing out of it, is the idea

of man as a being made in God's image, and capable of moral relations

and spiritual fellowship with his Maker; but who, through sin, has

turned aside from the end of his creation, and stands in need of

Redemption. In the heart of the history, we have the idea of a Divine

purpose, working itself out through the calling of a special nation,

for the ultimate benefit and blessing of mankind. God's providential

rule extends over all creatures and events, and embraces all peoples of

the earth, near and remote. In view of the sin and corruption that have

overspread the world, His government is one of combined mercy and

judgment; and His dealings with Israel in particular are preparative to

the introduction of a better economy, in which the grace already

partially exhibited will be fully revealed. The end is the

establishment of a kingdom of God under the rule of the Messiah, in

which all national limitations will be removed, the Spirit be poured

forth, and Jehovah will become the God of the whole earth. God will

make a new covenant with His people, and will write His laws by His

Spirit in their hearts. Under this happy reign the final triumph of

righteousness over sin will be accomplished, and death and all other

evils will be abolished. Here is a very remarkable "Weltanschauung,"

the presence of which at all in the pages of the Hebrew Scriptures is a

fact of no ordinary significance. In the comparative history of

religions, it stands quite unique. [24] Speculations on the world and

its origin are seen growing up in the schools of philosophy; but on the

ground of religion there is nothing to compare with this. The lower

religions, Fetishism and the like, have of course nothing of the nature

of a developed world-view. The rudiments of such a view in the older

nature-religions are crude, confused, polytheistic--mixed up abundantly

with mythological elements. Brahmanism and Buddhism rest on a

metaphysical foundation; they are as truly philosophical systems as the

atomistic or pantheistic theories of the Greek schools, or the systems

of Schopenhauer and Hartmann in our own day. And the philosophy they

inculcate is a philosophy of despair; they contain no spring of hope or

progress. Zoroastrianism, with its profound realisation of the conflict

of good and evil in the universe, perhaps comes nearest to the religion

of the Old Testament, yet is severed from it by an immense gulf. I

refer only to its pervading dualism, its reverence for physical

elements, its confusion of natural and moral evil--above all, to its

total lack of the idea of historical Revelation. [25] The Biblical

conception is separated from every other by its monotheistic basis, its

unique clearness, its organic unity, its moral character, and its

teleological aim. [26] It does not matter for the purposes of this

argument what dates we assign to the books of the Old Testament in

which these views are found whether we attribute them, with the critics

to the age of the prophets, or to any other. These views are at least

there many centuries before the Christian age began and they are found

nowhere else than on the soil of Israel. This is the singular fact the

critic has to face, and we cannot profess to wonder that, impartially

studying it, voices should be heard from the midst of the advanced

school itself unhesitatingly declaring, Date your books when you will,

this religion is not explicable save on the hypothesis of Revelation!

[27]

General drift and scope of the Lectures.

The general drift and object of these Lectures should now, I think, be

apparent. From the conditions of this Lectureship I am precluded from

directly entering the apologetic field. I feel, however, that it would

be useless to discuss any important theological subject at the present

day without reference to the thought and speculation of the time. No

other mode of thought would enable me to do justice to the Christian

position, and none, I think, would be so interesting to those for whom

the Lectures are primarily intended. This, however, will be subsidiary

to the main design of showing that there is a definite Christian view

of things, which has a character, coherence, and unity of its own, and

stands in sharp contrast with counter theories and speculations, and

that this world-view has the stamp of reason and reality upon itself,

and can amply justify itself at the bar both of history and of ex

experience. I shall endeavour to show that the Christian view of thing

forms a logical whole which cannot be infringed on, or accepted or

rejected piecemeal, but stands or falls in its integrity, and can only

suffer from attempts at amalgamation or compromise with theories which

rest on totally distinct bases. I hope thus to make clear at least the

true nature of the issues involved in a comparison of the Christian and

"modern" views, and I shall be glad if I can in any way contribute to

the elucidation of the former.

Objections in limine

Two objections may be taken in limine to the course I propose to

follow, and it is proper at this stage that I should give them some

attention.

I. From theology of feeling.

I. The first objection is taken from the standpoint of the theology of

feeling, and amounts to a denial of our right to speak of a Christian

"Weltanschauung" at all; indeed, to assume that Christianity has a

definite doctrinal content of any kind. [28] This class of objectors

would rule the cognitive element out of religion altogether. Religion,

it is frequently alleged, has nothing to do with notions of the

intellect, but only with states and dispositions of the heart. Theories

and doctrines are no essential part of it, but, on the contrary, a bane

and injury and hindrance to its free development and progress. Those

who speak thus sometimes do so in the interests of a theory which would

seek the essence of religion in certain instincts, or sentiments, or

emotions, which are supposed to be universal and indestructible in the

human race, and to constitute the imperishable and undecaying substance

of all religions--the emotions, e.g., of awe or wonder, or reverence or

dependence, awakened by the impression of the immensity or mystery of

the universe; while the and beliefs connected with these emotions are

regarded as but the accidents of a particular stage of culture, and as

possessing no independent value. They are at best the variegated moulds

into which this emotional life of the spirit has for the time being

poured itself--the envelopes and vehicles through which it seeks for

itself preservation and expression. All religions, from this impartial

standpoint, Christianity included, are equally Divine and equally

human. But even those who recognise a higher origin for the Christian

religion sometimes speak of it as if in its original form it was devoid

of all definite doctrinal content; or at least as if the doctrinal

ideas found in connection with it were only external wrappage and

covering, and could be stripped off--altered, manipulated, modified, or

dispensed with at the pleasure of the critic--without detriment to the

moral and spiritual kernel beneath. [29] Christianity is not given up,

but there is the attempt to refine and sublimate it till it is reduced

to a simple state of sentiment and feeling; to purge it of the

theoretic element till nothing is left but the vaguest residuum of

doctrinal opinion. Agreeing with this party in their aversion to

doctrine, yet occupying a distinct standpoint, are the

ultra-spirituals, whose naturally mystical bent of mind, and fondness

for the hazy and indefinite in theological as in other thinking,

predispose them to dwell in the region of cloudy and undefined

conceptions.

It scarcely falls within my province to inquire how far this theory

holds good in its general application to religion, though even on this

broad field it might easily be shown that it involves a number of

untenable assumptions, and really contradicts the idea of religion. For

what is meant by the assertion that religion consists only in sentiment

or feeling, and has nothing to do with doctrinal conceptions? Not,

surely, that religion can subsist wholly without ideas, or cognitive

apprehension, of some kind. Religion, in the lowest as well as in the

highest of its forms is an expression of the relation of the soul to

something beyond itself it involves, therefore, not one term, but two;

it points to the existence of an object, and implies belief in the

reality of that object. The element of idea, therefore,--or, as the

Germans would say, "Vorstellung,"--is inseparable from it. No religion

has ever been found which did not involve some rudiments of an

objective view. We may learn here even from the pessimist Hartmann,

who, in an acute analysis of the elements of religion, says, "How true

soever it may be that religious feeling forms the innermost kernel of

religious life, nevertheless that only is a true religious feeling

which is excited through religious representations having a character

of objective (if only relative) truth. Religion cannot exist without a

religious "Weltanschauung," and this not without the conviction of its

transcendental truth." [30]

Nor, again, can it be contended that, while a cognitive element of some

kind must be conceded, religion is indifferent to the character of its

ideas--that these have no influence upon the state of sentiment or

feelings. The religion of a Thug, e.g., is a very different thing from

the religion of a Christian; and will any one say that the ideas with

which the two religions are associated--the ideas they respectively

entertain of their deities--have nothing to do with this difference? In

what do religions differ as higher and lower, if not in the greater or

less purity and elevation of the ideas they entertain of the Godhead,

and the greater or less purity of the sentiment to which these ideas

give birth?

Nor, finally, can it be held that it is a matter of unimportance

whether these ideas which are connected with a religion are regarded as

true--i.e. whether they are believed to have any objective counterpart.

For religion can as little subsist without belief in the reality of its

object, as it can dispense with the idea of an object altogether. This

is the weakness of subjective religious theories like Feuerbach's, in

which religion is regarded as the projection of man s own egoistic

consciousness into the infinite; or of those poetic and �sthetic

theories of religion which regard the ends of religion as served if

only it furnishes man with elevating and inspiring ideals, without

regard to the question of how far these ideals relate to an actual

object. Ideas on this hypothesis are necessary to religion, and may be

ranked as higher and lower, but have only a fictitious or poetic value.

They are products of historical evolution,--guesses, speculations,

dreams, imaginings, of the human mind in regard to that which from the

nature of the case is beyond the reach of direct knowledge, probably is

unknowable. They are therefore not material out of which anything can

be built of a scientific character; not anything that can be brought to

an objective test; not anything verifiable. Their sole value, as said

earlier, is to serve as vehicles and support of religious feeling. [31]

But it is obvious that, on this view, the utility of religious ideas

can only last so long as the illusion in connection with them is not

dispelled. For religion is more than a mere �sthetic gratification. It

implies belief in the existence of a real object other than self, and

includes a desire to get into some relation with this object. The mind

in religion is in too earnest, a mood to be put off with mere fancies.

The moment it dawns on the thoughts of the worshipper that the object

he worships has no reality, but is only an illusion or fancy of his

own, the moment he is convinced that in his holiest exercises, he is

but toying with the creations of his own spirit,--that moment the

religious relation is at an end. Neither philosopher nor common man

will long continue bowing down to an object in whose actual existence

he has ceased to believe. [32] Nor is the conclusion which seems to

follow from this--that the illusion of religion is one which the

progress of knowledge is destined to destroy--evaded by the concession

that there is some dim Unknowable, the consciousness of which lies at

the basis of the religious sentiment, and which the mind can till

please itself by clothing with the attributes of God. For what is there

in this indefinite relation to an Unknowable, of which we can only

affirm that it is not what we think it to be, to serve the purpose of a

religion? And what avails it to personalise this conception of the

Absolute, when we know, as before, that this clothing with personal

attributes is only objective illusion?

No objection, therefore, can fairly be taken from the side of the

general "Science of Religions," to the supposition that a religion may

exist which can give us a better knowledge of God than is to be found

in the vague and uncertain conjectures and fancies of minds left to

their own groping after the Divine. If such a religion exists,

furnishing clear and satisfying knowledge of God, His character, will,

and ways, His relations to men, and the purposes of His grace, there is

plainly great room and need in the world for it; and the consideration

of its claims cannot be barred by the assumption that the only valuable

elements in any religion must be those which it has in common with all

religions--which is the very point in dispute. The only question that

can be properly raised is, Whether Christianity is a religion of this

nature? And this can only be ascertained by actual inspection.

Turning next to those within the Christian pale who would rule the

doctrinal element out of their religion, I confess I find it difficult

to understand on what grounds they can justify their procedure. If

there is a religion in the world which exalts the office of teaching,

it is safe to say that it is the religion of Jesus Christ. It has been

frequently remarked that in pagan religions the doctrinal element is at

a minimum--the chief thing there is the performance of a ritual. [33]

But this is precisely where Christianity distinguishes itself from

other religions--it does contain doctrine. It comes to men with

definite, positive teaching; it claims to be the truth; it bases

religion on knowledge, though a knowledge which is only attainable

under moral conditions. I do not see how any one can deal fairly with

the facts as they lie before us in the Gospels and Epistles, without

coming to the conclusion that the New Testament is full of doctrine.

The recently founded science of "New Testament Theology," which has

already attained to a position of such commanding importance among the

theological disciplines, is an unexceptionable witness to the same

fact. And this is as it should be. A religion based on mere feeling is

the vaguest most unreliable, most unstable of all things. A strong,

stable, religious life can be built up on no other ground than that of

intelligent conviction. Christianity, therefore, addresses itself to

the intelligence as well as to the heart. It sounds plausible indeed to

say, Let us avoid all doctrinal subtleties; let as keep to a few plain,

easy, simple pro positions, in regard to which there will be general

agreement. But, unfortunately, men will think on those deep problems

which lie at the root of religious belief--on the nature of God, His

character, His relations to the world and men, sin, the means of

deliverance from it, the end to which things are moving, and if

Christianity does not give them an answer, suited to their deeper and

more reflective moods, they will simply put it aside as in adequate for

their needs. Everything depends here on what the Revelation of the

Bible is supposed to be. If it is a few general elementary truths of

religion we are in search of, it may freely be conceded that these

might have been given in very simple form. But if we are to have a

Revelation such as the Bible professes to convey, a Revelation high as

the nature of God, deep as the nature of man, universal as the wants of

the race, which is to accompany man through all the ascending stages of

hi development and still be felt to be a power and inspiration to him

for further progress,--it is absurd to expect that such a Revelation

will not have many profound and difficult, things in it, and that it

will not afford food for thought in its grandest and highest reaches

"Thy judgments are a great deep." [34] A religion divorced from earnest

and lofty thought has always, down the whole history of the Church,

tended to become weak, jejune, and unwholesome; while the intellect,

deprived of its rights within religion, has sought its satisfaction

without, and developed into godless nationalism.

Christianity, it is sometimes, said by those who represent this view,

is a life, not a creed; it is a spiritual system, and has nothing to do

with dogmatic affirmations. But this is to confuse two things

essentially different--Christianity as an inward principle of conduct,

a subjective religious experience, on the one hand, and Christianity as

an objective fact, or an historic magnitude, on the other. But can even

the life be produced, or can it be sustained and nourished, without

knowledge? Here I cannot forbear the remark that it is a strange idea

of many who urge this objection in the interests of what they conceive

to be a more spiritual form of Christianity, that "spirituality" in a

religion is somehow synonymous with vagueness and indefiniteness; that

the more perfectly they can vaporise or volatilise Christianity into a

nebulous haze, in which nothing can be perceived distinctly, the nearer

they bring it to the ideal of a spiritual religion. [35] This, it is

safe to say, was not Paul's idea of spirituality--he by whom the

distinction of "letter" and "spirit" was most strongly emphasised. The

region of the spiritual was rather with him, as it is throughout

Scripture, the region of the clearest insight and most accurate

perception--of full and perfect knowledge (epignosis). His unceasing

prayer for his converts was, not that their minds might remain in a

state of hazy indistinctness, but that God would give them "a spirit of

wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, having the eyes of

(their) heart enlightened," that they might grow up in this knowledge,

till they should "all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the

knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of

the stature of the fulness of Christ." [36]

An objection to the recognition of doctrine in Christianity may be

raised, however, from the side of Christian positivism, as well as from

that of Christian mysticism. Christianity, it will be here said, is a

fact-revelation--it has its centre in a living in Christ, and not a

dogmatic creed. And this in a sense is true. The title of my Lectures

is the acknowledgment of it. The facts of Revelation are before the

doctrines built on them. The gospel is no mere proclamation of "eternal

truths," but the discovery of a saving purpose of God for mankind,

executed in time. But the doctrines are the interpretation of the

facts. The facts do not stand blank and dumb before us, but have a

voice given to them, and a meaning put into them. They are accompanied

by living speech, which makes their meaning clear. When John declares

that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, and is the Son of God, [37] he

is stating a fact, but he is none the less enunciating a doctrine. When

Paul affirms, "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures,"

[38] he is proclaiming a fact, but he is at the same time giving an

interpretation of it. No writer has laid more stress on the fact, and

less on the doctrine, in primitive Christianity than Professor Harnack,

yet he cannot help saying, "So far as the God and Father of Jesus

Christ is believed in as the Almighty Lord of heaven and earth, the

Christian religion includes a definite knowledge of God, of the world,

and of the world-aim." [39] This concedes in principle all that I

maintain. It affirms that the facts of Christianity, rightly understood

and interpreted, not only yield special doctrines, but compel us to

develop out of them a determinate "Weltanschauung." This is precisely

the assertion of the present Lectures.

If I refer for a moment in this connection to Schleiermacher, who may

be named as the most distinguished representative of the theology of

feeling it is because I think that the position of this remarkable man

on the question before us is frequently misunderstood. Schleiermacher's

earlier views are not unlike some of those we have already been

considering, and are entangled in many difficulties and inconsistencies

in consequence. I deal here only with his later and more matured

thought, as represented in his work, Der christliche Glaube. In it also

piety is still defined as feeling. It is, he says neither a mode of

knowing nor a mode of action, but a mode of feeling, or of immediate

selfconsciousness. It is the consciousness of ourselves as absolutely

dependent, or, what comes to the same thing, as standing in relation

with God. [40] In his earlier writings he had defined it more generally

as the immediate feeling of the infinite and eternal, the immediate

consciousness of the being of all that is finite in the infinite, of

all that is temporal in the eternal, awakened by the contemplation of

the universe. [41] But along with this must be taken into account

Schleiermacher's view of the nature of feeling. According to him,

feeling is the opposite of knowledge than that pure, original state of

consciousness--prior to both knowledge and action--out of which

knowledge and action may subsequently be developed. [42] In

Christianity this law material of the religious consciousness receives,

as it were, a definite shaping and content. The peculiarity in the

Christian consciousness is that everything in it is referred back upon

Jesus Christ, and the Redemption accomplished through Him. [43] This

moving back from the religious consciousness to the Person of the

sinless Redeemer as the historical cause of it is already a

transcending of the bounds of a theology of mere feeling. Theology is

no longer merely a description of states of consciousness, when it

leads us out for an explanation of these states into the region of

historic fact. But an equally important circumstance is that, while

describing the Christian consciousness mainly in terms of feeling,

Schleiermacher does not deny that a dogmatic is implicitly contained in

this consciousness, and is capable of development out of it. His Der

christliche Glaube is, on the contrary, the unfolding of such a

dogmatic. His position, therefore, is not offhand to be identified with

that of the advocates of a perfectly undogmatic Christianity. These

would rule the doctrinal element out of Christianity altogether. But

Schleiermacher, while he lays the main stress in the production of this

consciousness of Redemption in the believer on the Person of the

Redeemer, and only subordinately on his teaching, yet recognises in

Christian piety a positive, given content, and out of this he evolves a

clearly defined and scientifically arranged system of doctrines. It is

to be regretted that in the foundation of his theology--the doctrine of

God--Schleiermacher never broke with his initial assumption that God

cannot be known as He really is, but only as reflected in states of

human consciousness, and therefore failed to lift his theology as a

whole out of the region of subjectivity.

A chief reason probably why many entertain a prejudice against the

admission of a definite doctrinal content in Christianity, is that they

think it militates against the idea of "progress" in theology. How does

the matter stand in this respect? Growth and advance of some kind, of

course, there is and must be in theology. It cannot be that the other

departments of knowledge unceasingly progress, and theology stands

still. No one familiar with the history of theology will deny that

great changes have taken place in the shape which doctrines have

assumed in the course of their development, or will question that these

changes have been determined largely by the ruling ideas, the habits of

thought, the state of knowledge and culture, of each particular time.

The dogmatic moulds which were found adequate for one age have often

proved insufficient for the next, to which a larger horizon of vision

has been granted; and have had to be broken up that new ones might be

created, more adapted to the content of a Revelation which in some

sense transcends them all. I recognise therefore to the full the need

of growth and progress in theology. [44] Bit by bit, as the ages go on,

we see more clearly the essential lineaments of the truth as it is in

Jesus; we learn to disengage the genuine truths of Christ's gospel from

human additions and corruptions; we apprehend their bearings and

relations with one another, and with new truths, more distinctly; we

see them in new points of view, develop and apply them in new ways. All

this is true, and it is needful to remember it lest to temporary points

of view, and human theories and formulations we attribute an authority

and completeness which in no way belong to them. But it does not by any

means follow from this that therefore, everything in Christianity is

fluent, that it has no fixed startingpoints, no definite basal lines,

no sure and moveless foundations, no grand determinative positions

which control and govern all thought within distinctly Christian

limits,--still less that, in the course of its long history, theology

has achieved nothing, or has reached no results which can fairly be

regarded as settled. This is the exaggeration on the other side, and so

far from being helpful to progress in theology, it is in reality the

denial of its possibility. Progress in theology implies that there is

something to develop--that some truths at all events, relating to God

and to Divine things, are ascertainable, and are capable of scientific

treatment. It is easy to speak of the attempt to "limit infinite truth

within definite formul�"; but, on the other hand, unless some portion

at least of this infinite, truth can be brought within range of the

human faculties, theology has nothing to work on. It is a

pseudo-science, and to speak of progress in it is idle.

II. From the Ritschlian distinction of a "religious" and a "theoretic"

view of the world.

II. The recent tendency in Continental theology, however, is not so

much to deny the existence of a definite "Weltanschauung" in the Bible,

as rather to lay stress on the distinction between a "religious" and a

"theoretic" view of the world--ascribing to Christianity the former,

but not the latter. This is the position of the school of Ritschl, and

truth and error are so intimately blended in it that it is necessary to

give it our careful consideration. [45] That a sound distinction

underlies the terms "religious" and "theoretic" is not to be disputed,

and it is important that its nature should be rightly understood. But,

under the plea of expelling metaphysics from theology, the tendency is

at present to revive this distinction in a form which practically

amounts to the resuscitation of the old doctrine of a "double

truth"--the one religious, the other philosophical; and it is not held

necessary that even where the two overlap they should always be found

in agreement. It is not simply that the two kinds of knowledge have

different spheres, move in different orbits, and have to do with a

different class of objects; for this Ritschl at least denies. [46] But

they set out from different starting-points, judge by different

standards, and as a consequence frequently lead to different results.

Religious knowledge, Ritschl holds, moves only in the sphere of what he

calls worth- or value-judgments. That is to say, it judges of things,

not according to their objective nature and relations, but according to

their value for us--according to their fitness to meet and satisfy

religious necessities. [47] This, logically, would lead to pure

subjectivism, and in the hands of some of Ritschl's followers actually

does so. [48] This tendency is strengthened by the theory of knowledge

to which this school generally has committed itself--a theory Kantian

in its origin--which, denying to the mind any power of knowing things

as they are, limits it within the sphere of phenomenal representations.

Ritschl himself tries hard to ward off this reproach of subjectivity

from his system, and makes more than one attempt to find a bridge from

the practical to the theoretic, but with no real success. He never

quits the ground that it is not the objective truth of things--which

would carry us into the region of theoretic knowledge--which forms the

subject--matter of our inquiry in theology, but solely their subjective

aspect as related to our own states of pleasure and pain, or as helping

or hindering the ends sought in religion. In his doctrines of God and

Christ, of Providence and miracle, of sin and Redemption as we shall

afterwards see, it is constantly this subjective aspect of things,

which may be very different from our actual or scientific judgment upon

them, which is brought into prominence. Religion requires, for example,

that we view the universe from a teleological and not from a causal

standpoint, and therefore that we postulate God and Providence. But

these are only practical, not theoretic notions, and the mechanical and

causal view of the universe may stand alongside of them intact.

"Miracle" is the religious name for an event which awakens in us a

powerful impression of the help of God, but is not to be held as

interfering with the scientific doctrine of the unbroken connection of

nature. [49] Not only are the two spheres of knowledge to be thus kept

apart in our minds, but we are not to be allowed to trace any lines of

relation between them. We are not to be allowed, e.g., to seek any

theoretic proof of the existence of God; or to ask how special

Providence, or the efficacy of prayer, or supernatural Revelation, or

miracle, or even our own freedom is to be reconciled with the reign of

unbroken natural causation. All such inquiries are tabooed as a mixing

up of distinct sphere of knowledge, with the result, however, that they

are not really kept apart, but that all in the ideas of Providence,

miracle, prayer, etc. which conflicts with the theoretic view is

explained away

It should scarcely require much argument to convince us that this

proposal to divide the house of the mind into two compartments, each of

which is to be kept sacredly apart from the other, is a perfectly

illusory and untenable one. It might have some meaning in an �sthetic

theory of religion, in which the religious conceptions are avowedly

treated as pure ideals, but it can have none where the speech is of

religious "knowledge." There are, indeed, different modes of cognising

the same object, as well as different stages and degrees of real

knowledge. If by "theoretic knowledge" is meant only knowledge gained

by the methods of exact science, or by philosophical reflection, [50]

then, apart from religion altogether, there are vast fields of our

knowledge which will not come under this category. The knowledge, for

example, which we have of one another in the common intercourse of

life, or the knowledge which the ordinary man gathers from his

experience of the outward world, is very different in purity of

theoretical character from the kind of knowledge aimed at by the

psychologist or metaphysician, or by the student of science in his

investigations of nature. It is as far removed as possible from the

disinterested character which Ritschl ascribes to the knowledge he

calls "theoretical." Yet there is no part of this knowledge in which

theoretic activities are not present. The same processes of thought

which are employed in philosophy and science are implied in the

simplest act of the understanding. In like manner, we may grant that

there is a distinction of character and form--not to speak of

origin--between religious and what may be called theoretic knowledge;

and that thus far the distinction insisted on by Ritschl and his school

has a certain relative justification. Religion, assuredly, is not a

theoretical product. It did not originate in reasoning, but in an

immediate perception or experience of the Divine in some of the spheres

of its natural or supernatural manifestation; for the reception of

which again a native capacity or endowment must be presupposed in the

human spirit. Even Revelation implies the possession of this capacity

in man to cognise the manifestations of the Divine when they are set

before him. Originating in this way, religious knowledge--at least in

its first or immediate form--is distinguished by certain peculiarities.

For one thing, it is distinguished from strictly theoretic knowledge by

the practical motive which obtains in it. Theoretic knowledge aims at a

representation of objects in their purely objective character and

relations. Religion, on the other hand, seeks to set its objects before

it in those lights, and under those aspects, which directly subserve

religious ends. With this difference of aim is connected a difference

of form. Theoretic knowledge is cool, clear, and scientifically exact.

Religious knowledge is touched with emotion, and moves largely in the

region of figurative conception, or what the Germans would call

"Vorstellung." In the first place, religion, as having to do with the

personal relation of the soul to God, moves in a sphere in which the

affections and emotions are necessarily allowed large play. Its modes

of apprehension are therefore warm, lively, impassioned, intuitive. It

groups its material under the influence of the dominant feeling; lays

hold of those sides and relations of the object which affect itself,

and lets the others drop out of view; leaps over intermediate links of

causation, and seeks to grasp the object at once in its essential

reality and inner significance--in its relation to its ultimate cause

and final end. A second cause which leads to the same result is that

the objects with which religion has to deal are largely

transcendental--that is, they lie beyond the range and conditions of

our present experience. A certain amount of figurative representation

necessarily enters into the purest conceptions we are able to form of

such objects.

To the extent now indicated we may agree with Ritschl that religion

moves--if he chooses to phrase it so--in the sphere of value-judgments,

and not in that of scientific apprehension. But this is not to be

interpreted as if religion did not affirm the objective truth of the

ideas it entertains--as if its judgments of value were not at the same

time judgments of truth. Still less is it to be conceded that there is

any necessary divorce between the mind in its practical and the mind in

its theoretical activities, so that propositions may be affirmed in the

one sphere which have no relation to, can receive no corroboration

from, may even be contradicted by, propositions affirmed in the other.

Thus to tear asunder faith and reason is to render no service to

religion, but is to pave the way for theoretical scepticism. It is in

truth the same reason which works in both spheres; the results,

therefore, must be such as is admit of comparison. If Ritschl would

raise a bar against any such comparison of the results of religious

thinking with the conclusions reached by philosophy and

science--leaving each to work in its own domain--a more just view of

the subject will recognise that this is impossible. We cannot have two

spheres of truth lying side by side in the same mind without some

effort to arrive at an adjustment between them. Still less is it

possible for the mind to find itself in conflict with itself,--on the

one side for instance, affirming the personality of God, on the other

denying it; on the one side affirming freedom, Revelation, miracle, on

the other unbroken natural causation,--and not do what it can to annul

the discrepancy. Nor will reason in practice be content to remain in

this state of division with itself. It will insist on its knowledge

being brought to some sort of unity, or, if this cannot be done, in

regarding one or other of the conflicting propositions as illusive.

Finally, it is not sufficiently recognised by Ritschl and his school

that religion itself, while in the first instance practical, carries in

it also the impulse to raise its knowledge to theoretic form. Faith

cannot but seek to advance to knowledge--that is, to the reflective and

scientific comprehension of its own contents. Just because its

propositions are held to be not only "judgments of value," but to

contain objective truth, they must be capable of being submitted to

theoretic treatment. Ritschl himself recognises the necessity of

constructing a theology which shall be adequate to the contents of the

Christian Revelation. Only he would have it move solely within the

region of faith-propositions, or, as he calls them, "judgments of

value." Its task is ended when it has faithfully collected, purely

expressed, and internally co-ordinated these religious affirmations.

[51] It is not observed how much theoretic and critical activity is

already implied in this very process of collating, sifting, and

co-ordinating; or how largely, in Ritschl's own case, the results are

dependent on the theoretic presuppositions with which he sets out in

his (metaphysical) doctrine of knowledge, and his general theory of

religion. But, waiving this, it is surely vain to ask theology to go so

far, and then say it is to go no further. Christian science has many

tasks beyond those which the Ritschlian limitation would prescribe for

it. How, for example, can it refuse the task of investigating its own

grounds of certainty? How can it help raising the question of how far

these religious conceptions, now brought to expression and

co-ordinated, answer to objective truth? How can it avoid asking if

this content of the Christian Revelation receives no verification from

the laws of man's spiritual life, or in what this verification

consists? Can it help going back on its own presuppositions, and asking

what these are, and what kind of view of God and man they imply? How

can it help connecting this truth given in Revelation with truth in

other departments? And this investigation is not a mere matter of

choice in theology; it is forced on it as a necessity. For in the very

process of collation and criticism questions arise which can only be

solved by going further down. Antinomies arise within theology itself:

the different sides of Biblical truth have to be harmonised in a wider

conception; unity of view has to be sought in a field where only parts

are given, and much is left to be inferred. All this involves a large

amount of theoretic treatment in theology, and may--I should rather say

must--result in showing that the truths of Revelation have also a

theoretic idea, and are capable of theoretic verification and

corroboration.

I conclude, therefore, that it is legitimate to speak of a Christian

"Weltanschauung," and that we are not debarred from investigating its

relations to theoretic knowledge.

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[1] See Note A.--The Idea of the "Weltanschauung."

[2] Kritik d. r. Vernunft, pp. 302ff. (Bohn's trans., pp. 256 ff.). The

references to Kant throughout are to Erdmann's edition (1884).

[3] Cf. Zeller Pre-Socratic Philosophy, pp. 88, 89 (Eng. trans.).

[4] See Note B.--Classification of "Weltanschauungen."

[5] Bk. I. L1. 54-57 (Munro's trans.). Cf. Lucretius and the Atomic

Theory, by Professor John Veitch, p. 13.

[6] Caird's Social Philosophy of Comte, p. 24.

[7] Cf. Strauss--"We proceed from the isolated circles of phenomena

around us, from the stable basis and the elementary forces, to

vegetable and animal life, to the universal life of the earth, from

this to that of our solar system, and so ever further, till at last we

have grasped the entire range of existence in a single representation;

and this is the representation of the universe.--Der alte und der neue

Glaube, p.150.

[8] "As science becomes more conscious of its problems and its goal, it

struggles the more strenuously towards the region where physics melt

into metaphysics."--Fairbairn, Studies in the Philosophy of Religion

and History, p. 88.

[9] See Note C--Unconscious Metaphysic.

[10] "The question of questions for mankind the problem which underlies

all others, and is more deeply interesting than any other, is the

ascertainment of the place which man occupies in nature, and of his

relation to the universe of things. Whence our race has come, what are

the limits of our power over nature and of nature's power over us? to

what goal we are tending? are the problems which present themselves

anew, and with undiminished interest, to every man born into the world.

Huxley, Man's Place in Nature. p. 57.

[11] Cf. Principal Fairbairn--"The search after causes, both efficient

and ultimate, is being conducted with the most daring and unwearied

enthusiasm. Science has become as speculative, as prolific of

physico-metaphysical theories--as the most bewitched metaphysician

could desire.. . . The consequent crop of cosmic speculation has been

of the most varied and extensive kind, ranging from theories of the

origin of species to theories as to the origin of the

universe."--Studies, pp. 65, 66.

[12] "No one can enter on a consideration of the subject of Evolution

with the expectation of attending to clear ideas and relatively correct

conclusions, unless he first of all thinks of it as cosmic, i.e.

comprehensive, in its operation, of the entire universe of matter and

mind, and throughout all time."--Chapman, Pre-organic Evolution, etc.,

p. 3.

[13] Cf. Dorner, Syst. of Doct.i. p. 155 (Eng. trans.).

[14] Tennyson In Memoriam.

[15] Note D--Antagonism of Christian and "Modern" Views of the World.

[16] Note E--Internal Conflicts of the "Modern" View.

[17] Cf. Max M�ller, Preface to his Lectures on Anthropological

Religion (Gifford Lectures), 1892.

[18] History of the Church i. p. 2 (Eng. trans.).

[19] Cf. Baring-Gould--"In every religion of the world is to be found,

distorted or exaggerated, some great truth, otherwise it would never

have obtained foothold; every religious revolution has been the

struggle of thought to gain another step in the ladder that reaches to

heaven. That which we ask of Revelation is that it shall take up all

these varieties into itself, not that it shall supplant them; and show

how that at which each of them aimed, however dimly and indistinctly

has its interpretation and realisation in the objective truth brought

to light by Revelation. Hence we shall be able to recognise that

religion to be the true one, which is the complement and corrective of

all the wanderings of the religious instinct in its efforts to provide

objects for its own satisfaction."--Origin and Development of Religious

Belief, ii. Pref., p. 10.

[20] Cf. Areopagitica, "English Reprints," p. 56 Clement of Alexandria

has a similar figure, Strom. i. 13.

[21] Cf. Eph. iv. 6. Flint, Anti-Theistic Theories, p. 339.

[22] Cf. Dorner, Syst. of Doct. i. pp. 366, 367 (Eng. trans.). Even Ed.

v. Hartmann recognises the deep "metaphysical sense" of the doctrine of

the Trinity, and the service done by it in reconciling the Divine

immanence and transcendence.--Selbstzersetzung des Christenthums, p.

108.

[23] Alttestamentliche Theologie, p. 48.

[24] See Note F.--Uniqueness of the Old Testament View.

[25] Cf. the sketch of Zoroastrianism in Introduction to the Zendavesta

in Sacred Books of the East. See also Ebrard's Christian Apologetics,

ii. pp. 186-232. Some interesting remarks will be found in Lotze's

Microcosmus, ii. p. 459.

[26] Dr. Dorner says--"Israel has the idea of teleology as a kind of

soul."--Syst. of Doct. i. p. 274 (Eng. trans.).

[27] See Note G.--Origin of the Old Testament View--Relation to

Critical Theories.

[28] See Note H.--Nature and Definition of Religion.

[29] See Note I.--Undogmatic Religion.

[30] Religionsphilosophie, ii. p. 32.

[31] See Note J.--�sthetic Theories of Religion.

[32] Cf. Dorner--"Faith does not wish to be a mere relation to itself

or to its representations and thoughts. That would simply be a

monologue faith desires a dialogue."--Syst. of Doct. i. p. 123 (Eng.

trans.). Martineau--"No; if religious communion is reduced to a

monologue, its essence is extinct, and its soul is gone. It is a living

relation, or it is nothing--a response to the Supreme Reality."--Ideal

Substitutes for God, p.19. Strauss--"None but a book student could ever

imagine that a creation of the brain, woven of poetry and philosophy,

can take the place of real religion."--In Kaiser Julian, p. 12 (quoted

by Martineau).

[33] Cf. Professor W. R. Smith's Religion of the Semites--"The antique

religions had for the most part no creed; they consisted entirely of

institutions and practices. . . . In all the antique religions

mythology takes the place of dogma, that is, the sacred lore of priests

and people, so far as it does not consist of mere rules for the

performance of religious acts assumes the form of stories about use

gods; and these stories afford the only explanation that is offered of

the precepts of religion and the prescribed rules of ritual."--P. 18.

[34] Ps. xxxvi. 6.

[35] Cf. Bartlett's The Letter and the Spirit (Bampton Lectures. 1888).

[36] Eph. i. 17, 18; iv. 13.

[37] 1 John iv. 2, 15.

[38] 1 Cor. xv. 3.

[39] Grundriss der Dogmengeschichte, i. p. 1. I have used the word

"doctrine" in these discussions and kept clear of dogma which is often

used with a prejudice. "Dogma" I take to be a formulation of doctrine

stamped with some ecclesiastical authority. If there are doctrines no

objection can reasonably be taken to the formulation of them. It is

beyond my purpose to discuss the wider question of the utility and

necessity of creeds for church purposes Cf. Lect. VI. in Dr. Rainy's

Delivery and Development of Christian Doctrine (Cunningham Lectures).

[40] Der christ. Glaube sects. 3 and 4.

[41] Cf. Pfleiderer, Religionsphilosophie, i. p. 308 (Eng. trans.).

[42] Der christ. Glaube, sect. 3. 2.

[43] Ibid. sect. 11.

[44] Cf. Dr. Rainy's Delivery and Development of Doctrines (Cunningham

Lectures). On the position criticised see, e.g., Bartlett's The Letter

and the Spirit (Bampton Lectures, 1888).

[45] See Note K.--Religious and Theoretic Knowledge.

[46] Rechtfertigung und Vers�hnung, iii. pp. 185, 193-94 (3rd edit.).

[47] See Ritschl's discussion in Recht. und Ver. iii. pp. 192-202; and

in his Theologie und Metaphysik.

[48] E.g. Bender, of Bonn.

[49] Cf. Ritschl's remarks on "Miracle" in his Unterricht in der

christ. Religion, pp 14, 15.

[50] This seems the view taken in O. Ritschl's Uber Werthurtheile, but

would, if accepted, reduce the distinction to a truism.

[51] Cf. Ritschl, Recht. und Ver. iii. pp. 14-16.

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APPENDIX TO LECTURE I.

SKETCH OF THE CHRISTIAN VIEW.

It may conduce to clearness if, having indicated the general scope and

purport of these Lectures, I now give in this Appendix a brief

statement, in propositional form, of what I consider the Christian view

of the world to be, and sketch on the basis of this the course to be

pursued in the succeeding Lectures.

I. First, then, the Christian view affirms the existence of a Personal,

Ethical, Self-Revealing God. It is thus at the out set a system of

Theism, and as such is opposed to all systems of Atheism, Agnosticism,

Pantheism, or mere Deism.

II. The Christian view affirms the creation of the world by God, His

immanent presence in it, His transcendence over it, and His holy and

wise government of it for moral ends.

III. The Christian view affirms the spiritual nature and dignity of

man--his creation in the Divine image, and destination to bear the

likeness of God in a perfected relation of sonship.

IV. The Christian view affirms the fact of the sin and disorder of the

world, not as something belonging to the Divine idea of it, and

inhering in it by necessity, but as something which has entered it by

the voluntary turning aside of man from his allegiance to his Creator,

and from the path of his normal development. The Christian view of the

world, in other words, involves a Fall as the presupposition of its

doctrine of Redemption; whereas the "modern" view of the world affirms

that the so-called Fall was in reality a rise, and denies by

consequence the need of Redemption in the scriptural sense.

V. The Christian view affirms the historical Self-Revelation of God to

the patriarchs and in the line of Israel, and, as brought to light by

this, a gracious purpose of God for the salvation of the world,

centring in Jesus Christ, His Son, and the new Head of humanity.

VI. The Christian view affirms that Jesus Christ was not mere man, but

the eternal Son of God--a truly Divine Person--who in the fulness of

time took upon Him our humanity, and who, on the ground that in Him as

man there dwells the fulness of the Godhead bodily, is to be honoured,

worshipped, and trusted, even as God is. This is the transcendent

"mystery of godliness" [52] --the central and amazing assertion of the

Christian view--by reference to which our relation is determined to

every thing else which it contains.

Pausing for a moment on this truth of the Incarnation, we have to

notice its central place in the Christian system, and through its light

every other doctrine is illuminated and transformed.

1. The Incarnation sheds new light on the nature of God, and, in

conjunction with the work of the Spirit, reveals Him as triune

--Father, Son, and Spirit--one God.

2. The Incarnation sheds new light on the doctrine of creation--all

things being now seen to be created by Christ as well as for Him.

3. The Incarnation sheds new light on the nature of man, alike as

respects its capacity for union with the Divine, its possibilities of

perfection, and the high destinies awaiting it in the future.

4. The Incarnation sheds new light on the purpose of God in the

creation and Redemption of men--that end being, in the words of Paul,

"in the dispensation of the fulness of times to gather together in one

all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth,

even in Him." [53]

5 The Incarnation sheds new light on the permission of sin by showing

the possibility of Redemption from it, and how, through the Revelation

of the Divine purposes of mercy, a far grander discovery is made of the

Divine character, and far higher prospects are opened up for humanity.

VII. The Christian view affirms the Redemption of the world through a

great act of Atonement--this Atonement to be appropriated by faith, and

availing for all who do not wilfully withstand and reject its grace.

VIII. The Christian view affirms that the historical aim of Christ's

work was the founding of a Kingdom of God on earth, which includes not

only the spiritual salvation of individuals, but a new order of

society, the result of the action of the spiritual forces set in motion

through Christ.

IX. Finally, the Christian view affirms that history has a goal, and

that the present order of things will be terminated by the appearance

of the Son of Man for judgment, the resurrection of the dead, and the

final separation of righteous and wicked,--final, so far as the

Scriptures afford any light, or entitle us to hold out any hope.

Beyond this are the eternal ages, on whose depths only stray lights

fall, as in that remarkable passage--"Then cometh the end, when He

shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father: . . . then

shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things

under Him, that God may be all in all" [54] --and on the mysterious

blessedness or sorrow of which, as the case may be, it is needless to

speculate.

I have for clearness' sake exhibited this outline of the Christian view

in a series of propositions, but I need hardly say that it is not my

intention to attempt to exhaust this out line, or anything like it, in

this brief course of Lectures. In the actual treatment of my subject I

shall be guided very much by the way in which the main positions of the

Christian view are related to current theories and negations.

1. It is plain that the Christian view of the world is Theistic, and as

such is opposed, as already said, to all the views which deny a living

personal God, and also to Deism, which denies Revelation.

2. The Christian views of nature and man come into conflict with many

current theories. They involve, for example, the ideas of creation, and

of the spirituality, freedom, and immortal destiny of man--all of which

the thoroughgoing "modern" view of the world opposes.

3. The Christian view of sin is irreconcilable with modern theories,

which represent sin as a necessity of development, and nullify its true

conception by starting man off at a stage but little removed from that

of the brutes. At least I take this to be the case, and shall endeavour

to give reasons for my opinion.

The above denials, if logically carried out, involve the rejection of

the Christian view as a whole. We reject the Christian view in toto if

we deny the existence of God, the spiritual nature and immortality of

man, or destroy the idea of sin. In what follows we are rather in the

region of Christian heresy; at least the total rejection of the

Christian view is not necessarily implied, though in its mutilation it

is found that neither can that which is preserved be permanently

maintained.

4. The assertion of the Incarnation may be met by a lower estimate of

Christ's Person than the full Christian doctrine implies; or by the

complete denial of the supernatural dignity of His Person.

5. The Christian view may be met by the denial of the need or the

reality of Atonement, or by inadequate or unscriptural representations

of that great doctrine.

6. There may be unscriptural denials, as well as unwarrantable

dogmatisms, in the matter of eschatology.

My course, then, in view of the various antitheses, will shape itself

as follows:--

First, keeping in mind that it is the Incarnation which is the central

point in the Christian view, I shall look in the second Lecture at the

alternatives which are historically presented to us if this doctrine is

rejected.

Next, in the third, fourth, and fifth Lectures, I shall consider in

order the three postulates of the Christian view--God, Nature and Man,

and Sin.

The sixth Lecture will be devoted to the Incarnation itself, and the

seventh to the consideration of some related topics--the higher

Christian concept of God, and the relation of the Incarnation to the

plan of the world.

The eighth Lecture will treat of the Incarnation and Redemption from

sin; and the concluding Lecture will treat of the Incarnation and human

destiny. [55]

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[52] 1 Tim. iii. 16.

[53] Eph. i. 10.

[54] Cor. xv. 24-28.

[55] The original plan embraced a Lecture between Lecture VIII. and

what is now IX.--on "The Incarnation and New Life of Humanity: the

Kingdom of God." The subject is touched on in Lecture IX., and dealt

with more fully in an Appendix.

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"There has seldom been an age more irreligious than ours, yet it will

be difficult to find one in which religious questions have been more

profoundly discussed."--Hartmann.

"In the history of systems an inexorable logic rids them of their

halfness and hesitancies, and drives them straight to their inevitable

goal."--Martineau.

"Conjecture of the worker by the work:

Is there strength there?--enough: intelligence?

Ample: but goodness in a like degree?

Not to the human eye in the present state,

An isoscele deficient in the base.

What lacks, then, of perfection fit for God

But just the instance which this tale supplies

Of love without a limit? So is strength,

So is intelligence; let love be so,

Unlimited in its self-sacrifice,

Then is the tale true and God shows complete."

R. Browning

LECTURE II.

THE CHISTIAN VIEW AND ITS ALERNATIVES

Introductory

It is the fundamental assumption of these Lectures that the central

point in the Christian view of God and the world is the acknowledgment

of Jesus Christ as a truly Divine Person--the Son of God made flesh.

How is this assumption to be vindicated? I do not conceal from myself

that the issues involved in such an assertion are very stupendous. The

belief in Jesus as the Son of God is not one to be lightly taken up,

but when it is taken up, it practically determines, as has already been

said, a man's views on everything else in Christianity. No one will

dispute that, if Jesus Christ is what the creeds declare Him to be--an

Incarnation of the Divine--His Person is necessarily central in His own

religion, nay, in the universe. Christianity, on this assumption, is

correctly described as the religion of the Incarnation.

On the other hand, this is precisely the view of the Person of Christ

which, we are told, the modern view of the world compels us to reject.

No doctrine stumbles the modern mind so completely as this. It is

flatly pronounced incredible and absurd. That Jesus was the holiest of

men--the Divinest of the race, the most perfect exhibition of the

god-like in humanity--may well be conceded; but of literal Incarnation

it is not permitted to the modern intelligence to speak. Science has to

investigate the origin of the dogma; to show how it arose from the

powerful impression made by Jesus on His followers; how it was shaped

by Hebrew and Hellenic modes of thought; but it cannot for a moment

entertain the possibility that the idea which it represents is true. As

strenuously is our right resisted to speak of this doctrine as an

essential and integral part of Christianity. Short of this conception,

it is said, there are many grades of belief in

Christ, and we are not entitled to unchristianise any of them To

identify the essence of Christianity with the Incarnation is, it is

held, to make a particular dogmatic interpretation of Christianity

equivalent to Christianity itself. It is not, indeed, among the

extremer sceptics that we find any difficulty in getting the

acknowledgment that the Incarnation is central in Christianity. "It

is," says Strauss, "certainly the central dogma in Christianity. Here

the Founder is at the same time the most prominent object of worship;

the system based on Him loses its support as soon as He is shown to be

lacking in the qualities appropriate to an object of religious

worship." [56] "In Him alone," says Feuerbach, "is concentrated the

Christian religion." [57] Quite logically, from his point of view,

Strauss draws the conclusion that, since the Incarnation is untenable,

Christianity falls to the ground with it. But others will not go thus

far. They distinguish between Christianity and its accidents, and put

this doctrine in the category of the accidents. Nay, it is ostensibly

in the interests of what is supposed to be a purer and more primitive

form of Christianity that in many quarters the demand for the surrender

of this doctrine is made. The cry is, " Back from Christianity to

Christ"--back from the Christianity of the creeds, from the

Christianity even of Paul and John--to the Christ of the simple

Galilean gospel, who never dreamt of making himself God. As Lessing, in

a famous passage, distinguishes between " the religion of Christ" and

"the Christian religion," meaning by the former the religion which

Christ Himself professed and practised, and by the latter the

superstructure of dogma subsequently reared on this, [58] so an

analogous distinction is drawn between the Pauline and Johannine

Christ, with His halo of supernatural attributes, and the meek and

lowly Jesus, so intensely human, of the Synoptic Gospels.

Nevertheless, the ablest theology of the century will sustain me in the

general assertion, that the central principle of Christianity is the

Person of its Founder. Whatever may be thought of the great speculative

movement in the beginning of the century, connected with the names of

Fichte and Schelling and Hegel, it cannot be denied that at least it

rendered an essential service to theology in overcoming the shallow

rationalism of the preceding period, and in restoring to its place of

honour in the Christian system the doctrine of Christ's Person, which

it had become customary to put in the background. Still more

influential in this direction was the powerful impulse given to

theology by Schleiermacher. Since that time all the best theology in

Germany may be said to be Christological. That Christ sustains a

different relation to His religion from that of ordinary founders of

religion to the faiths they have founded; that in Him there was a

peculiar union of the Divine and human; that His appearance and work

were of decisive importance for the Church and for humanity--these are

thoughts which may be said to be common to all the greater systems,

irrespective of schools. They are found among theologians as widely

separated in dogmatic standpoint tendency as Rothe and Dorner,

Biedermann and Lipsius, Beyschlag and Ritschl, Luthardt and Frank. It

is only outside the circles of really influential theology that we find

a reversion to the loose deistic conception of Christ as simply a

Prophet or moral Teacher, like Moses or Confucius or Buddha. [59] It is

indeed a powerful proof of the view that the Person of Christ is of

unique importance in His religion, that whenever a new breath of life

passes over theology, and an attempt is made to gain a profounder

apprehension of Christianity, there is a recurrence to this idea, and

the necessity is felt of doing justice to it; thus testifying to the

truth of Dorner's remark, "A Christian system which is unable to make

Christology an integral part of itself, has pronounced its own

judgment; it has really given up the claim to the title of Christian."

[60]

At the same time, this acknowledgment of the central and unique place

of time Founder of Christianity in His religion does not settle the

question of the precise estimate we are to take of His Person. Is He

merely human, or is He Divine as well? Or if Divine, in what sense do

we attach this predicate to Him? Is it, as with the Hegelians, the mere

expression of a metaphysical idea--of that identity of the Divine and

the human which is as true of all men as it is of Christ, only that it

came first to clear consciousness in Him? Or is it, as with Ritschl,

the mere expression of a value judgment of the believer--a predicate

denoting the worth which Christ has for the believing soul as the

supreme Revealer of God's character and purpose? Or is it, as with

others, an ethical Divinity that is ascribed to Christ--such

participation in the Divine nature and life of Sonship as may be

experienced also by the believer? [61] Or shall we hold, in agreement

with the general faith of the Church, that Christ is more than all

this--that in Him the Divine pre-existing Word truly and personally

became incarnate, and made our nature His own--that therefore He is the

Son of God, not simply as we are, but in a high and transcendental

sense, in which we cannot compare ourselves with Him? This question, in

the present state of controversy, is not so easily settled as might at

first sight appear. It is vain, of course, to appeal to the great

ecclesiastical creeds, for it is they which are in dispute. It is vain

also, at this stage, to attempt to settle the question by the simple

method of citation of proof texts. The facts of Christ's

self-revelation, and His witness to His own Person, must indeed, in the

last resort, be the ground on which our faith in Him rests, and it will

be necessary at a later stage to examine this self-witness of Christ,

as well as the apostolic doctrine, with considerable care. [62] But at

the outset this method is attended by obvious disadvantages. It is easy

to say--the original documents of Christianity are before us; let us

examine them. But, for one thing, some of these documents--the Fourth

Gospel, e.g., and some of the Pauline epistles--are themselves in

dispute among our opponents; and, even if genuine, their authority is

not accepted as decisive. In the next place, there is the question,

whether there are not traces of development in the doctrine of the

Person of Christ even within the New Testament--whether all the sacred

writers teach the same view. There are many, as I have already said,

who will admit that Christ's Divinity is taught by Paul and John, who

would deny that it is taught by Christ Himself. These are difficulties

which cannot be satisfactorily met by mere assertion, and the question

recurs, whether--as a provisional expedient at least--any other course

is open to us?

There is another method which I propose to apply in this Lecture, one

which appears to me to have the advantage of dealing with all these

issues at once, and at the same time deals with issues of a wider

character. It is the method of appeal to history. The individual

judgment may err in the opinions it forms, and in the conclusions it

deduces from them. It is not given to any man to see all the

consequences that follow from his own thinking. He may quite

conceivably hold in the scheme of his beliefs propositions that are

inconsistent with each other, and, if logically carried out, would

destroy each other, and not be aware of the fact. In history things get

beaten out to their true issues. The strands of thought that are

incompatible with each other get separated; conflicting tendencies, at

first unperceived, are brought to light; opposite one-sidednesses

correct each other; and the true consequences of theories reveal

themselves with inexorable necessity. As Socrates, in Plato's Republic,

[63] investigating the nature of Justice, proposes to study it first as

"writ large" in the collective magnitude of the State, that thereafter

he may return with better knowledge to the study of it in the

individual, so the movements of thought are best studied on the broad

scale in which they present themselves over large periods of time. It

is to this test I propose to bring the great question of

Christianity--the same that was proposed by Jesus to the Pharisees

eighteen hundred years ago--"What think ye of Christ? Whose Son is He?"

[64] I shall ask what aid history affords us in determining the true

estimate to be put upon the Person of Christ, and the place held in the

Christian system by the doctrine of the Incarnation.

It is one advantage of this method, that, as I have said, it brings all

the issues into court at once. The verdict of history is at once a

judgment on the answers which have been given to the theological

question; on their agreement with the sum-total of the facts of

Christianity; on the methods of exegesis and New Testament criticism by

which they have been supported; on their power to maintain themselves

against rival views; on how far the existence of Christianity is

dependent on them, or bound up with them.

I. History a series of alternatives--the downward movement.

I. History, then, as it seems to me, presents us with a series of

alternatives of a deeply interesting character, by studying which we

may find our bearings on this question, "What think ye of Christ?" as

we can in no other way.

1. First alternative--A Divine Christ or humanitarianism.

1. The first essential service which history has rendered us has been

in the elimination of intermediate views--in making it clear as a first

alternative that the real issue on this question is between a truly

Divine Christ and pure humanitarianism. Intermediate views on Christ's

Person have from time to time arisen, and still go on arising, in the

Church; but, like the intermediate species of plants and animals Mr.

Darwin tells us of, which are invariably driven to the wall in the

struggle for existence, they have never been able to survive. There is,

e.g., the Arian view, which has appeared again and again in the history

of the Church in times of spiritual decadence. To find a place for the

high attributes ascribed to Christ in Scripture, a lofty supernatural

dignity is in this view assigned to Him. He was a sort of supreme

angel, God's First-born, His instrument in the creation of the world,

etc. But He was not eternal; He was not of Divine essence. It is safe

to say that this view is now practically extinct. It would be a shallow

reading of history to attribute the defeat of Arianism in the early

Church to the anathemas of councils, the influence of court favour, or

any other accidental circumstances. It perished through its own

inherent weakness. [65] If the Arians admit all they profess to do

about Christ--that He was pre-existent, God's agent in the creation of

the world, etc.--there need be little difficulty in admitting the rest.

On the other hand, if they stop short of the higher view to which the

Scriptures seem to point, they entangle themselves in difficulties and

contradictions, exegetical and other, which make it impossible for them

to remain where they are. In reality, these high-sounding attributes

which they ascribe to Christ are an excrescence on the system; for on

this theory no work remains for Christ to do which could not have been

accomplished equally well by a highly endowed man. Historically,

therefore, Arianism has always tended to work round to the Socinian or

strictly Unitarian view of Christ, where it has not gone upwards,

through semi-Arianism, to the recognition of His full Divinity.

But this Socinian or Unitarian view of the Person of Christ--I refer to

the older Unitarianism of the Priestley and Channing type--is another

of those intermediate views which history also may now be said to have

eliminated. Christ, on this view, is the greatest of inspired teachers,

a true Prophet. He had a divine mission; He wrought miracles in

confirmation of His doctrine; He rose from the dead on the third day;

He is expected to return to judge the world. Here also there is a great

deal of the halo of the supernatural about Christ. He is supernatural

in history, if not in nature, and men saw again that they must either

believe more or believe less. The rationalistic leaven, which was

already working in the rejection of the higher aspects of Christ's

Person and work, made itself increasingly felt. As the miraculous

adjuncts were retained only in deference to the representations of

Scripture, they were readily abandoned when criticism professed to show

how they might be stripped off without detriment to Christ's moral

image. Be the cause what it may, it is undeniable that Unitarianism of

this kind has not been able to maintain itself. It has constantly

tended to purge itself of the remaining supernatural features in the

portrait of Christ, and to descend to the level of simple

humanitarianism, i.e., to the belief in Christ as simply a great man, a

religious genius of the first rank, one in whom the light which shines

in all men shone in an eminent degree--but still a mere man, without

anything supernatural in His origin, nature, or history. [66]

A further example of the difficulty of maintaining an intermediate

position on the doctrine of the Person of Christ, may be taken from the

long series of intermediate views which have sprung up on the soil of

Germany as the result of the great intellectual and theological

movement inaugurated by Hegel and Schleiermacher in the beginning of

the century. Passing by the speculative Christologies--in which, when

the veil was stripped off, it was found that the idea was every thing,

the historical Christ nothing--I may refer here to the Christology of

Schleiermacher and his school. Schleiermacher recognises to the full "a

peculiar being of God in Christ." [67] He affirms Christ's perfect

sinlessness, and the unique significance of His Personality for the

Church and for the race. He is the Head, Archetype, Representative, and

Redeemer of mankind. Only through Him is redemption from sin and

fellowship of life with God possible. But when we come to inquire

wherein consists this "peculiar being of God" in Christ, it proves,

after all, to be only an exceptionally constant and energetic form of

that God-consciousness which exists germinally in all men, and indeed

lies at the root of religious experience generally. The difference

between Christ and other men is thus in degree, not in kind. In Him

this Divine element had the ascendency, in us it has not. He is a

miracle, in so far as the Divine dwelt in Him in this unique and

exceptional fulness and power, constituting Him the Redeemer and second

Adam of the race; but there is no entrance of God into humanity such as

we associate with the idea of Incarnation. When, further, we

investigate the nature of Christ's saving activity, we find that the

exalted, high-priestly functions which Schleiermacher ascribes to

Christ shrink, on inspection, into very meagre dimensions. Christ's

continued saving activity in His Church is presupposed, but it is not

the activity of One who still lives and reigns on high, but rather the

perpetuation of a posthumous influence, through the preservation of His

image in the Gospels, and the fellowship of the Christian society. [68]

Ultimately, therefore, Christ's saving activity is reduced to example

and teaching; at most, to the spiritual influence of a great and unique

historic Personality. [69] "When we have got this length, we are

clearly back on the road to simple humanitarianism. Accordingly, none

of Schleiermacher's followers have been able to stop exactly where he

did. They have felt the inexorable compulsion of the less or more; and

while some have gone back to rationalism, the great majority, as Rothe

acknowledges, [70] have pressed on to more positive views, and have

come into substantial harmony with confessional orthodoxy. A new wave

of mediating theology has recently arisen in the school of Ritschl; but

the fundamental principle of this school--the denial of the right of

the theoretic reason to have anything to do with religion or

theology--is not one that can permanently be approved of, and would, if

followed out, end in boundless subjectivity. In this school also,

accordingly, the necessity of less or more is asserting itself. Already

the members of the school have begun to move off on different and

irreconcilable lines--some in a more negative, the greater number in a

more positive direction. The attempt of Ritschl to bar off all inquiry

into the nature of Christ's Person, by resolving His "Godhead" into a

mere value-judgment of the believer, is felt not to be satisfactory;

and the admission is increasingly made that consistency of Christian

thinking demands the acknowledgment of a transcendental basis. [71]

The general verdict of history, therefore, is clearly against the

permanence of these attempts at a middle view of Christ's Person, and

warns us whither they tend. The liberal school in Germany, Holland, and

France are clearly right in saying that the only alternative to

Christ's true Divinity is pure humanitarianism; and that, if the former

doctrine is rejected, the supernatural view of His Person must be

altogether given up. This is a clear issue, and I think it is well to

have matters brought to it without shrinking or disguise. I desire now

to show that this first alternative soon hands us in a second.

2. Second alternative--A Divine Christ or Agnosticism.

2. The first alternative is between a Divine Christ and a purely human

one--the second is between a Divine Christ and pure Agnosticism. Many

of those who take the humanitarian view of Christ's Person are very far

from wishing to deny that a great deal of what Christ taught was true.

They do not wish to deny the existence of God, or the fact of a future

life, or the essentials of Christian morality. In not a few cases they

strongly uphold these truths--maintain them to be the true natural

religion, in opposition to revealed. They account it Christ's greatest

glory that He saw so clearly, and announced so unambiguously, the

Fatherhood of God, the dignity of the soul, the certainty of

immortality, and the dependence of happiness here and hereafter on

virtue. It is a plausible view to take, for it seems to secure to those

who hold it all that they take to be essential in Christianity, while

at the same time it leaves them unbounded liberty to accept or reject

what they like in modern "advanced" views--to get rid of miracles, go

in with progressive theories of science, accept the newest criticism of

the Gospels, etc. It is a plausible view, but it is an illusive one;

for if there is one thing more than another which the logic of events

makes evident, it is, that with the humanitarian view of Christ we

cannot stop at simple, abstract Theism, but must go on to pure

Agnosticism. This is indeed what the larger number of the more logical

minds which leave rejected supernatural Christianity in our own day are

doing. Nor is the process which heads to this result difficult to

follow. The Deism of the last century rejected Christianity, and sought

to establish in its place what it called "Natural Religion," i.e. a

belief in God, in the future life, in a state of rewards and

punishments, etc., based on reason alone. But however congruous with

reason these doctrines may be in the place which they hold in the

religion of Jesus, it was not really reason which had discovered them,

or which gave assurance about them; nor did it follow that reason could

successfully vindicate them, when torn from their context, and

presented in the meagre, abstract form in which they appeared in the

writings of the deists. What the deists did was to pick these doctrines

out of the New Testament, separating them from the rest of the

doctrines with which they were associated, and denuding them of

everything which could make them real and vital to the minds and

consciences of men; then to baptise this caput mortuum with the name of

"Natural Religion." They were doctrines that had their roots in the

Christian system, and the arguments from reason with which they were

sup ported wore not the real grounds of belief in them. In the present

century men are not so easily satisfied. [72] They see clearly enough

that all the objections which have been levelled against the God of

Revelation tell just as powerfully against the God of nature; that to

admit Christ's doctrine of a Heavenly Father, of a soul made in God's

image, of a special providence, of prayer, of forgiveness of sins, of a

future life of happiness and misery, is already to have crossed the

line which separates a merely natural from a supernatural view of

things; and that to reject Christ's doctrines on these great questions

makes it difficult to retain a Theism of any kind. [73] This is not

because a theistic view of tine world is ion itself less reasonable

than a non-theistic view--to admit this would be to give up the whole

case on behalf of Christianity. But it is because the kind of Theism

that remains after the Christian element has been removed out of it, is

not one fitted to satisfy either the reason or the heart. It is a pale,

emasculated conception, which, finding no support in the facts or

experiences of the spiritual life, can never stand against the assaults

made on it from without. It is here that Pantheism has its advantage

over Deism. It is indeed more reasonable to believe in a living

personal God, who created and who controls the universe, than in the

"One and All" of the pantheist; but it does not follow that it is more

reasonable to believe in an abstract Deity--a mere figment of the

intellect--who stands in separation from the world, and yields no

satisfaction to the religious life. Theism is a reasonable view of the

universe, but it must be a living Theism, not a barren and notional

one.

If, to avoid this bankruptcy, the attempt is made to deal in earnest

with the conception of a personal God, and to reclothe the Deity with

the warm, gracious attributes which belong to the Father-God of Christ,

then we have indeed a Being whom the soul can love, trust, and hold

communion with, but the difficulty recurs of believing Him to be a God

who remains self-enclosed, impassive, uncommunicative, towards

creatures whom He has dowered with a share of His own rational and

moral excellences, who has so shut Himself out by natural law from

direct contact with the spirits that seek Him, that He can neither

speak to them, answer their prayers, help them in trouble nor or even

reach them by inward succours--a silent God, who can no more enter into

personal relations with His creatures than if He were impersonal. Such

a conception is self-contradictory, and cannot maintain itself. One

feels this incongruity very powerfully in dealing with the Theism of

such writers as the late Mr. Rathbone Greg, or Dr. Martineau, or the

authoress of Robert Elsmere. None of these writers will admit the

possibility of miracle; logically, therefore, they shut out the

possibility of direct communication between God and man. Yet none of

them can rest with the cold abstract God of Deism; or with the immanent

impersonal spirit of Pantheism; or with the comfortless negation of

Agnosticism. God is with them a personal Being; His will is ethical;

communion with Him is longed after and believed in. Let Mr. Greg's own

pathetic words tell how insecure is the Theism thus cut off from

positive Revelation. "My own conception," he says, "perhaps from early

mental habit, perhaps from incurable and very conscious metaphysical

inaptitude, approaches far nearer to the old current image of a

personal God than to any of the sublimated substitutes of modern

thought. Strauss's Universum, Comte's Humanity, even Mr. Arnold's

Stream of Tendency that makes for Righteousness, excite in me no

enthusiasm, command from me no worship. I cannot pray to the

Immensities' and the Eternities' of Carlyle; they proffer me no help;

they vouchsafe me no sympathy; they suggest no comfort. It may be that

such a personal God is a mere anthropomorphic creation. It may be--as

philosophers with far finer instruments of thought than mine

affirm--that the conception of such a Being, duly analysed, is

demonstrably a self-contradictory one. But, at least in resting in it,

I rest in something I almost seem to realise; at least, I share the

view which Jesus indisputably held of the Father whom He obeyed,

communed with, and worshipped." [74] Surely it need hardly be said that

a view which, even while holding it, one doubts may be only a result of

"early mental habit," "a mere anthropomorphic creation," a

"self-contradictory" conception, cannot long stand as a basis for life;

nor will the trust which Jesus had help much, when one has already

rejected as delusion His doctrine of prayer, of special providence, of

forgiveness of sins, and His own Messianic claims and expectations.

Already we tremble on the verge of Agnosticism, if we have not actually

passed its bound.

I think, accordingly, I am justified in saying that when the ground of

Divine Revelation is once left behind, we have no logical halting-place

short of Agnosticism; not because a theistic view of the world is

unreasonable, but because a living Theism requires as its complement

belief in Revelation. We have these alternatives: either to revivify

our Theism till it approaches in the humane and loving attributes it

ascribes to God, the Christian conception of the Heavenly Father--in

which case we are back to a supernatural view of the universe; or, if

this is thought baseless, to dispense with the idea of God altogether,

and try to explain the world without reason, without final cause,

without spiritual assumptions of any kind.

3. Third alternative--A Divine Christ or Pessimism.

3. Agnosticism is, however, far from representing the end of this road

along which we had begun to travel in rejecting the Divine in Christ.

The final alternative--one which we may trust the world at large will

never be called upon to face--is a Divine Christ or Pessimism.

Agnosticism is not a state in which the mind of an intelligent being

can permanently rest. It is essentially a condition of suspense--a

confession of ignorance--an abdication of thought on the highest

subjects. [75] It is not, in the nature of things, possible for the

mind to remain persistently in this neutral, passive attitude. It will

press on perforce to one or other of the views which present themselves

as alternatives--either to Theism, or to Materialism and dogmatic

Atheism. [76] I do not speak, of course, of the individual mind, but of

the general historical development. But even Agnosticism has brought

with it a train of baleful results. With the loss of certainty on the

highest questions of existence there comes inevitably a lowering of the

pulse of human endeavour all round--a loosening of certainty about

morals, for why should these remain unaffected when every thing else is

going?--and as we see to-day, in much of the speculative thought of

France and Germany, a hopelessness about the future. For, obviously,

when this point is reached, the rational ground is taken away even from

belief in progress. [77] When the idea of God, which is equivalent to

the idea of a reason at the foundation of things, is

surrendered--whether in Agnosticism, or in some form of dogmatic

denial, makes little difference--it becomes a wholly unwarranted

assumption that things must certainly go on from better to better. The

opposite may quite as well be the case, and progress, now that a given

height is reached, may rather be from better to worse. The analogy of

nature shows that this is the law in regard to natural life. The plant

blooms, reaches its acme, and dies. So, it may be plausibly argued, it

will be with humanity. The fact that some progress has been made in the

past does not guarantee that this progress will go on indefinitely;

rather, the spur to this progress consisted in what we are now told are

illusions, and when these are exploded the motives to progress are

gone. A more highly evolved society may lead to an increase of misery

rather than of happiness; the growth of enlightenment, instead of

adding to men's enjoyments, may result in stripping them successively

of the illusions that remain, and may leave them at last sad, weary,

disappointed, with an intolerable consciousness of the burden and

wretchedness of existence. [78] All this is not fancy. The despairing,

pessimistic spirit I am speaking of has already taken hold of extensive

sections of society, and is giving startling evidences of its presence.

For the first time on European soil we see large and influential

systems springing up, and gaining for themselves wide popularity and

acceptance, which have for their root-idea exactly this conception of

the inherent irrationality and misery of existence. There have always

been individual thinkers with a tendency to take a prejudiced and

hopeless view of life, but their reveries have not been much regarded.

But here, strange to say, under the very shadow of this boasted

progress of the nineteenth century--in the very midst of its

enlightenment and civilisation and wealth--we see Pessimism raising its

head as a serious, carefully thought-out philosophy of existence, and,

instead of being scouted and laughed at as an idle dream, it meets with

passionate acceptance from multitudes. [79] The same spirit will be

found reflected by those who care to note its symptoms in much of our

current literature, in the serious raising and discussion, for example,

of the question already familiar to us--Is life worth living? Specially

noticeable is the tone of sadness which pervades much of the nobler

sceptical thinking of the present day--the tone of men who do not think

lightly of parting with religion, but feel that with it has gone the

hope and gladness of earlier days. This Pessimism of scepticism is to

me one of the saddest and most significant phenomena of modern times.

[80] And, granting the premises it starts from, what other conclusion

is possible? Deprive the world of God, and everything becomes an

insoluble mystery, history a scene of wrecked illusions, belief in a

superstition, and life in general "A tale Told by an idiot, full of

sound and fury, Signifying nothing." [81]

II. The upward movement from Pessimism to Christ.

II. The descent from faith in Christ has landed us in the abyss of

Pessimism. But just at this lowest point, where the light of religious

faith might seem utterly extinguished, a return movement is felt to be

inevitable. For Pessimism, no more than Theism, can escape the

necessity laid upon it of giving to itself some account of things as

they are--of constructing a "Weltanschauung"; and the movement it

attempts to do this, making naked the principle on which it rests, its

own insufficiency as a philosophy of existence and of life stands

glaring and confessed. Possibly the attempt to work out Pessimism as a

system will never be made with much more thoroughness, or with better

chances of success, than has already been done in the monumental works

of Schopenhauer and Hartmann. But the very thoroughgoingness of the

attempt is the demonstration of its futility. Of all theories, that

which explains the origin of the universe by a mistake--which accounts

for it by the blind rushing into existence of an irrational force, call

it "Will" or what we please--is surely the most incredible. [82] How

came this irrational will-force to be there? What moved it to this

insensate decision? In what state was it before it committed this

enormous blunder of rushing into existence? How came it to be possessed

of that potential wealth of ideas which now are realised in the world?

Of what use were they if they were never intended to be called into

existence? What I am at present concerned with, however, is not to

refute Pessimism, but rather to show how, as a first step in an upward

movement back to Christ, by its own immanent dialectic it refutes

itself--inverts, in fact, its own starting-point, and works itself

round into a species of Theism.

Schopenhauer and Hartmann both recognise that there is in the universe

not only "Will," but "Idea," and the manner in which they deal wish

this element of "Ideal" is one of the most curious examples of the

inversion of an original starting-point in the history of philosophy.

For, in the course of its development, Pessimism has actually adopted

as its leading principle the thought of a rational teleology in the

universe, and as a consequence, as above remarked, has worked itself

back to Theism. How this comes about it is not difficult to show. The

crucial point for all systems of Pessimism is the presence of reason in

the universe. How, if the basis of the universe is irrational, does

reason come to find a place in it at all? For, manifestly, account for

it as we may, there is reason in the universe now. The universe itself

is a law-connected whole; there is order and plan, organisation and

system, utility and beauty, means and ends. Above all, in man himself,

if nowhere else, there is conscious reason--the very instrument by

which this irrationality of the universe is discovered. There is

evidently more here than blind, purposeless will. How is its existence

to be explained? Schopenhauer postulates "Idea." In accounting for

nature, he has to suppose that in this blind, purposeless will there

lies potentially a whole world of ideas, representing all the stages

and kingdoms through which nature advances in the course of its

history. [83] Hartmann unites "Will" and "Idea" yet more closely,

regarding them as co-ordinate attributes of the Absolute, though still,

somehow, the will is supposed to be in itself a purely irrational

force. It is only when the will has made the mistake of rushing into

existence that it lays hold on the "Idea" as a means of delivering

itself from the unblessedness of its new condition. To this end the

universe is represented as ordered with the highest wisdom, the goal of

its development being the production of the conscious agent, man,

through whom the Redemption of the world-spirit is to be accomplished.

I do not pursue these "metaphysics of wonderland" further. I only

notice the extraordinary contradictions in which Hartmann involves

himself in his conception of the Absolute--"the Unconscious," as he

prefers to term it--and the extraordinary transformation it undergoes

in his hands. The absolute is unconscious, and needs to create for

itself an organ of consciousness in man before it can attain

deliverance from its unblessedness. Yet it knows, plans, contrives,

orders everything with consummate wisdom, works out its designs with a

precision that is unerring, etc. [84] The contradiction here is too

patent. For, if unconscious, how can we speak of this Absolute as

unblessed? Or how can we think of it as knowing and planning? Hartmann

therefore changes his ground, and speaks in other places of his

Absolute rather as supra-conscious; [85] elsewhere, again, in terms

akin to those of Mr. Spencer, as an "Unknowable"--incapable of being

represented in forms of our intelligence. [86] But if the Absolute is

supra-conscious, i.e. exists in a state higher than the ordinary

consciousness, why should it need the latter to help it out of its

misery? The climax is reached when, in a later work--while still

holding to the view that the Absolute is not a self-conscious

Personality--Hartmann invests it with most of the attributes

characteristic of Deity, sees in it, e.g., the ground, not only of a

natural, but of a moral order, makes it the object of religious

worship, attributes to it, not simply omnipotence and wisdom, but

righteousness and holiness, views it as a source of Revelation and

grace, expressly names it God! [87] We are here far enough from the

original assumption of a primitive, irrational will--in fact, what we

see is Pessimism passing over in all but the name into Theism. It

remained only that this transition should be explicitly made, and this

has been done by a disciple of the school, Karl Peters, whose work,

Willenswelt und Weltwille is one of the acutest criticisms of previous

Pessimism I know. With him we finally leave the ground of the

philosophy of the "Unconscious," and come round to a Theism in which we

have the full recognition of God as a self conscious, wise, good, holy

Personality, whose providence is over all, and whose ends all things

subserve. [88]

The theories of Schopenhauer and Hartmann, though pessimistic, might

with equal propriety have been classed in the family of pantheistic

systems. When dealing at an earlier stage with than downward movement

from faith in Christ, through Agnosticism to Pessimism, I purposely

reserved this alternative of Pantheism. This was not because the

subject is in itself unimportant, but because it comes at last to the

old dilemma, and can best be treated in its higher aspect as a stage in

the upward advance to Theism. Pantheism shares the fate of every

incomplete system, in being compelled to pass judgment on itself, and

either to sink to something lower, or to pass up to something higher. I

refer for proof to Germany, which has given birth to some of its

noblest forms, but where also history shows how possible it is to

descend at one step from the loftiest heights of overstrained Idealism

to gross Materialism. Fichte and Schelling and Hegel were followed by

Strauss and Feuerbach. [89] The logic of the process is again not

difficult to trace. If universal reason is the all, and the finite in

comparison with it nothing, in another point of view it is the finite

that is all, and reason that is nothing, seeing that in the finite only

it attains to actual existence. Concede the premiss, the Absolute has

reality only in the universe, and it is but a short step to the

conclusion, the universe only is real. [90] Interpret the universe now,

in accordance with the "modern" conception, in terms of matter and

motion, and Feuerbach's dictum is reached--"Man is what he eats." The

goal of this is the old plunge into Nihilism and Pessimism, in which we

have just seen that the mind cannot remain.

The other alternative is, however, possible to Pantheism, by holding

fast to the rational element contained in it, to correct and purify

itself by a return to Theism; and this is the movement we see taking

place in the latter forms of the philosophies Fichte and Schelling and

in the speculative Theism of the later Hegelians, In judging of these

systems, we must not be misled by too narrow a use of the word

"Theism." The Theism of the writers I refer to is in many respects

imperfect, and bears throughout the marks of its speculative origin.

Yet, in principle, the line between Pantheism and Theism is crossed

whenever God is conceived of no longer as an impersonal Force or Idea,

but as a spiritual, self-conscious principle at the basis of the

universe--as a knowing, willing Being, with whom man can sustain, not

only natural, but moral and spiritual relations. There may be

difficulties at this stage as to whether the term "personal" is a

suitable term to apply to the Divine; but it is, nevertheless, a

theistic conception of God which is shaping itself, and the purgation

of the system from remaining pantheistic elements is only a question of

time. What for instance, but an approximation to Theism is implied in

such words as Fichte's in his fine apostrophe--"Sublime and Living

Will! named by no name, compassed by no thought! I may well raise my

soul to Thee, for Thou and I are not divided! Thy voice sounds within

me, mine resounds in Thee; and all my thoughts, if they be but good and

true, live in Thee also. . . . Thou art best known to the childlike,

devoted, simple mind. To it Thou art the searcher of hearts, who seest

its inmost depths; the ever-present witness of its truth, who knowest

through all the world know it not. Thou art the Father whoever desirest

its good, who rulest all things for the best. . . . How Thou art, I may

not know. But let me be what I ought to be, and Thy relations to

me--the mortal--and to all mortals, lie open before my eyes, and

surround me more clearly than the consciousness of my own existence.

Thou workest in me the knowledge of my duty, of my vocation in the

world of reasonable beings:--how, I know not, nor need I to know. Thou

knowest what I think and what I will:--how Thou canst know, through

what act Thou bringest about that consciousness, I cannot understand.

. . . Thou willest that my free obedience shall bring with it eternal

consequences:--the act of Thy will I cannot comprehend, I only know

thief it is not like mine. Thou doest, and Thy will itself is the deed:

but the way of Thy working is not as my ways--I cannot trace it." [91]

If this is Pantheism, are we not all pantheists? If this is

Agnosticism, is it not an Agnosticism in which we must all share? The

moment in spiritual Pantheism which impels to this development is of

course the recognition of the fact that the universe has its ground in

reason. If this position is to be safeguarded against the lapse into

Materialism, it must free itself from the internal contradiction of

supposing that there can be thought without a thinker; [92] reason

without a subject to which the reason belongs; rational ends posited

and executed without intelligent and self-conscious purpose; moral

order without amoral will. In the case of Fichte and Schelling, this

revolution in their philosophies is seen taking place within their

lifetime; in the case of Hegel, it is seen in the development of his

philosophy, in the hands of his disciples, into a speculative Theism.

In Vatke and Biedermann--two prominent representatives--the Theism is

still very shadowy and incomplete; in I. H. Fichte and Pfleiderer of

Berlin, it attains to full and explicit recognition. The latter writer,

in particular, takes strong ground, and from his own point of view may

be regarded as one of the ablest defenders of theistic positions in

recent times. In our own country we have the Neo-Hegelian movement,

best represented by the late Mr. Green of Oxford, and in him also the

speculative spirit is seen allying itself very closely with the spirit

of religion, with the result that his philosophy almost inevitably

passes over into Theism. On the metaphysical side, God is already to

Mr. Green an "Eternal Self-Consciousness" [93] --the author and

sustainer of the system of relations which we call the universe. But,

on the religious side, He is thought of much more positively as a

conscious Being who is in eternal perfection all that man has it in him

to come to be--"a Being of perfect understanding and perfect love "--an

infinite Spirit, present to the soul, but other than itself, towards

whom "the attitude of man at his highest and completest could still

only be that which we have described as self-abasement before an ideal

of holiness." [94] The metaphysical contradictions which still inhere

in the Neo-Hegelian theory have been well pointed out by one--formerly

an ardent Hegelian--who has himself lived through the theory he

criticises Prof. Seth of Edinburgh. In him, in the line of this

development, we reach at length a perfectly unambiguous position. "It

must not be forgotten," he says, "that if we are to keep the name of

God at all, or any equivalent term, subjectivity--an existence of God

for Himself, analogous to our own personal existence, though doubtless

transcending it infinitely in innumerable ways--is an essential element

of the conception. . . . God may be, must be, infinitely more--we are

at least certain that He cannot be less--than we know ourselves to be."

[95]

The Theism we have thus gained embraces the two notions of God as

self-conscious reason, and God as moral will. Once, however, this

ground of Theism is reached, we are compelled, in order to secure it,

to advance a step further, viz. to the thought of God as

self-revealing. We have already seen that Theism can only be secured if

God is thought of as standing in a living relation to mankind--that is,

as interesting Himself in their welfare, and capable of entering into

moral and spiritual fellowship with them. How can one earnestly believe

in a living, personal God, and, on the other hand, in man as a being

constituted for moral ends, and not also believe that it is the will of

God that man should know Him, and be guided by Him to the fulfilment of

his destiny? It is, accordingly, a most noteworthy fact, that in all

the higher theology of the time-- even rationalistic theology--the

attempt is made to come to a right understanding with this concept of

Revelation. Strange as it may sound to many, there is no proposition on

which theologians of all schools at the present day are more willing to

agree than this--that all knowledge of God, and consequently all

religion, rests on Revelation; and that, if the true idea of God is to

be maintained, He must be thought of as self-revealing. This truth is

emphasised, not in the orthodox systems alone, but in the theologies,

e.g., of Biedermann, of Lipsius of Pfleiderer, of Ritschl--even, as I

said before, of the Pessimist irony, his chapters on Faith and

Revelation. The point of difference arises when we inquire into the

nature of Revelation, and specially when we pass from the sphere of

natural to that of supernatural Revelation Supernatural Revelation the

theologians of the liberal school--Pfleiderer, Lipsius, etc.--will not

allow us to speak of; or rather, natural and supernatural are with them

but different sides of the same process. That which, on the Divine

side, is viewed as Revelation, is, on the human side, simply the

natural development of man's moral and religious consciousness, and

vice versa. In the same way, every truly original moment in the life of

a man every birth-moment of a new truth in his man, every flash of

insight into some new secret or law of nature, is a Revelation. This,

which is the subtlest view of Revelation at present in the field, is

not to be set aside without an attempt to do justice to what is true in

it. [96] I am, for my part, not concerned to deny that there is a side

of truths, and a very important one, in this theory. If it sounds

deistical to say, "Revelation is only through the natural activities of

mind"; it may, on the other hand, be a wholesome corrective to a

deistic view to say that God is immanent in these activities, and that

through them He mediates His Revelation to the human spirit--that what

we call the "natural "development of mind involves, when rightly

understood, a factor of Revelation. Nor can the line ever be drawn so

finely between natural and supernatural Revelation as to enable us to

say, "Here precisely the natural ends and the supernatural begins."

Time theory in question, therefore, I would be disposed to call

inadequate, rather than false; or false only as it professes to cover

the whole field of Revelation. For in the latter, it must be contended

that we have more than can be accounted for by mere natural

development. Taken even on its own ground, this theory involves the

valuable admission that it is the will of God to make Himself known to

man, and that He has provided in the constitution of things for giving

him the knowledge that is necessary for him. The only criticism I shall

make at present upon this theory is--and I think it is one which goes

to the heart of the matter--that in some sense the end of the theory is

the refutation of the beginning of it. The point from which we start

is, that God can be known only through the natural activities of the

mind. He is present in these activities as He is present in all the

other functions of our mental, moral, and even physical being; and He

is present in no other way. But the peculiarity of this theory is that

it ends in a view of God which affirms the possibility of that with the

denial of which it set out--the possibility of direct communion between

God and the soul. It is not disputed by any of the advocates of these

views that the highest point in this self-revelation of God is the

Revelation given to men Christ through Jesus But the God and Father of

our Lord Jesus Christ is not a Being who communicates with man only in

the indirect way which this theory supposes He is a Being who Himself

draws near to man, and seeks fellowship with him; whose relations with

the spirits He has made are free and personal; who is as lovingly

communicative as man, on his part, is expected to be trustfully

receptive; to whom man can speak, and He answers. The simply natural is

here transcended, and we are in the region of direct intercourse of

spirit with spirit. And this view of God is not disputed by the writers

I am here referring to, who deny supernatural Revelation. Dr. Martineau

says, in words of deep wisdom, "How should related spirits, joined by a

common creative aim, intent on whatever things are pure and good, live

in presence of each other, the one the bestower, the other the

recipient of a sacred trust, and exchange no thought and give no sign

of the love which subsists between them?" [97] Pfleiderer again says,

"And why should it be less possible for God to enter into a loving

fellowship with us, than for men to do so with each other? I should be

inclined to think that He is even more capable of doing so. For as no

man can altogether read the soul of another, so no man can altogether

live in the soul of another; hence all our human love is and remains

imperfect. But if we are shut off from one another by the limits of

individuality, in relation to God it is not so; to Him our hearts are

as open as each man's own heart is to himself; He sees through and

through them, and He desires to live in them, and to fill them with His

own sacred energy and blessedness." [98] True, why not? But if this is

admitted, what becomes of the theory that the action of God in

Revelation is necessarily bound up within the limits of strict natural

law? If the gates of intercourse are thus open between the human soul

and God, is it either natural or probable that God will not enter in at

them, and that, instead of leaving men simply to feel after Him if

haply they may find Him, He will not at some point give them what

supernatural light and aid they need to bring them to the true

knowledge of Himself, and fit them for the attainment of the highest

ends of their, existence? Certainly, in light of the above admissions,

no a priori objection can be raised to the principle of supernatural

Revelation

The legitimate outcome of this theory is, that in addition to general

Revelation through reason, conscience, and nature, there is to be

expected some special Revelation; and even this, in a certain way, is

admitted, for it is conceded by nearly all the writers I have named

that in the providential plan of the world a peculiar function was

assigned to Israel; that, as the different nations of the world have

their several providential tasks (Greece--art, culture, philosophy;

Rome--law, government, etc.), to Israel was given the task of

developing the idea of God to its highest perfection in ethical

Monotheism. [99] And, finally, it is conceded that this self-revelation

of God reaches its culmination in Jesus Christ, whose Person has

world-historical significance, as bearing in it the principle of the

perfect relation between God and men--of the absolute religious

relation. [100] The line between natural and supernatural Revelation is

here, surely, becoming very thin; and it is therefore, perhaps, not

greatly to be wondered at that the latest school in German

theology--that of Ritschl--should take the short remaining step, and be

marked by precisely this tendency to lay stress on the need and reality

of positive Revelation. The general position of this school may be

fairly summed up by saying that God can only be truly known to us by

personal, positive Revelation, in which He actually enters into

historical relations with mankind; and that this Revelation has been

given in the Person of His Son Jesus Christ. Through this Revelation

alone, but in it perfectly, we have the true knowledge of God's

character, of His world-aim in the establishing of a kingdom of God on

earth, and of His gracious will of forgiveness and love. [101] Whatever

theory of Revelation we adopt, Jesus Christ must be pronounced to be

the highest organ of it. On this point all deep and serious thinkers of

our age may be held to be agreed. Thus, then, we are brought back to

Christ, are led to recognise in Him the medium of a true Revelation;

and it only remains to ask, What do the facts of this Revelation, and

of Christ's own self-testimony, properly construed, imply? We have

already seen what the verdict of history is on this point, to what

alternatives it shuts us up in our treatment of this subject. We shall

afterwards see by examination of the facts themselves how this verdict

is justified.

To sum up, we have seen that two movements are to be discerned in

history: the one a downward movement leading away from Christ, and

resulting from the denial of, or tampering with, His full Divinity; the

other, an upward movement, retracting the stages of the earlier

descent, and bringing us back to the confession of Thomas, "My Lord and

my God." [102] The former movement ends in the gulf of Nihilism and

Pessimism; the latter begins from the impossibility of the mind abiding

permanently in the denial of a rational basis for the universe. But

here, as in the downward movement, the logic of history asserts itself.

Belief in a rational basis of the universe can only secure itself

through return to Theism; a living Theism can only secure itself

through belief in God as self-revealing; belief in Revelation leads

historically to the recognition of Christ as the highest organ of God's

self-revelation to mankind; belief in Christ as Revealer can only

secure itself through belief in His Divinity. "Ye believe in God," said

Jesus; "believe also in Me." [103] Belief in God--theistic

belief--presses on to belief in Christ, and can only secure itself

through it. On the other hand, belief in Christ has for its legitimate

outcome belief in God. The two beliefs, as history demonstrates, stand

or fall together.

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[56] Der alte und der neue Glaube, pp. 43, 44.

[57] Das Wesen des Christenthums, p. 147 (Eng. trans.).

[58] Cf. Pfleiderer, Religionsphilosophie, i. p. 141 (Eng. trans.).

[59] See Note A.--The Central Place of Christ in His Religion.

[60] Doct. of Person of Christ, v. p. 49 (Eng. trans.).

[61] Thus, e.g., Wendt in his Inhalt der Lehre Jesu.

[62] Cf. Lecture VI.

[63] Book ii.

[64] Matt. xxii.

[65] See Note B.--The Defeat of Arianism. Dorner says "Not merely did

it tend back to Ebionitism; not merely was it unable, with its Docetism

and its doctrine of a created higher spirit, to allow even the

possibility of an Incarnation; but, by putting a fantastical under-God

between God and man, it separated the two quite as much as it appeared

to unite them."--Person of Christ, ii. p. 261 (Eng. trans.).

[66] See Note C.--Modern Unitarianism.

[67] Der christ. Glaube. sect. 94.

[68] Thus also Ritschl.

[69] On Schleiermacher's Christology, cf. Dorner, Person of Christ, pp.

174-213.

[70] He says: "Since Schleiermacher's death, the school proceeding from

him has generally gone back into the way of the Church

doctrine."--Dogmatik, ii. p. 162.

[71] See Note D.--Concessions of Ritschlians on the Person of Christ.

[72] See Note E.--The Weakness of Deism.

[73] This is where not only Deism, but also the so-called Liberal

Protestantism, fails, in rejecting supernatural Christianity, See Note

F.--Weakness of Modern Liberal Protestantism.

[74] Creed of Christendom, Introd., 3rd. ed., pp. 90, 91.

[75] Generally, however, under the surface of professed Agnosticism,

there will he found some more or less positive opinions about the

origin and nature of things all of them agreeing in this, that they

negate the belief in God.

[76] On the continent there are fewer agnostics, but more atheists and

materialists, than with us. "In Germany," says Karl Peters, "things are

come to such a pass that one is obliged. to ask a sort of absolution if

one does not swim with the prevailing atheistic-monistic

stream."--Willenswelt und Weltwille, p. 350.

[77] See Note G.--Christianity and the Idea of Progress.

[78] Pessimism reverses Pascal's saying that the greatness of man

consists in thought. thought, according to Pessimism, is the fatal

gift. "Well for those," Schopenhauer thinks, who have no consciousness

of existence. The life of the animal is more to be envied than that of

man; the life of the plant is better than that of the fish in the

water, or even of the oyster on the rock. Non-being is better than

being, and unconsciousness is the blessedness of what does exist. The

best would be if all existence were annihilated. "Cf. Luthardt, Die

mod. Welt. p. 150. The height of misery is not that of being man; it

is, being man, to despise oneself sufficiently to regret that one is

not an animal."--CARO, Le Pessimisme, p. 135.

[79] See Note H.--The Prevalence of Pessimism

[80] See Appendix to Lecture.--The Pessimism of Scepticism.

[81] "Macbeth," act v. scene 5.

[82] These Pessimistic theories are not without their roots in the

philosophies of Fichte. Schelling, and Hegel. Cf. Fichte's view of the

Absolute as "Will" and Sehelling's "irrational" ground of the Divine

nature (after Bohme). in his Philosophie und Religion (1801), Schelling

boldly describes the creation as the result of an "Abfall"--the

original assertion by the Ego of its independence. "This inexplicable

and timeless act is the original sin or primal fall of the spirit,

which we expiate in the circles of time existence" (cf. Professor

Seth's From Kant to Hegel, p. 65). Hegel also, in his own way, speaks

of creation as an "Abfall." It is in the Son," he says, "in the

determination of distinction, that progressive determination proceeds

to further distinction. . . . This transition in the moment of the Son

is thus expressed by Jacob Bohme--that the first-born was Lucifer, the

light-hearer the bright, the clear one; but he turned in upon himself

in imagination; i.e. he made himself independent, passed over into

being, and so fell."--Phil. d. Rel. ii. p. 251 (Werke, vol. xii.).

[83] Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung, i. pp. 1 85. 206 (Eng. trans.

pp. 203, 219 ff.). Karl Peters remarks: "If the Will alone bears in

itself the stages of the World-All as eternal ideas--how can

Schopenhauer call it an absolutely irrational Will? And if he conceives

of it as a radically blind Will as an insane and altogether groundless

Drang,' how can he vindicate for it these eternal ideas?"--Willenswelt,

p. 129.

[84] "The Unconscious wills in one act all the terms of a process,

means and end, etc., not before, beside, or beyond, but in the result

itself."--Phil. d. Unbewussten, ii. p. 60 (Eng. trans.).

[85] The Unconscious, it now appears, has after all a kind of

consciousness--is "a transcendent supra-mundane consciousness any thing

but blind , rather far-seeing and clairvoyant," "superior to all

consciousness, at once conscious and supra-conscious" (!), its "mode of

thinking is, in truth, above consciousness."--Phil. d. Unbewussten, pp.

246, 247, 258 etc. (Eng. trans.).

[86] Phil. d. Unbewussten, pp. 49, 223, 246, etc. (Eng. trans.).

Schopenhauer also declares his "Will" to be in itself, i.e. apart from

its phenomenal manifestations, an Unknowable, possibly possessing ways

of existing, determinations, qualities, which are absolutely unknowable

and incomprehensible to us, and which remain ever as its nature when it

has abrogated its phenomenal character, and for our knowledge has

passed into empty nothingness.--Die Welt als Wille (Eng. trans.), ii.

p. 408.

[87] Religionsphilosophie: Part II., Phil. des Geistes, pp. 74-89.

[88] See Note I.--Transition from Pessimism to Theism--Hartmann and

Karl Peters.

[89] See Note J.--Materialism in Germany.

[90] "If," says Dorner. "God be once defined as the essence of the

world, it is of subject and predicate logically allowable when

Feuerbach, the idea seriously, counted the essence of the world to be a

part of the world, made the world the subject, and reduced God to a

mere predicate of the world. The transition was thus made to

Anthropologism, the forerunner of Materialism."--Person of Christ, v.

p. 160.

[91] "The Vocation of Man" (Die Bestimmung des Menschen) in Fichte's

"Popular Works," p. 365 (Eng. trans.).

[92] "In spite of Fichte's imperious tone," says Professor Seth, "and

his warning that we are merely setting the seal to our own philosophic

incompetency, we must summon up all our hardihood, and openly confess

that to speak of thought as self-existent, without any conscious Being

whose the thought is, conveys no meaning to our minds. Thought exists

only as the thought of a thinker: it must be centred

somewhere."--Hegelianism and Personality, p. 73. He had formerly

expressed himself differently.--From Kant to Hegel, p. 76.

[93] Prolegomena to Ethics, passim.

[94] Pp. 93, 142 of "Memoir" by Nettleship, in Green's Works, vol. iii.

Prof. Green's profound Christian feeling, with his ideological views of

Christianity, are well brought out in the same "Memoir," and

accompanying works.

[95] Hegelianism and Personality, pp. 222-224. Mr. Green's theory is

discussed more fully in Professor Veitch's Knowing and Being, which

touches many vital points.

[96] Cf. on this theory Biedermann, Christ. Dogmatik, i. pp. 264-288;

Lipsicis, Dogmatik, pp. 41-68; Pfleiderer, Religionsphilosophie, iv.

pp. 46-94, specialty pp. 64-75 (Eng. translation, and Grundriss pp.

17-22. H. Schmidt has a good statement and criticism of this theory in

his article on The Ethical Oppositions in the Present Conflict of the

Biblical and the Modern Theological View of the World," in the Studien

und Kritiken for 1876 (3rd part). "The God whom the Scripture from

beginning to end preaches," he says, "is a God of supernational

Revelation, who makes Himself known directly, in distinction from the

everyday ordering of our lives; the God of rationalism is a God who, if

He still as realty communicates Himself, yet always remains hidden

behind the laws of nature, as behind the natural course of the

development of the human spirit, who never manifestly represents

Himself to the eye of man in His exaltation over the world."

[97] Study of Religion ii. p. 48. Cf. the following sentences from his

Hours of Thought:--"Whatever else may be included in the truth that God

is a Spirit,' this at least is implied, that He is free to modify His

relations to all dependent minds in exact conformity with their changes

of disposition and of need, and let the lights and shadows of His look

move us swiftly as the undulating wills on which they fall."--ii. p.

29. "Passing by this poor mockery I would be understood to speak of a

direct and natural communion of spirit with spirit, between ourselves

and God, in which He receives our affection and gives a responsive

breathing of His inspiration. Such communion appears to me as certain

of reality as the daily intercourse between man and man; resting upon

evidence as positive, and declaring itself by results as marked. The

disposition to throw doubt on the testimony of those who affirm that

they know this, is a groundless prejudice, an illusion on the negative

side as complete as the most positive dreams of enthusiasm."--P. 224.

[98] Religionsphilosophie, iii. p. 305 (Eng. trans.). See Note K.--The

Reasonableness of Revelation.

[99] Thus, e.g., Kuenen, Wellhausen, Pfleiderer, Martineau (Seat of

Authority, pp. 116-122).

[100] This is the general position of the higher class of theologians,

of whatever schools.

[101] See Note L.--The Ritschlian Doctrine of Revelation.

[102] John xx. 28.

[103] John xiv. 1.

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APPENDIX TO LECTURE II.

THE PESSIMISM OF SCEPTICISM.

ALL the writers on Pessimism dwell on the strangeness of the fact that

a century like our own, so marked by mental and material progress, by

vigour and enterprise, should witness a revival of this gospel of

despair; and bear emphatic testimony to the breadth and depth of the

influence which the pessimistic systems are exercising. Apart, however,

from the definite acceptance of Pessimism as a creed, it is instructive

to note the many indications which literature affords of the sad and

hopeless spirit which seems the necessary outcome of the surrender of

religious faith. A few illustrations of this Pessimism of scepticism,

culled almost at random, will perhaps not be out of place.

Voltaire was not happy. Dr. Cairns writes regarding him: "How little he

himself was contented with his own results appears in the gloom shed

over his later writings. It is not in Candide alone, but in others of

them that this sadness comes to light. Thus, in his dialogue, Les

Louanges de Dieu,' the doubter almost carries it over the

adorer--'strike out a few sages, and the crowd of human beings is

nothing but a horrible assemblage of unfortunate criminals, and the

globe contains nothing but corpses. I tremble to have to complain once

more of the Being of beings, in casting an attentive eye over this

terrible picture. I wish I had never been born.' . . . Thus the last

utterance of Voltaire's system is a groan." [104]

A deep pessimism lurked in the background of the genial optimism of

Goethe. Thus he expresses himself in conversation with Eckermann: "I

have ever been esteemed one of fortune's chiefest favourites; nor will

I complain or find fault with the course my life has taken. Yet truly

there has been nothing but toil and care; and I may say that in all my

seventy-five years I have never had a month of genuine comfort. It has

been the perpetual rolling of a stone which I have always had to raise

anew." His views of the future of the race were not hopeful. "Men will

become more clever and more acute, but not better, happier, and

stronger in action, or at least only at epochs. I foresee the time when

God will have no more joy in them, but will break up everything for a

renewed creation." [105] There are numerous such utterances.

Renan writes in the preface to his recently published work, The Future

of Science, originally composed in the years 1848-49--"To sum up: if,

through the constant labour of the nineteenth century, the knowledge of

facts has considerably increased, the destiny of mankind has, on the

other hand, become more obscure than ever. The serious thing is that we

fail to perceive a means of providing humanity in the future with a

catechism that will be acceptable henceforth, except on the condition

of returning to a state of credulity. Hence it is possible that the

ruin of idealistic beliefs may be fated to follow hard upon the ruin of

supernatural beliefs, and that the real abasement of the morality of

humanity will date from the day it has seen the reality of things.

. . . Candidly speaking, I fail to see how, without the ancient dreams,

the foundations of a happy and noble life are to be relaid." [106]

The late Professor Clifford is quoted as saying: "It cannot be doubted

that the theistic belief is a comfort to those who hold it, and that

the loss of it is a very painful loss. It cannot be doubted, at least

by many of us in this generation, who either profess it now, or have

received it in our childhood, and have parted from it since with such

searching trouble as only cradle-faiths can cause. We have seen the

spring sun shine out of an empty heaven to light up a soulless earth;

we have felt with utter loneliness that the Great Companion is dead."

[107]

Professor Seeley, in the close of his work on Natural Religion, thus

sums up: "When the supernatural does not come in to overwhelm the

natural, and turn life upside down, when it is admitted that religion

deals in the first instance with the known and natural, then we may

well begin to doubt whether the known and the natural can suffice for

human life. No sooner do we try to think so than Pessimism raises its

head. The more our thoughts widen and deepen, as the universe grows

upon us and we become accustomed to boundless space and time, the more

petrifying is the contrast of our own insignificance, the more

contemptible become the pettiness, shortness, and fragility of the

individual life. A moral paralysis creeps over us. For a while we

comfort ourselves with the notion of self-sacrifice; we say, What

matter if I pass, let me think of others! But the other has become

contemptible no less than the self; all human griefs alike seem little

worth assuaging, hum an happiness too paltry at the best to be worth

increasing. . . . The affections die away in a world where everything

great and enduring is cold; they die of their own conscious feebleness

and bootlessness." [108]

Of similar purport is a passage often quoted from A Candid Examination

of Theism, by "Physicus." "Forasmuch," this writer says, "as I am far

from being able to agree with those who affirm that the twilight

doctrine of the new faith' is a desirable substitute for the waning

splendour of the old,' I am not ashamed to confess that, with this

virtual negation of God, the universe to me has lost its soul of

loveliness; and although from henceforth the precept to work while it

is day' will doubtless but gain an intensified force from the terribly

intensified meaning of the words, The night cometh when no man can

work,' yet, when at times I think, as think at times I must, of the

appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once

was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as I new find it, at such

times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pang of

which my nature is susceptible. For, whether it be due to my

intelligence not being sufficiently advanced to meet the requirements

of the age, or whether it be duo to the memory of those sacred

associations which, to me at least, were the sweetest that life has

given, l cannot but feel that for me, and for others who think as I do,

there is a dreadful truth in those words of Hamilton,-- philosophy

having become a meditation, not merely of death, but of annihilation,

the precept know thyself has become transformed into the terrible

oracle to OEdipus, Mayest thou never know the truth of what thou art.'"

[109]

Theodore Jouffory, the French philosopher, wrote: "Never shall I forget

the December evening when the veil which hid my unbelief from mine own

eyes was torn away. . . . The hours of the night glided away, and I

perceived it not; I anxiously followed my thought, which descended step

by step to the bottom of my consciousness, and dissipating, one after

another, all the illusions which till then had hid them from my view,

rendered its subterfuges more and more visible to me. In vain I clung

to my last beliefs, as a shipwrecked sailor to the fragments of his

ship; in vain, terrified by the unknown waste in which I was about to

float, I threw myself back once more upon my childhood, my family, my

country, all that was dear and sacred to me; the inflexible current of

my thought was the stronger; parents, family, memories, beliefs--it

forced me to leave all. This examination became more obstinate and more

severe as it approached the end; nor did it stop till the end was

reached. I knew then that at the bottom of myself there was nothing

left standing, that all I had believed about myself, about God, and

about my destiny in this life and in that to come, I now believed no

more. This moment was frightful; and when, towards morning, I threw

myself exhausted upon my bed, it seemed to me as if I could feel my

former life, so cheerful and complete, die away, and before me there

opened up another life, dark and dispeopled, where henceforth I was to

live alone, alone with my fatal thought which had just exiled me

thither, and which I was tempted to curse." [110]

Here is Professor Huxley's estimate of human progress: "I know," he

says, "no study which is so unutterably saddening as that of the

evolution of humanity, as it is set forth in the annals of history. Out

of the darkness of prehistoric ages man emerges with the marks of his

lowly origin strong upon him. He is a brute, only more intelligent than

the other brutes; a blind prey to impulses which as often as not lead

him to destruction; a victim to endless illusions, which make his

mental existence a terror and a burden, and fill his physical life with

barren toil and battle. He attains a certain degree of physical

comfort, and develops a more or less workable theory of life, in such

favourable situations as the plains of Mesopotamia or of Egypt, and

then, for thousands and thousands of years, struggles with varying

fortunes, attended by infinite wickedness, bloodshed, and misery, to

maintain himself at this point against the greed and ambition of his

fellow-men. He makes a point of killing and otherwise persecuting all

those who first try to get him to move on; and when he has moved on a

step foolishly confers post-mortem deification on his victims. He

exactly repeats the process with all who want to move a step yet

further. And the best men of the best epochs are simply those who make

the fewest blunders, and commit the fewest sins." [111] The passage is

in protest against the Positivist "worship of Humanity."

In further illustration of the Pessimism of scepticism, I may refer to

two instructive magazine articles--one by Emile de Laveleye on "The

Future of Religion," in The Contemporary Review for July 1888; and the

other by Mr. F. W. H. Myers on "The Disenchantment of France," in The

Nineteenth Century for May 1888. To quote only a sentence or two, M.

Laveleye remarks: "It seems as if humanity could not exist without

religion as a spiritual atmosphere, and we see that, as this decreases,

despair and Pessimism take hold of minds thus deprived of solace.

Madame Ackermann well expresses this in some lines addressed to Faith,

in which she writes--

'Eh bien, nous l'expulsons de tes divins

roysumes, Dominatrice ardente, et l'instant

est venu; Tu ne vas plus savoir ou loger tes

fantomes, Nous fermons l'Inconnu!

Mais ton triumphateur expiera ta defaite,

L'homme deja se trouble et, vainqueur

eperdu, Il se sent ruine par sa propre

conquete; En te despossedant nous avons

tout perdu. Nous restons sans espoir, sans

recours, sans asile, Tandis qu' obstinement

le desir qu'on exile Revient errer autour du

gouffre defendu.'

"Incurable sadness takes hold of the man who has no hope of anything

better than this life, short as it is, and overwhelmed with trials of

all kinds, where iniquity triumphs if it have but force on its side,

and where men risk their lives in disputes with each other for a place

where there is too little space for all, and the means of subsistence

are wholly insufficient. Some German colonies have been founded in

America, in which all sorts of Divine worship are prescribed; those who

have visited them describe the colonists, the women especially, as

appearing exceedingly sad. Life with no hope in the future loses its

savour." [112]

Mr. Myers's article on the progress of disillusionment in France, "to

use the phrase of commonest recurrence in modern French literature and

speech," is one fitted to open many eyes as to the inevitable drift of

unbelief to Pessimism. In 1788 France possessed illusions and nothing

else,--"the reign of reason, the return to nature, the social contract,

liberty, equality, fraternity,--the whole air of that wild time buzzed

with new-hatched chimeras"; in 1888 France possesses everything except

illusions; and the end is "the vague but general sense of malaise or

decadence, which permeates so much of modern French literature and

life," and of which abundant illustrations are given. Not the least

striking of these is a passage from Emile Littre, the once enthusiastic

Comtist, who likens his own final mood to that of the Trojan women who

pontum aspectabant flentes! "Fit epigraph," says Mr. Myers, "for a race

who have fallen from hope, on whose ears the waves' world-old message

still murmurs without a meaning; while the familiar landmarks fall back

into shadow, and there is nothing but the sea." [113]

These illustrations, which might be multiplied indefinitely

sufficiently confirm the words of Mr. Sully in his work on Pessimism:

[114] "I am keenly alive to the fact that our scheme of individual

happiness, even when taken as including the good of others now living

and to live, is no perfect substitute for the idea of eternal happiness

presented in religon. Nobody, I imagine, would seriously contend that

the aims of our limited earthly existence, even when our imagination

embraces generations to follow us, are of so inspiring a character as

the objects presented by religion. . . . Into the reality of these

religious beliefs I do not here enter. I would only say that if men are

to abandon all hope of a future life, the loss, in point of cheering

and sustaining influence, will be a vast one, and one not to be made

good, so far as I can see, by any new idea of services to collective

humanity."

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[104] Cairns's Unbelief in the Eighteenth Century, p. 141.

[105] Eckermann's Conversations of Gothe, pp. 58, 345 (Eng. trans.).

Cf. Lichtenberger's German Thought in the Nineteenth Century, p. 269

(Eng. trans.); Martensen's Christian Ethics, pp. 172, 173: and Art.

"Neo-Paganism," in Quarterly Review, April 1891.

[106] L'Avenir de la Science, Preface (Eng trans.). Elsewhere Renan has

said, "Were living on the perfume of an empty vase."

[107] Quoted in Harris's Self-Revelation of God, p. 404.

[108] Natural Religion, pp. 261, 262.

[109] P. 114. It is now known that "Physicus" was the late Professor

Romanes, whose happy return to the Christian faith before his death has

since been announced. See his Thoughts on Religion, edited by Canon

Gore.

[110] Les Nouveaux Melanges Philosophiques, by Theodore Jouffory, pp.

112-115 (cf. Naville's "Christ," p. 16).

[111] "Agnosticism," by Professor Huxley, in Nineteenth Century, Feb.

1889, pp. 191, 192. Mr. Mallock, in his Is Life Worth Living? (pp. 128,

171, 172), quotes other striking sentences of Professor Huxley's. "The

lover of moral beauty," he says, "struggling through a world of sorrow

and sin, is surely as much the stronger for believing that sooner or

later a vision of perfect peace and goodness will burst upon him, as

the toiler up a mountain for the belief that beyond crag and snow lie

home and rest." And he adds that, could a faith like this be placed on

a firm basis, mankind would cling to it as "tenaciously as ever

drowning sailor did to a hencoop."

[112] Contemporary Review, vol. xiv. p. 6. A large number of

illustrations from French poetry may be seen in Caro's Problemes de

Morale Sociale, pp. 351-380. Cf. also the article next referred to on

"The Disenchantment of France."

[113] Nineteenth Century, May 1888, p. 676.

[114] Pessimism, p. 317.

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"For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are

clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even

His everlasting power and Divinity, that they may be without

excuse."--Paul.

"Let us begin, then, by asking whether all this which they call the

universe is left to this guidance of an irrational and random chance,

or. on the contrary, as our fathers declared, is ordered and governed

by a marvellous intelligence and wisdom. "--Plato.

"It is easy for the fool, especially the learned and scientific fool,

to prove that there is no God, but, like the murmuring sea, which heeds

not the scream of wandering birds, the soul of humanity murmurs for

God, and confutes the erudite folly of the fool by disregarding

it."--J. Service.

"It is in the moments when we are best that we believe in God."--Renan.

"Atheism is the most irrational form of theology."--COMTE.

"I leave noticed, during years of self-observation, that it is not in

hours of clearness and vigour that this doctrine (Material A theism)

commends itself to my mind; that in the presence of stronger and

healthier thought it ever dissolves and disappears, as affording no

solution of the mystery in which we dwell, and of which we form a

part."--Tyndall.

LECTURE III.

THE THEISTIC POSTULATE OF THE CHRISTIAN VIEW.

Introductory

In entering on the task of unfolding the Christian view of the world

under its positive aspects, and of considering its relations to modern

thought, I begin where religion itself begins, with the existence of

God. Christianity is a theistic system; this is the first

postulate--the personal, ethical, self-revealing God.

Volkmar has remarked that of monotheistic religions there are only

three in the world--the Israelitish, the Christian, and the Mohammedan;

and the last-named is derived from the other two. "So," he adds, "is

the Israel of God' the one truly religious, the religiously-elect,

people of antiquity; and ancient Israel remains for each worshipper of

the one, therefore of the true God, who alone is worthy of the name,

the classical people. . . . Christianity is the blossom and fruit of

the true worship of God in Israel, which has become such for all

mankind." [115] This limitation of Monotheism in religion to the

peoples who have benefited by the Biblical teaching on this subject,

suggests its origin from a higher than human source; and refutes the

contention of those who would persuade us that the monotheistic idea is

the result of a long process of development through which the race

necessarily passes, beginning with Fetishism, or perhaps Ghost-worship,

mounting to Polytheism, and ultimately subsuming the multitude of

Divine powers under one all-controlling will. It will be time enough to

accept this theory when, outside the line of the Biblical development,

a single nation can be pointed to which has gone through these stages,

and reached this goal. [116]

I should like further at the outset to direct attention to the fact

that, in affirming the existence of God as Theism apprehends Him, we

have already taken a great step into the supernatural, a step which

should make many others easy. Many speak glibly of the denial of the

supernatural, who never realise how much of the supernatural they have

already admitted in affirming the existence of a personal, wise, holy,

and beneficent Author of the universe. They may deny supernatural

actions in the sense of miracles, but they have affirmed supernatural

Being on a scale and in a degree which casts supernatural action quite

into the shade. If God is a reality, the whole universe rests on a

supernatural basis. A supernatural presence pervades it; a supernatural

power sustains it; a supernatural will operates in its forces; a

supernatural wisdom appoints its ends. The whole visible order of

things rests on another, an unseen, spiritual, supernatural order,--and

is the symbol, the manifestation, the revelation of it. It is therefore

only to be expected that the feeling should grow increasingly in the

minds of thoughtful men, float if this supernatural basis of the

universe is to he acknowledged, a great deal more must be admitted

besides. On the other hand, if the opposition to the supernatural is to

be carried out to its logical issue, it must not stop with the denial

of miracle, but must extend to the whole theistic conception. This is

the secret of the intimate connection which I showed in last Lecture to

exist between the idea of God and the idea of Revelation. A genuine

Theism Can never long remain a bare Theism. At the height to which

Christianity has raised our thoughts of God, it is becoming constantly

more difficult for minds that reflect seriously to believe in a God who

does not manifest Himself in word and deed. This is well brought out in

a memorable conversation which Mr. Froude had with Mr. Carlyle in the

last days of his life. "I once said to him," says Mr. Froude, "not long

before his death, that I could only believe in a God which did

something. With a cry of pain, which I shall never forget, he said, He

does nothing.'" [117] This simply means that if we are to retain the

idea of a hiving God, we must be in earnest with it. We must believe in

a God who expresses Himself in hiving deeds in the history of mankind,

who has a word and message for mankind, who, having the power and the

will to bless man kind, does it. Theism, as I contended before, needs

Revelation to complete it.

Here, accordingly, it is that the Christian view of God has ifs

strength against any conception of God based on mere grounds of natural

theology. It hinds together, in the closest reciprocal relations, the

two ideas of God and Revelation. The Christian doctrine, while

including all thief the word Theism ordinarily covers, is much more

than a doctrine of simple Theism. God, in the Christian view, is a

Being who enters into the history of the world in the most hiving way.

He is not only actively present in the material universe,--ordering,

guiding, controlling it.--but He enters also in the most direct way

into the course of human history, working in it in His general and

special providence, and by a gradual and progressive Revelation, which

is, at flue same time, practical discipline and education, giving to

man that knowledge of Himself by which he is enabled to attain the

highest ends of his own existence, and to co-operate freely in the

carrying out of Divine ends; above all, discovering Himself as the God

of Redemption, who, full of long-suffering and mercy, executes in

loving deeds, and at infinite sacrifice, His gracious purpose for the

salvation of mankind. The Christian view of God is thus bound up with

all the remaining elements of the Christian system,--with the idea of

Revelation in Christ, with a kingdom of God to be realised through

Christ, with Redemption from sin in Christ,--and it is inseparable from

them. It is through these elements--not in its abstract character as

Theism--that it takes the held it does on the living convictions of

men, and is felt by them to be something real. If I undertake to defend

Theism, it is not Theism in dissociation from Revelation, but Theism as

completed in the entire Christian view.

It is scarcely necessary that I should prove that Christ's teaching

about God embraces all the affirmations commonly understood to be

implied in a complete Theism. Christ's doctrine of the Father is,

indeed, entirely unmetaphysical. We meet with no terms such as

absolute, infinite, unconditioned, first cause, etc., with which the

student of philosophy is familiar. Yet all that these terms imply is

undeniably recognised by Jesus in His teaching about God. He takes up

into His teaching--as the apostles likewise do--all the natural truth

about God; He takes up all the truth about God's being, character,

perfections, and relations to the world and man, already given in the

Old Testament. God, with Jesus, is unquestionably the sole and supreme

source of existence; He by whom all things were created, and on whom

all things depend; the Lord of heaven and earth, whose power and rule

embrace the smallest as well as the greatest events of life; the

Eternal One, who sees the end from the beginning, and whose vast

counsels hold in their grasp the issues of all things. The attributes

of God are similarly dealt with. They are never made by Christ the

subject of formal discourse, are never treated of for their own sakes,

or in their metaphysical relations. They come into view solely in their

religious relations. Yet no one will dispute that all the attributes

involved in the highest theistic conception--eternity, omnipotence,

omnipresence, omniscience, and the like--are implied in His teaching.

God, in Christ's view, is the all-wise, all-present, all-powerful

Being, at once infinitely exalted above the world, and active in every

part of it, from whose eyes, seeing in secret, nothing can be hid,

laying His plans in eternity, and unerringly carrying them out. It is

the peculiarity of Christ's teaching, however, that the natural

attributes are always viewed in subordination to the moral. In respect

of these, Christ's view of God resembles that of the Old Testament in

its union of the two ideas of God's unapproachable majesty and

elevation above the world as the infinitely Holy One; and of His

condescending grace and continued action in history for the salvation

and good of men. The two poles in the ethical perfection of God's

character are with Him, as with the prophets of the old covenant,

righteousness and love--the former embracing His truth, faithfulness,

and justice; the latter His beneficence, compassion, long suffering,

and mercy. Ritschl, indeed, in his treatment of this subject, will

recognise no attribute but love, and makes all the others, even the

so-called physical attributes, but aspects of love. Righteousness,

e.g., is but the self-consistency of God in carrying out His purposes

of love, and connotes nothing judicial. [118] Righteousness, however,

has its relatively independent place as an attribute of God in both Old

and New Testaments, and cannot thins be set aside. It has reference to

indefeasible distinctions of right and wrong--to moral norms, which

even love must respect. Out of righteousness and love in the character

of God, again, issues wrath--another idea which modern thought tries to

weaken, but which unquestionably holds an important place in the view

of God given us by Christ. By wrath is meant the intense moral

displeasure with which God regards sin--His holy abhorrence of it--and

the punitive energy of His nature which He puts forth against it. So

regarded, it is not opposed to love, but, on the contrary, derives its

chief intensity from the presence of love, and is a necessary element

in the character of an ethically perfect Being. [119] While, however,

Christ's teaching about the character of God is grounded on that of the

Old Testament, yet in the purity and perfection with which He

apprehends this ethical perfection of God,--above all, in the new light

in which He places it by His transforming conception of the Divine

Fatherhood, we feel that we are carried far beyond the stage of the Old

Testament. God, as ethical Personality, is viewed by Christ, first, as

in Himself the absolutely Good One--"There is none good but one, that

is, God"; [120] second, as the perfect Archetype of goodness for man a

imitation--"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in

heaven is perfect"; [121] third, as the moral Will binding the universe

together, and proscribing the law of conduct--"Thy will be done on

earth, as it is in heaven"; [122] but, fourth, pre-eminently as the

Father. It is in the name Father, as expressive of a special loving and

gracious relation to the individual members of His kingdom, that

Christ's doctrine of God specially sums itself up. The Old Testament

knew God as tire Father of the nation; Christ knew Him as tire Father

of the individual soul, begotten by Him to a new life, and standing to

Him in a new moral and spiritual relation, as a member of the kingdom

of His Son.

This, then, without further delineation in detail, is the first

postulate of Christianity--a God living, personal, ethnical,

self-revealing, infinite. We have new to ask--How does this postulate

of the Christian view stand related to modern thought, and no the

general religious consciousness of mankind? How far is it corroborated

or negated by modern thought? What is the nature of the corroboration,

and what the worth of the negation? I shall consider the negation

first.

I. The negation of the Christian view.

I. Dogmatic Atheism has not so many advocates--at least in this

country--as at some former times ; but, instead, we have a wide

prevalence of that new form of negation which is called Agnosticism. I

have already referred to this as one of the alternatives to which the

mind is driven in its denial of the supernatural view of Christ's

Person; but it is new necessary to consider it on its own merits. The

thought may occur that this widespread phase of present-day unbelief is

not properly described as "negation," seeing that all it affirms is,

that it "does not know." It does not say, "There is no God," but only

that it does not know that there is one. Its ground is that of

ignorance, lack of evidence, suspense of judgment--not positive denial.

This plea, however, is on various grounds inadmissible. It is certainly

not the case that thorough-going, reasoned-out Agnosticism, as we have

it, for example, in the works of Mr. Spencer, is simply the modest

assertion that it does not know whether there is a God or not. It is

the dogmatic affirmation, based on an examination of the nature and

limits of human intelligence, that God--or, in Mr. Spencer's phrase,

the Power which manifests itself in consciousness and in the outward

universe--is unknowable. [123] But in all its forms, even the mildest,

Agnosticism is entitled to be regarded as a negation of the Christian

view, for two reasons. First, in affirming that God is not, or cannot

be, known, it directly negates, not only the truths of God's natural

Revelation, which Christianity presupposes, but the specific Christian

assertion that God can be and is known through the of His historical

Revelations, and supremely through His Son Jesus Christ. "The only

begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared

Him." [124] And, second, if God exists, it is impossible in the nature

of things that there should not be evidence of His existence, and

therefore the denial of such evidence is actually tantamount to the

denial of His existence. Why do I say this? It is because the truths

about God differs from every other truth in just this respect, that if

it is truth it must be capable of a certain measure of rational

demonstration. For God is not simply one Being among others. He is the

necessary Being. He is the Being whose existence is necessarily

involved in the existence of every other being. Thin whole universe,

ourselves as part of it, stands in a relation of necessary dependence

upon Him. God, therefore, is unlike every other being our thought can

take account of. Oilier beings may exist, and we may have no evidence

of their existence. But it is rationally inconceivable that such an

all-comprehending Reality as we call God should exist, and that through

Him the whole material and spiritual universe should come into being,

arid yet no trace be found connecting this universe with its Author--so

vast an effect with its cause. If even man, for however short a space

of time, sets foot on an uninhabited island, we expect, if we visit his

retreat, to find some traces of his occupation How much more, if this

universe owes its existence to infinite wisdom and power, if God is

unceasingly present and active in every part of it, must we expect to

find evidence of thin fact? Therefore, I say that denial of all

evidence for God's existence is equivalent to the affirmation that

there is no God. If God is, thought must be able, nay, is compelled, to

take account of His existence. It must explore the relations in which

He stands to us and to than world. An obligation rests on it to do so.

To think of God is a duty of love, but it is also a task of science.

Mr. Spencer is so far in agreement with the views just expressed, that

he maintains that our thought is compelled to posit the existence of an

absolute Being as the ground and cause of than universe, though of than

nature of this ultimate reality he holds that we can form no

conception. The reason given is, that our minds, being finite and

conditioned in their thinking, cannot form a conception of an existence

which lies outside these conditions. [125] The question, however, is

pertinent--If the mind is thus hemmed up within the limits of its

finitude, how does it get to know even that an Absolute exists? Or if

we can so far transcend the limits of our thought as to know that the

Absolute exists--which is a disproof of the position that thought is

restricted wholly to the finite--why may we not also have some

knowledge of its nature? It is not difficult to show that, in his

endeavours to extricate himself from these difficulties, Mr. Spencer

involves himself in a mass of self-contradictions. He tells us, e.g.,

in every variety of phrase, that we cannot know the Absolute, but

almost in the same breath he tells us that we have an idea of the

Absolute which our minds are compelled to form, [126] --that it is a

positive, and not, as Sir William Hamilton and Mr. Mansel held, a

merely negative conception, [127] --nay, that we have not only a

conception, but a direct and immediate consciousness of this Absolute,

blending itself with all our thoughts and feelings, and recognisable by

us as such. [128] Again, if we ask, What is meant by the Absolute? it

is defined as that which exists out of all relations, and for this

reason the possibility of a knowledge of it is denied. [129] But if we

inquire further what ground we have for affirming the existence of such

an Absolute, existing out of all relations, we find that the only

ground alleged is the knowledge we have of it as standing in relations.

[130] For this, which Mr. Spencer names the Absolute, is simply the

Infinite Power which he elsewhere tells us manifests itself in all that

is--in nature and in consciousness--and is a constituent element in

every idea we can form. The Absolute, therefore, stands in relation to

both matter and mind--has, so far as we can see, its very nature in

that relation. It is not, it turns out, a Being which exists out of all

relations, but rather, like the Christian God, a self-revealing Power,

manifesting itself, if not directly yet indirectly, in its workings in

the worlds of matter and of mind. How strange to speak of a Power thus

continually manifesting itself in innumerable ways, the consciousness

of which, on Mr. Spencer's own showing, [131] constantly wells up

within us, as absolutely unknown or unknowable!

But, after all, as we by and by discover, this Inscrutable Power of Mr.

Spencer's is not absolutely unknowable. It soon becomes apparent that

there are quite a number of affirmations we are able to make regarding

it, some of them almost of a theistic character. They are made, I

admit, generally under a kind of protest, [132] yet it is difficult to

see why, if they are not seriously meant--if they do not convey some

modicum of knowledge--they should be made at all. According to Mr.

Spencer, this ultimate reality is a Power: it is a force, the nearest

analogue to which is our own will: [133] it is infinite, it is eternal,

it is omnipresent; [134] it is an infinite and eternal Energy from

which all things proceed; [135] it is the Cause of the universe,

standing to it in a relation similar to that of the creative power of

the Christian conception. [136] Numerous other statements might be

quoted all more or less implying knowledge, --as, e.g., that "the Power

manifested throughout the Universe distinguished as material, is the

same Power which in ourselves wells up under the form of consciousness

": while the necessity we are under to think of the external energy in

terms of the internal energy gives rather a spiritualistic than a

materialistic aspect to the Universe." [137] This I take leave to say,

so far from being Agnosticism, would more correctly be described as a

qualified Gnosticism. [138] Mr. Spencer's so-called Agnosticism is not

an agnostic system at but a of non-material all, system or

semi-spiritual Pantheism. If we know all that these statements imply

about the Absolute, there is no bar in principle to our knowing a great

deal more. A significant proof of this is the development which the

system has received in the hands of one of Mr. Spencer's disciples, Mr.

Fiske, who in his Cosmic Philosophy, and still more in his book on The

Idea of God, has wrought it out into a kind of Theism. He discards the

term "Unknowable," and writes: "It is enough to remind the reader that

Deity is unknowable, just in so far as it is not manifested to

consciousness through the phenomenal world; knowable, just in so far as

it is thus manifested; unknowable, in so far as infinite and absolute;

knowable, in the order of its phenomenal manifestations; knowable, in a

symbolic way, as the Power which is disclosed in every throb of the

mighty rhythmic life of the universe; knowable, as tire eternal Source

of a Moral Law, which is implicated with each action of our lives, arid

in obedience to which lies our only guaranty of the happiness which is

incorruptible, and which neither inevitable misfortune nor unmerited

obloquy can take away. Thus, though we may not by searching find out

God, though we may not compass infinitude, or attain to absolute

knowledge, we may at least know all that it concerns us to know, as

intelligent and responsible beings." [139]

It has riot been left for Mr. Spencer to discover that, in the depths

of His absolute Being, as well as in the plenitude of the modes of His

revealed Being, there is that in God which must always pass our

comprehension,--that in the present state of existence it is only very

dimly and distantly, and by large use of "symbolic conceptions," that

we can approximate to a right knowledge of God. This is affirmed in the

Bible quite as strongly as it is by the agnostic philosophers. "Canst

thou by searching find out God?" [140] "O the depth of the riches, both

of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments,

and His ways past finding out!" [141] "Now I know in part." [142] In

this sense we cant speak of a Christian Agnosticism. [143] This

incomprehensibility, however, is held in Scripture to arise, not from

any inherent or incurable defect in the human faculties, but simply

from the vastness of the object, in the knowledge of which,

nevertheless, the mind may continually be growing. The universe itself

in its immeasurable extent vastly transcends our present powers of

knowledge . how much more the Author of the universe? This,

accordingly, is not the point we have in dispute with Mr. Spencer. The

point is not whether, in the depths of His absolute existence, there is

much in God that must remain unknown to us; but whether He cannot be

known by us in His revealed relations to ourselves, and to the world of

which we form a part; whether these relations are not also in their

measure a true expressions of His nature and character, so that through

them we come to know something of Him, even of His absolute

Being--though we cannot know all? When, now, the Agnostic tells us that

knowledge of this kind is impossible to us, see in what contradiction

he lands himself. Here is a man who says, "I know nothing of God; He is

absolutely beyond my ken; I cannot form the faintest conception of what

He is" And yet he knows so much about God as to be able to say

beforehand that He cannot possibly enter into relations with human

beings by which He might become known to them. This is a proposition of

which the Agnostic, on his own showing, can never have any evidence. If

God is unknowable, how can we know this much about Him--that He cannot

in any mode or form enter into relations with us by which He might be

known? Only on one supposition can this be maintained. If, indeed, as

Mr. Spencer thinks, the nature of God and the intelligence of man are

two things absolutely disparate--if, as Spinoza said, to speak of God

taking on Him the nature of man is as absurd as to speak of a circle

taking on it the nature of the square, [144] --then not only is God

unknowable, but the whole Christian system is a priori ruled out of

consideration. This, however, is a proposition which can never be

proved, and we have seen that the attempt to prove and work with it

only entangled Mr. Spencer in a mass of difficulties. There is really,

on his own principles, no reason why he should not admit the

possibility of a relative knowledge of God, as true in its way as the

knowledge which we have of space, time, matter, force, or cause,--all

which notions, as well as that of the Absolute, he tells us are

prolific of intellectual contradictions. [145] Why, for instance,

should we more hesitate to speak of God as Intelligence than to speak

of Him as Power; why shrink from attributing to Him the attribute of

Personality any more than that of Cause? [146] The whole objection,

therefore, falls to the ground with the intellectual theory on which it

is founded. For once grant that the nature of God and the intelligence

of man are not thus foreign to each other, as Spencer supposes; grant

that man is made in time image of God, and bears in some measure His

likeness--then man's mind is not wholly shut up within the limits of

the finite--there is an absolute element in it, kindred with the

absolute reason of God, and real knowledge both of God and of the

nature of things without us is possible.

II. Positive evidence for the Christian view.

II. The a priori bar with which Agnosticism would block the way to the

knowledge of God being thus removed, we may proceed to inquire how it

stands with the theistic postulate of the Christian view, in respect of

the positive evidence in its behalf. It has been shown that, if the

Christian view be true, it must, up to a certain point, admit of

verification by reason. The doctrine of God's existence must be shown

to be in accord with reason, and to be in harmony with amid

corroborated by the facts of science and of the religious history of

mankind. Science, indeed, has not for its object the determination of

anything supernatural. Yet in its inquiries--dealing as it does with

laws and forces, and with the widest generalisations of experience--it

must come to a point at which the questions with which religion and

philosophy deal are forced upon it, and it has to take up some attitude

to them. The facts which it brings to light, the interpretations which

it gives of these facts, cannot but have some bearing on the hypotheses

we form as to the ultimate cause of existence. If it does not cross the

borderland, it at least brings us within sight of truths which do not

lie within its proper sphere, and points the way to their acceptance.

1. I may begin with certain things in regard to which it is possible to

claim a large measure of agreement. And--

(1) It may be assumed with little fear of contradiction, that if the

idea of God is to be entertained, it can only be in the form of

Monotheism. The Agnostic will grant us this much. Whatever the power is

which works in the universe, it is one. "As for Polytheism," says a

writer in Lux Mundi, "it has ceased to exist in the civilised world.

Every theist is, by a rational necessity, a monotheist." [147] The

Christian assumption of the unity and absoluteness of God--of the

dependence of the creamed universe upon Him--is thus confirmed. It is

to be remembered that this truth, preached as a last result of science

and of the philosophy of evolution, is a first truth of the Biblical

religion. It is the Bible, and the Bible alone, which has made

Monotheism the possession of the world. The unity of God was declared

on the soil of Israel long before science or philosophy had the means

of declaring it. [148] Through Christianity it has been made the

possession of mankind. On the soil of paganism we see reason struggling

towards this idea, striking out partial glimpses of it, sometimes

making wonderful approximations to it, hut never in its own strength

lifting itself clear away from Polytheism to the pure conception of the

one spiritual God, such as we find it in Christianity, still less

making this the foundation of a religion It is through Christianity,

not through philosophical speculation, that this truth has become the

support of faith, a light to which the investigations of science

themselves owe much, and a sustaining principle and power in the lives

of men. [149]

(2) This Power which the evolutionist requires us to recognise as the

origin of all things is the source of a rational order. This is a

second fact about which there can be no dispute. There is a rational

order and connection of things in the universe. Science is not only the

means by which our knowledge of this order is extended, but it is

itself a standing proof of the existence of this order. Science can

only exist on the assumption that the world is not chaos, hut

cosmos--that there is unity, order, law, in it--that it is a coherent

and consistent whole of things, construable through our intelligence,

and capable of being expressed in forms of human speech. And the more

carefully we examine the universe, we find that this is really its

character. It is an harmonious universe. There is orderly sequence in

it. There is orderly connection of part and part. There is that

determinable connection we call law. There is the harmonious adjustment

of means to ends, which again are embraced in higher ends, till, in the

nobler systems, the teleological idea is extended to the whole system.

[150] In many ways does Mr. Spencer express in his writings his trust

that this Power of which he speaks--inscrutable as he proclaims it to

be--may be depended on not to put him, as the authors of the "Unseen

Universe" phrase it, "to intellectual confusion." [151] To give only

one instance--he bids the man who has some highest truth to speak, not

to be afraid to speak it out, on the ground that "it is not for nothing

that lie has in him these sympathies with some principles, and

repugnance to others. . . . He, like every other man," he says, "may

properly consider himself as one of the myriad agencies through whom

works the Unknown Cause; and when the Unknown Cause produces in him a

certain belief, he is thereby authorised to profess and act out that

belief. For to render in their highest sense the words of the poet--

Nature is made better by no mean,

But Nature makes that mean; o'er that art

Which roll cay adds to Nature, is an art Which

Nature makes.'

Not as adventitious, therefore, will the wise man regard the faith that

is in him." [152] Who does not see in these remarkable sentences that,

notwithstanding his reiteration of the words "Unknown Cause,"

"Unknowable," Mr. Spencer's latent faith is that this Power which works

in the world and in men is a Power working according to rational laws

and for rational ends--is on this account an object of trust--we might

almost add, a source of inspiration? But now, if this is so, can the

conclusion be avoided that the Power on which we thus depend rationally

is itself rational? It is knowable at least thins far, that we know

that it is the source of a rational order--of an order construable

through our intelligence. If now it is asserted that the source of this

rational order is not itself rational, surely the proof rests, not on

him who affirms, but on him who denies. [153] If Mr. Spencer replies,

as he does reply, that it is an " erroneous assumption that the choice

is between personality and something lower than personality, whereas

the choice is rather between personality only something higher," amid

asks--"Is it not just possible that there is a mode of being as much

transcending intelligence and will, as these transcend mechanical

motion?" [154] --the answer (not to dwell on the utterly disparate

character of the things compare d) is ready--this higher mode of being

cannot at least be less than conscious. It may be a higher kind of

consciousness, but it cannot be higher than consciousness. Nor is there

the slightest ground for the assumption that there can be anything

higher than self-conscious intelligence or reason. [155] If we find in

the universe an order congruous to the reason we have in ourselves,

this is warranty sufficient for believing, till the contrary is proved,

that the Power which gives rise to this order is not only Power, but

Intelligence and Wisdom as well.

(3) Again, this Power which the evolutionist compels us to recognise is

the source of a moral order. Butler, in his Analogy, undertook to prove

that the constitution and course of things are on the side of virtue.

His argument is sometimes spoken of as obsolete, but it is not so much

obsolete as simply transformed. It is a new-fashioned phrase which

Matthew Arnold uses when lie speaks of a "Power not ourselves that

makes for righteousness," but it means just what Butler meant, that the

make and constitution of things in the universe are for righteousness,

and not for its opposite. Right eons conduct works out good results for

the individual and for society; vicious conduct works out bad results.

But what I wish to point out at present is the new support which this

view receives from the theory of agnostic evolution, which is supposed

by many to overthrow it. No philosophy, which aims at completeness, can

avoid the obligation resting on it of showing that it is capable of

yielding a coherent theory of human life. The construction of a system

of ethics, therefore, Mr. Spencer justly regards as that part of his

work to which all the other parts are subsidiary. The theological basis

of ethics is rejected; utilitarianism also is set aside as inadequate;

and in room of these the attempt is made to establish the rules of

right conduct on a scientific basis by deducing them from the general

laws of evolution. You find a Power evolving itself in the universe.

Study, says Mr. Spencer, the laws of its evolution: find "the naturally

revealed end towards which the Power manifested throughout evolution

works"; then, "since evolution has been, and is still, working towards

the highest life, it follows that conforming to these principles by

which the higher life is achieved, is furthering that end." [156] And

when a system us constructed on this basis, what is the result? Why,

that we are simply back to the old morality-to what Mr. Spencer himself

calls "a rationalised version of the ethical principles" of the current

creed. [157] The ethical laws which are deduced from the observations

of the laws of evolution are identical with those which Christian

ethics and the natural conscience of man in the higher stages of its

development have always recognised. [158] What is the inference? These

principles were not originally gained by scientific induction. They

were the expressions of the natural consciousness of mankind as to

distinctions of right and wrong, or were promulgated by teachers who

claimed to have received them from a higher source. In either case,

they were recognised by man as principles independently affirmed by

conscience to be right. And now that the process of evolution comes to

be scientifically studied, we are told that the principles of conduct

yielded by it, in light of the end to which evolution naturally works,

absolutely coincide with those which spring from this "work of the law"

written in men's hearts. What else can we conclude, assuming that the

evolutionist is right in his deduction, but that the universe is

constructed in harmony with right; that the laws which we have already

recognised as of binding authority in conscience are also laws of the

objective world; that the principles of right discovered in conscience,

and the moral order of society based on these principles, are

productions of the one great evolutionary cause, which is the Force

impelling and controlling the whole onward movement of humanity? There

is certainly nothing lucre to conflict with, but everything to support

the view that the Power which is above all, and through all, and in all

things, is not only Intelligence and Wisdom, but also an Ethical Will.

At least, to most persons who dispassionately study the subject, I

think it will appear reasonable that a Power which has an ethical end

must be an ethical Power. If, further, this ethical end embraces, as

Mr. Spencer seems to believe, the highest perfection amid happiness of

man, [159] it is still more difficult to conceive how it should have a

place in the nature of things unless the Supreme Power were itself

benevolent and good. It is not, it should be remembered, as if this

ethical end were an after-thought or accident. It is, according to the

theory, the final and supreme goad to which the whole process of

evolution for count- less millenniums has been working up, and only

when it is reached will the ripest fruit of the whole development be

gathered. But how is this possible, except on a teleological view of

things; and what teleology can yield a moral result which does not

postulate at the other end a moral cause? Mr. Spencer may deprecate as

he will the imposing of moral ideas generated in our consciousness upon

the Infinite which transcends consciousness. But it is only his own

arbitrary denial of consciousness to the Absolute, and his arbitrary

assumption that there can be no kindredship between that absolute

consciousness and our own, which prevents him from drawing the natural

conclusion from his own premises. But if to Mr. Spencer's definition of

the Absolute, as "an Infinite and Eternal Energy from which all things

proceed," we add, as I think we are entitled to do, the predicates of

infinite Intelligence and of Wisdom, and of Ethical Will, we have all

the fundamental theistic positions affirmed.

If the First Cause of the universe is proved by its manifestations to

be at once rational Intelligence and Ethical Will, there should be no

excess of scrupulosity in applying to it the term "Personal." I have

thus far reasoned on the assumptions of Mr. Spencer, and have spoken of

his Ultimate Reality as he does himself, as "Power," "Force," "Cause,"

etc. But I cannot leave this part of the subject without remarking that

Mr. Spencer is far from having the field of thought all to himself on

this question of the nature of the Ultimate Existence. It was shown in

last Lecture how, starting from a different point of view, the higher

philosophy of the century--the Neo-Kantian and Neo-Hegelian--reaches,

with a very large degree of certainty, the conclusion that the ultimate

principle of the universe must be self-conscious. It is well known that

the Personality of God was a point left in very great doubt in the

system of Hegel. [160] God was conceived of as the Absolute Reason, but

the drift of the system seemed to point rather to an impersonal Reason

which first becomes conscious of itself ill man, than to a

selfconsciousness complete and perfect from the beginning. Whatever its

other defects, the later Hegelianism has shaken itself clear of this

ambiguity, amid affirms with emphasis that the principle at the basis

of the universe is self-conscious. [161] The other line of

development--the Neo-Kantian--is, in the person of its chief

representative, Hermann Lotze, explicitly theistic. I only notice here,

that after a careful discussion of all the arguments against ascribing

Personality to time Divine Being, on the ground that personality

implies the limitation of the finite, Lotze arrives at this conclusion,

diametrically the opposite of Mr. Spencer's--"Perfect personality is

reconcilable only with the conception of an infinite Being; for finite

beings only an approximation to this is attainable." [162] It is

interesting, further, to notice that even Neo-Spencerianism--if I may

coin such a term--has come round, in tire person of Mr. Fiske, to a

similar affirmation. "The final conclusion," he says, "is, that we must

not say that God is Force,' since such a phrase inevitably calls up

those pantheistic notions of blind necessity, which it is my express

desire to avoid; but always bearing in mind the symbolic character of

the words, we may say that God is Spirit.' How my belief in the

personality of God could be more strongly affirmed without entirely

deserting the language of modern philosophy and taking refuge in pure

mythology, I am unable to see." [163]

2. It is now necessary to come to closer quarters, arid to ask whether

the ordinary proofs for the existence of God, which have been so much

assailed since the time of Kant, still retain their old cogency, arid

if not, what modifications require to be made on them. The

time-honoured division of these proofs--which have recently received so

able a re-handling at the instance of Dr. Hutchison Stirling in his

"Gifford Lectures"--is into the cosmological, the teleological, and the

ontological, to which, as belonging to another category, falls to be

added the moral. Besides these, Kant thinks, there are no others. [164]

This, however, must be taken with qualification, if the remark is meant

to apply to the old scholastic forms in which these proofs have

customarily been put. Not only is there no necessity for the proofs

being confined to these forms--some of which are clearly

inadequate--hut they are capable of many extensions, and even

transformations, as the result of advancing knowledge, and of the

better insight of reason into its own nature. I may add that I do not

attach much importance in this connection to objections to these proofs

drawn from Kant's peculiar theory of knowledge. [165] If it can be

shown that in the exercise of our reason as directed on the world in

which we live--or on its own nature--we are compelled either to cease

to think, or to think in a particular way,--if we find that these

necessities of thought are not peculiar to individuals here and there,

but have been felt by the soundest thinkers in all ages, and among

peoples widely separated from each other,--we may be justified in

believing that our reason is not altogether an untrustworthy guide, but

may be depended on with considerable confidence to direct us to the

truth.

Neither shall I waste time at this stage by discussing in what sense it

is permissible to speak of "proof" of so transcendent a reality as the

Divine existence. We remember here the saying of Jacobi, that a God

capable of proof would be no God at all; since this would mean that

there is something higher than God from which His existence can be

deduced. But this applies only to the ordinary reasoning of the

deductive logic. It does not apply to that higher kind of proof which

may be said to consist in the mind being guided back to the clear

recognition of its own ultimate pre-suppositions. Proof in Theism

certainly does not consist in deducing God's existence as a lower from

a higher; but rather in showing that God's existence is itself the last

postulate of reason--the ultimate basis on which all other knowledge,

all other belief rests. What we mean by proof of God's existence is

simply that there are necessary acts of thought by which we rise from

the finite to the infinite, from the caused to the uncaused, from the

contingent to the necessary, from the reason involved in the structure

of the universe to a universal and eternal Reason, which is the ground

of all, from morality in conscience to a moral Lawgiver and Judge. In

this connection the three theoretical proofs constitute an inseparable

unity--"constitute together," as Dr. Stirling finely declares, "but the

three undulations of a single wave, which wave is but a natural rise

and ascent to God, on the part of man s own thought, with man's own

experience and consciousness as the object before him." [166]

(1) The cosmological argument.

(1) Adopting the usual arrangement, I speak first of the cosmological

proof, which, from the contingency and mutability of the world,--from

its finite, dependent, changeful, multiple character,--concludes to an

infinite and necessary Being as its ground and cause. That this

movement of thought is necessary is shown by the whole history of

philosophy and religion. Kant, who subjects the argument to a severe

criticism, nevertheless admits--"It is something very remarkable that,

on the supposition that something exists, I cannot avoid the inference

that something exists necessarily." [167] The question then arises--Is

the world this necessary Being? The cosmological proof on its various

sides is directed to showing that it is not,--that it is not sufficient

for its own explanation,--that, therefore, it must have its ground and

origin in some other being that is necessary. Whatever exists has

either the reason of its existence in itself, or has it in something

else. But that the world has not the reason of its existence in

itself--is not, in Spinoza's phrase, causa sui, is not a necessarily

existing being--is shown in various ways.

i. By the contingency of its existence.--A necessary Being as Kant

himself defines it, is one the necessity of whose existence is given

through its possibility, i.e. the non-existence of which cannot be

thought of as possible. [168] But the world is not an existence of this

character. We can think of its non-existence without contradiction--as,

e.g., we cannot think of the non-existence of space and time. We think

away all the contents of space and time, but we cannot think away space

and time themselves.

ii. By the dependency of its several parts.--It is made up of finite

parts, each of which is dependent on the others, and sustains definite

relations to them; its parts, therefore, have not the character of

self-subsistence. But a world made up of parts, none of which is

self-subsistent, cannot as a whole be self-subsistent, or the necessary

Being. [169]

iii. By its temporal succession of effects.--The world is in constant

flux and change. Causes give birth to effects, and effects depend on

causes. Each state into which it passes has determining conditions in

some immediately preceding state. This fact, apart from the general

proof of contingency, suggests the need of conceiving not only of a

necessary ground, but likewise of a First Cause of the universe. The

alternative supposition is that of an eternal series of causes and

effects--a conception which is unthinkable, and affords no

resting-place for reason. What can be more self-contradictory than the

hypothesis of a chain of causes and effects, each link of which hangs

on a preceding link, while yet the whole chain hangs on nothing? [170]

Reason, therefore, itself points us to the need of a First Cause of the

universe, who is at the same time a self-existing, necessary, infinite

Being.

It is, since Kant's time, customarily made an objection to this

argument, that it only takes us as far as some necessary being--it does

not show us in the least degree what kind of a being this is--whether,

e.g., in the world or out of it, whether the world soul of the Stoics,

the pantheistic substance of Spinoza, the impersonal reason of Hegel,

or the personal God of the theist. This may be, and therefore the

cosmological argument may need the other arguments to complete it. It

will be found, however, when we go more deeply (in the ontological

argument) into the conception of necessary being, that there is only

one kind of existence which answers to this description, and with this

more perfect conception the cosmological argument will then connect

itself.

As thus presented, the cosmological argument is a process of thought. I

cannot leave it, however, without pointing out that it stands connected

with a direct fact of consciousness, which, as entering into

experience, changes this proof to some extent from a merely logical

into a real one. Not to speak of the immediate impression of

transitoriness, finitude, contingency, vanity, which, prior to all

reasoning, one receives from the world, [171] and which finds

expression, more or less, in all religions, there is, at the very root

of our religious consciousness, that "feeling of absolute dependence"

which Schleiermacher fixes on as the very essence of religion: [172]

and which reappears in Mr. Spencer's philosophy in a changed form as

the immediate consciousness of an absolute Power on which we and our

universe alike depend. This feeling of dependence, so natural to man,

and interweaving itself with all his religious experiences, is the

counterpart in the practical sphere of the cosmological argument in the

logical. Both need their explanation in something deeper than

themselves, namely, in the possession by man of a rational nature,

which makes him capable of rising in thought and feeling above the

finite. And as, in the theoretic sphere, the cosmological argument

presses forward to its completion in another and a higher, so in the

religious sphere the rational nature of man forbids that this sense of

dependence should remain a mere feeling of dependency on a blind Power.

Religion must free, bless, inspire, strengthen men. From the first,

therefore, the soul is at work, seeking in its depths, and in obedience

to its own laws, to change this relation of dependence into a free and

personal one.

(2) The second argument for the Divine existence is the

teleological,--better known simply as the design argument. Kant speaks

of this oldest and most popular of the theistic arguments with great

respect; and the objections which he makes to it affect more its

adequacy to do all that is expected from it than its force so far as it

goes. It does not, he thinks,prove a Creator, but only an Architect, of

the world; it does not prove an infinite, but only a very great

Intelligence, etc. [173] I may remark, however, that if it proves even

this, it does a great deal; and from an intelligence so great as to

hold in its ken the plan and direction of the universe, the step will

not be found a great one to the Infinite Intelligence which we call

God. But the argument, in the right conception of it, does more than

Kant allows, and is a step of transition to the final one--the

ontological.

A new argument against design in nature has been found in recent times

in the doctrine of evolution. The proof we are considering turns, as

every one knows, on the existence of ends in nature. In Kant's words:

"In the world we find everywhere clear signs of an order which can only

spring from design--an order realised with the greatest wisdom, and in

a universe which is indescribably varied in content, and in extent

infinite." [174] In organisms particularly we see the most

extraordinary adaptations of means to ends--structures of almost

infinite complexity and wonderful perfection--contrivances in which we

have precisely the same evidence of the adjustment of the parts to

produce the ends as in human works of art. [175] From this the

inference is drawn, that a world so full of evidences of rational

purpose can only be the work of a wise and intelligent mind. But this

argument is broken down if it can be shown that what look like ends in

nature are not really such, but simply results--that the appearance of

apparently designed arrangements to produce certain ends can be

explained by the action of causes which do not imply intelligence. This

is what evolution, in the hands of some of its expounders, undertakes

to do. By showing how structures may have arisen through natural

selection, operating to the preservation of favourable variations in

the struggle for existence, it is thought that the aid of intelligence

may be dispensed with, and that a deathblow is given to teleology.

[176] The eye, for example, may have resulted from the gradual

accumulation of small variations, each of them accidental, and arising

from unknown laws in the organism, but each, as it arises giving to its

possessor some slight advantage in the struggle for existence. It is a

simple case of the survival of the fittest. Instead of the advantage

resulting from a designed arrangement, the appearance of arrangement

results from the advantage. In reality, the facts of evolution do not

weaken the proof from design, but rather immensely enlarge it by

showing all things to be bound together in a vaster, grander plan than

had been formerly conceived. Let us see how the matter precisely

stands.

On the general hypothesis of evolution, as applied to the organic

world, I have nothing to say, except that, within certain limits, it

seems to me extremely probable, and supported by a large body of

evidence. This, however, only refers to the fact of a genetic

relationship of some kind between the different species of plants and

animals, and does not affect the means by which this development may be

supposed to be brought about. On this subject two views may be held.

[177] The first is that evolution results from development from within;

in which case, obviously, the argument from design stands precisely

where it did, except that the sphere of its application is enormously

extended. The second view is, that evolution has resulted from

fortuitous variations, combined with action of natural selection,

laying hold of and preserving the variations that were favourable. This

is really, under a veil of words, to ask us to believe that accident

and fortuity have done the work of mind. But the facts are not in

agreement with the hypothesis. The variations in organisms are net

absolutely indefinite. In the evolution of an eye, for example, the

variations are all more or less in the line of producing the eye. When

the formation of an eye has begun, the organism keeps to that line in

that place. It does not begin to sprout an ear where the eye is being

developed. There is a ground plan that is adhered to in the midst of

the variations. Could we collect the successive forms through which the

eye is supposed to have passed in the course of its development, what

we would see (I speak on the hypothesis of the theory) would be a

succession of small increments of structure, all tending in the

direction of greater complexity and perfection of the organ--the

appearance of new muscles, new lenses, new arrangements for adjusting

or perfecting the sight, etc. But the mere fact that these successive

appearances could be put in a line, however extended, would throw no

light on how the development took place, or how this marvellously

complex organ came to build itself up precisely after this pattern.

[178] The cause invoked to explain this is natural selection. Now the

action of natural selection is real, but its influence may be very

easily overrated. It is never to be forgotten that natural selection

produces nothing. It acts only on organisms already produced, weeding

out the weakest, and the least fitted structurally to survive, and

heaving the better adapted in possession of the field. [179] It is

altogether to exaggerate the influence of natural selection, to

attribute to it a power to pick out infallibly on the first appearance

the infinitesimal variations in an organism which are to form the

foundations of future useful organs, though, in their initial stage,

they cannot be shown to confer any benefit on their possessors, and may

be balanced or neutralised by fifty or sixty other variations in an

opposite direction, or by differences of size, strength, speed, etc.,

on the part of the competitors in the struggle; and still more a power

to preserve each of these slight variations till another and yet

another of a favourable kind is added to it after long intervals, in a

contest in which numbers alone are overwhelmingly against the chance of

its survival. [180] Taking the facts of evolution as they really stand,

what they seem to point to is something hike the following:--

i. An inner power of development of organisms.

ii. A power of adjustment in organisms adapting them to environment.

iii. A weeding out of weak and unfit organisms by natural selection.

iv. Great differences in the rate of production of new species.

Ordinarily, species seem to have nearly all the characters of fixity

which the old view ascribed to them. Variation exists, but it is

confined within comparatively narrow limits. The type persists through

ages practically unchanged. At other periods in the geological history

of the past there seems to be a breaking down of this fixity. The

history of life is marked by a great inrush of new forms. New species

crowd upon the scene. Plasticity seems the order of the day. [181] We

may call this evolution if we like, but it is none the less

creation,--the production out of the old of something new and higher.

All that we are called upon to notice here is that it in no way

conflicts with design, but rather compels the acknowledgment of it.

The chief criticism I would be disposed to make upon the design

argument, as an argument for intelligence in the cause of the universe,

is that it is too narrow. It confines the argument to final

causes--that is, to the particular case of the adaptation of means to

ends. But the basis for the inference that the universe has a wise and

intelligent Author is far wider than this. It is not the marks of

purpose alone which necessitate this inference, but everything which

bespeaks order, plan, arrangement, harmony, beauty, rationality in the

connection and system of things. It is the proof of the presence of

thought in the world--whatever shape that may take. [182] As we saw in

a former part of the Lecture, the assumption on which the whole of

science proceeds--and cannot but proceed--in its investigations is,

that the system it is studying is intelligible,--that there is an

intelligible unity of things. It admits of being reduced to terms of

thought. There is a settled and established order on which the

investigator can depend. Without this he could not advance one step.

Even Kant's objection, that this argument proved only an architect of

the universe, but not a creator of its materials, is seen from this

point of view to be invalid. [183] The very materials of the

universe--the atoms which compose it--show by their structure, their

uniformity, their properties, their mathematical relations, that they

must have a Creator; that the Power which originated them, which

weighed, measured, and numbered them, which stamped on them their

common characters, and gave them their definite laws and relations,

must have been intelligent. I admit, however, that as the design

argument presupposes the cosmological, to give us the idea of an

infinite and necessary Being at the basis of the universe, so both of

these arguments need the ontological, to show us in the clearest and

most convincing manner that this Being and Cause of the universe is

infinite, self conscious Reason.

(3) I come, accordingly, in the third place, to the ontological

argument--that which Kant, not without reason, affirms to beat the

foundation of the other two, and to be the real ground on which the

inference to the existence of a necessary and infinitely perfect Being

rests. It is an argument which in these days, owing largely to his

criticism upon it, has fallen much into disrepute, though a good deal

has also been done by able thinkers to rehabilitate it, and to show its

real bearings. It must further be admitted that in the form in which it

was wont to be put in the schools, the strictures which Kant makes on

it are in the main just.1 [184] In the earlier form, it is an argument

from the idea of God as a necessary idea of the mind, to His real

existence. I have, reasons Anselm, the idea of a most perfect Being.

But this idea includes the attribute of existence. For if the most

perfect Being did not exist, there could be conceived a greater than

He,--one that did exist,--and therefore He would not be the most

perfect. The most perfect Being, therefore, is one in the idea of whom

existence is necessarily included. In this form the argument seems

little better than a logical quibble, and so Kant has treated it. Kant

grants the necessity of the idea--shows how it arises--names it The

Ideal of Pure Reason--but argues with cogency that from an idea, purely

as such, you cannot conclude to real existence. It would be strange,

however, if an argument which has wielded such power over some of the

strongest intellects were utterly baseless; and Dr. Hutchison Stirling

has well shown that when we get to the kernel of Anselm's thought, as

he himself explains it, it has by no means the irrational character

which might at first sight appear to belong to it. [185] Anselm's form

of the argument, however, it must now be observed, is neither the final

nor the perfect one. Kant himself has given the impulse to a new

development of it, which shows more clearly than ever that it is not

baseless, but is really the deepest and most comprehensive of all

arguments--the argument implied in both of the two preceding.

The kernel of the ontological argument, as we find it put, for example,

by Prof. Green, is the assertion that thought is the necessary prius of

all else that is--even of all possible or conceivable existence. This

assertion is not arrived at in any a priori way, but by the strict and

sober analysis of what is involved in such knowledge of existence as we

have. If we analyse the act of knowledge, we find that in every form of

it there are implied certain necessary and universal conditions, which,

from the nature of the case, must be conditions of experience also,

otherwise it could never be experience for us at all. Thus, any world

we are capable of knowing with our present faculties must be a world in

space and time,--a world subject to conditions of number and

quantity,--a world apprehended in relations of substance and accident,

cause and effect, etc. A world of any other kind--supposing it to

exist--would be in relation to our thought or knowledge unthinkable.

These conditions of knowledge, moreover, are not arbitrary and

contingent, but universal and necessary. They spring from reason

itself, and express its essential and immutable nature. Thus we feel

sure that there is no world in space or time to which the laws of

mathematics do not apply; no world possible in which events do not

follow each other according to the law of cause and effect; no world in

which the fundamental laws of thought and reasoning are different from

what they are in our own. Mr. J. S. Mill, indeed, thought there might

be worlds in which two and two do not make four; or in which events

succeed each other without any causal relation. But in this he will get

few to agree with him. In like manner, there are moral principles which

our reason recognises as universally and unconditionally valid. We

cannot conceive of a world in which falsehood would really be a virtue,

and truth-speaking a vice. We hold it, therefore, for certain that

reason is the source of universal and necessary principles which spring

from its essence, and which are the conditions of all possible

knowledge. But this, its own essential nature, reason finds reflected

back from the world around it. A world does exist, constituted through

these very principles which we find within ourselves,--in space and

time, through number and quantity, substance and quality, cause and

effect, etc.,--and therefore knowable by us, and capable of becoming an

object of our experience. We arrive, therefore, at this--that the world

is constituted through a reason similar to our own; that, in Mr.

Green's words, "the understanding which presents an order of nature to

us is in principle one with an understanding which constitutes that

order itself." [186] And that such a reason not only does, but must

exist, I see not simply by inference from the existence of the world,

which is the higher form of the cosmological argument, but by

reflection on the necessary character of the principles of reason

themselves. For whence these laws of thought--these universal and

necessary conditions of all truth and knowledge--which I discover in

myself; which my own reason neither makes nor can unmake; which I

recognise to be in me and yet not of me; which I know must belong to

every rational being in every part of the universe? They are necessary

and eternal in their nature, yet they have not the ground of their

existence in my individual mind. Can I conclude otherwise than that

they have their seat and ground in an eternal and absolute Reason--the

absolute Prius of all that is, at once of thought and of existence? It

is but a further extension of the same argument when I proceed to show

that thought is only possible in relation to an I, to a central

principle of self-consciousness, which unifies and connects all

thinking and experience.

This argument, which has been called that of "Rational Realism," is one

which in varied forms has been accepted by the deepest thinkers, and

finds widespread acknowledgment in literature. [187] It is not liable

to the objection made to the Anselmic form, of involving an illicit

inference from mere idea to real existence; but it has this in common

with it, that the existence of an Eternal Reason is shown to be

involved in the very thinking of this, or indeed of any thought. In the

very act of thinking, thought affirms its own existence. But thought

can perceive, not only its own existence, but the necessity of its

existence--the necessity of its existence, even, as the prius of

everything else. What is affirmed, therefore, is not simply my thought,

but an Absolute Thought, and with this the existence of an Absolute

Thinker; in the words of Dr. Harris, who has done much to give popular

expression to this argument, of "an Absolute Reason energising in

perfect wisdom and love" in the universe. [188] I cannot but maintain,

therefore, that the onto- logical argument, in the kernel and essence

of it, is a sound one, and that in it the existence of God is really

seen to be the first, the most certain, and the most indisputable of

all truths.

We saw in connection with the cosmological argument that there was a

direct fact of consciousness which turned the logical argument into a

real one,--which translated, if I may so speak, the abstract proof into

a living experience. It is worth our while to inquire, before leaving

these theoretic proofs, whether there is anything of the same kind

here; anything in actual religious consciousness which answers to that

demonstration of a rational element in the world which is given in the

two remaining arguments. I think there is. I refer to that very real

perception which mankind have at all times manifested of a spiritual

presence and power in nature, which is the effect of the total

unanalysed impression which nature in its infinite variety and

complexity, its wondrous grandeur, order, beauty, and fulness of life

and power, makes upon the soul. The more carefully facts have been

examined, the more narrowly the history of religions has been

scrutinised, the clearer has it become that underlying all the

particular ideas men have of their deities,--underlying their

particular acts of worship to them,--there is always this sense of

something mysterious, intangible, infinite--of an all-pervading

supernatural Presence and Power,--which is not identified with any of

the particular phenomena of nature, but is regarded rather as

manifested through them. [189] It is this which Paul speaks of when he

says that "the Eternal Power and Divinity" of God are manifested since

the creation of the world in the things that are made. [190] It is Max

Muller's "perception of the infinite," Schleiermacher's "consciousness

of the infinite in the finite," the sensus numinis of the older

writers, Wordsworth's "sense of something far more deeply interfused"--

"Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns, And the round ocean, and

the living air, And the blue sky, and in the mind of man." [191]

Such a sense or perception of the Divine is the common sub- stratum of

all religions, and the theory of religion which fails to take account

of it is hike the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out.

But how is this sense of the Divine in nature--which is the stronghold

of the theology of feeling--to be accounted for? It is certainly not

the result of logical argument, and goes beyond anything that logical

argument could yield. Yet it may easily be shown that rational elements

are implicit in it, and that the rational elements involved are

precisely those which the fore going arguments have sought explicitly

to unfold. To understand the impression of the Divine which nature

makes on man, we have to remember how much the mind of man has already

to do with nature. We have to do here with nature, not primarily as an

objectively existing system of laws and forces, but as it exists for

man as an object of actual knowledge and experience. And how has it

come to be this to him? Not without help from the thinking mind which

collates and connects the separate impressions made on it through the

senses, and gradually reads the riddle of the universe by the help of

what it brings to it out of its own resources. We speak of the

immaturity of the savage mind, but there is an intense mental activity

in the simplest conception which the savage (or the child) can form of

the existence of nature, or of a world around him. He sees changes, but

he finds the interpretation of these changes in the idea of causality

which he brings to it from his own mind. He groups attributes and forms

objects, but he does this through the mental law of substance and

accident. He perceives the operation of vast forces in nature, but

whence does he get the idea of force? He gets it from the consciousness

of power within himself, and through this puts meaning into the scene

of change and movement which he finds around him. Is it wonderful,

then, that man, who has put so much of himself into nature, even when

constructing it as an object of thought, should again receive back the

reflection of his own spiritual image from nature--receive it back on a

grander, vastly enhanced scale, proportionate to the greatness and

immensity of the universe on which he looks, and should be filled with

awe and reverence in presence of this Other-Self, and Higher-than-Self,

as that of a Reason, Power, and Will essentially akin to his own,

though infinitely greater? Reason does not create this sense of the

Divine; it can only follow in its train, and seek to lay bare and

analyse--as is done in the theoretic proofs--the rational elements

which it involves.

III. The moral argument--contrast with theoretic proofs.

III. There remains the moral argument, which deserves a place by

itself, and which I must briefly consider before I close. The theoretic

proofs, as Kant rightly said, can give us no knowledge of God as a

moral Being--as a Being who sets before Him moral ends, and governs the

world with reference to these ends. For this we are dependent on the

Practical Reason, which shows us not what is, but what ought to be, and

is the source of laws of moral conduct which we recognise as of binding

force for every rational agent. The way in which Kant works out his

argument from this point is one of the most interesting parts of his

system. Nature in itself, he thinks, knows nothing of a highest end.

This is given only in the Practical Reason, which sets before us ends

of unconditioned worth, and requires us, if our view of the world is to

be consistent, to regard these as supreme, i.e. to view the world as a

moral system, in which natural ends are everywhere subordinated to

moral. But such a moral teleology is only possible if there is one

principle of the natural and of the moral order, and if nature is so

arranged as to secure a final harmony of natural and moral conditions;

in other words, if the world has a moral as well as an intelligent

cause. God, therefore, is a postulate of the Practical Reason. [192] I

quote, in further illustration of this argument, Professor Caird's

fuller statement of it, in his excellent exposition of the Critique of

Judgment, in which he follows Kant. "The principle of moral

determination in man," he says, "carries with it the idea of a highest

end, after which he should strive; in other words, the idea of a system

in which all rational beings realise their happiness through their

moral perfection, and in proportion to it. But such realisation of

happiness through morality is no natural sequence of effect on cause;

for there is nothing in the connection of physical causes that has any

relation to such an end. We are forced, therefore, by the same moral

necessity which makes us set before us such an end, to postulate

outside of nature a cause that determines nature, so as finally to

secure this result: and from this follows necessarily the idea of an

all-wise, all-powerful, all-righteous, all-merciful God. We have a pure

moral need' for the existence of such a Being; and our moral needs

differ from physical needs in that they have an absolute claim to

satisfaction. . . . Furthermore, we are to remember that the principle

which leads us to postulate God is a practical principle, which does

not give us, strictly speaking, a knowledge of God, but only of a

special relation in which He stands to us and to nature: while,

therefore, in order to find in God the principle which realises the

highest good, we are obliged to represent Him as a rational Being, who

is guided by the idea of an end, and who uses nature as means to it, we

are to remember that this conception is based on an imperfect analogy.

. . . All that we can say is that, consistently with the nature of our

intelligence, we cannot make intelligible to ourselves the possibility

of such an adaptation of nature to the moral law and its object as is

involved in the final end which the moral law commands us to aim at,

except by assuming the existence of a Creator and Governor of the

world, who is also its moral Legislator.'" [193]

It is to this view of God as a postulate of the Practical Reason, and

as satisfying a "pure moral need," that the Ritschlian theology

specially attaches itself; but-it must be remarked that such an origin

of the idea of God, abstracted from direct experience of dependence on

Him, would furnish no adequate explanation of the religious relation.

We may, however, accept all that Kant says of God as a postulate of the

moral consciousness, and yet carry the argument a good deal further

than he does. God is not only a postulate of the moral nature in the

sense that His existence is necessary to secure the final harmony of

natural and moral conditions, but it may be held that His existence is

implied in the very presence of a morally legislating and commanding

Reason within us,--just as an eternal self-conscious Reason was seen to

be implied in the universal and necessary principles of the theoretic

consciousness. That moral law which appears in conscience--the

"categorical imperative" of duty for which Kant himself has done so

much to intensify our reverence --that ideal of unrealised goodness

which hovers constantly above us, awakening in us a noble

dissatisfaction with all past attainments,--these are not facts which

explain themselves. Nor are they sufficiently explained as products of

association and of social convention. Moral law is not comprehensible

except as the expression of a will entitled to impose its commands upon

us. The rules and ideals of conduct which conscience reveals to us, and

which bind the will with such unconditional authority, point to a

deeper source in an eternal moral Reason. The ethical ideal, if its

absolute character is to be secured, points back to an eternal ground

in the Absolute Being. It takes us back to the same conception of God

as the ethically perfect Being, source and ground of moral truth

fountain of moral law, which we found to be implied in Christianity.

[194]

And let me observe, finally, that here also we have more than logical

argument--we have experience. The moral consciousness is one of the

most powerful direct sources of man's knowledge of God. In the earliest

stages in which we know anything about man, a moral element blends with

his thought. There grows up within him--he knows not how--a sense of

right and wrong, of a law making its presence felt in his life,

prescribing to him moral duties, and speaking to him with a "thou

shalt" and "thou shalt not" in his soul which he dare not disregard.

His thoughts, meanwhile, accuse or else excuse each other. This law,

moreover, presents itself to him as something more than a mere idea of

his own mind. It is a real judging power in his soul, an arbiter

invested with legislative, but also with judicial functions. It has

accordingly from the first a sacred character. It is a power not

himself making for righteousness within him. He instinctively connects

it with the Power be worships, whose existence is borne in on him from

other sources. As conscience develops, his deities come to be more

invested with a moral character, and are feared, honoured, or

propitiated accordingly. It is the moral consciousness particularly

which safeguards the personality of God--the Divine tending to sink

back into identity with nature in proportion as the ethical idea is

obscured.

The conclusion we reach from the various arguments and considerations

advanced in this Lecture is, that the Christian view of a personal and

holy God, as the Author of the universe, and its moral Legislator and

Ruler, is the only one in which the reason and the heart of man can

permanently rest. I do not say that reason could have reached the

height of the Christian conception for itself; I do not even think it

can hold to it unless it accepts the fact of Revelation and the other

truths which Christianity associates with it. But I do say that, with

this view as given, reason is able to bring to it abundant

corroboration and verification. It is not one line of evidence only

which establishes the theistic position, but the concurrent force of

many,- starting from different and independent standpoints. And the

voice of reason is confirmed by the soul's direct experiences in

religion . At the very least these considerations show--even if the

force of demonstration is denied to them--that the Christian view of

God is not unreasonable; that it is in accordance with the highest

suggestions of reason applied to the facts of existence; that there is

no bar in rational thought or in science to its full acceptance. And

this is all that at present we need ask.

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[115] Jesus Nazarenus, p. 5.

[116] See Note A.--Primitive Fetishism and Ghost-Worship.

[117] See the whole passage in Froude's Carlyle, ii. pp. 258-263.

[118] Cf. his Recht. und Ver. ii. pp. 102-112.

[119] Cf. on the Divine Wrath. Principal Simon. The Redemption of Men,

ch. v.; Dale on The Atonement, Lecture VIII.; Lux Mundi, pp. 285 289.

[120] Mark x. 18.

[121] Matt. v. 48.

[122] Matt. vi. 10.

[123] Prof. Huxley, the inventor of the term, has given us his

explanation of it. "Agnosticism," he says, "in fact, is not a creed but

a method, tins essence of which lies in the rigorous application of a

single principle. . . . Positively, the principle may be thus

expressed: in matters of the intellect, follow your reason as far as it

will take you, without regard to any other consideration. And,

negatively, in matters of the intellect, do not pretend that

conclusions are certain which are ant demonstrated or demonstrable.

That I take to be the Agnostic faith, which, if a man keep whole and

undefiled, he shall not be ashamed to look the universe in the face,

whatever the future may have in store for him."--"Agnosticism," in

Nineteenth Century, Feb. 1889. This, however, us evidently not a

"faith," but, as he says, a "method," which in its application may

yield positive or negative results, as the ease may be. Behind it, at

the same time, lies, in his ease, the conviction that real answers to

the greater questions of religions are "not merely actually impossible,

but theoretically inconceivable."--Ibid. p. 182.

[124] John i. 18.

[125] Cf. First Principles, pp. 74, 75, 110.

[126] First Principles, p. 88.

[127] First Principles, pp. 87-92. "Still more manifest," he says,

"will this truth become when it is observed that our conception of the

Relative itself disappears, if our conception of the Absolute is a pure

negation. . . . What, then, becomes of the assertion that the Absolute

is conceived merely by a negation of conceivability,' or as the mere

absence of the conditions under which consciousness is possible'? If

the Non-relative or Absolute is present in thought only as a mere

negation, then the relation between it and the Relative becomes

unthinkable, because one of the terms of the relation is absent from

consciousness. And if this relation is unthinkable, then is the

Relative itself unthinkable, for want of its antithesis; whence results

the disappearance of all thought whatever."--P. 91.

[128] First Principles, pp. 89, 91, 94-97. Cf. Nineteenth Century, July

1884, p. 24.

[129] First Principles, pp. 78, 79, 81. This is qualified in other

places by such phrases as "possible existence out of all relation"

(Mansel), and "of which no necessary relation can be predicted," pp.

39, 81. But this qualification seems unnecessary, for it is only as out

of relation that by definition it is the Absolute.

[130] Even in thus passage above quoted, we have the contradictio in

adjecto of "the relation between it (i.e. the Non-Relative) and the

Relative."--P. 91.

[131] Eccles. Instit. p. 839.

[132] E.g. Eccles. Instit. p. 843.

[133] First Principles, p. 189; cf. Eccles. Instit. p. 843.

[134] First Principles, p. 99.

[135] Eccles. Instit. p. 843.--"But one truth," he says, "must grow

ever clearer --the truth that there is an Inscrutable Existence

everywhere manifested, to which he can neither find nor conceive either

beginning or end. Amid the mysteries which become the more mysterious

the more they are thought about, there will remain the one absolute

certainty that he is ever in presence of one Infinite and Eternal

Energy, from which all things proceed."

[136] "I held at the outset, and continue to hold, that this

Inscrutable Existence which science, in the last resort, is compelled

to recognise as unreached by its deepest analysis of matter, motion,

thought, and feeling, stands towards our general conception of things

in substantially the same relation as does this Creative Power asserted

by Theology."--Nineteenth Century, July 1884, p. 24. Mr. Spencer tells

us that the words quoted in the last note were originally written--"one

Infinite and Eternal Energy by which all things are treated and

sustained."--Ibid. p. 4.

[137] Eccles. Instit. pp. 839, 841.

[138] Mr. Spencer, when pressed in controversy by Mr. Harrison, takes

great pains to show how positive his conception of the "Unknowable" is.

He is astonished that his opponent should assert that "none of the

positive attributes which have ever been predicated of God can be used

of this Energy"; maintains that, instead of being an Everlasting No,

Agnosticism is "an Everlasting Yea". denies that Agnosticism is

"anything more than silent with respect to personality," seeing that

"duty requires us neither to affirm nor deny personality"; holds that

the Unknowable is not an "All nothingness" but the "All- Being,"

reiterates that this Reality "stands towards the universe and towards

ourselves in the same relation as an anthropomorphic Creator was

supposed to stand," and "bears a like relation with it not only to

human thought, but to human feeling," etc.--Nineteenth Century, July

1884, pp. 5-7, 25. Mr. Harrison has no difficulty in showing in what

contradictions Mr. Spencer entangles himself by the use of such

language.--Ibid. Sept., pp. 358, 359.

[139] Cosmic Philosophy, ii. p. 470: Idea. of God, Pref. p. 28.

[140] Job xi. 7.

[141] Rom. xi. 33.

[142] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

[143] "God." says Augustine. "is more truly thought than He is uttered

and exists more truly than He is thought."--De Trinitate. Book vii. ch.

4. "Not the definitely-known God, " says Professor Veitch, "not the

unknown God, is our last word, far less the unknowable God, but the

ever-to-be-known God."--Knowing and Being, p. 323.

[144] Letter to Oldenburg, Epist. xxi.

[145] First Principles, pp. 159-171.

[146] Cf. Fiske, Idea of God, Pref. p. 15; and Chapman's Pre-Organic

Evolution, p. 254.

[147] Lux Mundi, p. 59. J. S. Mill has said: "The reason, then, why

Monotheism may be accepted as the representative of Theism in the

abstract is not so much because it is the Theism of all the more

improved portions of the human race, as because it is the only Theism

which can claim for itself any footing on a scientific ground. Every

other theory of the government of the universe by supernatural beings

is inconsistent either with the carrying on of that government through

a continual series of natural antecedents, according to fixed laws, or

with the interdependence of each of these series upon all the rest,

which are two of the most general results of science."--Three Essays on

Religion, p. 133.

[148] See Note B.--Old Testament Monotheism.

[149] Cf. Naville's Modern Physics--"The Philosophy of the Founders of

Modern Physics," pp. 151-243 (Eng. trans.); Fairbairn's Studies in the

Phil. of Rel. and Hist--" Theism and Scientific Speculationi," pp.

66-71; and an article by Dr. Alex. Mair, on "The Contribution of

Christianity to Science," in Presbyterian Review, Jan. 1888.

[150] So Mr. Spencer speaks of "the naturally-revealed end towards

which the Power manifested throughout Evolution works."--Data of

Ethics, p. 171.

[151] Unseen Universe, 5th ed., p. 88.

[152] First Principles, p. 123.

[153] Cf. Chapman's Pre-Organic Evolution, pp. 226, 227, 251, 282.

[154] First Principles, p. 109

[155] Prof. Seth has justly said: "Nothing can be more certain than

that all philosophical explanation must be explanation of the lower by

the higher, and not vice versa; and if self consciousness is the

highest fact we know, then we are justified in using the conception of

self-consciousness as our best key to the ultimate nature of existence

as a whole."--Hegelianism and Personality, p. 89.

[156] Data of Ethics, p. 171.

[157] Data of Ethics, p. 257.

[158] Cf. article by Professor Laidlaw on "Modern Thought in relation

to Christianity and the Christian Church," Presbyterian Review, 1885.

p. 618.

[159] Data of Ethics, pp. 253-257.

[160] On this ambiguity in Hegel's doctrine, see Prof. Seth,

Hegelianism and Personality, Lect. V.; and the criticism in Dorner,

Person of Christ, v. pp 147-162 (Eng. trans.).

[161] See Lecture II. p. 59. The Neo-Hegelian theory, however, is far

from satisfactory from the point of view of Theism in other respects.

[162] Outlines of the Phil. of Religion, p. 69 (Eng. trans.). See the

whole discussion (chap. iv.), and the fuller treatment in the

Microcosmus, ii. pp. 659-688. Lotze's closing words in the latter are:

"Perfect Personality is in God only, to all finite minds there is

allotted but a pale copy thereof: the finiteness of the finite is not a

producing condition of this Personality, but a limit and a hindrance to

its development." Cf. Ritsclhl, Recht. und Ver. iii. pp. 220 ff.

[163] Idea of God, p. 117. Cf. the instructive treatment of this

subject of Personality in Professor Iverach's Is God Knowable? pp. 7,

12-37, 223, 233.

[164] Kritik d. r. Vernunft, p. 416 (Eng. trans. p. 363).

[165] See an acute criticism of Kant's Theory of Knowledge in Stahlin's

Kant, Lotze, und Ritschl, pp. 6-83 (Eng. trans.).

[166] Philosophy and Theology, p. 45. On the theistic proofs generally,

and Kant's criticism of them, cf. Dr. J. Caird's Philosophy of

Religion, pp. 133-159; Prof. E. Caird's Philosophy of Kant, ii. pp.

102-129; and Dr. Stirling's work cited above.

[167] Kritik, p. 431 (Eng. trans. p. 378). See Note C.--Kant on the

Cosmological Argument.

[168] Kritik, p. 102 (Eng. trans. p. 68).

[169] Cf. Dr. Stirling, in Phil. and Theol. p. 126.

[170] Dr. Stirling says, replying to Hume: "No multiplication of pacts

will make a whole potent if each part is impotent. You will hardly

reach a valid conclusion where your every step is invalid.It as-ill be

vain to extract one necessity out of a whole infinitude of

contingencies. Nor is it at all possible for such infinitude of

contingencies to be even conceivable by reason. It each link of the

chain hangs on another, the whole will hang, and only hang, even in

eternity, unsupported, hike some stark serpent, unless you find a hook

for it. Add weakness to weakness, in any quantity, you will never make

strength."--Phil. and Theol. p. 262.

[171] Cf. Caird, Phil. of Religion, p. 135.

[172] Der christ. Glaube, secs. 3 and 4.

[173] See Note D.--Kant on the Teleological Argument.

[174] Kritik, p. 436 (Eng. trans. 384).

[175] No recent school has done more to elaborate the proof of

teleology in Nature than that from which the opposite might have been

expected--the pessimistic school. Cf. Schopenhauer's Die Welt als Wille

und Vorstellung (Book ii. chap. 26, "On Teleology"), and Hartmann's

Phil. d. Unbewussten, dassim.

[176] Thus, e.g., Strauss, Haeckel, Helmboltz, G. Romanes ("Physicus").

Helmboltz, as quoted by Strauss, says: "Darwin's theory shows bony

adaptation of structure in organisms can originate without any

intermixture of intelligence, through the blind operation of a natural

law."--Der alte und der neue Glaube,p. 216. Mr. Romanes says: "If

[plants and animals] were specially created, the evidence of

supernatural design remains unrefuted and irrefutable, whereas if they

were slowly evolved, that evidence has been utterly and for ever

destroyed."--Organic Evolution, p. 13. On the bearings of evolution on

design, and on the design argument generally in its present relations

to science see Janet's Final Causes (Eng. trans.); Stirling's

Philosophy und Theology Kennedy's Natural Theology and Modern Thought

(1891); Row's Christian Theism (1890); Martineau's Study of Religion

(i. pp. 270-333); Flint's Theism; Mivart's Lessons from Nature;

Conder's Basis of Faith; Murphy's Habit und Intelligence; Ebrard's

Christian Apologetics, ii. pp. 1-56 (Eng. trans.); Argyll's Reign of

Law, etc. On Kant's views on evolution and on final causes as connected

therewith, cf. Caird's Phil. of Kant, ii. 495-499.

[177] See Note E.--Schools of Evolutionists.

[178] Cf. Jevons, Principles of Science, ii. p. 462; J. S. Mill, Three

Essays on Religion, p. 171. Mill concludes that "the adaptations in

Nature afford a large balance of probability in favour of creation by

intelligence,"--Pg. 174.

[179] See passages in Note E.

[180] Mr. Spencer shows that Natural Selection fails as an explanation

in proportion as life grows complex. "As fast," he says, "as the

faculties are multiplied, so fast does it become possible for the

several members of a species to have various kinds' of superiority over

one another. While one saves its life by higher speed, another does the

like by clearer vision, another by keener scent, another by quicker

bearing, another by greater strength, another by unusual power of

enduring cold und hunger, another by special sagacity, another by

special timidity, another by special courage, and others by other

bodily and mental attributes. Now it is unquestionably true that, other

things being equal, each of these attributes giving its possessor an

extra chance of life, us likely to be transmitted to posterity. But

there seems no reason to suppose that it will be increased in

subsequent generations by natural selection. . . . If those members of

the species which have but ordinary shares of it nevertheless survive

by virtue of other superiorities which they severally possess, then it

is not easy to see how this particular attribute can be developed by

natural selection in subsequent generations," etc.--Principles of

Biology, sec. 166. Cf. Alfred W. Bennett in Martineau's Study of

Religion, i. 280-282.

[181] Cf. Dawson, Modern Ideas of Evolution, pp. 106, 107; The Chain of

Life in Geol. Time, p. 229. "The progress of life," he says, "in

geological time has not been uniform or uninterrupted. . . .

Evolutionists themselves, those at least who are willing to allow their

theory to be at all modified by facts, now perceive this; and hence we

have the doctrine advanced by Mivart, Le Conte, and others, of critical

periods,' or periods of rapid evolution alternating with others of

greater quiescence."--Mod. Ideas, pp. 106, 107. See in both works the

examples given of this apparition of species.'

[182] Principal Shairp says: "To begin with the outward world, there

is, I shall not say so much the mark of design on all outward things as

an experience forced in upon the mind of the thoughtful naturalist

that, penetrate unto nature wherever he may, thought has been there

before him; that, to quote the words of one of the most distinguished,

there is really a plan, which may he read in the relations which you

and I, and all his-lining beings scattered over the surface of our

earth, hold to each other.'"--Studies ins Poetry and Philosophy, p.

367. Cf. also on this aspect of the subject, M'Cosh, Method of Divine

Government, pp. 75-151; and on the argument from Beauty and Sublimity

in Nature, Kennedy's Natural Theology and Modern Thought, Lecture IV.

(Donnellan Lectures).

[183] Cf. Lecture IV. on Creation. It may be asked, besides, if it is

so certain, as Kant assumes, that only a finite power is needed to

create--I do not say a universe, but even an atom; whether there are

not finite effects, such as creation, to which only Omnipotence is

competent. The point is not that it is an atom, but that it is created.

[184] Kritik, pp. 417-424 (Eng. trans. pp. 364-370). See Note F.--Kant

on the Ontological Argument.

[185] Phil. and Theol. pp. 182-193.

[186] Prol. to Ethics, p. 23.

[187] See Note G.--Rational Realism.

[188] The Phil. Basis of theism, p.3; cf. pp. 82, 146, 560, etc.

[189] This is true of the lowest as well as of the highest

religions,--cf. Waitz on The religion of the Negroes, in Max Muller's

Hibbert Lectures, pp. 106, 107,--but is much more conspicuous in the

oldest forms of natural religion, e.g. in the Vedic, Babylonian, and

Egyptian religions. On the general facts, cf. Max Muller's works,

Revelle's Hist. of Religions, Sayce's Hibbert Lectures on The Religion

of Ancient Egypt, Fairbairn's Studies, Loring Brace's The Unknown God,

Pressense's The Ancient World and Christianity (Eng. trans.), etc.; and

see Note F. to Lecture V.

[190] Rom. i. 20.

[191] Wordsworth's Tintern Abbey.

[192] Cf. Kritik d. r. Vernunft, pp. 548-557, on "The Ideal of the

Highest Good as a Determining Ground of the last end of Pure Reason"

(Eng. trans. pp. 487-496); and the Kritik d. praktischen Vernunft, Part

II. 5--"The Being of God as a Postulate of the Pure Practical Reason."

[193] Philosophy of Kant, ii. pp. 504, 505.

[194] Cf. on the moral argument, Conder's Basis of Faith, pp. 383-431;

Martineau's Study of Religion, ii. pp. 1-42; Kennedy's Natural Theology

and Modern Thought, Lecture VI., "Kant and the Moral Proof"; and

M'Cosh's Divine Government, Book i. chap. 3.

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APPENDIX TO LECTURE III.

GOD AS RELIGIOUS POSTULATE.

IF we are to speak of God as a postulate of the soul, we must speak of

Him as a postulate for the whole need of the soul--for its religious

and its rational, not less than for its moral need. We must speak of

Him also in such a way as to show that this postulate is not an

arbitrary one, but springs necessarily from the soul's rational and

moral constitution, and so as to explain the conviction of its truth by

which it is accompanied. But this can only be done by showing that

there are laws of man's spiritual nature which imperatively demand such

and such an object, and by making it clear what these are. In like

manner I would lay it down as a first principle, as against all

psychological and empirical theories of religion, which propose to

account for men's religious ideas and beliefs from natural causes

(hopes and fears, animism, ghosts, etc.), without raising the question

of how far they correspond with any outward reality, that no theory of

religion can be adequate which does not cast light on the deepest

ground of the soul's movement towards God, and on the nature of the

object which alone can adequately satisfy it. This again assumes that

there are laws of the spiritual nature which determine beforehand what

the character of the object must be which alone can satisfy the

religious necessity, and which impel the soul unceasingly to a search

after that object. This, however, is precisely what I consider the

truth about religion to be,- as a survey of its manifestations in

history reveals its nature to us. Religion is not an arbitrary product

of the soul. Even in the lowest and poorest religions we see something

struggling into consciousness,--a want, a desire, a need,--which is not

measured by the extent of its actual knowledge of the Divine. Religion

we might define from this point of view as the search of the soul for

an adequate spiritual object to rest in, combined with the

consciousness that there is such an object, and with the impulse to

seek after it and when found, to surrender itself to it. Now what kind

of object is it which the soul thus demands? This can only be

determined by the study of its laws, as these spring from its essential

nature, and are exhibited on the field of historical religion. And

here, I think, we are warranted to say--

1. That the soul, as itself personal, demands for the satisfaction of

its religious need, a personal object. From whatever source it derives

its idea of the Divine (sense of dependence, outward impressions of

nature, moral consciousness), it invariably personalises it. Over

against its "I" it seeks a "Thou," and will rest satisfied with nothing

less.

2. That the soul, as thinking spirit, demands an infinite object. This

is a proposition of some importance, and requires more careful

consideration. We cannot err in seeking with Hegel the deepest ground

of man's capacity for religion in his possession of the power of

thought. The power of thought is not the whole of religion, but it is

that which gives man his capacity for religion. The lower animals are

irrational, and they have no religion. Thought, in this connection, may

be described as the universalising principle in human nature. It is

that which heads us to negate the limits of the finite. It is that

which impels man from fact to principle, from law to wider law, from

the collection of facts and laws in the universe to the principle on

which the whole depends. It is the element of boundlessness in

imagination, of illimitableness in desire, of insatiableness in the

appetite for knowledge. On the side of religion we see it constantly at

work, modifying the idea of the object of religion, and bringing it

more into harmony with what it is felt that an object of worship ought

to be. One way in which this is done is by the choice of the grander

objects of nature--the sky, sun, mountains, etc.--as the embodiments

and manifestations of the Divine. Another way is by the mere

multiplication of the objects of idolatry--the mind seeking in this

way, as it were, to fill up the gap in its depths. Another way is

physical magnitude--hugeness. "Nebuchadnezzar the king made an image of

gold, whose height was threescore cubits and the breadth thereof six

cubits; he set it up in the plain of Dura." [195]

This love of the colossal is seen in most oriental religions (e.g.

Egyptian, Assyrian). Another way is by what Max Muller calls

Henotheism--fixing on one special deity, and treating it for the time

being as if it was alone and supreme. Another way is by creating a

"system," placing one deity at the head of the Pantheon, and making the

rest subordinate. We have examples in the position held by Zeus and

Jupiter in the Greek and Roman religions--a position described by Tiele

as one of "Monarchism allied to Monotheism." Another way is by tracing

back the origin of the gods, as in Hesiod, to some uncreated principle;

or by placing behind them a fate, necessity, or destiny, which is a

higher power than they. Finally, in the philosophical schools, we have

reasoned Theism, or Pantheism, or some cosmic theory in which the

universe itself becomes God. Through all, the search of the soul for an

infinite is clearly discernible.

3. That the soul, as itself ethical, demands an ethical object. It does

this in all the higher forms of religion. It may be observed that, once

the idea of an ethical God has been brought home to the mind, no lower

conception of the Deity can be accepted. The agnostic himself--strongly

as he protests against the knowableness of God--will yet be the first

to maintain that it is impossible to entertain, even as hypothesis, any

idea of God which represents Him as false, cruel, tyrannical,

revengeful, unjust. He knows enough about God, at any rate, to be sure

that He is not this.

4. I may add that the soul, as itself an intelligence, demands a

knowable object. It has previously been shown that, for purposes of

religion, an unknowable God is equivalent to no God at all. Religion

seeks not only a knowledge of its object, but such a knowledge as can

be made the basis of communion. Here, again, we are led by the very

idea of religion, to the expectation of Revelation. The bearing of all

this on the Christian view is very obvious, It gives us a test of the

validity of the Christian view, and it explains to us why this view

comes home to the spirit of man with the self-evidencing power that it

does. It comes to the spirit as light--attests its truth by its

agreement with the laws of the spirit. The worth of this attestation is

not weakened by the fact that the Christian religion itself mostly

creates the very capacity by which its truth can be perceived--creates

the organ for its own verification. It makes larger demands upon the

spirit, calls forth higher ideas than any other; but, in doing so,

reveals at the same time the spirit to itself. Brought to the foregoing

tests, it discovers to us a God personal, infinite, ethical, and

knowable, because self-revealing, and in this way answers the demands

of the religious spirit.

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[195] Dan. iii. 1.

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"By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of

God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which do

appear."--Epistle to Hebrews.

"Man is neither the master nor the slave of Nature; he is its

interpreter and living word. Man consummates the universe, and gives a

voice to the mute creation."--Ed. Quinet.

"He who believes in God must also believe in the continuance of man's

life after death. Without this there could be no world which would be

conceivable as a purpose of God."--Rothe.

"I trust I have not wasted breath; I think we are not wholly brain,

Magnetic mockeries; not in vain, Like Paul with beasts, I fought with

Death;

"Not only cunning casts in clay: Let Science prove we are, and then

What matters Science unto men, At least to me? I would not stay."

TENNYSON.

"Does the soul survive the body? Is there God's self, no or yes?" R.

Browning.

LECTURE IV.

THE POSTULATE OF THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF THE WORLD IN REGARD TO NATURE AND MAN.

Introductory

The Christian doctrine of God as personal, ethical, and self-revealing,

carries with it a second postulate as to the nature of man. The

Christian doctrine of God and the Christian doctrine of man are in fact

correlatives. For how should man know that there is a personal,

ethical, self-revealing God,--how should he be able to frame the

conception of such a Being, or to attach any meaning to the terms

employed to express His existence,--unless he were himself rational and

moral--a spiritual personality? The two views imply each other, and

stand or fall together. We may express this second postulate of the

Christian view in the words, Man made in the image of God. [196]

This truth of a natural kinship between the human spirit and the Divine

is at once the oldest declaration in the Bible about man, and is

implied in every doctrine of the Christian system. It is implied, as

already said, in the knowledge of God, and in the call to fellowship

with Him in holiness and love. It is implied in the Christian view of

sin; for sin in the Christian view derives its tragic significance from

the fact that it is a revolt of the creature will against the Divine

will, to which it is by nature bound, that it cuts the soul off from

its true life and blessedness in union with God. It is implied in

regeneration, and in the capacity of the soul to receive the Spirit of

God. For the Spirit of God does not enter the soul as something foreign

and extraneous to it. He enters it as the principle of its true life.

What, on the one side, we call the operations of the Spirit, or the

presence of the Spirit in the soul, we call, on the other, the new life

itself. The Divine and human here are but one and the same thing on two

different sides. It is implied also in the call of man to a Divine

sonship. It is the case, no doubt,--and the fact is one to be carefully

considered,--that in Christ's teaching God is not called the Father of

all men indiscriminately, nor is the title "son of God" given to all

men indiscriminately. It is used only of those who are the subjects of

spiritual renewal, and who bear in some measure the moral and spiritual

likeness of the Father. [197] It does not denote a merely natural or

physical relationships, but a moral bond as well. Deliberate and

hardened transgressors are spoken of, not as children of Gods, but

rather as children of the devil. [198] But this is only because these

wicked persons have turned their backs on their own true destination.

As made by God, and as standing in his normal relation to Him, man is

without doubt a son. Hence, in the Gospel of Luke, though not by Christ

Himself, Adam is called "the son of God," [199] and Paul does not

scruple to quote the saying of the heathen poet, "For we also are His

offspring." [200] The fact that the title "son of God" should belong to

any, already implies a natural kinship between God and man, else the

higher relationship would not be possible. If there were not already a

God-related element in the human spirit, no subsequent act of grace

could confer on man this spiritual dignity. [201]

Not only in the Christian view in generals, but specially in the great

central doctrine of the Incarnation, is this truth of man made in the

image of God seen to be implied. I have already referred to certain

services which the German speculative movement in the beginning of the

century rendered to Christianity, in laying stress on the essential

kinship which exists between the human spirit and the Divine, a thought

never since lost sight of in theology. So long as the world is

conceived of in deistic separation from God, it is inevitable that the

Divine and human should be regarded as two opposed essences, between

which true union is impossible. Once this point of view is overcome,

and it is seen that the bond between God and man is inner and

essential--that there is a God-related element in the human spirit

which makes man capable of receiving from the Divine, and of becoming

its living image--a great step is taken towards removing objections to

the Incarnation. A union between the Divine and human is seen to be

possible, to the intimacy of which no limits can be set,--which,

indeed, only reaches its perfection when it becomes personal. The

Incarnation has not only this doctrine of man as its presupposition--it

is, besides, the highest proof of its truth. Christ, in His own

Persons, is the demonstration of the truth of the Bible doctrine about

man. To get a knowledge of the true essence of anything, we do not look

at its ruder and less perfect specimens, but at what it is at its best.

Christ is the best of humanity. He is not only the Revelation of God to

humanity, but the Revelation of humanity to itself. In Him we see in

perfect form what man in the Divine idea of him is. We see how man is

made in the image of Gods, and how humanity is constituted the perfect

organ for the Revelation of the Divine.

It is evident that in the Christian view the doctrine of man links

itself very closely with the doctrine of nature--of creation. It is not

merely that man is related to nature by his body, but he is in

Scripture, as in science, the highest being in nature. He is, in some

sense, the final cause of nature, the revelation of its purpose, the

lord and ruler of nature. Nature exists with supreme reference to him;

is governed with a view to his ends; suffers in his fall; and is

destined to profit by his Redemption. [202] I propose to begin with the

natural basis--the doctrine of creation.

I. The natural basis--the doctrine of creation.

I. The Bible affirms, and perhaps it is the only book that does so,

that all things, visible and invisible, have originated from God by a

free act of creation. [203] The Bible doctrine of creation is something

more than the Mosaic cosmogony. For my present purpose it is

indifferent how we interpret the first chapter of Genesis--whether as

the result of direct Revelation, or as the expression of certain great

religious truths in such forms as the natural knowledge of the age

admitted of. I believe myself that the narrative gives evidence of its

Divine original in its total difference of character from all heathen

cosmogonies, but this is a view I need not press. [204] The main point

is the absolute derivation of all things from God, and on this truth

the Scripture as a whole gives no uncertain sound. Discussions have

been raised as to the exact force of the Hebrew word (bara) used to

express the idea of creation, [205] but even this is of subordinate

importance in view of the fact, which none will dispute, that the

uniform teaching of Scripture is that the universe had its origin, not

from the fashioning of pre-existent matter, but directly from the will

and word of the Almighty. [206] "He spake, and it was done; He

commanded, and it stood fast." [207]

Not only is this doctrine of creation fundamental in Scripture, but it

is of great practical significance. It might be thought, of what

practical importance is it to us to know how the world originated? Is

not this a question of purely speculative interest? But a moment's

reflection will convince us that it is not so. The vital thing in

religion is the relation of dependence. To feel that we and our world,

that our human life and all that we are and have, absolutely depend on

God,--this is the primary attitude of religion. For if they do not thus

depend,--if there is anything in the universe which exists out of and

independently of God,--then what guarantee have we for the unfailing

execution of His purposes, what ground have we for that assured trust

in His Providence which Christ inculcates, what security have we that

all things will work together for good? But to affirm that all things

depend on God is just in another way to affirm the creation of all

things by God. They would not depend on Him if He were not their

Creator. They do depend on Him, because they are created by Him. The

doctrine of creation, therefore, is not a mere speculation.--Only this

conviction that it is "the Lord that made heaven and earth" [208]

--that "of Him, amid through Him, and to Him, are all things" [209]

--that He has created all things, and for His pleasure they are and

were created, [210] --can give us the confidence we need in a holy and

wise government of the universe, and in a final triumph of good over

evil.

If the doctrine of creation is the only one which meets the wants of

our religious nature, it may new further be affirmed that it is a

doctrine consonant with reason, and consistent with all true knowledge.

It is opposed, first, to all forms of dualism; secondly, to a merely

logical derivation of the universe; and thirdly, to the atheistic

assertion of the self-subsistence and eternity of the universe. Let us

glance briefly at these various oppositions.

1. Partly on metaphysical, partly on moral grounds, some have revived

the old Platonic doctrine of an eternal matter, or ether independent

principle, which exists alongside the Deity, and conditions and limits

Him in His working. Thus Dr. Martineau holds that, in order to afford

an objective field for the Divine operations, we must assume something

to have been always there, a primitive datum, eternal as God Himself;

[211] while the late J. S. Mill thought the difficulties of the

universe could be best explained by supposing the Creator hampered by

the insufficiency and intractableness of the materials He had to work

with. [212] Karl Peters, a disciple of the pessimistic school already

mentioned, sets up space as a second eternal principle beside God;

[213] and others have held similar views. Philosophically, these

theories are condemned by the fact that they set up two absolutes in

the universe, which, if they really were absolutes, could never be

brought into any relation to each other, much less be embraced in a

single act of knowledge. Suppose this eternal matter to exist outside

of God, how could it ever get to be known by God, or how could He ever

act upon it, seeing that it has its being utterly apart from Him? Or,

if it is not out of relation to His intelligence, by what middle term

is this relation brought about? This, which applies to two absolutes,

applies, of course, much more to a theory which starts from an infinity

of independent atoms-- that is, from an infinite of absolutes. But

these theories are weighted with difficulties of another kind. An

absolutely quality less matter, or u le, such as Plato supposes, [214]

is unthinkable and impossible. Plato himself is compelled to describe

it as a me on, or nothing. It is a mere abstraction. [215] Is Dr.

Martineau's eternal matter, which has no properties of any kind till

the Creator bestows them upon it, in any better case? When, again, Mr.

Mill identifies this eternal element, not with naked matter, but with

the matter and force which we know-- with constituted matter, clothed

with all its existing properties and laws--are we not in the new

predicament of having to account for this matter? How came it there?

Whence this definite constitution? Whence these powers and properties

and laws which, in their marvellous adjustments and inter- relations,

show as much evidence of design as any other parts of the universe? To

suppose that "the given properties of matter and force, working

together and fitting into one another" [216] --which is Mr. Mill's own

phrase--need no explanation, but only the uses subsequently made of

them, is to manifest a strange blindness to the fundamental conditions

of the problem.

2.If the Scripture view of creation is opposed to dualism in all its

forms, it is not less opposed to every theory of a mere logical

derivation of the universe--whether, with Spinoza, the universe is

supposed to flow, with logical necessity, from an absolute substance;

[217] or with Hegel, to be the development of an impersonal Reason; or

with Green, to arise from a Reason that is self-conscious. It is this

doctrine of a necessary derivation of the universe which takes the

place in modern times of the old theories of emanation; but I shall

only make two remarks on it. (1)It involves an amazing assumption. The

assumption is that this universe, which exhibits so much evidence of

wise arrangement, and of the free selection of means to attain ends, is

the only universe possible, and could not, by any supposition, be other

than it is. Such a theory may be the only one open to those who hold

the ground of the universe to be impersonal; but it is not one which a

true Theism can sanction, and it is unprovable. Why should infinite

wisdom not choose its ends, and also freely choose the means by which

they are to be accomplished? Which is the higher view--that which

regards the Divine Being as bound down to a single system--one, too,

which wisdom, love, and freedom have no share in producing, but which

flows from the nature of its cause with the same necessity with which

the properties of a triangle flow from the triangle; or that which

supposes the universe to have originated in a free, intelligent act,

based on the counsels of an infinite wisdom and goodness? [218] (2) As

in this theory no place is left f or freedom in God, so logically it

leaves no place for freedom in man. Freedom implies initiative,

control, a choice between possible alternatives. But, on this theory we

are considering, freedom can never be more than a semblance. Whether

the individual recognises it or not, all that he sees around him, and

all that takes place within him, is but the working out of an immanent

logical necessity. [219] Things are what they are by a necessity as

stringent as that which obtains in mathematics, and as little room is

left for human initiative as on the most thorough-going mechanical or

materialistic hypothesis. History, too, shows that the step from the

one kind of determinism to the other is never difficult to take. The

consciousness of (pg. 126-127 missing) freedom, however, is a fact too

deeply rooted in our personality; too many interests depond on it to

admit of its being this put aside at the bidding of any theory,

metaphysical or other; and so long as human freedom stands, this view

of the origin of the universe can never gain general acceptance.

3. In the third place, the doctrine of creation is opposed to the

atheistic assertion of the self-subsistence and eternity of the

universe. I may here point out the indications which science itself

gives that the universe is neither self-subsistent nor eternal.

Science, indeed, cannot prove the creation of the world, but it may

bring us to that point at which we are compelled to assume creation.

(1) In the analysis of nature, science compels us to go back to

primordial elements. The atomic constitution of matter seems one of the

surest results of science, [220] and it is not yet suggested that these

primordial elements are developed from one another by any process of

evolution, or that their homogeneous structure and identical properties

are to be accounted for by natural selection or any similar cause.

Here, then, is one limit to evolution, and it is important that those

who are disposed to regard evolution as all-embracing should take

notice of it. But science not only tells us that the universe is built

up of atoms, it finds that each of these atoms is a little world in

itself in intricacy and complexity of structure; [221] and the fact

that all atoms of the same class are exactly alike, perfect copies of

each other in size, shape, weight, and proportion, irresistibly

suggests the inference that they have a common cause. "When we see a

real number of things," says Sir John Herschel, "precisely alike, we do

not believe this similarity to have originated except from a common

principle independent of them." Applying this to the atoms, he

observes, "the discoveries alluded to effectually destroy the idea of

an eternally self-existent matter, by giving to each of its atoms the

essential characters at once of a manufactured article and a

subordinate agent." [222] This reasoning, I think, will command general

assent, though fastidiousness may be offended with the phrase

"manufactured article" as applied to a work of Deity.

(2) Science compels us to go back to a beginning in time. No doctrine

comes here more powerfully to our support than the doctrine of

evolution which some suppose to be a denial of creation. If the

universe were a stable system,--i.e. if it were not in a condition of

constant development and change,--it might with some plausibility be

argued that it had existed from eternity. But our knowledge of the past

history of the world shows us that this is not its character; that, on

the contrary, it is progressive and developing. [223] Now it lies in

the very thought of a developing universe that, as we trace it back

through narrower and narrower circles of development, we come at last

to a beginning,--to some point from which the evolution started. [224]

The alternative to this is an eternal succession of cycles of

existence, a theory which has often recurred, but which brings us back

to the impossible conception of a chain without a first link, of a

series every term of which depends on a preceding, while yet the whole

series depends on nothing. [225] Science can give no proof of an

eternal succession, but so far as it has any voice on the subject

points in an opposite direction, by showing that when the universe has

parted with its energy, as it is in constant process of doing, it has

no means of restoring it again. [226]

(3) Finally, it is the view of many distinguished evolutionists, that

the course of evolution itself compels us to recognise the existence of

breaks in the chain of development, where, as they think, some new and

creative cause must have come into operation. I may instance Mr.

Wallace, a thoroughgoing evolutionist, who recognises three such

"stages in the development of the organic world, when some new cause or

power must necessarily have come into action," viz. (a) at the

introduction of life, (b) at the introduction of sensation or

consciousness, (c) at the introduction of man. [227] With the view I

hold of development as a process, determined from within, I do not feel

the same need for emphasising these as "breaks." We have, indeed, at

the points named, the appearance of something entirely new, but so have

we, in a lesser degree, with every advance or improvement in the

organism, e.g., with the first rudiment of an eye, or of a new organ of

any kind. The action of the creative cause is spread along the whole

line of the advance, revealing itself in higher and higher potencies as

the development proceeds. It only breaks out more manifestly at the

points named, where it founds a new order or kingdom of existence.

[228]

While thus advocating, as part of the doctrine of creation, a beginning

of the world in time, I am not insensible to the enormous difficulties

involved in that conception. Prior to that beginning we have still, it

may appear, to postulate a beginningless eternity, during which God

existed alone. The Divine purpose to create was there, but it had not

passed into act. Here arises the difficulty. How are we to fill up in

thought these blank eternal ages in the Divine life? The doctrine of

the Trinity, with its suggestion of an internal Divine life and love,

comes in as an aid, [229] but, abstracting from the thought of the

world, of the universe afterwards to be created, we know of nothing to

serve as a content of the Divine mind, unless it be the so-called

"eternal truths." So that here we are in, presence of a great deep. A

yet greater difficulty arises when we ask, Since God purposed to

create, why was creation so long delayed? Why was a whole eternity

allowed to elapse before the purpose was put into execution? [230] If

it was a satisfaction to love and wisdom to produce a universe, why was

creation not as eternal as the purpose of it? Why an eternity's

quiescence, and then this transient act? Or rather, since in eternity

no one moment is indistinguishable from another, why this particular

moment chosen for creation? The very mentioning of these difficulties

suggests that somehow we are on a wrong track, and that the solution

lies--since solution there must be, whether we can reach it or not--in

the revisal of the notions we set out with as to the relations of

eternity to time.

First, some have sought to cut this knot by the doctrine of an Eternal

Creation. God, it is thought, did not wait through a solitary eternity

before He called the world into existence--the act of creation is

coeval with His Being, and the world, though a creature and dependent,

is eternal as Himself. This was the doctrine of Origen in the early

Church, of Erigena in the Middle Ages, and has been revived by Rothe,

Darner, Lotze, and many others in modern times. It is carefully to be

distinguished from the doctrine of a pre-existent eternal matter

formerly referred to. But I do not think it solves the difficulty. It

is either only the doctrine of an eternal series of worlds in another

form,. and is exposed to all the difficulties of that assumption; or it

seeks to evade these difficulties by the hypothesis of an undeveloping

spiritual world, standing, as Dorner says, in the light of eternity,

antecedent to the existing one--an hypothesis which leaves the origin

of the temporal and developing world precisely where it was. Besides,

how is the purpose of God ever to be summed up into a unity, if there

is literally no beginning and no goal in creation? [231] Secondly,

another form of solution is that of the speculative philosophers, who

would have us regard the distinction of time and eternity as due only

to our finite standpoint, and who bid us raise ourselves to that higher

point of view from which all things are beheld, in Spinoza's phrase,

sub specie aeternitatis. [232] The meaning of this is, that what exists

for our consciousness as a time-development exists for the Divine

consciousness as an eternally complete whole. For God, temporal

succession has no existence. The universe, with all its determinations,

past, present, and future, stands before the Divine mind in

simultaneous reality. Language of this kind is found in Spinoza,

Fichte, Hegel, Green, [233] and is to be met with sometimes in more

orthodox theologians. It is, however, difficult to see what meaning can

be attached to it which does not reduce all history to an illusion.

[234] For, after all, time-development is a reality. There is

succession in our conscious life, and in the events of nature. The

things that happened yesterday are not the things that are happening

to-day. The things that are happening today are not the things that

will happen to-morrow. The past is past; the future is not yet come. It

is plain that if time is a reality, the future is not yet present to

God, except ideally. The events that will happen to-morrow are not yet

existent. Else life is a dream; all, as the Indian philosophers say, is

Maya,--illusion, appearance, seeming. Even if life is a dream, there is

succession in the thoughts of that dream, and time is still not got rid

of. I cannot see, therefore, that without reducing the process of the

world to unreality, this view of it as an eternally completed fact can

be upheld. In an ideal sense the world may be, doubtless is, present to

the Divine mind; but as regards the parts of it yet future, it cannot

be so actually. [235] What other solution, then, is possible? The

solution must lie in getting a proper idea of the relation of eternity

to time, and this, so far as I can see, has not yet been satisfactorily

accomplished. The nearest analogy I can suggest is that of the

spiritual thinking principle within ourselves, which remains a constant

factor in all the flux of our thoughts and feelings. It is in the midst

of them, yet it is out of the flux and above them. It is not involved

in the succession of time, for it is the principle which itself relates

things in the succession of time-for which, therefore, such succession

exists. I would only venture to remark, further, that even if the

universe were conceived of as originating in an eternal act, it would

still, to a mind capable of tracing it back through the various stages

of its development, present the aspect of a temporal beginning. Before

this beginning, it would be possible for the mind to extend its vision

indefinitely backwards through imaginary ages, which yet had no

existence save as its own ideal construction. But God's eternity is not

to be identified with this thought of an indefinitely extended time.

Eternity we may rather take to be an expression for the timeless

necessity of God's existence; and time, properly speaking, begins its

course only with the world. [236] A few words before leaving this part

of the subject on the motive and end of creation. If we reject the idea

of metaphysical necessity, and think of creation as originating in a

free, intelligent act, it must, like every similar act, be conceived of

as proceeding from a motive, which includes in it at the -same time a

rational end. And if God is free, personal Spirit, who is at the same

time ethical Will, what motive is possible but goodness or love, or

what end can be thought of but an ethical one? In this way it may be

held that, though the universe is not the product of a logical or

metaphysical necessity, it arises from the nature of God by a moral

necessity which is one with the highest freedom, and thus the

conception of creation may be secured from arbitrariness. It is an old

thought that the motive to the creation of the world was the goodness

of the Creator. Plato expresses this idea in his Timaeus, [237] and

points to a yet more comprehensive view when, in the Republic, he names

"the Good" as the highest principle both of knowledge and of existence.

[238] Since the time of Kant, philosophy has dealt m very earnest

fashion with this idea of "the Good"--now conceived of as ethical good,

but likewise as including in it the highest happiness and

blessedness--as at once the moving cause and end of the world. Start

from the postulate of Kant, that moral ends are alone of absolute

worth, and the inference is irresistible that the world as a whole is

constituted for moral ends, and that it has its cause in a Supreme

Original Good, which produces the natural for the sake of the moral,

and is guiding the universe to a moral goal. [239] Hence, from his

principles, Kant arrives at the notion of an ethical community or

"Kingdom of God," having the laws of virtue as its basis and aim, as

the end to which creation tends. [240] Lotze takes up the same thought

of a world ordered in conformity with the idea of "the Good," and

having its source in a Highest-Good Personal, and from him chiefly it

has entered into Ritschlian theology. [241] But Christian theology from

its own standpoint arrives at a similar result. We have but to ask,

with Dorner, What is the relation of the ethical nature of God to the

other distinctions we ascribe to Him? to see that "the non-ethical

distinctions in and the nature of God are related to the ethical as

means to an end; but the absolute end can only lie in morality, for it

alone is of absolute worth." [242] In the graduated system of ends of

which the universe consists, the moral, in other words, must be

presumed to be the highest. And this is precisely what Christianity

declares when it teaches that Christ and the kingdom of God are the

consummation of God's world-purpose; that the government of the world

is carried on for moral ends; and that "all things work together for

good to them that love God." [243]

II. The nature of man, and his place in creation: man the final cause of the

world.

II. From the point now reached, the transition is easy to the Scripture

doctrine of the nature of man, and of his position in creation. I may

begin here with man's place in creation, which of itself is a testimony

which nature bears to the meaning and purpose of God in that creation.

Assuming that final cause is to be traced in the world at all, we can

get no better clue to it than by simply observing whither the process

of development tends--what, as Mr. Spencer says, is "the naturally

revealed end" towards which evolution works. [244] Here is a process of

development, of evolution, going on for millenniums--what, as a matter

of fact, do we find to be the outcome of it? At the base of the scale

is inorganic matter; then we rise to organic life in the vegetable

world; as a next round in the ladder of ascent we have animal and

sentient life; we rise through all the gradations of that life--through

insect, fish, reptile, bird, mammal--till at length, at the close of

the long line of evolution, we find--What? Man, a self-conscious,

personal, rational moral being; a being capable of entering not only

into moral relations with his fellow-men, but, infinitely higher, into

spiritual and moral relations with his invisible Creator. Man's

creation, it is true, is only the starting-point of a new line of

evolution, but that evolution is one of moral life. So far as the

teaching of evolution goes, then, man is the crown and masterpiece of

this whole edifice of creation, and this also is the teaching of the

Bible. I have been frequently struck with this in reading the works of

Mr. Spencer and of other evolutionists, that none of them supposes that

evolution is ever to reach a higher being than man; that whatever

future development there is to be will not be development beyond

humanity, but development within humanity. In this it is implied that

man is the end of nature, and that the end of nature is a moral one. In

man, if we may so speak, mute and unintelligent nature attains to

consciousness of itself, gains the power of reading back meaning into

its own blind past, and has a prophecy of the goal to which its future

tends. At the summit of nature's gradations--of her inorganic kingdom

and plant kingdom and animal kingdom-there stands a being fitted for

the kingdom of God.

The agreement of Scripture and science up to this point is patent and

incontestable. In the original picture in Genesis we have, as in

nature, a gradually ascending series of creations. We have man at the

top of the scale; man as the latest being of all, and distinguished

from all by the fact that he alone bears his Creator's image; man set

at the head of the lower orders of creatures, as God's rational

vicegerent and representative. Science corroborates all this. It gives

to man the same place in the ascending series of creations as Scripture

gives him; declares him to be the last and final product of nature;

links him intimately with the past through his physical organisation,

in which the whole of nature, as physiology shows, recapitulates

itself; and at the same time acknowledges that he stands alone, and far

removed from the other creatures, in his powers of thought and

language, in his capacity for a selfregulated moral life under general

rules, in his religious nature, in his capability of progress, and of

boundless productivity in arts, sciences, laws, and institutions. Nay,

looking at creation as a whole, from the vantage-ground which our

present know ledge gives us, we can feel that its plan would have

remained incomplete, its pyramid would have lacked a summit, had man

not appeared upon the scene. For man not only stands at the head of

creation, but, in virtue of his rational nature, he occupies a position

in relation to it different from every other. The animal, however high

in the scale of development, is a mere creature of nature; man has a

life above nature. He is a being of "large discourse, looking before

and after." [245] He is capable of reflection on himself; on the

meaning and causes of things in the world around him; on the ends of

his own existence. He can rise above momentary impulse and passion, and

guide his life by general principles of reason, and so is capable of

morality. For the same reason he is capable of religion, and shows his

superiority over nature through the thoughts he cherishes of God, of

infinity, of eternity. Till a mind of this kind appeared, capable of

surveying the scene of its existence, of understanding the wisdom and

beauty displayed in its formations, and of utilising for rational

purposes the vast resources laid up in its treasuries, the very

existence of such a world as this is remained an inexplicable riddle:

an adequate final cause--an end-for-self--was not to be found in it.

[246] It would indeed be an exaggeration to view creation solely from

the standpoint here taken. The position that man is the final cause of

creation must obviously be held with certain qualifications. Were we to

attempt to maintain that the world exists solely for man's use and

benefit, we would be met by unanswerable objections. Because man is the

supreme end of nature, it does not follow that there are not lower

ends--the happiness of the sentient creatures, e.g., and many others

that we do not know. This world, again, is part of a wider system, and

there may be not only lower ends, but wider ends, than those prescribed

by man's existence. There is a delight which creative wisdom has in its

own productions, which is an end in itself. God saw the works that He

had made, and behold they were good; though not till man appeared upon

the scene were they declared "very good." [247] But this in no degree

militates against the position that the main use and end of nature is

to subserve the purposes of man's existence. Is not this to a thinking

mind implied in its very dispositions and arrangements, in its

distribution of land and sea, in its river plains and ocean

communication, in its supplies of mineral and other wealth stored up in

its recesses, in the forces it puts at man's disposal for the

accomplishment of his purposes, in the very obstacles it interposes in

the way of his advancement, stimulating his mental activity, summoning

forth his powers to contend with difficulties, and in this way rousing

him up to further conquests? There are yet higher teleological

relations which nature sustains to man, on which I cannot now

dwell--the part, e.g., which natural conditions play, as in Greece, in

the development of the character and spirit of peoples; the food which

the study of nature affords to his intellect; the beauty which

delights, and the sublimity which awes him, both speaking to his spirit

of things higher than them-selves; the suggestions it gives of the

infinite and eternal, etc. Taking it all in all, we may rest in the

view that man, as nature's highest being, is the key to the

understanding of the whole development; that nature does not exist for

its own sake, but supremely for the sake of the moral; that its chief

end is to furnish the means for such a development as we now see in the

mental and moral history of mankind. [248]

As a compound being, made up of body and of spirit, man is the link

which unites the natural and the spiritual worlds. [249] The direct

link between man and nature is the body, which in its erect posture,

its highly evolved brain, its developed limbs, and its countenance

lifted up to the heavens, bears witness, as already Ovid reminds us,

[250] to the dignity of the soul within. As Materialism ignores the

rights of the spirit, and would reduce thought, feeling, and will, to

functions of matter; so an ultra-spirituality is too apt to ignore the

rights of the body, and to regard it as a mere accident of man's

personality. Materialism quite rightly protests against this

one-sidedness; and the whole tendency of modern inquiry is to draw the

two sides of man's nature--the material and the spiritual, the physical

and the metaphysical, the physiological and the mental--more closely

together. The Bible avoids both extremes. Materialism gets all its

rights in the Bible doctrine of the body. The abstract spirituality of

a Plotinus, or of a hyper-refined idealism, which regards the body as a

mere envelope of the soul, dropped off at death without affecting its

entirety, is quite foreign to it. I do not dwell on this now, as I

shall have occasion to refer to it in the following Lectures. Enough to

remark that the Bible history of man's creation; the remarkable honour

its places on the body as God's workman ship and the temple of the Holy

Ghost; its doctrines of sin, with death as the penalty; of the

Incarnation--"forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and

blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same"; [251] of

Redemption, which includes "the Redemption of the body"; [252] of the

future life in a glorified corporeity--all warn us against an undue

depreciation of the body. I go on to remark that if the Bible gives its

rightful place to the body, much more does it lay stress on the

possession by man of a spirit, which is the true seat of his

personality, and the link which unites him with the spiritual world,

and with God. Psychological questions would be here out of place, and I

can only enter into a very brief examination of the Biblical terms used

to express the different aspects of man's spiritual nature, relegating

the further discussion of these to their proper sphere in Biblical

theology or psychology. [253] I would first remark that the Biblical

usage of psychological terms can only be understood if we keep strictly

to the Biblical point of view. In the Old Testament, it is the unity of

the personality which is the main fact, and not the distinction of an

immaterial and a material part, as in our modern usage. Nephesh or soul

does not, in the Old Testament, stand opposed to body, but is rather

the principle of "life," which manifests itself on the one hand in the

corporeal functions ("the life is in the blood" [254] , and on the

other in the conscious activities of the mind. The real contrast in the

Old Testament is between "flesh" (basar) and "spirit" (ruach), and the

"soul" is the middle term between them, the unity of them. [255] This

does not mean that "soul" and "spirit" are separable elements in the

same way that "soul" and "body" are, but it means that the "soul," as

inbreathed by God, is the source or seat of a double life. On the one

side, it is the animating principle of the body; the source of all

vital functions. It is its presence in the body which constitutes the

latter "flesh." On the other side, it is the principle of

self-conscious life. Various names are employed to denote the kinds of

these self-conscious activities; but they may be grouped generally

under the name "spirit." More explicitly, all the activities of the

"spirit" belong to the "soul"; but the converse is not true, that all

the activities of the "soul" belong to the "spirit." For the vital

functions of the body, with the appetites, desires, impulses, etc.,

which belong to this side of our nature, likewise are traceable to it

as their source. It is only the higher activities of the "soul"--those

which we still denominate "spiritual"--I speak of general usage, for

probably there is no distinction we can make which has not some

exception--which are described by the term "spirit." Thus we read of a

spirit of wisdom, of knowledge, of understanding, of an upright spirit,

a free spirit, a contrite spirit, etc. [256] That the "soul,"

essentially considered, is also spiritual, is implied in its origin

from the Divine Spirit. In the New Testament we have a distinction of

"soul" and "body" much more akin to our own, though the influence of

Old Testament usage is still very marked. "Soul" (psuche) still

includes a higher and a lower life; and the higher life is still

denoted by the term "spirit" (pneuma); while the implication of a body

is still always conveyed in the term "soul." There is no "soul" which

is not intended to animate a "body"; there are incorporeal spirits

(angels, demons), but they are not called by the name "souls." On the

other hand, the "soul" is recognised as spiritual in its essence, and

in its disembodied state is classed among "spirits," e.g. "the spirits

in prison." [257] I need not discuss the cognate terms heart (kardia),

mind (nous), understanding (dianoia), etc., but content myself with

saying that, except in the sense above explained, I do not see how a

trichotomous view of man's nature can be maintained. The distinction of

"soul" and "spirit" is a distinction within the one indivisible

spiritual nature; and the antithesis "soul" and "body" really covers

all the facts of man's personal life. The highest functions of the

"spirit" arc in the New Testament ascribed also to the "soul"; [258]

and the "soul" in turn is used by Jesus as a name f or man's highest

imperishable life. "He that hateth his life (psuche) in this world

shall keep it unto life eternal." [259]

From this digression I return to the fact that it is in his "soul" or

"spirit" that man peculiarly bears the Divine image. In a threefold

respect is man the personal image of his Maker.

1. He bears first of all the rational image of God. We have a proof of

this in the fact formerly referred to, that man can understand the

world God has made. How is science possible, except on the assumption

that the reason we find in ourselves is the same in kind as the reason

which expresses itself in the universe? The argument is the same as if

we were set to translate a book written in a foreign language. The

first condition of success in that attempt--the postulate with which we

set out--is similarity of intelligence between the man who wrote the

book, and ourselves who seek to decipher its meaning. If his reason

were of a totally different kind from ours, the attempt to understand

him would be hopeless. Precisely the same condition applies to the

possibility of our knowledge of the world. Reason in man and the reason

expressed in nature must be the same in kind, or no relation between

them could be established. Christian theology expresses this by saying

that the world is created by the Logos, a term which means at once

reason and word.

2. Man bears God's moral image, not now in the possession of actual

righteousness, but in the possession of the indestructible elements of

a moral nature. (1) He is a being with the power of moral knowledge;

reason, in other words, is the source to him, not only of principles of

knowledge, but of laws of duty. The idea of the good, and with it the

moral "ought" or ethical imperative, is part of his constitution. His

moral ideal may vary with the degree of his development and culture;

but, throughout, man is a being who distinguishes good and evil, and

who recognises the obligation to obey the good and to eschew the evil.

In this he proclaims himself a subject of moral law, and a being with a

moral destiny. (2) He is a free, spiritual cause, i.e. he has moral

freedom. I speak again not of man as at present he actually is, with

his freedom sadly impaired through sin, but of man in the constitutive

elements of his nature. And as a free, spiritual, self-determining

cause, standing at the summit of nature, man is again in a very marked

sense the image of his Maker. It is this power of will and

self-decision in man which most of all constitutes him a person.

Through it he stands out of and above nature's sequences, and can react

on and modify them. He is, as some have chosen to regard him, a

supernatural cause in the order of nature. [260] It is surely of little

use to deny the possibility of miracle, when every human volition is a

species of miracle--a new, hyperphysical cause interpolated in the

chain of physical events, and giving them a hew direction. (3) Man is a

being with moral affections. Without these he would not be a true image

of the God who is love. Summing up these points, we recognise in man a

conscience which reveals moral law, a will which can execute moral

purposes, and affections which create a capacity for moral love. This

relates only to formal attributes; but it is now to be remarked that

the bearing of God's moral image in the full sense implies not only the

possession of these attributes, but an actual resemblance to God in

character, in holiness and love. In the primeval state--the status

integritatis of the Biblical account [261] --this possession of the

image of God by man can only be viewed as potentiality, though a pure

potentiality, for the perfected image could not be gained except as the

result of self-decision and a long process of development, if even then

without the appearance of the second Adam from heaven. [262] It is

Christ, not the first Adam who is the ideal here, the model after which

we are to be renewed in the image of Him who created us. Only in Christ

do we see what a humanity perfectly conformed to the Divine idea of it

is.

3. Man bears the image of God in his deputed sovereignty over the

creatures, a sovereignty which naturally belongs to him in virtue of

the attributes just enumerated, and of his place at the head of

creation already adverted to. To the reality of this sovereignty, all

man's conquests over material conditions, his achievements in art and

civilisation, his employment of nature's laws and forces for his own

ends, his use of the lower creatures for service and food, etc.,

abundantly testify. [263]

I might add one other mark of the possession of the Divine image by

man, likewise involved in his self-conscious personality. I refer to

what may be called the potential infinitude of his nature. It has often

been remarked that man could not even know himself to be finite, if he

were not able in thought to transcend the finite, and frame an idea of

the Infinite. It is the strange thing about him, yet not strange once

we realise what is implied in the possession of a thinking nature, that

though finite, hedged round on every side by the limitations of the

finite, he yet shows a constant impulse to transcend these limitations,

and ally himself with the Infinite. Through this peculiarity of his

nature, there is none of God's infinite attributes which does not find

a shadow in his soul How else could Carlyle, e.g., fill his pages with

references to the eternities, the immensities, etc., in which man's

spirit finds its awful home? Is a being who can form the idea of

eternity not already in affinity with the Eternal, in a sense His

image? Man is not omnipresent, but is there not a shadow of God's

omnipresence in those thoughts of his that roam through space, and find

a satisfaction in the contemplation of its boundlessness? He is not

omniscient, but is not his desire for knowledge insatiable? The same

spurning of bounds, the same illimitableness, is seen in all his

desires, aims, ideals, hopes, and aspirations. This shows the folly of

the contention that because man is finite, he is cut off from the

knowledge of the Infinite. The objection seems to turn on the thought

that there is a physical bigness in the idea of infinity which prevents

the mind from holding it. It might as well be contended that because

the mind is cooped up within the limits of a cranium only a few inches

in diameter, it cannot take account of the space occupied, say by the

solar system, or of the distance between the earth and the sun!

In thus affirming the spiritual nature and dignity of man, and a

sonship to God founded thereon, it was inevitable that the Christian

view should meet with keen opposition from the modern

anti-supernaturalistic tendency, which regards with extreme disfavour

any attempt to lift man out of the ranks of nature, and the prevailing

bias of which is strongly towards Materialism. In this spirit Professor

Huxley has told us that "anyone who is acquainted with the history of

science will admit that its progress has, in all ages, meant, and now

more than ever means, the extension of the province of what we call

matter and causation, and the concomitant banishment from all regions

of human thought of what we call spirit and spontaneity." [264] The

materialistic hypothesis has wide currency at the present day, though

it is difficult to see how any sober mind, reflecting on the patent

difference between mental and physical phenomena, could ever suppose

that it was adequate, or could imagine that by its aid it had got rid

of "spirit." As involving the denial of the existence of a spiritual

principle in man, distinct from the body, this hypothesis is manifestly

in contradiction with the Biblical doctrine just explained, and on this

account claims a brief consideration.

The great fact on which every theory of Materialism strikes is, of

course, the fact of consciousness. Life, unattended by sensation,

presents a great enough difficulty to the theorist who would explain

everything on mechanical principles, [265] but when consciousness

enters the difficulty is insuperable. [266] It is, at the same time, no

easy matter to bind down the advocates of the materialistic theory to a

clear and consistent view.

1. There is the crass, thorough going Materialism which literally

identifies brain with mind, and the movements of the brain with the

thoughts and feelings of which we are aware in consciousness. Brain

action, on this hypothesis, is thought and feeling. "The brain," says

Cabanis, "secretes thought, as the liver secretes bile." This is the

crude theory of writers like Moleschott, Vogt, and Buchner, but it is

too manifestly absurd--it too palpably ignores the striking differences

between mental and physiological facts--to be accepted by more cautious

scientists without qualification. Brain movements are but changes of

place and relation on the part of material atoms, and, however caused,

are never more than motions; they have nothing of the nature of thought

about them. "It is absolutely and for ever inconceivable," says the

distinguished German physiologist, Du Bois-Reymond, "that a number of

carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, and oxygen atoms should be otherwise than

indifferent to their own positions or motions, past, present, or

future. It is utterly inconceivable how consciousness should result

from their joint action." [267] There is, accordingly, general

agreement among scientific thinkers that the physical changes and the

mental phenomena which accompany them are two distinct sets of facts,

which require to be carefully kept apart. "The passage from the physics

of the brain to the corresponding facts of consciousness," says

Professor Tyndall, "is unthinkable." [268] "I know nothing, and never

hope to know anything," says Professor Huxley, "of the steps by which

the passage from molecular movement to states of consciousness is [269]

"The two things are on two utterly different platforms," says Professor

Clifford; "the physical facts go along by themselves, and the mental

facts go along by themselves." [270] So far as this goes, it is clearly

in favour of spiritualism, and would seem in consistency to require the

abandonment of Materialism. [271]

2. An escape, however, may seem to be afforded from this dilemma, by

consenting to regard matter as itself but the phenomenal manifestation

of some unknown power, as therefore not the ultimate reality, but only

a form or appearance of it to our senses. This is the view held by

Strauss, Lange, Haeckel, Spencer, and the scientific professors whose

words I have just quoted. "I have always," says Strauss, "tacitly

regarded the so loudly proclaimed contrast between Materialism and

Idealism (or by whatever terms one may designate the view opposed to

the former) as a mere quarrel about words. They have a common foe in

the dualism which has pervaded the view of the world (Weltansicht),

through the whole Christian era, dividing man into body and soul, his

existence into time and eternity, and opposing an eternal Creator to a

created and perishable universe." [272] But whatever the change in the

theoretic groundwork, this view in practice comes to very much the same

thing as the other. It will not be disputed that it does so with

Strauss and his German allies, whose Materialism is most pronounced.

[273] But our English savants also, while disclaiming the name

"materialists," while maintaining in words the distinction between the

two classes of facts (mental and physical), while careful to show that

a strict interpretation of the data would land us rather in a

subjective Idealism than in Materialism, [274] none the less proceed

constantly upon the hypothesis that mental facts admit of being

translated (as they call it) into terms of matter, and that thus only

are they capable of being treated by science. [275] Thus, Professor

Huxley speaks of our thoughts as "the expression of molecular changes

in that matter of life which is the source of our other vital

phenomena," [276] of consciousness as "a function of nervous matter,

when that matter has attained a certain degree of organisation." [277]

This is carried out so far as to deny the existence of any freedom in

volition, or indeed of any influence exercised by consciousness at all

upon the train of physical events.

One advantage of this materialistic-idealistic form of the theory is,

that it enables the theorist to play fast and loose with language on

matter and mind, and yet, when called to account, to preserve an

appearance of consistency by putting as much or as little meaning into

the term "matter" as he pleases. Professor Tyndall is eloquent on the

"opprobrium" which we, in our ignorance, have heaped on matter, in

which he prefers to discern "the promise and potency of every form of

life." [278] But lie has to admit that, before he can do this, he has

to make a change in all ordinarily received notions of matter. "Two

courses and two only are possible," he says. "Either let us open our

doors freely to the conception of creative acts, or, abandoning them,

let us radically change our notions of matter." [279] To which Dr.

Martineau very justly replies, "Such extremely clever matter, matter

that is up to everything, even to writing Hamlet, and finding out its

own evolution, and substituting a moral plebiscite for a Divine

government of the world, may fairly be regarded as a little too modest

in its disclaimer of the attributes of mind." [280] My chief objection

to Dr. Tyndall, however, is that practically he does not change his

notion of matter, but, ignoring his own admission of the "chasm

intellectually impassable" [281] between the two classes of phenomena,

persists in treating mind as if it were capable of being adequately

represented by molecular changes of matter, in the ordinary acceptation

of the word. Instead, however, of supporting the view that molecular

changes and mental functions are convertible terms, science, with its

doctrine of the "conservation of energy," has furnished, as we shall

now see, a demonstration of the opposite.

There are three points at which, in the light of modern science and

philosophy, the argument for Materialism is seen utterly to break down.

1. The first is that which I have just alluded to, the impossibility of

accounting for the phenomena of consciousness in consistency with the

scientific doctrine of the "conservation of energy." As already

remarked, none but the very crassest materialists will maintain that

the molecular changes in the brain are themselves the thoughts and

feelings which we are aware of in consciousness. What the physicist

will say is, that these changes are attended by certain conscious

phenomena as their concomitants. You have the motions, and you have the

conscious fact--the thought or feeling--alongside of it. This is the

way in which the matter is put by writers like Huxley and Tyndall, who

frankly confess, as we have seen, the unbridgeable gulf between the two

classes of phenomena. But, once this is admitted, the assertion that

mental phenomena are products of cerebral changes is seen to come into

collision with the scientific law of conservation. If mental phenomena

are produced by material causes, it can only be at the expense of some

measure of energy. This, indeed, is what is affirmed. Physical energy,

it is supposed, is transformed into vital energy, this again into

thought and feeling. But this, it can be shown to demonstration, is

precisely what does not take place. Every scientific man admits that

energy in all its active forms is simply some kind of motion; and that

what is called "transformation of energy" (heat into light or

electricity, etc.) is merely change from one kind of motion into

another. What, then, becomes of the energy which is used when some

change takes place in the matter of the brain, accompanied by a fact of

sensation? It is all accounted for in the physical changes. No

scientific man will hold that any part of it disappears, passes over

into an "unseen universe." With keen enough senses you could track that

energy through every one of its changes, and see its results in some

physical effect produced. The circuit is closed within the physical.

Motions have produced motions, nothing more, and every particle of

energy present at the beginning is accounted for in the physical state

of the brain at the end. There has been no withdrawal of any portion of

it, even temporarily, to account for the conscious phenomenon. [282]

This is a new outside fact, lying beyond the circle of the physical

changes, a surplusage in the effect, which there is nothing in the

expenditure of energy to explain. It is a fact of a new order, quite

distinct from physical motions, and apprehended through a distinct

faculty, self-consciousness. But, apart from the nature of the fact,

there is, as I say, no energy available to account for it. What energy

there is, is used up in the brain's own motions and changes, and none

is left to be carried over for the production of this new conscious

phenomenon. If this is true of the simplest fact of consciousness, that

of sensation, much more is it true of the higher and complex activities

of self-conscious life. [283]

2. The second point on which Materialism breaks down is the

impossibility of establishing any relation between the two sets of

phenomena in respect of the laws of their succession. The mental facts

and the physical facts, we are told, go along together. But it is not

held that there is no relation between them. And the relation is,

according to Professor Huxley, that the mental order is wholly

determined by the physical order; while, conversely, consciousness is

not allowed to exercise the slightest influence on the physical series.

Consciousness he thinks, in men as in brutes, to be "related to the

mechanism of the body simply as a collateral product of its working,

and to be as completely without any power of modifying that working as

the steam-whistle which accompanies the work of a locomotive engine is

without influence upon its machinery." [284] The physical changes, in

other words, would go on precisely as they do, in obedience to their

own laws, were there no such thing as consciousness in existence; and

consciousness is simply a byeproduct or reflex of them without any

counter-influence. Similarly, Mr. Spencer says, "Impossible as it is to

get immediate proof that feeling and nervous action are the outer and

inner faces of the same change, yet the hypothesis that they are so

harmonises with all the observed facts"; [285] and again, "While the

nature of that which is manifested under either form proves to be

inscrutable, the order of its manifestations throughout all mental

phenomena proves to be the same as the order of its manifestations

throughout all material phenomena." [286] The one point clear in these

statements is that in the materialistic hypothesis the order of mental

phenomena is identical with an order of physical phenomena, determined

by purely mechanical conditions. [287] Is this according to fact, or is

it not precisely the point where a materialistic explanation of mind

must for ever break down? On the hypothesis, the one set of phenomena

follow purely physical (mechanical, chemical, vital) laws; but the

other set, or a large part of the other set (the mental), follow laws

of rational or logical connection. Suppose a mind, for example,

following out the train of reasoning in one of the propositions in

Euclid--or, better still, think of this demonstration as it was first

wrought out in the discoverer s own mind. What is the order of

connection here? Is it not one in which every step is determined by the

perception of its logical and rationally necessary connection with the

step that went before? Turn now to the other series. The laws which

operate in the molecular changes in the brain are purely

physical--mechanical, chemical, vital. They are physical causes,

operating to produce physical effects, without any reference to

consciousness. What possible connection can there be between two orders

so distinct, between an order determined solely by the physical laws,

and the foregoing process of rational demonstration? The two orders

are, on the face of them, distinct and separate; and not the least

light is cast by the one on the other. To suppose that the physical

laws are so adjusted as to turn out a product exactly parallel to the

steps of a rational demonstration in consciousness, is an assumption of

design so stupendous that it would cast all other proof of teleology

into the shade. I am far, however, from admitting that, as the

materialistic hypothesis supposes, every change in the brain is

determined solely by mechanical, chemical, and vital laws. Granting

that cerebral changes accompany thought, I believe, if we could see

into the heart of the process, it would be found that the changes are

determined quite as much by mental causes as by material. I do not

believe, for example, that an act of will is wholly without influence

on the material sequence. Our mental acts, indeed, neither add to nor

take from the energy stored up in the brain, but they may have much to

do with the direction and distribution of that energy. [288]

3. A third point on which the materialistic hypothesis breaks down is

its irreconcilability with what is seen to be implied in

self-consciousness, and with the fact of moral freedom. To constitute

self-consciousness, it is not enough that there should be a stream or

succession of separate impressions, feelings, or sensations; it is

necessary that there should be a principle which apprehends these

impressions, and relates them (as resembling, different, co-existent,

successive, etc.) to one another and to itself, a principle which not

only remains one and the same throughout the changes, but is conscious

of its self-identity through them. It is not merely the mental changes

that need to be explained, but the consciousness of a persistent self

amidst these changes. And this ego or self in consciousness is no

hyperphysical figment which admits of being explained away as

subjective illusion. It is only through such a persistent, identical

self, that knowledge or thought is possible to us; it is implied in the

simplest analysis of an act of knowledge. Were we simply part of the

stream, we could never know it [289] As another fact of our conscious

life incompatible with subjection to mechanical conditions, I need only

refer to the consciousness of moral freedom. In principle, Materialism

is the denial of moral freedom, or of freedom of any kind, and with its

triumph moral life would disappear. [290]

These considerations are sufficient of themselves to refute

Materialism, but the final refutation is that which is given by the

general philosophical analysis of the relation of thought to existence,

a subject on which I do not enter further than I have already done in

the previous Lecture. Thought, as I tried to show there, is itself the

prius of all things; and in attempting to explain thought out of

matter, we are trying to account for it by that which itself requires

thought for its explanation. Matter, which seems to some the simplest

of all conceptions to work with, is really one of the most difficult;

and the deeper its nature is probed, whether on the physical or on the

metaphysical side, the more does it tend to disappear into something

different from itself; the more, at any rate, is it seen to need for

its explanation facts that are spiritual. It was remarked above how,

even in the hands of Professors Huxley and Tyndall, matter tends to

disappear in a subjective Idealism; the only escape from this is a

rational theory of knowledge, which again explains the constitution of

the world through rational categories. To explain thought out of matter

is, from a philosophical point of view, the crowning instance of a

hysteron proteron. [291]

III. Man as made in the image of God constituted for immortality.

III. From the distinction thus shown to exist between the spiritual and

the material parts of man's nature, there results the possibility of

the soul surviving death, and the foundation is laid for the doctrine

of Immortality. The consideration of the Biblical aspect of this

subject will more properly be reserved for next Lecture, where I treat

of the connection of sin and death. Here I will only ask how far nature

and reason have a voice to utter on these two questions: Is man

constituted for immortality? And is there a presumption that the soul

will survive death? These questions, it ought to be observed, are not

identical. The proposition that man, as a being made in God's image, is

naturally destined for immortality, is not immediately convertible with

the other, that the soul will survive death; for it is no part of the

Biblical view, as we shall see afterwards, that death is a natural

condition of man. Now, however, that death has supervened, the question

arises, Does the soul still survive? To this question also, as I hope

to show, both Old and New Testaments give an affirmative answer; but

the complete Scripture doctrine of immortality means a great deal more

than this.

It is a significant circumstance that the modern unbelieving view of

the world has no hope to give us of a life beyond the grave. With the

obscuration of the idea of God, and the loss of the sense of the

spiritual, there has gone also faith in immortality. [292] Materialism,

of course, is bound to deny a future life. The theories of Huxley,

Tyndall, and Spencer hold out just as little hope of it, [293] though

Mr. Fiske, developing a Theism out of the principles of Mr. Spencer,

has developed also a doctrine of immortality, another evidence of the

connection of these two belief's. [294] The hope proposed to us in lieu

of individual immortality is that of "corporate immortality," the

privilege of joining the "choir invisible" of those who have laboured

in the service of humanity, though they live now only in the grateful

memory of posterity. [295] Pantheism, likewise, forbids the thought of

personal immortality, exalting instead the blessedness of absorption in

the Infinite. [296] We cannot, however, part with the hope of

immortality without infinitely lowering the whole pulse and worth even

of present existence. [297]

The only scientific plea on which the possibility of immortality can be

denied to us is based on the fact that mind in this life is so

intimately bound up with physiological conditions. Once grant, however,

that the thinking principle in man is distinct from the brain which it

uses as its instrument, and no reason can be shown, as Bishop Butler

demonstrated long, ago, why it should not survive the shock of the

dissolution we call death. Death need not even be the suspension of its

powers. "Suppose," says Cicero, "a person to have been educated from

his infancy in a chamber where he enjoyed no opportunity of seeing

external objects but through a small chink in the window shutter, would

he not be apt to consider this chink as essential to his vision? and

would it not be difficult to persuade him that his prospects would be

enlarged by demolishing the walls of his prison?" [298] It may turn

out, as Butler says, that existing and bodily conditions are rather

restraints on mind than laws of its essential nature. [299] Even so

rigid a critic of evidence as the late J. S. Mill admits that this

argument against immortality from the present dependence of thought and

feeling on some action of the bodily organism, is invalid. "there is,

therefore," he says, "in science, no evidence against the immortality

of the soul, but that negative evidence which consists in the absence

of evidence in its favour. And even the negative evidence is not so

strong as negative evidence often is." [300] It may, at the same time,

be questioned, as we have seen, whether there are not limits to the

extent to which science has demonstrated the dependence of the higher

mental operations on cerebal changes. [301] Science, therefore, cannot

negative the idea of immortality, but has reason no positive utterance

to give on this great and solemn question of future existence? It is

not men of science only, but some believers in Revelation also, who

show a disposition to minimise the indications and corroborations which

nature affords of man's immortal destiny. Mr. Edward White does this in

support of his theory of conditional immortality; [302] but many others

also have held the opinion that this is a question on which reason has

little or nothing to say, and which must be determined solely by the

light of Revelation. This position seems to me a hazardous one for a

believer in Revelation to take up. Just as in speaking of Theism I

ventured to say that, if God exists, it is inconceivable that nature

should afford no evidence of His existence; [303] so I would say here

that if human immortality be a truth, it is impossible that it should

be only, or merely, a truth of Revelation. If, as he came from his

Creator's hand, it was man's destiny to be immortal, his fitness and

capacity for that destiny must reveal itself in the very make and

constitution of his being, in the powers and capabilities that belong

to him. If it could really be shown that in man's nature, as we find

it, no trace of anything exists pointing to a higher sphere of

existence than earth affords, no powers or capabilities for which this

earthly scene did not offer full employment or satisfaction, this

alone, without any other argument, would be a cogent disproof of

immortality. For the same reason, immortality cannot be viewed, as in

Mr. White's theory, as a mere external addition to a nature regarded as

having originally no capacity or destination for it, a donum

superadditum. It is impossible that a being should be capable of

receiving the gift of immortality, who yet in the make and constitution

of his nature gives no evidence that he was destined for immortality.

Otherwise immortality loses all moral significance, and sinks to the

level of a mere prolongation of existence, just as the life of the

brute might be prolonged. Such evidence, if it exists, may not be

sufficient to demonstrate man's immortality, but it will show that the

make and constitution of his nature points in that direction, that

immortality is the natural solution of the enigmas of his being, that

without immortality he would be a riddle and contradiction to himself

and an anomaly in the world which be inhabits. And are there pot such

proofs?

1. Our minds are arrested here, first, by the fact that nearly every

tribe and people on the face of the earth, savage and civilised, has

held in some form this belief in a future state of existence. This

suggests that the belief is one which accords with the facts of human

nature, and to which the mind is naturally led in its inquiries. Assume

the doctrine to be false, there is still this fact to be accounted

for--that nearly all tribes and families of mankind have gone on

dreaming this strange dream of a life beyond the grave. [304] Mr.

Spencer, of course, has a way of explaining this belief which would rob

it of all its worth as evidence. The hypothesis is a very simple one.

Belief in a future state, according to it, is simply a relic of

superstition. It had its origin in the fancies of the savage, who, from

the wanderings of his mind in sleep, and supposed appearances of the

dead, aided by such facts as the reflection of his image on the water

and the appearance of his shadow, imagined the existence of a soul, or

double, separable from the body, and capable of surviving death. [305]

Were I discussing this theory at length, I would like to put in a word

for Mr. Spencer's savage. I would like to ask, first, Is Mr. Spencer so

sure that this is the whole explanation of that singularly persistent

instinct which leads even savage minds to cling so tenaciously to the

idea of a future life? May it not be, though a philosopher may not care

to take account of them,

"That even in savage bosoms

There are longings, yearnings, strivings,"

For the good they comprehend not,"

and that, sometimes at least,

"the feeble hands and helpless,

Groping blindly in the darkness,

Touch God's right hand in that darkness,

And are lifted up and strengthened!" [306]

And I would like, secondly, to ask, Is the savage, after all, so

illogical as Mr. Spencer would make him out to be? Allow that he has

crude notions of apparitions and dreams, this is not the essential

point. The essential point is that, from the activity of his mind in

thinking and dreaming, he infers the working of a power within him

distinct from his body. Is he so far wrong in this? I do not think we

do justice always to the workings of the savage mind. [307] The savage

knows, to begin with, that there is a something within him which

thinks, feels, acts, and remembers. He does not need to wait on dreams

to give him that knowledge. [308] The step is natural to distinguish

this thinking something from his hands and head and body, which remain

after its departure. [309] Going further, he peoples nature with

spiritual agents after the type of the mind he finds within himself.

Here, therefore, we have the clear yet not reasoned out distinction

between body and spirit, and this, in connection with other hopes,

instincts, and aspirations, readily gives birth to ideas of future

continued existence. But, however it may be with the savage, how absurd

it is for Mr. Spencer to assume that the mature and thinking portion of

mankind have no better foundation for their belief than is implied in

these vulgar superstitions which he names! You sit at the feet of a

Plato, and see his keen intellect applied to this subject; you listen

to the eloquence of a Cicero discoursing on it; [310] you are lifted up

by the grand strains of the poets of immortality. You really thought

that it was proof of the greater mental stature and calibre of these

men that they speculated on such themes at all, and expressed

themselves so nobly in regard to them. But it turns out you are

mistaken. You and they have miserably deceived yourselves; and what

seemed to you rational and ennobling belief is but the survival of

superstitions, born of the dreams and ghost fancies of the untutored

savage!

2. But let us leave the savage, and look at this subject in the light

of the higher considerations which have in all ages appealed with

special force to the minds of rational men. I pass by here the

metaphysical arguments, which at most are better fitted to remove bars

to the acceptance of the doctrine than to furnish positive proofs of

it. The real proofs are those which, as already said, show that the

make and constitution of man's nature are not explicable on the

hypothesis that he is destined only for a few short years of life on

earth, but are such as point to a nobler and enduring state of

existence. It is an interesting circumstance that Mr. J. S. Mill, who,

in his treatment of this question, took evident delight in reducing the

logical evidence to its minimum, yet practically brings all those

arguments which he had thrust out by the door of the head back by the

door of the heart, and uses them to found the duty of cherishing this

hope of a future life. [311] What are these indications which point to

a fitness for, and are a prophecy of, immortality in man?

(1) There is the fact that the scale of man's nature is too large for

his present scene of existence. I have already spoken of that shadow of

infinitude in man which manifests itself in all his thoughts, his

imaginations, his desires, etc. Look, first, at his rational

constitution. In the ascent of the mountain of knowledge, is man ever

satisfied? Does not every new height he reaches but reveal a higher

height? Does not every new attainment but whet his appetite to attain

more? Is any thirst more insatiable than the thirst for knowledge? Is

it not the last confession of ripened wisdom that man as yet knows

nothing as he would wish to know? Or look at the ideas which man's mind

is capable of containing. His mind spans the physical universe, and

ever as the telescope expands the horizon of knowledge, it reaches out

in desire for a further flight. But there are greater ideas than even

those of worlds and systems. His mind can take in the thought of God,

of eternity, of infinity. Is this like the endowment. of a creature

destined only for threescore years and ten? The same illimitableness

attaches to imagination. "The use of this feigned history," says Lord

Bacon, speaking of poetry, "is to give some shadow of satisfaction to

the mind of man on those points wherein the nature of things doth deny

it, the world being in proportion inferior to the soul; by reason

whereof there is, agreeable to the spirit of man, a more ample

greatness, a more exact goodness, and a more absolute variety than can

be found in the nature of things." [312] Finally, there is desire. Give

a man all of the world he asks for, and he is yet unsatisfied.

"I cannot chain my soul; it will not rest

In its clay prison, this most narrow sphere.

It has strange powers, and feelings, and desires

Which I cannot account for nor explain,

But which I stifle not, being hound to trust

All feelings equally, to hear all sides.

Yet I cannot indulge them, and they live,

Referring to some state of life unknown." [313]

This argument is not met by saying, as Mill does, that there are many

things we desire which we never get. This may be true, but the point is

that even if we did get all the satisfaction which the earth could give

us, our desires would still go beyond that earthly bound. [314]

"And thus I know the earth is not my sphere,

For I cannot so narrow be, but that

I still exceed it." [315]

The argument is further strengthened by comparing man with the other

creatures that tenant the earth. Modern science justly lays stress on

the constant relation subsisting between creatures and their

environments. Throughout nature you find the most careful adjustment of

faculty to environment. If there is a fin, there is water; if there is

an eye, there is light; if there is a wing, there is air to cleave,

etc. But here is a creature whose powers, whose capabilities, whose

desires, stretch far beyond the terrestrial scene that would contain

him! Must we not put him in a different category?

(2) The same inference which follows from the scale of man's endowments

results if we consider life from the point of view of moral discipline.

Everything which strengthens our view of the world as a scene of moral

government, everything which leads us to put a high value on character,

and to believe that the Creator's main end in His dealings with man is

to purify and develop character, strengthens also our belief in

immortality. The only way we can conceive of the relation of nature to

man, so as to put a rational meaning into it, is, as Kant has shown, to

represent it to ourselves as a means to the end of his culture and

morality. [316] Can we believe, then, that God will spend a lifetime in

perfecting a character, developing and purifying it, as great souls

always are developed, by sharp trial and discipline, till its very best

has been evoked, only in the end to dash it again into nothingness?

What would we think of an earthly artist who dealt thus with his works,

spending a lifetime, e.g., on a block of marble, evolving from it a

statue of faultless pro portions and classic grace, only in the end,

just when his chisel was putting his last finishing touches on it, to

seize his mallet and dash it again to pieces. It would stumble our

faith in God--in the "Divine reasonableness" [317] --to believe that

such could be His action.

(3) A third consideration which points in the same direction is that

frequently insisted on--the manifest incompleteness of the present

scene of things, both as respects human character and work, and as

respects the Divine administration. Here, again, everything that

strengthens our faith in a moral government of the world, that

impresses us with the infinite worth of human personality, that

intensifies our sense of justice and injustice, forces on us the

conviction that the present life, with its abounding anomalies,

imperfections, and iniquities, is not God's last word to us; [318] that

there is another chapter to our existence than that which closes on

earth. Here comes in the consideration which Kant urges of the need of

prolonged existence to complete the fulfilment of our moral destiny;

[319] the sense of accountability which we all carry with us,

instinctively anticipating a day of final reckoning; the feeling of an

unredressed balance of wrong in the arrangements of life and society;

above all, the sense of incompleteness which so often oppresses us when

we see the wise and good cut down in the midst of their labours, and

their life-work left unfinished. These are the "enigmas of life" for

which it is difficult to see how any solution is provided if there is

not a future state in which life's mysteries shall be made clear, its

unredressed wrongs rectified, the righteousness of the good vindicated,

and a completion granted to noble lives, broken off prematurely here.

Our faith in God leads us again to trust Him, that "He that hath begun

a good work" [320] in us will not leave it unfinished.

(4) Finally, there is the fact which all history verifies, that only

under the influence of this hope do the human faculties, even here,

find their largest scope and play. This was the consideration which,

more than any other, weighed with the late J. S. Mill, in inclining him

to admit the hope of immortality. "The beneficial influence of such a

hope," he says, in words well worth quoting, "is far from trifling. It

makes life and human nature a far greater thing to the feelings, and

gives greater strength as well as greater solemnity to all the

sentiments which are awakened in us by our fellow-creatures, and by

mankind at large. [321] It allays the sense of that irony of nature,

which is so painfully felt when we see the exertions and sacrifices of

a life culminating in the formation of a wise and noble mind, only to

disappear from the world when the time has just arrived at which the

world seems about to begin reaping the benefit of it. . . . But the

benefit consists less in the presence of any specific hope than in the

enlargement of the general scale of the feelings; the loftier

aspirations being no longer kept down by a sense of the insignificance

of human life--by the disastrous feeling of not worth while.'" [322]

The evolutionist, it seems to me, should, beyond all others, respect

these voices of the soul, this natural and unforced testimony of our

nature to a life beyond, which does not disappear (as it would do were

Mr. Spencer's hypothesis correct), but only grows clearer and more

solemn, as the history of humanity advances.

I think, then, we may conclude that reason does create a presumption,

and that a very strong one, in favour of a future life. The

considerations we have urged prove the possibility of immortality, and

show that the soul of man is naturally fitted for immortality. We need

not claim that they do more, though they have proved sufficient to

inspire many of the noblest minds of our race, even apart from the

gospel, with a very steady persuasion that there is a life hereafter.

They cannot give absolute certainty. They may not be able, apart from

the light of Revelation, to lift the mind wholly above the suspicion

that the law of waste and destruction which prevails here against the

body may somewhere else, and finally, prevail against the soul. But, so

far as they go, they must be accepted as a powerful corroboration and

confirmation, from the side of nature, of the Christian view.

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[196] Gen. i. 27. Dorner says truly: "The absolute personality of God,

and the infinite value of the personality of man, stand and fall with

each other."-- Person of Christ, v. p 155.

[197] Matt. v. 9, 45; John i. 12-13. Cf Schmid's Theol. of the New

Testament, p. 101 (Eng. trans.).

[198] Matt. xxiii. 15; John viii. 44.

[199] Luke iii. 38. Yet only through the context--Adam, tou Theou.

[200] Acts xvii. 28.

[201] On the nature of man's sonship cf. Candlish's Fatherhood of God,

and Dr. Crawford's work in reply (same title); Bruce's Kingdom of God,

chaps. iv. and v.; Wendt's Die Lehre Jesu, ii. pp. 145-151, 453-464.

[202] See pp. 193-196.

[203] Gen. i. 1; John i. 2; Col. i. 16; Heb. xi. 3. etc.

[204] Note A.--The Creation History.

[205] Cf. Delitzsch's Genesis, ch. i. 1, and Schultz's Alt. Theol. pp.

570, 571.

[206] "Creation out of nothing," says Rothe, "is not found in express

words in Holy Scripture. . . . The fact itself, however, is expressed

in Scripture quite definitely, since it teaches throughout, with all

emphasis, that, through His word and almighty will alone, God has

called into being the world, which before did not exist, and this not

merely in respect of its form, but also of its matter."--Dogmatik, i.

133.

[207] Ps. xxxiii. 9.

[208] Ps. cxxi. 2.

[209] Rom. xi. 36.

[210] Rev. iv. 11. Revised Version reads: "For Thou didst create all

things; and because of Thy will they are and were created."

[211] Study of Religion, pp. 405-408; Seat of Authority, pp. 32, 33.

[212] Three Essays on Religion, pp. 178, 186. Cf. Plato, Timaeus, p. 51

(Marg. Jowett's Plato, iii.).

[213] Willenswelt, pp. 335-344.

[214] Cf. his Timaeus, pp. 27, 35, 50, 51.

[215] Dr. Stirling says: "A substance without quality were a non-ens,

and a quality without a substance were but a fiction in the air.

Matter, if to be, must be permeated by form; and equally form, if to

be, must be realised by matter. Substance takes being from quality;

quality, actuality from substance. That is metaphysic; but it is seen

to be as well physic,--it is seen to have a physical existence; it is

seen to be in rerum natura."--Phil. and Theol. p. 43.

[216] Three Essays, p. 178. I may refer for further development of this

argument to two articles by myself in The Theological Monthly (July and

August, 1891), on "John Stuart Mill and Christianity."

[217] Cf. Spinoza's Ethics, Part I. Prop. 29.--" Nothing in the

universe is contingent, but all things are conditioned to exist and

operate in a particular manner by the necessity of the Divine nature."

Prop. 33.--"Things could not have been brought into being by God in any

manner or in any order different from that which has in fact obtained."

[218] Cf. Veitch's Knowing and Being, pp. 290, 291.

[219] Lotze discusses "the conception of the world" as "a necessary,

involuntary, and inevitable development of the nature of God," and says

regarding it: "It is wholly useless from the religions point of view,

because it leads consistently to nothing but a thorough-going

determinism, according to which not only is everything that must

happen, in case certain conditions occur, appointed in pursuance of

general laws; but according to which even the successive occurrence of

these conditions, and consequently the whole of history with all its

details, is predetermined."--Outlines of the Philosophy of Religion,

pp. 71, 72 (Eng. trans.).

[220] Professor Clifford said: "What I wish to impress upon you is

this, that what is called the atomic theory'--that is just what I have

been explaining--is not longer in the position of a theory, but that

such of the facts as I have just explained to you are really things

which are definitely know, and which are no longer

suppositions."--Manchester Science Lectures on "Atoms," Nov. 1872. Cf.

art. "Atom" in Ency. Brit., and Stallo's Concepts of Modern Physics,

pp. 28, 29.

[221] The authors of The Unseen Universe say: "To our minds it appears

no less false to pronounce eternal that aggregation we call the atom,

than it would be to pronounce eternal that aggregation we call the

sun."--P. 213. Cf. p.139. Professor Jevons believes that "even chemical

atoms are very complicated structures; that an atom of pure iron is

probably a vastly more complicated system than that of the planets and

their satellites."--Principles of Science, ii. p.452.

[222] Quoted in Hitchcock's Religion of Geology, p.105, and endorsed by

Professor Clerk-Maxwell--art. "Atom," Ency. Brit.; and by the authors

of The Unseen Universe. The latter say: "Now, this production was as

far as we can judge, a sporadic or abrupt act, and the substance

produced, that is to say, the atoms which form the substratum of the

present universe, bear (as Herschel and Clerk-Maxwell have well said),

from their uniformity of constitution, all the marks of being

manufactured articles."--P. 214.

[223] This does not necessarily mean acceptance of the nebular theory

of development. See Note B.--Evolution in Inorganic Nature--The Nebular

Hypothesis.

[224] Professor Clerk-Maxwell says: "This idea of a beginning is one

which the physical researches of recent times have brought home to us,

more than any observer of the course of scientific thought in former

times would have had reason to expect."--Address to Math. and Phys.

Sect. of Brit. Assoc., 1870.

[225] See Note C.--The Hypothesis of Cycles.

[226] See passages quoted in Note C.

[227] Darwinism, pp. 474-476.

[228] Mr. Gore has said: "The term supernatural is purely relative to

what at any particular stage of thought we mean by nature. Nature is a

progressive development of life, and each new stage of life appears

supernatural from the point of view of what lies below it."--The

Incarnation (Bampton Lectures), p. 85. Lange has expanded the same

thought. "Each stage of nature," he says, "prepares for a higher; which

in turn maybe regarded as above nature, as contrary to nature, and yet

as only higher nature, since it introduces a new and higher principle

of life into the existent and natural order of things. . . . Thus the

chemical principle appeared as a miracle in the elementary world, as

introducing a new and higher life; similarly the principle of

crystallisation is a miracle with reference to the lower principle of

chemical affinity; the plant, a miracle above the crystal; the animal,

a miracle in reference to the plant; and man, over all the animal

world. Lastly, Christ, as the Second Man, the God-Man, is a miracle

above all the world of the first man, who is of the earth

earthy."--Com. on Matt. p. 152 (Eng. trans.).

[229] Cf. Professor Flint, in Anti-Theistic Theories, pp. 438, 439. He

remarks: "Although Omnipotence cannot express itself fully in the

finite world to which we belong, the Divine nature may be in itself an

infinite universe, where this and all other attributes can find

complete expression. . . . The Divine nature must have in itself a

plenitude of power and glory, to which the production of numberless

worlds can add nothing."

[230] This objection was early urged against the doctrine of creation.

Cf. Origen, De Principiis, Book iii. 5; Augustine, De Civitate Dei,

Book xi. 5.

[231] See Note D.--"Eternal Creation."

[232] Spinoza's Ethics, Part II. Prop. 44, Cor. ii.--"It is the nature

of reason to perceive things sub quadam aeternitatis specie."

[233] A good illustration is afforded by Mr. Green in a fragment on

Immortality. "As a determination of thought," he says, "everything is

eternal. What are we to say, then, to the extinct races of animals, the

past formations of the earth? How can that which is extinct and past be

eternal? . . . The process is eternal, and they as stages in it are so

too. That which has passed away is only their false appearance of being

independent entities, related only to themselves, as opposed to being

stages, essentially related to a before and after. In other words,

relatively to our temporal consciousness, which can only present one

thing to itself at a time, and therefore supposes that when A follows

B, B ceases to exist, they have perished; relatively to the thought

which, as eternal, holds past, present, and future together, they are

permanent; their very transitoriness is eternal."--Works, iii. p. 159.

[234] Hegel, indeed, says: "Within the range of the finite we can never

see that the end or aim has really been secured. The consummation of

the infinite aim, therefore, consists merely in removing the illusion

which makes it seem yet unaccomplished. . . . It is this illusion under

which we live. . . . In the course of its process the Idea makes itself

that illusion, by setting an antithesis to confront it; and its action

consists in getting rid of the illusion which it has

created."--Wallace's Logic of Hegel, p. 304.

[235] Cf. Veitch's Knowing and Being, chap. vii.; Seth's Hegelianism

and Personality, pp. 180-184; Pfleiderer, Religionsphilosophie, iii.

pp. 293-295 (Eng. trans.); Lotze, Microcosmus, ii. p. 711 (Eng.

trans.); and see Note D. to Lect. III.

[236] See Note E.--Eternity and Time.

[237] Timaeus, p.29--"Let me tell you, then, why the Creator created

and made the universe. He was good, and no goodness can ever have any

jealousy of anything. And being free from jealousy, He desired that all

things should be as like Himself as possible."--Jowett's Plato, iii. p.

613.

[238] Republic, Bk. vi.

[239] See last Lecture, pp. 108-109.

[240] In his Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft, Bk.

iii. Cf. Seth's From Kant to Hegel, pp. 123, 124; Caird's Philosophy of

Kant, pp. 611-613.

[241] Cf. Microcosmus, ii. p. 728 (Eng. trans.); Outlines of

Metaphysic, pp. 151, 152 (Eng. trans.).

[242] Christian Ethics, p. 65 (Eng. trans.).

[243] Rom. viii. 28.

[244] Data of Ethics, p. 171.

[245] Hamlet, act iv. scene 4

[246] See Note F.--Man the Head of Creation.

[247] Gen. i. 31.

[248] On the teleological relations of nature to man, see Kant, Kritik

d. Urtheilkraft, sect. 83--"Of the last end of nature as a teleological

system," and sect. 84--" Of the final end of the existence of a world,

i.e. of the creation itself"; and cf. Caird, Philosophy of Kant, ii.

pp. 545-557.

[249] See this thought worked out in Herder's Ideen zur Phil. d. Gesch.

der Menschheit (cf. Book v. 6, quoted in Note F.).

[250] Metamorphoses, i. 2:

"Pronaque quum spectent animalia cetera terram,

Os homini sublime dedit, coelumque tueri

Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus."

[251] Heb. ii. 14.

[252] Rom. viii. 23.

[253] Cf. on this subject the works of Delitzsch and Beckon Biblical

Psychology; Oehler and Schultz on Old Testament Theology; Wendt's

Inhalt der Lehre Jesu; Heard on the Tripartite Nature of Man; Laidlaw's

Bible Doctrine of Man; Dickson's Flesh and Spirit (Baird Lectures),

etc.

[254] Lev. xvii. 11.

[255] Another word for spirit is Neshamah--used twice in the Old

Testament, once in a noteworthy passage for the principle of

self-consciousness (Prov. xx. 27), as in 1 Cor. ii. 11.

[256] Isa. xi. 2; Ps. li. 10-12. Some of the references are to the

Divine Spirit, but as the source of spiritual powers in man.

[257] I Pet. iii. 19.

[258] E.g. Matt. xxii. 27; Luke i. 46.

[259] John xii. 25.

[260] Cf. Bushnell, Nature and Supernatural, pp. 23-25.

[261] See next Lecture.

[262] This is a view already enunciated with great clearness by

Irenaeus. Cf. Dorner, Person of Christ, i. pp. 314-316; Art. "Irenaeus"

in Dict. of Christ. Biog. vol. iii.; and Harnack, Dogmengeschichte, i.

p. 499.

[263] On the whole subject of the image of God in man, cf. Laidlaw's

Bible Doctrine of Man, Lect. III. (Cunningham Lectures).

[264] Lay Sermons, "On the Physical Basis of Life," p. 156.

[265] Kant has said that the attempt to explain the world on mechanical

principles is wrecked on a caterpillar.

[266] Du Bois-Reymond, who himself favours Materialism, specifies, in

his Die Sieben Weltrathsel (The Seven Enigmas of the World), seven

limits to the materialistic explanation of Nature. These are:

The Existence of Matter and Form.

The Origin of Motion.

The Origin of Life.

The Appearance of Design in Nature.

The Existence of Consciousness.

Intelligent Thought and the Origin of Speech.

The Question of Free-Will. See the account of this work in Kennedy's

Natural Theology and Modern Thought, from which I take the list (p.

52). Enigmas 1, 2, and 5 Du Bois-Reymond regards as insoluble.

[267] Lecture on Die Grenzen des Naturerkennens. Leipsic, 1872.

[268] Fragments of Science, "Scientific Materialism," p. 121. In the

sixth edition the words are--" is inconceivable as a result of

mechanics" (vol. ii. p. 87). He goes on to say that, could we "see and

feel the very molecules of the brain; were we capable of following all

their motions, all their groupings, all their electric discharges,

. . . the chasm between the two classes of phenomena would still remain

intellectually impassable."

[269] Article on "Mr. Darwin's Critics," in Contemporary Review, Nov.

1871, p. 464. Mr. Spencer expresses himself similarly: "Can the

oscillation of a molecule," he says, "be represented in consciousness

side by side with a nervous shock, and the two he recognised as one? No

effort enables us to assimilate them."--Principles of Psychology, i.

sec. 62.

[270] "Body and Mind," in Fortnightly Review, December 1874.

[271] Cf. Herbert's Modern Realism Examined, pp. 89-94; Kennedy's

Natural Theology and Modern Thought, pp. 64-66.

[272] Der alte und der neue Glaube, p. 212.

[273] Strauss declares his thorough agreement with Carl Vogt in his

denial of any special spiritual principle, p. 210.

[274] Thus, e.g., Huxley: "For, after all, what do we know of this

terrible matter,' except as a name for the unknown and hypothetical

cause of states of our own consciousness?" ("On the Physical Basis of

Life ") . . . it follows that what I term legitimate Materialism . . .

is neither more nor less than a shorthand Idealism."--" On Descartes,"

Lay Sermons, pp. 157, 374. On the relation of extreme Materialism to

Idealism, cf. Kennedy's Natural Theology, pp. 64-66.

[275] At least this terminology is held to be preferable. Prof. Huxley

says: "In itself it is of little moment whether we express the

phenomenon of matter in terms of spirit, or the phenomenon of spirit in

terms of matter. . . . But, with a view to the progress of science, the

materialistic terminology is in every way to he preferred."--Lay

Sermons, "On the Physical Basis of Life," p. 160.

[276] Lay Sermons, "On the Physical Basis of Life," p. 152. In the same

essay he tells us: "As surely as every future grows out of past and

present, so will the physiology of the future extend the realm of

matter and law, till it is coextensive with knowledge, with feeling,

and with actions."--P. 156.

[277] Article on "Mr. Darwin's Critics," in Contemporary Review, Nov.

1871, p. 464. In his Lecture on "Descartes," he says: "Thought is as

much a function of matter as motion is."--Lay Sermons, p. 371.

[278] "Belfast Address," Fragments of Science, ii. p. 193.

[279] Ibid. ii. p. 191.

[280] Religion as Affected by Modern Materialism, pp. 14, 15.

[281] Fragments of Science ii p 87.

[282] "Motion," says Du Bois-Reymond, "can only produce motion, or

transform itself into potential energy. Potential energy can only

produce motion, maintain statical equilibrium, push, or pull. The

sum-total of energy remains constantly the same. More or less than is

determined by the law cannot happen in the material universe; the

mechanical cause expends itself entirely in mechanical operations. Thus

the intellectual occurrences which accompany the material occurrences

in the brain are without an adequate cause as contemplated by our

understanding. They stand outside the law of causality, and therefore

are as incomprehensible as a mobile perpetuum would be. "--Ueber die

Grenzen des Naturerkennens, p. 28 (in Kennedy's Natural Theology, p.

48).

[283] On this argument, see Herbert's Modern Realism Examined, pp. 43,

57; Kennedy's Natural Theology and Modern Thought, pp. 48, 49, 79, 80;

Harris's Philosophical Basis of Theism, pp. 439-442.

[284] "The Hypothesis. that Animals are Automata," in Fortnightly

Review, Nov. 1874, pp. 575, 576. This steam-whistle illustration fails,

as his critics all point out, in the essential respect that a

steam-whistle does subtract a portion of the energy available for

working the machinery, while the production if a conscious. phenomenon

does not. Cf. Herbert, pp. 46, 47; Kennedy, 79, etc.

[285] Principles of Psychology, i. sec. 51.

[286] Ibid. i. sec. 273.

[287] See Note G.--Mind and Mechanical Causation.

[288] See Note H.--Mind and Cerebral Activity.

[289] Cf. Green's Prolegomena to Ethics, Book i.; Lotze's Microcosmus,

pp. 157, 163; Seth's. Hegelianism and Personality, pp. 3-5. Lotze puts

the point thus.: "Our belief in the soul's unity rests not on our

appearing to ourselves such a unity, hut on our being able to appear to

ourselves at all. . . . What a being appears to itself to be is not the

important point; if it can appear anyhow to itself, or other things to

it, it must be capable of unifying manifold phenomena in an absolute

indivisibility of its. nature."--Microcosmus, p. 157.

[290] Cf. Ebrard's Christian Apologetics, ii. pp. 77-98; Dorner's

Christian Ethics, pp. 105, 106; Kennedy's Natural Theology, Lecture V.

[291] Cf. Caird's Philosophy of Religion, pp. 94-101.

[292] Renan has said: "No one in business would risk a hundred francs

with the prospect of gaining a million, on such a probability as. that

of the future life."--Dialogues, p. 31. Cf. Strauss, Der alte und der

neue Glaube, pp. 123-134. "In fact," he says, "this. supposition is the

most gigantic assumption that can be thought of; and if we ask after

its foundation, we meet with nothing hut a wish. Man would fain not

perish when he dies; therefore he believes he will not perish."--Pp.

126, 127.

[293] The contrast is again marked with the attitude of the last

century "Natural Religion," which regarded the "immortality of the

soul" as one of its most certain articles. How little assurance even

Theism, apart from Revelation, can give on this subject, is seen in Mr.

Greg's. statements in The Creed of Christendom, chap. xvii.; and

Preface to his Enigmas of Life.

[294] Fiske's Man's Destiny. Dr. Martineau tells the story that on a

report of the arguments of this. book being read to an English friend,

a Positivist, on its first appearance, his exclamation was: "What? John

Fiske say that? Well; it only proves, what I have always maintained,

that you cannot make the slightest concession to metaphysics, without

ending in a theology!"--Preface to A Study of Religion.

[295]

"O may I join the choir invisible

Of those immortal dead who live again

In minds made better by their presence. . . .

This is life to come,

Which martyred men have made more glorious

For us to strive to follow"

George Eliot, Jubal, and other Poems, pp. 301-303.

[296] Thus in the Indian systems, but also in modern times. Spinoza's

Pantheism has no room in it for personal immortality. In Hegel's system

the question was left in the same ambiguity as the question of the

Divine personality (cf. Stirling's Secret of Hegel, ii. pp. 578-580;

Seth's Hegelianism and Personality, pp. 149, 150). On Schleiermacher's

views, see Note I.--Schleiermacher and Immortality.

[297] Cf. p. 160.

[298] Quoted by Dugald Stewart, Active and Moral Powers, i. p. 72

(Collected Works). Cf. Tusculan Disputations, Book i. 20.

[299] Analogy, i. chap. 1.

[300] Three Essays, p. 201.

[301] See Professor Calderwood's views in Note H.

[302] In his Life in Christ.

[303] Lect. III. p. 81.

[304] Cicero urges the argument in The Tusculan Disputations, Book i.

13. For modern illustrations, cf. Max Muller's Anthropological

Religion, Lecture V.; Dawson's Fossil Men and their Modern

Representatives, chap. x., etc.

[305] Eccles. Institutions, chaps. i., xiv.; Strauss has a similar

theory, Der alte und der neue Glaube, p. 124.

[306] Longfellow's Hiawatha, Introduction.

[307] Max Muller says: "We cannot protest too strongly against what

used to be a very general habit among anthropologists, namely, to

charge primitive man with all kinds of stupidities in his early views

about the soul, whether in this life or the next."--Anthropological

Religion, p. 218.

[308] Cf. Max Muller's discussion of the "shadow" and "dream" theory in

Anthropological Religion, pp. 218-226. "Before primitive man could

bring himself to imagine that his soul was like a dream, or like an

apparition, it is clear that he must already have framed to himself

some name or concept of soul."--P. 221.

[309] Cf. Max Muller, Anthropological Religion, pp. 195, 281, 337, 338.

"It was a perfectly simple process: what may almost be called a mere

process of subtraction. There was man, a living body, acting, feeling,

perceiving, thinking, and speaking. Suddenly, after receiving one blow

with a club, that living body collapses, dies, putrefies, falls to

dust. The body, therefore, is seen to he destroyed. But there is

nothing to prove that the agent within that body, who felt, who

perceived, who thought and spoke, had likewise been destroyed, had

died, putrefied, and fallen to dust. Hence the very natural conclusion

that, though that agent had separated, it continued to exist somewhere,

even though there was no evidence to show how it existed and where it

existed"--P. 281. See also Mr. Greg, Preface to Enigmas of Life, p. 7;

and Fairbairn's Studies in Philosophy of Religion, pp. 115ff.

[310] Plato's Phaedo, Cicero's Tusculan Disputations and Dream of

Scipio, etc. Cf. Max Muller on Anthropological Religion, Lecture XI.

[311] In the Essay on "Theism," in Three Essays on Religion. See below.

[312] Adv. of Learning, Book ii. 13.

[313] It. Browning, Pauline. [The text is somewhat altered in 1889

edition. Works, i. p. 27.]

[314] "Man," says Kant, "is not so constituted as to rest and be

satisfied in any possession or enjoyment whatsoever."--Kritik d.

Urtheilskraft, p. 281 (Erdmann's ed.).

[315] Browning, Pauline. As revised:--

"How should this earth's life prove my only sphere?

Can I so narrow sense but that in life

Soul still exceeds it?"

Works, i. p. 29.

[316] Cf. Kant on "The Last End of Nature as a teleological System,"

Kritik d. Urtheilskraft, pp. 280--285; and Caird, Philosophy of Kant,

ii. P. 501.

[317] "For my part," says Mr. Fiske, "I believe in the immortality of

the soul, not in the sense in which I accept the demonstrable truths of

science, but as a supreme act of faith in the reasonableness. of God's

work."--Man's Destiny p. 116.

[318]

There is no reconciling wisdom with a world distraught,

Goodness with triumphant evil, power with failure in the aim,

If--(to my own sense, remember! though none other feel the same!)--

If you bar me from assuming earth to be a pupil's place,

And life, time,--with all their chances, changes,--just

probation-space,

Mine, for me?" BROWNING, La Saisiaz, Works, xiv. p. 178.

[319] It should be noticed that, as Kant grants a "doctrinal faith" in

the existence of God, as distinguished from theoretical demonstration

on the one hand, and the moral proof on the other (see note D. to

Lecture III.), so he admits also a "doctrinal faith" in immortality.

"In view of the Divine wisdom," he says, "and having respect to the

splendid endowment of human nature, and to the shortness of life, so

inadequate for its development, we can find an equally satisfactory

ground for a doctrinal faith in the future life of the human soul.

--Kritik d. r. Vernunft, p. 561 (Eng. trans. pp. 590, 591).

[320] Phil. i. 6.

[321] Cf. Uhlhorn in his Christian Charity in the Ancient Church.

"There is an idea," he says, "which has been again met with in our own

day, that men, when they first clearly come to believe that human life

finds its life in this life alone, would be on that account the more

ready to help one another, so that at least life here below might be

made as pleasant to all as possible, and kept free from evil. But, in

truth, the opposite is the case. If the individual man is only a

passing shadow, without any everlasting significance, then reflection

quickly makes us decide: Since it is of no importance whether he exists

or not, why should I deprive myself of anything to give it to him?

. . . It was only when through Christianity it was for the first time

made known that every human soul possessed an infinite value, that each

individual existence is of much more worth than the whole world,--it

was only then that room was found for the growth of a genuine

charity."--Pp. 33, 34 (Eng. trans.).

[322] Three Essays, p. 249.

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"Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death

through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all have

sinned."--Paul.

"This is a wonder to which the worshippers of reason have not yet given

a name--the story of the fall of the first man. Is it allegory?

history? fable? And yet there it stands, following the account of the

creation, one of the pillars of Hercules, beyond which there is

nothing--the point from which all succeeding history starts. . . . And

yet, ye dear, most ancient, and undying traditions. of my race--ye are

the very kernel and germ of its most hidden history. Without you,

mankind would be what so many other things are--a hook without a title,

without the first cover and introduction." Herder.

"The existence of two selves in a man, a better self which takes

pleasure in the good, and a worse self which makes for the bad, is a

fact too plain to he denied."--F. H. Bradley.

"When we speak of primitive man, we do not mean man while he was

emerging from brutality to humanity, while he was losing his fur and

gaining his intellect.' We leave that to the few biologists who,

undeterred by the absence of facts, still profess a belief in descent

of man from some known or unknown animal species."--Max Muller.

"Are God and Nature then at strife,

That Nature lends such evil dreams?

So careful of the type she seems,

So careless of the single life; . . .

so careful of the type?' but no.

From scarped cliff and quarried stone

She cries, A thousand types are gone,

I care for nothing, all shall go.'"

Tennyson.

LECTURE V.

THE POSTULATE OF THE CHRISTIAN VIEW IN REGARD TO THE SIN AND DISORDER OF THE

WORLD.

Christianity is the religion of Redemption. As such, it has for its

third postulate the sin and disorder of the world. The existence of

natural and moral evil is one of the darkest, deepest, and most

difficult problems that can occupy human thought. It is one which has

exercised the hearts of men in all ages, one which is often raised in

Scripture, and which should warn us off from light and superficial

views of the Divine character and purposes. Its presence is the great

difficulty in the way of a belief on natural grounds in the perfect

justice and goodness of God, the obstacle we immediately encounter when

we try to persuade ourselves that the universe is created and ordered

by a supremely good Being. So grave is this difficulty, even in respect

to natural evil, that Mr. J. S. Mill declares "the problem of

reconciling infinite benevolence and justice in the Creator of such a

world as this" to be "impossible"; and adds, "The attempt to do so not

only involves absolute contradiction in an intellectual point of view,

but exhibits in excess the revolting spectacle of a jesuitical defence

of moral enormities." [323] From the natural point of view, the

assurance of God's perfect goodness must always be, to some extent, an

act of faith, based on the postulate of our own moral consciousness;

and even this will often find it difficult to sustain itself, since

Christianity alone imparts the moral consciousness in sufficient

strength to uphold the faith required.

It is important to observe that, though this problem meets us in

connection with the Christian view of the world, it is not Christianity

that makes this problem. Natural and moral evil is there as a fact in

the universe, and would be there though Christianity had never been

heard of. Christianity intensifies the problem by the stronger light it

casts on the character of God, and the higher view it gives of man, but

it does not create the problem. What it professes to do is to help us

to Solve it. But the problem is there all the while, and has to be

taken account of by every system, whether Christian or not. It is a

difficulty of philosophy, not less than of theology.

While, however, in naturalistic systems moral evil is apt to fall

behind natural evil, in Christianity it is the other way --the moral

evil is throughout placed in the forefront, and natural evil is looked

at mainly in the light of it. This is as it should be; for while, as we

shall see, natural evil presents an independent problem, there can be

no doubt that its existence is deeply implicated with the existence of

moral evil. [324] If we subtract from the sum of suffering in the world

all that is directly or indirectly caused by sin--by the play and

action of forces that are morally evil--we shall reduce the problem to

very manageable dimensions indeed. It is the existence moral evil which

is the tremendous difficulty from a theistic point of view. I might go

further, and say that it is only for a theistic system that the problem

of moral evil properly exists. [325] Materialism and Pantheism may

acknowledge natural evil--misfortune, pain, sorrow, misery--but it is

only by an inconsistency they can speak of sin. Both are systems of

determinism, and leave no place for moral action. There is, besides, in

either system, no question of a theodicy, for there is to them no God.

Things are as they are by a necessity of nature, which we can neither

account for nor get behind. If we could, indeed, really get rid of the

problem of sin by adopting either of these systems, there would be some

reason for accepting them. But unfortunately the problem of moral evil

is one which refuses to be thus summarily got rid of. Sin is there; the

feeling of responsibility and of guilt is there; and neither the heart

nor the reason of humanity will allow us to treat them as nonentities.

Nor does the denial of God's existence really mitigate the difficulty.

Dark as the problem of evil is, it would be immeasurably darker if we

were compelled to believe that there is no infinite righteousness and

love behind, through which a solution of the problem may ultimately be

hoped for. I proceed to consider more narrowly what the Christian view

of sin is, and how it stands related to modern theories and

speculations.

I. The problem of moral evil: conflict of Christian and modern views.

I. It is in their respective relations to the sin and disorder of the

world, perhaps more than at any other point, that the Christian and

"modern" views of the world come to a direct issue. On the one hand,

there are certain respects in which the Christian view finds unexpected

support from the modern view of the world; on the other, there are

certain respects in which it is fundamentally at variance with it. Let

us briefly consider both.

There are three respects, in particular, in which the modern view of

the world comes to the support of the Christian view of sin.

1. The modern view of things is marked by a stronger sense than in

former times of the reality and universal presence of evil--both of

natural evil and of moral evil, though moral evil, as was to be

expected, is regarded more from its side of error, misery, and bondage,

than from its side of guilt. The modern view has disposed of the

superficial optimism of earlier times. The days of a flimsy optimism,

when men demonstrated to their own satisfaction that this was the best

of all possible worlds, and made light of the facts which contradicted

their pleasing hypothesis, are over, and everywhere there is an

oppressive sense of the weight of the evils which burden humanity, and

of the unsatisfactoriness of natural existence generally. The strain of

modern thought is pessimistic rather than optimistic. Its high-water

mark is not optimism, but what George Eliot prefers to call

"meliorism." [326] Herbert Spencer, indeed, still looks for an

"evanescence of evil," as the result of the working of natural and

necessary laws of evolution, [327] but I do not find that this

represents the general temper of the age. Schopenhauer and Hartmann

have at least this merit, that they raise the question of the good or

evil of existence in a form which makes it impossible ever again to

ignore it, or bury it out of sight. Pessimism, as Professor Flint has

said, "like Macbeth, has murdered sleep." [328] All this is a gain to

the Christian view. Hartmann even goes so far as to find the merit of

Christianity in the fact that it is a system of Pessimism. [329] Both

systems take for granted the facts of existence, and both look them

boldly in the face. But there is this difference--Christianity looks on

the world in a spirit of hope; Pessimism looks on it in a spirit of

despair.

2. It is an extension of the same remark to say that the modern view of

the world has disposed effectually of the shallow Rousseau view of the

inherent goodness of human nature, and of the eighteenth-century

illumination dreams of a perfectibility of man based on education, and

on altered social and political conditions. [330] The optimistic and

Pelagian views of human nature are as completely discredited as the

optimistic view of the world generally. Kant struck this deeper keynote

when, in opposition to the preceding Rationalism, he acknowledged the

presence of a "radical evil" in human nature, which he could only

account for by an act of the will above time. [331] The modern

evolutionary philosophy goes even beyond Christianity in its

affirmation of the dominance of the brute element in man's being--of

the ascendency of the egoistic over the social impulses in the natural

man; [332] while the moralisation of humanity which it anticipates, in

the sense of a gradual subordination of the former to the latter, is

admitted to be yet very imperfect. From the side of modern thought,

therefore, there is no hesitation in admitting, what Christianity also

affirms, that the animal in man has an undue preponderance over the

intellectual and spiritual; that the will, even in the best of men, is

hampered and fettered by impulses of the lower nature to a degree which

often evokes the liveliest expressions of shame and self-reproach; that

society is largely ruled by egoistic passions and aims. The law in the

members warring against the law in the mind [333] --in a sense, a

natural depravity and "original sin "--has its recognition in modern

science and philosophy.

3. In the modern view of the world we have the fullest recognition of

the organic principle in human life, and of the corollary of this in

heredity. This, which is the correction of the individualistic view of

human nature which prevailed in last century, I take to be one of the

greatest gains of modern thought for the right understanding of the

Christian doctrines both of sin and of Redemption. The Christian view

is one which gives its rightful place alike to the individual, and to

the organic connection of the individual with the race; and it is the

latter side of the truth which modern thought has done so much to

further. Rather, perhaps, I should say that both sides are being

brought into strong prominence; for if there never was so much stress

laid on the connection of the individual with society, neither was

there ever so much said about individual rights. The former idea, at

all events, is now thoroughly incorporated into modern habits of under

the name of the "solidarity" of the race. [334] There is an individual

life, and there is a social life in which we all share. The race is an

organism, and the individual, if we may so speak, is a cell in the

tissue of that organism, indissolubly connected for good or evil with

the other cells in the unity of a common life. [335] From this follows

the conception of heredity, which plays so important a part in modern

theories. Man is not simply bound up with his fellows through the

external usages and institutions of society. "He has been produced by,

and has become a part of them, . . . he is organically related to all

the members of the race, not only bone of their bone and flesh of their

flesh, but mind of their mind." [336] He is a bundle of inherited.

tendencies, and will in turn transmit his nature with its new marks of

good an evil, to those who come after him. [337] It is easy to see that

this conception of heredity, and of the organic unity of the race, is

but the scientific expression of a doctrine which is fundamental to the

Scriptures, and which underlies all its tea in about sin and salvation.

In respect of the points just named, therefore, it may be affirmed that

the modem view of the world is largely in agreement with Christianity.

We may not agree with Schopenhauer and Hartmann that Christianity is a

system of Pessimism; but we may admit that Pessimism, in so far as it

recognises that the world is in an evil state, is far truer to facts

and to Christianity than the superficial Optimism, the shallow

perfectionism, and the Pelagian denial of original and inherited sin,

which it helped to displace. In the respect last named, indeed, modern

thought is nearer to Christianity than some Christian systems

themselves. Ritschl, for example, teaches that sin consists only in

acts, and not in states and dispositions of the heart; that there is no

such thing as original or inherited sin; that sin is not transmissible

by nature, but only through education, influence, the reciprocal action

of individuals in society, etc. [338] But in maintaining this, he comes

into conflict, not merely with texts of Scripture, but with the whole

modern conception of the organic union of the race. Universal sin--sin

which does not consist merely in acts but seated causes in the heart

the effects of which both bodily and mental, are hereditarily

transmitted--these I take to he conceptions which neither Ritschl nor

any other will now be able to overthrow. [339]

When all this is said, however, it must still be granted that the most

fundamental difference exists between the two views--the Christian and

the modern. The difference is partly one as to the nature of sin, and

it runs up into a difference as to its origin. The Christian view of

sin is not only infinitely deeper and more earnest than in any current

conception apart from Christianity; but it is, as I formerly remarked,

profoundly modified by the difference in the views of God and of man.

The first thing we have to do here is to secure clearly the Christian

idea of sin: then when we have done this, and asked whether it is

verified in conscience and experience we are prepared to judge of

theories of origin.

I lay it down as a first principle that, in the Christian view, sin is

that which absolutely ought not to be. [340] How that which absolutely

ought not to be is yet permitted to exist under the government of a

wise and holy God, is a problem we may not be able to solve; but the

first thing to do is to hold firmly to the conception of sin itself.

Sin, as such, is that which unconditionally ought not to be, which

contradicts or infringes upon an unconditional law of right, and

therefore can only be understood in the light of that which ought to

be--of the moral good. [341] The Christian view of sin, accordingly,

has for its presupposition the doctrine of God as ethical Personality,

previously explained. It is God's perfect nature and holy will which

form the norm of character and duty for man. The law of holiness

requires, not only that the human will subsist in perfect harmony with

the Divine, being surrendered to it in love, trust, and obedience, but,

as involved in this, that there should be a right state of the

affections, a pure and harmonious inner life. The external sphere for

obedience is prescribed by our position in the world, and by our

relation to it, to our neighbours, and to God.

As the negation of this, sin, in the Biblical view, consists in the

revolt of the creature will from its rightful allegiance to the

sovereign will of God, and the setting up of a false independence, the

substitution of a life-for-self for life-for-God. [342] How such an act

should ever originate may again be a problem we cannot solve; but it is

evidently included in the possibilities of human freedom. The

possibility of sin arises from the fact that the creature has

necessarily a relative independence and that in man, particularly,

together with the impulse towards God, there exists an impulse towards

the world, which the will may be tempted to make an object on its own

account. [343] The false choice made. the spiritual bond between God

and the soul is cut or at least infinitely weakened: the soul enters

into subjection to the world to which it has surrendered itself, and an

abnormal development begins, in which the baneful and God-negating

character of the egoistic principle taken into the will gradually

reveals itself. [344]

While thus spiritual in its origin, as arising from the free act of a

will up to that time pure, sin is anything but spiritual in its

effects. Its immediate result is the subversion of the true relation of

the natural and the spiritual in man's constitution, making that

supreme which ought to be subordinate, and that subordinate which ought

to be supreme. The relation of the spiritual and psychical in human

nature is inverted. The spiritual is reduced to subjection, can at best

make only feeble and ineffectual protests; the natural or psychical is

elevated to authority and rule. Further, the spiritual bond being

broken which kept the nature in harmony--reason, conscience, the

God-ward affections ruling, while the lower passions and desires

observed the bounds which higher law prescribed for them--not only is

the psychical nature exalted to undue ascendency, but its own actings

are now turbulent and irregular. It refuses to obey law; its desires

clamour importunately each for its own special gratification; discord

and division take the place of the normal unity. There is introduced

into the soul a state of anomia--lawlessness. [345] Reason and

conscience are still there as indestructible elements of human nature,

nor can the sense of its dependence on God, or obligation to Him, ever

be entirely lost. Hence arise, even in the natural man, conflict,

struggle, self-condemnation, painful and ineffectual attempts to break

the dominion of sin, never truly successful. [346] For this reason,

that carnality preponderates in the nature of man as a whole, and that

the most spiritual acts of the natural man betray the signs of its

controlling influence, the whole man is spoken of as "in the flesh,"

though elsewhere Paul distinguishes the flesh from that better

self--the nous, or inner man--which protests against its rule. [347]

All this finds its verification in conscience and experience, if not in

its totality in every man's consciousness, yet in the general

consciousness of the race. What a man's judgment of himself will be

depends upon his standpoint, but in proportion to the depth of his

self-knowledge he will confess that his heart is not naturally

possessed by love to God, and by spiritual affections; that his inner

life is not perfectly pure and harmonious; that there are principles in

his heart at war with what duty and the law of God require; that he

often transgresses the commandment which he recognises as "holy, and

just, and good," [348] in thought and word and deed; and that, in all

this, he lies under his own self-condemnation. He is conscious that the

sin of his heart is such that he would not willingly lay bare its

secrets to his closest intimate, and he would probably confess also

that this state in which he finds himself did not spring wholly, or de

novo, from his individual will, but that it developed from a nature in

which the principle of disorder was already implanted.

Gathering these observations to an issue, I conclude that the cardinal

point in the Christian view of sin is, that it is not something

natural, normal, and necessary, but, both as actual and as hereditary,

something which must find its explanation in a free act of the

creature, annulling the original relation of the creature to God. The

Christian view, in other words, cannot be maintained on the hypothesis

that man's existing state is his original one,--still less on the

assumption that, in a moral respect, it is an advance and improvement

on his original one, but only on the supposition that man has wilfully

defaced the Divine image in which he was originally made and has

voluntarily turned aside to evil. Apart from express statements on the

subject, the underlying presupposition of the Christian view is that

sin has a volitional cause, which, as the sin itself is universal, must

be carried back to the beginning of the race--that, in other words, the

development of the race has not been a natural and normal, but an

abnormal and perverted one. And here it is, I admit, that the modern

view of the world, with its doctrine of man's original brutishness, and

his ascent by his own efforts to civilisation and moral life, comes

into the most direct and absolute contradiction with it. Many

attempts--some of them well meant--have been made to gloze over, or get

rid of, this contradiction; but these would-be solutions all break on

the fact that they make sin, or what passes for sin, a natural

necessity; whereas, on the Biblical view, it is clearly not man's

misfortune only, but his fault--a deep and terrible evil for which he

is responsible.

We shall best appreciate the force of this contradiction by looking at

some of the theories to which the Christian view is opposed.

1. First, we have a class of theories which seek the ground of evil in

creation, or in the original constitution of the world; but these I do

not dwell upon. Such is the theory of Buddhism, and of all the

pessimistic systems. "The existence of the world," Schopenhauer holds,

"is itself the greatest evil of all, and underlies all other evil, and

similarly the root evil of each individual is his having come into the

world"; [349] and Hartmann speaks of the "inexpiable crime" of

creation. [350] Such, again, is the hypothesis of two original

principles in creation, e.g., the Persian dualism, of which we see some

faint attempts at a revival in modern times. [351] Such were the

Platonic and Gnostic theories, that evil had its origin in matter. This

doctrine also has its modern revivals. Even Rothe has adopted the view

which seeks the origin of evil in matter, though why matter should be

supposed inimical to goodness it is not easy to see. With him, it is

the non-divine, the contradictory counterpart to God, opposed in its

essence to the Divine, a conception not Biblical, and one which cannot

be maintained. [352]

2. We come, second, to a class of theories which seek the explanation

of evil in the nature of man. It is the characteristic of all these

theories that they regard sin as necessarily resulting from the

constitution of human nature, in contrast with the Biblical view that

it entered the world voluntarily. Of this class of theories, again, we

have several kinds.

(1) We have the metaphysical theories of sin--that, e.g., of Hegel. Sin

is here regarded as a necessary stage in the development of spirit.

Hegel is fond of explicating the story of Eden in the interests of his

philosophy, and this is how he does it. "Knowledge, as the disannulling

of the unity of nature," he says, "is the Fall,' which is no casual

conception, but the eternal history of spirit. For the state of

innocence, the paradisaical condition, is that of the brute. Paradise

is a park, where only brutes, not men, can remain. . . . The fall is,

therefore, the eternal mythus of man, in fact the very transition by

which he becomes man." [353] Sin, in brief, is the first step of man

out of his naturalness, and the only way in which he could take that

step. It is the negation of the immediate unity of man with nature, and

of the innocence of that pristine state, but only that the negation may

be in turn negated, and the true destination of spirit realised. [354]

(2) We have the ethical and would-be Christian forms of these theories,

in which the subject is looked at from the religious point of view.

Such, e.g., is the theory of Schleiermacher, who derives sin from a

relative weakness of the spirit as compared with sense. [355] Such,

again, is the theory of Lipsius, who explains it from the fact that man

is at first a naturally conditioned and self-seeking being, while his

moral will is only gradually developed. [356] Such is the theory of

Ritschl, who connects it with man's ignorance. With him also man starts

as a purely natural being, the subject of self-seeking desires, while

his will for good is a "growing" quantity. [357] Sin, therefore, is an

inevitable stage in his development.

(3) We have the evolutionary theories, in which man begins only a shade

removed from the brutes, and his subsequent moralisation is the result

of slow development. This theory may be held in a more naturalistic or

in a more philosophical form. In the former, the genesis of our moral

ideas, from which the sense of sin arises, is sought in causes outside

of the moral altogether--in the possession by man of social as well as

egoistic impulses, in the perception of the advantage that would accrue

from the subordination of the latter to the former, in the gradual

accumulation of the results of experience in the organism through

heredity, in the strengthening of the bonds of society through custom,

law, etc. [358] What this theory fails to show is how this idea of the

advantageous becomes converted into the perfectly distinct conception

of the morally obligatory. A clearly perceived duty lays an obligation

on the will quite distinct from a perceived advantage; and even

supposing the discovery made that a larger good would accrue through

every individual devoting himself to the common weal, a distinct notion

is involved when it is perceived that duty requires us to adopt this

for our end. [359] The higher form of the evolutionary theory,

accordingly, makes a more promising beginning, in that it grants to man

from the first his rational nature, and recognises that his ideas of

moral truth and obligation spring directly from a rational source. It

is held, however, as in the theories already considered, that at first

it is the instinctive impulses, in which the self-regarding desires are

necessarily preponderant, which hold the field, and that man comes to

the knowledge of his true nature only gradually. Man, indeed, only

begins to be a moral being when, through the awakening of his moral

consciousness, he makes the discovery that he is not what, in the true

idea of his personality, he ought to be--when he forms an ideal. It is

this impulse to realise his true nature, to attain to moral freedom,

and bring the self-seeking impulses into harmony with moral law, which,

on this theory, constitutes the mainspring of all development and

progress. [360]

Taking this class of theories together, I contend that it is impossible

to derive out of them conceptions of sin and guilt adequate to the

Christian view. In the first place, it is evident that, in all these

theories, sin is made something necessary--not simply something that

might be, or could be, but an absolute necessity. In every one of them,

the original condition of man is supposed to be such that sin could not

but result from it. This, it seems to me, is practically to empty the

idea of sin of its real significance, and to throw the responsibility

of it directly back on the Creator. It is probably a feeling of this

kind which leads many who favour the view we are considering to

disclaim the word "necessity." Hegel, even, tells us that sin is not

necessary; that man can- will evil, but is not under compulsion to will

it. But this is a mere evasion, arising from an- ambiguous use of

terms. In a multitude of other places Hegel tells us that sin arises

from the highest logical and speculative necessity. [361]

Schleiermacher, in like manner, disclaims the view that sin is a

necessary law of human development. [362] He could not do otherwise,

and hold, as he does the sinlessness of Christ. But he holds at the

same time that the development through sin--or what we subjectively

regard as sin--is the form of growth ordained for us by God, with a

view to the ultimate Redemption, or perfecting, of the race in Christ.

[363] Lipsius will have it that sin is at once necessary and free and

avoidable. [364] Ritschl holds, in the same way, that a necessity of

sinning can be derived neither from the outfit of human nature, nor

from the ends of moral life, nor from a design of God. [365] Yet he

grants, and starting off with man as he does as a merely natural being,

he could not do otherwise, that sin is an apparently unavoidable

product of the human will under the given conditions of its

development. [366] All these theories in fact, therefore, however they

may evade the use of the name, do make sin a necessity. In the

evolutionary theories this is very obvious. There is here no pretence

that a sinless development is possible. How is it conceivable that a

being beginning at the stage of lowest savagery should avoid sin; and

what responsibility can be supposed to attach to the acts of such a

being, in whom brute passions and desires have full ascendency, while

reason and conscience are yet a glimmer--a bare potentiality?

One immediate effect of these theories, accordingly, is to weaken, if

not entirely to destroy, the idea of guilt. How can man be held

responsible for acts which the constitution of his nature and his

environment--without the intervention of moral causes of any kind, such

as is involved in the idea of a "Fall"--make inevitable? In all these

theories I have named, accordingly, it will be found that there is a

great weakening down of the idea of guilt. That man attributes his acts

to him- self, and feels guilty on account of them, is, of course,

admitted; but instead of guilt being regarded as something objectively

real, which God as well as man is bound to take account of, it comes to

be viewed as something clinging only to the subjective

consciousness,--a subjective judgment which the sinner passes on

himself, to which nothing actual corresponds. Redemption thus becomes,

in theories that admit Redemption, not the removal of guilt, but of the

consciousness of guilt; and this, not by any real Divine pardon, but by

the sinner being brought to see that his guilty fears misrepresented

the actual state of God's mind towards him. Thus it is in the theories

of Schleiermacher, of Lipsius, and of Ritschl--in that of Ritschl most

conspicuously. According to Schleiermacher, this subjective

consciousness of guilt is a Divinely ordained thing to serve as a spur

to make men seek Redemption, i.e. to be taken up into the perfect life

of Christ. [367] Ritschl regards all sins as arising so much from

ignorance as to be without real guilt in the eyes of God. God does not

impute guilt on account of the ignorance in which we now live. The

reason, therefore, why sins are pardonable is, that though the sinner

imputes them to himself as offences, they are not properly sins at all,

but acts done in ignorance. The guilt attaching to these acts is but a

feeling in the sinner's own consciousness, separating him from God,

which the revelation of God's Fatherly love in the Gospel enables him

to overcome. [368] But I ask, Does this harmonise with the moral

experience of the race--not to say with the statements of the Bible? Is

it not the universal feeling of mankind that guilt is a terrible and

stern reality, carrying with it objective and lasting effects, that it

is as real as the "ought" is real, and that conscience, in passing

judgment on our state, is but reflecting the judgment of God, to whom,

ultimately, we are accountable? This weakening down and subjectivising

of the idea of guilt is to me a strong condemnation of any theory from

which it springs.

These theories contradict the Christian view of sin, not simply in

respect of its nature and of the degree of guilt attaching to it, but

in the accounts they give of its origin. They regard that as a normal

state for man in the beginning of his history, which the Christian view

can only regard as an abnormal one. This is, indeed, the primary

difference on which all the others depend. With minor differences,

these theories all agree in regarding man's original condition as one

but little removed from the brute; the animal impulses are powerful and

ungoverned. Is this a state which, from the Christian point of view,

can ever be regarded as normal? It may be a normal state for the

animal--can it be a normal state for a moral personality? In such a

being, even from the first, the moral law asks for a subordination of

the animal impulses to reason and conscience, for unity, and not for

disorganisation and lawlessness. It asks for this, not as something to

be attained through ages of development, but as something which ought

to exist now, and counts the being in a wrong moral state who does not

possess it. What, according to these theories themselves, is the

judgment which the individual, when moral consciousness awakes, passes

on himself? Is it not that he is in a wrong moral state, a state in

which he condemns himself, and feels shame at the thought of being in

it? Else whence this sense of moral dissatisfaction, which it is

acknowledged that he feels, and feels the more keenly in proportion as

his moral perceptions become more acute? It is not simply that he has

an ideal which he has not reached: this is an experience to be found in

every stage of development, even when the conscience implies no blame.

But the contrast is between the idea of the "is" and of the "ought to

be," even in his present state, and this awakens the feeling of blame.

[369] On what ground, further, must it be held that man must have

commenced his career from this low and non-moral, if not positively

immoral point? Is it a necessary part of a law of development, that a

man can only reach that which he ought to be by passing through that

which he ought not to be? Then evil has a relative justification, and

the judgment which the immediate consciousness passes on it must be

retracted or modified from a higher point of view. [370] We have only

to compare the Christian estimate of sin with that to which this theory

heads us, to see how profound is the difference between them. On this

theory of development, when a man has reached the higher moral

standpoint, he judges of his former state more leniently than he did at

first; he ceases to pass condemnatory judgments on himself on account

of it. In the Christian view, on the other hand, the higher the stage

which a Christian man has reached, the evil and guilt of his former

state will appear in a deeper dye; the more emphatically will he

condemn it as one of lostness and shame. Which estimate is the more

just? I do not think there is any difficulty, at least, in seeing which

is most in accord with the idea of the moral.

I cannot, therefore, think that the picture sometimes given us of man's

primeval state--that of a miserable, half-starved, naked wretch, just

emerged from the bestial condition, torn with fierce passions, and

fighting his way among his compeers with low-browed cunning--is one in

harmony with the Christian view. And the adversaries of the Christian

faith not only admit the discrepancy between their view and ours, but

glory in it. Christianity, they say, requires you to accept one view of

man's origin, and science gives quite another. As it is sometimes put,

the doctrine of Redemption rests on the doctrine of the Fall; and the

doctrine of the Fall rests on the third chapter of Genesis. But science

has exploded the third chapter of Genesis, so the whole structure falls

to the ground. I acknowledge the issue, but it is not rightly put to

say that the doctrine of the Fall rests on the third chapter of

Genesis. The Christian doctrine of Redemption certainly does not rest

on the narrative in Gen. iii., but it rests on the reality of the sin

and guilt of the world, which would remain acts though the third

chapter of Genesis never had been written. It would be truer to say

that I believe in the third chapter of Genesis, or in the essential

truth which it contains, because I believe in sin and Redemption, than

to say that I believe in sin and Redemption because of the story of the

Fall. [371] Put the third chapter of Genesis out of view, and you have

the facts of the sin and disorder of the world to be accounted for, and

dealt with, all the same.

The question, however, arises, and it is a perfectly fair one to raise,

Whatever we may say of the relation to the Christian view, is not this

doctrine of man's origin, which implies a pure point of beginning in

the history of the race, expressly contradicted by the facts of

anthropology? Do not the facts of modern science compel us to adopt a

different view? Must we not conclude, if regard is had to the evidence,

that man did begin as a savage, but a few degrees removed from the

brutes, and has only gradually worked his way upwards to his present

condition? In answer I would say, I certainly do not believe that this

theory has been proved, and, expressing my own opinion, I do not think

it is likely to be proved. If it were proved, I admit that it would

profoundly modify our whole conception of the Christian system.

Negatively, evolutionists have not proved that this was the original

state of man. The missing link between man and brute has long been

sought for, but as yet has been sought in vain. The oldest specimens of

men known to science are just as truly men as any of their successors.

[372] At the same time, we need not reject the hypothesis of evolution

within the limits in which science has really rendered it probable. The

only theory of evolution which necessarily conflicts with the Biblical

view is that which supposes evolution to proceed by slow and gradual

modifications--"insensible gradations," as Mr. Spencer puts it--and

this is a view to which many of the facts of science are themselves

opposed. Evolution is not opposed to the appearance, at certain points

in the chain of development, of something absolutely new, and it has

already been mentioned that distinguished evolutionists, like Mr.

Alfred Russel Wallace, freely recognise this fact. [373] The

"insensible gradation" theory, as respects the transition from ape to

man, has not a single fact to support it. With man, from the point of

view of the Bible, we have the rise of a new kingdom, just as truly as

when life first entered,--the entrance on the stage of nature of a

being self-conscious, rational, and moral, a being made in the image of

God, and it is arbitrary to assume that this new beginning will not be

marked by differences which distinguish it from the introduction of

purely animal races.

The evidence which is adduced from other quarters of the originally

savage state of man is equally inconclusive. There is no reason to

believe that existing savage races represent the earliest condition of

mankind; rather there is evidence to show that they represent a

degradation from a higher state. The traces of early man which geology

has disinterred show, indeed, the existence in various parts of the

world of races in a comparatively rude and uncivilised state; but they

are found mostly in outlying regions, far from the original centres of

distribution, and afford no good evidence of what man was when he first

appeared upon the earth. [374] On the other hand, when we turn to the

regions which tradition points to as the cradle of the race, we find

great empires and civilisations which show no traces of those gradual

advances from savagery which the modern theory requires, but which

represent man as from the earliest period as in possession of faculties

of thought and action of a high order. [375] The theory, again, that

man began with the lowest Fetishism in religion, and only gradually

raised himself through Polytheism to Monotheism, finds no support from

the history of religions. [376] There is not the slightest proof, e.g.,

that the Vedic religion was developed out of fetish worship, or ghost

worship, but many indications that it was preceded by a purer faith, in

which the sense of the unity of God was not yet lost. The same may be

said of the religions of the most ancient civilised peoples,--that

while all, or nearly all, in the form in which we know them, are

polytheistic and idolatrous, there is not any which does not show a

substratum of monotheistic truth, and from which we cannot adduce many

proofs of an earlier purer faith. [377]

Another side from which the Christian view is contested, and the

hypothesis of an originally savage condition of man is supposed to be

supported, is the evidence that has been accumulated of an extreme

antiquity of the human race. I am not aware that the Bible is committed

to any definite date for the appearance of man upon the earth; but it

will be generally felt that if the extreme views which some advocate on

this subject, carrying back marks appearance some hundred thousand or

two hundred thousand years, were accepted, it would, taken in

connection with the comparatively recent origin of civilisation,

militate against the view which we defended. I am free further to admit

that, did no religious interest enter, and were the facts of science

the only ones to be regarded, we would probably have been found

yielding a ready assent to the hypothesis of a great antiquity. The

religious interests at stake lead us, while of course acknowledging

that whatever science really proves must be accepted as true, to be a

little more careful in our examination of the proofs. And it is well we

have been thus cautious; for, if we take the latest testimony of

science as to what has been really proved, we find that the recent

tendency is rather to retrench than to extend the enormous periods

which were at first demanded; and that, while some geologists tell us

that one or two hundred thousand years are needed, others, equally well

informed, declare that ten thousand years would cover all the facts at

present in evidence. [378] Professor Boyd Dawkins has said in a recent

Address:--"The question of the antiquity of man is inseparably

connected with the further question, Is it possible to measure the

lapse of geological time in years? Various attempts have been made, and

all, as it seems to me, have ended in failure. Till we know the rate of

causation in the past, and until we can be sure that it is invariable

and uninterrupted, I cannot see anything but failure in the future.

Neither the rate of the erosion of the land by sub-aerial agencies, nor

its destruction by oceanic currents, nor the rate of the deposit of

stalagmite, or of the movement of the glaciers, have as yet given us

anything at all approaching to a satisfactory date. We have only a

sequence of events recorded in the rocks, with intervals the length of

which we cannot measure. It is surely impossible to fix a date in term

of years, either for the first appearance of man, or for any event

outside the written record." [379]

I claim, then, that so far as the evidence of science goes, the Bible

doctrine of a pure beginning of the race is not overturned. I do not

enter into the question of how we are to interpret the third chapter of

Genesis,--whether as history or allegory or myth, or, most probably of

all, as old tradition clothed in oriental allegorical dress,--but the

truth embodied in that narrative, viz. the fall of man from an original

state of purity, I take to be vital to the Christian view. On the other

hand, we must beware, even while holding to the Biblical account, of

putting into the original state of man more that the narrative

warrants. The picture given us of the first man in the Bible is

primitive in every way. The Adam of the book of Genesis is not a being

of advanced intellectual attainments, or endowed with an intuitive

knowledge of the various arts and sciences. If his state is far removed

from that of the savage, it is equally far removed from that of the

civilised man. [380] The earliest steps in what we call civilisation

are of later date, and are duly recorded, though they belong, not to

the race of Seth, but to that of Cain. [381] It is presumed that man

had high and noble faculties, a pure and harmonious nature, rectitude

of will, capability of understanding his Creator's instructions, and

power to obey them. Beyond that we need not go. The essence of the

Biblical view is summed up in the words of the Preacher: "God made man

upright; but they sought out many inventions." [382]

II. The problem of natural evil: connection with moral evil.

II. I pass to the consideration of the connection of moral with natural

evil, reserving for discussion in a succeeding section a special aspect

of that connection--the relation of sin to death. I begin by a brief

consideration of the problem of natural evil, as such. It is not sin

only, but natural evil--the existence of pain and suffering in the

world--which is made the ground of an impeachment of God's justice and

goodness. Everyone will remember Mr. J. S. Mill's terrible indictment

of nature on this score; [383] and Pessimism has given new voice to the

plaints which have always been heard of the misery and suffering bound

up with life, On the general question, I would only like again to

emphasise what I said at the outset of the extent to which this problem

of natural evil is bound up with that of sin. Apart from all

theological prepossessions, we have only to cast our eyes abroad to see

how large a part of the total difficulty this connection with moral

evil covers. Take away from the history of humanity all the evils which

have come on man through his own folly, sin, and vice; through the

follies and vices of society; through tyranny, misgovernment, and

oppression; through the cruelty and inhumanity of man to man; and how

vast a portion of the problem of evil would already be solved! What

myriads of lives have been sacrificed at the shrines of Bacchus and of

lust; what untold misery has been inflicted on the race, to gratify the

unscrupulous ambitions of ruthless conquerors; what tears and groans

have sprung from the institution of slavery; what wretchedness is

hourly inflicted on human hearts by domestic tyranny, private

selfishness, the preying of the strong upon the weak, dishonesty and

chicanery in society! If great civilisations have fallen, to what has

the result been commonly due, if not to their own vices and

corruptions, which sapped and destroyed their vigour, and made them an

easy prey to ruder and stronger races? [384] If society witnesses great

volcanic eruptions like the French Revolution, is it not when evil has

reached such a height through the long-accumulating iniquities of

centuries that it can no longer be borne, and the explosion effects a

remedy which could not otherwise be achieved? If all the suffering and

sorrow which follow directly or indirectly from human sin could be

abstracted, what a happy world, after all, this would be! Yet there

seem to be natural evils which are independent of sin, and we must

endeavour to look the problem suggested by them fairly in the face.

First of all, I would say that this problem of natural evil can hardly

be said to meet us in the inorganic world at all, i.e. regarding it

merely as such. [385] We see there what may appear to us like

disharmony and disorder; convulsion, upheaval, the letting loose of

titanic forces which work havoc and destruction; but except in relation

to sentient existences, we cannot properly speak of these as evil. We

may wonder why they should be, but when we see what ends are served in

the economy of nature by this apparently lawless clash and conflict of

forces, we may reconcile ourselves to it as part of a system, which, on

the whole, is very good. [386]

Neither does this problem properly meet us in connection with the

organic world, so far as it is not sentient, e.g., in connection with

the law of decay and death in the vegetable world. When it is said

that, according to the Bible, there was no death before Adam, it is to

be remembered that the Bible speaks of a vegetable creation, which was

evidently intended to be perishable, [387] --which, in fact, was given

for food to animals and men. We feel no difficulty in this. The plants

are part of nature. They flower, seed, decay. They fall under the law

of all finite, merely natural existences, in being subject to

corruptibility and death.

When we rise to animal life, the problem does appear, for here we have

sentiency and suffering. Yet abstracting for a moment from this

sentiency, the same thing applies to animals as to plants. They are

finite, merely natural creatures, not ends in themselves, but

subserving some general use in the economy of nature, and, by the law

of their creation, exposed to corruption and death. flow is this

modified by the fact of sentiency! I think we have only to look at the

matter fairly to see that it is not modified in any way which is

incompatible with the justice and goodness of the Creator. Leaving out

of reckoning the pain of human life, and the sufferings inflicted on

the animal world by man, we might fairly ask the pessimist to face the

question, Is the world of sentient beings an unhappy one? Look at the

fish in the stream, the bird in the air, the insect on the wing, the

creatures of the forest,--is their lot one of greater pleasure or pain?

I do not think it is unhappy. We speak of "the struggle for existence,"

but is this necessarily pain? The capacity or pleasure, indeed, implies

as its counterpart the susceptibility of pain, but whereas the avenues

for pleasure are many, the experience of pain is minimised by the

suddenness with which death comes, the absence of the power of

reflection, the paralysis of feeling through fascination or excitement,

etc. [388] I have been struck with observing the predominatingly

optimistic way in which the Bible, and especially Jesus, all through

regard the natural and sentient world, dwelling on its brightness, its

beauty, its rejoicing, the care of Providence over the creatures, their

happy freedom, [389] --in striking contrast with the morbid brooding

over the aspects of struggle in nature which fill our modern treatises.

[390] The thing which strikes us most as a difficulty, perhaps, is the

universal preying of species on species --"nature red in tooth and

claw" [391] --which seems so strange a feature in a government assumed

to have for its motive beneficence. But the difficulty is modified by

the consideration that food in some way must be provided for the

creatures; and if sentiency is better than insentiency, greater

beneficence is shown in giving the bird or insect its brief span of

life than in with holding existence from it altogether. The present

plan provides for the multiplication of sentient creatures. to an

extent which would not be possible on any other system; it provides,

too, since death must rule over such organisms, for their removal from

nature in the way which least pollutes nature with. corruption. [392]

The real question which underlies the problem in relation to the

natural world is,--Is there to be room in the universe for any grades

of existence short of the highest? In nature, as the evolutionist is

fond of showing, we find every blank space filled--every corner and

niche that would be otherwise empty occupied by some form of life. Why

should it not be so? If, in addition to the higher orders of being,

lower grades of sentient existence are possible, enhancing the total

sum of life and happiness, why should they not also be created? Why--to

give our thoughts for a moment the widest possible range--if there is

in the universe, as Dorner supposes, "a world standing in the light of

eternity, a world of pure spirits, withdrawn from all relation to

succession" [393] (the angelic world), should there not be also a

material and time-developing world? Why, in this temporal world, should

there be only the highest creature, man, and not also an infinity of

creatures under him, stocking the seas, rivers, plains, forests, and

taking possession of every vacant opening and nook which present

themselves? Or, in a developing world, could the highest be reached

except through the lower--the spiritual except through the natural? Is

not this the law of Scripture, as well as of nature--"that was not

first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards

that which is spiritual"? [394] The mere fact that in a world of this

kind the denizens would be finite and perishable--exposed to incidental

pains, as well as constituted for pleasures--would not be a reason for

not creating it, unless the pains were a predominant feature, and

constituted a surplusage over the pleasures. But this we do not

acknowledge to be the case. The pleasures of the animal world we take

to be the rule; the pains are the exception. [395]

It is when we rise from the animal world to the consideration of

natural evil in relation to man, that we first meet with the problem in

a form which constitutes it a formidable difficulty. For man, unlike

the animals, is an end to himself; pain means more to him than it does

to them; death, in particular, seems a contradiction of his destiny;

and it is not easy to understand why he should be placed in a world in

which he is naturally, nay necessarily, exposed to these evils. The

natural disturbances which we formerly noticed--floods, hurricanes,

earthquakes, volcanoes, and the like--now assume a new aspect as

elements in a world of which man is to be the inhabitant, and where he

may be called upon to suffer through their agency. [396] This is really

a serious problem, and we have to ask whether the Biblical view affords

any clue to the solution of it, and whether that solution will sustain

the test of reason and of fact?

It is scarcely an adequate solution of this problem of natural evil and

death as it affects man, though, no doubt, a profound element in the

solution, to point to the disciplinary and other wholesome uses which

misfortune and suffering are fitted to subserve in the moral education

of man. This is the line followed by most earnest thinkers in trying to

explain the mystery of suffering in the world, and it rests on the true

thought that there is a Divinely ordained connection between the pains

we are called upon to suffer and the ends of our highest life. [397]

Without trials and difficulties, it is urged, where were progress?

without checks to self-will, where were the lessons of submission to a

higher will? without experience of resistance, where were the stimulus

to effort? without danger and misfortune, where were courage, manhood,

and endurance? without pain, where were sympathy? [398] without sorrow

and distress, where would the opportunity for self-sacrifice be? This

is quite true, but does it go to the root of the matter? Does it

explain all? Because suffering and death, as existing in the world,

have an educating and purifying effect; because, as may be freely

granted, they have a power of developing a type of character greater

and nobler than could have been developed without them (a glimpse of

theodicy in the permission of evil at all); because they serve for

purposes of test and trial where character is already formed, and aid

its yet ampler growth [399] --does it follow that a world such as this,

with its manifold disorders, would have been a suitable abode for an

unfallen race; or that it would have been righteous to expose such a

race to these calamities; or that, in the case of pure beings, less

violent and painful methods of education would not have sufficed? [400]

Of course, if this method of arguing were admitted, the existence of

moral evils would have to be justified on the same ground, for in

conflict with these, even more than with outward misfortune, is the

highest type of character developed. It will be observed, also, that

the argument rests largely, though not wholly, on the assumption of

fault in human nature to be corrected (self-will, selfishness, etc.),

and thus already presupposes sin; it does not, for instance, tell what

a world would have been into which no sin had entered. But do even the

advocates of this explanation of natural evil abide by their own

thesis? Pain, it is said, begets tenderness and sympathy; suffering

engenders philanthropy; the presence of evils in the world awakens

noble self-sacrificing efforts for their removal--summons man, as

Pfleiderer puts it, to fellowship with "the aim of God Himself, viz. to

advance goodness, and to overcome evil in the world." [401] Then these

are evils, and, notwithstanding their advantages, we are to treat them

as things which would be better absent, and do our utmost to remove

them. A concrete case in this connection is worth a good deal of

argument, and I take it from Naville. He tells of a letter he received,

written from Zurich, at a time when the cholera was ravaging the city.

"My correspondent," he says, "told me that he had seen sad things--the

results of selfishness and fear; but he also told me that so much

courage, devotedness, and regard for the good of others had been

brought out under the pressure of the malady, that different ranks of

society had been so drawn together by the inspiration of generous

sentiments, that he would not for the world have been absent from his

native place, and so have missed witnessing such a spectacle." [402]

Shall we then, because of these salutary effects, wish for the

prevalence of cholera? Or because wars bring out noble examples of

heroism, shall we desire to see wars prevail? The question has only to

be asked to be answered, and it shows that this mode of justifying

natural evil leaves much yet to be accounted for.

It has just been seen that even this mode of explaining the existence

of natural evil, and the use made of it in the moral government of God,

presupposes, to some extent, the existence of sin. This yields a point

of transition to the Biblical view, in which this solidarity of man

with his outward world, and the consequent connection of natural with

moral evil, is a central and undeniable feature. We are not, indeed, at

liberty to trace a strict relation between the sins of individuals and

the outward calamities that befall them; but Christ's warning on this

subject by no means contradicts the view that there is an intimate

connection between natural and moral evils, and that the former are

often used by God as the punishment of the latter. It is one of the

most deeply ingrained ideas in the Bible, that physical evils are often

used by God for the punishment of individual and national wickedness,

and Christ Himself expressly endorses this view in His own predictions

of the approaching judgments on Jerusalem. [403] He warns us only that

the proposition,--Sin is often punished with physical evils--is by no

means convertible with the other,--All physical evils are the

punishment of individual sins. Nor is this teaching of Scripture to be

explained away, as it is by Lipsius, Pfleiderer, and Ritschl, as

meaning merely that the evil conscience subjectively regards these

visitations as retributive, though objectively they have no such

character, but simply flow from the natural course of events. [404]

Similarly, the expression, "All things work together for good to them

that love God," [405] is explained as meaning that things work together

for good to the believer, because, whatever the course of events, he is

sure to profit by them. This is not the Biblical view, and it is not a

reasonable one for those to take, who, like the above-named writers,

admit a government of the world for moral ends. Once allow a relation

between the natural and the moral in the government of God, and it is

difficult to avoid the conclusion that the course of outward events is

directed with a regard to the good and evil conduct of the subjects of

that government.

A deeper question, however, which lies behind this immediate one, of

the place of natural evils in the moral government of God is, Is nature

itself in a normal condition? The Bible, again, undeniably answers this

question in the negative, and it is important for us to ascertain in

what sense precisely it does so. The most explicit passage in the New

Testament is perhaps that in Rom. viii. 19-23, where the Apostle Paul

expressly declares, "For the earnest expectation of the creation

waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was

subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of Him who

subjected it in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered

from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the

children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and

travaileth in pain together until now." The plain implication of this

passage is that nature is a sufferer with man on account of sin; that,,

as I expressed it above, there is a solidarity between man and the

outward world, both in his Fall and his Redemption. So far the passage

is an echo of the statement of Genesis, that the earth lies under a

curse on account of human sin. Is this view scientifically tenable, or

is it not a baseless dream, directly contradicted by the facts already

conceded of physical disturbance, decay, and death in the world, long

ere man appeared in it? I do not think it is. This implication of

creation in the effects of human sin, though science certainly cannot

prove it, is an idea by no means inadmissible, or in contradiction with

known facts.

1. The view has often been suggested--is maintained, e.g., by Dorner

and Delitzsch [406] --that the constitution of nature had from the

first a teleological relation to sin; that sin did not enter the world

as an unforeseen accident, but, as foreseen, was provided for in the

arrangements of the world; that creation, in other words, had from the

beginning an anticipative reference to sin. This view would explain

maw, things that seem mysterious inn the earlier stages of creation,

and falls in with other truths of Scripture, to which attention will

subsequently be directed. [407]

2. I do not feel, however, that I need to avail myself of this

hypothesis. All that is essential in the Apostle's statement can be

conserved without going back to pre-Adamic ages, or to vegetable decay,

and animal suffering and death. We gain the best key to the passage if

we keep to the meaning of his own word "vanity" (mataio

tes)--profitlessness-- as expressive of that to which creation was

subjected. "It is not said," remarks Bishop Ellicott, "that the

creation was subject to death or corruption, though both lie involved

in the expression, but to something more frightfully generic, to

something almost worse than non-existence,--to purposelessness, to an

inability to realise its natural tendencies, and the ends for which it

was called into being, to baffled endeavour and mocked expectations, to

a blossoming and not bearing fruit, a pursuing and not attaining, yea,

and as the analogies of the language of the original significantly

imply, to a searching and never finding." [408] Thus interpreted, the

apostle�s words convey the idea that nature is in a state of arrested

development through sin, is frustrated of its true end, and has a

destiny before it which sin does not permit it to attain. There is an

arrest, delay, or back-putting through sin, which begets in the

creature a sense of bondage, and an earnest longing for deliverance.

[409] This certainly harmonises sufficiently well with the general

impression nature makes upon us, which has found expression in the

poetry and literature of all ages.

3. The earth is under "bondage to corruption" in another way,--in the

very presence of man and his sin upon it; in being the abode of a

sinful race; in being compelled, through its laws and agencies, to

subserve the purposes of man�s sin; in being perverted from its true

uses in the service of his lusts and vices; in the suffering of the

animal creation through his cruelty; in the blight, famine, earthquake,

etc., to which it is subjected in consequence of his sin, and as the

means of punishment of it. For it by not means follows that because

these things were found in the world in the making, they were intended

to be, or continue, in the world as made, or would have been found had

sin not entered it. Science may affirm, it can certainly never prove,

that the world is in a normal state in these respects, or that even

under existing laws a better balance of harmony could not be

maintained, had the Creator so willed it.

III. Culmination of this problem in the question of the relation of sin to

death.

III. This whole discussion of the connection of natural with moral evil

sums itself up in the consideration of one special problem, in which

the contending views may be said to be brought to a distinct and

decisive issue--I mean the relation of sin to death. Is human

death--that crowning evil, which carries so many other sorrows in its

train--the result of sin. or is it not? Here, again, it is hardly

necessary for me to say, there is a direct contradiction between the

Biblical and the "modern" view, and it is for us very carefully to

inquire whether the Pauline statement, "Through one man sin entered

into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all

men, for that all have sinned," [410] enters into the essence of the

Christian view, or whether, as some seem to think, it is an excrescence

which may be stripped off.

Now, so far from regarding this relation of human death to sin as a

mere accident of the Christian view, which may be dropped without

detriment to its substance, I am disposed to look on it as a truth most

fundamental and vital--organically connected with the entire Christian

system. Its importance comes out most clearly when we consider it in

the light of the Christian doctrine of Redemption. The Bible, as we

shall immediately see, knows nothing of an abstract immortality of the

soul, as the schools speak of it; nor is its Redemption a Redemption of

the soul only, but of the body as well. It is a Redemption of man in

his whole complex personality--body and soul together. It was in the

body that Christ rose from the dead; in the body that He has ascended

to heaven; in the body that He lives and reigns there for evermore. It

is His promise that, if He lives, we shall live also; [411] and this

promise includes a pledge of the resurrection of the body. The truth

which underlies this is, that death for man is an effect of sin. It did

not lie in the Creator's original design for man that he should

die,--that these two component parts of his nature, body and soul,

should ever be violently disrupted and severed, as death now severs

them. Death is an abnormal fact in the history of the race; and

Redemption is, among other things, the undoing of this evil, and the

restoration of man to his normal completeness as a personal being.

That man was originally a mortal being neither follows from the fact of

death as a law of the animal creation, nor from its present

universality. It is, no doubt, an essential part of the modern

anti-Christian view, that man is a dying creature, and always has been.

This goes with the view that man is simply an evolution from the

animal, and falls under the same law of death as the rest of the animal

creation. But I have shown some reasons for not admitting the premiss,

[412] and therefore I cannot assent to the conclusion. There is not a

word in the Bible to indicate that in its view death entered the animal

world as a consequence of the sin of man. But, with the advent of man

upon the scene, there was, as remarked in an earlier part of the

Lecture, the introduction of something new. There now appeared at the

head of creation a moral and spiritual being--a being made in God's

image--a rational and accountable being--a being for the first time

capable of moral life, and bearing within him infinite possibilities of

progress and happiness; and it does not follow that because mere

animals are subject to a law of death, a being of this kind must be.

More than this, it is the distinction of man from the animals that he

is immortal, and they are not. He bears in his nature the various

evidences that he has a destiny stretching out far into the

future--into eternity; and many even, who hold that death is not a

consequence of sin, do not dispute that his soul is immortal. But here

is the difficulty in which such a view is involved. The soul is not the

whole of the man. It is a false view of the constitution of human

nature to regard the body as a mere appendage to the soul, or to

suppose that the human being can be equally complete whether he has his

body, or is deprived of it. This is not the Biblical view, nor, I

venture to say, is it the view to which the facts of modern psychology

and physiology point. If anything is evident, it is that soul and body

are made for each other, that the perfect life for man is a corporeal

one; that he is not pure spirit, but incorporated spirit. The soul is

capable of separation from the body; but in that state it is in an

imperfect and mutilated condition. Thus it is always represented in the

Bible, and heathen feeling coincides with this view in its

representations of the cheerless, sunless, joyless, ghost-like state of

Hades. If, then, it is held that man was naturally constituted for

immortality, how can it be maintained, with any show of consistency,

that he stood originally under a law of death? That the animal should

die is natural. But for the rational, moral agent, death is something

unnatural--abnormal; the violent rupture, or separation, or tearing

apart, so to speak, of two parts of his nature which, in the Creator's

design, were never intended to be sundered. There is, therefore,

profound truth in the Biblical representation, "In the day that thou

eatest thereof thou shalt surely die"--"Dust thou art, and unto dust

thou shalt return." [413] Some other way of leaving the world, no

doubt, there would have been--some Enoch or Elijah-like translation, or

gradual transformation of a lower corporeity into a higher, but not

death as we know it. [414]

The true Biblical doctrine of immortality, then, I think, includes the

following points:--

1. It rests on the Biblical doctrine of human nature. According to the

Bible, and according to fact, man is a compound being--not, like God

and the angels, a pure spirit, but an embodied spirit, a being made up

of body and of soul. The soul, it is true, is the higher part of human

nature, the seat of personality, and of mental, moral, and spiritual

life. Yet it is intended and adapted for life in the body, and body and

soul together make the man--the complete human being.

2. It was no part of the Creator's design for man in his ideal

constitution that body and soul should ever be separated. The

immortality man was to enjoy was an immortality in which the body was

to have its share. This is the profound truth in the teaching of the

Bible when it says that, as respects man, death is the result of sin.

Had sin not entered we must suppose that man--the complete man--would

have enjoyed immortality; even his body, its energies replenished from

vital forces from within, being exempt from decay, or at least not

decaying till a new and more spiritual tenement for the soul had been

prepared. With the entrance of sin, and departure of holiness from the

soul, this condition ceased, and the body sank, as part of general

nature, under the law of death.

3. The soul in separation from the body is in a state of imperfection

and mutilation. When a human being loses one of his limbs, we regard

him as a mutilated being. Were he to lose all his limbs, we would

regard him as worse mutilated still. So, when the soul is entirely

denuded of its body, though consciousness and memory yet remain, it

must still be regarded--and in the Bible is regarded--as subsisting in

an imperfect condition, a condition of enfeebled life, diminished

powers, restricted capacities of action--a state, in short, of

deprivation. The man whose life is hid with Christ in God will no doubt

with that life retain the blessedness that belongs to it even in the

state of separation from the body--he will "be with Christ, which is

far better"; [415] but it is still true that so long as he remains in

that disembodied state, he wants part of himself, and cannot be

perfectly blessed, as he will be after his body, in renewed and

glorified form, is restored to him.

4. The last point, therefore, in the Biblical doctrine is, that true

immortality is through Redemption, and that this Redemption embraces

the Resurrection of the body. [416] It is a complete Redemption, a

Redemption of man in his whole personality, and not simply of a part of

man. This is a subject which will be considered afterwards. It is

enough for the present to have shown that the Biblical doctrines of

man's nature, of the connection of sin and death, of Redemption, and of

the true immortality, cohere together and form a unity--are of a piece.

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[323] Three Essays on Religion, pp. 186, 187. Cf. pp. 24-41, 112, etc.

See Note A.--Defects in Creation: an Argument against Theism.

[324] This is a point which Mr. Mill overlooks.

[325] Cf. Ott's Le Probleme du Mal, pp. 1-5, 98, 99.

[326] Cf. Sully's Pessimism, p. 399. He adopts the term.

[327] Social Statics, p. 79.

[328] Anti-Theistic Theories, p. 294.

[329] Selbstzersetzung des Christenthusms, p. 51. Its characteristic

mark, he thinks, is "the pessimistic conviction of the unworthiness of

this world to exist." Schopenhauer's language is similar. "Let no one

think," he says, "that Christianity is favourable to optimism; for in

the Gospels world and evil are used as almost synonymous." "The inmost

kernel of Christianity is identical with that of Brahmanism and

Buddhism."--Die Welt als Wille, etc., i. p. 420; iii. p. 420 (Eng.

trans.).

[330] Schopenhauer says: "Indeed, the fundamental characteristic and

the proton pseudos of Rousseau's whole philosophy is this, that in the

place of the Christian doctrine of original sin, and the original

depravity of the human race, he puts an original goodness and unlimited

perfectibility of it, which has only been led astray by civilisation

and its consequences, and then founds upon this his optimism and

humanism."--Die Welt als Wille, etc., iii. p. 398.

[331] Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft, Book

i.--"On the Indwelling of the Evil Principle along with the Good, or on

the Radical Evil in Human Nature." Cf. Caird's Philosophy of Kant, ii.

pp. 566-568.

[332] Mr. Flairs says:--"Thus we see what human progress means. It

means throwing off the brute-inheritance--gradually throwing it off

through ages of struggle that are by and by to make struggle needless.

. . . The ape and the tiger in human nature will become extinct.

Theology has had much to say about original sin. This original sin is

neither more nor less than the brute-inheritance which every man

carries with him, and the process of evolution is an advance towards

true salvation."--Man's Destiny, p. 103.

"Arise and fly The reeling Faun, the seminal feast;

Move upward, working out the beast,

And let the ape and tiger die."

TENNYSON, In Memoriam.

[333] Rom. vii. 23.

[334] This word, I believe, has come from Comte.

[335] Cf. Stephen's Science of Ethics, chap. iii. sec. 4, "Social

Tissue."

[336] Sorley's Ethics of Naturalism, pp. 123, 135.

[337] Perhaps the moat forcible illustrations of heredity are to be

found in Maudsley's works." Most certain is it," he says, "that men are

not bred well or ill by accident, little as they reck of it in

practice, any more than are the animals, the select breeding of which

they make such a careful study; that there are laws of hereditary

action, working definitely in direct transmission of qualities, or

indirectly through combinations and repulsions, neutralisations and

modifications of qualities; and that it is by virtue of these laws

determining the moral and physical constitution of every individual

that a good result ensues in one case, a had result in another."--Body

and Will, p. 248.

[338] Recht. und Ver. iii. pp. 317-332 (3rd ed.)."As a personal

propensity in the life of each individual," he says, "it originates, so

far as our observation reaches, out of the sinful desire and action

which as such finds its adequate ground in the self-determination of

the individual will"--P. 331.

[339] Mr. J. J. Murphy says of Original Sin: "It is not a revealed

doctrine, but an observed fact; a fact of all human experience, and

witnessed to as strongly by classical as by Biblical writers, as

strongly by heathens and atheists as by Christians."--Scientific Basis

of Faith, p. 262. Pfleiderer speaks of "the undeniable fact of

experience, that, from the very dawn of moral life, we find evil

present in us as a power, the origin of which accordingly must be

beyond the conscious exercise of our freedom," as "a fact on which

indeterminism, Pelagian or rationalistic, must ever suffer

shipwreck."--Religionsphilosophie, iv. p. 28 (Eng. trans.).

[340] Hegel also uses this formula, but ambiguously. "What ought not to

be," means with Hegel, "what ought to be done away."Cf. Julius Muller,

Christian Doctrine of Sin, i. p. 322 (Eng. trans.). See on Hegel's

views later.

[341] "For how can anything be called evil, unless it deviate from an

obligatory good, and be therefore a violation of what ought to be

(seinsollendes)--of the holy law."--Dorner, System of Doctrine, ii. p.

308 (Eng. trans.).

[342] Exemplified in the Parable of the Prodigal (Luke xv. 11ff.).

[343] Cf. Martensen's Christian Ethics, i. secs. 26-28 (Eng. trans. pp.

94-102).

[344] On the development and forms of sin, see Muller, Christian

Doctrine of Sin, i. pp. 147-182; Dorner, System of Doctrine, ii. pp.

393-397; Martensen, Christian Ethics, i. pp. 102-108, etc. (Eng.

trans.)

[345] 1 John iii. 4.

[346] Rom. vii. 13-25.

[347] Rom. vii. 22, 23. On the various views of the Pauline use of the

term sarx with criticism of these, see Dr. Dickson's St. Paul's Use of

the Terms Flesh and Spirit (Baird Lectures, 1883).Cf. Dorner, System of

Doctrine, ii. p. 319 (Eng. trans.).

[348] Rom. vii. 12.

[349] Pfleiderer, Religionsphilosophie, ii. p. 233 (Eng. trans.) Cf.

Welt als Wille, etc., i. pp. 452-461; iii. pp. 420-454.

[350] That is, on the supposition that the Creator knew what He was

about.

[351] See Note B.--Dualistic Theories of the Origin of Evil.

[352] See his theory in Theologische Ethik, 2nd ed., i. secs. 40,

104-130. Cf. his Still Hours (Eng. trans.), pp. 185, 186. He says: "The

development of man passes through stages of sin. . . . If sin is a

necessary point in human development, it is not on that account merely

negative. . . . Evil in the course of development, or sin, is not in

itself a condition of the development of the good; but it belongs to

the idea of creation, as a creation out of nothing, that the created

personality cannot detach itself from material nature otherwise than by

being clothed upon with matter, and being in this way altered, rendered

impure or sinful. This is the necessary commencement of the creation of

man, but only its mere commencement, which comes to a close in the

Second Adam. . . . The necessity of a transition through sin is not

directly an ethical, but rather a physical necessity."The theory is

criticised by Muller, i. pp. 146, 147 (Eng. trans.); and Dorner, System

of Doctrine, ii. pp. 375-380 (Eng. trans.).

[353] Philosophy of History (Eng. trans.), p. 333.Cf.

Religionsphilosophie, ii. pp. 264-266.

[354] See Note C.--Hegel's Doctrine of Sin.

[355] Der christ. Glaube, secs. 66-69.Cf. Muller, i. pp. 341-359, on

"Schleiermacher's View of the Essence and Origin of Sin"; and Dorner,

System of Doctrine, iii. pp. 34-38 (Eng. trans.).

[356] Dogmatik, pp 374, 375.

[357] Cf. his Unterricht, 3rd ed. p. 26. This, according to him,

creates only "a possibility and probability" of sin; but it is a

possibility which, as shown below, in the early stages of man's

history, cannot fail to be realised.

[358] Cf. for different forms of the evolution theory, Darwin's Descent

of Man, Stephen's Science of Ethics, Spencer's Data of Ethics; and see

criticism in Sorley's Ethics of Naturalism, chaps. v. to viii.

[359] Mr. Stephen substitutes the "health" for the "happiness" of

society as the moral end (p. 366).But the health is in order to the

happiness, and it is presumed that the two tend to coincide (pp. 82,

83). "Morality is a statement of the conditions of social welfare,"

"the sum of the preservative instincts of society," "virtue is a

condition of social welfare," etc. (p. 217). Strong in his criticism of

the ordinary utilitarianism, Mr. Stephen is weak in his attempt to

provide a substitute, or show how the moral can possibly arise out of

the non-moral.See Mr. Sorley's criticism, Ethics of Naturalism, chap.

viii.

[360] Cf. with this general sketch Bradley's Ethical Studies (see pp.

261-265 on "The Origin of the Bad Self": and Green's Prolegomena to

Ethics, Book iii., on "the Moral Ideal and Moral Progress." Green finds

the moral end in rational 'self-satisfaction,"--a conception into which

it is difficult to avoid importing a subtle kind of hedonism; Bradley

less objectionably finds it in "self-realisation"

[361] Cf. the references to Phil. des Rechts, sec. 139, in Muller, p.

392, and see Note C.

[362] Der christ. Glaube, sec. 68, 3.

[363] Der christ. Glaube, secs. 80, 81.

[364] Dogmatik, pp. 376, 377, secs. 475-477.

[365] Unterricht, p. 26; and Recht. und Ver. iii. p. 358.

[366] Recht. und Ver. iii. 3rd ed. p. 360.

[367] Der christ. Glaube, secs. 80, 81.Cf. Muller, pp. 355, 356.The

views of Lipsius may be seen in his Dogmatik, secs. 768-771.

"Justification," he says, "in respect of human sin, is the removal of

the consciousness of guilt as a power separating from God, . . . the

certainty awakened in him by the Spirit of God present in man of his

fellowship in life and love with God, as something graciously restored

in him by God Himself."--P. 690.

[368] Recht. und Ver. iii. pp. 46, 52, 56, 83; 306, 307; 356-363,

etc.See Note D.--Ritschl's Doctrine of Guilt.

[369] Dorner truly says: "Evil does not consist in man's not yet being

initially what he will one day become; for then evil must be called

normal, and can only be esteemed exceptionable by an error. Evil is

something different from mere development. . . . Evil is the discord of

man with his idea, as, and so far as, that idea should be realised at

the given moment. . . . Sin is not being imperfect at all, hut the

contravention of what ought to be at a given moment, and of what can

lay claim to unconditioned worth"--System of Doctrine, iii. pp. 36, 37.

[370] Dorner says: "If evil is supposed to consist only in development,

which God has willed in His character as Creator, then its absolute

wrongfulness must come to an end The non-realisation of the idea cannot

be blameworthy in itself, if the innate law of life itself prescribes

progressiveness of development."--System of Doctrine, p. 264.

[371] Cf. the suggestive remarks in Auberlen's The Divine Revelation,

pp. 175-185 (Eng. trans.).

[372] Professor Dana said, in 1875: "No remains of fossil man bear

evidence to less perfect erectness of structure than in civilised man,

or to any nearer approach to the man ape in essential characteristics.

. . . This is the more extraordinary, in view of the fact that from the

lowest limits in existing man there are all possible gradations up to

the highest; while below that limit there is an abrupt fall to the ape

level, in which the cubic capacity of the brain is one-half less. If

the links ever existed, their annihilation, without trace, is so

extremely improbable that it may be pronounced impossible. Until some

are found, science cannot assert that they ever existed."--Geology, p.

603. Virchow said, in 1879: " On the whole, we must readily acknowledge

that all fossil type of a lower human development is absolutely

wanting.Indeed, if we take the total of all fossil men that have been

found hitherto and compare them with what the present offers, then we

can maintain with certainty that among the present generation there is

a much larger number of relatively low-type individuals than among the

fossils hitherto known. . . . We cannot designate it as a revelation of

science that man descended from the ape or any other animal."--Die

Freiheit der Wissenschaft, pp. 29, 31. No new facts have been

discovered since, requiring a modification of these statements.

[373] Not only in respect of his mind, hut in respect also of his body,

Mr. Wallace has contended that the appearance of man cannot he

explained on Darwinian principles. He argues from the brain of

primitive man as having a development beyond his actual attainments,

suggesting the idea of "a surplusage of power; of an instrument beyond

the wants of its possessor"; from his hairless back, "thus reversing

the characteristics of all other mammalia"; from the peculiar

construction of the foot and hand, the latter "containing latent

capacities and powers which are unused by savages "; from the

"wonderful power, range, flexibility, and sweetness of the musical

sounds producible by the human larynx," etc.--Natural Selection, pp.

332, 330.

[374] See Note E.--Alleged Primitive Savagery of Mankind.

[375] Cf. Canon Rawlinson's Origin of Nations, Part I., "On Early

Civilisations"; and the same author's "Antiquity of Man Historically

Considered," in Present Day Tracts, No. 9.

[376] Cf. Note A to Lecture III.

[377] See Note F--Early Monotheistic Ideas.

[378] See Note G.--The Antiquity of Man and Geological Time.

[379] Report of Address to British Association, Sept. 6, 1888.

Professor Dawkins is himself an advocate of man's great antiquity.

[380] Cf. Dawson, Modern Science in Bible Lands, iv., "Early Man in

Genesis."

[381] Gen. iv. 16-22.

[382] Eccl. vii. 29. Cf. Delitzsch, in loc.

[383] Three Essays, pp. 29-31: "In sober truth, nearly all the things

which men are hanged or imprisoned for doing to one another, are

Nature's everyday performances," etc.

[384] Cf. Martineau, Study of Religion, ii. pp. 131-135 (Book ii. chap.

iii.).

[385] Cf. Ott, Le Probleme du Mal, p. 18; Naville, do., p. 50 (Eng.

trans.).

[386] These disturbances, however, present a very different aspect when

viewed in relation to man. See below.

[387] Gen. i. 11, 12 (seed producing).

[388] We may exaggerate, too, the power of sensibility in the lower

species of animals.See on this, Mivart, Lessons from Nature, pp. 368,

369. "Though, of course, animals feel, they do not know that they feel,

nor reflect upon the sufferings they have had, or will have to endure.

. . . If a wasp, while enjoying a meal of honey, has its slender waist

suddenly snipped through and its whole abdomen cut away, it does not

allow such a trifle for a moment to interrupt its pleasurable repast,

but it continues to rapidly devour the savoury food, which escapes as

rapidly from its mutilated thorax."--P. 369.

[389] E.g. the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. vi. 26.Another note as

respects creation as a whole is struck by Paul in Rom., viii. 19-22.

[390] Cf. for an example of this a passage quoted from De Maistre by

Naville, p. 54: "In the vast domain of living Nature open violence

reigns, a kind of fury which arms all creatures in mutua funera," etc.

[391] Tennyson, In Memoriam, lv.

[392] Martineau says: "I will be content with a single question, How

would you dispose of the dead animals . . . . If no creature would

touch muscular fibre, or adipose tissue, or blood, and all animated

nature had to he provided with cemeteries like ours, we should be

baffled by an unmanageable problem; the streams would be poisoned, and

the forests and the plains would be as noisome as the recent

battlefield. Nature, in her predatory tribes, has appointed a sanitary

commission, and in her carrion-feeders a burial board, far more

effective than those which watch over our villages and cities."--Study

of Religion, ii. p. 95. See his whole treatment of this problem.

[393] System of Doctrine, ii. pp. 33-99 (Eng. trans.).Dorner mentions

the idea of Aquinas of "a complete world, exhibiting without a break

all possible forms of life."--P. 99.

[394] 1 Cor. xv. 46.

[395] The difficulty is "modified," as said, but not altogether

removed, by these considerations, especially when the world is viewed

in its teleological relations to man, and when stress is laid, not only

on the mere fact of the preying of one creature on another, but on some

of the kinds of creatures with which the earth is stocked, and on the

manner of their warfare; on their hideousness, repulsiveness,

fierceness, unnecessary cruelty, etc. See a powerful statement in

Martensen's Jacob Bohme, pp. 217-222 (Eng. trans.).

[396] To a certain extent these disturbances affect animals also, hut

in these cases. the question is subordinate.

[397] Thus Rothe, Pfleiderer, Martineau, Ott, etc.

[398] Cf. Browning, Ferishtah's Fancies--"Mihrab Shah."

[399] The theodicy in Job takes this form.

[400] Cf. Lotze, Outlines of Philosophy of Religion (Eng. trans.), pp.

124, 125; end Browning, La Saisiaz, Works, xiv. p. 181:--

"What, no way but this that man may learn and lay to heart how rife?

Life were with delights would only death allow their taste to life?

Must the rose sigh Pluck--I perish!' must the eve weep Gaze--I fade!'

--Every sweet warn Ware my bitter!' every shine hid Wait my shade'?

Can we love but on condition that the thing we love must die?

Needs there groan a world in anguish just to teach us sympathy--

Multitudinously wretched that we, wretched too, may guess

What a preferable state were universal happiness?"

[401] Religionsphilosophie, iv. p. 63 (Eng. trans.).

[402] Problem of Evil, p. 65 (Eng. trans.).

[403] Matt. xxiii. 35; cf. John v. 14: "Sin no more, lest a worse thing

come unto thee."

[404] Cf., e.g., Ritschl Recht. und Ver. iii. p. 334; Pfleiderer,

Religionsphilosophie, iv. pp. 42-44.

[405] Rom. viii. 28.

[406] Dorner, System of Doctrine, ii. p. 67 (Eng. trans.); Delitzsch,

New Commentary on Genesis, i. e. 103 (Eng. trans.)."The whole of the

six days' creation," says the latter, "is, so to speak, supralapsarian,

he. so constituted that the consequences of this foreseen fall of man

were taken into account."

[407] This theory is ingeniously argued out in an interesting chapter

in Bushnell's Nature and the Supernatural, chap. vii., "Anticipative

Consequences." Cf. also Hugh Miller's Footprints of the Creator, pp.

268ff.; "Final Causes; their Bearing on Geologic History "; and

Hitchcock, Religion of Geology, Lecture III. I have not touched on

another theory, beginning with Bohme, which connects the present state

of creation with yet earlier, i.e. daemonic evil. The most striking

statement of this theory is perhaps in Martensen, Jacob Bohme (Eng.

trans.), pp. 217-222--a passage already referred to. See the theory

criticised in Reusch's Nature and the Bible, Book i. chap. xvii. (Eng.

trans.).

[408] Destiny of the Creature, p. 7.

[409] Thus also Dorner: "So far, then, as sin retards this perfection,

it may certainly be said that Nature is detained by sin in a state of

corruption against its will, as well as that it has been placed in a

long-enduring state of corruptibleness, which, apart from sin, was

unnecessary, if the assimilation of Nature by spirit could have been

accomplished forthwith."--Syst. of Doct. 22. p. 66.

[410] Rom. v. 12 (R.V.)

[411] John xiv. 19.

[412] Cf. last Lecture.

[413] Gen. ii. 16, ii. 19.

[414] See further Note H.--The Connection of Sin and Death.

[415] 2 Cor. v. 8; Phil. i. 23; Rev. xiv. 13, etc.

[416] Rom. v. 11, viii. 23.

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APPENDIX TO LECTURE V.

THE OLD TESTAMENT DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY.

The views advanced in the Lecture have an important bearing on the much

discussed question of the Old Testament doctrine of immortality. The

statement is often made that the Old Testament, especially in the older

books, has no distinct doctrine of Immortality. Many explanations have

been offered of this difficulty, but I would humbly suggest that the

real explanation may be that we have been looking for evidence of that

doctrine in a wrong direction. We have been looking for a doctrine of

"the immortality of the soul" in the sense of the schools, whereas the

real hope of patriarchs and saints, so far as they had one, was, in

accordance with the Biblical doctrine already explained, that of

restored life in the body. [417]

The early Hebrews had no manner of doubt, any more than we have, that

the soul, or spiritual part of man, survived the body. [418] It would

be strange if they had, for every other ancient people is known to have

had this belief. The Egyptians, e.g., taught that the dead descended to

an under-world, where they were judged by Osiris and his forty-two

assessors. [419] The Babylonians and Assyrians conceived of the abode

of the dead as a great city having seven encircling walls, and a river

flowing round or through it. [420] A name they gave to this city is

believed by some to have been "Sheol," [421] the same word as the

Hebrew Sheol, which is the name in the Old Testament for the place of

departed spirits. It is one of the merits of the Revised Version that

it has in many places (why not in all?) printed this word in the text,

and tells the reader in the preface that "Sheol," sometimes in the Old

Version translated "grave," sometimes "pit," sometimes "hell," means

definitely "the abode of departed spirits, and corresponds to the Greek

Hades,' or the under-world," and does not signify "the place of

burial." But the thought of going to "Sheol" was no comfort to the good

man. The gloomy associations of death hung over this abode; it was

figured as a land of silence and forgetfulness; the warm and rich light

of the upper-world was excluded from it; [422] no ray of gospel light

had as yet been given to chase away its gloom. The idea of "Sheol" was

thus not one which attracted, but one which repelled, the mind. Men

shrank from it as we do from the breath and cool shades of the

charnel-house. The saint, strong in his hope in God, might believe that

God would not desert him even in "Sheol"; that His presence and

fellowship would be given him even there; but it would only be in

moments of strong faith he could thus triumph, and in hours of

despondency the gloomiest thoughts were apt to come back on him. His

real trust, so far as he was able to cherish one, was that God would

not leave his soul in "Sheol," but would redeem him from that state,

and restore him to life in the body. [423] His hope was for

resurrection. To illustrate this state of feeling and belief, in regard

to the state of the separate existence of the soul, it may be well to

cite one or two passages bearing on the subject. An indication of a

belief in a future state of the soul is found in an expression several

times met with in Genesis--"gathered to his people"--where, in every

instance, the gathering to the people (in "Sheol") is definitely

distinguished from the act of burial. [424]

Other evidences are afforded by the belief in necromancy, the

narratives of resurrection, etc. What kind of place "Sheol" was to the

popular imagination is well represented in the words of Job--

"I go whence I shall not return,

Even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death,

A land of thick darkness, as darkness itself,

A land of the shadow of death, without any order,

And where light is as darkness." [425]

There was not much cheer in looking forward to an abode like this, and

it is therefore not surprising that even good men, in moments of

despondency, when it seemed as if God's presence and favour were taken

from them, should moan, as David did--

"Return, O Lord, deliver my soul;

Save me for Thy loving kindness' sake

For in death there is no remembrance of Thee,

In Sheol who shall give Thee thanks?" [426]

or with Hezekiah--

"Sheol cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee:

They that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth.

The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day." [427]

It is not, therefore, in this direction that we are to look for the

positive and cheering side of the Old Testament hope of immortality,

but in quite another. It is said we have no doctrine of Immortality in

the Old Testament. But I reply, we have immortality at the very

commencement--for man, as he came from the hands of his Creator, was

made for immortal life. Man in Eden was immortal. He was intended to

live, not to die. Then came sin, and with it death. Adam called his son

Seth, and Seth called his son Enoch, which means "frail, mortal man."

Seth himself died, his son died, his son's son died, and so the line of

death goes on. Then comes an interruption, the intervention, as it

were, of a higher law, a new inbreaking of immortality into a line of

death. "Enoch walked with God, and he was not; for God took him." [428]

Enoch did not die. Every other life in that record ends with the

statement, "and he died"; but Enoch's is given as an exception. He did

not die, but God "took" him, i.e. without death. He simply "was not" on

earth, but he "was" with God in another and invisible state of

existence. [429] His case is thus in some respects the true type of all

immortality, for it is an immortality of the true personality, in which

the body has as real a share as the soul. It agrees with what I have

advanced in the Lecture, that it is not an immortality of the soul only

that the Bible speaks of that is left for the philosophers but an

immortality of the whole person, body and soul together. Such is the

Christian hope, and such, as I shall now try to show, was the Hebrew

hope also.

It is a current view that the doctrine of the Resurrection of the dead

was a very late doctrine among the Hebrews, borrowed, as many think,

from the Persians, during, or subsequent to, the Babylonian exile. Dr.

Cheyne sees in it an effect of Zoroastrian influence on the religion of

Israel. [430] My opinion, on the contrary, is that it is one of the

very oldest doctrines in the Bible, the form, in fact, in which the

hope of immortality was held, so far as it was held, from the days of

the patriarchs downward. [431] In any case, it was a doctrine of very

remote antiquity. We find traces of it in many ancient religions

outside the Hebrew, an instructive testimony to the truth of the idea

on which it rested. The Egyptians believed, e.g., that the reanimation

of the body was essential to perfected existence; and this, according

to some, was the thought that underlay the practice of embalming. [432]

The ancient Babylonians and Assyrians also had the idea of

resurrection. One of their hymns to Merodach celebrates him as the

"Merciful one among the gods,

Merciful one, who restores the dead to life." [433]

The belief was probably also held by the Persians, though it is still a

disputed question whether it is found in the older portions of the

Zend-Avesta. That question is not so easily settled as Dr. Cheyne

thinks; [434] but in any case the older references are few and

ambiguous, and are totally inadequate to explain the remarkable

prominence which this doctrine assumed in the Old Testament. [435] The

Bible has a coherent and consistent doctrine of its own upon the

subject, and is not dependent on doubtful allusions in Zoroastrian

texts for its clear and bold statements of the final swallowing up of

death in victory. Let me briefly review some of the lines of evidence.

I have referred already to the case of Enoch in the beginning of the

history, as illustrative of the Biblical idea of immortality. As

respects the patriarchs, the references to their beliefs and hopes are

necessarily few and inferential,--a fact which speaks strongly for the

early date and genuineness of the tradition. The New Testament

signalises them as men of "faith," and certainly their conduct is that

of men who, accounting themselves "strangers and pilgrims" on the

earth, look for a future fulfilment of the promises as of something in

which they have a personal interest. [436] Not improbably it was some

hope of resurrection which inspired (as with the Egyptians) their great

care for their dead, and prompted the injunctions heft by Jacob and

Joseph regarding the interment of their "bones" in the hand of promise.

[437] It is significant that the Epistle to the Hebrews connects

Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac with his faith in a resurrection. "By

faith Abraham, being tried, offered up Isaac . . . accounting that God

is able to raise up, even from the dead; from whence also he did in a

parable receive him back." [438] The Rabbis drew a curious inference

from God's word to Abraham, "I will give to thee, and to thy seed after

thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger." [439] "But it appears,"

they argued, "that Abraham and the other patriarchs did not possess

that land; therefore it is of necessity that they should be raised up

to enjoy the good promises, else the promises of God should be vain and

false. So that here we have a proof, not only of the immortality of the

soul, but also of the foundation of the law--namely, the resurrection

of the dead." [440] If this be thought fanciful, I would refer to the

teaching of a greater than the Rabbis. Reasoning with the Sadducees,

Jesus quotes that saying of God to Moses, "I am the God of Abraham, and

the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," adding, "God is not the God of

the dead, but of the living." [441] The point to be observed is that

Jesus quotes this passage, not simply in proof of the continued

subsistence of the patriarchs in some state of being, but in proof of

the resurrection of the dead. And how does it prove that? Only on the

ground, which Jesus assumes, that the relation of the believer to God

carries with it a whole immortality, and this, as we have seen, implies

life in the body. If God is the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob,

this covenant relation pledges to these patriarchs not only continuance

of existence, but Redemption from the power of death, i.e.

resurrection.

It is, however, when we come to the hater books--the Book of Job, the

Psalms, the Prophets--that we get clearer light on the form which the

hope of immortality assumed in the minds of Old Testament believers;

and it may be affirmed with considerable confidence that this light is

all, or nearly all, in favour of the identification of this hope with

the hope of resurrection. I take first the Book of Job, because,

whenever written, it relates to patriarchal times, or at least moves in

patriarchal conditions. The first remarkable passage in this book is in

chapter xiv. This chapter raises the very question we are now dealing

with, and it is noteworthy that the form in which it does so is the

possibility of bodily revival. First, Job enumerates the appearances

which seem hostile to man's living again (vers. 7-12). Then faith,

rising in her very extremity, reasserts herself against doubt and

fear--

"Oh that Thou wouldest hide me in Sheol

That Thou wouldest keep me secret, till Thy wrath be past,

That Thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!

If a man die, shall he live again?

All the days of my warfare would I wait,

Till my release should come.

Thou shouldest call, and I would answer Thee,

Thou wouldest have a desire to the work of Thy hands." [442]

There seems no reasonable room for question that what is before Job's

mind here is the thought of resurrection. Dr. A. B. Davidson explains:

"On this side death he has no hope of a return to God's favour. Hence,

contemplating that he shall die under God's anger, his thought is that

he might remain in Sheol till God's wrath be past, for He keepeth not

His anger for ever; that God would appoint him a period to remain in

death, and then remember him with returning mercy, and call him back

again to His fellowship. But to his mind this involves a complete

return to life again of the whole man (ver. 14), for in death there is

no fellowship with God (Ps. vi. 5). Thus his solution, though it

appears to his mind only as a momentary gleam of light, is broader than

that of the Psalmist, and corresponds to that made known in subsequent

revelation." [443]

The second passage in Job is the well-known one in chapter xix.,

translated in the Revised Version thus--

"But I know that my Redeemer liveth,

And that He shall stand up at the last upon the earth (Heb. dust].

And after my skin bath been thus destroyed,

Yet from my flesh shall I see God:

Whom I shall see for myself,

And mine eyes shall behold, and not another." [444]

I do not enter into the many difficulties of this passage, but refer

only to the crucial line, "Yet from my flesh shall I see God." The

margin gives as another rendering, "without my flesh," but this is

arrived at only as an interpretation of the word "from," which is

literally the one used. The natural meaning would therefore seem to be,

"Yet from (or out of) my flesh shall I see God," which implies that he

will be clothed with flesh. [445] Dr. Davidson allows the admissibility

of this rendering, and says: "If therefore we understand the words from

my flesh' in the sense of in my flesh, we must suppose that Job

anticipated being clothed in a new body after death. Something may be

said for this view. Undoubtedly, in chapter xiv. 13 seq., Job clearly

conceived the idea of being delivered from Sheol and living again, and

fervently prayed that such a thing might be. And what he there ventured

to long for, he might here speak of as a thing of which he was assured.

No violence would be done to the line of thought in the book by this

supposition." Yet he thinks "it is highly improbable that the great

thought of the resurrection of the body could be referred to in a way

so brief," and so prefers the rendering "without." [446] I think,

however, this is hardly a sufficient reason to outweigh the

tremendously strong fact that we have already this thought of

resurrection conceded in chapter xiv., and, further, that the thought

of living again in the body seemed the only way in which Job there

could conceive the idea of immortality. If that is so, it may explain

why more stress is not laid upon resurrection here. The hope which

absorbs all Job's thought is that of "seeing God," and the fact that,

if he does so at all, he must do it "in" or "from" the flesh, is taken

for granted as a thing of course. [447]

The question of the testimony of the Psalms is greatly simplified by

the large concessions which writers hike Dr. Cheyne are now ready to

make, in the belief that in the references to resurrection doctrine

they have a proof of "Zoroastrian influences." The passages, however,

are happily of an order that speak for themselves, and need no forcing

to yield us their meaning. A conspicuous example is Ps. xvi. 8-11,

cited in the New Testament as a prophecy of the resurrection of

Christ--

"I have set the Lord always before me;

Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.

Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth;

My flesh also shall dwell in safety (or confidently,

For Thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol;

Neither wilt Thou suffer Thins Holy One to see corruption (or the pit).

Thou wilt show me the path of life:

In Thy presence is fulness of joy;

In Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." [448]

Another passage is in Psalm xvii. 15, where, after describing the

apparent prosperity of the wicked, the Psalmist says--

"As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness:

I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness."

The "awakening" here, as Delitzsch says, can only be that from the

sleep of death. [449] Yet more distinct is Ps. xlix. 14, 15--

"They (the wicked) are appointed as a flock for Sheol;

Death shall he their shepherd;

And the upright shall have dominion over them in the moaning;

And their beauty shall be for Sheol to consume, that there he no

habitation for it.

But God will redeem my soul from the power (hand) of Sheol;

For He shall receive me.

There is here again, it is believed, clear reference to the "morning"

of the resurrection. The passage is the more significant that in the

last words, as well as in Ps. lxxiii. 24, there is direct allusion to

the case of Enoch. "God," says the Psalmist, "shall redeem my soul from

the hand of Hades, for He shall take me," as He took Enoch, and as He

took Elijah, to Himself." [450] Ps. lxxiii. 24 reads thus--

"Nevertheless I am continually with Thee;

Thou hast holden my right hand.

Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel,

And afterward receive me to glory.

Whom have I in heaven but Thee?

And there is none on the earth that I desire beside Thee.

My flesh and my heart faileth;

But God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever."

These, and a few others, are the passages usually cited in favour of

the doctrine of Immortality in the Book of Psalms, and it will be seen

that in all of them this hope is clothed in a form which implies a

resurrection. [451]

I need not delay on the passages in the prophetic books, for here it is

usually granted that the idea of resurrection is familiar. Not only is

the restoration of the Jewish people frequently presented under this

figure, but a time is coming when, for the Church as a whole, including

the individuals in it, death shall be swallowed up in victory. We have

a passage already in Hosea, which is beyond suspicion of Zoroastrian

influence--

"After two days will He revive us;

On the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live before Him."

And again--

"I will ransom them from the power of Sheol;

I will redeem them from death;

O death, where are thy plagues?

O grave, where is thy destruction?" [452]

The climax of this class of passages is reached in Isa. xxv. 6-8, xxvi.

19. Cf. also Ezek. xxxvii. 1-10, the vision of the dry bones. [453] The

last Old Testament passage I will quote is an undisputed one, and has

the special feature of interest that in it for the first time mention

is made of the resurrection of the wicked as well as of the just. It is

that in Dan. xii. 2--"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the

earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and

everlasting contempt." This needs no comment.

From the whole survey I think it will be evident that I was entitled to

say that from the first the manner in which the hope of immortality was

conceived by holy men in Israel was that of a resurrection. Yet, when

all is said, we cannot but feel that it was but a hope--not resting on

express revelation, but springing out of the consciousness of the

indissoluble relation between God and the believing soul, and the

conviction that God's Redemption will be a complete one. Life and

immortality were not yet brought to light as they are now by Christ in

His gospel. [454] The matter is unexceptionably stated by Dr. A. B.

Davidson in the following words, with which I conclude; "The human

spirit is conscious of fellowship with God; and this fellowship, from

the nature of God, is a thing imperishable, and, in spite of

obscurations, it must yet be fully manifested by God. This principle,

grasped with convulsive earnestness in the prospect of death, became

the Hebrew doctrine of Immortality. This doctrine was but the necessary

corollary of religion. In this life the true relations of men to God

were felt to be realised; and the Hebrew faith of immortality--never a

belief in the mere existence of the soul after death, for the lowest

superstition assumed this--was a faith that the dark and mysterious

event of death would not interrupt the life of the person with God,

enjoyed in this world. . . . The doctrine of Immortality in the Book

(of Job) is the same as that of other parts of the Old Testament.

Immortality is the corollary of religion. If there be religion--that

is, if God be--there is immortality, not of the soul, but of the whole

personal being of man (Ps. xvi. 9). This teaching of the whole Old

Testament is expressed by our Lord with a surprising incisiveness in

two sentences--I am the God of Abraham. God is not the God of the dead

but of the living.'" [455]

Note to Third Edition.--Believing that the tendency at present is to

find too little rather than too much in the Old Testament, I leave this

Appendix as it is. The recent work of Professor S. D. F. Salmond on

Immortality--which for long will be the classic work on this

subject--does not go so far in finding a doctrine of Resurrection in

the Psalms as is done here, but it may be said at least that it lays

down the premisses in its doctrines of God, and of man's origin,

constitution, and destiny, which justify such an interpretation, and

might easily have gone farther without inconsistency, or violation of

sound exegesis. Accepting it as the Old Testament doctrine that man was

created for immortality in body and soul in fellowship with God, that

death is a penalty of sin, that fellowship with God contains the pledge

of preservation from Sheol, or of rescue from it, which hopes are

allowed to find expression in at least certain of the Psalms and in

Job, and to take definite shape in the doctrine of Resurrection in the

prophets, Professor Salmond's position does not differ very widely in

principle from that indicated above. Enoch and Elijah are viewed as the

type of immortality in Ps. xlix. and lxxiii., etc. It is difficult to

see in what way this "postulate of faith" could shape itself, however

vaguely, if not as a faith in a revived life in the body. If the Psalms

came after the prophets, according to the modern theory, it is still

more difficult to see how this hope should have shaped itself in the

prophetic books, and not have exercised any influence upon the Psalms.

Even the writer of the 16th Psalm can hardly have anticipated permanent

exemption from death; his confidence, therefore, that in fellowship

with God "soul and flesh, himself in his entire living being, shall

continue secure" everlastingly, becomes unintelligible if his hope did

not stretch. beyond death, and carry in it the assurance of a

resurrection. Cf. specially pp. 193-197, 217-220, 238-255, 258 ff.

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[417] The view defended in this Appendix will be found indicated in

Hofmann's Schriftbeweis, iii. pp. 461-477; and Dr. P. Fairbairn's

Typology of Scripture, 3rd ed. i. pp. 343-359.

[418] Cf. Max M�ller, Anthropological Religion, on "Belief on

Immortality in the Old Testament," pp. 367, 377.

[419] Cf. Renouf, Hibbert Lectures, pp. 195, 196; Budge, Dwellers on

the Nile ("By-Paths of Bible Knowledge" Series), chap. ix.; Vigoroux's

La Bible et les Decouvertes modernes, iii. pp. 133-141.

[420] Cf. the Descent of Ishtar, in Sayce's Hibbert Lectures, Lecture

IV.; Budge's Babylonian Life and History ("By-Paths of Bible Knowledge"

Series), pp. 140-142; Vigoroux, La Bible et les Decouvertes modernes,

ill. pp. 123-132.

[421] Thus F. Delitzsch, and Boscawen in British Museum Lecture on

Sheol, Death, the Grave, and Immortality. But the identification is

held by others to be conjectural (Schrader, Keilinschriften, il. p. 80

[Eng. trans.]; Budge, Babylonian Life and History, p. 140, etc.;

Vigouroux, iii. p. 125). The Assyrian gives the name as Aralu.

[422] Thus also in the Babylonian and Greek conceptions. Cf. Sayce,

Hibbert Lectures, p. 364; Fairbairn, Studies, "The Belief in

Immortality," pp. 190, 191.

[423] See passages discussed below.

[424] Gen. xxv. 8, 9, xxxv. 29, xlix. 29, 31, 33.

[425] Job x. 21, 22. Cf. description in Descent of Ishtar, Hibbert

Lectures.

[426] Ps. vi. 4, 5.

[427] Isa. xxxviii. 18, 19.

[428] Gen. v. 24.

[429] So, later, Elijah.

[430] Origin of Psalter, Lecture VIII.; and papers in The Expository

Times (July and August 1891) on "Possible Zoroastrian Influences on the

Religion of Israel."

[431] Thus also Hofmann: "Nothing can be more erroneous than the

opinion that the resurrection from the dead is a late idea, first

entering through human reflection, the earliest traces of which, if not

first given by the Parsees to the Jews, are to be met with in Isaiah

and Ezekiel."--Schriftbeweis, ii. p. 461. Cf. on this theory of Parsic

influence, Pusey's Daniel, pp. 512-517.

[432] "There is a chapter with a vignette representing the soul uniting

itself to the body, and the text promises that they shall never again

be separated."--Renouf, Hibbert Lectures, p. 188. "They believed," says

Budge, "that the soul would revisit the body after a number of years,

and therefore it was absolutely necessary that the body should he

preserved, if its owner wished to live for ever with the

gods."--Dwellers on the Nile, p. 156.

[433] Cf. Boscawen, British Museum Lecture, pp. 23, 24; Sayce, pp.

98-100; Cheyne, Origin of Psalter, p. 392. There is no evidence,

however, of a general hope of resurrection.

[434] Cf. Pusey, pp. 512-517; and Cheyne's own citations from recent

scholars, Origin of Psalter, pp. 425, 451. M. Montet formerly held that

the germs of the doctrine came from Zoroastrianism, but "in 1890, in

deference, it would seem, to M. Harlez, and in opposition not less to

Spiegel than to Gelder, be pronounces the antiquity of the resurrection

doctrine in Zoroastrianism as yet unproven."--Cheyne, p. 451. Cf.

Schultz, Alttest. Theol. p. 762.

[435] Anyone can satisfy himself on this head by consulting the

passages for himself in the Zend-Avesta, in Sacred Books of the East.

The indices to the three volumes give only one reference to the

subject, and that to one of a few undated "Miscellaneous Fragments" at

the end. Professor Cheyne himself can say no more than that "Mills even

thinks that there is a trace of the doctrine of the Resurrection in the

Gathas. . . . He (Zoroaster) may have had a vague conception of the

revival of bodies, but not a theory."--Origin of Psalter, p. 438.

[436] Heb. xi. 13.

[437] Gen. i. 5, 25; Ex. xlii. 19; Heb. xi. 22.

[438] Heb. xi. 17-19; cf. Hofmann, pp. 461, 462.

[439] Gen. xvii. 8.

[440] Quoted in Fairbairn i. p. 353.

[441] Matt. xxii. 23.

[442] Job xiv. 13-15 (R.V.). The margin translates as in A.V., "Thou

shalt call," etc. As remarked, the form in which the question is put in

this passage is as significant as the answer to it. It implies that

revived existence in the body is the only form in which the patriarch

contemplated immortality. Life and even sensation in Sheol are

presupposed in ver. 22.

[443] Com. on Job, in loc. (Cambridge Series). I can scarcely agree

that Job's solution is broader than that of the Psalmist's. See below.

[444] Job xix. 25-27.

[445] Cf. Pusey, p. 508, and Vigoroux, iii. pp. 172-180.

[446] Commentary on Job, Appendix on chap. xix. 23-27, p. 292.

[447] Dr. Davidson's remark, "On Old Testament ground, and in the

situation of Job, such a matter-of-course kind of reference is almost

inconceivable" (p. 292), involves the very point at issue.

[448] See Acts ii. 24-31. Cf. Delitzsch, in loc.; and Cheyne, Origin of

the Psalter, p. 431.

[449] Com., in loc. Thus also Pusey, Perowne, Cheyne, Hofmann, etc.

"The awakening," says Cheyne, "probably means the passing of the soul

into a resurrection body."--Origin of Psalter, p. 406.

[450] Perowne, in loc. Thus also Pusey, Delitzsch, Cheyne, etc. "The

dawn,'" says Cheyne, "is that of the resurrection day."--Expository

Times, B. p. 249; cf. Origin of Psalter, pp. 382, 406, 407. Delitzsch,

in note on Ps. xvi. 8-11, says: "Nor is the awakening in xlix. 15 some

morning or other that will very soon follow upon the night, hut the

final morning, which brings deliverance to the upright, and enables

them to obtain dominion."

[451] Or if not resurrection, then immortality in the body without

tasting of death, as Enoch. But this is a hope the Old Testament

believer could hardly have cherished for himself. The view of

deliverance from death seems therefore the more probable in Ps. xlix.

15, etc. A very different view is taken by Schultz in his

Alttestamentliche Theologie, pp. 753-758. Schultz not only sees no

proof of the resurrection in the passages we have quoted, but will not

even allow that they have any reference to a future life. So extreme a

view surely refutes itself. It is at least certain that if these

passages teach a future life, it is a life in connection with the body.

[452] Hos. vi. 2, xiii. 14. Cf. Cheyne, p. 383.

[453] On the passages in Isaiah, Cheyne remarks: "Instead of swallowing

up, Sheol in the Messianic period shall itself be swallowed up. And

this prospect concerns not merely the church-nation, but all of its

believing members, and indeed all, whether Jews or not, who submit to

the true King, Jehovah."--Origin of Psalter, p. 402, Cf. Expository

Times, ii. p. 226. In Ezekiel, the subject is national resurrection,

but "that the power of God can, against all human thought and hops,

reanimate the dead, is the general idea of the passage, from which

consequently the hope of a literal resurrection of the dead may

naturally be inferred."--Oehler Theology of Old Testament, ii. p. 395

(Eng. trans.). Oehler does more justice to these passages than Schultz.

[454] 2 Tim. i. 10.

[455] Commentary on Job, Appendix, pp. 293-295.

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"With historical science, the life of Jesus takes its place in the

great stream of the world's history; He is a human individual, who

became what He was, and was to be, through the living action of ideas

and the circumstances of His time, and He, as a mighty storm-wave which

has arisen through the conflict of forces, is destined to sink once

more into the smooth sea, in the restless whirl of earthly things,

quietly subsiding from the general life of humanity, in order to make

room for new and stronger throes and creations. Here, in the Church, He

is the rock which rules over the flood, instead of being moved by it.

. . . He, the pillar, the Son of God, will survey humanity, however far

and wide it may extend, permitting it only to hold fast by Him, or to

wreck itself against Him."--Keim.

"But Thee, but Thee, O Sovereign Seer of time,

But Thee, O poet's Poet, wisdom's tongue,

But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,

O perfect life in perfect labour writ,

O all men's Comrade, Servant, King, or Priest,--

What if or yet, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,

What least defect or shadow of defect,

What rumour, tattled by an enemy,

Of inference loose, what lack of grace

Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's, or death's,--

Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,

Jesus, good Paragon, thou crystal Christ?"

Sidney Lanier.

LECTURE VI.

THE CENTRAL ASSERTION OF THE CHRISTIAN VIEW--THE INCARNATION OF GOD IN CHRIST.

Introductory

In the second Lecture I conducted an historical argument intended to

show that there is really no intermediate position in which the mind

can logically rest between the admission of a truly Divine Christ and a

purely humanitarian view. This argument I have now to complete, by

showing that the necessity which history declares to exist arises from

the actual state of the facts in the Christian Revelation. We have seen

what the alternative is, and we have now to ask why it is so.

Why is it that we cannot rest in a conception of Christ as simply a

prophet of a higher order? or as a God-filled man in whom the Divine

dwelt as it dwells in no other? or as the central Personage of our

race, at once ideal man and the Revelation to us of the absolute

principles of religion? These views seem plausible; they are accepted

by many; they seem at first sight to bring Christ nearer to us than on

the supposition of His true God-manhood; why cannot the mind of the

Church rest in them? Must not the explanation be that, taking into

account the sum-total of the facts of Christianity, they refuse to

square with any subordinate view, but compel us to press up to the

higher conception? This is what I affirm, and I propose in this Lecture

to test the question by an examination of the facts themselves.

There is, I know, in some minds, an insuperable objection, a priori, to

the acceptance of the fact of the Incarnation, arising from the

lowliness of Christ's earthly origin and condition. Can we believe, it

is said, that in this historical individual, Jesus of Nazareth--this

son of a carpenter-God actually became incarnate; that in this humble

man, so poor in all His earthly surroundings, there literally dwelt the

fulness of the Godhead bodily? Is the thought not on the face of it

incredible? The appeal here is to our powers of imagination--of

conceiving--to our sense of the likelihood or unlikelihood of things;

and to enable us to judge fairly of that appeal, and of its nature as

an objection to the Incarnation, a great many things would have to be

taken into account, both before and after. I would only say that, as

regards a certain class who make that objection--the higher class of

liberal theologians especially--the question seems only one of degree.

If Christ is, in any ease, as most of them affirm, the central,

typical, religiously greatest individual of the race; if the principle

of the absolute religion is manifested in Him, as Pfleiderer allows;

[456] if He is the ideally perfect man in whom the God-consciousness

finds its fullest expression, as Schleiermacher declares; [457] if He

is alone the sinless Personality of the race, as even Lipsius will

grant, [458] --these are already remarkable claims, and, as compared

with His lowly appearance and mean historical environment, create

almost as great a feeling of strangeness as on the supposition of His

true Divinity. Or let us suppose that the objection comes from the

evolutionist. Then contrast the strangeness he speaks of with that of

his own views. His objection is, that he cannot believe that in this

lowly Man of Nazareth there should reside all the potentialities of

Divinity. But what does he ask us to believe? He goes back to the

primitive state of things, and there, in that little speck of jelly at

the first dawn of life,--in that humble drop of protoplasmic matter

buried in some oozy slime,--he bids us believe that there lies wrapped

up, only waiting for development, the promise and potency of the whole

subsequent evolution of life. In that first germ-cell there lies

enfolded--latent--not only the whole wealth of vegetable existence, not

only the long procession of future races and species of lower and

higher animals, with their bodily powers and mental instincts, but, in

addition, the later possibilities of humanity; all that has now come to

light in human development--the wealth of genius, the riches of

civilisation, the powers of intellect, imagination, and heart, the

treasures of human love and goodness, of poetry and art--the genius of

Dante, of Shakespeare, of Milton--the spiritual greatness and holiness

of Christ Himself;--all, in a word, that has ever come out of man, is

supposed by the evolutionist to have been potentially present from the

first in that little primitive speck of protoplasm! [459] I confess

that, putting his assertion alongside the Christian one, I do not feel

that there is much to choose between them in point of strangeness. But

evolution, he would tell us, is not deprived of its truth by the

strangeness at first sight of its assertion--neither is the Christian

view, The question is not one to be settled a priori, but to be brought

to the test of facts.

I. Testimony of the apostolic age as throwing light on Christ's own claims.

I. Godet has said, "Christianity is entirely based upon Christ's

consciousness of Himself, and it is the heroism of faith to rest upon

the extraordinary testimony which this Being gave to Himself." [460]

This must be so, for the reason which Christ Himself gives, that He

alone has the knowledge which qualifies Him to give a true estimate of

Himself. "For I know," He said to the Jews, "whence I came, and whither

I go." [461] I propose, however, to begin at a point further down--that

to which our first written documents belong--and to ask, What was the

view of Christ's Person held in the apostolic age? The testimony of

that age is clearly one of great importance, as throwing light on

Christ's own claims. When men say, Buddha also was raised to the rank

of Divinity by his followers, though he himself made no such claim, I

answer that the cases are not parallel. It was only long centuries

after his death, and within limited circles, that Buddha was regarded

as Divine; but one short step takes us from the days when Christ

Himself lived and taught on earth, into the midst of a Church, founded

by His apostles, which in all its branches worshipped and adored Him as

the veritable Son of God made manifest on earth for our salvation. If

it can be shown that in the apostolic Church a practically consentient

view existed of Christ's Person, this, of itself, is a strong reason

for believing that it rested on claims made by Christ Himself, and rose

naturally out of the facts of His historical self-manifestation. [462]

I begin with the broad fact which none can dispute, that, in the first

age of Christianity, Christ was universally regarded as one who had

risen from the dead, who had ascended on high to the right hand of God,

who exercised there a government of the world, who was to return again

to judge the quick and dead, and who, on these grounds, was the object

of worship and prayer in all the churches. [463] This view of Christ is

found in every book of the New Testament,--in the Acts, in the Pauline

Epistles, in Hebrews, in Peter, in the Book of Revelation, in the

Epistles of John, and James, and Jude,--and is so generally

acknowledged to be there, that I do not need to delay in quoting

special texts. But even so much as this cannot be admitted, without

implying that in the faith of the early Church Christ was no mere man,

but a supernatural Personage, i.e. that the Ebionitic view was not the

primitive one. Think only of what is implied in this one claim to be

the Judge of the world--the arbiter of the everlasting destiny of

mankind. [464] There is no point on which the writers of the New

Testament are more absolutely unanimous than this--that Christ shall

come again to be our Judge; and whether the early Christians analysed

all that was involved in this belief or not, there can be no doubt in

the mind of anyone who has analysed it that it involved the possession

of attributes which can belong only to God (e.g., omniscience). Or take

the other outstanding fact of worship paid to Christ--such, e.g., as we

find in the Book of Revelation. The idea of Divine honours externally

conferred on one who is essentially but man is quite foreign to the New

Testament; and the only alternative is, to suppose that Christ was from

the first regarded as having a supernatural and Divine side to His

Person--as being essentially Divine.

As regards the apostolic testimony, the ground is happily cleared in

modern times by the large measure of general agreement which exists

among impartial exegetes as to the nature of the doctrines taught in

the several books. The old Unitarian glosses on passages which seemed

to affirm the Divinity of Christ are now seldom met with; and it is

freely admitted that the bulk of the New Testament writings teach a

doctrine of Christ's Person practically as high as the Church has ever

affirmed. For instance, it is no longer disputed by any competent

authority that, in Paul and John, it is the supernatural view of

Christ's Person that is given. As to John--using that name at present

for the author of the Fourth Gospel and related Epistles--his doctrine

of Christ is of the highest. This is admitted by the most negative

critics, e.g., by Dr. Martineau, who says that the phrase "Son of God,"

applied to the preexisting Word in the Fourth Gospel, heaves all finite

analogies behind. "The oneness with God which it means to mark is not

such resembling reflex of the Divine thought and character as men or

angels may attain, but identity of essence, constituting Him not

god-like alone, but God. Others may be children of God in a moral

sense; but by this right of elemental nature, none but He; He is,

herein, the only Son; so little separate, so close to the inner Divine

life which He expresses, that He is in the bosom of the Father. This

language undoubtedly describes a great deal more than such harmony of

will and sympathy of affection as may subsist between finite obedience

and its infinite Inspirer; it denotes two natures homogeneous, entirely

one; and both so essential to the Godhead that neither can be omitted

from any truth you speak of it. . . . It was one and the same Logos

that in the beginning was with God, who in due time appeared in human

form, and showed forth the Father's pure perfections in relation to

mankind, who then returned to His eternal life, with the spiritual ties

unbroken which He brought from His finished work." [465] In this

Gospel, therefore, the question is not so much as to the doctrine

taught, but as to whether the evangelist has given us an authentic

record of what Christ said and did. On this question, so far as it is

affected by the Christology, it will be well to reserve our judgment

till we see whether the other writings of the apostolic age do not give

us--or yield by implication--quite as high a view of Christ's Person as

that which creates offence in John.

To aid us in determining this question, there lie first to hand the

writings, above alluded to, of the Apostle Paul. Here, again, it is not

seriously doubted that in Paul's undisputed Epistles we have as clear

and strong an assertion of Christ's Divine dignity as we could well

desire. That, in Paul's theology, Christ had a heavenly pre-existence;

[466] that the title "Son of God" applies to Him in this pre-existent

state; that He was a being of Divine essence; that He mediated the

creation of the world; that in the fulness of time He took on Him human

nature; that now, since His death and resurrection, He has been exalted

again to Divine power and glory--all this the most candid exegetes now

admit. A new turn, however, has been given in recent years to this

theology of Paul, by the fancy of some theologians that this heavenly,

pre-existent essence of the earlier Pauline Epistles--the "Son of God"

who became incarnate in Christ--is not a second Divine Person, as we

understand that expression, but a pre-existent "heavenly man," a being

apparently of subordinate rank, at once the perfect spiritual image of

God and the heavenly prototype of humanity--a conception easier to

state than to make intelligible. This "heavenly man" theory, as we may

call it, has been seized on with avidity by many as the true key to the

Pauline Christology. [467] Beyschlag of Halle adopts it as the basis of

his own theory,--in this, however, differing from the others, that he

attributes only an ideal pre-existence to this heavenly principle,

[468] while the majority admit that what Paul had in view was a real

and personal pre-existence. This whole hypothesis of the "heavenly man"

I can only regard as a new-fangled conceit of exegesis, resting

practically on one passage--that in which Paul speaks of "the second

man from heaven," [469] --and in diametric opposition to the general

teaching of the Epistles. It is an hypothesis, therefore, which finds

no countenance from more sober expositors like Meyer, Weiss, or Reuss,

all of whom recognise in Paul's "Son of God" a Being truly Divine.

[470] Christ indeed, in Paul's view, has humanity, but it is not a

humanity which He brought with Him from heaven, but a humanity which He

assumed when He came to earth.

The argument for the "heavenly man" theory completely breaks down if we

take into account the later Epistles--especially Philippians,

Ephesians, and Colossians, the genuineness of which there are no good

grounds for disputing. [471] Pfleiderer, who advocates this theory,

admits the genuineness of the Epistle to the Philippians, but there we

have the strongest assertion of Christ's pre-existent Divinity. The

whole argument in chap. ii. 5-11 turns on Christ's original condition

of Divine glory--" being in the form of God"--and His voluntary

abdication of it to take upon. Him "the form of a servant"--"being made

in the likeness of men"--"being found in fashion as a man." [472] As to

the teaching of the Epistles to the Colossians and the Ephesians, there

is no dispute, even among the friends of this theory. In these

Epistles, says Lipsius, "Christ, as the image of God and the first-born

of the whole creation, is an essentially Divine Personality, and the

Mediator of the creation of the world." [473] Pfleiderer sees, or

imagines he sees, in them the same influence of the Philonic Logos

doctrine as is traceable in the Gospel of John [474] --an indirect

witness that between the theology of Paul in these Epistles and that of

the Fourth Gospel there is no essential difference. But though the

Christology of the later Epistles is admittedly more developed than

that of the earlier Epistles, the doctrine of Christ in both is

substantially one. [475] In both, Christ was "the Son of God,"

eternally pre-existing in a state of glory with the Father, who, in the

fulness of time, moved by love, became incarnate for our salvation.

[476] In both--as also in John--He existed before the creation of the

world, and was the agent in its creation. [477] That He is the centre

of the Divine purpose, and therefore the One for whom all things as

well as by whom all things, are made, is a doctrine as clearly taught

in the Epistles to the Romans and the Corinthians as in those to the

Colossians and the Ephesians. [478] In both, the Divine name Kurios is

freely given to Him; passages applied in the Old Testament to Jehovah

are applied to Him also; Divine honour is paid to Him; He is exalted to

a Divine sovereignty of the world; [479] His name is constantly joined

with that of the Father as the source of grace and peace in the

introductions to the Epistles, [480] and again with those of the Father

and of the Spirit in the apostolic benediction; [481] it is declared of

Him that, as Judge, He has the attribute of the Divine searcher of

hearts. [482] Taking all the facts into account, and remembering how

inconsonant it would have been with Paul's rigorous Monotheism to

attribute Divine honours to a Being not truly Divine, it seems

impossible to doubt that, in the view of the Apostle, Christ was truly

a Divine Person, one in essence, though distinct in Person from the

Father. [483] But the most remarkable circumstance of all is--and it is

a point which I desire specially to emphasise--that in propounding

these high views of Christ's Person, Paul in no case speaks or argues

as one teaching a new doctrine, but throughout takes it for granted

that his reader's estimate of the Lord's dignity is the same as his

own. He gives no indication in these letters that he preached or

contended for a higher view of Christ's Person than that which was

currently received. [484] He has no monopoly of this truth, but assumes

it as the common possession of the Church. He argues at length for the

doctrine of justification by faith, but we never find him arguing for

the Divinity of Christ. Whether writing to his own converts, or to

churches he had never seen, he uses the same language on this subject,

and apparently anticipates no doubt or contradiction on the part of his

readers. What inference can we draw, but that the doctrine of Christ's

Person in the early Church was anything but Ebionitic,--that from the

first a Divine dignity was ascribed to Christ?

Paul's Epistles, however, are not the only witnesses on this point of

Apostolic theology. Essentially the same doctrine we find in the

Epistle to the Hebrews, long attributed to Paul, but now almost

universally assigned to another author. It has, therefore, the value of

an independent witness. The Epistle is further valuable for its early

date, most critics unhesitatingly referring it to the period before the

destruction of Jerusalem, probably about A.D. 66. [485] But here,

though the writer's stand- point is somewhat different from both Paul's

and John's, we find precisely the same doctrine as before,--Jesus, the

Divine Son of God, the effulgence of the Father's glory and very image

of His substance, the creator, upholder, and heir of all things, who,

because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, Himself

likewise partook of the same, and is now again exalted to the right

hand of the Majesty on high. [486] Further, in teaching this high

Christological view, the author is not conscious any more than Paul of

bringing in a new doctrine. He stands rather upon the ground of the

common Christian confession, which he exhorts the Hebrews to hold fast.

[487]

It is conceded, however, that in the main the Christology of the

Epistle to the Hebrews is of the Pauline type, and the question

arises--Have we anywhere a witness of another type, showing how the

Person of Christ was viewed in the distinctively Jewish, as contrasted

with the Gentile sections of the Church? The answer is given in another

book of the apostolic age, the early date of which is one of the

articles of the modern creed, and which is supposed by some--e.g., by

Volkmar--to have been written expressly with the view of opposing Paul.

[488] I refer to the Apocalypse. By general consent of the modem school

of critics, this book was composed immediately after the death of Nero,

[489] and its anti-Pauline character is not only admitted, but insisted

on. Here, then, we have what may be regarded as a representative early

Jewish-Christian writing; and the question is of deep interest, What

kind of view of Christ's Person do we find in it? And the answer must

be given that the doctrine of Christ in the Apocalypse is as high, or

nearly as high, as it is in either Paul or John. Reuss, who is

certainly an unprejudiced witness, has some remarks here which are

worth quoting as corroborative of the previous line of argument. "We

may here observe," he says, "that the writings of Paul, which carry us

back, so to speak, into the very cradle of the Church, contain nothing

to indicate that their Christological doctrine, so different from that

of common Ebionitism, was regarded as an innovation, or gave rise to

any disputations at the time of its first appearance. But we have in

our hands another book, essentially Judaeo-Christian, which gives

emphatic support to our assertion. This is the Book of Revelation.

. . . It ought unhesitatingly to be acknowledged that Christ is placed

in the Revelation on a par with God. He is called the First and the

Last, the Beginning and the End, and these same expressions are used to

designate the Most High." [490] Professor Pfleiderer is another critic

who puts this point so strongly and unambiguously, that I cannot do

better than give his words. "As, according to Paul," he says, "Christ

has been exalted to the regal dignity of Divine dominion over all, so,

according to our author, He has taken His seat on the throne by the

side of His Father, participating therefore in His Divine dominion and

power--He is the Lord of the churches, holds their stars, or guardian

angels, in His hand, and is also Ruler of nations and King of kings,

the all-wise and almighty Judge of the nations; indeed, to Him is due a

worship similar to that of God Himself. As the author of the

Apocalypse, in his apotheosis of Christ as an object of worship, thus

almost outstrips Paul, neither does he in his dogmatic definitions of

Christ's nature at all fall behind the Apostle. Like Paul, he calls

Christ the 'son of God' in the metaphysical sense of a godlike

spiritual being, and far beyond the merely theocratic significance of

the title. . . . As Paul had described the celestial Son of Man as at

the same time the image of God, the agent of creation, the head of

every man, and finally even God over all, so the Christ of the

Apocalypse introduces Himself with the predicates of Divine majesty: I

am the Alpha and the Omega, saith the Lord God, who is, and who was,

and who is to come, the All-powerful'; and He is accordingly called

also the Head of Creation,' and the Word of God,' that is, the

mediating instrument of all Divine Revelation from the creation of the

world to the final judgment. It appears from this that the similarity

of the Christology of the Apocalypse to that of Paul is complete; this

Christ occupies the same exalted position as the Pauline Christ above

the terrestrial Son of Man." [491]

It is not necessary, after these examples, that I should dwell long on

the Christology of the Petrine and minor Epistles. Peter is again a

distinct witness, and his testimony is in harmony with what we have

already seen. Christ is, to refer only to the First Epistle, joined

with the Father and the Spirit as one of the principals in the work of

salvation; [492] He is the Redeemer, foreordained before the foundation

of the world, but manifest in these last times; [493] His Spirit

testified beforehand in the prophets; [494] He is called Kurios, and

passages used in the Old Testament of Jehovah are applied to

Him--remarkably in chap. iii. 15, "Sanctify in your hearts Christ as

Lord"; [495] He has gone into heaven, and is at the right hand of God,

angels and authorities and powers being made subject to Him; [496] He

is the ordained Judge of quick and dead. [497] He is therefore, as

Weiss says, in His exaltation a Divine Being, [498] whether the Epistle

directly teaches His pre-existence or not, as, however, Pfleiderer

thinks it does. [499] Even James, who barely touches Christology in his

Epistle, speaks of Christ as the "Lord of Glory," and the Judge of the

world, and prayer is to be made in His name. [500] Not less instructive

are the references in the brief Epistle of Jude, who describes Jesus as

"our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ"; who exhorts believers to pray

in the Holy Spirit, and keep themselves in the love of God, hooking for

the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ; and who concludes his short letter

by ascribing to the only God, our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our

Lord, glory, majesty, dominion, and power, before all time, and now,

and for evermore. [501] If to these sources of evidence we add the

popular discourses in the Acts of the Apostles, we shall have a

tolerably clear idea of the views of Christ held in the Church in the

earliest period of Christianity. These discourses, though, as might be

expected, containing little or no dogmatic teaching on the origin or

constitution of Christ's Person, yet do not fail to represent Him as

possessing a unique dignity; [502] as the holy and sinless One, whom it

was not possible for death to hold; [503] as the Prince of Life,

exalted to the throne of universal dominion; [504] as the Lord on whose

name men were to call, the One in whom alone under heaven there was

salvation, and through whom was preached forgiveness of sins to men;

[505] as the Giver of the Holy Ghost [506] as the appointed Judge of

the world, whom the heaven must retain till the time of the restitution

of all things. [507] These representations, though simpler, are not

inconsistent with the more developed Christology of the Epistles, but

rather furnish the data or premises from which all the positions of

that Christology can be deduced. [508]

The supernatural view of Christ, then, is no late development, but was

in all its leading features fully established in the Church in the

generation immediately succeeding Christ's death. We find it

presupposed in all the apostolic writings, and assumed as well known

among the persons to whom these writings were addressed. If there were,

as the T�bingen school alleges, Pauline and Petrine parties in the

Church, it was held by both of these; whatever other shades of

doctrinal opinion existed, this was a common element. But this, it

seems to me, is only conceivable on the supposition that the view in

question was in harmony with the facts of Christ's own life on earth,

with the Claims He made, and with the testimony which His apostles had

deposited in the various churches regarding Him. We are now to see how

far this is borne out by the actual records we possess of Christ's

life.

II. The testimony of the Gospels--Christ in the Fourth Gospel.

II. We go back then to the Gospels, and ask what they teach. Here I

leave out of view the Fourth Gospel, about the teaching of which there

can be little possible dispute. Not simply the prologue, but the acts

and sayings of Christ recorded in that Gospel, are decisive for anyone

who admits it, as I do, to be a truthful record by the beloved disciple

of what Christ did and said on earth. [509] It would be out of place

here to discuss the question of the genuineness. I would only say that,

so far as the objections are drawn from the advanced Christology of the

Gospel, and the alleged traces of Alexandrian influence, after what we

have seen of the general state of opinion in the apostolic age, very

little weight need be attached to them. The Christology of John is not

a whit higher than the Christology of Paul, or that of the Epistle to

the Hebrews, or even that of the Apocalypse--all lying within the

apostolic age; the alleged traces of Philonic influence are as

conspicuous in the Epistle to the Hebrews as in the Fourth Gospel. It

is not, therefore, necessary to go beyond the apostolic age to account

for them. I question, indeed, very much whether, if we except the

prologue--i.e., if we keep to Christ's own doings and sayings--there is

much in John's Gospel at all which would directly suggest the

peculiarities of Philo. There is certainly a very exalted doctrine of

Christ's Person, but the doctrine is Christian, not Philonic. [510]

It may, however, still be said that at least the Synoptics [511] tell a

very different story. Here, it will be maintained, we have the human,

the truly historical Christ, in contrast with the idealised and

untrustworthy picture of the fourth evangelist. Dr. Martineau makes

this his strongest ground for the rejection of the Gospel of John. But

is it really so? Certainly it is not so, if we let these Gospels--as it

is only fair that in the first instance we should do--speak fully and

freely for themselves, and do not, in the interest of theory, curtail

any part of their testimony. The picture given us in the Synoptics is

not at all that of the humanitarian Christ. We have a true human life,

indeed,--the life of One who went in and out among men as a friend and

brother, who grieved, who suffered, who was tempted, who was poor and

despised,--a true "Son of Man," in every sense of the word. But do we

not find more? Does this represent their whole testimony about Christ?

On the contrary, does not this lowly Being move as a supernatural

Personage throughout, and do not His character and works bear amplest

witness to the justice of His claims? Is there, according to the

Synoptics, nothing extraordinary in the commencement of Christ's life,

nothing extraordinary in its close, nothing in keeping with this

extraordinary beginning and end in the career that lies between? It is

easy, no doubt, to get rid of all this by denying the historical

character of the Gospels, or pruning them down to suit; but after every

allowance is made for possible additions to the narrative, there

remains a clear enough picture of Jesus to enable us to determine the

great subjects of His teaching, and the general character of His

claims. In fact, the further criticism goes, the supernatural character

of Jesus stands out in clearer relief. These are not mere

embellishments, mere external additions, obscuring the picture of a

Christ otherwise human. They are not things that can be stripped off,

and the real image of Christ be left behind, as the writing of a

palimpsest might be removed and the picture below be brought into view.

The history is the picture. All fair historical criticism must see that

these supernatural features belong to the very essence of the

historical representation of Jesus in the Gospels, and that, if we take

them away, we have no longer a historical Christ at all, but only a

Christ of our own imaginings; [512] that we must either take these

features as part of our view of Christ, or say frankly with Strauss

that we really know little or nothing about Him. But it is just the

impossibility of resting in this dictum with any fair regard to the

canons of historical criticism which has constantly forced even

negative critics back to a fuller recognition of the historical reality

of the portraiture in the Gospels, and has again placed them in the

dilemma of having to reconsider these claims of the Son of Man.

Let us look at these claims of Jesus in the Synoptics a little more in

detail. Even this title "Son of Man"--found only in Christ's own lips,

and never given Him by His followers--has something unique and

exceptional about it. It wells up from the depths of the consciousness

of One who knew Himself to stand in some peculiar and representative

relation to humanity, and to bear the nature of man in some exceptional

way. [513] He is not simply "a Son of Man," but "the Son of Man"; just

as, in a higher relation, He is not simply "a Son of God," but "the Son

of God." How high this latter relation is, is brought out in the

words--"No one knoweth the Son save the Father; neither doth any know

the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to

reveal Him." [514] In conformity with the uniqueness of nature implied

in these titles, He claims to be the Messiah, [515] the Fulfiller of

law and prophets, [516] the Founder of the kingdom of God, the supreme

Legislator and Head of that kingdom, [517] He, through faith in whom

salvation is to be obtained, [518] the One who demands, as no other is

entitled to do, the absolute and undivided surrender of the heart to

Himself. [519] He forgives sins with Divine authority, [520] is the

giver of the Holy Ghost, [521] ascribes an expiatory virtue to His

death, [522] anticipates His resurrection and return in glory, [523]

announces Himself as the appointed Judge of the world. [524] This claim

of Christ to be the final Judge of the world, found already in the

Sermon on the Mount; [525] His repeated declarations of His future

return in the glory of His Father, and His own glory, and the glory of

the holy angels; [526] the eschatological parables, in which He makes

the ultimate destinies of men depend on relation to Himself, [527] are

among the most remarkable features in His teaching, and are not to be

explained away as mere figurative assurances of the ultimate triumph of

His cause. They constitute a claim which must either be conceded, or

Christ be pronounced the victim of an extravagant hallucination! We

have to add to these claims of Christ, His endorsement of Peter's

confession of the unique dignity of His Person--"Thou art the Christ,

the Son of the living God"; [528] His solemn words, so fraught with

selfconsciousness, in answer to the High Priest's

adjuration--"Henceforth ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the

right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven"; [529] and

such sublime declarations, implying an omnipresent and omniscient

relation to His Church, as "Where two or three are gathered together in

My name, there am I in the midst of them." [530]

These are stupendous claims of Christ, but we have next to observe that

the whole representation of Christ in the Synoptic Gospels is worthy of

them. I do not dwell here on the holy majesty with which Christ bears

Himself throughout the Gospels in all circumstances, on the tone of

authority with which He speaks, on the grace and tenderness which

marked His whole relations to men,--I would concentrate attention on

the one point that Christ, according to the picture given of Him in the

Gospels, is a sinless Being--in this respect also standing quite apart

from other men. It is the uniform testimony of the apostles and other

writers of the New Testament--of Paul, of Peter, of John, of the

Epistle to the Hebrews, of the Apocalypse, [531] --that Christ was

without sin; and the Synoptic narratives, in the picture they give us

of a character entirely God-centred, dominated by the passion of hove

to men, embracing the widest contrasts, maintaining itself in absolute

spiritual freedom in relation to the world, to men and to events,

uniformly victorious in temptation, untouched by the faintest stain of

base, paltry, or selfish motive, completely bear out this description.

So strong is the evidence on this point, that we find the sinlessness

of Christ widely admitted, even by the representatives of schools whose

general principles, one would imagine, would lead them to deny it--by

adherents of the Hegelian school like Daub, Marheineke, Rosenkranz,

Vatke; [532] by mediating theologians of all types, like

Schleiermacher, [533] Beyschlag, [534] Rothe, [535] and Ritschl; [536]

by liberal theologians, like Hase [537] and Schenkel, [538] and so

decided an opponent of the miraculous even as Lipsius. [539] We must

contend, however, that if Christ was really the sinless Being which the

Gospels represent Him, and His followers believed Him to be, we have a

phenomenon in history which is not to be explained out of mere natural

grounds, or on any principle of development, but a literal new

creation, a true moral miracle, involving further consequences as to

the origin and nature of the exceptional Personality to whom these

predicates of sinlessness belong. [540]

In keeping with the character and with the claims of Jesus are the

works ascribed to Him in the Gospels. It is, as the merest glance will

show, a supernatural history throughout. The miracles attributed to

Jesus are not mere wonders, but deeds of mercy and love--the outflow of

just such Divinity as we claim for Him. They are, accordingly, wrought

by Jesus in His own name, in the exercise of His own authority, [541]

and are suitably spoken of as simply His "works" [542] --i.e. standing

in the same relation of naturalness to Him, and to His position in the

world, as our ordinary works do to us, and to our position in the

world. So far from being isolated from the rest of His manifestation,

Christ's miracles are entirely of one piece with it,--are revelations

of the powers and spirit of His kingdom, [543] --are the works of the

kingdom, or, as they are called in John, "signs." [544] The most

skilful criticism, therefore, has never been able to excise them from

the narrative. Their roots intertwine inseparably with the most

characteristic elements of the gospel tradition,--with sayings of

Christ, for example, of unimpeachable freshness, originality, and

beauty; and, as part of the history, they produce upon us precisely the

same impression of dignity, wisdom, and beneficence, as the rest of the

narrative. They are, in short, integral parts of that total

presentation of Jesus which produces on us so marked and irresistible

an impression of Divinity. [545]

Even this is not the highest point in the Synoptic testimony about

Christ. If Christ died, He rose again on the third day. Meeting with

His disciples, He declares to them, "All authority hath been given unto

Me in heaven and on earth"; He commissions them to preach repentance

and remission of sins in His name to all the nations; He bids them

"make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the

Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost" (one name); He utters for

their encouragement this sublime promise, "Lo, I am with you always,

even unto the end of the world." [546] There can be no mistake as to

the meaning of this Trinitarian formula, which, as Dorner says, does

not express a relation to men, but "requires us to regard the Father as

the Father of the Son, and the Son as the Son of the Father, and

therefore does not signify a paternal relation to the world in general,

but to the Son, who, standing between the Father and the Spirit, must

be somehow thought of as pertaining to the sphere of the Divine, and

therefore denotes a distinction in the Divine itself." [547] Attempts

are made to challenge the authenticity of these sayings. But they are

at least part of the Synoptic representation of Christ, and must be

taken into account when the comparison is between the Synoptic

representation and that found in John, and in other parts of the New

Testament. When, however, Christ's whole claim is considered, no valid

objection can be taken to these sayings, except on principles which

imply that the resurrection never took place at all,--a position which

works round to the subversion of the claim itself. [548]

Such, then, is the view of Christ in the Synoptic Gospels; and the

conclusion I draw is, that it is in keeping with the estimate formed of

Christ's Person in the apostolic age. The two things are in harmony.

Given such a life as we have in the Gospels, this explains the

phenomena of the apostolic age. On the other hand, given the estimate

of Christ's Person and work in the apostolic age, this supports the

reliableness of the picture of Christ in the Gospels, for only from

such a life could the faith of the Church have originated. We have, in

this Synoptic picture, the very Being whom the writings of Paul and

John present to us; and the forms they use are the only forms which can

adequately interpret Him to us. In other words, given the Christ of the

Synoptic Gospels, the doctrine of Paul and John is felt to be the only

adequate explanation of His character and claims. I agree, therefore,

entirely with Dorner when he says, "It may be boldly affirmed that the

entire representation of Christ given by the Synoptics may be placed by

the side of the Johannine as perfectly identical, inasmuch as faith,

moulded by means of the Synoptic tradition, must have essentially the

same features in its concept of Christ as John has"; and adds, "Those

who reject the Gospel of John on account of its glorifying of Christ,

can hardly have set themselves in clear relations with the Synoptic

Christology." [549]

I claim, then, to have shown that if we are to do justice to the facts

of Christianity, we must accept the supernatural view of Christ's

Person, and recognise in Him the appearance of a Divine Being in

humanity. The argument I have conducted--if it be correct--goes further

than to show that this doctrine is an integral part of Christianity. If

this were all, it might still be said, Rather than that this doctrine

be accepted, let Christianity go! But if my contention is right, we are

not at liberty to let Christianity go. The reason why Christianity

cannot be waved out of the world at the bidding of sceptics simply is,

that the facts are too strong for the attempt. The theories which would

explain Christianity away make shipwreck on the facts. But if

Christianity is not to be parted with, its full testimony to itself

must be maintained; and we have now seen what this means. Formerly it

was shown that the attempts to maintain Christianity, while rejecting

the truth of the Incarnation, have uniformly failed. Now we have seen

why it is so. It was shown also whither the rejection of Christianity

led us, and how the painful steps of return conducted us back through

Theism to Revelation, and through Revelation to belief in Christ as the

supreme Revealer. But this faith heads us again to His testimony about

Himself, and so once more to the Incarnation. Thus it is that the Lord

stands constantly challenging the ages to give their answer to His

question, "What think ye of Christ? whose Son is He?" [550] and

increasingly it is shown that it is not in the world's power to put

this question aside. However silenced for the moment, it soon again

asserts its rights, and will not cease to be heard till humanity, from

one end of the earth to the other, has joined in the devout

acknowledgment--"My Lord and my God!" [551]

III. Doctrinal aspects of the Incarnation: proposed reconstructions.

III. This fact of the Incarnation being given, how are we to interpret

it? The full discussion of what, doctrinally, is involved in the

Incarnation, belongs rather to dogmatics than to the present inquiry;

but certain limiting positions may at least be laid down, which may

help to keep our thoughts in harmony with the facts we have had before

us, and may serve as a check on modern theories, which, professing to

give us a re-reading of this all-important doctrine more in agreement

with the Christian verity than the old Christological decisions, fall

short of, or go beyond these facts. The early decisions of the Church

on Christ's Person are not, indeed, to be regarded as beyond criticism.

It may very well be that reconstruction is needed in this doctrine as

in many others. Only, we should be careful not to part with the old

formulas till something better--something at least equally true to the

facts of Christianity--is put in their place; and I confess that most

of the modern attempts at a revised Christology do not seem to me to

fulfil this condition.

Constrained by the evidence of Scripture, many theologians agree in

ascribing "Godhead" to Christ, whose views of the Person of Christ yet

fall short of what the complete testimony of Scripture seems to

require. Schleiermacher may be included in this class, though he avoids

the term; [552] of more recent theologians, Rothe, Beyschlag, Ritschl,

Lipsius, etc., who speak freely of the "Godhead" (Gottheit),

"God-manhood" (Gottmenschheit), of Christ, and of the "Incarnation"

(Menschwerdung) of God in Him. [553] But what do these expressions

mean? In all, or most, of these theories, Christ has a high and unique

position assigned to Him. He is the second Adam, or new Head of the

race, Son of God in a sense that no other is, archetypal Man, sinless

Mediator and Redeemer of mankind. [554] This is a great deal, and must

be recognised in any theory of the Incarnation. All these theories

acknowledge, further, a peculiar being or Revelation of God in Christ,

on the ground of which these predicates "Godhead" and "God-manhood" are

ascribed to Him. But what is its nature? In Schleiermacher, as already

seen in the second Lecture, it is the constant and energetic activity

of that God-consciousness which is potentially present in every

man--which constitutes, therefore, an original element in human nature.

[555] In Rothe, it is an ethical union of God with humanity, gradually

brought about in the course of the sinless development of Christ, and

constituting, when complete, a perfect indwelling of God in man--a

perfect unity of the Divine and human. [556] In Beyschlag, it is the

consciousness of a perfect and original relation of Sonship to God,

which has its transcendental ground in an impersonal (Divine-human)

principle eternally pre-existent in the Godhead. [557] In Ritschl, the

"Godhead" of Christ has a purely moral and religious sense, expressing

the fact that in Christ, as the supreme Revealer of God, and Founder of

the kingdom of God, there is perfect oneness of will with God in this

world-purpose, and a perfect manifestation of the Divine attributes of

grace and truth, and of dominion over the world. [558] In Lipsius,

again, and those who think with him, "Incarnation" and "Godhead" denote

the realisation in Christ of that perfect relation of Sonship to God

(Gottessohnschaft) which lies in the original idea of humanity, and the

perfect Revelation of the Divine will of love (Liebewillen) in that

Revelation. [559] Now I do not deny that in these theories we have a

certain union of the Divine and human, just as believers in Christ,

through union with Him and participation in His Spirit, become "sons of

God," and "partakers of the Divine nature." [560] I do not deny,

further, that these theories secure for Christ a certain distinction

from every other, in that they make Him the original type of that

relation of Divine Sonship into which others can only enter through

Him. It is a thought also which not unnaturally occurs, whether on this

idea of a God-filled humanity--a humanity of which it may be truly said

that in an ethical respect the fulness of the Godhead dwells in it

bodily--we have not all that is of practical value in any doctrine of

Incarnation. We must beware, however, of imposing on ourselves with

words, and I believe that, if we do not rise to a higher view, it will

be difficult, as the second Lecture showed, to prevent ourselves

drifting to pure humanitarianism.

Two things are to be considered here--First, whether these theories are

tenable on their own merits; and, second, whether they do justice to

the facts of Christ's Revelation, and to the data of the New Testament

generally. I shall offer a few remarks on these points, then add a

brief notice of the theories known as Kenotic.

1. There are two classes of these theories--those which do not, and

those which do, presuppose a transcendental or metaphysical ground for

the predicate "Godhead" applied to Christ, and as important differences

exist between them, it is desirable to distinguish them.

(1) Of the former class are those of Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Lipsius,

with many others that might be named. I abstract from other features in

these theories, and look only at the grounds on which "Godhead" is

ascribed to Christ; and I do not find any which transcend the limits of

humanity. Christ is archetypal man, ideal man, sinless man, the perfect

Revelation of grace and truth, the central individual of the race, the

bearer of the principle of true religion, the Founder of the kingdom of

God in humanity, the pre-eminent object of the Father's hove,--but He

is not more than man. His humanity may he a "God-filled" humanity;

still a God-filled man is one thing, and God become man is another.

There may be participation in the Divine life--even in the Divine

nature--on the part of the ordinary believer; but the man in whom God

thus dwells does not on this account regard himself as Divine, does not

speak of himself as a Divine person, does not think himself entitled to

Divine honours, would deem it blasphemy to have the term "Godhead"

applied to him. If, therefore, this is the only account we can give of

Christ's Person, it is clear that this predicate "Godhead" can never

properly be applied to Him. We might speak of the Divine in Christ, but

we could not say that Christ Himself was Divine. We might see in Him

the highest organ of Divine Revelation, but we would require to

distinguish between the God revealing Himself and the humanity through

which He is manifested. It would be blasphemy here also to speak of

Christ Himself as God. It would be idolatry to give Him Divine honours.

We find, therefore, that Ritschl has to admit that it is only in a

figurative and improper sense that the Church can attribute "Godhead"

to Christ. [561] This predicate, he says, is not a theoretic truth, but

only a judgment of value--an expression of the worth which Christ has

for the religious consciousness of the believer. In further carrying

out the same idea, both Schleiermacher and Ritschl strip away, as

formerly shown, all the eschatological attributes from Christ, and

resolve His sitting at the right hand of God, His return to judge the

world, etc., into metaphors. The only real sense in which Christ is

spiritually present in His Church is through the perpetuation of His

image, of His teaching, and of His influence in the community of

believers. [562] This is the legitimate consequence of a theory which

does not go beyond the bounds of the human in its estimate of Christ;

for if the eschatological teaching of Jesus is admitted, it seems

impossible to stop short of a much higher view of His Person. This

method, however, of simply sweeping aside what is distasteful, is too

violent to be long endured; there are besides those utterances of Jesus

which bespeak the consciousness of a relation different in kind, and

not merely in degree, from that sustained by others to the Father. This

class of theories, therefore, naturally passes over to another--that

which seeks to do justice to the facts by admitting a deeper ground for

Christ's Personality than the earthly one.

(2)Of this second class of theories, I may take those of Rothe and

Beyschlag as examples. Rothe thinks he effectually secures the idea of

Christ's Godhead by assuming that, in the course of Christ's sinless

development, God constantly unites Himself with Him in closer and

closer relations, till at length a perfect union both of person and of

nature is effected. [563] Beyschlag thinks to do the same by supposing

that a Divine impersonal principle--a pre-existent ideal humanity--is

somehow incarnated in Christ. [564] But not to speak of the absence of

scriptural proof for both of these theories, see the difficulties under

which they labour. Can it be seriously said that, if a transcendental

ground of Christ's Person is to be admitted, these theories have any

advantage in simplicity or intelligibility over the old view? Take

Rothe's theory. What are we to make of the supposition of a personality

which begins as human, and ultimately and gradually is changed into

Divine? Then what is meant by two persons merging into one, and this by

moral process? For God is one Person to begin with, and Christ is

another, and at length a perfect union is effected of both. Do we

really in this theory get beyond the idea of an ethical union, or

perfect moral friendship, in which, after all, the two Persons remain

distinct, though united in will and love? If this is the character of

the union, it is only by a misuse of terms that we can speak of Christ

becoming really God. Yet Rothe is perfectly in earnest with this

conception of the deification of Christ, so we ask finally--How is this

newly constituted Person related to God the Father? For Rothe

acknowledges no immanent distinction of Persons in the God-head, and it

is the Father Himself who thus unites Himself with Christ, and confers

Godhead upon His Person. Rothe says expressly, "The Incarnation of God

in the Second Adam is essentially an incarnation of both in Him--of the

Divine personality, and of the Divine nature." [565] But if it is the

One absolute Personality whom we call God, who enters into the union

with the humanity of Jesus, how can the resultant relation be described

as that of Father and Son? Or if a new Divine Person really is

constituted, does not Rothe's theory amount to this, that, since the

Incarnation, a new Person has been added to the Godhead? But what does

the constitution of a new Divine Person mean? Is it not, if the

expression is to be taken literally, very like a contradiction in

terms? I need not wait long on Beyschlag's rival theory of a

pre-existent impersonal humanity, which solves no difficulties, and is

loaded with inconceivabilities of its own. For in what sense can this

idea of humanity be spoken of as Divine, any more than any other idea

of the Divine mind which is realised in time h--the idea, e.g., of the

world, or of the believer, or of the Church. What, besides, is meant by

a heavenly, ideal humanity? Does it include only the single Person of

Christ, or not also all the members of the human race? [566] How,

further, is this ideal of humanity, which forms the supernatural

principle in Christ, related to His actual humanity of flesh and blood,

which came to Him "of the seed of David"? [567] Finally, if Christ's

Person was thus peculiarly constituted, even in respect of its

humanity, how can it be said of Him that He was made in all things like

unto His brethren? [568] It may seem a waste of time to discuss such

questions; yet theories like Rothe's and Beyschlag's have their uses;

for they aid us, by a process of exclusion, in seeing what the true

theory must be, and where we are to look for it.

2. The second question I proposed to ask is already in large measure

answered in the course of the above discussion, Do these theories do

justice to the facts of Christ's Revelation, and to the data of the New

Testament generally? They clearly do not, either in a negative or a

positive respect. There is no hint in the Scriptures of either Rothe's

gradual incarnation, or of Beyschlag's pre-existent principle of

humanity; but there are: many passages which directly, or by

implication, claim for Christ personal pre-existence, and attribute to

Him Divine acts and functions in that state of pre-existence. But,

apart from this, all those passages which claim for Christ a unique

relation of Sonship to the Father, taken with the sayings which imply

His consciousness of the possession of attributes and functions raised

above those of humanity, point to a super-earthly and pre-incarnate

state of existence. And this brings us back to the fundamental

distinction between a true and a false or inadequate doctrine of

Incarnation. Incarnation is not simply the endowing of human nature

with the highest conceivable plenitude of gifts and graces; it is not a

mere dynamical relation of God to the human spirit--acting on it or in

it with exceptional energy; it is not simply the coming to

consciousness of the metaphysical unity all along subsisting between

humanity and God; it is not even such moral union, such spiritual

indwelling and oneness of character and will, as subsists between God

and the believer; still less, of course, is it analogous to the heathen

ideas of sons of the gods, where the relation is that of physical

paternity --or of the appearances of gods in human guise--or even of

temporary appearances in humanity, as in the case of the Avatars of

Vishnu. The scriptural idea of the Incarnation is as unique as is the

Biblical conception as a whole. It is not, to state the matter in a

word, the union simply of the Divine nature with the human,--for that I

acknowledge in the case of every believer through the indwelling

Spirit,--but the entrance of a Divine Person into the human. That there

is an analogy, and a closer one than is sometimes admitted, between the

believer's relation to God and Christ's relation to the Father is

expressly declared in Christ's own words in John xvii.21, where He asks

"that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in

Thee, that they may be one in Us." But the subject here is moral

union,--not union of essence, as in John i.1, and perhaps John x.30,

hut the mutual ensphering of personalities in an atmosphere of love,

such as obtains in its highest degree between the Father and the Son.

For "he that abideth in Love, abideth in God, and God abideth in him."

[569] There is this also in Christ. But the distinction remains--these

personalities of ours are human, and continue so, no matter how

entirely filled, penetrated, possessed, with the light and love and

knowledge of God they may be; but His was a Personality of a higher

rank--a Divine Personality, which entered into the limitations and

conditions of humanity from above, which was not originally human, as

ours is, but became so. Here questions deep and difficult, I.

acknowledge, crowd thick.upon us, to many of which no answer may be

possible; but so much as this, I think, is assuredly implied in the

Christian Incarnation.

3. Before, however, venturing further in this direction, I must bestow

at least a glance on what is known as the question of the Kenosis. This

word, meaning "emptying," is taken, as is well known, from Phil. ii.7,

in which passage Christ is said to have "emptied Himself" (heauton ek

enose), taking the form of a servant. The question is, What does this

emptying include? Did the Son of God--the Eternal Word--literally lay

aside His Divine glory, and, ceasing to he in the form of God, enter by

human birth into the conditions of earthly poverty and weakness? Or, if

He did not, what is the import of this remarkable phrase? The Kenotic

theories--represented en Germany by a long list of honoured names [570]

--answer the former question in the affirmative. Godet among French

writers advocates the same view. The Divine Logos, he thinks, literally

laid aside His Divine attributes at the Incarnation, and entered the

sphere of the finite as an unconscious babe. [571] The object of these

theories, of course, is to secure the reality of Christ's humanity, and

the fact of a true human development, which seemed imperilled by the

older view. Notwithstanding, however, the wide support they have

received, I cannot think that these theories will ever permanently

commend themselves to the judgment of the Church. [572] They seem to

me--to come to the heart of the matter at once--to involve an

impossibility, inasmuch as they ask us to believe in the temporary

suspension of the consciousness, and the cessation from all Divine

functions, of one of the Persons of the God-head! How does this consist

with Scripture? Are we not told of the Son, in particular, not only

that by Him all things were created, but that in Him all things

consist--that He upholdeth all things by the word of His power? Is this

relation to the universe not an essential one? and does the Kenotic

theory not reduce it to one wholly unessential and contingent? I cannot

therefore accept this theory, nor do I think that the reality of the

Incarnation requires it. I might appeal here to the analogy of nature.

There is an immanent presence of God in nature, but there is also a

transcendent existence of God beyond nature. So the Divine Son took

upon Him our nature with its human limits, but above and beyond that,

if we may so express it, was the vast "over-soul" of His Divine

consciousness. Even human psychology, in making us more familiar than

we were with the idea of different strata of consciousness even in the

same personal being, gives us a hint which need not be lost. The sense

of the apostle's words seems sufficiently met by the lowly form of

Christ's earthly manifestation--"despised and rejected of men, a man of

sorrows, and acquainted with grief." [573]

The result of our inquiry has not been to overthrow the Christological

decisions of the early Church, but rather to impress us with the

justice and tact of these decisions in guarding the truth against

opposite errors. Has all the labour and earnestness of modern

investigation on this profound subject, then, been absolutely without

result? I do not think so. One remarkable gain has already been

adverted to, in the tendency of modern speculation to draw the Divine

and the human nearer together, and to emphasise, if not their identity,

at least their kindredness, and the capacity of the human to receive

the Divine. [574] But many lights and suggestions have been afforded in

the treatment of this subject, from Schleiermacher downwards, which in

any attempt at a constructive view must always be of great value. This

will perhaps become apparent if, in closing this survey, I notice an

objection which is sometimes urged against the view of the Incarnation

here presented--the ordinary, and as I believe the scriptural

one--namely, that in affirming the incarnation of a heavenly and

pre-existent Person we seem to impinge on the reality, or at least the

integrity, of the human nature which Christ bore. The question is, Had

Christ's human nature an independent Personality of its own, or was the

Divine the only Personality? To guard against Nestorian error, or the

assumption of two persons in Christ, the Church, it will be remembered,

affirmed what is called the "impersonality" of the human nature of

Christ, and, as might appear, with perfect reason on the principles of

the Logos Christology. [575] But this very consequence is made in

modern times the ground of an objection to that Christology, which, it

is said, while maintaining the Divinity, impairs the integrity of the

humanity, of the Redeemer. For (1) If Christ's human nature had no

independent Personality, was not His human nature thereby mutilated?

and (2) If it is the Divine Personality that is the subject--the

Ego--does not this detract on the other side from the truth of His

humanity? For this reason, some are disposed to grant that Christ's

humanity also must be conceived of as personal, and that the

Incarnation must be thought of, with Rothe, as the union both of person

and of nature. Let us see how it stands with this difficulty on closer

inspection, and from what point of view it can best be obviated.

1. It would be well if the objector to the ordinary ecclesiastical

view--he who admits in any sense an Incarnation--would think out

carefully what is implied in the attribution of an independent

Personality to Christ's human nature. On both sides there will be

agreement that the unity of the Person must in some form be maintained.

You cannot have two Egos in Christ's one Divine-human Person--however

close the relation between them. If the human Ego retains in any

measure its distinction from the Divine, then we have not an

Incarnation, but a Nestorian relation of persons. If, therefore, an

independent human Ego is to be assumed, it must be supposed to be so

incorporated with the Divine Ego--so host in it, so interpenetrated by

it, so absorbed in it--that all sense of separate identity is parted

with; [576] while, on the other hand, the Divine Ego so transfuses

itself into the human, so limits and conditions itself, so becomes the

ruling and controlling force in the human consciousness, as itself

practically to become human. There is perhaps no obvious objection to

this view, but, at the same time, it is difficult to see what is gained

by it. The human Ego, as a distinct Ego, is as entirely lost sight

of--is as completely taken up and merged into the Divine--as on the

other supposition. For it is of the essence of the true view of

Incarnation that the bond of personal identity should remain unbroken

between the Son who shared the glory of the Father in eternity, and the

human Christ who prayed, "O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self

with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was." [577]

2. The other side of the objection -- If it is the Divine Personality

which is the subject, does not this detract from the truth of the human

nature, give us only an unreal and doketic Christ?--raises a much

deeper question--that, namely, of the original relation of the Divine

Logos to humanity. If God can become man, it can only be on the

presupposition of an original relation between God and humanity, in

virtue of which there is an essential kindredness and bond of

connection between them. This is already implied in the Scripture

doctrine of man made in the image of God, but it receives a deeper

interpretation through the doctrine of the Logos. [578] When it is

objected that the Divine Logos, even though entering into the nature

and conditions and limitations of humanity, is not truly a human

Person, the question is to be asked, Is the relation between

Personality in the Logos and that in man one of contrariety, or is not

Personality in the Logos rather the truth of that which we find in

humanity? Is man's personality in every case not grounded in that of

the Logos? Is He not the light and life of all men, even in a natural

respect--the light of intelligence, of conscience, of spirit? But if

man's personality is thus grounded in the Logos, is there a difference

of kind between them, or not rather one of condition? Is there not a

human side in the Logos, and a Divine side in man? and is not this the

truth we have to conserve in such theories as Beyschlag's and Hegel's.

There is no denial, therefore, in the doctrine of the Incarnation,

rightly understood, of a true human Personality in Christ,--what is

denied is that the Personality of the Divine Son cannot also become in

the incarnate condition a truly human one. A further question would be,

whether the idea of the human race did not include from the first the

idea of an Incarnation, with the Son Himself as Head--a subject which

will be dealt with in the next Lecture.

I remark, in a word, in closing, that we do not do justice to this

stupendous fact of the Incarnation, if we neglect to look at it in the

light of its revealed ends. The advantage of taking the doctrine in

this way is, that we see at a glance the inadequacy of all lower

theories of the Person of Christ, if the ends intended to be

accomplished by His appearance were to be attained. If Christ came to

do only the work of a prophet, or of a philanthropist, or of a teacher

of ethical truth, I admit that the Incarnation would shrivel up into an

absurdity. The means would be out of all proportion to the ends. But

who will say this of the actual ends for which the Son of God came into

the world? Who will affirm that if a world was to be redeemed from sin

and guilt, and spiritual bondage--to be renewed, sanctified, and

brought into the fellowship of life with God--anyone less than Divine

was adequate to the task? [579] Here, again, the Christian view is in

keeping with itself. There is a proportion between the Incarnation and

the ends sought to be accomplished by it. The denial of the Incarnation

of necessity carries with it a lowering of the view of the work Christ

came to do for men. He, on the other hand, who believes in that

work--who feels the need of it--much more who has experienced the

redeeming power of it in his own heart--will not doubt that He who has

brought this salvation to him is none other than the "Strong Son of

God--Immortal Love." [580]

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[456] Cf. his Grundriss, secs. 128, 129.

[457] ii. secs. 93, 94.

[458] Dogmatik, sec. 651.

[459] Tyndall carries back this promise and potency to the original

fire-mist. "For what are the core and essence of this hypothesis? Strip

it naked, and you stand face to face with the notion that not alone the

more ignoble forms of animalcular or animal life, not alone the nobler

forms of the horse and lion, not alone the exquisite and wonderful

mechanism of the human body, but that the human mind itself--emotion,

intellect, will, and all their phenomena--were once latent in a fiery

cloud."--Fragments, ii. p. 132.

[460] Commentary on John, ii. p. 315 (Eng. trans.).

[461] John viii. 14.

[462] A good summary of the apostolic evidence will be seen in Dr.

Whitelaw's How is the Divinity of Jesus depicted in the Gospels and

Epistles?

[463] Cf. Weiss's Bib. Theol. of the New Testament, pp. 177-181 (Eng.

trans.); Harnack's Dogmengeschichte, i. pp. 66-68.

[464] Cf. Baldensperger, Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu, p. 152. "How does

such a claim fit into the frame of a human consciousness? Such an

assumption lies in fact beyond all our experience, also beyond the

highest religious experience," etc.

[465] Seat of Authority, pp. 428, 429. Biedermann, Lipsius, Pfleiderer,

Reuss, Reville, etc., all agrees in their estimate of John's doctrine.

Wendt (Die Lehre Jesu, ii. pp. 450-476) seems to go back, and to

explain the expressions in John only of an ethical Sonship. Cf.

Appendix to Lecture.

[466] See Note A.--The Doctrine of Pre-Existence.

[467] It goes back to Baur, and to Ritschl Entstehung, p. 80 (1857),

and has been adopted by Holsten, Hilgenfeld, Biedermann, Lipsius,

Pfleiderer, etc. Biedermann states it succinctly thus;--"The Person,

the I of Christ, has already, before His appearance in the earthly

corporeity, in the flesh, preexisted in a pre-earthly condition with

God as the eikon Theou, as the human image of God, and consequently as

the archetypal pattern of humanity; thus is He the Son of God. . . .

The appearance of Christ in the world, sent by God in love, is not a

becoming man, but a coming of the heavenly, pneumatic Man in the

flesh."--Dogmatik,. B. pp. 93, 97.

[468] Christologie, pp. 225, 226, 243.

[469] 1 Cor. xv. 47 (R.V.).

[470] See Weiss's criticism in Biblical Theology, i. pp. 410-412, and

ii. p. 100; Meyer on 1 Cor. xv. 47; Dorner, System of Doctrine, iii.

pp. 175, 176.

[471] Renan, Reuss, Sabatier, Weiss, etc., accept them all as Pauline.

[472] Cf. Bruce's Humiliation of Christ (Cunningham Lectures), pp.

21-28, 403-411.

[473] Dogmatik, p. 453.

[474] Urchristenthum, pp. 676, 695.

[475] Cf. Schmid, Bib. Theol. of New Testament, pp. 469-478 (Eng.

trans.).

[476] 2 Cor. viii. 9; Gal. iv. 4.

[477] 1 Cor. viii. 6.

[478] Cf. Rom. i. 1-4, xvi. 25-27; 1 Cor. viii. 6. Bishop Lightfoot

says: "The absolute universal mediation of the Son is declared as

unreservedly in this passage from the First Epistle to the Corinthians

(One Lord Jesus Christ; through whom are all things, and we through

Him'), as in any later statement of the apostle; and if all the

doctrinal and practical inferences which it implicitly involves were

not directly emphasised at this early date, it was because the

circumstances did not yet require explicitness on these

points."--Commentary on Colossians, pp. 188, 189.

[479] Cf. on above statements, Weiss, Biblical Theology, i. pp.

390-393.

[480] Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 3; 2 Cor. i. 2; Gal. i. 3.

[481] 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

[482] Rom. ii. 16; 1 Cor. iv. 5.

[483] It is a noteworthy circumstance that nearly all the modern

scholars agree in that interpretation of the strongest passage of all,

Rom. ix. 5, "who is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen," which makes

it refer to Christ. Thus, E.g., Rothe, Lipsius, Pfleiderer, Ritschl,

Schultz, Weiss, etc.

[484] Cf. Reuss, History of Christian Theology, i. p. 397 (Eng.

trans.). The passage is quoted below.

[485] Cf. Weiss, Introduction to New Testament, ii. p. 31 (Eng.

trans.); Dr. A. B. Davidson, Hebrews, etc. A few, like Pfleiderer (who,

however, thinks Apollos may have been the author), date it

later.--Urchristenthum, p. 629.

[486] Cf. Weiss, ii. pp. 186-190; Reuss, ii. pp. 243, 244. Reuss says:

"It is clear from the figures chosen that the intention of the theology

is to establish at once the Divinity and the plurality of the Persons

in the Godhead, side by side with the monotheistic principle."

[487] Heb. iv. 14.

[488] Pfleiderer shares this view. See it criticised by Reuss,

Christian Theology, i. pp. 308-312. Pfleiderer thinks, too, that the

passage in Matthew, "Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these

least commandments," etc. (Matt. v. 19), is a blow aimed at Paul's

antinomianism!--Hibbert Lectures, p. 178.

[489] "It is now pretty generally acknowledged that the date of this

book is the year 68-69 A.D."--Pfleiderer, Hibbert Lectures, p. 153.

Since the above was written, the hypothesis promulgated, by Vischer

(1886), and favoured by Harnack, etc., has come into vogue, that the

present book is a Christian workingup of an older Jewish Apocalypse, or

of several such writings. See the views in J�licher's Einleitung, pp.

181-183. J�licher takes the date to be about 95 A.D. Dr. C. A. Briggs,

who at first opposed this theory, now adopts it.

[490] History of Christian Theology, i. pp. 397, 398 (Eng. trans.).

[491] Hibbert Lectures, pp. 159-161.

[492] 1 Pet. i. 2.

[493] 1 Pet. i. 20.

[494] 1 Pet. i. 11.

[495] Cf. 1 Pet. i. 5, ii. 13, iii. 12.

[496] 1 Pet. iii. 22.

[497] 1 Pet. iv. 5.

[498] Biblical Theology of New Testament, i. p. 238.

[499] Urchristenthum, p. 659.

[500] James ii. 1, v. 7-9, 14, 15.

[501] Jude 4, 20, 21, 25 (R.V.).

[502] Acts iii. 13, 25, iv. 27. "Servant," in sense of Isaiah's

"Servant of Jehovah."

[503] ii. 24, iii. 14.

[504] ii. 36, iii. 15.

[505] i. 21, 38, iii. 26, iv. 10-12, v. 30, 31.

[506] ii. 33.

[507] iii. 20, 21.

[508] Cf. Weiss, i. p. 180: "The Messiah who is exalted to this

kuriotes must, of course, be a Divine Being, although, for the earliest

proclamation, this conclusion gave no occasion for the consideration of

the question on how far such an exaltation was rooted in the original

nature of His Person."

[509] It is precisely the discourses of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel

which Wendt, in his recent Die Lehre Jesu, is disposed to attribute to

a genuine Johannine source. On the difference of style between the

Johannine and the Synoptical discourses, Godet remarks: "The discourses

of the Fourth Gospel, then, do not resemble a photograph, but the

extracted essence of a savoury fruit. From the change wrought in the

external form of the substance, it doss not follow that the slightest

foreign element has been mingled with the latter."--Introduction to

Commentary, p. 135 (Eng. trans.). The contrast, however, may be

exaggerated, as shown by comparison of passages where the Synoptics and

John cross each other.--Cf. Godet, Introduction, pp. 155-157.

[510] Harnack expresses himself very decidedly on this subject.

"Neither the religious philosophy of Philo," he says, "nor the manner

of thought out of which it originated, has exercised a provable

influence on the first generation of Christian believers. . . . A

Philonic element is also not provable in Paul. . . . The apprehension

of the relation of God and the world in the Fourth Gospel is not the

Philonic. Therefore, also, the Logos doctrine found there is

essentially not that of Philo."--Dogmengeschichte, i. p. 99. See Note

B.--Philo and the Fourth Gospel.

[511] Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

[512] Cf. on this, Bushnell's Nature and the Supernatural, chap. xii.,

"Water. marks on the Christian Doctrine," and Row's Jesus of the

Evangelists.

[513] Cf. Dorner, Person of Christ, i. p. 55 (Eng. trans.), and System

of Doctrine, iii. p. 170; Gess, Christi Person und Werk, i. p. 212. On

the various views as to the meaning of the title, see Bruce,

Humiliation of Christ, pp. 474-487 (Cunningham Lecture).

[514] Mat. xi. 27 (R.V.).

[515] Matt. xi. 1-6; Luke iv.17-21, etc.

[516] Matt. v. 17.

[517] Matt. xiii. (Parables of Kingdom); Matt. v.-vii. (Sermon on

Mount).

[518] Matt. xi. 28; Luke vii. 50.

[519] Matt. x. 37-39.

[520] Matt. ix. 2, 6.

[521] Matt. iii. 11, etc.

[522] Matt. xx. 28, xxi. 26-28, etc.

[523] Matt. xvi. 21, 27, xvii. 23, xx. 19, etc.

[524] Matt. xxv. 31-46, etc.

[525] Matt. vii. 21-23.

[526] Mark viii. 38, etc.

[527] Matt. xxv.; Luke xii. 11-27.

[528] Matt. xvi. 16, 17.

[529] Matt. xxv. 64.

[530] Matt. xviii. 20.

[531] E.g., 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Pet. ii. 22; 1 John iii. 5; Heb. iv. 15;

Rev. iii. 14, etc. Cf. on this subject Ullmann's Sinlessness of Jesus,

and Bushnell's Nature and the Sapernatural, x.

[532] Cf. Dorner's Person of Christ, v. pp. 121-131; System of

Doctrine, iii. p. 261 (Eng. trans.).

[533] Der christl. Glaube, sec. 98 (ii. 78, 83).

[534] Leben Jesu, i. pp. 181-191.

[535] Dogmatik, ii. pp. 83, 108.

[536] Unterricht, p. 19.

[537] Geschichte Jesu, p. 248. Hase, however, only recognises the

sinlessness of Jesus from His entrance on His public work. It was a

sinlessness won by struggle.

[538] In his Dogmatik, see sketch in Pfleiderer's Dev. of Theol. pp.

177-182. Pfleiderer himself doubts the "psychological possibility" of

sinless perfection, and does not ascribe it to Christ--Ibid. pp. 117,

118. In his Religionsphilosophie, i. p. 339 (Eng. trans.), he blames

Schleiermacher for identifying "this personality so entirely with the

ideal principle, that it is exalted to an absolute ideal, and indeed to

a miraculous appearance." This affords a good standard for the

measurement of Pfleiderer's general Christian position.

[539] Dogmatik, sec. 651, p. 569.

[540] Strauss acknowledges this when he says: "A sinless, archetypal

Christ is not a hair's-breadth less unthinkable than one supernaturally

born, with a Divine and human nature. "--Der Christus des Glaubens und

der Jesus der Geschichte, p. 63. But Strauss himself bears high tribute

to the perfection of Jesus. "In the attainment of this serene inward

disposition, in unity with God, and comprehending all men as brethren,

Jesus had realised in Himself the prophetic ideal of the New Covenant

with the Law written in the heart; He had--to speak with the

poet--taken the Godhead into His will. . . . In Him man made the

transition from bondage to freedom."--Leben Jesu, p. 207 (1864).

[541] E.g., Matt. viii. 3, 7-10, 26.

[542] Matt. xi. 2. "Mighty works," in vers. 20, 21, 23, is literally

"powers." "Works" is the favourite term in John.

[543] Matt. xi. 4, 5; Luke xi. 20.

[544] John ii. 11, etc.

[545] Cf. Godet's Lectures in Defence of the Christian Faith, iii.,

"The Miracles of Jesus Christ," p. 124 (Eng. trans.); and Pressense,

Vie de Jesus, p. 373 (Eng. trans. p. 277).

[546] Matt. xxviii. 18-20.

[547] System of Doctrine, i. p. 351 (Eng. trans.).

[548] See Note C--The Resurrection of Christ and the Reality of His

Divine Claim.

[549] Person of Christ, i. pp. 60, 61.

[550] Matt. xxii. 42.

[551] John xx. 28.

[552] See Schleiermacher's views in Der christl. Glaube, ii. pp. 56,

57, 93, He says: "Inasmuch as all the human activity of Christ in its

whole connection depends on this being of God in Him, and represents

it, the expression is justified that in the Redeemer God became man, in

a sense true of Him exclusively; as also each moment of His existence,

so far as one can isolate it represents a new and similar incarnation

of God and state of being incarnate; since always and everywhere, all

that is human in Him proceeds out of that which is Divine."--Pp. 56,

57. He objects to the term "God-Man" as too definite.--P. 93.

[553] Rothe, Dogmatik, B. pp. 88, 107, etc.; Beyschlag, Leben Jesu, p.

191, etc.; Ritschl, Recht. und Ver. iii. pp. 364-393; Unterricht, p.

22; Lipsius, Dogmatik, p. 457. Cf. also Schultz, Lehre von der Gottheit

Christi, pp. 536, 537; Herrmann, Verkehr des Christen mit Gott, pp.

42-62; Nitzsch, Evangelische Dogmatik, ii. p. 514, etc. [Beyschlag's

views are further expounded in his New Testament Theology, since

published and translated.]

[554] Schleiermacher, ii. p. 19; Lipsius, sec. 638.

[555] Der christl. Glaube, ii. pp. 40, 56. Cf. Lipsius, p. 492.

[556] Dogmatik, ii. pp. 88-97, 165-182.

[557] Leben Jesu, i. p. 191; Christologie, pp. 58, 84, etc

[558] Unterricht, p. 22. It will be seen that this is a tolerably

complex idea of "Godhead."

[559] Dogmatik, pp. 574, 575. Lipsius distinguishes between the

"principle" of the Christian religion--which is that of religion

absolutely--and the historical revelation of that principle in the

Person and Work of Christ.--Pp. 535, 536. Yet this principle is not

accidentally or externally bound up with Christ, as if He were only

casually the first representative of it, or His work only the external

occasion for the symbolical representation of the general activity of

this principle in humanity.--Pp. 537, 538.

[560] John i. 12; 2 Pet. i. 4.

[561] Ritschl, Recht. und Ver. iii. p. 378.

[562] Ritschl, Recht. und Ver. pp. 383, 384, 407, 408. "In any other

sense," he thinks, "the formula of the exaltation of Christ to the

right hand of God is either without content for us, because Christ as

exalted is directly bidden for us; or becomes the occasion of all

possible extravagance (Schw�rmerei)."--P. 407. Schleiermacher, Der

christl. Glaube, pp. 84-88, 290-292; Lipsius, Dogmatik, pp. 494, 587.

[563] Dogmatik, pp. 165-182.

[564] Christologie, p. 84, etc.

[565] Dogmatik, ii. p. 172.

[566] Cf. his Christologie, p. 58; and Leben Jesu, p. 46.

[567] Rom. i. 4.

[568] Heb. ii. 17. Beyschlag would avoid some of these difficulties, if

he kept consistently by the position that Christ is but the perfect

realisation of the "Ebenbild" of humanity, which is fragmentarily

realised in ail men,--is, in fact, simply the ideal Man; hut he seeks

to establish a metaphysical distinction between Christ's humanity and

ours, in virtue of which His personality is "originally and

essentially" Divine, while ours is not.--Christologie, p. 58. See

further on Beyschlag's views in Appendix.

[569] 1 John iv. 16.

[570] E.g. Thomasius, Gess, Ebrard, Kahnis, Luthardt, etc.

[571] Cf. Commentary on John, i. 14. Pressense and Gretillat are other

French Kenoticists.

[572] For an able discussion of Kenotic theories see Professor Bruce's

Humiliation of Christ, Lecture IV. (Cunningham Lectures).

[573] Isa. liii. 3.

[574] In a practical respect the chief gain is that we begin with the

earthly side of Christ's humanity, and rise to the recognition of His

Divinity; more stress is laid on the humanity which manifests the

Divinity than formerly. See Kaftan's Brauchen wir ein neue Dogma? p.

54.

[575] Cf. on this subject of the Anhypostasia, as it is called,

Schaff's Creeds of Christendom, pp. 32, 33; Dorner's System of

Doctrine, iii. p. 254 (Eng. trans.); Bruce's Humiliation of Christ, pp.

427-430.

[576] This was Origen's view in the early Church. The Logos, he

thought, united itself with an unfallen soul in the pro-existent state.

Cf. De Principiis, Book ii. chap. vi.: "But since, agreeably to the

faculty of free-will, variety and diversity characterised the

individual souls, so that one was attached with a warmer love to the

Author of its being, and another with a feebler and weaker regard, that

soul, . . . inhering from the beginning of the creation, and

afterwards, inseparably and indissolubly in Him, as being the Wisdom

and Word of God, and the Truth and the true Light, and receiving Him

wholly, and passing into His light and splendour, was made with Him an

a pre-eminent degree one Spirit, according to the promise of the

apostle to those who ought to imitate it, that be who is joined to the

Lord is one spirit' (1 Cor. vi. 17). . . . Neither was it opposed to

the nature of that soul, as a rational existence, to receive God, into

whom, as stated above, as into the Word and the Wisdom and the Truth,

it had already wholly entered. And therefore deservedly is it also

called, along with the flesh which it had assumed, the Son of God, and

the Power of God, the Christ, and the Wisdom of God, either because it

was wholly in the Son of God, or because it received the Son of God

wholly into itself."--Ante-Nicene Library trans. Origen's view may be

compared with Rothe's, only that Rothe does not allow a separate

personality in the Logos.

[577] John xvii. 5.

[578] An original relation of the Logos to humanity on the ground of

the Incarnation, is already implied in the theology of Irenaeus,

Clement, and Origen (cf. Dorner's History); is made prominent in recent

Christological discussions in Germany; was the view of Maurice, etc.

[579] Even Hartmann recognises this. "If one sees in Jesus," he says,

"only the eon of the carpenter Joseph and of his wife Mary, this Jesus

and His death can as little redeem me from my sins as, say, Bismarck

can do it," etc.--Selbstzersetzung, p. 92.

[580] In Memoriam.

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APPENDIX TO LECTURE VI

THE SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS OF JESUS.

It is a significant circumstance that, in recent years, interest has

concentrated itself more and more on the question of Christ's

self-consciousness--that is, on what He thought and felt about Himself,

and on how He arrived at these convictions. The fact is an illustration

of the saying of Godet, quoted in the Lecture, that in the last

instance Christianity rests on Christ's witness to Himself. I have

noted below some of the chief books which bear upon this subject, [581]

and may refer here to a few of their results, only venturing very

sparingly upon criticism.

The general subject is the origin and development of Christ's Messianic

consciousness, as that may be deduced from the Gospels, and the points

chiefly discussed are the following:--

1. What was the fundamental fact in Christ's Messianic consciousness

out of which the other elements grew--the consciousness of a perfect

religious relation to the Father (Beyschlag, Weiss, Wendt, etc.), or,

behind this, of sinlessness? (Baldensperger).

2. When did Christ clearly realise His Messianic calling? --At the

Baptism? (Beyschlag, Wendt, Baldensperger, etc.). Or earlier? (Neander,

Hase, Weiss, etc.). Or not till a later period? (Renan, Strauss,

Schenkel, etc.).

3. Was Christ's "plan" one and the same throughout? (Neander, Schmidt,

etc.). Or, did Christ's views change with the course of events?

(Beyschlag, Schenkel, Hase, Keim, Baldensperger, etc.). Was it, e.g.,

only gradually that He realised the necessity of His death? (Beyschlag,

Weiss, Baldensperger, Wendt, etc.).

4. The import and origin of the titles "Son of Man" and "Son of God."

Does the former represent Christ as "weak, creaturely man"? (Holsten,

Wendt). Or as "ideal, typical man"? (Neander, Reuss, Beyschlag, etc.).

Or simply as Messiah? (Baldensperger). Was it borrowed from Daniel (as

most hold), and to what extent was it a popular, well-known title for

Messiah? (Against this, Matt. xvi. 13.)

This title expresses the two ideas that Christ at once belongs to the

race of humanity, and sustains a peculiar and unique relation to it. It

may be held to denote Christ's consciousness that He is true and

perfect Man, that He sustains a universal relation to the race, and

that He is the Messiah.

As respects the second title, does it denote an ethical and religious

relation (so most of the above), or has it also any metaphysical (or,

as I prefer to say, transcendental) implication? (Beyschlag, Reuss,

Schmidt, etc.). Is it a tithe which Christ shares with others (in part

Wendt), or uses in a peculiar and exceptional sense of Himself?

(Beyschlag, Reuss, Weiss, etc.).

It will help the understanding of the subject if I sketch a little more

fully the views of some of the above named writers.

Beyschlag's view does not hang well together. It begins with a Christ

who is unique among men--sinless, the Son of God in an absolute sense,

whose nature is grounded in eternity, who works miracles, is raised

from the dead, is translated into heavenly power and glory, who has

Godhead, who demands worship; but who grows only gradually into the

consciousness of His Messiahship, is limited in nature and gifts, makes

mistakes, errs in His expectations, etc. Beyschlag's opinions, however,

contain many notable elements. On the general subject he says, "First

in a Personality in which the Divine nature translates itself so

perfectly into the human that it can be said, Who sees Me, sees the

Father,' can the Divine Revelation perfect itself." [582] The

God-manhood is "the wonder of all wonders." [583] He separates himself

from the Church doctrine,. and declares himself in favour of an

"anthropocentric" Christology, though only on the ground, as he

explains it, of "a theocentric anthropology," that is, of the view that

it is the image of God which is the essential thing in the nature of

man. [584] He rejects Strauss's view, that the sinlessness of Jesus is

"the death of all true humanity," and contends that "the Christ of

faith" is no impossibility. [585] The history of the childhood of

Jesus, at the same time, he resolves into poetry, and thinks the birth

from a virgin not essential to sinlessness, or to a new beginning of

humanity. [586] On the self-consciousness of Jesus, he holds that the

individuality of Jesus had its limitations, but in respect of the

consciousness of a Divine Sonship was clear and absolute. "It is not

the old Israelitish religious consciousness which lives in Jesus in

such all-determining fashion, but a new, till then in the world unheard

of and perfect consciousness, which not only is still unsurpassed but

in its inwardness and clearness never can be surpassed." [587] Its

central point is the consciousness of God as Father, to which the name

"Son" corresponds. "Sonship to God (Gottessohnschaft) is the peculiar

expression of the self-consciousness of Jesus." [588] This name

represents the highest aim, or ideal, for all men, but still there is a

singularity in its application to Jesus. [589] God was His Father in a

special sense. "While He calls God not merely His' Father, but names

Him also the' Father absolutely, and teaches His disciples to pray our

Father in heaven,' He yet never includes Himself with them under an our

Father,' but always says My Father' or your Father,' thus

distinguishing His relation from theirs." [590] This does not mean

"that He is the first who has recognised and realised this destination

to a Divine Sonship." It means that, while all others become sons of

God through a change of disposition--through conversion, the new birth,

etc.--and not through themselves, but only through Him--His relation to

the Father is original, perfect, absolute, so that He knows Himself to

be the object of God's love absolutely. [591] In this is involved His

sinlessness. [592] This is a necessary pre-supposition of Christian

faith--the religious, moral absoluteness of Jesus, and the history

confirms it. [593] If He has not this absolute greatness, He is no

Saviour of others, but stands in need of salvation Himself. [594] This

is the "Godhead" of Jesus. "It is never a relative greatness, however

exalted and super-excellent it may be, but the absolute which is the

appearance of Godhead in humanity; the religiously and morally perfect,

and this alone, is in the domain of the human, the truly Divine, in

which we can believe, and which admits of and demands worship." [595]

But this religious-moral Godhead of Christ does not stand in opposition

to a metaphysical. A real being of God in Him lies at the foundation of

the consciousness of Christ, that which He expresses in the word, "I am

in the Father and the Father in Me"; so that in Him in whom the eternal

love has perfectly appeared an essential Godhead also may be

recognised. [596] The passages in John which seem to imply personal

pre-existence, Beyschlag explains away by predestination, etc. On the

Messianic calling, he finds the birth-moment of the Messianic

consciousness of Jesus in the baptism. [597] He reviews the opinions of

those who would put it earlier or hater, and finds them untenable.

[598] But though Christ from this moment knew Himself to be the

Messiah, He did not know what the course of His Messianic life was to

be. [599] He had no foreseen plan. "The public life of Jesus began

under quite other stars than the expectation of the death of the

Cross." [600] Beyschlag distinguishes three stages in the development

of Christ's ideas: [601] --

1. A stage when the kingdom is conceived of as near--standing at the

door (early ministry in John).

2. Jesus realises that His people are anything but ready for the

kingdom; and sees that its triumph will involve a long-protracted

development (Galilean ministry).

3. He foresees His death, and the triumph of the kingdom is now

transported into the future, in connection with a second advent. The

name "Son of Man," Beyschlag connects with the Messianic dignity (from

Daniel); but holds that Christ knew and felt Himself also as "the

heavenly, archetypal (urbildlich). man." [602] The reality of the

resurrection is strongly defended, and the following explanation is

given of the ascension. "What, then, was the original thought of the

ascent to heaven? What else can it have been than that of the elevation

of Jesus above the limits of the earthly life, of His translation into

another, supramundane, Divine form of existence,--in a word, of His

exaltation or glorification?" [603]

H. Schmidt's article in the Studien und Kritiken, on "The Formation and

Content of the Messianic Consciousness of Jesus," is an acute criticism

of the views of Beyschlag and Weiss, and also an able independent

treatment of the subject. He inquires "first as to the time in which

Jesus came to the consciousness of His Messianic destination, and then

what moments His Messianic consciousness comprehended, and what measure

of clearness there was already present in Him as to the nature of His

kingdom." [604] As against Weiss, who seeks to lead from the

consciousness of Christ's unique Son-relationship to the consciousness

of His Messiahship by way of inference, he argues very powerfully for a

peculiarity in the self-consciousness of Jesus other than the mere

sense of a perfect religious relation to the Father. [605] Sonship

implies a knowledge of the thoughts and love of God to the individual,

not of God's thoughts or purposes for the world. On the other

hand--this against Beyschlag--the consciousness of a unique and sinless

Sonship could not exist without the idea of a unique calling connected

therewith. [606] For Jesus to know that He was the only sinless Being

in humanity, was already to know that He had a calling beyond that of a

Nazarene carpenter. He strongly presses the point that the appearance

of a perfectly sinless Being in the empirical state of the race is

scarcely comprehensible by us "without the background of a distinction

of essence"; [607] and shows that Beyschlag's admission that the

peculiarity of Christ's Person, as the absolute moral ideal, involves a

permanent distinction between Him and others, and rests on a

metaphysical background, is fatal to his "anthropocentric" view, for it

means that the centre of Christ's Person is in the suprahuman--the

Divine. [608] He examines the alleged traces of growth in the Messianic

consciousness of Jesus during His public ministry, and demonstrates how

weak are the grounds on which this view rests. [609] He holds it to

have been inconceivable that Jesus should have been in unclearness in

regard to, at least, "the constitutive moments" of His kingdom, and

therefore in regard to His death. [610] He combats Weiss's view that

Jesus thought at first only of Israel, not of a universal kingdom.

[611] "If at the entrance on His Messianic course, already the kingdoms

of the world and the glory of them were offered to Him, one would think

He must have had a wide glimpse into this world." [612] The whole essay

deserves careful consideration.

Another critic of current theories is Grau, who thus defines the

subject in his preface. "The capital question in this domain," he says,

is, "What Jesus has thought about Himself, His vocation, and the

significance of His Person?" Another form of the question is, "How is

the Christ of the Nicene Creed related to the Christ of the New

Testament, and specially to the Christ of the Synoptics"? [613] He

criticises very severely the view of H. Schultz, in his work on The

Godhead of Christ, but along with this, the theories of Beyschlag, etc.

He quotes Schultz's criticism on the Socinian writers, that they

ascribed "a become Godhead" (eine gewordene Gottheit) to Christ, and

asks wherein their view differed from his own, as expressed in the

following passage: "If we teach the Godhead of Christ, it is that we

are certain that Jesus, after He has completed His work, has become

perfectly one with the Christ-idea of God. . . . God has made Him Lord

and Christ. And so He has also received, as His personal attribute, the

Godhead which is proper to the Christ. The Christ is for us God. Jesus

has become God in becoming Christ." [614] The old view, Grau remarks,

was that "God became man in Jesus Christ"; now the truth of salvation

is expressed by Schultz and his friends in the proposition, "The man

Jesus Christ has become God." "This Godhead," he says, "can be no true'

Godhead, because it is one that has become. So, finally, is this whole

representation nothing else than what it was with the Socinians--a

misuse of the name of God." [615] Grau's own book, however, though it

goes on original lines, can hardly be recommended as a satisfactory

contribution to the subject. He is often far from concise or clear in

his statements, and somewhat unmethodical in his treatment. He does not

systematically investigate the question of Christ's

self-consciousness--its development, relation to current ideas,

contents, etc.--but aims rather at proving the thesis that Christ is

the one who combines in His Messianic calling, all the attributes of

Jehovah in the Old Testament. An elaborate discussion of the tithe "Son

of Man" sums itself up in the following remark:--"This is the (title)

Son of Man, the grasping together and fulfilment of all the offices m

the kingdom of God which lie side by side in the Old Testament, and

complete each other--those of shepherd, physician, priest (but also of

sacrifice), of prophet, of king, and judge." [616]

A much more thorough discussion of the subject is Baldensperger's

recent work on The Self-Consciousness of Jesus in the Light of the

Messianic Hopes of His Time. Baldensperger will have nothing to say to

the "ideal man" theory--which he ridicules as an attempt to carry back

our nineteenth-century ideas into a period to which they were quite

strange--and treats the title "Son of Man" as simply a designation for

the Messiah. [617] Yet his general view is exposed to the same

objections as Beyschlag's. He makes Jesus first arrive dimly at the

feeling that He is Messiah; then, aroused by John's preaching and

baptised, He reaches religious assurance (but still expecting,

according to the ideas of the time, signs in confirmation of His call);

He is perplexed (the Temptation); after this, He gains clearness, yet

not such absolute certainty as warrants Him in publicly proclaiming

Himself; ultimately he attains to this certainty, and at the same time

sees that His victory is only to be secured through death, and now

looks for the completion of the kingdom of God through the Parousia and

last judgment, etc. [618] It is obvious how much of all this is mere

theory, without corroboration in the history. To mention only one

objection--according to Baldensperger, Christ did not announce Himself

as Messiah till the time of Peter's confession, [619] while yet the

name "Son of Man," which Baldensperger takes to be quite equivalent to

Messiah, is on His lips in the Gospels from the first. [620] To avoid

this difficulty, the critic has no alternative but arbitrarily to

change the order of the sections, and to assume that all those

incidents in which this name occurs, took place after Peter's

confession--a violent and unwarrantable hypothesis. [621] It is a

weakness of Baldensperger's theory that it fluctuates between a view

according to which Jesus is certain of Himself, and another according

to which He is in doubt and perplexity. Surely, if there is one thing

clearer in the Gospels than another, it is that Christ is quite certain

of Himself from the beginning. Not to build on this expression "Son of

Man," can we listen to the tone of authority in the Sermon on the

Mount, and doubt it? The hypothesis of a wavering and fluctuating

consciousness totally lacks support in the Gospel narrative. Had Christ

any doubt of Himself when He answered John's messengers, when He chose

the twelve apostles, when He invited the labouring and heavy laden to

come to Him for rest, when He said, "All things are delivered to Me of

My Father," etc.? [622] One thing which Baldensperger totally fails to

show us is, what amount of reliance we are to place in self-beliefs of

Christ, arrived at by the psychological methods he indicates, through

contact with the apocalyptic notions of the time, etc. In other words,

what objective value have these beliefs of Christ for us--His beliefs,

e.g., about His atoning death, His Parousia, the judgment of the world,

etc.? Apparently Baldensperger attaches great religious weight to these

beliefs, stripped at least of their immediate form, yet it is not easy

to see on what grounds he can do so. He leaves wholly undetermined,

besides, Christ's relation to His miracles, to the resurrection, etc.,

without which, surely, His self-witness is not set in its right light.

I would refer, finally, to the important discussion of these subjects

in Wendt's able and exhaustive work on The Doctrine of Jesus. In this

book Wendt subjects the opinions of Beyschlag and Baldensperger, as to

a change in Christ's views of His kingdom, to a careful criticism, and

arrives at the con: elusion that, in all essential respects, Christ's

views of the nature and coming of His kingdom as a present, spiritual,

gradually developing reality on earth, remained unchanged during the

period of His ministry. [623] He holds, however, that this does not

apply to the details of the development; and grants, in agreement with

the others, that at the beginning of His work Christ had no thought of

the necessity of His death, not to speak of so speedy and frightful a

death. [624] The difference of the two views, therefore, resolves

itself into one of degree, for unless it is held that Christ's death

had no essential relation to the nature of His kingdom, and the manner

of its setting up, it is impossible to say that ignorance in regard to

that event did not affect the conception of the kingdom. Wendt, like

Beyschlag, holds that the baptism was the moment of the miraculous

revelation to Christ of His Messiahship, though He finds this prepared

for in His previous consciousness of standing in an inner communion of

love with His heavenly Father. "In this consciousness was given the

psychological pre-supposition for His gaining the certainty of His own

Messiahship, and therewith, at the same time, obtaining a new, higher

knowledge of the nature and coming of the kingdom of God. But,

previously to the baptism, this conclusion from His inner fellowship

with God as His Son was to Him still not clear." [625] On the meaning

of the name "Son of Man," Wendt argues strongly for the view that this

title designates Christ as a weak, creaturely being--member, Messiah

though He was, of the weak, creaturely race of humanity. [626] This

view, in turn, is ably criticised by Baldensperger in the work noticed

above. [627] It cannot be carried through without doing violence to

many passages in which this name is evidently used by Christ as a tithe

of dignity; the highest Messianic functions being claimed by him, not

(as Wendt's argument would require) despite of His being Son of Man but

because He is Son of Man. [628] In general, Wendt's ideas of Jesus and

His teaching are very high. "My interest in the historical treatment of

the teaching of Jesus," he says, "arises from the conviction that the

historical Jesus Christ, in His annunciation, by word and deed, of the

kingdom of God, was the perfect Revelation of God to men"; and again,

"We recognise in His teaching concerning the kingdom of God the highest

and perfect Revelation of God." [629] On the other hand, this high

estimate is limited by the admission that on everything but the one

peculiar point of His own mission--the founding of the kingdom of

God--Jesus simply occupied the standpoint, and used the language, of

His contemporaries. His views of the natural world--e.g. of the Old

Testament, of angels and devils, of the future world, etc.--were simply

those of His age, and liable to all the error and imperfection of the

time. [630] But then the question cannot help arising, If Jesus is

avowedly wrong on all points where a scientific view of the world is

concerned, how are we to trust Him when He speaks to us of supernatural

and supersensible realities? May not His own words be applied, "If I

have told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe

if I tell you of heavenly things?" [631] There need be no dispute as to

what Dr. Wendt says of the religious ideas of Christ, of His spiritual

conception of the kingdom of God, of His doctrine of the Divine

Fatherhood, of His pure and exalted doctrine of righteousness. The

sceptic would admit it all. He would only question whether, with the

altered view of the world which has arisen since Christ's time, such

doctrines are tenable now as sober, objective truth. And to answer that

question satisfactorily, firmer ground must be taken up in regard to

Christ's consciousness as a whole. Dr. Wendt's book is, in many

respects, a richly instructive one, full of suggestive points, but it

lacks the means of guarding Christianity against the subjectivity which

would grant to it every kind of moral worth and beauty, but would deny

its objective truth as Revelation.

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[581] Beyschlag's Das Leben Jesu, i. pp. 171-244--("Das

Selbstbewusstsein Jesu," "Der messianische Beruf," etc.). 1885. [Cf.

his New Testament Theology.] Gess's Christi Person und Werk, nach

Christi Selbstzeugniss, etc., vol. i. (1870). Hermann Schmidt on

"Bildung und Gehalt des messianischen Bewusstseins Jean," in Studien

and Kritiken (1889). Grau's Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu im Licht der

messianischen Hoffnungen seiner Zeit (1888, 2nd ed. 1892). Wendt's Die

Lehre Jesu, vol. ii. (1890). Stanton's The Jewish and Christian Messiah

(1886). Lives of Christ, by Weiss, Keim, Hase, etc. Biblical Theology

of New Testament,--Weiss, Reuss, etc.

[582] Leben Jesu, i. p. 39.

[583] Ibid. i. p. 39.

[584] Ibid. i. p.46.

[585] Ibid. i. pp. 50, 56.

[586] Ibid. pp. 146, 161, 162.

[587] Ibid. i. p. 175.

[588] Ibid. i. p. 176.

[589] Ibid. i. p. 177.

[590] Ibid. i. p. 178.

[591] Leben Jesu, i. p. 179.

[592] Ibid. i. p. 181.

[593] Ibid. i. p. 190.

[594] Ibid. i. p. 190.

[595] Ibid. i. p. 191.

[596] Ibid. i. p. 191.

[597] Ibid. i. p. 213.

[598] Ibid. i. pp. 216, 217.

[599] Ibid. i. p. 289.

[600] Ibid. i. p. 231.

[601] Ibid. i. pp. 233-236.

[602] Leben Jesu, i. p. 241.

[603] Ibid. i. p. 448.

[604] Stud und Krit. 1889, p. 425.

[605] Ibid. 1889, 432.

[606] Ibid. 1889, p. 433.

[607] Ibid. 1889, p. 499.

[608] Stud. und Krit. 1889, p. 435.

[609] Ibid. 1889, pp. 448-451.

[610] Ibid. 1889, p. 472.

[611] Ibid. 1889, p. 490.

[612] Ibid. 1889, p. 490.

[613] Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu, Preface, pp. 5, 9.

[614] Ibid. Preface, p. 12.

[615] Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu, Preface, p. 13. Cf. the criticism of

Schultz in Frank's Gewissheit p. 444 (Eng. trans).

[616] Ibid. p. 215.

[617] Ibid. p. 137; 2nd ed. p. 178.

[618] See Wendt's criticism in his Die Lehre Jesu, ii. pp. 307-310.

[619] Das Selbstbewusstsein Jesu, ii. p. 177; 2nd ed. p. 246.

[620] E.g., Matt. xi. 6; Mark ii. 10, 28. Cf. Das Selbstbewusstsein

Jesu, ii. p. 179; 2nd ed. p. 249.

[621] They are to be regarded as "erratic blocks" in the history, Das

Selbstbewusstsein Jesu, p. 180; 2nd ed. p. 252.

[622] Matt. xi. 27, 28.

[623] Die Lehre Jesu, ii. pp. 307-325.

[624] Ibid. ii. pp. 306, 320.

[625] Ibid. ii. p. 316.

[626] Ibid. ii. pp. 442, 443.

[627] Ibid. ii. 2nd ed. p. 182, etc.

[628] Mark ii. 28; John v. 27, etc.

[629] Preface to recent Eng. trans. of Die Lehre Jesu. Dr. Wendt,

however, does not allow anything higher than an ethical Sonship to

Jesus, identical in kind with that enjoyed by all the other members of

the kingdom of God--"viz, a fellowship of love with God, in which God

as the Father bestows His eternal salvation, and man as son trustfully

and obediently appropriates and follows the will of God; only that

Jesus knows that this relation of Sonship to God is realised in Himself

in unique perfection, and on this account regards Himself as the Son of

God kat' exiche"--P. 453. He expressly denies to Jesus pre-existence,

or a transcendental mode of being, and explains away the sayings in

John which seem to teach such higher existence.--Pp. 453-476.

[630] Die Lehre Jesu, ii. pp. 113-129.

[631] John iii. 12.

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"God is one, but not solitary."--Peter Chrysologus.

"Christian worship calls men away from the altars of Polytheism, and

elevates their souls to the One God, but it does this in a threefold

direction: for we know by faith that eternal life streams down to us

out of three personal fountains of love--from God the Father, who has

created us; from God the Son, who has redeemed us; and from God the

Holy Ghost, who sanctifies us and makes us the children of God:--in the

Trinity alone do we possess the whole of love."--Martensen.

"The conceptions of speculative philosophy, where they are most

profound, come nearest to the Christian doctrine; nor need webs anxious

lest speculative philosophy should ever reach a height from which it

may look down and say that the Christian element is left behind. No

thought can transcend the Christian idea, for it is truth in

itself."--Brantiss (in Christlieb).

"For who among men knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the

man, which is in him! Even so the things of God none knoweth, save the

Spirit of God."--Paul

LECTURE VII.

THE HIGHER CONCEPT OF GOD INVOLVED IN THE INCARNATION--

THE INCARNATION AND THE PLAN OF THE WORLD.

Introductory

The point reached at the conclusion of last Lecture was that the facts

of Christ's Revelation are reconcilable with no lower estimate of His

Person than that which we find in the apostolic writings. This

conclusion is counterchecked by the circumstance that, in the history

of doctrine, no lower estimate of Christ's Person has been found able

to maintain itself.

Theories, therefore, like that of Ritschl, which ascribe "Godhead" to

Christ only in a figurative way, or like those of Rothe and Beyschlag,

which aim at investing Christ with a real Divinity, but deny His

personal pre-existence, are none of them in full harmony with Scripture

testimony. The former sinks back into humanitarianism; the latter

involve themselves in the difficulty that they must suppose a new

Divine person to come into existence in the Incarnation. They literally

add a new Person to the Godhead. This difficulty is not obviated by

taking the predicate "Divinity" in a quasi-ideal sense to denote simply

the ethical indwelling of God in Christ. There is no doubt a true

presence of the Divine in Christ, just as there is a true presence of

God by His Spirit in the heart of every believer; and what is

imperfectly true of the believer may be held to be perfectly true of

Christ. But no matter how entirely the believer is filled with the

Divine life, and in this sense is a partaker of the Divine nature, we

do not regard this as a reason for worshipping him. We may worship and

glorify the God revealed in him, but we do not worship the believer

himself. The worship paid to Christ, therefore, and that from the

earliest period, marks a distinction between His Divinity and that of

every other. Not simply as the possessor of a communicated Divine

nature, but in the root of His own Personality, Christ was Divine.

I. Higher concept of God involved in the Incarnation--God as triune.

I. I come now to speak of the higher concept of God involved in this

truth of the Incarnation--I mean the concept of God as triune. This is

the first of the corollaries of the doctrine of the Incarnation, taken

in connection with the related doctrine of the Spirit. It must be

evident to any one who thinks upon it, that such a doctrine as that of

the Incarnation cannot be seriously entertained without profoundly

reacting upon and modifying our concept of God. Necessity is laid on

us, as it was laid on the early Church, to reconstruct our concept of

God so as to bring it into harmony with the new and higher Revelation

which has been given us. The result is the Trinitarian view, which

Christendom expresses in the formula--Father, Son, and Spirit, one God;

and which is as essentially bound up with Christianity as the

Incarnation itself. [632]

Here let me say, to begin with, that it is a mistake to shrink from the

triune view of God as if it did nothing else than impose a mysterious

burden on our faith,--as if it had no voice to reason, or brought no

light into our view of the world, or had no practical relation to

Christian life. This doctrine has not been gained indeed by

speculation, but by induction from the facts of God's

self-revelation,--just, e.g., as the man of science gains his knowledge

of the polarity of the magnet by induction from the facts of nature.

Yet it is not a doctrine which the Church, having once gained it, could

ever again willingly part with. Even from a philosophical point of

view, the worth of this doctrine is very great. The more profoundly

speculation has occupied itself with the mystery of the Divine

existence, the more impossible has it been found to rest in the thought

of God as an abstract, distinctionless unity, the more has the triune

conception of God been felt to be necessary to secure the life, love,

personality,--even the Fatherhood of God. Professor Flint says of this

doctrine, that it is "a mystery indeed, yet one which explains many

other mysteries, and which sheds a marvellous light on God, on nature,

and on man." [633] Professor Laidlaw says of it, "This doctrine is one

of the most prolific and far-reaching among the discoveries of

Revelation. Fully to receive it influences every part of our

theological system, and of our practical religion. It is the

consummation and the only perfect protection of Theism." [634]

Martensen has declared, "If Christian dogmatics had not asserted and

developed the doctrine of the Trinity, ethics must postulate it in its

own interests." [635] Similar testimonies might be multiplied

indefinitely.

It is well to keep clearly in view how this doctrine has originated. It

has just been said that the doctrine of the Trinity is not a result of

mere speculation,--not a theory or hypothesis spun by theologians out

of their own fancies,--still less, as some eminent writers would

maintain, the result of the importation of Greek metaphysics into

Christian theology. [636] It is, in the first instance, the result of a

simple process of induction from the facts of the Christian Revelation.

We could know nothing positively of this self-distinction in the nature

of God save as He Himself discovers it to us in the facts of His

self-revelation; we do not know it through the discovery of Himself as

Father, Son, and Spirit. We know it just as, e.g., we know of the

existence of reason, memory, imagination, will, etc., in our own minds,

through their actual manifestations; or as we know of the various modes

of force in nature--light, heat, electricity, chemical force,

etc.--through observation of their workings. Our faith in the Trinity

does not rest even on the proof-texts which are adduced from the

Scriptures in support of the Trinitarian distinction. [637] These. have

their value as summaries of the truth we gain from the complex of facts

of the New Testament Revelation, and serve to assure us that we are on

right lines in our interpretation of these facts, but the fundamental

ground on which we rest is the facts themselves. The triune conception

of God is justified when it is shown to be the conception which

underlies the triune Revelation God has given of Himself, and the

triune activity in the work of Redemption.

For this same reason that the doctrine of the Trinity is one which

properly arises only out of the facts of the completed Revelation in

the New Testament, we do not look, or we look in vain, for any full

discovery of it in the Old Testament. Yet, if the doctrine be true, we

would anticipate that the older dispensation would not be without at

least some foregleams or intimations of it,--that some facts which

point in its direction would not be wanting,--and this we find to be

actually the case. It is only, I think, a very superficial view of the

Old Testament which will allow us to say that no such traces exist. I

do not lay any stress upon the plural word "Elohim," or on the plural

pronouns sometimes associated with it, though this word is an

indication of the deep feeling which the Hebrews had for that plurality

of powers in the Divine nature, which Polytheism separated, and

worshipped in isolation, or under some visible manifestation (sky,

etc.). It is this which constitutes the Monotheism of the Bible from

the first a living thing, and keeps it from degenerating into a hard,

unspiritual monadism. More to the purpose is the large place allowed in

the Old Testament to ideas and representations which naturally and

almost necessarily suggest--if indeed they do not sometimes formally

express--the thought of self-distinction in the Divine nature. I might

refer here (1) to the remarkable series of facts connected in the older

Scriptures with the appearances and Revelations of the "Angel of

Jehovah." [638] Discussion goes on to this day as to whether the

mysterious Being who bears this designation in the older narratives of

the Bible is to be viewed as a mere theophany, or as a created angel,

or as a distinct hypostasis; [639] but I think a dispassionate review

of all the facts will dispose us to agree with Oehler that, judged by

his manifestations, the "Mal'ach" is best described as "a

self-presentation of Jehovah, entering into the sphere of the creature,

which is one in essence with Jehovah, and yet again different from

Him." [640] (2) We have again the very full development given to the

doctrine of the Spirit. Ordinarily the Spirit appears only as a power

or energy proceeding from Jehovah, but in function and operation the

tendency is to represent Him as an independent agent, and there are

several passages, especially in the later chapters of Isaiah, where

this view receives distinct expression. Such, e.g., is Isa. xl. 13,

"Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being His counsellor,

bath taught Him?" where, in Oehler's words, "The Divine Spirit acting

in creation is a consciously working and intelligent power." [641]

Cheyne observes on the same passage: "In Isaiah there is a marked

tendency to hypostatise the Spirit: here, for instance, consciousness

and intelligence are distinctly predicated of the Spirit." [642] (3)

There is in the later books the doctrine of the Divine Wisdom, which in

the Jewish and Alexandrian schools developed into the view of a

distinct hypostasis. Still, whatever the measure of these

approximations, it was not till the actual appearance of the Son in the

flesh, and till the actual outpouring of the Spirit consequent on

Christ's exaltation, that the facts were available which gave this

doctrine a distinct place in the faith of the Church.

The doctrine of the Trinity is first of all a doctrine of distinctions

interior to the Divine essence, and as such it has frequently been

objected to on the ground that it asks us to accept an intellectual

puzzle, or to believe in an intellectual contradiction--that three can

be one, and one be three. No objection is more common than this, yet

none is more baseless--more narrowly the product of the mere logical

understanding. [643] The objection does not turn peculiarly on the

point of the attribution of Personality to the three modes of existence

in the Godhead--to call them such for the present--but simply on the

formal contradiction of "one and three." But what is there to which the

same objection would not apply? What is there which is not at the same

time one and manifold? Take any object--it can only be conceived of as

unity of substance, yet plurality of attributes. Take mind--it is one,

if anything is, yet we distinguish in it a variety of powers--reason,

memory, imagination, will, etc.--a plurality of faculties, yet all

expressions of the one undivided spiritual self. Take any form of

life--what an unfolding into multiplicity have we there of what is in

its principle one. Is it not the very essence of life to unfold and

maintain itself in the play of distinctions? Take a yet higher view,

and the same contradiction meets us--if contradiction it is--in any

explanation we may give of the ultimate ground of the universe. However

we may choose to conceive of it, the many must in some way have come

out of the One,--that One, accordingly, must have in it a plurality of

powers, must be thought of as capable of expressing, or unfolding, or

differentiating itself into a manifold. This is as true on the

pantheistic hypothesis, or on Mr. Spencer's theory of an Unknowable

Power, which manifests itself in matter and mind, or on any of the

monistic systems,--Haeckel's or Hartmann's, for example,--as in the

Christian doctrine. It will be remembered how this question was one of

the difficulties discussed in the early Greek schools, and what came of

the attempts of the Eleatics and others to hold fast the unity of the

Absolute in contrast to all distinctions. From the idea of one absolute

distinctionless unity, excluding all plurality, all change, all

mobility, all decay, came the relegation of the world of perception to

the category of mere seeming, show, unreality, non-being--in brief, the

denial of the reality of the existing world, or Acosmism. [644] It was

in the attempt to overcome this difficulty that philosophy from Plato

downwards felt the need of a conception of God which should embrace the

element of self-distinction. Hence the Logos speculations of the Stoics

and of Philo, the nous of the Neo-Platonists. In hike manner,

self-diremption, self-distinction in God, is the key to all the higher

speculative movements of the present century. Whether these speculative

views be held to be satisfactory or not, they have at least served to

show that the Trinitarian conception, instead of being the shallow

thing it is sometimes represented to be, includes elements of the

deepest speculative importance. [645]

It is not, therefore, to the mere fact that Christianity posits

self-distinctions in God, but to the nature of these distinctions as

personal, that the real objections to the doctrine of the Trinity must

be addressed. And this is the point on which, within the Church itself,

discussion on the nature of the Trinity really turns. What is the

character of this distinction which we must ascribe to God, which

exhaustively expresses, or does full justice to, the facts of the

Christian Revelation? Is it a distinction of essence, or only of

working? an immanent distinction, or one only of Revelation? a personal

distinction, or one which is impersonal? Now, in applying this word

"Person" to these distinctions in the Godhead, it is granted that we

are conscious of inevitable limitations and drawbacks. The objection

commonly made to the word is that it represents the Godhead as

constituted by three separate individualities, as distinct from each

other as human beings are distinct,--a conception which would, of

course, be fatal to the Divine unity. This word Person, it is to be

observed, does not occur in Scripture itself. [646] It comes to us from

the Latin, while the Greek Church employed the term hupostasis, or

substance; so that, as Augustine says, the Greeks spoke of one essence,

three substances, but the Latins of one substance, three Persons, while

yet both meant the same thing. [647] The same father even says, "Three

Persons, if they are to be. so called, for the unspeakable exaltedness

of the object cannot be set forth by this term," [648] and he reminds

us of what I have just stated, that Scripture does not anywhere mention

three Persons. [649] Too much stress, therefore, must not be laid on

the mere term. Yet I do not know any word which would so well express

the idea which we wish to convey, and which the titles Father, Son, and

Spirit seem to imply--the existence in the Divine nature of three

mutually related yet distinct centres of knowledge, love, and will, not

existing apart as human individualities do, but in and through each

other as moments in one Divine self-conscious life.

Using the term "Person," therefore, to denote distinctions in the

Divine nature, properly described as I and Thou and He, without

contradiction of the thought of the comprehension of these distinctions

in a higher unity of essence, we certainly hold that the distinctions

in the Christian Trinity are personal. This is already implied, as just

hinted, in the names given to the members of the Trinitarian

circle--Father, Son, and Spirit--at least the two former are personal,

and for that very reason the third is presumably so also. But, apart

from this, all those facts and testimonies which go to show that in

Christ we have the Incarnation of a true Divine Person, distinct from

the Father, establish this truth; while, finally, all the facts and

testimonies which show that the Holy Spirit, sent forth by Christ as

the Guide, Teacher, Comforter, and Sanctifier of His disciples, is a

Divine Person, distinct from the Father and the Son, support the same

view. I do not enlarge on this series of testimonies relating to the

Spirit, for the reason that few who admit a real personal distinction

in regard to the Son are disposed to deny it in regard to the Spirit.

It has, indeed, been said, and with justice, that in regard to the Son

the dispute has not been as to His Personality, but as to His Divinity;

while in regard to the Spirit the dispute has not been as to His

Divinity but as to His Personality. Yet it is a rare thing to find

those who admit the Personality and Divinity of the Son denying the

Personality of the Spirit; rather it is felt that if the distinction of

Father and Son is admitted there is a necessity for completing the

triad in the Divine life by the acknowledgment of the Spirit also. The

other view of a merely modal or economical Trinity--a Trinity, that is,

not of essence, but only of Revelation--has had many advocates both in

ancient and modern times, but falls to the ground if a true Incarnation

of the Son be admitted. [650] It is, besides, loaded with difficulties

and contradictions of its own, which make it, whenever the matter is

thought out, untenable as an hypothesis. In the old Sabellian view, for

example, we had indeed a Divine Christ, but the distinction between

Father and Son was abolished, because it was the same being who first

appeared as Father, who afterwards appeared as Son. Modern theories

escape this difficulty by ascribing to Christ only an ethical

Sonship--that is, by denying His true Divinity; but this in turn

deprives us of even a Trinity of Revelation. We have now God the Father

and God the Spirit, but no longer, in the proper sense, God the Son.

The Son is the bearer or medium of the Revelation of the Father, but

does not Himself belong to the Divine circle. Or suppose that with

Rothe and Beyschlag we seek to save Christ's Divinity by asserting a

"becoming" Godhead, then we involve ourselves in the old dilemma, that

to complete the Trinitarian circle we add a new Person to the Godhead,

and the Trinity is no longer economical. The only way of clearing

ourselves of these entanglements is to hold fast to the scriptural idea

of the true entrance of a Divine Personal Being--the Eternal Son--into

the conditions of humanity; and, in accordance with this, to move back

from an economical to an ontological and personal Trinity. [651]

The question is now to be considered, How does this doctrine stand

related to rational thought and to experience? It may: be thought that

at the best this doctrine is one to be received as a mystery of faith,

that it can bring no light or help to the intellect, and that in point

of simplicity and clearness it compares unfavourably with the Unitarian

view. This, however, if the doctrine of the Trinity is true, is most

unlikely; and I confess to have a great dislike to doctrines which are

supposed to come to us in the form of absolute mysteries, and to have

no point of contact with thought through which some ray of rational

light may break in upon them. In proof that the Trinitarian view is not

without relation to thought, I might appeal to the fact that it is to

the influence of philosophical thought on Christianity that many would

attribute the rise of such a doctrine in the Church at all. It is

certainly not without meaning that, as already remarked, in the attempt

to explain the Revelation of God to the world, we should see a Logos

doctrine springing up in the schools of Alexandria; should find at a

later period the Neo-Platonists developing on Platonic principles

something like a doctrine of the Trinity; should find in the

deep-reaching speculations of B�hme in the seventeenth century, [652]

and in the modern speculative philosophies, the self-diremption of God

as an essential feature. These speculative constructions are sometimes

far enough removed from the pure Christian view, but they have a value

as bringing clearly to. light the reality of a threefold pulse or

movement, involved in the very nature of thought, and the fact that the

life of Spirit only maintains itself through this triple movement of

distinction of self from other, and the resolution of this distinction

in a higher unity. These thoughts of the speculative philosophy I

heartily accept, and believe them to be in deepest harmony with

Christian doctrine. [653]

The attempts met with in Augustine and others to find an image of the

Trinity in the constitution of the soul, need not detain us here.

Augustine's ingenious analysis of the mind's relation to its own

knowledge, and of both to its love of itself,--of the relations of

memory, understanding, and will,--his comparison of the Divine Word to

our own inner and mental word, and of the Holy Spirit to hove,--have

profounder elements in them than is always recognised; but he himself

is quite conscious of the imperfection of the analogies, and especially

of the fact that what they give us is a Trinity of powers and functions

in the one Person, and not a Trinity of personal distinctions. [654] If

I were disposed to look for a shadow of such distinctions in our own

mental life, I am not sure but that I would seek it, as Augustine also

hints, in that mysterious power which the soul has of dialogue with

itself,--in that indrawn, ideal life of the spirit, when the mind,

excluding the outward world,' holds converse and argument with

itself--divides itself as it were within itself, and holds discussion

with itself, putting its questions and answering them, proposing

difficulties and solving them, offering objections and repelling

them,--all the while remaining, as we may say, in a third capacity the

neutral spectator of itself, taking watchful note of what is advanced

on both sides of the debate, and passing favourable or unfavourable

judgment on the issues. Yet, after all, this trilogy is only shadow,

and, in conjunction with other elements of our spiritual life, can but

faintly suggest to us what, if the distinction went deeper, Trinity

might mean.

We get more help when, leaving the ground of purely psychological

analogies, we proceed to inquire into the conditions under which, so

far as our thought can go, self-consciousness, personality, love, are

possible. Here we begin to see the positive philosophical and

theological value of this concept of God. There are several points of

view from which its advantage over the Unitarian view of God becomes

apparent.

1. First of all, there is the bearing of this doctrine on the Divine

self-consciousness--on knowledge and Personality in God. The relation

of knowledge seems necessarily to imply a distinction of subject and

object. Philosophers have spoken of a transcendental kind of knowledge

which is above this distinction,--in which subject and object melt into

one. But their words convey no idea to the mind. The only kind of

knowledge we are capable of conceiving is one in which the subject

distinguishes himself from some object which is not himself, and

through this distinction returns to knowledge of himself and of his own

states. In our own case, this knowledge of self is mediated through

knowledge of the outward world, and in the highest degree through

intercourse with our fellow human beings. Seizing on this analogy, some

have thought that the Divine consciousness might be conceived of as

mediated by the idea of the world. [655] The idea of the world in this

view takes the place of the Son in the orthodox theology. The

objections to this are--

(1) It makes God dependent on the world, the idea of which is necessary

for the realisation of His self-consciousness.

(2) The object in this case is an ideal one, and this seems inadequate

to mediate a real self - consciousness. Hegel is consistent,

accordingly, if this theory is to be adopted, in making not the idea of

the world, but the world itself, the object through which the Divine

Spirit attains to self-consciousness.

(3) The world is a finite object, and cannot be an adequate means for

the mediation of an infinite self-consciousness. [656]

(4) Finally, the world is not a personal object. But the true depths of

personality are only sounded when the "I" knows itself in

contradistinction from and in reciprocal relations with a "Thou"--a

counter-self to its own. [657]

The result we reach by this line of thought is that we can only secure

the reality of the Divine self-consciousness by regarding it as

complete in itself--apart from the idea of the world; and this can only

be done by positing an immanent distinction in the Godhead, through

which the Divine consciousness carries its object within itself; and

this neither an ideal, nor finite, nor impersonal object, but One in

whom God sees His own personal image perfectly expressed,--who, in

Scripture language, is "the effulgence of His glory, and the very image

of His substance" (hupostasis). [658] The value of the doctrine of the

Trinity from this point of view is very evident. The third moment--that

which corresponds to the Holy Spirit--is more difficult to arrive at d

priori, but one feels the need of it to complete the circle of the

Divine life in bringing to light the unity which underlies the previous

distinction. [659]

2. A more familiar deduction is that from Divine love. Here, in

realising what is involved in Divine love, we feel, quite as strongly

as in the case of the Divine Personality, the need of sell-distinction.

The proof of the Trinity from hove-- if proof it can be called--is a

favourite one with theologians. [660] "God is love." [661] But love is

self-communication to another. There cannot be love without an object

to be loved. If, therefore, God is essentially love, this is in other

words to say that He has from eternity an object of His love. This

object cannot be the world--ideally or really--for the reason already

given, that this would be to make God dependent on the world,--to make

the world, indeed, an essential moment in God's life,--whereas the true

doctrine is that God has love in its fulness in Himself, and out of

that fulness of hove, loves the world. [662] The world, besides, is a

finite object, and could not be an adequate object for the infinite

love of God. If, therefore, God is love in Himself--in His own eternal

and transcendent being--He must have in some way within Himself the

perfect and eternal object of His love--which is just the Scripture

doctrine of the Son. This view of God is completed in the perfect

communion the Divine Persons have with each other through the Holy

Spirit--the bond and medium of their love.

To see the importance of this view, we have but to contrast it with its

opposite, and to ask, What can love in God mean on the supposition of

His absolute solitariness? What can be the object of God's love

throughout eternity, if there is no triune distinction in God? What can

it be but Himself? Instead of love, therefore, as we understand

it,--affection going out to another,--what we have in the universe is

an infinite solitary Ego; a Being who loves Himself only, as, indeed,

there is no other to love. Either, therefore, we must come back to seek

an object for God's love in the finite, created world, or recognise

that God has an infinitely blessed life of love within Himself, and

this brings us to the doctrine of an immanent Trinity. The value of the

doctrine in an ethical aspect is seen when we recognise that only

through the Trinitarian distinction are we brought into communion with

a Being who has within Himself a life of communion.

3. Connected with this as a third point of view--though it is really

only an extension of the foregoing--is a deduction from the Divine

Fatherhood. God, is Father. This is Christ's own new name for Him, and

expresses His relation to those who stand in moral dependence on Him,

and who bear His image. But Father and Son are terms of relation. [663]

If, then, God be Father, where shall we find the Son who corresponds

with this relation? If we say, men, created angels, creatures of any

kind, we are led to this, that Fatherhood in God depended on there

being a creation. God is not Father simply as God. Fatherhood is not of

His very essence. This could not easily be better put than it has been

by Mr. R. H. Hutton, in a well-known essay on the Incarnation in his

volume of Theological Essays. "If Christ is the eternal Son of God," he

says, "God is indeed and in essence a Father; the social nature, the

spring of love, is of the very essence of the Eternal Being; the

communication of His life, the reciprocation of His affection, dates

from beyond time--belongs, in other words, to the very being of God.

. . . The Unitarian conviction that God is--as God and in His eternal

essence--a single, solitary Personality . . . thoroughly realised,

renders it impossible to identify any of the social attributes with His

real essence--renders it difficult not to regard power as the true root

of all other Divine life. If we are to believe that the Father was from

all time, we must believe that He was as a Father,--that is, that love

was actual in Him as well as potential, that the communication of life

and thought and fulness of joy was of the inmost nature of God, and

never began to be, if God never began to be." [664]

4. Finally, this doctrine of the Trinity has a profound bearing on the

relation of God to the world. Not without reason does Scripture connect

the Son with the creation, and give His person and His work a cosmical

significance. We may conceive of God in two relations to the

world--either in His absolute transcendence over it, which is the

deistic conception, or as immanently identified with it, which is the

pantheistic conception. Or we may conceive of Him as at the same time

exalted above the world--transcending it, and yet present in it as its

immanent sustaining ground, which is the Christian conception. It was

to maintain this double relation to the world that, as we have seen,

Philo conceived of the Logos as a middle term between God and the

creation, and the Neo-Platonists distinguished between God, the nous,

and the soul of the world. When a middle term is wanting, we have

either, as in the later Judaism and Mohammedanism, an abstract and

immobile Monotheism; or, in recoil from this, a losing of God in the

world in Pantheism. In the Christian doctrine of the triune God we have

the necessary safeguards against both of these errors, and at the same

time the link between God and the world supplied which speculation

vainly strove to find. [665] The Christian view is, therefore, the true

protection of a living Theism, which otherwise oscillates uncertainly

between these two extremes of Deism and Pantheism, either of which is

fatal to it. [666]

II. The Scripture view brings creation and Redemption into

line--consequences of this.

II. It is a special service of the doctrine of the Trinity, from the

point of view we have now reached, that it brings creation and

Redemption into line, teaching us to look on creation and Redemption as

parts of one grand whole, and on Christ, now exalted to supreme

dominion in the universe, as at once the first-born of creation and the

first-born from the dead. [667] This thought of the Son as the link

between God and creation--which is so prominent a thought in the New

Testament--forms the transition to the other subject on which I propose

to speak in this Lecture--the relation of the Incarnation to the plan

of the world. The Revelation of the Trinity is given in the work of

Redemption, but once given we can see that it has its bearings also on

the work of creation. This is the view of all the leading writers in

the New Testament,--of Paul, of John, of the author of the Epistle to

the Hebrews,--who go back, or reason back, to an original agency of the

Son in the creation of the world. [668] Even the Apocalypse speaks of

Christ as "the beginning (arche, or principle) of the creation of God."

[669] But once started on this line, it is impossible to shut one's

eyes to the question which inevitably arises, and which has so

frequently been discussed in the history of theology--more keenly than

ever in modern theology--Did an Incarnation lie in the original plan of

the world? Would there have been an Incarnation had man never fallen?

Has the Incarnation any relation to the original ends for which the

world was made? Or is the Incarnation connected solely with the

entrance of sin and the need of Redemption?

To raise a question of this kind at all may be thought by many to

savour of idle and presumptuous speculation. It may be thought that it

is one which the Scripture directly and expressly settles in the

negative, in connecting the Incarnation so intimately as it does with

God's great purpose of salvation to our race--making it, indeed, the

crowning proof of His love to sinners that He has sent His

only-begotten Son into the world, that the world might live through

Him. [670] There are, however, certain considerations which should give

us pause before coming too hastily to this conclusion.

1. The first is that this is a question which does rise naturally out

of so transcendent a fact as the Incarnation.

2. It is a question which has forced itself on the mind of the Church,

and has been deeply and reverently discussed by its ablest thinkers for

centuries. It is a view which the late Principal Fairbairn, who reasons

against it, admits undoubtedly to include among its defenders "some of

the most learned theologians of the present day." [671]

3. But, mainly, the theory referred to is one not unsuggested by

certain of the teachings of Scripture. The same objection which is

taken to this--that it lies outside the field of view of

Redemption--may be made against the Scripture statements as to the

relation of the Son to creation; but it is the grandeur of the

Christian view that, starting with our primary necessities as sinners,

it opens up principles and views fertile and far-reaching vastly beyond

their original application.

It is unnecessary for my purpose to enter at any length into the

history of the question. A sketch of it may be seen in Dorner's History

of the Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ, [672] or in the

finely-toned essay on the subject, entitled "The Gospel of Creation,"

appended to Bishop Westcott's Commentary on the Epistles of St. John.

These writers, with Archbishop Trench, in his Cambridge University

Sermons, take the view that the Incarnation was not conditioned by

human sin; and the same view is held by Rothe, Lange, Oosterzee,

Martensen, Ebrard, and a large number of other theologians. The

opposite view is stated with great temperateness and force by Principal

Fairbairn in the fourth edition of his valuable work on the Typology of

Scripture. [673] It may perhaps be found as the result of a brief

consideration of the subject, that the truth does not lie exclusively

on either side in this profound and difficult controversy, but that a

higher point of view is possible from which the opposition disappears.

The strong point in favour of the view that the Incarnation is

conditioned solely by human sin, is the fact that in Scripture it is

represented invariably in this connection. I need not quote many

passages in illustration of this statement. "The Son of Man came to

seek and to save that which was lost." [674] "God so loved the world

that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him

should not perish, but have eternal life." [675] "God sent forth His

Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them

which were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

[676] "To this end was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy

the works of the devil." [677] These and numerous other Scriptures

explicitly associate Christ's coming with man's Redemption Christ is

the unspeakable gift of God's love to men for their salvation.

On the other hand, it is argued that, while the Scripture thus directly

connects the Incarnation with the work of Redemption, it leaves room

for, and contains passages which necessarily suggest, a wider view.

Such are the passages already referred to, which throw light on the

original relation of the Son to creation--which declare that all things

were made by Him, that all things consist or hold together in Him, that

He is the firstborn of all creation--above all, that all things were

created for Him--that, in the? language of Dr. Lightfoot, "the Word is

the final cause as well as the creative agent of the universe"--"not

only the arche but also the telos of creation, not only the first but

also the last in the history of the universe." [678] These past ages I

shall advert to again. It is further argued--and this is a point on

which great stress is laid--that an event of such tremendous magnitude

as the Incarnation cannot be regarded as a mere contingency in the

universe; that if it was in view at all, it must have governed the

whole plan of creation; and that, in point of fact, it is through it

that, according to Scripture, the creation does reach its end--not only

redeemed humanity, but all things, both in heaven and in earth, being

ultimately gathered up into Christ as Head. [679] A plan of such vast

extent cannot, it is held, be conceived of as an afterthought,--as

something grafted on creation outside its original design,--it must

have lain in the original design itself.

It seems to me that the real source of difficulty in thinking on this

subject lies in not grasping with sufficient firmness the fact that,

however we may distinguish from our human point of view between parts

and aspects of the Divine plan, God's plan is in reality one, and it is

but an abstract way of thinking which leads us to suppose otherwise. In

our human way of apprehension, we speak as if God had first one plan of

creation--complete and rounded off in itself--in which sin was to have

no place; then, when it was foreseen that sin would enter, another plan

was introduced, which vitally altered and enlarged the former. But if

we take a sufficiently high point of view, we shall be compelled to

conclude, I think, that the plan of the universe is one, and that,

however harsh the expression may sound, the foresight and permission of

sin were from the first included in it. An ultra-Calvinist would speak

of the foreordination of sin; I take lower ground, and speak only of

the foresight and permission of sin. Dealing with the question on the

largest scale, I do not see how either Calvinist or Arminian can get

away from this. It is not a question of how sin historically or

empirically eventuated,--that we agree it must have done through human

freedom,--but it is the question of fact, that sin is here, and that in

the Divine plan it has been permitted to exist--that it has been taken

up by God into His plan of the world. His plan included the permission

of sin, and the treatment of it by Redemption. In a previous Lecture I

referred to the view held by some, that nature, even before the Fall,

had a prophetic reference to man's sin, and that in this way is to be

explained much that is otherwise mysterious and perplexing in its

arrangements. We have only to enlarge our range of vision to see that

this way of looking at the subject applies to the whole plan of God. It

is idle to speculate whether, had there been no sin, the plan of the

universe would have included an Incarnation or not. Had this been

different, everything else would have been different also. What we do

know is, in that the infinite, possibilities of things, God has chosen

to create a universe into which it was foreseen that sin would enter;

and the Incarnation is a part of the plan of such a creation. This

being so, it may very well be conceived that the Incarnation was the

pivot on which everything else in this plan of creation was made to

turn. To state my view in a sentence--God's plan is one; Christ was the

Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; [680] and even creation

itself is built up on Redemption lines.

We must, I think, on this question allow great weight to the

consideration of the revealed end. The Scriptures speak of an ultimate

gathering together in one of all things in Christ--of a summing up of

them in Him as Head. [681] It is then to be asked, Is this only the

external unification of a universe not originally intended to be so

unified, but in regard to which God's original plan was something

entirely different? Or did it not lie in its original destination? The

end of a thing, we are to remember, is that which in the Divine plan

determines the beginning of it. What a thing is to be it is fitted for

being by its original make. To turn it from that end, and superinduce

another upon it, would be to some extent to contradict its true nature.

If this is so in general, must it not be so in the highest degree when

the end we speak of is the end of the universe, and the plan in

question is that of gathering together in one all things in the

Incarnate Son. If such a destination did not lie in the original plan

of creation, was it in the nature of things possible that it could

afterwards be externally superinduced upon it? Then what, in this view,

becomes of the statement that all things were made for Christ, as well

as by Him? [682] Can it be received at all, for such words go deeper

than a mere economical adaptation? The longer these questions are

pondered, the clearer will it appear that Christ's relation to the

universe cannot be thought of as something adventitious and contingent;

it is vital and organic. This means that His Incarnation had a relation

to the whole plan of the world, and not simply to sin.

Dr. Fairbairn himself really admits all that is here contended for,

when he says, "The argument derived from the wonderful relationship,

the personal and everlasting union into which humanity has been brought

with the Godhead, as if the purpose concerning it should be turned into

a kind of afterthought, and it should sink, in a manner derogatory to

its high and unspeakably important nature, into something arbitrary and

contingent, if placed in connection merely with the Fall;--such an

argument derives all its plausibility from the limitations and defects

inseparable from a human mode of contemplation. To the eye of Him who

sees the end from the beginning,--whose purpose, embracing the whole

compass of the providential plan, was formed before even the beginning

was effected,--there could be nothing really contingent or uncertain in

any part of the process." [683] That is to say, the Incarnation is not

to be placed in connection merely with the Fall; but the plan even of

creation had from the first a reference to an Incarnation for the sake

of Redemption from sin, and the perfecting of humanity.

When, from this point of view, we look back to the Scriptures, we find

them in full harmony with the ideas now indicated.

1. The Scriptures know of only one undivided purpose of God,--that

eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus, and which embraces,

apparently, both creation and Redemption. [684]

2. We have the clearest acknowledgment, as has already been shown, of a

direct relation of the Son to the work of creation. [685] It does not

detract from the suggestiveness of the passages which declare this

relation, but immensely adds to it, that, as Dr. Fairbairn says, the

subject of the assertions is the historical Christ, He by whom

believers have obtained Redemption, and in whom they have forgiveness

of sins. For the drift of the passages is evidently to bring these two

things more completely into line--the work of creation and the work of

Redemption, and to show them to be parts of one Divine plan.

3. Still more significant is the fact already insisted on, that, in

some of the above passages, Christ is not only represented as the agent

in creation, but as the final cause of creation. "All things have been

created through Him, and unto Him." [686] He is the Alpha and Omega,

the First and the Last. [687] Indirectly suggestive of the same idea

are the passages which speak of "the kingdom prepared for (believers)

from the foundation of the world"; [688] of "the Lamb slain from the

foundation of the world"; [689] of Christ as "foreknown indeed before

the foundation of the world," etc. [690]

4. There are the express statements, also already quoted, of the goal

to which God's purpose actually tends. I may here again avail myself of

the words of Bishop Lightfoot, commenting on the phrase "unto Him."

[691] "All things," he says, "must find their meeting-point, their

reconciliation, at length in Him from whom they took their rise--in the

Word as mediatorial agent, and through the Word in the Father as the

primary source. . . . This ultimate goal of the present dispensation in

time is similarly stated in several passages. Sometimes it is

represented as the birth-throe and deliverance of all creation through

Christ--as Rom. viii. 19, sq. Sometimes it is the absolute and final

subjection of universal nature to Him--as 1 Cor. xv. 28. Sometimes it

is the reconciliation of all things through Him--as below, ver. 20.

Sometimes it is the recapitulation, the gathering up in one head, of

the universe in Him--as Eph. i. 10. The image involved in this last

passage best illustrates the particular expression in the text; but all

alike enunciate the same truth in different terms. The Eternal Word is

the goal of the universe, as He was the starting-point. It must end in

unity, as it proceeded from unity; and the centre of this unity is

Christ."

The conclusion I reach is that this question, Would there have been an

Incarnation but for sin? is one which rests upon a false abstraction.

There is but one plan of God from the creation of the world, and it

includes at once the permission of sin and the purpose of Redemption

from it. It includes, therefore, the Incarnation as an integral and

essential part of that purpose. The Incarnation has, indeed, immediate

reference to Redemption; but it has at the same time a wider scope. It

aims at carrying through the plan of creation, and conducts, not the

redeemed portion of humanity alone, but the universe at large, to its

goal. There is, however, another inference which we are entitled to

draw--one which remarkably illustrates the unity of the Christian view.

If we rightly interpret that view as implying that the Divine plan of

the world contemplates an ultimate gathering up of all things into one

in Christ, it will readily be seen that this, in turn, reflects back

light on the doctrine of Christ's Person. It shows that we are right in

ascribing to Him full and proper Divinity, not less than true humanity.

For it is manifest that no other than a truly Divine Being is fitted to

occupy this position which Scripture, with consentient voice, assigns

to Christ. From the new height we have reached, light falls back also

on Christ's place in the universe, in remarkable agreement with our

previous postulates as to the nature of man, his place in. creation,

and the law of ascent and development to which God's natural works so

strikingly testify. As the inferior stages of existence are summed up

in man, who stands at the head of the earthly creation, and forms a

first link between the natural and the spiritual, so are all stages of

humanity summed up in Christ, who in His Person as God-man links the

creation absolutely with God.

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[632] Kaftan says: "Christian faith in God is faith in the three-one

God. That is the expression, alike simple and yet all-comprehending, of

the Christian truth of faith."--Das Wesen, etc. p. 387. Most modern

theologians, as Schleiermacher, Biedermann, Lipsius, Pfleiderer, etc.,

express themselves similarly, though each has his own interpretation of

the Trinitarian formula.

[633] Anti-Theistic Theories, p. 439.

[634] Bible Doctrine of Man, p. 126 (Cunningham Lectures).

[635] Christian Ethics, i. 75 (Rug. trans.).

[636] Thus Harnack, Hatch, etc.

[637] E.g. Matt. xxviii. 19; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; 1 Cor. xii. 4-6; 1 Pet.

i. 2; Rev. i. 4, 5.

[638] "Angel of God" in Elohistic sections. Cf. Gen. xvi. 7-13, xviii.

20, 26, xxii. 11-19, xxiv. 7, 40, xxxi. 11-13, xlviii. 15, 16; Ex. iii.

2-6, xiii. 21, compared with xiv. 19; xxxii. 14 compared with Isa.

lxiii. 9; Josh. v. 14, 15; Zech. i. 12, iii. 1, 2, etc.

[639] Cf. on this subject Oehler's Theology of Old Testament, i. pp.

188-196 (Eng. trans.); Schultz's Alttest. Theol. pp. 600-606;

Delitzsch's New Commentary en Genesis, on chap. xvi. 7, etc. Delitzsch

founds on Gen. xviii. in support of his view that the Mal'ach was a

created angel, but Schultz shows that this was not so. Schultz holds a

mediating view, but says: "There is certainly in the Angel of God

something of what Christian theology seeks to express in the doctrine

of the Logos," p. 606. Delitzsch also holds that "the angelophanies of

God were a prefiguration of His Christophany," ii. p. 21.

[640] Theology of Old Testament, i. p. 193.

[641] Ibid. p. 172.

[642] On Isa. xlviii. 16, Cheyne remarks: "I cannot but think with

Kleinert (who, however, makes His Spirit' the subject) that we have

both here and in Gen. i. 2 an early trace of what is known as the

Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit"; and on chap. xliii. 10: "There

is an evident tendency in this book to hypostatise the Holy Spirit

(which it mentions no less than seven times) with special distinctness.

The author has already claimed to have been sent in special union with

the Spirit of Jehovah; he now employs another phrase which could not

have been used (cf. ver. 14) except of a person." Delitzsch confirms

this view, remarking on chap. xlviii. 16: "Although His Spirit' is

taken as a second object, the passage confirms what Cheyne and Driver

agree in remarking, that in II. Isa. the tendency is evidently to

regard the Spirit of God as a separate personality." Schultz remarks,

in speaking of Creation:--" The Spirit of God and His Word appear as

powers enclosed in God. The Spirit appears as very independent, in the

manner of an hypostasis."--Alttest. Theol. p. 569. On the doctrine of

the Spirit in the Old Testament, see Schultz, Oehler, and Kleinert in

Jahrb�cher f�r deutsche Theologie for 1867 (referred to by Cheyne).

[643] Cf. Hegel, Religionsphilosophie, ii. pp. 237-239.

[644] Cf. Zeller on the Eleatics Pre-Socratic Philosophy, i. pp.

533-642.

[645] "In philosophy," says Hegel, "it is shown that the whole content

of nature, of spirit, gravitates to this centre as its absolute

truth."--Religionsphilosophie, ii. p. 229.

[646] Calvin on this ground objected to the term. "Specially was he

annoyed by the attacks made on him by one Caroli, who impeached his

orthodoxy, and even had him brought before a synod to clear himself of

the charge of Arianism. It is curious to see Calvin--hard dogmatist as

we are apt to think him--called to account for not using the terms

Trinity' and Person' in his teachings on the Godhead, and having to

defend himself for his preference for simple scriptural expressions.

When blamed by Caroli for not accepting the ancient creeds, he

rejoined,' say the Genevese preachers (in a letter to Borne), that we

have sworn to the belief in One God, and not to the creed of

Athanasius, whose symbol a true Church would never have admitted.'

"--Lecture on "John Calvin" by the authors in volume on The Reformers

(1885).

[647] De Trinitate, Book vii. chap. iv. (p. 189, trans. in Clark's

series). Cf. Book v. chap. v. p. 155.

[648] Quoted by Van Oosterzee, Dogmatics, p. 289 (Eng. trans.). Cf. De

Trinitate, v. 9: "When the question is asked, What three? human

language labours altogether under great poverty of speech. The answer,

however, is given, three persons, not that it might be spoken, but that

it might not be left unspoken."

[649] De Trinitate Book iv. chap. iv. sec. 8, p. 192 (Eng. trans.).

[650] Biedermann and Pfleiderer grant that, with the presupposition of

the Personal Incarnation in Christ, the ontological Trinity is

inevitable. "The Trinity," says Biedermann, "is the specific Christian

concept of God, as it must necessarily develop itself out of the

identification of the Divine principle in Christ with the Ego of Jesus

Christ."--Dogmatik, ii. p. 600. Pfleiderer says: "When we observe that

dogmatic reflection had to work with the presuppositions set up by the

Pauline and Johannine theology, and with the notions provided in the

philosophy of the age, we can scarcely imagine any other result to have

been possible than that embodied in the decrees of the councils of

Nicaea, Constantinople, and Chalcedon."--Religionsphilosophie, iii. p.

218 (Eng. trans.).

[651] "The anti-trinitarian movements of recent times have made it

perfectly clear that there consequently only remains the choice either

to think of God in a Unitarian manner, and in that case to see even in

Jesus a mere man, or, if He is supposed to he the God-Man, to hold to

eternal distinctions in God, and therefore to undertake to prove that

the unity of God is quite consistent with such distinctions."--Dorner,

System of Doctrine, i. p. 415 (Eng. trans.). But has Dr. Dorner himself

a truly immanent Trinity? See Note A.--Recent Theories of the Trinity.

[652] Bohme's "mode of imagining, of thinking," says Hegel, "is

certainly somewhat fantastic and wild; he has not raised himself into

the pure form of thought, but this is the ruling, the ground tendency

of his ferment and struggle--to see the Trinity in everything and

everywhere."--Religionsphilosophie, B. p. 246.

[653] "No wonder," says Christlieb. "that philosophy too--and that not

only the old mystic theosophical speculation, but also modern idealism,

with all the acuteness of its dialectics--has taken up the idea of a

Triune God, and endeavoured to comprehend and prove it. . . . Their

efforts show us that modern philosophy (from Jacob Robins onwards)

feels that this doctrine is the true solution of the world's enigma.

Moreover, these philosophical investigations cast a strong light on the

unconscionable superficiality and shortsightedness of those who most

reject this fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith untested,

without a notion of its deep religious, philosophical, and historical

importance."--Moderne Zweifel, pp. 273, 274 (Eng. trans.). See Note

A.--As above.

[654] Augustine is constantly acknowledging the imperfection of finite

analogies to express the ineffable reality of the Godhead. See

specially Book xv. The following are some of the headings of chapters:

"That it is not easy to discover the Trinity that is God from the

trinities we have spoken of." "There is the greatest possible

unlikeness between our word and knowledge and the Divine Word and

knowledge." "Still further of the difference between the knowledge and

word of our mind, and the knowledge and Word of God."--"How great is

the unlikeness between our word and the Divine Word! Our word cannot

be, or be called, eternal," etc. "We know but in an enigma," and "Who

can explain how great is the unlikeness also, in this glass, in this

enigma, in this likeness, such as it is?"--De Trinitate, p. 402 (Eng.

trans.).

[655] Thus, e.g., Weisse.

[656] It is besides only progressively realised, and thus would involve

a growing self-consciousness.

[657] This objection is not obviated by assuming a world of finite

personalities.

[658] Heb. i. 3. Pfleiderer supposes that the Divine self-consciousness

is mediated by God's own thoughts ("His changing activities and

states")--but thoughts of what?--Religionsphilosophie, iii. p. 282

(Eng. trans.).

[659] Cf. on this argument Dorner, System of Doctrine, pp. 422-426;

Christlieb,Moderne Zweifel, pp. 271, 272 (Eng. trans.), etc. Hegel

makes it the startingpoint of his deduction. "Knowing implies that

there is another which is known; and in the act of knowing, the other

is appropriated. Herein it is contained that God, the eternally

in-and-for-Himself existing One, eternally begets Himself as His Son,

distinguishes Himself from Himself--the absolute act of

judgment."--Religionsphilosophie, ii. p. 228.

[660] It is developed specially by Sartorius in his Doctrine of Divine

Love (translated). See also Martensen's Christian Ethics, i. p. 73;

Christlieb's Moderne Zweifel, pp. 272, 273 (Eng. trans.); Laidlaw's

Bible Doctrine of Man, pp. 126, 127; Murphy's Scientific Basis of

Faith, p. 377; Lux Mundi, p.

[661] 1 John iv. 16.

[662] This is an important point in the doctrine of Divine Love. The

thought is already met with in lrenaeus. Cf. Dorner, Person of Christ,

i. p. 306. Martensen says: "God's love to the world is only then pure

and unmixed holy affection when God, whilst He is sufficient to Himself

and in need of nothing, out of infinite grace and mercy calls forth

life and liberty beyond His own Being. . . . But this free power of

love in the relations of God to the world presupposes the existence of

perfect love realised within itself, the love of the Father and the Son

in the unity of the Holy Spirit."--Christian Ethics, i. p. 74.

Similarly Dorner in his Christian Ethics, p. 94 (Eng. trans.).

[663] This is the mistake of those who, in a Sabellian way, take Father

as the name for God as the Creator, etc. The Christian idea of the

Father comes to birth only in the Revelation of the Son. The terms are

reciprocal. See Note A.

[664] Theological Essays, 3rd ed. p. 257.

[665] This important aspect of the Trinity, as safeguarding the true

idea of God in. relation to the world (His immanence and transcendence)

against the opposite errors of Deism and Pantheism, is brought out with

special fulness by Dorner in his discussion of Sabellianism and

Arianism, Person of Christ, i. and B., and his System of Doctrine, i.

pp. 365-378. Cf. also Martensen's Dogmatics, pp. 103-106; Christlieb's

Moderne Zweifel, pp. 263-265; Lux Mundi, pp. 92-102, etc.

[666] A remarkable illustration of how the deeper thought on God runs

almost necessarily into a Trinitarian mould is furnished by an essay of

Dr. Martineau's on "A Way out of the Trinitarian Controversy," in his

recently published volume of Essays, Ecclesiastical and Historical. See

Note B.--Dr. Martineau as a Trinitarian.

[667] Col. i. 15-18.

[668] John i. 3; 1 Cor. viii. 6; Eph. iii. 9-11; Col. i. 15-18; Heb. i.

[669] Rev. ii. 14.

[670] 3

[671] Typology of Scripture, 4th ed. I. p. 118.

[672] Person of Christ, iii. pp. 361-369. This view was already

Involved in the theology of Irenaeus. See Dorner, I. p. 316; and

Article "Irenaeus," in Dictionary of Christian Biography.

[673] Vol. i. pp. 117-135.

[674] Luke xix. 10.

[675] John iii. 16.

[676] Gal. iv. 4 (R.V.).

[677] 1 John iii. 8.

[678] On Col. i. 16.

[679] Eph. i. 10.

[680] Rev. xiii. 8. Cf. the interesting remarks in Hugh Miller's

Footprints of the Creator, 23rd ed. p. 289 (1887).

[681] Eph. i. 10.

[682] Col. i. 16.

[683] Typology of Scripture, 4th ed. i. p. 133.

[684] Cf. Weiss, Biblical Theology of New Testament, ii. pp. 97-100

(Eng. trans.). On Eph. iii. 9 he says: "If it is said that the mystery

of salvation was hid from eternity in God, who created the universe, it

is indicated by this characteristic of God, that the purpose of

salvation is connected in the closest way with the plan of the world,

which began to be realised in creation; and that purpose, having been

formed by the Creator before the creation of the world, was regulative

even in its creation."

[685] John i. 3; 1 Cor. viii. 6; Col. i. 15-18; Heb. i. 3.

[686] Col. i. 16.

[687] Rev. i. 8, 17.

[688] Matt. xxv. 34.

[689] Rev. xiii. 8.

[690] 1 Pet. i. 20 (R.V.).

[691] Col. i. 16.

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"In whom we have our Redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of

our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace."--Paul.

"The faith of the Atonement presupposes the faith of the Incarnation.

It may be also said historically that the faith of the Incarnation has

usually had conjoined with it the faith of the Atonement. The great

question which has divided men as to these fundamental doctrines of the

faith has been the relation in which they stand to. each other--which

was to he regarded as primary, which secondary? Was an Atonement the

great necessity in reference to man's salvation, out of which the

necessity for an Incarnation arose, because a Divine Saviour alone

could make an adequate Atonement for sin?--or, is the Incarnation to be

regarded as the primary and highest fact in the history of God's

relation to man, in the light of which God's interest in man and

purpose for man can alone he truly seen?--and is the Atonement to be

contemplated as taking place in order to the fulfilment of the Divine

purpose for man which the Incarnation reveals?"--J. M'Leod Campbell.

"Fourier's void,

And Comte absurd, and Cabet puerile,

Subsist no rules of life outside of life,

No perfect manners without Christian souls;

The Christ Himself had been no Lawgiver

Unless He had given the Life, too, with the Law."

Mrs. Browning

LECTURE VIII.

THE INCARNATION AND REDEMPTION FROM SIN.

Introductory

Whatever we may think of the Incarnation in its wider relations to the

plan of the world and the ends of creation as a whole, it remains the

fact that in Scripture it is always brought into immediate connection

with sin, and with the purpose of God in Redemption. "He was manifested

to take away sins," says John, "and in Him was no sin"; [692] and so

say all the writers in the New Testament. Christianity is thus

distinctively a religion of Redemption,--a great Divine economy fore

the recovery of men from the guilt and power of sin--from a state of

estrangement and hostility to God--to a state of holiness and

blessedness in the favour of God, and of fitness for the attainment of

their true destination. It is in this light we are to consider it in

the present Lecture.

We may, therefore, set aside at once as alien to the true Christian

view, or at least as inadequate and defective, all such representations

of Christianity as see in its Founder only a great religious teacher

and preacher of righteousness; or a great religious and social

reformer, such as has often appeared in the history of the world; or a

great philanthropist, caring for the bodies and souls of men; or one

whose main business it was to inoculate men with a new "enthusiasm for

humanity"; [693] or a teacher with a new ethical secret to impart to

mankind; or even such representations as see m Him only a new spiritual

Head of humanity, whose work it is to complete the old creation, and

lift the race to a higher platform of spiritual attainment, or help it

a stage further onwards to the goal of its perfection. Christ is all

this, but He is infinitely more. God's end in His creation indeed

stands, as also His purpose to realise it; but, under the) conditions

in which humanity exists, that end can only be realised through a

Redemption, and it is this Redemption which Christ pre-eminently came

into the world to affect.

A comparison has sometimes been instituted in this respect between

Christianity and Buddhism, which also is in some sort a religion of

Redemption. But the comparison only brings out the more conspicuously

the unique and original character of the Christian system. For whereas

Buddhism starts from the conception of the inherent evil and misery of

existence, and Redemption which it promises as the result of

indefinitely prolonged striving through many successive lives is the

eternal rest and peace of non-being; the Christian view, on the other

hand, starts from the conception that everything in its original nature

and in the intent of its Creator is good, and that the evil of the

world is the result of wrong and perverted development,--holds,

therefore, that Redemption from it is possible by the use of

appropriate means. And Redemption here includes, not merely deliverance

from existing evils, but restoration of the Divine likeness which has

been lost by man, and the ultimate blessedness of the life everlasting.

[694]

The chief point on which the discussion in this subject turns is the

connection of Redemption with the Person and work of Christ. Here at

the outset it is necessary to guard against too narrow an idea of

Redemption, as if the saving work of Christ were limited to that doing

and suffering which we call the Atonement. The ends of Christ's coming

into the world include much more than the making atonement for sin.

This is recognised when the Church names three offices which Christ

executes as our Redeemer--a prophetic and a kingly as well as a

priestly office. Yet it is principally on the question of Atonement, or

the manner of the connection of Redemption with the doing and suffering

of Christ, that discussion has been directed, and it is to this subject

I shall specially address myself. [695]

I. It needs no proof that all the New Testament writers who refer to

the subject regard the forgiveness of sins and the salvation of men as

connected in quite a peculiar way with the death of Christ; and it is

not less evident that they do this because they ascribe to Christ's

death a sacrificial and expiatory value. They do this further, as every

one must feel, not in a mere poetic and figurative way, but with the

most intense conviction that they have really been redeemed and

reconciled to God by the death of Christ upon the cross. The how of

this redemptive transaction most of them may not enter into, but Paul,

at least, has a theology on this subject, with the main outlines of

which the others, judging from the expressions they use, and the

propitiatory virtue they ascribe to the shedding of Christ's blood,

must be held to agree. [696] Happily we are freed from the necessity of

dwelling long on the apostolic testimony on this subject, for the same

reason which I gave when speaking of the Person of Christ--namely, that

impartial exegesis and Biblical theology practically grant to us all

that we assert. Apart from such occasional speculations as, e.g.,

Holsten's, that, in Paul's view, sin is identical with the body or

"flesh" of Christ, and that the slaying of Christ's body or flesh

denotes the slaying of sin, [697] it will be found that the

descriptions given of the teaching of the Epistles as to the work of

Redemption do not differ much from those met with in our ordinary books

of theology. The accounts given us, e.g., by Baur or Reuss or

Pfleiderer, or even by Martineau [698] --not to speak of an exegete

like Meyer, or a Biblical theologian like Weiss--of the doctrine of

Paul on Redemption, is what, with very slight exception, any of us

could accept. The same is true of the other New Testament witnesses--of

the Epistle to the Hebrews, of Peter, of Revelation, of the Epistles of

John. With differences of standpoint and strong individual

characteristics, it is acknowledged that they teach a fundamentally

identical doctrine of Redemption from the guilt and power of sin

through Christ, and particularly that they ascribe to His death a

sacrificial or propitiatory virtue. To get rid of the attribution of

this view to the author of the Fourth Gospel, Dr. Martineau has to

assume, in face of all probability and evidence, that the First Epistle

of John is not by the same author as the Gospel. [699]

More important is the question which the newer forms of controversy

press upon us--Whether Christ's doctrine on this subject is the same as

that of His apostles? We have a theology of propitiation in the

Epistles--that is admitted; but have we anything of the same kind in

Christ's own words? Was not the gospel preached in Galilee a much

simpler thing than the theological gospel preached by Paul, or

contained in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and is it not free from every

trace of this cumbrous machinery of Atonement, or of pardon on the

ground of the suffering and death of another? Where, it is asked, is

there any vestige of this doctrine in the Sermon on the Mount, or in

the parable of the Prodigal Son? Is this doctrine not an aftergrowth,

the result of the running of the Divine thoughts of the Master, and of

the impression produced by His life and death, into the moulds of

Jewish sacrificial conceptions which had no real affinity with them,

and have indeed served to overlay and obscure them to the apprehension

of all subsequent generations?

If the case were as this objection represents it, I grant that it would

have very serious consequences for our faith. If the apostles of

Christ--the very persons chosen by Him to communicate His doctrine to

the world, and to whom He promised the illumination, of His Spirit for

this very end--could so seriously misunderstand and pervert His

doctrine on this essential point, I do not know what credit we should

be able to attach to them on any point on which they profess to

represent the mind of Christ. Dr. Dale has argued this point so

strongly in his book on the Atonement, [700] that I do not need to do

more than refer to it. It is not for us, it is for the objector to

explain how the guides and leaders of the apostolic Church should come

with this singular unanimity to shift the centre of gravity in Christ's

gospel from where He Himself had placed it, and so to mislead the world

as to the essentials of their Master's teaching. But the question

remains--Have they done so? And this is certainly not proved from the

circumstance that, in Christ's own teaching, the doctrine of Atonement

is not brought forward with the same explicitness as it is in the

apostolic writings. That Christ took up a central position in relation

to the truths which He proclaimed, that he invited men to faith in

Himself as the condition of their participation in the blessings of the

kingdom, that He promised the fullest satisfaction in the approaching

kingdom to the hunger and thirst of the spiritually needy, that He

declared that it was by their relation to Him that men would be

ultimately judged,--this lies upon the surface of the Gospels. But that

He should have preached to the Galilean multitudes truths which, on any

hypothesis, could only be intelligible after His death and resurrection

had taken place,--that He should have done this before He had even

publicly proclaimed Himself to be the Messiah,--this is to ask what in

reason we are not entitled to expect. Before there could be any

preaching of an Atonement, there must be an Atonement to preach. I

grant, however, that if the apostolic gospel really represents the

truth about Christ's work, the facts of His early manifestation ought

to bear this out. They must be such, at least, that the apostolic

gospel is felt to be the natural key to them. In reality they are much

more; for, taken in their entirety, they point unmistakably to just

such a view as the apostolic doctrine gives, and explain to us, what

else would be a complete enigma, how such a doctrine could arise.

It is significant that the most unbiased modern inquiry into Christ's

teaching recognises that He attributed a redemptive virtue to His

death, and connected it directly with the forgiveness of sins. [701]

Ritschl also acknowledges that Christ first, and after Him the oldest

witnesses, connect Redemption or forgiveness, not with His prophetic

office, but much more with the fact of His death. [702] Taking the

testimony of the Gospels as a whole, I think it is exceedingly strong.

It is remarkable that in the Gospel of John, the most spiritual of the

four, we have both the earliest and the clearest statements of the fact

that Christ's death stood in direct relation to the salvation of the

world. I refer to such passages as the Baptist's utterance, "Behold the

Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"; [703] Christ's

words to Nicodemus, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,

even so must the Son of Man be lifted up," [704] etc.; and the sayings

in chap. vi. about giving His flesh for the life of the world. [705] In

the Synoptic Gospels, while in one saying at least of the earlier

ministry there is a premonition of the cross, [706] it was not till

after Peter's great confession that Jesus began to speak explicitly to

the disciples of His approaching sufferings and death. [707] Then we

have many utterances declaring the necessity of His death, and such a

saying throwing light upon its character as, "For verily the Son of Man

came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a

ransom for many." [708] On the Mount of Transfiguration it was the

decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem which was the subject

of discourse. [709] But the clearest expression of all prior to His

death is His solemn utterance at the institution of the Supper, when,

taking the sacramental bread and wine, He said, "This is My body; this

is My blood of the Covenant, which is shed for many, unto remission of

sins." [710] To this must be added the instruction which the disciples

are recorded to have received after the resurrection. On one remarkable

occasion we read that Christ said to them "O foolish men, and slow of

heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Behoved it not

the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into His glory? And

beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, He interpreted to them

in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself." [711] And at a

later meeting with the eleven, "These are My words which I spake unto

you, while I was yet with you, how that all things must needs be

fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and

the psalms concerning Me. Then opened He their mind, that they might

understand the scriptures; and He said unto them, Thus it is written,

that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead on the

third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached

in His name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem." [712]

These passages are invaluable as giving us a clue to the clearness and

decision of the subsequent apostolic doctrine. What these lengthened

interpretations of Jesus included we cannot of course tell, but they

must have embraced much light on the significance of His death; and for

the nature of that light we are entitled to look to the Spirit-guided

utterances of the apostles who received it.

The apostolic Church, therefore, was not left without guidance in its

construction of the doctrine of Redemption, any more than in its

construction of the doctrine of Christ's Person. It had various groups

of facts to lead it to a conclusion.

1. It had the objective facts themselves of Christ's death,

resurrection, and subsequent exaltation to heaven. Holding fast as it

did to the Messiahship and Divine Sonship of Jesus, it could not but

find the death of Christ a dark and perplexing problem, till it grasped

the solution in the thought of a Divine necessity for that death for

the accomplishment of the Messianic salvation. With this had to be

taken the fact of Christ's own command, that repentance and remission

of sins should be preached in His name to all nations. Behind this

again were all the facts of. His earthly life, with its revelations of

Messianic power and grace, and its not less wonderful self-abasement

and sorrow.

2. There were the sayings of Christ, above referred to, which threw

light upon the meaning and necessity of His sufferings and death.

These, in the new illumination of the Spirit, would be earnestly

pondered, and are sufficient to explain all the forms in which Christ's

death came to be regarded by them.

3. There was an earlier Revelation with which the new economy stood in

the closest relations, and to which Christ Himself had directed His

disciples for instruction regarding Himself. In many ways also this old

covenant aided them to a fuller comprehension of the meaning of the

sufferings and death of Christ.

(1) There were the prophecies of the Old Testament,--foremost among

them that wonderful prophecy of the Servant of Jehovah in Isaiah liii.,

to whose undeserved sufferings, lovingly and submissively borne, an

expiatory virtue is expressly ascribed. "There is no exegete," says

Professor G. A. Smith, "but agrees to this: . . . all agree to the fact

that by Himself, or by God, the Servant's life is offered an expiation

for sin--a satisfaction to the law of God." [713]

(2) There was the work of the law in men's hearts, begetting in them

the sense of sin, and, in virtue of its propaedeutic character,

creating the deep feeling of the need of Redemption. It is with this

consciousness of the want of righteousness wrought by the law, and the

consequent feeling of the need of Redemption, that Paul's doctrine

specially connects itself.

(3) There was the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. This was the

remaining key in the hands of the early Church to unlock the

significance of Christ's death. If the law created the sense of sin, it

was the sacrificial system which created the idea of Atonement. This,

in turn, is the thought to which the Epistle to the Hebrews specially

attaches itself. When, therefore, exception is taken to the apostles

casting their ideas into the moulds of Jewish sacrificial conceptions,

we have rather to ask whether the economy of sacrifice was not Divinely

prepared for this very end, that it might foreshadow the one and true

Sacrifice by which the sin of the world is taken away, and whether this

is not in accordance with all the data at our disposal.

II. Assuming, however, that all this is granted,--that it is conceded

that the apostles teach Redemption through the death of Christ, and

that there is no, discrepancy in this respect between their teaching

and that of Christ Himself,--we are still far from a solution of the

many questions which may be raised in regard to this great cardinal

doctrine. Indeed, our real task is only commencing. Those who think

that, on the basis of Scripture passages, a ready-made theory of

Atonement lies to our hand, have only to consider the show and gradual

process by which the doctrine of the Church has been built up to its

present form, to become convinced of the contrary. Christ's death is a

sacrifice, but in what sense is it a sacrifice? It is a propitiation

for our sins; but what are the elements in it which give it value as a

propitiation? It is connected with the remission of sins; but what is

the nature of this connection? These are questions as keenly discussed

to-day as ever, and we cannot avoid considering them in connection with

the deep and difficult problems which they raise.

Now I for one do not think it is the duty of the Church to rest

content--as some express it--with the fact of the Atonement, without

further inquiring as deeply as we can into its nature. I cannot believe

that any doctrine of Scripture--least of all the doctrine of Atonement,

which is represented in Scripture as the Revelation of the innermost

heart of God to man, the central and supreme manifestation of His love

to the world--was ever meant to lie like a dead-weight on our

understanding, incapable of being in any degree assimilated by our

thought. Certain it is that any doctrine which is treated in this way

will not long retain its hold on men's convictions, but will sooner or

later be swept out of the way as a piece of useless theological lumber.

The Atonement, as Dr. John M'Leod Campbell was fond of putting it, must

be capable of being seen in its own light. I grant, indeed, that the

fact of the Atonement is greater than all our apprehensions of it. We

are here in the very Holy of holies of the Christian faith, and our

treatment of the subject cannot be too reverential. The one thing a

priori certain about the Atonement is, that it has heights and depths,

lengths and breadths, greater than any line of ours can fathom or span.

It is this which should make us patient of what are called theories of

the Atonement. I do not know any one of these theories of which it can

justly be said that it is unmixed error,--which has not rather in the

heart of it a portion of the truth,--which does not apprehend some side

or aspect of the Atonement which other theories neglect, or have thrust

into the background. Instead, therefore, of being too keen to scent

error in these theories, our wiser plan will be to be ever on the

outlook for an enlargement of our knowledge of the truth through them.

If I might indicate in a word what I take to be the tendency of the

modern treatment of the Atonement, I would say that it consists in the

endeavour to give a spiritual interpretation to the great fact which

lies at the heart of our Redemption; not necessarily to deny its

judicial aspect,--for that, I take it, will be found impossible,--but

to remove from it the hard, legal aspect it is apt to assume when

treated as a purely external fact, without regard to its inner

spiritual content; and, further, to bring it into harmony with the

spiritual laws and analogies which obtain in other spheres. There is

the attempt (1) to find spiritual laws which will make the Atonement

itself intelligible; and (2) to find spiritual laws which connect the

Atonement with the new life which springs from it. I may add that this

is a department of the truth in which I think that the theology of our

own country has rendered better service to the Christian view than the

theology of the Continent.

In accordance with my plan, I am led to study this subject of Atonement

through Christ especially from the point of view of the Incarnation.

There is an advantage in this method, for as, on the one hand, we see

how the Atonement rises naturally out of the Incarnation, so that the

Son of God could not appear in our nature without undertaking such a

work as this term denotes; so, on the other, we see that the

Incarnation is itself a pledge and anticipation of reconciliation. It

is evident that such an event could never have taken place had there

been no purpose or possibility of salvation; had humanity been a

hopelessly ruined and rejected race. In principle, therefore, the

Incarnation is the declaration of a purpose to save the world. It is

more: it is itself a certain stage in that reconciliation, and the

point of departure for every other. In the Incarnation, God and, man

are already in a sense one, In Christ a pure point of union is

established with our fallen and sin-laden humanity, and this carries

with it the assurance that everything else that is necessary for the

complete recovery of the world to God will not be lacking. Theories,

therefore, have never been wanting in the Church which, in one form or

another, lay the stress in Redemption on the simple fact of the

Incarnation. As Dr. Hodge has expressed it, "The Incarnation itself,

the union of the Divine and human natures, was the great saving act.

Christ redeems us by what He is, not by what He does." [714] Germs of

such theories appear in some of the early Church fathers, e.g. in

Irenaeus. [715] They reappeared in the Middle Ages, and at the

Reformation. [716] They have a modern analogue in the theories of the

Hegelian school, which in the realised unity of God and humanity in

Christ see the prototype of that unity of God and man which is to be

accomplished in the race in general. The thought of the identity of

Incarnation and Redemption colours modern theology in many other ways.

[717] These theories are obviously defective, if meant to exhaust the

whole Scripture doctrine on the subject; but they have their point of

truth in this, that the perfect union of the Word with humanity is

already a reconciliation of the race with God in principle, and is,

besides, the medium by which a new Divine life is introduced into

humanity--a view with which the theology of John specially connects

itself.

In further considering the theories on this subject, it will be

convenient to observe that all theories of Redemption within Christian

limits agree in taking for granted three things as included under this

term--

1. There is the removal of guilt, or of the consciousness of guilt,

which carries with it the sense of the Divine forgiveness.

2. There is the breaking down of the actual enmity of the heart and

will to God, and the turning of the sinner from dead works to serve the

hiving and true God.

3. There is the taking up of the believer into the positive fellowship

of eternal life with Christ, and into the consciousness of a Divine

Sonship.

These are the immediate effects, from which others follow in a changed

relation to the world, gradual progress in holiness, and deliverance at

death and in eternity from all natural and spiritual evils.

Accordingly now as theories relate themselves predominantly to one or

other of these points of view, they present a different aspect.

1. Theories which attach themselves by preference to the last point of

view--that of fellowship--are apt to regard Christ chiefly as the type

of the normal relation of God to humanity, and to subordinate the other

aspects of His life and work to this.

2. Theories which attach themselves to the second point of view--the

breaking down of the sinner's enmity--regard Christ's work as a great

moral dynamic--"the power of God unto salvation," [718] the effect of

which is to break down the natural distrust of the heart towards God,

and to melt the sinner into penitence,--"to bring men," as Bushnell

expresses it, "out & their sins, and so out of their penalties." [719]

3. Theories which attach themselves to the first point of view--the

removal of guilt--lay special stress on the relation of Christ's work

to the Divine righteousness, and view it specially as an expiation.

A perfect theory, if we could obtain it, would be one which did justice

to all these standpoints, and presented them in their scriptural

relations to each other and to the Person and work, of the Redeemer.

Without adhering rigidly to the scheme here indicated, which would be

indeed impossible, seeing that the different theories cross each other

at innumerable points, I shall now glance at the chief standpoints

represented in these theories, and try to show that they gradually lead

us up to a view which embraces them all; and is in harmony with the

full Scripture testimony.

1. We have a class of theories which start from the idea of fellowship,

based on the unique relation which Christ sustains to the race as

perfect, archetypal Man--a relation expressed in the title--"Son of

Man." The point on which stress is laid here is the solidarity between

Christ and the race which He came to save, a true thought in itself,

and one which takes the place in modern theology of the older way of

looking at Christ's relation to the race as purely federal or official.

The typical example of this class of theories is Schleiermacher's. With

the idea of fellowship Schleiermacher combines that of representation.

The essence of Redemption, in his view, consists in deliverance from

the miserable contradiction of flesh and spirit, through being taken up

into the fellowship of Christ's life of holiness and blessedness. [720]

As standing in this fellowship with Christ, believers are the objects

of the love of God, who looks upon them in Him. "Christ," he says,

"purely represents us before God in virtue of His own perfect

fulfilment of the Divine will, to which, through His life in us, the

impulse is active in us also, so that in this connection with Him we

also are objects of the Divine good pleasure." [721] In thus speaking

of Christ in His sinless perfection as representing believers before

God, it might appear as if Schleiermacher held a doctrine of

imputation,--indeed, he says this is the true meaning of that much

misunderstood phrase, the imputation of the righteousness of Christ.

[722] When, however, we probe the matter a little further, his meaning

is found to be nothing more than this--that God already sees in the

initial stage of the believer's holiness the germ of his subsequent

full perfection,--of that perfection of which Christ is the pattern or

type,--and views him in the light of that ideal. [723] This thought of

a justification through germinal holiness is a favourite one with

writers of a mystical and speculative tendency; but it manifestly

shifts the ground of acceptance from Christ for us to Christ in us, and

treats objective reconciliation as unnecessary. [724] In

Schleiermacher's theory, accordingly, as in those of a kindred type,

Christ's sufferings and death have only a very subordinate place. These

sufferings arose from His being in a world where evils are a necessary

result of sin, and from His fellow-feeling for us in our sins.

They may therefore be called substitutionary, as endured by a sinless

Being for the sake of others, but they are in no sense satisfactory or

expiatory. They are connected with our Redemption as teaching us to

feel that outward evils are not necessarily penal, but chiefly through

the Revelation they give us of Christ's constancy and love, and through

the moral impression they are fitted to make upon us. [725]

Schleiermacher's theory in the end thus passes over into one of moral

influence; indeed, it is through the powerful working of Christ's

Personality upon us that we are moved to enter into fellowship with Him

at all. He is our Redeemer through the exceptional strength of His

God-consciousness, by which our own is invigorated to overcome sin. If,

then, we ask how, on this theory, the sense of guilt is removed, the

answer we get is very curious. In fellowship with Christ,

Schleiermacher says, the believer is a new man, and in the new man sin

is no longer active. Sin in the believer is but the after-working and

back-working of the old man, and as such the believer does not identify

himself with it. [726] He is relieved, therefore, from the

consciousness of guilt. Something like this is Kant's theory, [727] and

in our own days it is the theory of a section of the Plymouth

Brethren--so do extremes meek But it is evident that, on this

hypothesis, the doctrine of forgiveness is retained only in name. The

old man is not forgiven, and the new man does not need forgiveness.

Between the two forgiveness falls to the ground. [728]

2. Schleiermacher, in his treatment of Christ's sufferings, lays

special stress on His sympathy or fellow-feeling with us, as a cause of

these sufferings. This gives us a point of transition to a second class

of theories, the keynote of which may be said to be sympathy. The

starting-point here is not the thought of Christ's archetypal

perfection, but the fitness of Christianity in a dynamical relation to

break down the enmity of the sinner's heart to God. The best-known type

of this class of theory is Dr. Bushnell's, in his original and freshest

presentation of it in his work on Vicarious Sacrifice. The strong and

true point in Dr. Bushnell's theory is in its insistence on the

vicarious element involved in the very nature of sympathetic love. We

speak of Christ's substitutionary work, [729] --of His standing,

suffering, dying for sinners,--but how often do we apprehend this in a

purely external and official way! It is the merit of Dr. Bushnell's

book that, with a wealth of illustration drawn from every sphere of

life in which a like law of substitution prevails, he makes us feel

that it is something real and vital. When we speak of sympathy, we are

already in a region in which substitutionary forces are at work. "None

of us liveth to himself, and none dieth to himself." [730] We benefit

and suffer involuntarily through each other, but we have it also in our

power to enter voluntarily into the partnership of the world's joys and

sorrows, and by bearing the burdens of others to help to relieve them

of their load. From His unique relation to our race, this law applied

in the highest degree to Christ. In the whole domain of love, Divine

and human, we find substitutionary forces acting; but in Christ's life

we find them acting at a maximum. Christ not only wears our nature, but

in the exercise of a perfect sympathy He truly identifies Himself with

us in our lot, bears our sins and sorrows on His soul, and represents

us to the Father, not as an external legal surety, but with a throbbing

heart of love. This of itself may not be Atonement--we shall see

immediately it is not--but whatever else there is in Atonement,

Scripture warrants us in saying that at least there is this. "Himself

took our infirmities, and bare our diseases," says Matthew, [731] in a

passage which Dr. Bushnell adopts as the key to his theory. "It behoved

Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren,. that He might be

a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to

make propitiation for the sins of the people." [732]

This, then, is the key which Dr. Bushnell gives us to the vicarious

sufferings of Christ--that of sympathetic love; and so far as the book

in question goes, it is the whole key. If I were disposed to criticise

the theory minutely, I might remark that, on Dr. Bushnell's own

principles, it is too narrow to cover all the facts. To get an adequate

explanation of Christ's undeserved sufferings, alike as regards their

nature, their motive, and their end, we need a wider view of them than

is covered by this single word--sympathy. Sympathy, in a pure and holy

nature like Christ's, was necessarily one cause of His sufferings, but

it was not the only cause. He suffered from natural causes--as hunger

and thirst, from the unbelief of the world, from the persecutions and

malice of His enemies, from temptations of the devil, from the

faithlessness and desertion of disciples, etc. Deeper and more

mysterious causes of suffering are not obscurely intimated in the

Gospel narratives. Sympathy was only indirectly concerned with all

these. If it be said that it was the sympathetic entrance into and

endurance of these sufferings which gave them their vicarious

character, I would remark that we need here a wider word than sympathy.

Christ voluntarily took upon Him abasement, suffering, and death for

the salvation of men; but He did so, not simply from sympathy; but--as

Dr. Bushnell also often recognises, though still generally emphasising

the sympathetic aspect--in a spirit of large, self-sacrificing love.

Love includes sympathy, but is not necessarily exhausted by it. We take

also too narrow a view when we seek in the moral influence of sympathy

or love the sole key to the peculiar fruitfulness of self-sacrifice.

That self-sacrifice acts as a potent inspiration to like deeds in

others--that it has power to soften and subdue the obdurate heart--is a

great truth. But it should not be overlooked that a main part of the

secret of the fruitfulness of self-sacrifice lies in the way in which

one life is linked with another, and society is bound together as a

whole; so that, through the labours and sacrifices of one, or of a

handful, martyrs or patriots, benefits accrue to multitudes who never

come within the range of its moral influence. [733]

This leads directly to another remark--namely, that Dr. Bushnell does

not give any clear answer to the question, What was the distinctive

life-task, or vocation, in the fulfilment of which these great and

heavy sorrows came upon Christ? This is a point of very great

importance. Sympathy, or disinterested love, will lead one person to

undertake labours and undergo sacrifices for another, but the sacrifice

is undergone, not for the mere sake of displaying sympathy, but always

in the prosecution of some independent end. The mother wears out her

strength for her sick child, but it is in the hope that by her nursing

she will aid in its recovery. The philanthropist will devote life and

fortune for the cause in which he is interested, but it is in carrying

out plans and projects which he thinks will contribute to the success

of his object. If we ask, then, What was the work which Christ came

into the world to do, in the accomplishment of which He endured such

sufferings? it will not do to reply simply, To manifest sympathy, for

the sake of the moral impression to be produced by it. We must still

ask, What was the work which made submission to this suffering

necessary? To this question Dr. Bushnell gives us no very definite

answer, none which carries us beyond Christ's immediate ministries to

soul and body, or His witness-bearing in word or deed for the Father.

But even this must have for its content some special declaration of

God's character and will, if it is not simply to point us back to the

exhibition of love in the vicarious suffering. It is on the latter

really that Dr. Bushnell lays all the stress; the suffering, in his

view, is not simply a necessary incident in the prosecution of some

independent task of love, but is the main, substantial reason of

Christ's appearance in the world. [734] If, on the other hand, we lay

the chief weight on the witness of Christ, and view His sufferings in

subordination to this as furnishing occasions for the manifestation of

His patience, steadfastness, and love to men--then is His work purely

declarative, His sufferings add nothing to its content, and owe their

value for redemptive purposes solely to their power of moral

enforcement.

It is obvious that, if Dr. Bushnell's theory be true, vicarious

suffering which has redemptive efficacy, is not confined to Christ, but

runs through the whole spiritual universe. This, indeed, is what he

asserts. [735] It points, however, to a clear defect in his view,

inasmuch as it removes the work of Christ from that unique and

exceptional position which the Scriptures constantly ascribe to it.

Even were this difficulty surmounted, there remains the crowning

objection, which is the really fatal one--namely, that in resolving the

redeeming efficacy of the sufferings of Christ solely into their moral

influence, the theory runs directly counter to the explicit and uniform

declarations of the New Testament, which put in the foreground their

expiatory and propitiatory character. It is the less necessary to ask

whether Dr. Bushnell's theory in this respect is adequate, since he

himself at a subsequent period was compelled to modify it in favour of

the recognition of an objective element in the Atonement. In his later

work on Forgiveness and Law, he tells us that he had formerly conceived

the whole import and effect of Christ's work to lie in its reconciling

power on others; now he has been brought to see that it has a

propitiatory effect on God also. The peculiar view which underlies this

second work--namely, that God must overcome His repugnance to the

sinner by making cost or sacrifice for him, need not detain us here,

especially as I do not know of anyone who has ever adopted it. [736]

But I cannot refrain from adverting, as most of Dr. Bushnell's critics

have done, to the striking evidence which even the earlier volume

affords of the necessity of recognising an objective propitiation.

There is, perhaps, nothing more curious in literature than the way in

which, in the closing chapter of his Vicarious Sacrifice, after

exhausting all his powers to convince us that the efficacy of Christ's

sufferings lies solely in their moral efficacy, Dr. Bushnell

practically throws the whole theory he has been inculcating to the

winds as inadequate for the moral and spiritual needs of men. "In the

facts of our Lord's passion," he says, "outwardly regarded, there is no

sacrifice, or oblation, or atonement, or propitiation, but simply a

living and dying thus and thus. . . . If, then, the question arises,

How are we to use such a history so as to be reconciled by it? we

hardly know in what way to begin. How shall we come to God by the help

of this martyrdom? How shall we turn it, or turn ourselves under it, so

as to be justified and set in peace with God? Plainly there is a want

here, and this want is met by giving a thought-form to the facts which

is not in the facts themselves. They are put directly into the moulds

of the altar, and we are called to accept the crucified God-Man as our

sacrifice, an offering or oblation for us, our propitiation, so as to

be sprinkled from our evil conscience--washed, purged, and cleansed

from our sin. . . . So much is there in this, that without these forms

of the altar we should be utterly at a loss in making any use of the

Christian facts that would set us in a condition of practical

reconciliation with God. Christ is good, beautiful, wonderful; His

disinterested hove is a picture by itself; His forgiving patience melts

into my feeling; His passion rends my heart. But what is He for? And

how shall He be made to me the salvation that I want? One word--He is

my sacrifice--opens all to me; and beholding Him, with all my sin upon

Him, I count Him my offering; I come unto God by Him, and enter into

the holiest by His blood." [737] Not a word needs to be added to this

self-drawn picture by Dr. Bushnell of the inadequacy of a mere moral

influence theory of the Atonement. If the soul, in order to find peace

with God, must explicitly renounce that theory, how can it be put

forward as in any sense a theory of reconciliation? It fails to satisfy

the wants of the awakened conscience; and it fails to satisfy

Scripture, which, as we have seen, demands an objective connection

between Christ's work and our forgiveness.

3. Before dealing with theories which recognise an objective element in

the Atonement, it may be useful to glance at a theory which really

belongs to the subjective class, though its author has done his best to

give it an objective form--I mean the theory of Ritschl As Bushnell's

theory turns on . the idea of sympathy, so that of Ritschl may be said

to turn on the idea of Vocation. Ritschl's strong point lies precisely

in the answer which he gives to the question which Bushnell failed to

meet--namely, What was the work which Christ came into the world to do,

which entailed on Him suffering and rejection? What was His vocation,

His life-work, His peculiar moral task? It is this thought of Christ's

fulfilment of His vocation (Beruf) which is the central thing in

Ritschl. He speaks of the solidaric unity of Christ with God. [738] By

this he means that Christ adopted God's end in the creation and

government of the world (Weltzweck) as His own end, and lived and died

to fulfil it. This end is summed up in the establishing of the kingdom

of God--that is, of a religious and moral community, in which the

members are bound together by hove to God and love to man, and act

solely from the motive of hove; and in which they attain the end aimed

at in all religions, namely, moral supremacy over the world, which is

Ritschl's synonym for eternal life. [739] This, it will be allowed, is

a somewhat bald scheme, and it does not become richer as we proceed. In

what sense, we ask, is Christ a Redeemer? The essential part of the

answer seems to be that through His Revelation of God's grace and

truth, through His preaching of the kingdom of God, and through His

personal devotion to God's world-aim, He influences and enables men to

turn from their sins, and leads them to appropriate God's end as their

own. The uniqueness of Christ's Person is supposed to be secured by the

fact that in Him first the final end of the kingdom of God is realised

in a personal life, so that everyone who would undertake the same

life-task must do it in dependence on Him. [740] Ritschl, therefore, is

able, like Schleiermacher, to speak of Christ as the "Urbild" of

humanity in its relation to the kingdom of God, and as such the

original object of the love of God, in whom God beholds and loves those

who are embraced in His fellowship. [741] But fellowship here means

simply unity of moral aim. What significance, on this theory, have the

sufferings of Christ? Only this significance, that they are the highest

proof of Christ's fidelity in His vocation--the guarantee of the

reality of that new relation to God which is exhibited in His Person.

[742] Here, as in Schleiermacher, we are plainly back to the theory of

a mere moral influence. Ritschl, like Dr. Bushnell, would cast his idea

of Christ's death in the moulds of the altar; but this must be

connected with his theory of the Old Testament sacrifices, which, he

holds, had no reference to Atonement for sin, but only served to dispel

the creature's distrust in drawing near to a great and awful God.

Christ, in like manner, by His death, brings us near to God by

dispelling distrust of God, and inspiring confidence in His grace.

[743] What, finally, on this theory, becomes of the idea of guilt?

Strictly speaking, guilt is not removed, but God admits us to

fellowship with Himself, and to co-operation with Him in work for His

kingdom, without our guilt, or feeling of guilt, forming any hindrance

thereto. [744] This is what Ritschl understands by justification. It is

the easier for him to take this view, that, as we saw before, guilt

with him has little objective significance, and exists more for our own

feeling than for God. [745] In proportion as this view is adopted,

however, the experience of forgiveness becomes subjective also, and

there remains nothing objective but the actual change of mind and

feeling. [746] It is plain that we have here quite changed the centre

of gravity in the Christian view of Redemption; and the only remedy is

to restore the idea of guilt to its scriptural importance, which,

again, necessitates a changed idea of its treatment. [747]

The theories we are now to consider differ from those we have just had

under review, in that they recognise an objective element in the

Atonement, and in this way come nearer to the manifest teaching of

Scripture. They recognise that Christ's work not only affects us

subjectively in the way of moral influence, but is an objective work,

on the ground of which God forgives sin, and receives us into

fellowship with Himself. And the question they raise is, What is the

nature of this objective element?

4. The first answer which is given to this question is by that group of

theories which find the essential feature in the Atonement in the

surrender of the holy will of Christ to God. The idea of Atonement

here, then, is the self-surrender of the human will to the Divine. This

is Maurice's theory, but essentially also that of Rothe, Pressense,

Bahr, Oehler, and many others. [748] Here, as in previous theories,

Christ is regarded as the Head of the race, and as representing in

Himself all humanity. In this humanity He offers up to God the perfect

sacrifice of a will entirely surrendered to His service. As Maurice

puts it, "Supposing the Father's will to be a will to all good;

supposing the Son of God, being one with Him and Lord of man, to obey

and fulfil in our flesh that will by entering into the lowest condition

into which men had fallen through their sin; supposing this Man to be,

for this reason, an object of continual complacency to His Father, and

that complacency to be fully drawn out by the death of the cross;

supposing His death to be a sacrifice, the only complete sacrifice ever

offered, the entire surrender of the whole spirit and body to God,--is

not this, in the highest sense, the Atonement? Is not the true, sinless

root of humanity revealed; is not God in Him reconciled to man? Is not

the cross the meeting-point between man and man, between man and God?"

[749] That which, on this view, gives the sacrifice of Christ its

value, is not the suffering, but the perfect will of obedience

expressed in the suffering. When, according to the Epistle to the

Hebrews, sacrifices and offerings, and whole burnt-offerings and

sacrifices for sin, God would not, neither had pleasure therein, "then

hath He said, Lo, I am come to do Thy will. He taketh away the first,

that He may establish the second. By which will we have been

sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for

all." [750] This surrender of the will is the only kind of sacrifice

God delights in, and it is the perfect Atonement. [751] The sin of

humanity is its negation of the will of God, and the cross takes back

that negation on behalf of humanity. This is brought into harmony with

the Old Testament sacrifices by the theory that in these sacrifices it

is not the death of the victim that is the essential thing, but the

presentation of the blood. The death is only the means of obtaining the

blood, which, as the vehicle of the pure life, the offerer presents to

God as a covering for his own sin. [752]

Again, there can be no doubt of the deep spiritual truth involved in

this theory of the sacrifice which Christ offered for our Redemption.

We may again say that, whatever else there is in the Atonement, there

is this in it. Viewing Christ's death as a sacrifice, we cannot

question that the nerve and core of the sacrifice was the holy will, in

which, through the Eternal Spirit, He offered Himself without spot or

blemish to God. [753] It was not the mere fact of the sufferings, but

that which was the soul of the sufferings,--the holy, loving will in

which they were borne, and the self-surrender to the will of the Father

in them,--which gave them their spiritual value. [754] The only

question is, Is this the whole of the explanation? Does this exhaust

the meaning of Christ's sacrifice? Does this fill up the whole of the

scriptural testimony regarding it? And, however fascinated one may be

for a time with this theory, it seems impossible permanently to rest in

it as adequate. I do not go back on the inadequacy of a theory which

lays the whole stress of Atonement on self-sacrifice, without saying

sacrifice for what, or in what, but come at once to the point in which

it seems peculiarly to fail. That point is, that the Scriptures appear

to assert a direct relation of the sacrifice of Christ to the sin and

guilt of men,--a direct expiatory power to remove that guilt,--a

relation, not only to God's commanding will, but to His condemning

will. Not only the Old and New Testament doctrine of the righteousness

and holiness of God, and of His judicial attitude towards sin,--not

only the extreme gravity of the scriptural doctrine of guilt, but the

deepest feeling of the awakened conscience itself, demands that guilt

shall not be simply overlooked, but that it shall be dealt with also in

the transacting of Christ with God for man, and that the forgiveness

which is sealed in His death. shall have placed on it the holy sanction

of justice as well as that of love. I go on, therefore--

5. To look at theories which not only affirm the offering up of a holy

will of obedience in Christ's sacrifice, but recognise its relation to

guilt. Such theories include, after all, among their representatives,

the great bulk of the ablest and most scriptural theologians--as

Dorner, Luthardt, Martensen, Oosterzee, Godet, etc.; and an undesigned

testimony is borne to their substantial truth by the approximations

often made to them in theories of a different tendency, and by the

difficulty felt in avoiding language which would imply the expiatory

view, as well as by the studied accommodation of all parties, as far as

possible, to the recognised language of the Church. Yet the dislike of

many, and these often men of the most spiritual mind, to the forms of

the imputation theology, their inability to rest in anything which

seems to them to wear an air of legal fiction, suggests to us the

necessity of seeking to approach even this side of the subject from

within, and of trying to connect it with spiritual laws which will

commend it to the conscience and the heart.

I may begin here with a theory which, though it opposes itself directly

to the idea of penal sufferings, yet deals with this question of the

relation of Atonement to guilt, and has, I think, valuable light to

throw upon the subject,--more, perhaps, than is sometimes admitted,--I

refer to the theory of Dr. John M'Leod Campbell. Dr. Campbell starts

with the Incarnation, and his idea is to see the Atonement developing

itself naturally and necessarily out of Christ's relation to men as the

Incarnate Son--which is, I think, a sound point of view. Next, he

distinguishes in Christ's work two sides--(l) a dealing with men on the

part of God, and (2) a dealing with God on the part of men; which,

again, I think, is a true distinction. The peculiarity of his theory,

and here undoubtedly it becomes artificial and indefensible, lies in

the proposal to substitute a vicarious, repentance for sins, and

confession of sins, for the vicarious endurance of the penalties of

transgression. [755] There is here, first, a confusion between

repentance for sins and confession of them. The idea that Christ could

in any sense repent of the sins of the humanity which He represented,

could bring to God "a perfect repentance" for them, is one totally

inadmissible, even though his premiss were granted, which it cannot be,

that a perfect repentance would of itself constitute Atonement. That

Christ should confess our sins in His high-priestly intercession for us

with God is, on the other hand, not inadmissible, but is rightly

classed as a part of His substitutionary activity for us. It has its

analogies in the intercessory confessions of Moses, Daniel, and

Nehemiah, and may very well be regarded by us as an element in the

Atonement.

When we get behind Dr. Campbell's words, and look at the kernel of his

theory, and even at what he means to convey by these unfortunate

expressions about a perfect repentance, we obtain light on the

Atonement which is, I think, valuable. The point of this theory, as I

understand it--that on which Dr. Campbell himself constantly insists

through all his volume--is, that with the most perfect apprehension of

what the sin of man was, on the one hand, and of what the mind of God

towards sin, and sin's due at the hands of God, were, on the other,

there went up from the depths of Christ's sinless humanity a perfect

"Amen" to the righteous judgment of God against sin. There must,

therefore, be recognised, even on Dr. M'Leod Campbell's theory, a

certain dealing of Christ with God's wrath--with His judicial

condemnation upon sin. "Christ, in dealing with God on behalf of men,"

he says, "must be conceived of as dealing with the righteous wrath of

God against sin, and as according to it that which was due." [756] "Let

us consider," he says again, "this Amen' from the depths of the

humanity of Christ to the Divine condemnation of sin. What is it in

relation to God's wrath against sin? What place has it in Christ's

dealing with that wrath? I answer, He who so responds to the Divine

wrath against sin, saying, Thou art righteous, O Lord, who judgest so,'

is necessarily receiving the full apprehension and realisation of that

wrath, as well as of that sin against which it comes forth, into His

soul and spirit, into the bosom of the Divine humanity, and so

receiving it, He responds to it with a perfect response--a response

from the depths of that Divine humanity, and in that perfect response

He absorbs it." [757] If, however, this were all that was in Dr.

Campbell's theory, we should still have to say that, valuable as the

suggestion is which it contains, it is only a half-truth. It will be

observed that, so far as these quotations go, it is only a vivid mental

realisation of God's wrath against sin to which we are to conceive

Christ as responding. He has the perfect realisation of what sin is in

man; He has the perfect realisation of God's mind towards sin; but He

is Himself in no sense brought under the experience of that wrath, or

of its penal effects: it may be thought by many He could not be. And

this might seem to detract from the value of that "Amen" from the

depths of Christ's humanity on which all the stress is laid. To take an

analogous case, it is one thing to be patient and resigned under a

vivid mental realisation of possible trials, another thing to be

resigned under actual experience of sorrow. Yet the only resignation

which has worth is that which has been actually tested in the fires of

trial. In order, therefore, that Christ's "Amen" to the judgment of God

against sin might have its fullest content, it would appear to be

necessary that it should be uttered, not under a mere ideal realisation

of what God's wrath against sin is, but under the actual pressure of

the judgment which that wrath inflicts. Is this possible? Strange to

say, with all his protests against Christ being thought of as enduring

penal evils, it is precisely this view to which Dr. Campbell in the end

comes. He is quite awake to the fact of the unique character of

Christ's sufferings; quite aware that they involved elements found in

no ordinary martyr's death; quite conscious that an "Amen" uttered, as

he calls it, "in naked existence," [758] would have little value. It

must be uttered under actual experience of the evils which this

judgment of God lays on humanity, especially under the experience of

death. The closing period of Christ's life, he says, was one of which

the distinctive character was suffering in connection with a permitted

hour and power of darkness; [759] while his remarks on our Lord's

tasting death are so important and apposite that I cannot forbear

quoting one or two of them. "When I think of our Lord as tasting

death," he says, "it seems to me as if He alone ever truly tasted

death. . . Further, as our Lord alone truly tasted death, so to Him

alone had death its perfect meaning as the wages of sin. . . . For

thus, in Christ's honouring of the righteous law of God, the sentence

of the law was included, as well as the mind of God which that sentence

expressed. . . . Had sin existed in men as mere spirits, death could

not have been the wages of sin, and any response to the Divine mind

concerning sin which would have been an Atonement for their sin, could

only have had spiritual elements; but man being by the constitution of

humanity capable of death, and death having come as the wages of sin,

it was not simply sin that had to be dealt with, but an existing law

with its penalty of death, and that death as already incurred. So that

it was not only the Divine mind that had to be responded to, but also

that expression of the Divine mind which was contained in God's making

death the wages of sin." [760] It is evident how nearly in such

passages Dr. Campbell comes to a theory of the Atonement which holds

that Christ, as a member of humanity and the new Head of the race,

really bore in His own Person the penal evils which are the expression

of the wrath of God against the sin of the world. He maintains, in

deed, that for Christ these were not really penal evils; but, in the

light of the explanations just given, the difference seems to resolve

itself mainly into one of nomenclature. Whatever sense we may give to

that expression, "Christ bore the wrath of God for us," it is held by

no one to mean that Christ was personally the object of His Father's

anger. All that is meant is that by Divine ordainment He passed under

the experience of evils which are the expression of God's wrath against

sin, or a judgment laid on humanity on account of that sin. The

peculiarly valuable idea, as I take it, which Dr. Campbell brings to

the elucidation of Christ's sufferings as atoning is--that it was not

simply the patience and resignation with which lie bore them, not

simply the surrender of His will to God in them, but the perfect

acknowledgment, which accompanied His endurance of them, of the

righteousness of God in their ordainment, which made them a

satisfaction for sin. "By that perfect response in Amen to the mind of

God, in relation to sill," as he himself expresses it, "is the wrath of

God rightly met, and that is accorded to Divine justice which is its

due, and could alone satisfy it" [761]

It is, I own, difficult to frame a theory to which no exception can be

taken, which shall show how the sufferings of Christ, which were in

large part sufferings endured for righteousness' sake, had at the same

time an expiatory value; yet it is the clear teaching of Scripture that

they possess this character. As aids to the apprehension of the

subject, the facts remain that these sufferings of the sinless Sell of

God were voluntarily under taken, and (what can be said of no other of

the race) wholly undeserved; that Christ did enter, as far as a sinless

Being could, into the penal evils of our state, and finally submitted

to death--the doom which sin has brought on our humanity; that He did

this with a perfect consciousness and realisation of the relation of

these evils to sill; that lie experienced the full bitterness of these

evils, and. especially in His last hours, w as permitted to endure them

without even the alleviations and spiritual comforts which many of His

own people enjoy; that there were mysterious elements ill His

sufferings, which outward causes do not seem adequate to explain (e.g.

the agony in Gethsemane, the awful darkness of His soul on Calvary).

which appear related to His position as our Sin-hearer;--finally, that

in this mortal sorrow He still retains unbroken His relation to the

Father, overcomes our spiritual enemies, so transacts with God for men,

so offers Himself to God in substitutionary love on our behalf, so

recognises and honours the justice of God in His condemnation of sin,

and in the evils that were befalling Himself in consequence of that

sin, that His death may fitly be regarded as a satisfaction to

righteousness for us--the Redemption of the world, not, indeed, ipso

facto, but for those who through faith appropriate His sacrifice, die

in spirit with Him in His death, and make His righteousness the ground

of their hope.

Is exception taken--as it was by the Socinians--to the idea of the

innocent satisfying for the guilty h Is it asked, How should the

righteous suffer for the guilty? Is it just that they should do so? Or,

how can the sufferings of the righteous atone for the unrighteous? I

would point out ill answer that there are two questions here. The first

relates to a matter of fact--the suffering of the righteous for the

guilty. We know that they do so. It is the commonest fact in our

experience. In the organic relation in which we stand to each other it

could not he otherwise. The penalties of evildoing are probably never

confined to the actual wrong-doer, but overflow upon others, and

sometimes involve them in untold misery. To impeach the justice of this

is to impeach the justice of an organic constitution of the race. Thus

far, then, we can say that Christ is no exception to this universal

law; nay, He is the highest exemplification of it. Christ could not

enter the world without receiving upon Him the brunt of its evils. Just

because He was the infinitely pure and holy One, they fell on Him with

greater severity. A writer like Bushnell here often uses the strongest

language. He speaks of Christ as incarnated into the curse of the

world. "It is," he says, "as if the condemnations of God were upon Him,

as they are on all the solidarities of the race into which He is come."

[762] "It means," he says again, "that He is incarnated into common

condition with us, under what is called the curse. . . . He must become

a habitant with us, a fellow-nature, a brother; and that He could not

be without being entered into what is our principal distinction as

being under the curse. . . . He has it upon Him, consciously, as the

curse or penal shame and disaster of our transgression." [763] The

question is not, therefore, How should Christ, the sinless One, suffer

for the guilty? but, How can sufferings thus endured become expiatory

or atoning? And this I have tried to answer by pointing out the unique

relation which Christ sustains to our race, in virtue of which He could

become its Representative and Sin-bearer; and, secondly, by indicating

how in our humanity He must, as Dr. M'Leod Campbell says, have related

Himself to our sins--not only patiently and lovingly enduring

sufferings, not only yielding up to His Father a will of obedience in

them, but viewing them in the light of their causes, entering fully

into God's judgment on the sin of which they were the consequences, and

rendering to God in our nature a full and perfect and glorifying

response to His justice in them. In this way His sufferings might well

become, like those of the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah liii.,

expiatory.

Gathering together, in closing, the various aspects of Christ's work

which have been brought before us, we see, I think, the truth of a

previous remark that the true or full view of Christ's work in

Redemption is wide enough to include them all--takes up the elements of

truth in every one of them. A complete view of Christ's work will

include the fact that in the Incarnation a new Divine life has entered

humanity; will include the fact that Christ is our perfect

Representative before God as the new Head of the race, and the wearer

of our humanity in its pure and perfect form; will include the fact of

an organic relation of Christ with all the members of the race, in

virtue of which He entered, not merely outwardly, but in the most real

and vital way, into the fellowship of our sin and suffering, and truly

bore us on His heart before God as a merciful and faithful High Priest;

will include the idea of a vocation which Christ had as Founder of the

kingdom of God on earth, though this vocation will embrace, not only

the Revelation of the Father's character and doing His will among men,

but also the making reconciliation for the sins of the people; will

include the fact of a holy and perfect and continuous surrender of

Christ's will to God, as an offering, through the Eternal Spirit, in

humanity, of that which man ought to render, but is unable in his own

strength to give--the presentation to God in humanity, therefore, of a

perfect righteousness, on the ground of which humanity stands in a new

relation to God, and is accepted in the Beloved; will include, finally,

a dealing with God in reference to the guilt of sin, which is not

simply a sympathetic realisation of the burden of that guilt as it

rests on us, nor yet simply a confession of sins in our name, nor yet

simply an acknowledgment in humanity of the righteousness of God in

visiting our sins with wrath and judgment, but is a positive entrance

into the penal events of our condition, and, above all, into death as

the last and most terrible of these evils, in order that in these also

He might become one with us, and under that experience might render to

God what was due to His judicial righteousness,--an Atonement which, as

Dr. M'Leod Campbell says, has in it an "Amen" from the depths of our

humanity towards the righteous judgment of God on our sins. So far from

this latter aspect of Christ's work--the judicial--being to be thrown

into the background, it is, I think, the one which the apostolic

theology specially fastens upon as the ground of the remission of sins,

and the means by which the sinner is brought into a relation of peace

with God--the ground, as Bunyan phrases it, on which God "justly

justifies the sinner."

Christ, as the Son of God, incarnate in our nature, is the only one

qualified to undertake this work; and as Son of God and Son of Man He

did it. He alone could enter, on the one hand, into the meaning of the

sin of the world; on the other, into a realisation of all that was due

to that sin from God, not minimising either the sin or the

righteousness, but doing justice to both, upholding righteousness, yet

opening to the world the gates of a forgiving mercy. In Him we see that

done which we could not do; we see that brought which we could not

bring; we see that reparation made to a broken law which we could not

make; we see, at the same time, a righteousness consummated we long to

make our own, a victory over the world we long to share, a will of love

we long to have reproduced in ourselves, a grandeur of self sacrifice

we long to imitate. And, appropriating that sacrifice, not only in its

atoning merit, but in its inward spirit, we know ourselves redeemed and

reconciled.

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[692] 1 John iii. 5 (R.V.).

[693] Ecce Homo, chap. 17.

[694] "In Buddhism Redemption comes from below; in Christianity it is

from above: in Buddhism it comes from man; in Christianity it comes

from God."--Carpenter, Permanent Elements of Religion, Introduction, p.

34.

[695] To prevent ambiguity, it is desirable that I should refer here

for a moment to the meaning of this word "atonement." It is the

equivalent of the New Testament word katallage, which is always

translated in the Revised Version "reconciliation," and of the German

words "Vers�hnung" and "S�hnung." It is therefore capable of a wider

and of a more special sense. In both cases it refers to the

"reconciliation" or "making-at-one" of mankind and God, and in New

Testament usage implies that this reconciliation is effected through

expiation or propitiation. But in the one case it denotes the actual

state of reconciliation with God into which believers are introduced

through Christ, whose work is then regarded as the means to this end;

whereas in the other it denotes the reconciling act itself--mankind

being viewed as objectively reconciled to God in the work or death of

His Son, which is the same the term ordinarily bears when we speak of

the Atonement. Dr. Hodge would discard this term altogether because of

its ambiguity, and substitute for the latter meaning of it the term

"satisfaction."--Systematic Theology, ii. p. 469. lint "satisfaction"

is too narrow and exclusively forensic a term to express all that is

implied in the reconciling act.

[696] The passages may be seen classified in Dale on The Atonement, or

in Professor Crawford's Doctrine of Holy Scripture respecting the

Atonement.

[697] Cf. Weiss, Biblical Theology of the New Testament, i. p. 422

(Eng. trans.).

[698] Cf. Seat of Authority, pp. 478, 479. Baur's views may be seen in

his Paulus, pp. 537-547; those of Reuss in his Hist. of Christ. Theol.

in the Apost. Age, ii. pp. 68-74 (Eng. trans.); those of Lipsius in his

Dogmatik, p. 498; those of Pfleiderer in his Urchristenthum, pp.

222-242.

[699] Seat of Authority, p. 509.

[700] Lecture IV.

[701] Cf. Baldensperger's Selbstbewusstsein Jesu, 2nd ed. pp. 153-155;

Wendt's Lehre Jesu, ii. pp. 526-530; Schmoller's Die Lehre vom Reiche

Gottes, pp. 144, 145, etc.

[702] Unterricht, p. 36.

[703] John i. 29. Marg. in R.V., "heareth the sin." Cf. Dorner, System

of Doctrine, iii. p. 415.

[704] John iii. 15.

[705] Vers. 51-56.

[706] Matt. ix. 15.

[707] Mark viii. 31, ix. 12, 31, x. 33, 34.

[708] Mark x. 45 (R.V.).

[709] Luke ix. 31.

[710] Matt. xxvi. 26, 28 (R.V.).

[711] Luke xxiv. 25-27 (R.V.).

[712] Luke xxiv. 44-47.

[713] The Book of Isaiah, ii. p. 364.

[714] System. Theology, ii. p. 585.

[715] E.g. "To this end the Word of God was made Man, and He who was

the Son of God became the Son of man, that man, having been taken into

the Word, and receiving the adoption, might become the Son of

God."--Iren. iii. 19. Harnack finds a germ of this doctrine in Justin

Martyr.--Dogmengeschichte, i. p. 459. There are, however, other

elements in the teaching on Redemption of all these Fathers.

[716] E.g. Osiander, Schwenkfeld.

[717] E.g. in the school of Erskine of Linlathen. Cf. Murphy,

Scientific Basis of Faith (a disciple of this school): "I do not speak

of the Incarnation as one act and the Atonement as another--they are

one and the same Divine act, which in itself is called the Incarnation,

and in its results is called the Atonement. The act of the Son of God

in becoming a partaker of our nature is the Incarnation; the result of

this act, in making us partakers of the Divine nature, is the Atonement

or Reconciliation; though these latter words are both of them

inadequate."--P. 384.

[718] Rom. i. 16.

[719] Vicarious Sacrifice, p. 7.

[720] "The Redeemer takes believers up into the fellowship of His

untroubled blessedness, and this is His atoning activity."--Der

christl. Glaube, sec. 101.

[721] Ibid. ii. p. 133.

[722] Ibid. ii. p. 133.

[723] Ibid. ii. pp. 133, 134.

[724] Note A--The Germ Theory of Justification.

[725] Cf. on these views, Der christl. Glaube, ii. pp. 136-147.

[726] Der christl. Glaube, ii. p. 194. What Schleiermacher means by

forgiveness of sins is indicated in the following sentence: "The

beginning here is the vanishing of the old man, consequently also of

the old manner of referring all evil to sin, therefore the vanishing of

the consciousness of desert of punishment, consequently the first thing

in the moment of reconciliation is the forgiveness of sin"--P. 105.

[727] Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloss. Vernunft, Book ii. sec.

3.

[728] Ritschl rightly remarks that what Schleiermacher calls

reconciliation with God is really reconciliation with evil,--"the

reconciliation of man with suffering, with his position in the world,

which as sinner he had traced to his guilt."--Recht. und Ver. i. p. 470

(Eng. trans.).

[729] Cf. Dorner, System of Doctrine, iv. pp. 89-98: "There are

substitutionary forces, and a receptiveness for them in humanity."

[730] Rom. xiv. 8 (R.V.).

[731] Matt. viii. 17.

[732] Heb. ii. 17 (R.V.); cf. v. 12.

[733] This is admirably worked out in the section on the fruitfulness

of sacrifice in Bishop Westcott's The Victory of the Cross, ii. 23-35.

[734] The work of Christ he conceives of "as beginning at the point of

sacrifice, vicarious sacrifice, ending at the same, and being just this

all through."--Vicarious Sacrifice, Introduction, p. 35 (1886). On the

sense in which he does regard Christ's work as declarative, i.e. as a

Revelation of the eternal vicarious sufferings of the Godhead, see

below.

[735] Vicarious Sacrifice, pp. 17, 18. "The suffering of Christ," he

says, "was vicarious suffering in no way peculiar to Him, save in

degree."--P. 68.

[736] In this work Dr. Bushnell develops the idea already suggested in

his earlier book (pp. 18, 35, 37), that Christ's sacrifice has its

chief significance as a revelation of the eternal sacrifice in God's

own nature. "The transactional matter of Christ's life and death," he

says, "is a specimen chapter, so to speak, of the infinite hook that

records the eternal going on of God's blessed nature within. . . . All

God's forgiving dispositions are dateless, and are cast in this mould.

The Lambhood nature is in Him, and the cross set up, before the

Incarnate Son arrives. . . . I have already said that the propitiation,

so called, is not a fact accomplished in time, but an historic matter

represented in that way, to exhibit the interior, ante-mundane,

eternally proceeding sacrifice of the Lamb that was slain before the

foundation of the world"--Pp. 60, 61, 74. This, surely, is to give

Christ's work something of a docetic character.

[737] Vicarious Sacrifice, pp. 460, 461.

[738] Unterricht, pp. 20, 21; cf. Recht. und Ver. 3rd ed. iii. p. 428.

[739] Cf. Ibid. pp. 7, 12; cf. Recht. und Ver. iii. p. 497: "Therefore

is the direct content of eternal life or of blessedness to be

recognised in the religious functions ruling the world."--P. 497

("Eternal Life, or Freedom over the World," title of sec. 54).

[740] Ibid. p. 20.

[741] Unterricht, p. 20.

[742] Cf. ibid. pp. 36, 37, 38.

[743] Cf. ibid. p. 40. Cf. Dorner's criticism of Ritschl on this point,

System of Doctrine, iii. 405, 406.

[744] Ibid. p. 32.

[745] Ritschl's view of Christ's sufferings and their relation to

forgiveness is expounded at length in his Recht. und Vers. 3rd ed. iii.

417-428, 505-533. Cf. specially pp. 422, 511, 512, 513, 524, 574.

"Christ's death, in the view of the apostles, is the compendious

expression for the fact that Christ has inwardly maintained His

religious unity with God and His revelation-position in the whole

course of His life."--P. 511.

[746] It is not remarkable, therefore, that Herrmann, as quoted by

Lipsius, should speak of the forgiveness of sins as "nothing at all

particular" (ganz nichts besonderes).--Die Ritschl'sche Theologie, p.

12. Herrmann certainly expresses himself very differently in his

Verkehr, pp. 39, 40 (2nd ed. p. 103).

[747] A kindred view of atonement to Ritschl's is that of F. A. B.

Nitzsch in his Lehrbuch der Evang. Dogmatik, ii. (1892). "God," he

holds, "could only forgive the sin of humanity if the representative of

humanity was able to afford him the security of a moral renewal of the

same, the security of a new humanity. But this Christ did as the

Beginner of the new humanity, and as Founder of a community upon which

He could take over His own fellowship with God. We cannot, therefore,

say that the doing of Christ first made it possible for God the Father

to he graciously disposed to men, but rather that He made it possible

for God to reveal His grace."--P. 508. Christ is therefore a guarantee

to God for our future sanctification. This is not a thought which we

find prominent in Scripture, while the scriptural idea that Christ

reconciles us to God by removal of our guilt is overlooked.

[748] Cf. Rothe's Dogmatik, ii. pp. 265-269; Pressense, Apostolic Age,

p. 274 (Eng. trans. 4th ed.); Bahr, Symbolik, etc.

[749] Theological Essays, p. 147.

[750] Heb. x. 5-10 (R.V.).

[751] Erskine of Linlathen's theory was akin to this: "The true and

proper sacrifice for our sin" is "the shedding out of the blood of our

will--of that will which had offended."--Doctrine of Election, 2nd ed.

p. 156.

[752] Cf. e.g., Oehler, Theology of Old Testament, i. p. 411 (Eng.

trans.); Bahr, Symbolik (see his view criticised by Dorner, System of

Doctrine, iii. pp. 407, 408; and Fairbairn, Typology, 3rd ed. ii. pp.

290-297). Thus also Rothe, Riehm, Nitzsch, Schultz, etc.

[753] Heb. ix. 14, x. 4-10.

[754] This is the point of view emphasised in Bishop Westcott's The

Victory of the Cross, which may be classed with this group of theories.

The key-word; of the book are Fatherhood, Incarnation, Sacrifice.

Sufferings in general are viewed in the light of discipline--"a

revelation of the Fatherhood of God, who brings back His children to

Himself in righteousness and love."--P. 82. Christ bore these

sufferings according to the mind of God as "entering into the Divine

law of purifying chastisement," "realising in every pain the healing

power of a Father's wisdom."--Pp. 69, 82. But in what sense can we

speak of "purifying chastisement" and "healing power" in the case of

the Sinless One? Bishop Westcott himself has expressions which

recognise a deeper relation of sufferings to sin, as where, e.g.,

Christ is spoken of as gathering "into one supreme sacrifice the

bitterness of death, the last penalty of sin, knowing all it means, and

hearing it as He knows"; and His sufferings are held as showing "His

complete acceptance of the just, the inevitable sentence of God on the

sin at humanity."--Pp. 68, 81. The thoughts of the book are not worked

out into perfect clearness.

[755] The Nature of the Atonement, chap. vii.

[756] The Nature of the Atonement, 4th ed. p. 117.

[757] Ibid. p. 118.

[758] The Nature of the Atonement, p. 259.

[759] Ibid. p. 224.

[760] The Nature of the Atonement. pp. 259-262. He even sips: "The

peace-making between God and man, which was perfected by our Lord an

the cross, required to its reality the presence to the spirit of Christ

of the elements of the alienation as well as the possession by Him of

that eternal righteousness in which was the virtue to make peace"--Page

250. The italics in the extracts are Dr. Campbell's own.

[761] Ibid. p. 119.

[762] Forgiveness and Law, p. 155.

[763] Ibid. pp. 150, 158. Bushnell will have it that him "penal

sanctions" are "never punitive, but only coercive and corrective."--P.

132. But what does "penal" mean, if not "punitive"? And can penalties

not be "judicial." and yet up to a certain point "corrective"?

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"This earth too small

For Love Divine? Is God not Infinite?

If so, His Love is Infinite. Too small!

One famished babe meets pity oft from man

More than an army slain! Too small for Love I

Was earth too small to he of God created?

Why then too small to he redeemed?"

Aubrey De Vere.

"And so beside the silent sea

I wait the muffled oar:

No harm from Him can come to me

On ocean or on shore.

"I know not where His islands lift

Their fronded palms in air,

I only know I cannot drift

Beyond His love and care."

Whittier.

"The last enemy that shall be abolished is death."--Paul

LECTURE IX.

THE INCARNATION AND HUMAN DESTINY.

Introductory

Every view of the world has its eschatology. It cannot help raising the

question of the whither, as well as of the what and the whence? "O my

Lord," said Daniel to the angel, "what shall be the end of these

things?" [764] What is the end, the final destiny, of the individual?

Does he perish at death, or does he enter into another state of being;

and under what conditions of happiness or woe does he exist there? What

is the end, the final aim, of the great whole; that far-off Divine

event to which the whole creation moves? It is vain to tell man not to

ask these questions. He will ask them, and must ask them. He will pore

over every scrap of fact, or trace of law, which seems to give any

indication of an answer. He will try from the experience of the past,

and the knowledge of the present, to deduce what the future shall be.

He will peer as far as he can into the unseen; and, where knowledge

fails, will weave from his hopes and trusts pictures and conjectures.

It is not religions only, but philosophy and science also, which have

their eschatologies. The Stoics had their conceptions of world-cycles,

when everything, reabsorbed in the primal fire, was produced anew

exactly as before. The Buddhists had their kalpas, or world-ages,

periods of destruction and restoration, "during which (as in

Brahmanism) constant universes are supposed to appear, disappear, and

reappear"; [765] new worlds, phoenix-like, incessantly rising out of

the ruins of the old. The pessimist Hartmann has his eschatology as

truly as the New Testament has its. [766] Kant speculated, in his

Theory of the Heavens, on the birth and death of worlds; and Strauss

compares the cosmos to one of those tropical trees on which,

simultaneously, here a blossom bursts into flower, there a ripe fruit

drops from the bough. [767] How is the science of to-day seen peering

on into the future, trying to make out what shall be the end of these

things; whither the changes, and transformations, and integrations, and

dissolutions of the physical universe all tend; and what fate is in

store for the earth, and for the physical system as a whole! Mr.

Spencer has his eschatology, and speculates on a boundless space,

holding here and there extinct suns, fated to remain thus for ever;

though he clings to the hope that, in some way he knows not, out of the

ashes of this old universe a new universe will arise. [768] The authors

of The Unseen Universe say, "What happens to our system will happen

likewise to the whole visible universe, which will, if finite, become

in time a lifeless mass, if indeed it be not doomed to utter

desolation. In fine, it will become old and effete, no less truly than

the individual,--it is a glorious garment this visible universe, but

not an immortal one--we must look elsewhere, if we are to be clothed

with immortality as with a garment." [769]

The Christian view of the world, also, has its eschatology--one too, in

its physical issues, not very different from that just described. The

Christian view, however, is positive, where that of science is

negative; ethical, where it is material; human, where it is cosmogonic;

ending in personal immortality, where this ends in extinction and

death. The eschatology of Christianity springs from its character as a

teleological religion. The highest type of "Weltanschauung" is that

which seeks to grasp the unity of the world through the conception of

an end or aim. It is only through a conception of the world that is

itself unified that man can give a true unity to his life--only in

reference to an aim or end that he can organise his life to a

consistent whole. On the cycle hypothesis, no satisfactory view of life

is possible. All is vanity and vexation of spirit. A truly purposeful

view of life is only possible on the basis of a world-view which

gathers itself up to a highest definite aim. As giving this,

Christianity is the teleological religion par excellence. It is, says

Dorner, the only absolute teleological religion. [770] In one other

respect Christianity agrees with the higher speculation--scientific and

other--and that is in its breadth and scope, extending in its issues

far beyond this little spot called earth, and touching in its influence

the remotest regions of creation.

I. Before entering directly on eschatological questions, it may be

worth our while, in connection with the fact just mentioned, to glance

at the objection sometimes raised to Christianity from the enlargement

of our knowledge of the physical universe through modern

discoveries--chiefly through astronomy. The enormous expansion of our

ideas in regard to the extent of the physical universe brought about

through the telescope, and the corresponding sense of the

insignificance of our planet, awakened by comparison with the gigantic

whole, is supposed by many to be fatal to belief in Christianity.

Strauss boldly affirms that the Copernican system gave the death-blow

to the Christian view of the world. [771] So long as the earth was

believed to be the centre of the universe, and the only inhabited spot

in it, so long was it possible to maintain that God had a peculiar love

to the inhabitants of our world, and had sent His Son for their

Redemption. But when the true relation of the earth to the sun, and to

the other planets of the system, was discovered--when, beyond this, the

infinite depths of the heavens were laid bare, with their innumerable

suns, galaxies, and constellations, to which our own sun, with its

attendant planets, is but as a drop in the immeasurable ocean--then the

idea that this little globe of ours--this insignificant speck--should

become the scene of so stupendous a Divine drama as the Christian

religion represents; should be the peculiar object of God's favours,

and the recipient of His revelations; that, above all, the Son of God

should become incarnate on its surface,--seemed nothing less than

incredible. In a universe teeming with worlds, presumably inhabited by

intelligences of every order and degree, it is thought preposterous to

connect the Deity in this peculiar and transcendent way with one of the

very smallest of them.

Here, first, since the objection is made in the name of science, it

might fairly be asked how far the premiss on which it rests--the

assumption of innumerable spheres peopled with such intelligences as we

have in man (I do not refer to angelic intelligences, for the Christian

view has always admitted these, without our thoughts of the greatness

of the Christian Redemption being thereby lessened, but corporeal

inhabitants of other planets and worlds)--how far this assumption is

scientifically established, or is even matter of plausible conjecture.

Kant declared that he would not hesitate to stake his all on the truth

of the proposition--if there were any way of bringing it to the test of

experience--that at least some one of the planets which we see is

inhabited; [772] but others may not be prepared to share his

confidence. Of direct scientific evidence, of course, there is none,

and the argument from analogy is weakened rather than strengthened by

the progress of modern discovery. If astronomy has been extending our

views of the universe in space, geology has been extending our views of

our own world backwards in time, and it has been pointed out that,

though preparation was being made through the millions of years of that

long past, it is only in quite recent times that man appeared upon its

surface, and then under conditions which we have no reason to suppose

exist in any other planet of our system. [773] Are there not worlds in

the making, as well as worlds already made? Certain it is, that of the

seven hundred and fifty-one parts, or thereabouts, into which our solar

system [774] can be divided, life, such as we know it, or can conceive

of it, is not found in seven hundred and fifty of them, for the sun

monopolises that enormous proportion of the whole for himself; and of

the remaining one part, it is only an insignificant fraction in which

the physical conditions exist which render any of the higher conditions

of life possible. [775] If the same proportion prevails through the

universe, the area reserved for rational life will be correspondingly

restricted. But, in truth, we know nothing of planets in other parts of

the heavens at all, or even whether--except in one or two problematical

instances--such bodies exist. [776] What if, after all, our little

planet should be the Eden of the planetary system--the only spot on

which a place has been prepared for rational life, or in which the

conditions favourable to its blossoming forth have been found? [777] It

is a singular circumstance that the objection here urged against

Christianity is not exclusively applicable to it, but bears as strongly

against all those speculative systems--Hegelianism, Schopenhauerism,

Hartmannism, etc.--which have been hatched in the full light of the

nineteenth century. Here, too, it is assumed that our planet stands

alone as the place in which the Absolute has come to consciousness of

himself (or itself), and where the great drama of his historical

evolution is unfolded--where, in Hegelian phrase, God is incarnate in

man! [778]

Apart from such considerations, however, the real reply to this

objection to the Christian view of the world is that it is merely a

quantitative one. Be the physical magnitude of the universe what it

may, it remains the fact that, on this little planet, life has

effloresced into reason; that we have here a race of rational beings

who bear God's image, and are capable of knowing, loving, and obeying

Him. This is a fact against which it is absurd to put into comparison

any mere quantities of inanimate matter--any number of suns, nebulae,

and planets. Even suppose that there were other inhabited worlds, or

any number of them, this does not detract from the soul's value in this

world. Mind, if it has the powers we know it has, is not less great

because other minds may exist elsewhere. Man is not less great, because

he is not alone great. If he is a spiritual being,--if he has a soul of

infinite worth, which is the Christian assumption,--that fact is not

affected though there were a whole universeful of other spiritual

beings, as indeed the Christian Church has always believed there is.

The truth is, what we have underlying this objection is that very

anthropomorphism in thinking about God against which the objection is

directed. It is thought that, while it might be worthy of God to care

for man if he existed alone, it is derogatory to God's greatness to

think of him when there are so many other objects in the universe. Or

it is thought that God is a Being so exalted that He will lose sight of

the individual in the crowd. Those who think thus must have very

unworthy ideas of the Being whom they wish to exalt; must forget, too,

that the universe can only exist on the condition that God is present

in the little as in the great; that His knowledge, power, and care

extend, not to things in the mass, but to each atom of matter

separately, to each tiniest blade of grass, to each insect on the wing,

and animalcule in the drop of water. It is the Bible which gives the

true philosophy, when it teaches that the same God who cares for stars

cares also for souls; that the very hairs of our head are all numbered;

that not even a sparrow falls to the ground without our heavenly

Father. [779]

But the question still remains, even if all these bright worlds were

inhabited--which they are not,--inhabited by rational beings like to

man himself,--are they sinful? Sin retains its awful significance in

the universe, no matter how many worlds there may be. If this world

alone is sinful, then it is worthy of God to redeem it. Have men's

hearts not recognised the Divineness of that parable of Christ about

the lost sheep? Is it not the Divinest thing that God can do to seek

and to save the lost? Suppose that this universe were as full of

intelligent life as the objection represents, but that this world is

the one lost sheep of the Divine flock, would it not be worthy of the

Good Shepherd to seek it out and save it? Shall its size prevent? Then

is the worth of the soul a thing to be weighed in scales? Mr. Spencer,

in one passage of his writings, thinks he has destroyed the case for

Revelation, when he asks us if we can believe that "the Cause to which

we can put no limits in space or time, and of which our entire solar

system is a relatively infinitesimal product, took the disguise of a

man for the purpose of covenanting with a shepherd-chief in Syria."

[780] He first defines God in terms which put Him infinitely far away

from us, and then asks us to combine with this a conception which seems

to contradict it. But what if God is not only the "Cause" of all

things--the infinitely great Creator of stars and systems--but, as Mr.

Spencer a own principles might lead him to hold, One also infinitely

near to us--

"Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and spirit with spirit can meet;

Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands or feet." [781]

--

and, beyond this, infinite goodness and love as well,--is it then so

strange that He should draw a Syrian shepherd to His side, and should

establish a covenant with him which had for its ultimate aim, not that

shepherd's personal aggrandisement, but the blessing, through him, of

all mankind?

But finally, and this is the complete answer to the objection, if the

Christian view is true, the scope of God's purpose is not confined to

this little planet, but embraces all the realms of creation. [782] The

Incarnation is not a fact the significance of which is confined to

earth. The Scriptures do not so represent it, but seek rather to

impress us with the thought of how wide this purpose of God is, how

extensive in its sweep, how far-reaching in its issues. The objection

to the Christian scheme with many, I fancy, will rather be, that with

its base on earth it rises too high; that when it speaks to us of the

bearing of the gospel on different parts of creation, of angels

desiring to look into it, of principalities and powers in the heavenly

places being instructed by it in the many-sided wisdom of God,--above

all, of all things in heaven and in earth being gathered up in Christ,

[783] --it presents us with a plan the magnitude of which soars beyond

our powers of belief. But if the Divine plan is on a scale of this

grandeur, why complain because its startingpoint is this physically

small globe? The answer to this objection, as to the similar one drawn

from the earthly lowliness of Christ, must be, Respice finem--Look to

the end!

II. In proceeding now to deal directly with the eschatological

relations of the Christian view, it is to be remembered that it stands

differently with lines of prophecy projected into the future from what

it does with facts already past. In dealing with the history of God's

past Revelations--with the ages before the Advent, with the earthly

life and Revelation of Jesus Christ, with the subsequent course of

God's Providence in His Church--we are dealing with that which has

already been. It stands in concrete reality before us, and we can

reason from it as a thing known in its totality and its details. But

when the subject of Revelation is that which is yet to be, especially

that which is yet to be under forms and conditions of which we have no

direct experience, the case is widely altered. Here it is at most

outlines we can look for; and even these outlines will be largely

clothed in figure and symbol; the spiritual kernel will seek material

investiture to body itself forth; the conditions of the future will

require to be presented largely in forms borrowed from known relations.

[784] The outstanding thoughts will be sufficiently apparent, but the

forms in which these thoughts are cast will partake of metaphor and

image.

Examples of undue literalism in the interpretation of prophetic

language will occur to every one; as an example on the other side, I

may instance Ritschl, who, because of the figurative character of the

language employed, sweeps the whole of the New Testament eschatology on

one side, and simply takes no account of it. This is a drastic method,

which makes us wonder why, if these representations convey no

intelligible representations to the mind, use was made of them at all.

With Ritschl, the sole thing of value is the idea of the kingdom of

God, for the realisation of which we are to labour in this world. The

form which the kingdom of God will assume beyond this life we cannot

know, and need not concern ourselves about. The recoil from this

one-sided position of Ritschl is seen in the further development of his

school, particularly in Kaftan, who precisely reverses Ritschl's

standpoint, and transports the good of the kingdom of God entirely into

the life beyond. "The certainty of an eternal life in a kingdom of

God," he says, "which is above the world, which lies to us as yet in

the beyond, is the very nerve of our Christian piety." [785] This is an

exaggeration on the other side, in opposition to which the truth of

Ritschl's view has to be contended for, that there is a kingdom of God

to be striven for even in this world. What did Christ come for, if not

to impart a new life to humanity, which, working from within outwards,

is destined to transform all human relations--all family and social

life, all industry and commerce, all art and literature, all government

and relations among peoples--till the kingdoms of this world are become

the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ? [786] Whether more slowly

or more rapidly, whether peacefully or, as Scripture seems to indicate,

by a succession of crises, surely this grand result of a kingdom of God

will be brought about; and it is our duty and privilege to pray and

labour for it. What is the reproach which is sometimes brought against

Christianity by its enemies, but that of "other-worldliness"--of

exclusive devotion to a good beyond this life, to the neglect of

interests lying immediately to hand? And what is the remedy for this

reproach, but to show that Christianity is a power also for temporal

and social salvation, a leaven which is to permeate the whole lump of

humanity? It is on this side that a great and fruitful field opens

itself up for Christian effort in the present day; on this side that

Christianity finds itself in touch with some of the most characteristic

movements of the time. The ideals of the day are pre-eminently social;

the key-word of Positivism is "Altruism"--the organisation of humanity

for social efforts; the call is to a "service of humanity"; [787] the

air is full of ideas, schemes, Utopias, theories of social reform; and

we who believe that Christianity is the motive power which alone Can

effectually attain what these systems of men are striving after, are

surely bound to put our faith to the proof, and show to men that in

deed and in truth, and not in word only, the kingdom of God has come

nigh to them. We know something of what Christianity did in the Roman

Empire as a power of social purification and reform; [788] of what it

did in the Middle Ages in the Christianising and disciplining of

barbarous nations; of the power it has been in modern times as the

inspiration of the great moral and philanthropic movements of the

century; [789] and this power of Christianity is likely to be yet

greater in the future than in the past. There is yet vast work to be

accomplished ere the kingdom of God is fully come. [790]

This, therefore, may be said to be the nearer aim of Christianity--the

coming of the kingdom of God on earth; but beyond this there is, as

certainly, another end. Even on earth the kingdom of God does not

consist supremely, or even peculiarly, in the possession of outward

good, but in the inward life of the Spirit, in righteousness and peace

and joy in the Holy Ghost. [791] History, too, moves onward to its

goal, which is not simply a transformed society, but a winding-up of

all terrestrial affairs, and the transition from a world of time to a

new order of things in eternity, in which the good of the kingdom of

God will be perfectly realised. In dealing with the eschatology proper

of the Christian view, it will be of advantage to turn our attention

first to those aspects of it which stand out distinct and clear. I have

said that a truly purposeful life is only possible on the basis of a

world-view which has a definite aim. What that aim is in the Christian

view, as respects its positive and bright side, is seen in the light of

the Incarnation. There are three points here which seem to stand out

free from all uncertainty.

1. The aim of God as regards believers is summed up in the simple

phrase--conformity to the image of the Son. "Whom He foreknew, He also

foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be

the First-born among many brethren." [792] This is the one absolute

light-point in the eternal future. The mists and shadows which rest on

other parts of the eschatological problem do not affect us here. We see

not yet all things put under humanity, "but we behold Him who hath been

made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus, because of the

suffering of death crowned with glory and honour," [793] and we know

that our destiny is to be made like Him. This is conformity to type in

the highest degree. By what processes the result is to be brought about

we may not know, but the end itself is clear--the assimilation begun on

earth shall be perfected above.

2. This conformity to Christ includes not only moral and spiritual

likeness to Christ, but likeness to Him also in His glorious body; that

is, the Redemption of the body, life in a glorified corporeity.

Difficulties rise here of course in great numbers, and the question

will be put, "How are the dead raised, and with what manner of body do

they come?" [794] But, first, I would say that there are certain things

here also which stand out clear.

(1) First of all, this doctrine of the Redemption of the body is

needful for the completion of the Christian view. It is not an

accident, but an essential and integral part of it. It is essential to

a complete Redemption, as we saw in speaking of immortality, that not

the soul only, but man in his whole complex personality, body and soul

together, should be redeemed. In the disembodied state, the believer

indeed is with Christ, rests in the blessedness of unbroken fellowship

with Him, but it is the resurrection which is the perfection of his

life. [795]

(2) I say, next, that this doctrine of the Resurrection of the body is

not exposed to some of the objections often made to it. How, it is

asked, can the same body be raised, when it is utterly decayed, and the

particles of which it was composed are scattered to the winds of

heaven, or perhaps taken up into other bodies? But the doctrine of the

Resurrection does not involve any such belief. The solution lies, I

think, in a right conception of what This which constitutes identity.

Wherein, let us ask, does the identity even of our present bodies

consist? Not, certainly, in the mere identity of the particles of

matter of which our bodies are composed, for this is continually

changing, is in constant process of flux. The principle of identity

lies rather in that which holds the particles together, which vitally

organises and constructs them, which impresses on them their form and

shape, and maintains them in unity with the soul to serve as its

instrument and medium of expression. It lies, if we may so say, in the

organic, constructive principle, which in its own nature is spiritual

and immaterial, and adheres to the side of the soul At death, the body

perishes. It is resolved into its elements; but this vital, immaterial

principle endures, prepared, when God wills, to give form to a new and

grander, because more spiritual, corporeity. The existence of mystery

here I grant: we cannot understand the resurrection from natural

causes, but only, as Christ teaches us, from the power of God. [796] It

is a miracle, and the crowning act of an economy of miracles. But we

need not make the mystery greater than it is by insisting on a material

identity between the new body and the old, which is no part of the

doctrine of Scripture--indeed, is expressly contradicted by the words

of the apostle, touching on this very point. "Thou foolish one," says

Paul, "that which thou thyself sowest is not quickened, except it die;

and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not the body which shall be,

but a bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other kind; but

God giveth it a body even as it pleaseth Him, and to each seed a body

of its own." [797] In the case supposed, we see very clearly, first,

that the identity consists only in a very minute degree, if at all--and

then only. accidentally--in identity of material particles; and,

second, that the real bond lies in the active, vital principle which

connects the two bodies.

(3) A third point is, that the resurrection contemplated is not a

resurrection at death, but a future event connected with the

consummation of all things. The opposite view is one which has had many

modern advocates,--among them the authors of The Unseen Universe; [798]

but, though it professes to stay itself on the expressions, "a house

not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," "clothed upon with our

habitation which is from heaven," [799] I do not think that this view

accords with the general representations of Scripture, which always

contemplate the resurrection as future, and regard the believer's state

as, till that time, one of being "unclothed." What Scripture does seem

to teach is, that meanwhile a preparation for this spiritual body is

going on, a spiritual basis for it is being laid, through the

possession and working of Christ's Spirit. [800]

3. The doctrine of the Christian consummation carries with it, further,

the idea that, together with the perfecting of the believer, or of the

sons of God, there will be a perfecting or glorification even of

outward nature. This is implied in the possession of a corporeity of

any kind, for that stands in relation to an environment, to a general

system of things. A new heaven and earth there must be, if there is to

be glorified corporeity. Scripture, accordingly, makes clear that

nature also, the creation also, will be delivered from the bondage of

vanity and corruption under which it is at present held. [801] It is

needless for us to attempt to anticipate what changes this may imply;

how it is to be brought about, or how it stands related to the changes

in the material universe predicted by science. The day alone will

declare it.

Connected with these views and anticipations of the consummation, are

certain pictorial and scenic elements in the Christian eschatology, to

which attention must now be given. Such are the descriptions of the

second Advent and of the general Judgement. Here belong the

eschatological discourses and sayings of Christ and His apostles, in

regard to which, again, the question is, How are they to be

interpreted? Taking, first, those which relate to Christ's personal

return to the world, I might quote Beyschlag as a typical example of

how these pictorial and scenic elements are treated by many who are

indisposed to take a literal view of their import. "Jesus," he says,

"grasps up together in the sensible image of His coming again on the

clouds of heaven all that which lay beyond His death--the whole

glorious reversal of His earthly life and the death on the cross, from

His resurrection on till the perfecting of His kingdom at the last day;

and the more we keep in view the genuinely prophetic nature of this

comprehensive sense-image, and how it shares the essential limits of

all prophecy, the more is a solution found of the at first apparently

insoluble difficulty of this prophetic part of His doctrine." [802]

Now, I think a careful study of the passages will compel us to agree

with this writer on one main point, namely, that Jesus does not always

speak of His coming in the same sense; that it is to Him rather a

process in which many elements flow together in a single image, than a

single definite event, always looked at in the same light. [803] Thus,

He says to the high priest, with obvious reference to the prophecy in

Daniel, "Henceforth," that is, from this time on, "ye shall see the Son

of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of

heaven." [804] He came again to His disciples after the resurrection;

lie came in the mission of the Comforter; He came in the power and

spread of His kingdom, especially after the removal of the limitations

created by the existing Jewish polity, which seems to be the meaning in

the passage, "There be some of them that stand here which shall in no

wise taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His

kingdom"; [805] He has come in every great day of the Lord in the

history of His Church; He will come yet more conspicuously in the

events of the future. Yet I cannot agree with Beyschlag when, on these

grounds, he would exclude altogether a final, personal advent of Jesus,

a visible return in power and glory to the world. It seems to me that

Christ's words on this subject, repeated by His apostles, are

altogether too explicit and of too solemn an import to be explained

away into mere metaphor. I would agree, therefore, with the Church

catholic in its confession, "From thence He shall come to judge the

quick and the dead" In Beyschlag's case it seems the more arbitrary to

deny this, as he fully admits the reality of Christ's resurrection,

and, if not of His visible ascent, at least of His actual bodily

reception into heaven. His words are, "What then was the original

thought of the ascension? What else can it have been than that of the

elevation of Jesus above the limits of the earthly life, of His

translation into another, supra-mundane, Divine form of existence--in a

word, of His exaltation or glorification?" [806] If this be so, there

is surely no incongruity in the thought that He who thus went away

shall again appear in manifested glory.

It is not otherwise with the pictures we have of a final act of

Judgment as the accompaniment of this reappearance of the Lord. Here,

also, it is correct to speak of a continuous judgment of the world. The

history of the world, as we often hear, is the judgment of the world.

Yet the representations which Christ Himself gives us of a gradual

ripening of both good and evil to the harvest, then of a final and

decisive separation [807] --joined with the similar representations of

the apostles [808] --compel us, it seems to me, to speak of a day of

reckoning, when God shall judge the secrets of men by Christ Jesus;

which shall be at once a vindication of God's action in the government

of the world, and a decision upon the issues of the individual life.

From a teleological view of the world, also, as well as from a survey

of its existing imperfections, it is felt that there is an inherent

fitness, if not a moral necessity, in the supposition of such a last

judgment which shall form, as it were, the denouement of the great

drama of universal history. [809] It is manifest, on the other hand,

that all the descriptions and pictures which we have of this dread

event are so charged with figurative and parabolic elements that we can

infer nothing from them beyond the great principles on which the

judgment will proceed.

III. By these steps we are led up, in the consideration of the last

things, to that which is for us the question of supreme concern, on

this subject--the question of individual destiny. I have spoken of this

already as regards the believer. But what of the shadow alongside of

the light? What of the judgment of condemnation alongside of the

judgment of life? What of the wrath of God abiding on the unbeliever,

alongside of the blessedness of those who are saved? These questions

are not arbitrarily raised, but are forced upon us by the plain

statements of Scripture, by the fears and forebodings of the guilty

conscience, and by the anxiety and perplexity they are causing to many

hearts. To the questions thus raised, three main answers have been

given, and are given.

1. The first is that of dogmatic Universalism. This was the view of

Origen in the early Church, [810] and is the view of Schleiermacher,

expressed in the words, "that through the power of Redemption there

will result in the future a general restoration of all human souls";

[811] the view expressed yet more dogmatically by Dr. Samuel Cox,

"While our brethren hold the Redemption of Christ to extend only to the

life that now is, and to take effect only on some men, we maintain, on

the contrary, that it extends to the life to come, and must take effect

on all men at the last"; [812] the view breathed as a wish by

Tennyson--

"The wish that of the living whole

No life may fail beyond the grave." [813]

It is a view which, I am sure, we would all be glad to hold, if the

Scriptures gave us light enough to assure us that it was true.

2. The second answer is that of the theory of Annihilation, or, as it

is sometimes called, Conditional Immortality. This is the direct

opposite of the universalistic view, inasmuch as it assumes that the

wicked will be absolutely destroyed, or put out of existence. Rothe and

others have held this view among Continental theologians; [814] in this

country it is best known through the writings of Mr. Edward White. A

kindred view is that of Bushnell, who, reasoning "from the known

effects of wicked feeling and practice in the reprobate characters,"

expects "that the staple of being and capacity in such will be

gradually diminished, and the possibility is thus suggested that, at

some remote period, they may be quite wasted away, or extirpated."

[815] The service which this theory has rendered is as a corrective to

Universalism, in laying stress on those passages in Scripture which

appear to teach a final ruin of the wicked.

3. The third answer is that which has been the prevailing one in the

Protestant Church, the theory of an eternal punishment of the wicked in

a state of conscious suffering; a theory, also, with which, in the form

in which it has been commonly presented, a strong feeling of

dissatisfaction at present exists. A modification of this theory is

that which supposes the ultimate fate of the wicked--or of those who

are the wicked here--to consist in the punishment of loss, rather than

in that of eternal suffering.

Such are the views that are held; what attitude are we to. take up

towards them? I shall best consult my own feelings and sense of duty by

speaking frankly what I think upon the subject. Here, in the first

place, I would like to lay down one or two fundamental positions which

seem to me of the nature of certainties.

1. I would lay down, as the first and great fundamental certitude, the

truth enunciated by the prophet, "Say ye of the righteous, that it

shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.

Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his

hands shall be given him"; [816] in other words, the great and

fundamental principle of certain retribution for sin. This is a

principle we cannot hold too clearly or too strongly. Whatever tends to

tamper with this principle, or to weaken its hold upon the conscience,

is alien to the true Christian view. By unalterable laws impressed upon

the nature of man and on the universe, righteousness is life, and sin

is inevitable misery and death. [817] Omnipotence itself could not

reverse this law, that so long as the sinner continues in his sin he

must suffer. On the other hand, where this principle is firmly grasped,

there ought, I think, to be much room left for difference of views on

points which, from the nature of the case, are obscure and tentative.

2. I think, in the next place, a strong distinction ought to be drawn

between those things which Scripture expressly teaches, and those

things on which it simply gives no light, in regard to which it neither

affirms nor denies, but is simply silent. Here our wisdom is to imitate

its caution, and refrain from dogmatism. I confess I marvel sometimes

at the confidence with which people pronounce on that which must and

shall be through the eternities and eternities--the ages and ages--of

God's unending life, during which also the soul of man is to exist; and

this in respect of so appalling a subject as the future fate of the

lost. There is room here for a wise Agnosticism. I prefer to say that,

so far as my light goes, I see no end, and there to stop.

3. I hold it for a certainty that, to deal with all the sides and

relations of this difficult subject, we would require a much larger

calculus than with our present light we possess. What chiefly weighs

with many in creating dissatisfaction with the current Church view is

not so much special texts of Scripture, as rather the general

impression produced on the mind by the whole spirit and scope of the

gospel Revelation. Starting with the character of God as Christ reveals

it; with the fact of the Incarnation; with the reality and breadth of

the Atonement; with the glimpses given into the issues of Christ's

work,--the feeling is produced in every thoughtful mind, that the sweep

of this great scheme of Incarnation and Redemption cannot be exhausted

in the comparatively meagre results which we see springing from it

here,--meagre, I mean, in comparison with the whole compass of the race

or even of those who are brought outwardly within the range of its

influence. What, men are asking with a constantly heavier sense of the

burden of the difficulty, of the untold millions who have never heard

of Christ at all, of the millions and millions who have never even had

the chance of hearing of Him? What, even within the limits of

Christendom, of the multitudes, as they must be reckoned, in comparison

with the really Christ-like in our midst, who give no evidence of true

regeneration, vast numbers of whom are living openly worldly and

godless lives? We feel instinctively that the last word has not

been--cannot be--spoken by us here. It may be said, and with much

truth, that for -those who have the light, there is no excuse.

Salvation has been put within their reach, and they have deliberately

rejected it. But even here, are there not elements we dare not

overlook? Men are responsible for the use they make of light, but how

much here also is not due to the individual will, which is crossed by

influences from heredity, from environment, from up-bringing, from

pressure of events! God alone can disentangle the threads of freedom in

the web of character and action, and say how much is a man's individual

responsibility in the result, as distinguished from his share in the

common guilt of the race. [818] It is certain, from Christ's own

statement, that, in the judgment of Omniscience, all these things are

taken into account, and that even in the administration of punishment

there are gradations of penalty, proportionate to men s knowledge and

opportunities; that, as Paul says, there is a distinction made between

those who have "sinned without law," and those who have "sinned under

law." [819]

These principles being laid down, I proceed to offer a few remarks on

the various theories which have been submitted.

1. And, first, I cannot accept the view of dogmatic Universalism. There

is undoubtedly no clear and certain scripture which affirms that all

men will be saved; on the other hand, there are many passages which

look in another direction, which seem to put the stamp of finality on

the sinner's state in eternity. Even Archdeacon Farrar, so strong an

advocate of this theory, admits that some souls may ultimately be lost;

[820] and it is to be observed that, if even one soul is lost finally,

the principle is admitted on which the chief difficulty turns. I am

convinced that the light and airy assertions one sometimes meets with

of dogmatic Universalism are not characterised by a due sense of the

gravity of the evil of sin, or of the awful possibilities of resistance

to goodness that lie within the human will. It seems to me plain that

deliberate rejection of Christ here means, at the very least, awful and

irreparable loss in eternity; that to go from the judgment-seat

condemned is to exclude oneself in perpetuity from the privilege and

glory which belong to Gods sons. Even the texts, some of them formerly

quoted, which at first sight might seem to favour Universalism, are

admitted by the most impartial expositors not to bear this weight of

meaning. We read, e.g., of "a restoration of all things"--the same that

Christ calls the palingenesia--but in the same breath we are told of

those who will not hearken, and will be destroyed. [821] We read of

Christ drawing all men unto Him; [822] but we are not less clearly told

that at His coming Christ will pronounce on some a tremendous

condemnation. [823] We read of all things being gathered, or summed up,

in Christ, of Christ subduing all things to Himself, etc.; but

representative exegetes like Meyer and Weiss show that it is far from

Paul's view to teach an ultimate conversion or annihilation of the

kingdom of evil. [824] I confess, however, that the strain of these

last passages does seem to point in the direction of some ultimate

unity, be it through subjugation, or in some other way, in which active

opposition to God's kingdom is no longer to be reckoned with.

2. Neither can I accept the doctrine of the Annihilation of the Wicked.

In itself considered, and divested of some of the features with which

Mr. White clothes it in his Life in Christ, this may be admitted to be

an abstractly possible hypothesis, and as such has received the assent,

as before stated, of Rothe and others who are not materialistically

disposed. There is a certain sense in which everyone will admit that a

man has not a necessary or inherent immortality, that he depends for

his continued existence, therefore for his immortality, solely on the

will and power of God. Man can never rise above the limits of his

creaturehood. As created, he is, and must remain, a dependent being. It

is, therefore, a possible supposition--one not a priori to be

rejected--that though originally made and destined for immortality, man

might have this destiny cancelled. There is force, too, in what is

said, that it is difficult to see the utility of keeping a being in

existence merely to sin and suffer. Yet, when the theory is brought to

the test of Scripture proof, it is found to fail in evidence.

(1) Stress is laid on those passages which speak of the destruction of

the wicked, of their perishing, [825] of their being consumed in fire,

as chaff, tares, branches, etc. [826] So far as the last class of

passages is concerned, they are plainly metaphorical, and, iii face of

other evidence, it is difficult to put on any of them the meaning that

is asked. For this destruction comes on the ungodly at the day of

judgment, at the day of the Lord. "Sudden destruction," an apostle

calls it; [827] yet it is part of this theory that the wicked are not

annihilated at the day of judgment, but live on in suffering for an

indefinitely prolonged time, as a punishment for their offences, the

greatest sinners suffering most. In this respect the theory

approximates to the ordinary view, for it makes the real punishment of

the sinner lie in the period of his conscious existence, and the

annihilation which comes after is rather a merciful termination of his

sufferings than the crowning of his woe. If Mr. White's theory is to be

made consistent with itself, it ought to provide for the immediate

annihilation of the wicked at death, or at least at the judgment. In

reality, however, the "destruction" comes at the judgment, and the

"annihilation" not till long after; so that, on his own principles, we

cannot argue from the mere word to the fact of annihilation.

(2) Another thing which suggests itself in regard to this theory is

that, taken strictly, it seems to shut out all gradations of

punishment; the end of all being "death," i.e. "annihilation." If, to

escape this, reference is made to the longer or shorter period of the

suffering before annihilation, this shows, as before, that it is in the

conscious sufferings, not in the annihilation, that the real punishment

is supposed to lie.

(3) But the crowning objection to this theory--so far as proof from

Scripture is concerned--is that in its use of the words "life" and

"death," it misses the true significance of these Bible terms. Life is

not, in Scripture usage, simple existence; death is not simple

non-existence, but separation from true and complete life. This theory

itself being witness, the soul survives in the state of natural death.

It passes into the intermediate condition, and there awaits judgment.

Life, in short, is, in its Scripture sense, a word with a moral and

spiritual connotation; a person may not possess it, and yet continue to

exist. "He that obeyeth not the Son," we are told, "shall not see life,

but the wrath of God abideth on him." [828] But so long as the wrath of

God abides (menei) on him, he must abide. So far as Scripture goes,

therefore, this theory is not proved. It must remain a mere

speculation, and one which cuts the knot rather than unties it.

It is interesting to mark that Mr. White himself seems little satisfied

with his theory, and does his best to relieve it of its harsher

features. If the thought is terrible of the countless multitudes who

leave this world without having heard of Christ, or without deliberate

acceptance of Him, being doomed to endless suffering, it is scarcely

less appalling to think of these myriads, after longer or shorter terms

of suffering, being swept from existence by the fiat of Omnipotence.

Mr. White feels the weight of this difficulty, and tries to alleviate

it by the thought of a prolonged probation in Hades. [829] Here, he

thinks, we find the solution of the problem of the heathen; and of many

more whose opportunities have not been sufficiently great to bring them

to clear decision. I have no doubt that Mr. White cherishes in his

heart the hope that by far the greater proportion of mankind will thus

be saved; that, in consequence, the finally lost will be comparatively

few. In other words, just as in the admission of prolonged periods of

penal suffering his theory was seen approximating to that of eternal

punishment, so here we see it stretching out hands, as it were, on the

other side, towards "the larger hope" of Universalism. It is certainly

a curious result that a theory which begins by denying to man any

natural immortality--which takes away the natural grounds of belief in

a future state--should end by transferring the great bulk of the

evangelising and converting work of the gospel over to that future

state; for, assuredly, what is accomplished there must be immense as

compared with what, in his view, is done on earth. This brings me--

3. To speak of the ordinary doctrine, and as a proposed alleviation of

this, of the theory of a Future Probation, a theory which we have just

seen is held also by Mr. Edward White. By future probation is meant

here probation, not after the judgment, but intermediately between

death and judgment. This is a theory which, as is well known, has found

wide acceptance among believing theologians on the Continent, and also

in America, and is advanced by its adherents as a solution of the

difficulties which arise from supposing that all who leave this world

without having heard of Christ or having definitely accepted Him

necessarily perish. It is the theory held, e.g., by Dorner, Van

Oosterzee, Martensen, Godet, Gretillat, and very many others. No one,

it is said, will be lost without being brought to a knowledge of

Christ, and having the opportunity given him of accepting His

salvation. Every man must be brought to a definite acceptance or

rejection of Christ, if not here, then hereafter. The theory is

believed to be supported by the well-known passages in the First

Epistle of Peter which speak of a preaching by Christ to the spirits in

prison, and of the gospel being preached to the dead. [830]

Yet, when all is said, this theory must be admitted to be based more on

general principles than on definite scriptural information. Our own

Church is not committed on the subject; indeed, as I have occasion to

remember, in framing its Declaratory Act, it expressly rejected an

amendment designed to bind it to the position that probation in every

case is limited to time. The Synod acted wisely, I think, in rejecting

that amendment. All the same, I wish now to say that I do not much like

this phrase, "Future Probation." Least of all am I disposed with some

to make a dogma of it. There are three facts in regard to the

scriptural aspect of this theory which ought, I think, to make us

cautious.

(1) The first is the intense concentration of every ray of exhortation

and appeal into the present. "Now is the acceptable time; behold, now

is the day of salvation." [831] This is the strain of Scripture

throughout. Everything which would weaken the force of this appeal, or

lead men to throw over into a possible future what ought to be done

now, is a distinct evil.

(2) The second is the fact that, in Scripture, judgment is invariably

represented as proceeding on the matter of this life, on The "deeds

done in the body." [832] The state after death is expressly described,

in contrast with the present life, as one of "judgment." [833] In every

description of the judgment, or allusion to it, it is constantly what a

man has been, or has done, in this life, which is represented as the

basis on which the determination of his final state depends. There is

not a word, or hint, to indicate that a man who would be found on the

left hand of the King, or who would pass under condemnation, on the

basis of his earthly record, may possibly be found on the other side,

and be accepted, on the ground of some transaction in the state between

death and judgment. Surely this does not agree well with a "future

probation" theory, but would rather require us to suppose that, in

principle at least, man is presumed to decide his destiny here.

(3) There is, as the converse of these facts, the silence of Scripture

on the subject of probation beyond; for the passages in 1 Peter, even

accepting the interpretation which makes them refer to a work of Christ

in the state of the dead, form surely a slender foundation on which to

build so vast a structure. The suggestions they offer are not to be

neglected. But neither do they speak of general probation, if of

probation at all; nor give information as to the special character of

this preaching to the dead, or its results in conversion; least of all

do they show that what may apply to the heathen or others similarly

situated, applies to those whose opportunities have been ample. I have

spoken of the influences of heredity, etc., as an element to be taken

account of in judgment; but we must beware, even here, of forgetting

how much responsibility remains. Will is at work here also; personal

volition is interweaving itself with the warp of natural circumstance

and of hereditary predisposition. In the sphere of heathenism

itself--even apart from the direct preaching of the gospel--there is

room for moral decision wider than is sometimes apprehended, and a type

of will is being formed on which eternal issues may depend.

I recognise, however, in the light of what I have stated about the need

of a larger calculus, that the issues of this life must prolong

themselves into the unseen, and, in some way unknown to us, be brought

to a bearing there. All I plead for is, that we should not set up a

definite theory where, in the nature of things, we have not the light

to enable us to do so. This again is a reason for refusing to acquiesce

in many of the dogmatic affirmations which are advanced in the name of

a doctrine of eternal punishment. Suffering and loss beyond expression

I cannot but conceive of as following from definite rejection of

Christ; nor do I see anything in Scripture to lead me to believe that

this loss can ever be repaired. How this will relate itself to

conditions of existence in eternity I do not know, and beyond this I

decline to speculate.

The conclusion I arrive at is, that we have not the elements of a

complete solution, and we ought not to attempt it. What visions beyond

there may he, what larger hopes, what ultimate harmonies, if such there

are in store, will come in God's good time; it is not ours to

anticipate them, or lift the veil where God has left it drawn! What

Scripture wishes us to realise is the fact of probation now, of

responsibility here. We should keep this in view, and, concentrating

all our exhortations and entreaty into the present, should refuse to

sanction hopes which Scripture does not support; striving, rather, to

bring men to live under the impression, "How shall. we escape, if we

neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3).

Here I bring these Lectures to a conclusion. No one is more conscious

than myself of the imperfection of the outlines I have sought to trace;

of the thoughts I have brought before you in the wide and important

field over which we have had to travel. Only, in a closing word, would

I. state the deepened, strengthened conviction which has come to myself

out of the study, often prolonged and anxious enough, which the duties

of this Lectureship have entailed on me: the deepened and strengthened

conviction of the reality and certainty of God's supernatural

Revelation to the world,--of His great purpose of love and grace,

centring in the manifestation of His Son, but stretching out in its

issues through all worlds, and into all eternities,--of a Redemption

adequate to human sin and need, the blessings of which it is our

highest privilege to share, and to make known to others. With this has

gone the feeling--one of thankfulness and hope--of the breadth of the

range of the influence of this new power which has gone out from

Christ: not confined, as we might be apt to think, to those who make

the full confession of His name, but touching society, and the world of

modern thought and action, on all its sides--influencing its life and

moulding its ideals; and in circles where the truth, as we conceive it,

is mutilated, and even in important parts eclipsed, begetting a

personal devotion to Christ, a recognition of His unique and peerless

position in history, and a faith in the spread and ultimate triumph of

His kingdom, which is full of significance and comfort. I hail these

omens; this widespread influence of the name of Jesus. It tells us

that, despite of appearances which seem adverse, there is a true

kingdom of God on earth, and that a day of gathering up in Christ Jesus

is yet to come. I do not believe that the modern world has ceased to

need the Christian view, or that in spirit its back is turned against

it. The "isms" of the day are numerous, and the denials from many

quarters are fierce and vehement. But in the very unbelief of the time

there is a serious feeling such as never existed before; and there is

not one of these systems but, with all its negations, has its side of

light turned towards Christ and His religion. Christ is the centre

towards which their broken lights converge, and, as lifted up, He will

yet draw them unto Him. I do not, therefore, believe that the Christian

view is obsolete; that it is doomed to go down like a faded

constellation in the west of the sky of humanity. I do not believe

that, in order to preserve it, one single truth we have been accustomed

to see shining in that constellation will require to be withdrawn, or

that the world at heart desires it to he withdrawn. The world needs

them all, and will one day acknowledge it. It is not with a sense of

failure, therefore, but with a sense of triumph, that I see the

progress of the battle between faith and unbelief. I have no fear that

the conflict will issue in defeat. Like the ark above the waters,

Christ's religion will ride in safety the waves of present-day

unbelief, as it has ridden the waves of unbelief in days gone by,

bearing in it the hopes of the future of humanity.

I thank the Principal and Professors, I thank the students, for their

unfailing courtesy, and for their generous reception of myself and of

my Lectures.

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[764] Dan. xii. 8.

[765] Buddhism, by Professor Monier-Williams, p. 120. Cf. p. 118.

[766] On Hartmann's "Cosmic Suicide," see Caro's Le Pessimisme, chap.

viii.

[767] Der alte und der neue Glaube, p. 152.

[768] First Principles, pp. 529, 537.

[769] Unseen Universe, 5th ed. p. 196. Cf. pp. 165, 166.

[770] System of Doctrine, iv. p. 376 (Eng. trans.). Cf. Martensen,

Dogmatics, pp. 465, 466 (Eng. trans.).

[771] Is fatal even to belief in a personal God. Cf. his Der alte und

der neue Glaube, pp. 108-110.

[772] Kritik d. r. Ver. p. 561, Erdmann's ed. (Eng. trans. p. 500).

[773] This is the point specially made in Whewell's The Plurality of

Worlds.

[774] Sun and planets.

[775] In Mars, and even here, Professor Ball doubts the

possibility--Story of the Heavens, p. 190.

[776] Professor Ball says: "It may be that, as the other stars are

suns, so they too may have other planets circulating round them; but of

this we know nothing. Of the stars we can only say that they are points

of light, and if they had hosts of planets these planets must for ever

remain invisible to us, even if they were many times as large as

Jupiter."--Story of the Heavens, p. 95.

[777] "The earth is perhaps at this hour the only inhabited globe in

the midst of almost boundless space."--Renan, Dialogues, p. 61.

[778] Cf. Renan: "For my part I think there is not in the universe any

intelligence superior to that of man, so that the greatest genius of

our planet is truly the priest of the world, since he is the highest

reflection of it."--Dialogues, p. 283. See on Renan's extraordinary

eschatology-- Note A.

[779] Ps. cxlvii. 3, 4; Matt. x. 29-31.

[780] Eccles. Institutions, p. 704.

[781] Tennyson's Higher Pantheism.

[782] This is the argument developed in Chalmers's celebrated

Astronomical Discourses. See Note B.--The Gospel and the Vastness of

Creation.

[783] 1 Pet. i. 12; Eph. ii. 10, i. 10, etc.

[784] Cf. Fairbairn's Prophecy, chap. iv. sec. 4.

[785] This sentence is quoted from Pfleiderer, Religionsphilosophie,

ii. p. 206 (Eng. trans.). Cf. Kaftan, Wesen, pp. 67, 71, 171, 173, 214,

213, etc.; Wahrheit, p. 547, etc.

[786] Rev. xi. 15.

[787] Cf. Cotter Morison's The Service of Man. "The worship of deities

has passed .into The Service of Man.' Instead of Theolatry, we have

Anthropolatry; the divine service has become human service."--P. 265.

As if the truest service of God did not carry in it the service of

humanity.

[788] Cf. Loring Brace's Gesta Christi; Schmidt's Social Results of

Early Christianity (Eng. trans.); Uhlhorn's Christian Charity in the

Early Church; Lecky's History of European Morals, etc.

[789] Note Mr. Stead, himself an enthusiast in social work, says: "Most

good work is done by Christians. Mrs. Besant herself expressed to me

that they did very little indeed, and those who did were only those

who, like herself, had been brought up Christians."--Church of the

Future, p. 9.

[790] Note See Appendix on "The Idea of the Kingdom of God."

[791] Rom. xiv. 17.

[792] Rom. viii. 29 (R.V.).

[793] Heb. ii. 5, 9 (R.V.).

[794] 1 Cor. xv. 35 (R.V.).

[795] The idealistic school, on the other hand, speak slightingly of

life in the body. "A renewed embodiment," says Mr. Green, "if it means

anything, would be but a return to that condition in which we are but

parts of nature, a condition from which the moral life is already a

partial deliverance."--Works, iii. p. 206. Was Plotinus then right when

he blushed that he had a body?

[796] Matt. xxii. 29.

[797] 1 Cor. xv. 36-38 (R.V.). Cf. Origen, De Principiis, ii. 6: For

him the resurrection is not the reproduction of any particular

organism, but the preservation of complete identity of person, an

identity maintained under new conditions, which he presents under the

apostolic figure of the growth of the plant from the seed: the seed is

committed to the earth, perishes, and yet the vital power which it

contains gathers a new frame answering to its proper nature."--Westcott

in Dictionary of Christian Biography, iv. p. 121.

[798] Unseen Universe, pp. 200-211, and on Swedenborg's views, pp. 63,

64. Thus also Munger in his Freedoms of Faith: "This change necessarily

takes place at death. A disembodied state, or state of torpid existence

between death and some far-off day of resurrection, an under-world

where the soul waits for the reanimation of its body: these are

old-world notions that survive only through chance contact with the

Christian system."--P. 309. Then, were Hymenaeus and Philetus not right

who said that "the resurrection is past already," and in Paul's view

overthrew the faith of some (2 Tim. ii. 18.) Cf. Newman Smyth's Old

Faiths in New Lights, chap. viii.

[799] 2 Cor. v. 1, 2 (R.V.).

[800] The Scriptures mention also a resurrection of the wicked (John v.

29; Acts xxiv. 15; Rev. xx. 12), likewise, we cannot doubt, connected

with Christ's appearance in our nature, but, beyond describing it as a

resurrection of condemnation, they throw little light upon its nature.

[801] Rom. viii. 21; 2 Pet. iii. 13.

[802] Leben Jesu, i. p. 356.

[803] That Jesus did not anticipate His immediate return, but

contemplated a slow and progressive development of His kingdom, is

shown by many indications in the Gospels. Cf. on this subject.

Beyschlag, Leben Jesu, i. pp. 354-356; Reuss, Hist. of Christ. Theol.

i. pp. 217, 218; Bruce's Kingdom of God, chap. xii.

[804] Matt. xxvi. 64 (R.V.). Cf. Dan. vii. 13, 14. In Daniel's vision

the "one like unto a son of man" comes with the clouds of heaven to

receive a kingdom from the Ancient of Days, not to judge the world.

[805] Matt. xvi. 28 (R.V.). Mark has "till they see the kingdom of God

come with power" (ix. 1); Luke simply, "till they see the kingdom of

God" (ix. 27).

[806] Leben Jesu, i. p. 448.

[807] Matt. xiii. 30, 49, etc.

[808] Acts xvii 31; Rom. ii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 10, etc.

[809] Cf. Martensen, Dorner, Van Oosterzee, Luthardt, for illustrations

of this thought.

[810] De Principiis, i. 6.

[811] Der christl. Glaube, ii. p. 505.

[812] Salvator Mundi, 11th ed. p. 225.

[813] In Memoriam.

[814] Dogmatik, iii. p. 108. Ritschl, too, teaches that if there are

any who oppose themselves absolutely to the realisation of the Divine

plan, their fate would be annihilation--Recht. und Ver. ii. pp. 129,

140-142. But the case is purely hypothetical, iii. p. 363.

[815] Forgiveness and Law, p. 147.

[816] Isa. iii. 10, 11 (R.V.).

[817] Mr. Greg also has his doctrine of future retribution. Must not a

future world in itself--the condition of spiritual corporeity'

alone--bring with it dreadful retribution to the wicked, the selfish,

and the weak? In the mere fact of their cleared perceptions, in the

realisation of their low position, in seeing themselves at length as

they really are, in feeling that all their work is yet to do, in

beholding all those they loved and venerated far before them, away from

them, fading in the bright distance, may lie, must lie, a torture, a

purifying fire, in comparison with which the representations of Dante

and Milton shrivel into baseness and inadequacy"--Creed of Christendom,

p. 280.

[818] Maudsley says: "When we reflect how much time and what a

multitude of divers experiences have gone to the formation of a

character, what a complex product it is, and what an inconceivably

intricate interworking of intimate energies, active and inhibitive, any

display of it in feeling and will means, it must appear a gross

absurdity for anyone to aspire to estimate or appraise all the

component motives of a particular act of will. . . . To dissect any act

of will accurately, and then to recompose it, would be to dissect and

recompose humanity."--Body and Will, p. 29. But see below.

[819] Rom. ii. 12 (R.V.).

[820] "I cannot tell whether some souls may not resist God for ever,

and therefore may not be for ever shut out from His presence, and I

believe that to be without God is hell'; and that in this sense there

is a hell beyond the grave; and that for any soul to fall even for a

time into this condition, though it be through its own hardened

impenitence and resistance of God's grace, is a very awful and terrible

prospect; and that in this sense there maybe for some souls an endless

hell."--Mercy and Judgment, p. 485.

[821] Matt. xix. 28; Acts iii. 21, 23 (R.V.).

[822] John x. 32.

[823] Matt. vi. 23, xxv. 41.

[824] See Note C.--Alleged Pauline Universalism.

[825] Matt. vii. 13; 2 Thess. i. 9; 2 Cor. ii. 15; 2 Pet. ii. 12, etc.

[826] Matt. iii. 12, xiii. 30, 50; John xv. 6, etc.

[827] 1 Thess. v. 3.

[828] John iii. 36 (R.V.).

[829] Life in Christ, chap. xxii.

[830] 1 Pet. iii. 18-20, iv. 6.

[831] 2 Cor. vi. 2 (R.V.).

[832] E.g. Matt. xxv. 31-46; 2 Cor. v 10; Rev. xx. 12.

[833] Heb. ix. 27.

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APPENDIX.

THE IDEA OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

In the original plan of these Lectures it was my intention to include a

Lecture on "The Incarnation and the New Life of Humanity; the Kingdom

of God," which would have found its fitting place between the eighth

and what is now the ninth. Such a Lecture is obviously needed to

complete the course. After resurrection came exaltation. After Calvary

came Pentecost. After the ministry of the Son came the dispensation of

the Spirit. The new life proceeding from Christ, entering first as a

regenerating principle into the individual soul, was gradually to

permeate and transform society. The doctrine of Redemption passes over

into that of the kingdom of God. This design has reluctantly had to he

abandoned, and all I can here attempt, in addition to the brief

allusions in Lecture Ninth, is to give a few notes on the general idea

of the kingdom of God.

I. I shall refer first to the place of this idea in recent theology.

This idea has had a prominence accorded to it in recent theology it

never possessed before, and the most thoroughgoing attempts are made to

give it application in both dogmatics and ethics. By making it the

head-notion in theology, and endeavouring to deduce all particular

conceptions from it, it is thought that we place ourselves most in

Christ's own point of view, and keep most nearly to His own lines of

teaching. Kant here, as in so many other departments, may be named as

the forerunner; and fruitful suggestions may be gleaned from writers

like Schleiermacher, Schmid, and Beck. It is the school of Ritschl,

however, which has done most to carry out consistently this all-ruling

notion of the kingdom of God, making it the determinative conception

even in our ideas of sin, of the Person of Christ, etc. Through their

influence it has penetrated widely and deeply into current theological

thought, and is creating for itself quite an extensive literature.

[834]

This being the prevailing tendency, I may not unnaturally be blamed for

not making more use of this idea than I have done in these Lectures. If

this is the chief and all-embracing, the all-comprehensive and

all-inclusive notion of the pure Christian view, it may be felt that

the attempt to develop the Christian "Weltanschauung," without explicit

reference to it, is bound to be a failure. I may reply that I have not

altogether left it out; it is, indeed, the conception I should have

wished to develop further, as best fitted to convey my idea of the goal

of the Christian Redemption, and of the great purpose of God of which

that is the expression. But I have another reason. It is, that I

gravely doubt the possibility or desirability of making this the

all-embracing, all-dominating conception of Christian theology, except,

of course, as the conception of an end affects and determines all that

leads up to it. And even here the idea of the kingdom of God is not the

only or perfectly exhaustive conception. The following reasons may be

given for this opinion:--

1. The kingdom of God is not so presented in the New Testament. In the

preaching of Christ in the Synoptic Gospels, this idea has indeed a

large place. Christ attaches Himself in this way to the hopes of His

nation, and to the doctrine of the prophets. Yet the very variety of

the aspects of His doctrine of the kingdom shows how difficult it must

be to sum them all up permanently under this single formula. In the

Gospel of John, the idea is not so prominent, but recedes behind that

of "life." In the Epistles, it goes still more decidedly into the

background. Instead of the kingdom, it is Christ Himself who is new

made prominent, and becomes the centre of interest. Harnack notices

this in his Dogmengeschichte. "It is not wonderful," he says, "that in

the oldest Christian preaching Jesus Christ' meets us as frequently as

in the preaching of Jesus the kingdom of God itself." [835] In 1 Peter

the expression is not found; in James only once. The Pauline theology

is developed from its own basis, without any attempt to make it fit

into this conception. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, it is other ideas

that rule. Where this idea is used in the Epistles, it is generally

with an eschatological reference. [836] The Apocalypse is the book of

the New Testament which gives it most prominence.

2. The kingdom of God is not a notion which can be treated as a fixed

quantity. The greatest possible diversity prevails among the

interpreters as to what ideas are to be attached to this expression.

Whether the kingdom of God is something set up in this life (Ritschl,

Wendt, etc.), or is something which has reference only to the future

(Kaftan, Schmoller, J. Weiss, etc.); whether it is to be taken in a

purely ethical and religious sense (Ritschl, etc.), or is to he

extended to embrace all the relations of existence--the family, state,

art, culture, etc. (Schleiermacher, Beck, etc.); what is the nature of

the good which it promises--these and numberless other points are still

keenly under discussion. This is not a reason for saying that on

Christ's lips the term has no definite signification, but it shows that

the time is not yet ripe for making it the one and all-inclusive notion

in theology.

3. Even when we have reached what seems a satisfactory conception of

the kingdom, it will be found difficult in practice to bring all the

parts and subjects of theology under it. In proof of this, appeal might

be made to the work of those who have adopted this as their principle

of treatment. [837] The older Nitzsch, in his System of Doctrine, says

of a writer (Theremin) who maintained the possibility of such a

deduction, that if he had really applied his general notion of the

kingdom of God to a partition and articulation of the Christian

doctrinal system, it would have become manifest of itself that this was

not the right middle notion to bind the parts together. Schleiermacher,

and Beck, and Lipsius, alike fail to carry through this idea in their

systems. Either the doctrines are viewed only in this relation, in

which case many aspects are overlooked which belong to a full system of

theology; or a mass of material is taken in which is only connected

with this idea in the loosest way. The idea of the kingdom of God

becomes in this way little more than a formal scheme or groundwork into

which the ordinary material of theology is fitted. Ritschl, indeed,

renounces the idea of a perfect unity, when he says that Christianity

is an ellipse with two foci --one the idea of the kingdom of God, the

other the idea of Redemption. [838]

4. The true place of the idea of the kingdom of God in theology is as a

teleological conception. It defines the aim and purpose of God in

creation and Redemption. It is the highest aim, but everything else in

the plan and purpose of God cannot be deduced from it. Even as end, we

must distinguish between the aim of God to establish a kingdom of God

on earth and the ultimate end--the unity of all things natural and

spiritual in Christ. The fulness of this last conception is not

exhausted in the one idea of "kingdom," though this certainly touches

the central and essential fact, that God is "all in all." [839]

II. Let us next consider the teaching of Jesus on the kingdom of God.

Here,

1. I cannot but agree with those who think that the kingdom of God, in

Christ's view, is a present, developing reality. [840] This is implied

in the parables of growth (mustard seed, leaven, seed growing

secretly); in the representations of it, in its earthly form, as a

mixture of good and bad (wheat and tares, the net of fishes); in the

description of the righteousness of the kingdom (Sermon on the Mount),

which is to be realised in the ordinary human relations; as well as in

many special sayings. I do not see how anyone can read these passages

and doubt that in Christ's view the kingdom was a presently-existing,

slowly developing reality, [841] originating in His word, containing

mixed elements, and bound in its development to a definite law of

rhythm ("first the blade, then the ear," etc.). [842] On the other

hand, the idea has an eschatological reference. The kingdom is not

something which humanity produces by its own efforts, but something

which comes to it from above. It is the entrance into humanity of a new

life from heaven. In its origin, its power; its blessings, its aims,

its end, it is supernatural and heavenly. Hence it is the kingdom of

heaven, and two stadia are distinguished in its existence--an earthly

and an eternal; the latter being the aspect that chiefly prevails in

the Epistles. [843]

2. What is the nature of this kingdom of God on earth? In the Lecture,

I have spoken of it as a new principle introduced into society which is

fitted and destined to transform it in all its relations. This is the

view of Schleiermacher, Neander, [844] Beck, of Dorner, Martensen,

Harless, in their works on "Christian Ethics," and of most Protestant

writers. This view, however, is contested, and has to be considered.

(1) Now, first, it is to be acknowledged that in Christ's teaching it

is the spiritual, or directly religious and ethical, side of the

kingdom which alone is made prominent. Those who would identify the

kingdom off-hand with social aims and endeavours, such as we know them

in the nineteenth century, look in vain in Christ's teaching for their

warrant. There the whole weight is rested on the inward disposition, on

the new relation to God, on the new life of the Spirit, on the new

righteousness proceeding from that life, on the new hopes and

privileges of the sons of God. Everything is looked at in the light of

the spiritual, the eternal. We read nothing in Christ of the effects of

His religion on art, on culture, on philosophy, on politics, on

commerce, on education, on science, on literature, on economical or

social reform. It is the same with the apostles. Absorbed in the

immediate work of men's salvation, they do not look at, or speak of,

its remoter social effects. How far this is due in their case to the

absence of apprehension of a long period of development of Christ's

religion, and to a belief on the impending dissolution of the world, I

need not here discuss. [845] The fact remains that, as already stated,

while regarding the believer as already in God's kingdom and partaker

of its blessings, their conceptions of the kingdom, in its actual

manifestation, are mainly eschatological.

(2) But, second, as it is certain that a principle of this kind could

not enter into society without profoundly affecting it in all its

relations, so we may be sure that Christ did not leave this aspect of

it out of account. And when we look a little deeper, we see that

Christ, though He does not lay stress on this side, yet by no means

excludes it, but, on the contrary, presupposes and assumes it in His

teaching. It is to be observed:

(a) Christ, in His teaching, presupposes the truth of the Old

Testament, and moves in the circle of its conceptions. The Old

Testament moves predominatingly in the religious and ethical sphere

too, but there is a large material background or framework. We have

accounts of the creation, of the early history of man, of his vocation

to replenish the earth and subdue it, of the first institutions of

society, of the beginnings of civilisation, of the divisions of

nations, etc. Christ never leaves this Old Testament ground. The world

to Him is God's world, and not the devil's. He has the deepest feeling

for its beauty, its sacredness, the interest of God in the humblest of

His creatures; His parables are drawn from its laws; He recognises that

its institutions are the expression of a Divine order. The worlds of

nature and society, therefore, in all the wealth and fulness of their

relations, are always the background of His picture. We see this in His

parables, which have nothing narrow and ascetic about them, hut mirror

the life of humanity in it amplest breadth--the sower, shepherd,

merchant, handicraftsman, the servants with their talents (and proving

faithful and unfaithful in the use of them), the builder, the

vineyard-keeper, weddings, royal feasts, etc.

(b) The world, indeed, in its existing form, Christ cannot recognise as

belonging to His kingdom. Rather, it is a hostile power--"the world,"

in the bad sense. His disciples are to expect hatred and persecution in

it. It is under the dominion of Satan, "the prince of this world."

[846] His kingdom will only come through a long succession of wars,

crises, sorrows, and terrible tribulations. Yet there is nothing

Manichaean, or dualistic, in Christ's way of conceiving of this

presence of evil in the world. If man is evil, he is still capable of

Redemption; and what is true of the individual is true of society. His

kingdom is a new power entering into it for the purpose of its

transformation, and is regarded as a growing power in it.

(c) Christ, accordingly, gives us many indications of His true view of

the relation of His kingdom to society. The world is His Father's, and

human paternity is but a lower reflection of the Divine Fatherhood.

Marriage is a Divine institution, to be jealously guarded, and Christ

consecrated it by His special presence and blessing. The State also is

a Divine ordinance, and tribute is due to its authority. [847] The

principles He lays down in regard to the use and perils of wealth; love

to our neighbour in his helplessness and misery; the care of the poor;

the infinite value of the soul, etc., introduce new ideals, and involve

principles fitted to transform the whole social system. His miracles of

healing show His care for the body. With this correspond His

injunctions to His disciples. He does not pray that they may be taken

out of the world, but only that they may be kept from its evil. [848]

They are rather to live in the world, showing by their good works that

they are the sons of their Father in heaven; are to be the light of the

world, and the salt of the earth. [849] Out of this life in the world

will spring a new type of marriage relation, of family life, of

relation between masters and servants, of social existence generally.

It cannot be otherwise, if Christ's kingdom is to be the leaven He says

it shall be. The apostles, in their views on all these subjects, are in

entire accord with Christ. [850]

(3) We may glance at a remaining point, the relation of the idea of the

kingdom of God to that of the Church. If our previous exposition is

correct, these ideas are not quite identical, as they have frequently

been taken to be. The kingdom of God is a wider conception than that of

the Church. On the other hand, these ideas do not stand so far apart as

they are sometimes represented. In some cases, as, e.g., in Matt.

xviii. 18, 19, the phrase "kingdom of heaven" is practically synonymous

with the Church. The Church is, as a society, the visible expression of

this kingdom in the world; is, indeed, the only society which does

formally profess (very imperfectly often) to represent it. Yet the

Church is not the outward embodiment of this kingdom in all its

aspects, but only in its directly religious and ethical, i.e. in its

purely spiritual aspect. It is not the direct business of the Church,

e.g., to take to do with art, science, politics, general literature,

etc., but to bear witness for God and His truth to men, to preach and

spread the gospel of the kingdom, to maintain God's worship, to

administer the sacraments, to provide for the self-edification and

religious fellowship of believers. Yet the Church has a side turned

towards all these other matters, especially to all efforts for the

social good and bettering of mankind, and cannot but interest herself

in these efforts, and lend what aid to them she can. She has her

protest to utter against social injustice and immorality; her witness

to bear to the principles of conduct which ought to guide individuals

and nations in the various departments of their existence; her help to

bring to the solution of the questions which spring up in connection

with capital and labour, rich and poor, rulers and subjects; her

influence to throw into the scale on behalf of "whatsoever things are

true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just,

whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever

things are of good report" (Phil. iv. 8). A wholesome tone in

literature, a Christian spirit in art and science, a healthy temper in

amusements, wise and beneficent legislation on Christian principles in

the councils of the nation, the spirit of long-suffering, peace,

forbearance, and generosity, brought into the relations of men with one

another in society, Christian ideals in the relations of nations to one

another, self-sacrificing labours for the amelioration and elevation of

the condition of the masses of the people,--these are matters in which

the Church can never but be interested. Else she foregoes her calling,

and may speedily expect to be removed out of her place.

III. Historically, we might have looked, had space permitted, at this

kingdom of God as the principle of a new life to humanity. I do not

enter into this extensive field, but only remark:

1. The principle of this new life is Christ risen and exalted. It was

not by His preaching merely that Christ came to set up the kingdom of

God. The foundation of it was laid, not only in His Word, but in His

redeeming acts--in His death, His resurrection, His exaltation to

heaven, His sending of the Spirit. The new kingdom may be said to have

begun its formal existence on the day of Pentecost. This is the mistake

of those who would have us confine our ideas of the kingdom solely to

what is given in the records of Christ's earthly life--they would have

us go behind Pentecost, and remain there. But Christ's teaching on

earth could not anticipate, much less realise, what His death, and the

gift of His Spirit, have given us. It is not Christ's earthly life, but

His risen life, which is the principle of quickening to His Church.

[851] He himself bade His disciples wait for the coming of the Spirit;

and told them that it was through His being "lifted up" that the world

would be brought to Him. The Spirit would complete His mission; supply

what was lacking in His teaching; bring to remembrance what He had said

to them; and would work as a power convincing of sin, of righteousness,

and of judgment in the world. [852]

2. This new life in humanity is (1) a new life in the individual, a

regeneration of the individual soul, a power of sanctification and

transformation in the nature. But (2) it is further, as we have seen, a

principle of new life in society, exercising there a transforming

influence. What society owes to the religion of Christ, even in a

temporal and social respect, it is beyond the power of man to tell. It

is this that enables us, from the Christian standpoint, to take an

interest in all labours for the social good of men, whether they

directly bear the Christian name or not. The influence of Christ and

His ideals is more apparent in them than their promoters sometimes

think. They are not without relation to the progress of the kingdom.

3. The kingdom of God, being the end, is also the centre, i.e. it is

with ultimate reference to it that we are to read, and are best able to

appreciate, the great movements of Providence. We can already see how

the progress of invention and discovery, of learning and science, of

facilities of communication and interconnection of nations, has aided

in manifold ways the advance of the kingdom of God. It has often been

remarked how the early spread of Christianity was facilitated by the

political unity of the Roman Empire, and the prevalence of the Greek

tongue; and how much the revival of learning, the invention of

printing, and the enlargement of men's ideas by discovery, did to

prepare the way for the sixteenth century Reformation. In our own

century the world is opened up as never before, and the means of a

rapid spread of the gospel are put within our power, if the Church has

only faithfulness to use them. It is difficult to avoid the belief that

the singular development of conditions in this century, its unexampled

progress in discovery and in the practical mastery of nature, the

marvellous opening up of the world which has been the result, and the

extraordinary multiplication of the means and agencies of rapid

communication, together portend some striking development of the

kingdom of God which shall cast all others into the shade,--a crisis,

perhaps, which shall have the most profound effect upon the future of

humanity. [853] The call is going forth again, "Prepare ye in the

wilderness the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway

for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill

shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the

rough places plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and

all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken

it" [854]

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[834] Recent works in our own country are Professor Candlish's The

Kingdom of God (Cunningham Lectures, 1884), and Professor A. B. Bruce's

The Kingdom of God (1889). A good discussion of the subject is

contained in an article by D. J. Kostlin, in the Studien und Kritiken

for 1892 (3rd part). I may mention also Schmoller's recent work, Die

Lehre vom Reiche Gottes in den Schriften des Neuen Testaments (1891);

another by E. Issel on the same subject (1891); and a revolutionary

essay by J. Weiss, entitled Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes (1892).

[835] Vol. i. p. 79. Kaftan similarly remarks: "In Paul also the

doctrine of the highest good is determined through faith in the risen

and exalted Christ who had appeared to him before the gates of

Damascus. It can indeed be said that the glorified Christ here fills

the place taken in the preaching of Jesus by the super-terrestrial

kingdom of God, which has appeared in His Person, and through Him is

made accessible as a possession to His disciples."--Das Wesen, p. 229.

[836] Not always, however; e.g. Rom. xiv. 17. Besides, what Christ

meant by the present being of His kingdom is always recognised by these

writers.

[837] Cf. article by Kostlin above referred to.

[838] Recht. und Ver. iii. p. 11.

[839] 1 Cor. xv. 28.

[840] E.g. Wendt.

[841] Cf. as in earlier note (p. 334), Reuss, Hist. of Christ. Theol.

i. pp. 217, 218 (Eng. trans.); Bruce, Kingdom of God, chap. xii.

[842] The kingdom of God, in its simplest definition, is the reign of

God in human hearts and in society; and as such it may be viewed under

two aspects: (1) the reign or dominion of God Himself; (2) the sphere

of this dominion. This sphere, again, may be (1) the individual soul;

(2) the totality of such souls (the Church invisible); (3) the visible

society of believers (the Church); (4) humanity in the whole complex of

its relations, so far as this is brought under the influence of God's

Spirit and of the principles of His religion. It is obvious--and this

is one source of the difficulty in coming to a common

understanding--that Christ does not always use this expression in the

same sense, or with the same breadth of signification. Sometimes one

aspect, sometimes another, of His rich complex idea is intended by this

term. Sometimes the kingdom of God is a power within the soul of the

individual; sometimes it is a leaven in the world, working for its

spiritual transformation; sometimes it is the mixed visible society;

sometimes it is that society under its ideal aspect; sometimes it is

the totality of its blessings and powers (the chief good); sometimes it

is the future kingdom of God in its heavenly glory and perfection. The

view that Christ looked for a long and slow process of development and

ripening in His kingdom may seem to be opposed by the eschatological

predictions in Matt. xxiv. Even here, however, it is possible to

distinguish a nearer and a remoter horizon--the one, referring to the

destruction of Jerusalem and the dissolution of the Jewish state, and

demoted by the expression, "these things" ("this generation shall not

pass away, till all these things he accomplished," ver. 34); and the

other, denoted by the words, "that day and hour" (ver. 36), regarding

which Christ says, "Of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the

angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only."

[843] The eschatological view alone is that taken by Kaftan, Schmoller,

J. Weiss, etc.

[844] See History of the Church, opening paragraphs.

[845] Paul's large view of the philosophy of history in Rom. xi., of a

future "fulness of the Gentiles," etc., is against this supposition. It

is too hastily assumed that the Apostle looked for the Lord's return in

his own lifetime.--See note by Professor Marcus feds on 1 Thess. iv. 15

in Schaff's Popular Commentary on the New Testament.

[846] John xii. 31, xv. 11, etc.

[847] On above see Matt. vii. 11, xix. 8-10; John ii. 1-11 (cf. Matt.

ix. 15); Matt. xxii. 21, etc.

[848] John xvii. 15.

[849] Matt. v. 13-16.

[850] e.g. Rom. xiii.; 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2; Heb. xiii. 4; 1 Pet. ii. 13-15.

[851] "In truth the life of the soul hidden with Christ in God is the

kernel of the Christian religion."--Kaftan, Das Wesen, p. 76. Kaftan

has here the advantage over Ritschl, Schleiermacher, etc.

[852] John xii. 32, xiv. 26, xv. 7-15.

[853] It is curious how this feeling of an impending crisis sometimes

finds expression in minds not given to apocalyptic reveries. Lord

Beaconsfield said in 1874: "The great crisis of the world is nearer

than some suppose." In a recent number of the Forum, Professor Goldwin

Smith remarks: "There is a general feeling abroad that the stream of

history is drawing near a climax now; and there are apparent grounds

for the surmise. There is everywhere in the social frame an untoward

unrest, which is usually a sign of fundamental change within."

[854] Isa. xl. 3, 4 (R.V.)

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LECTURE I NOTE A.--P. 3.

THE IDEA ON THE "WELTANSCHAUUNG."

The history of this term has yet to be written. I do not know that Kant

uses it, or the equivalent term "Weltansicht," at all--it is at least

not common with him. The same is true of Fichte, Schelling, and

generally of writers till after the middle of this century. [855] Yet

Kant above all gave the impulse to its use, both by his theoretic

"Idea" of the world, and by his practical philosophy, which results in

a "Weltanschauung" under the idea of the moral. Hegel, however, has the

word, e.g., "As man, religion is essential to him, and not a strange

experience. Still the question arises as to the relation of religion to

the rest of his Weltanschauung,' and philosophical knowledge relates

itself to this subject, and has to do essentially with

it."--Religionsphilosophie, i. p. 7. Within the last two or three

decades the word has become exceedingly common in all kinds of books

dealing with the higher questions of religion and philosophy--so much

so as to have become in a manner indispensable. Thus we read of the

"Theistic," "Atheistic, "Pantheistic," "Realistic," "Materialistic,

"Mechanistic," "Buddhistic," "Kantian" Weltanschauungen; and a

multitude of similar phrases might be cited.

The best special contribution to the discussion of the idea I have met

with is in a book entitled Die Weltanschauung des Christenthums, by

August Baur (1881), which I regret I did not come across till my own

work was finished. [856] In this work the author expresses his surprise

that more has not been done for the elucidation of a term which has

become one of the favourite terms of the day; and alludes to the

absence of any explanation of it (a fact which had struck myself) in

books professedly dealing with the terminology of philosophy and

theology, as, e.g., Rud. Eucken's Geschichte und Kritik der

Grundbegriffe der Gegenwart (1878), and Geschichte der philosophischen

Terminologie (1879). [857] The same writer has contributed an article

on "The Notion and Ground-plan of the Weltanschauung' generally, and of

the Christian in particular," to the Jahrbucher d. prot. Theologie,

vol. iii. A valuable examination of the subject is contained also in an

able work published in 1887, Das menschliche Erkennen, Grundlinien der

Erkenntnisstheorie und Metaphysik, by Dr. A. Dorner. I might further

refer to Hartmann's Religionsphilosophie, Zweiter Theil: Die Religion

des Geistes, which, on this particular subject, contains a good deal of

most suggestive matter (pp. 1-55). As may be gathered from the remarks

in the close of the Lecture, the idea has a large place in the writings

of the Ritschlian school. It is discussed with special fulness and care

in Herrmann's Die Religion im Verh�ltniss zum Welterkennen und zur

Sittlichkeit, the last section of which bears the heading, "The Task of

the Dogmatic Proof of the Christian Weltanschauung.'" Lipsius also

devotes considerable attention to it in the first part of his Dogmatik

(sects. 16-115).

It is characteristic of the Ritschlian school that it will allow no

origin for the "Weltanschauung" but that which springs from religion or

morality. Ritschl, e.g., traces the tendency to the formation of

general views of the world solely to the religious impulse. Philosophy

also, he says, "raises the claim to produce in its own way a view of

the world as a whole; but in this there betrays itself much more an

impulse of a religious kind, which philosophers must distinguish from

their method of knowledge."--Die christ. Lehre von der Rechtfertigung

und Versohnung, iii. p. 197 (3rd ed.). This is connected with his view

that religion itself originates in the need which man feels of help

from a supernatural power to enable him to maintain his personality

against the limitations and hindrances of natural existence. [858]

Since, however, he allows that philosophy has as part of its task "the

aim of comprehending the world-whole in a highest law," and that "the

thought of God which pertains to religion is also employed in some form

in every philosophy which is not materialistic" (p. 194), what he

really contends for would seem to amount to no more than this, that

theoretic knowledge alone cannot attain to that highest view of God

which is given in the Christian religion, and which is necessary for

the completion of a after satisfactory view of the universe as a whole.

[859] The truth is, Ritschl's views vary very widely on these topics in

the different editions of his chief work, and it is no easy task to

reduce his statements to unity.

In quite a similar spirit to Ritschl, his disciples Herrmann and Kaftan

conceive of the "Weltanschauung" as due only to the operation of the

practical or religious motive. [860] The peculiarity of the Christian

"Weltanschauung" Kaftan sums up in the two positions--"that the world

is perfectly dependent on God, and that He orders everything in it in

conformity with the end of His holy love." [861]

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[855] But Fitche has the equivalent "Ansicht der Welt," and

occasionally "Weltansicht." See especially his Die Anweisung zum

seligen Leben (1806), Lect. V. "Weltansicht" is Schopenhauer's word.

[856] The headings of the chapters of Baur's book will suffice to show

its importance for our subject. They are--

1. The general notion of the "Weltanschauung."

2. Characterisation and criticism of the objections of the modern

spirit against religion and the religious "Weltanschauung."

3. Possibility and necessity of an ideal, supersensible

"Weltanschauung."

4. The supersensible, ideal "Weltanschauung" according to its essence,

and us its transition to the religious "Weltanschauung" generally.

5. The "Weltanschauung" of Christianity.

In theology A. Baur is a follower of Alex. Schweizer, of whom a good

notice may be seen in Pfleiderer's Development of Theology, pp.

125-130.

[857] Eucken himself, however, uses it, as when be says, "Bohme strives

after an expression for the notion of consciousness and

self-consciousness, which has a central place within his

"Weltanschauung" (Gesch. der phil. Term. p. 128); and has recently

published an admirable historical and critical work, bearing the

kindred title, Die Lebensanschauungen Denker (1890). This work contains

a valuable section on "Die christliche Welt and die Lebensanschauungen

Jesu" (pp. 154-205).

[858] Cf. Recht. und Ver. iii. p. 189.

[859] Ritschl's own words, with which we heartily agree, are: "If

theoretical thought is ever to solve the problem of the world as a

whole, it will have to fall back on the Christian view of God, of the

world, and of human destiny" (2nd ed. p. 210).

[860] With the Ritschlian theologians religion and morality sustain

only an external relation to each other. The deepest impulse is not

religion, but self-maintenance (Herrmann), or self-satisfaction

(Kaftan). Religion is but means to this end.

[861] Das Wesen d. christ. Religion, p. 393.

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LECTURE I NOTE B.--P. 5.

CLASSIFICATION ON "WELTANSCHAUUNGEN."

It is not easy to find a principle of division which will yield a

perfectly satisfactory classification of systems which we yet readily

recognise as presenting distinct types of world-view. The deepest

ground of division, undoubtedly, is that which divides systems

according as they do or do not recognise a spiritual principle at the

basis of the universe. But when, by the aid of this principle, we have

put certain systems on the one side, and certain systems on the other,

it does not carry us much further. We must, therefore, either content

ourselves with a simple catalogue, or try some other method. In the

earliest attempts at a world-view many elements are mixed up

together--religious, rational, and ethical impulses, poetic

personification of nature, the mythological tendency, etc., and

classification is impossible. The "Weltanschauung" at this stage is

rude, tentative, imperfect, and goes little further than seeking an

origin of some kind for the existing state of things, and connecting

the different parts of nature and of human life in some definite way

with particular gods. The interest felt in the soul and its fates

enlarge this "Weltanschauung" to embrace a world of the unseen (Sheol,

Amenti, etc.). Of reflective "Weltanschauungen," as these appear in

history, we may roughly distinguish--

I. The Phenomenalistic and Agnostic--which refuse all inquiry into

causes, and would confine themselves strictly to the laws of phenomena.

The only pure type of this class which I know is the Comtist or

Positivist, which contents itself with a subjective synthesis. [862]

(Mr. Spencer's system, though called Agnostic, is really a system of

Monism, and falls into the third class. See Lecture III.)

II. The Atomistic and Materialistic (Atheistic). The systems of

Democritus, Epicurus, Lucretius, and materialistic systems generally,

are of this class. As no spiritual principle is recognised, the unity

can only be sought in a highest law of the elements--in the order of

the universe--in the way in which things cohere. (But many modern

systems of Materialism, again, are really monisms, e.g., Haeckel,

Strauss.)

III. Pantheistic systems--and these constitute a vast family with a

great variety of forms. Here the universe is conceived as dependent on

a first principle or power, but one within itself, of which it is

simply the necessary unfolding, and with which, in essence, it is

identical. The systems differ according to the view taken of the nature

of this principle, and of the law of its evolution. The principle may

be conceived of:

1. Predominatingly as physical--in which case the system is allied to

Materialism (Materialistic Pantheism).

2. As the vital principle of an organism (Hylozoistic).

3. As an intelligent world-soul (Stoicism--analogous to fire).

4. Metaphysically--as Being (Eleatics), Substance (Spinoza), etc.

5. Spiritually--as impersonal Reason, or Spirit (Hegel), or Will

(Schopenhauer, etc.).

Thus, while on its lower side Pantheism is indistinguishable from

Materialism and Atheism, on its higher side it approaches, and often

nearly merges into, Theism (as with the Neo-Hegelians).

IV. Systems which recognise a spiritual, self-conscious Cause of the

universe. Here belong:

1. Deism--which views God predominatingly as Creator, but denies

present communication and Revelation, and practically separates God

from the world. [863]

2. Theism--which views God as the Living Creator, Immanent Cause, and

Moral Ruler of the world and of man.

3. Christian Trinitarianism--a higher form of Theism. [The division of

systems as Optimistic and Pessimistic has reference to another

standpoint--not to the first principle of the system, hut to its

ethical character and end. As combined with the others, it would form a

cross-division.]

There is yet another division of types of world-view (equally important

for our subject), based, not on their objective character, but on the

mental attitude of the observer, and on the activities employed in

their formation- Three main types of world-view may be here

distinguished, answering to three distinct standpoints of the human

spirit, from each of which a "Weltanschauung" necessarily results.

These are:

1. The "Scientific"--in which the standpoint of the observer is in the

objective world, and things are viewed, as it were, wholly from

without. Abstraction is made from the thinking mind, and only external

relations (co-existence, succession, cause and effect, resemblance,

etc.) are regarded. The means employed are observation and induction,

and the end is the discovery of laws, and ultimately of a highest law,

under which all particular phenomena may be subsumed.

2. The "Philosophical"--which precisely inverts this relation. The

standpoint here is the thinking Ego, and things are regarded from

within in their relations to thought and knowledge. It starts from the

side of the thinking mind, as science from the side of the world as

known, in abstraction from the mind knowing it. From the philosophical

standpoint the world assumes a very different aspect from that which it

presents to empirical science, or to the ordinary irreflective

observer. All higher philosophy may be described as an attempt to

conclude in some way from the unity of reason to the unity of things.

The resultant world-view will assume two forms, according as the point

of departure is from the theoretical or the practical reason: (1) a

theoretical (as in the Absolutist attempts to deduce all things from a

principle given through pure thought); (2) a moral (e.g. the Kantian).

3. The "Religious"--which views everything from the standpoint of the

consciousness of dependence upon God, and refers all back to God. It

starts from the practical relation in which man stands to God as

dependent on Him, and desiring His help, support, and furtherance in

the aims of his life (natural, moral, distinctively religious aims).

The nature of the religious "Weltanschauung" and its relation to

theoretic knowledge is discussed later.

At no time, however, can these points of view be kept perfectly

distinct, and the claim of either science or philosophy to produce a

self-sufficing world-view must he pronounced untenable. Insensibly,

even in the pursuit of science, the standpoint changes from science to

philosophy; but this, in turn, cannot dispense with the material which

the sciences and the history of religions furnish to it; and it is

equally unable, out of its own resources, to produce an adequate and

satisfying world-view. It cannot therefore take the place of religion,

or furnish a "Weltanschauung" satisfying to the religious

consciousness. It is a well-recognised truth that philosophy has

founded systems and schools, but never religions. [864] The religious

world-view is better capable of independent existence than the others,

for here at least the mind is in union with the deepest principle of

all. But that principle needs to develop itself, and in practice it is

found that religion also is largely influenced in the construction of

its world-views by the state of scientific knowledge and the philosophy

of the time. The Indian religious systems are metaphysical throughout.

The early Greek fathers of the Church were largely influenced by

Platonism; the mediaeval schoolmen by Aristotelianism; modern

theologians by Kant, Hegel, etc. The type of world-view freest from all

trace of foreign influence is that found in the Old Testament, and

completed in the New. This unique character belongs to it as the

religion of Revelation.

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[862] A more extreme type of view still is the denial of the reality of

the world altogether--Acosmism.

[863] On the definition of terms, cf. Lipsius's Dogmatik, pp. 88, 89;

and Flint's Anti-Theistic Theories, pp. 339, 441-445.

[864] "A religion," says Reville, "may become historical, but no

philosophy has ever founded a religion possessing true historical

power."--History of Religions, p. 22 (Eng. trans.) cf. Strauss, Der

alte und der neue Glaube, p. 103 Hartmann, Religionsphilosophie, p. 23;

A. Dorner, Das menschl. Erkennen, p. 239.

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LECTURE I NOTE C--P. 7.

UNCONSCIOUS METAPHYSIC.

Schopenhauer has remarked that each man has his metaphysic.

"The man," says Zeller, "who is without any philosophic standpoint is

not on that account without any standpoint whatever; he who has formed

no scientific opinion on philosophical questions has an unscientific

opinion about them."--Pre-Soc. Phil. p. 23.

Principal Fairbairn observes: "Professor Tyndall's presidential address

is memorable enough, were it only as an instance of sweet simplicity in

things historical, and the most high-flying metaphysics disguised in

scientific terms."--Studies, p. 65.

Regarding Mr. Spencer: "Just as the term force revolutionises the

conception of the Unknowable, so it, in turn, transmuted into forces,

beguiles the physicist into the fancy that he is walking in the, to

him, sober and certain paths of observation and experiment, while in

truth he is soaring in the heaven of metaphysics."--Ibid. p. 97.

Professor Caird remarks of Comte: "Hence, while he pretends to renounce

metaphysics, he has committed himself to one of the most indefensible

of all metaphysical positions. . . . It is a residuum of bad

metaphysics, which, by a natural Nemesis, seems almost invariably to

haunt the minds of those writers who think they have renounced

metaphysics altogether."--Soc. Phil. of Comte, p. 121.

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LECTURE I NOTE D.--P. 9.

ANTAGONISM OF CHRISTIAN AND "MODERN" VIEWS OF THE WORLD--ANTISUPERNATURALISM

OF THE LATTER.

I add some illustrations of the remarks made on this subject in the

text.

Principal Fairbairn puts the matter thus: "The scientific and religious

conceptions of the world seem to stand at this moment in the sharpest

possible antagonism. . . . There is one fact we cannot well

overrate--the state of conflict or mental schism in which every devout

man, who is also a man of culture, feels himself compelled more or less

consciously to live. His mind is an arena in which two conceptions

struggle for the mastery, and the struggle seems so deadly as to demand

the death of the one for the life of time other, faith sacrificed to

knowledge, or knowledge to faith."--Studies in the Philosophy of

Religion and History, pp. 61, 62.

The uncompromising character of time conflict amid the nature of the

issues involved are well brought out in the following extracts from Mr.

Wicksteed's pamphlet on The Ecclesiastical Institutions of Holland.

"The religious movement," he says, "known in Holland as that of the

Modern School,' or New School,' or sometimes the School of Leiden,' is

essentially a branch of that wider religious movement extending over

the whole of Europe and America, which is a direct product upon the

field of religion of the whole intellectual life of the nineteenth

century.

"This Modern School, in the larger sense, is in fact essentially the

religious phase of that undefinable Zeit-Geist,' or spirit of the age,

sometimes called on the Continent modern consciousness,' the most

characteristic feature of which is a profound conviction of the organic

unity, whether spiritual or material, of the universe.

"This modern consciousness can make no permanent treaty of peace with

the belief which takes both the history and the philosophic science of

religion out of organic connection with history and philosophical

science in general No compromise, no mere profession of a frank

acceptance of the principles of the modern view of the world, can in

the long-run avail. The Traditional School cannot content the claims of

the Zeit-Geist' by concessions. Ultimately, it must either defy it or

yield to it unconditionally. . . .

"The task of modern theology, then, is to bring all parts of the

history of religion into organic connection with each other, and with

the general history of man, and to find in the human faculties

themselves, not in something extraneous to them, the foundations of

religious faith."--Pp. 55, 56.

The venerable Dr. Delitzsch, from the standpoint of faith, recognises

the same irreconcilable contrast, and in The Deep Gulf between the Old

and Modern Theology; a Confession (1890), gives strong expression to

his sense of the gravity of the situation. "It is plain, he says, "that

the difference between old and modern theology coincides at bottom with

the difference between the two conceptions of the world, which are at

present more harshly opposed than ever before. The modern view of the

world declares the miracle to be unthinkable, and thus excluded from

the historical mode of treatment; for there is only one world system,

that of natural law, with whose permanence the direct, extraordinary

interferences of God are irreconcilable. [865] . . . When the one

conception of the world is thus presented from the standpoint of the

other, the mode of statement unavoidably partakes of the nature of a

polemic. The special purpose, however, with which I entered on my

subject was not polemical. I wished to exhibit as objectively as

possible the deep gap which divides the theologians of to-day,

especially the thoughtful minds who have come into contact with

philosophy and science, into two camps. An accommodation of this

antagonism is impossible. We must belong to the one camp or the other.

We may, it is true, inside the negative camp, tone down our negation to

the very border of affirmation, and inside the positive camp we may

weaken our affirmation so as almost to change it to negation; the

representation by individuals of the one standpoint or the other leaves

room for a multitude of gradations and shades. But to the fundamental

question--Is there a supernatural realm of grace, and within it a

miraculous interference of God in the world of nature, an interference

displaying itself most centrally and decisively in the raising of the

Redeemer from the dead?--to this fundamental question, however we may

seek to evade it, the answer can only he yes or no. The deep gulf

remains. It will remain to the end of time. No effort of thought can

fill it up. There is no synthesis to bridge this thesis and antithesis.

Never shall we be able, by means of reasons, evidence, or the witness

of history, to convince those who reject this truth. But this do we

claim for ourselves, that prophets and apostles, and the Lord Himself,

stand upon our side; this we claim, that while the others use the

treasures of God's Word eclectically, we take our stand upon the whole

undivided truth."--Translation in Expositor, vol. ix. (3rd series), pp.

50, 53.

See also Hartmann's Die Krisis des Christenthums in der modernen

Theologie (1888), and his Selbstzersetzung des Christenthums (1888).

"From whatever side," he declares, "we may consider the ground-ideas of

Christianity and those of modern culture, everywhere there stands out

an irreconcilable contradiction of the two, and it is therefore no

wonder if this contradiction comes to light more or less in all

derivative questions."--Selbstzersetzung des Christenthums, p. 30.

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[865] Similarly Max M�ller finds the kernel of the modern conception of

the World in the idea "that there is law and order in everything, and

that an unbroken chain of causes and effects holds the whole universe

together,"--a conception which reduces the miraculous to mere

seeming.--Anthropological Religion, Preface, p. 10.

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LECTURE I NOTE E.--P. 9.

INTERNAL CONFLICTS OF THE "MODERN" VIEW.

An internecine warfare is waged among the representatives of the

"modern" view, quite as embittered and irreconcilable as that which

they unitedly wage against Christianity. A "Kampf der Weltanschauungen"

is going on here also. Deists, Pantheists, Agnostics, Pessimists,

Atheists, Positivists, and liberal theologians, unceasingly refute each

other; and were their respective opinions put to the vote, out of a

dozen systems, each would be found in a minority of one, with the other

eleven against it. If escape were sought in a theoretical scepticism,

which despairs of truth altogether, this would but add another sect to

the number, which would encounter the hostility of all the rest.

Not without justice, therefore, does Dr. Darner, after reviewing the

systems, speak of the attempt to set up a rival view to Christianity as

ending in a "screaming contradiction."--System of Christian Doctrine,

i. pp. 121, 122 (Eng. trans.).

"The atheistic systems of Germany," says Lichtenberger, "have raised

the standard, or rather the red rag' of Radicalism and Nihilism; and

have professed that their one and only principle was the very absence

of principles. The one bond which unites them at bottom is their hatred

of religion and of Christianity."--History of German Theology in the

Nineteenth Century, p. 370 (Eng. trans.).

"It is not here our business," says Beyschlag, "philosophically to

arrange matters between the Christian theistic Weltanschauung' on the

one side, and the deistic, or pantheistic, or materialistic, on the

other, which latter have first to fight out their mortal conflict with

one another."--Leben Jesu, i. p. 10.

A few examples in concreto will point the moral better than many

general statements.

The columns of the Nineteenth Century for 1884 witnessed an interesting

controversy between Mr. Herbert Spencer and Mr. Frederick Harrison, in

which some pretty hard words were bandied to and fro between the

combatants. Mr. Spencer had written a paper ("Religious Retrospect and

Prospect," January 1884), developing his theory of the origin of

religion from ghost-worship, and expounding his own substitute for

decaying religious faith. To this Mr. Harrison replied in a vigorous

article (July 1884), ridiculing Mr. Spencer's proposed substitute as

"The Ghost of Religion," and scoffing at his "Unknowable" as "an

ever-present conundrum to be everlastingly given up." Extending his

attack to certain modern Theisms, he said, "The Neo-Theisms have all

the same mortal weakness that the Unknowable has. They offer no

kinship, sympathy, or relation whatever between worshippers and

worshipped. They, too, are logical formulas begotten in controversy,

dwelling apart from men and the world." "Tacitly implying," retorts Mr.

Spencer, in a later round of the controversy, "that Mr. Harrison's

religion supplies this relation" (November 1884), which, as he shows at

great length, it does not ("Retrogressive Religion," July 1884). Sir

James Stephen also had offended Mr. Spencer by describing his

"Unknowable" (June 1884) as "like a gigantic soap-bubble, not burst,

but blown thinner and thinner till it has become absolutely

imperceptible"; and Mr. Harrison also returns to the attack ("Agnostic

Metaphysics," September 1884).

In a subsequent controversy, Mr. Harrison fares as badly at the hands

of Professor Huxley as he did at those of Mr. Spencer. Replying to an

article of his on "The Future of Agnosticism," Professor Huxley says:

"I am afraid I can say nothing which shall manifest my personal respect

for this able writer, and for the zeal and energy with which he ever

and anon galvanises the weakly frame of Positivism, until it looks more

than ever like John Bunyan's Pope and Pagan rolled into one. There is a

story often repeated, and I am afraid none the less mythical on that

account, of a valiant and loud-voiced corporal, in command of two full

privates, who, falling in with a regiment of the enemy in the dark,

orders it to surrender under pain of instant annihilation by his force;

and the enemy surrenders accordingly. I am always reminded of this tale

when I read the Positivist commands to the forces of Christianity and

of science; only, the enemy shows no more signs of intending to obey

now than they have done any time these forty years."--"Agnosticism," in

Nineteenth Century, February 1889. [866]

Mr. Samuel Laing, author of Modern Science and Modern Thought, probably

regards himself as quite a typical representative of the modern spirit.

The "old creeds," he informs us "must be transformed or die."

Unfortunately, not content with assailing other people's creeds, he

undertook the construction of one of his own, [867] concerning which

Professor Huxley writes: "I speak only for my. self, and I do not dream

of anathematising and excommunicating Mr. Laing. But when I consider

his creed, and compare it with the Athanasian, I think I have, on the

whole, a clearer conception of the meaning of the latter. Polarity,' in

Art. viii., for example, is a word about which I heard a good deal in

my youth, when Natur-philosophie' was in fashion, and greatly did I

suffer from it. For many years past, whenever I have met with polarity'

anywhere but in a discussion of some purely physical topic, such as

magnetism, I have shut the book. Mr. Laing must excuse me if the force

of habit was too much for me when I read his eighth

article."--Nineteenth Century, February 1889. Mr. Laing's own book is a

good example of how these "modern" systems eat and devour one another.

See his criticisms of theories in chap. vii., etc.

Mr. Rathbone Greg is another writer who laboured hard to demolish "the

creed of Christendom," while retaining a great personal reverence for

Jesus. His concessions on this subject, however, did not meet with much

favour on his own side. Mr. F. W. Newman, in an article on "The New

Christology," in the Fortnightly Review (December 1873), thus speaks of

his general treatment: "He has tried and proved the New Testament, and

has found it wanting, not only as to historical truth, but as to moral

and religious wisdom; yet he persists in the effort of hammering out of

it what shall be a guide of life.' In fact, he learns by studying the

actual world of man; but in his theory he is to discover a fountain of

wisdom, by penetrating to some essence in a book which he esteems very

defective and erroneous. This is to rebuild the things he has

destroyed.' To sit in judgment on Jesus of Nazareth, and convict Him of

glaring errors, as a first step, and then, as a second, set Him on a

pedestal to glorify Him as the most Divine of men and the sublimest of

teachers, a perpetual miracle,--is a very lame and inconsequent

proceeding. . . . Mr. Greg, as perhaps all our Unitarians, desires a

purified gospel. Why, then, is not such a thing published? No doubt,

because it is presently found that nearly every sentence has to he

either cut out or rewritten."

Mr. Greg and Mr. Newman are Theists. The latter even writes: "The claim

of retaining a belief in God, while rejecting a Personal God, I do not

know how to treat with respect." Mr. Fiske also, author of Cosmic

Philosophy, is in his own way a Theist. But "Physicus," another

representative of the "modern" view, in his Candid Examination of

Theism, can see no evidence for the existence of a God, and speaks thus

of Mr. Fiske's attempt to develop Theism out of Mr. Spencer's

philosophy: "I confess that, on first seeing his work, I experienced a

faint hope that, in the higher departments of of evolution as conceived

by Mr. Spencer, and elaborated by disciple, there might be found some

rational justification for an attenuated form of Theism. But on

examination I find that the bread which these fathers have offered us

turns out to be a stone....We have but to think of the disgust with

which the vast majority of living persons would regard the sense in

which Mr. Fiske uses the term Theism,' to perceive how intimate is the

association of that term with the idea of a Personal God. Such persons

will feel strongly that, by this final act of purification, Mr. Fiske

has simply purified the Deity altogether out of existence."--Candid

Examination, essay on "Cosmic Theism," pp. 131, 138, and throughout.

[868]

Thus the strife goes on. Strauss, in his Old Faith and the New, refutes

Pessimism; but Hartmann, the Pessimist, retorts on Strauss that he has

"no philosophic head," and shows the ridiculousness of his demand that

we should love the Universe. "It is a rather strong, or rather naive

claim, that we should experience a sentiment of religious piety and

dependence for a Universum' which is only an aggregate of all material

substances, and which threatens every instant to crush us between the

wheels and teeth of its pitiless mechanism."--Selbstzer. des Christ.

Pref. and p. 81.

Hartmann may as well speak of the "Selbstzersetzung" and

"Zersplitterung" of unbelief, as of the disintegration of Christianity.

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[866] Mr. Harrison complains (Fortnightly Review, October 1892) that

Mr. Huxley, in this article, has held him up "to public ridicule as

pontiff, prophet, general humbug, and counterpart of Joe Smith the

Mormon," and tries to show how much agreement, mostly in negations,

underlies their differences.

[867] "It appears that Mr. Gladstone, some time ago, asked Mr. Laing if

he could draw up a short summary of the negative creed; a body of

negative propositions which have so far been adopted on the negative

aide as to be what the Apostles' and other accepted creeds are on the

positive; and Mr. Laing at once kindly obliged Mr. Gladstone with the

desired articles--eight of them."--Professor Huxley, as above.

[868] It has already been noted that the author, Mr. G. J. Romanes,

returned later to the Christian faith. See his Thoughts on Religion,

edited by Canon Gore (1895).

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LECTURE I NOTE F.--P. 9.

UNIQUENESS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT VIEW.

It may be Confidently affirmed that the drift of modern Criticism and

research has not been to lower, but immensely to exalt, our conceptions

of the unique character of the Old Testament religion. The views of the

critics of the earlier stages of the religion of Israel are low and

poor enough, but, as if in compensation, they exalt the "Ethical

Monotheism" and spiritual religion of the prophets and psalms, till one

feels, in reading their works, that truly this religion of Israel is

something unexampled on the face of the earth, and is not to be

accounted for on purely natural principles. Schleiermacher and Hegel

spoke disparagingly of the Old Testament, but this is not the more

recent tendency. The following are some testimonies from various

standpoints.

Lotze, in his Microcosmus, bears a noble testimony to the uniqueness of

the Old Testament religion, and to the sublimity and unparalleled

character of its literature. "Among the theocratically governed nations

of the East," he says, "the Hebrews seem to us as sober men among

drunkards" (vol. ii. p. 267, Eng. trans.). See his spirited sketch of

the Old Testament view (pp. 466-468), and his eulogy of the literature

(pp. 402-404).

Dr. Hutcheson Stirling says: "The sacred writings of the Hebrews,

indeed, are so immeasurably superior to those of every other name,

that, I or the sake of the latter, to invite a comparison is to undergo

instantaneous extinction. Nay, regard these Scriptures as a literature

only, the literature of the Jews--even then, in the kind of quality, is

there any literature to be compared with it? Will it not even then

remain still the sacred literature? A taking simpleness, a simple

takingness, that is Divine--all that can lift us out of our own

week-day selves, and place us, pure then, holy, rapt, in the joy and

the peace of Sabbath feeling and Sabbath vision, is to be found in the

mere nature of these old idylls, in the full-filling sublimity of these

psalms, in the inspired God-words of these intense-souled

prophets."--Phil. and Theol. (Gifford Lectures), pp. 18, 19.

Dr. Robertson Smith has well brought out the singularity and elevation

of the Hebrew view in contrast with that of the other Semitic and Aryan

nations, in his Religion of the Semites (Burnett Lectures). "The idea

of absolute and ever-watchful Divine justice," he says, "as we find it

in the prophets, is no more natural to the East than to the West, for

even the ideal Semitic king is, as we have seen, a very imperfect

earthly providence; and, moreover, he has a different standard of right

for his own people and for strangers. The prophetic idea that Jehovah

will vindicate the right, even in the destruction of His own people of

Israel, involves an ethical standard as foreign to Semitic as to Aryan

tradition" (p. 74).

Again: "While in Greece the idea of the unity of God was a

philosophical speculation, without any definite point of attachment to

actual religion, the Monotheism of the Hebrew prophets kept touch with

the ideas and institutions of the Semitic race, by conceiving of the

one true God as the King of absolute justice, the national God of

Israel, who, at the same time, was, or rather was destined to become,

the God of all the earth, not merely because His power was world-wide,

but because, as the perfect ruler, He could not fail to draw all

nations to do Him homage" (p. 75).

Again: "The Hebrew ideal of a Divine Kingship that must one day draw

all men to do it homage, offered better things than these, not in

virtue of any feature that it possessed in common with the Semitic

religions as a whole, but solely in virtue of its unique conception of

Jehovah as a God whose love for His people was conditioned by a law of

absolute righteousness. In other nations individual thinkers rose to

lofty conceptions of a supreme Deity, but in Israel, and in Israel

alone, these conceptions were incorporated in the conception of the

national God. And so, of all the gods of the nations, Jehovah alone was

fitted to become the God of the whole earth" (pp. 80, 81).

Kuenen writes thus of the universalism of the prophets: "What was thus

revealed to the eye of their spirit was no less than the august idea of

the moral government of the world--crude as yet, and with manifold

admixture of error (l) but pure in principle. The prophets had no

conception of the mutual connection of the powers or operations of

nature. They never dreamed of carrying them hack to a single cause, or

deducing them from it. But what they did see, on the field within their

view, was the realisation of a single plan--everything, not only the

tumult of the peoples, but all nature likewise, subservient to the

working out of one great purpose. The name Ethical Monotheism'

describes better than any other the characteristics of their point of

view, for it not only expresses the character of the one God whom they

worshipped, but also indicates the fountain whence their faith in Him

welled up."--Hibbert Lectures, pp. 124, 125.

"So far," says Mr. Gladstone, "then, the office and work of the Old

Testament, as presented to us by its own contents is without a compeer

among the old religions. It deals with the case of man as a whole. It

covers all time. It is alike adapted to every race and region of the

earth. And how, according to the purport of the Old Testament, may that

case best be summed up? In these words: It is a history first of sin,

and next of Redemption."--God in the Bible p. 87. See the whole chapter

on "The Office and Work of the Old Testament in Outline."

I may add a few words of personal testimony from Professor Monier

Williams, on the comparison of the Scriptures with the Sacred Books of

the East. "When I began investigating Hinduism and Buddhism, I found

many beautiful gems; nay, I met with bright coruscations of true light

flashing here and there amid the surrounding darkness. As I prosecuted

my researches into these non-Christian systems, I began to foster a

fancy that they had been unjustly treated. I began to observe and trace

out curious coincidences and comparisons with our own Sacred Book of

the East. I began, in short, to be a believer in what is called the

evolution and growth of religious thought. These imperfect systems,' I

said to myself, are interesting efforts of the human mind struggling

upwards towards Christianity. Nay, it is probable that they were all

intended to lead up to the one true religion, and that Christianity is,

after all, merely the climax, the complement, the fulfilment of them

all.'

"Now, there is unquestionably a delightful fascination about such a

theory, and, what is more, there are really elements of truth in it.

But I am glad of this opportunity of stating publicly that I am

persuaded I was misled by its attractiveness, and that its main idea is

quite erroneous.... We welcome these books. We ask every missionary to

study their contents, and thankfully lay hold of whatsoever things are

true and of good report in them. But we warn him that there can be no

greater mistake than to force these non-Christian bibles into

conformity with some scientific theory of development, and then point

to the Christian's Holy Bible as the crowning product of religious

evolution. So far from this, these non-Christian bibles are all

developments in the wrong direction. They all begin with some flashes

of true light, and end in utter darkness. Pile them, if you will, on

the left side of your study table, but place your own Holy Bible on the

right side--all by itself, all alone--and with a wide gap

between."--Quoted by Joseph Cook in God in the Bible (Boston Lectures),

p. 16.

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LECTURE I NOTE G.--P. 16.

ORIGIN OF THE OLD TESTAMENT VIEW--RELATION TO CRITICAL THEORIES.

Many feel that from the peculiarity of Israel's religion referred to in

last note the need will arise sooner or later for recasting the whole

critical view of the development. The more rich and wonderful the

religious development of the age of the prophets is shown to be, the

more will it be felt necessary to postulate something in the earlier

stages to account for this development--the more natural and life-like

will Israel's own account of its history appear [869] --the more

impossible will it be found to explain the presence of such a

development of religion at all apart from the fact of supernatural

Revelation.

As it is, there is a growing acknowledgment among the critics of the

most advanced school, that, date the books when we may, the religion

can only be explained by Revelation. I quote from three recent works.

H. Schultz, in his new edition of his Alttestamentliche Theologie,

1889, thus writes: "The Old Testament religion is thus only to be

explained out of Revelation; that is to say, out of the fact that God

raised up to this people men, in whose original religious and moral

endowment, developed through the leadings of their inner and outer

life, the receptivity was given for an absolutely original

comprehension of the self-communicating, redeeming will of God towards

men, the religious truth which makes free--not as a result of human

wisdom or intellectual effort, but as an irresistible, constraining

power on the soul itself. Only he who explicitly recognises this can do

historical justice to the Old Testament" (p. 50).

R. Kittel, in his recent valuable Geschichte der Hebr�er, 1888-92, also

based, though discriminatingly, on the results of the later criticism,

thus sums up on the question: "Whence did Moses derive his knowledge of

God?" "The historian stands here," he says, "before a mystery, which is

almost unique in history. A solution is only to be found if in that gap

a factor is inserted, the legitimacy of which can no more be proved by

strict historical methods. There are points in the life of humanity

where history goes over into the philosophy of history, and speculation

must illuminate with its retrospective and interpreting light the

otherwise permanently dark course of the historical process. Such a

case is here. Only an immediate contact of God Himself with man can

produce the true knowledge of God, or bring man a real stage nearer to

it. For in himself man finds only the world, and his own proper ego.

Neither one nor the other yields more than heathenism: the former a

lower, the latter a higher form of it. Does the thought flash on Moses

that God is neither the world nor the idealised image of man, but that

He is the Lord of Life, of moral commands, exalted above multiplicity

and the world of sense, and the Creator, who does not crush man, but

ennobles him; so has he this knowledge, not out of his time, and not

out of himself--he has it out of an immediate Revelation of this God in

his heart."--Geschichte, i. pp. 227, 228.

Alex. Westphal, author of an able French work, Les Sources du

Pentateuque, Etude de Critique et d'Histoire, 1888-92, is another

writer who uncompromisingly accepts the results of the advanced

critical school. But he earnestly repudiates, in the Preface to the

above work, the idea that these results destroy, and do not rather

confirm, faith in Revelation, and even builds on them an argument for

the historic truthfulness of the early tradition. He separates himself

in this respect from the unbelieving position. "Truth to tell," he

says, "the unanimity of scholars exists only in relation to one of the

solutions demanded, that of the literary problem....The position which

the scholar takes up towards the books which lie studies, and his

personal views on the history and the religious development of Israel,

always exercise, whether he wishes it or not a considerable influence

on the results of his work. However, we may be permitted to affirm, and

hope one day to be able to prove, that the reply to the historic

question belongs to evangelical criticism, which, illuminated by the

spirit of Revelation, alone possesses all the factors for the solution

of this grave problem. . . . Far from being dismayed by the fact that

the plurality of sources involves profound modifications in our

traditional notion of the Pentateuch written by Moses, we should rather

see in it a providential intervention, at the moment when it is most

necessary, a decisive argument in favour of the primitive

history."--Les Sources, i. Preface, p. 28.

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[869] Cf. Robertson's Early Religion of Israel (Baird Lectures). An

able criticism of some of Professor R. Smith's positions in The

Religion of the Semites appeared in the Edinburgh Review, April 1892.

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LECTURE I NOTE H.--P. 16.

NATURE AND DEFINITION OF RELIGION.

In strictness these Lectures ought to have included a treatment of the

general question of religion as preparatory to the consideration of the

specific Christian view. Christianity involves a "Weltanschauung" and

it belongs to the type "religious." It ought therefore to be shown in

what distinctively a religious "Weltanschauung" consists, and how the

Christian view is related to the general conception. This, again, would

involve an inquiry into the general nature of religion; in order, on

this basis, to show how a "Weltanschauung" necessarily originates from

it. A few notes are all that can be attempted here, in addition to what

is said in the text of various portions of the Lectures, and in

Appendix to Lecture III.

The main question is as to the general character, or essential nature,

of religion, as a means of understanding how a "Weltanschauung" springs

from it.

I. It may be remarked that this question is not answered--

1. By an abstract definition of religion. Much has been written on the

definition of religion. [870] A prior question is, In what sense do we

speak of definition? Do we mean to include in our definition of

religion only the common elements in all religions; or do we propose to

define by the idea of religion, as that may be deduced from the study

of the laws of man's nature, seen in their manifestation on the field

of history, and most conspicuously in the higher religions? The fault

of most definitions is that, aiming at a generality wide enough to

embrace the most diverse manifestations of the religious

consciousness,--the lowest and most debased equally with the most

complex and exalted,--they necessarily leave out all that is purest and

most spiritual in religion--that which expresses its truest essence.

They give us, in short, a logical summum genus, which may be useful

enough for some purposes, but is utterly barren and unprofitable as a

key to the interpretation of any spiritual fact. On the other hand, if

we take as our guide the idea of religion, we may be accused of finding

only one religion which corresponds to it--the Christian; and in any

case the definition will leave outside of it a vast variety of

religious phenomena. What is wanted is not a logical definition which

will apply to nothing from which its marks are absent, but such a

comprehension of the inner principle and essential character of

religion as will enable us to discern its presence under forms that

very rudely and imperfectly express it. [871]

2. By exclusively psychological or historical methods in the treatment

of religion. These are the methods in vogue at the present day in what

is designated "The Science of Religions." I call a theory psychological

which seeks to account for the ideas and beliefs which men entertain

regarding their deities by tracing them to psychological causes,

without raising the question of how far these ideas and beliefs have

any objective truth. Psychology deals with the empirical--the given. It

observes the facts of the religious consciousness--groups and

classifies them--seeks to resolve the complex into the simple, the

compound into the elementary--notes the laws and relations which

discover themselves in the different phenomena, etc. In doing this, it

performs a necessary service, but its method is liable to certain

obvious drawbacks.

(l) If religion is a necessity of human nature, springing by an inner

necessity from the rational and spiritual nature of man, this method

can never show it. Psychology can only show what is, not what must or

should be. Its function is ended when it has described and analysed

facts as they are. It does not reach inner necessity. From the

persistency with which religion appears and maintains itself in human

nature, it may infer that there is some deep and necessary ground for

it in the spirit of man, but it lies beyond the scope of its methods to

show what that is. Its line is too short to reach down to these depths.

(2) It is a temptation in these theories to aim at an undue simplicity.

This is a fault, indeed, of most theories of religion, that they do not

do justice to the multiplicity of factors involved in religion, but,

haying hold on one of these factors, exalt it to exclusive importance

at the expense of the rest. Religion is a highly complex thing,

blending in itself a multitude of elements readily

distinguishable,--hopes and fears, belief in the invisible, the feeling

of dependence, the sense of moral relation, desire for fellowship,

emotions of awe, love, reverence, surrender of the will, etc.,--and I

suppose no definition of it has ever been constructed which did not

leave out some of its extraordinarily varied manifestations. Theories,

therefore, err which attempt to deduce all religious sentiments and

ideas from some one principle, e.g., Hume, from man's hopes and fears;

Tylor, from the animistic tendency in human nature; Spencer, from

ghost-worship; Feuerbach, from man's egoistic wishes--"What man would

have liked to be, but was not, he made his god; what he would like to

have, but could not get for himself, his god was to get for him"

(Strauss); others from Totemism, etc. [872]

(3) It is a common error of these theories to study religion chiefly as

it presents itself in the lowest, poorest, crudest manifestations of

the religious consciousness; and to suppose that if they can explain

these, all the higher stages of religious development can be explained

in the same way. This is much the same as if a botanist, wishing to

exhibit the essential characteristics of plant life, were to confine

his attention to the lowest order of plants, and even to the most

dwarfed, stunted, and impoverished specimens of these.

(4) It is a further weakness of psychological theories that they move

solely in the region of the subjective. They occupy themselves with

psychological causes, and with the ideas and fancies to which these

give rise; but have nothing to teach us of the object of

religion--neither what the true object is, nor whether a true object is

to be known at all. Their function is ended when they have described

and analysed facts; they claim no right to pass judgment. They have, in

other words, no objective standard of judgment. Yet the question of the

object is the one of essential importance in religion, as determining

whether it has any ground in objective truth, or is only, as Feuerbach

would have it, a deceptive play of the human consciousness with itself.

[873]

(5) Finally, even the higher class of psychological theories form a

very inadequate basis for a true conception of religion.

Schleiermacher, e.g., explains religion as the immediate consciousness

of the infinite in the finite, and of the eternal in the temporal; Max

Muller as the perception of the infinite, [874] etc. But if we ask in

Kantian fashion, How is such an immediate consciousness--feeling or

perception--possible? what view of man's nature is implied in his

capacity to have a consciousness, or feeling, or perception of the

infinite? we are driven back on deeper ground, and come in view of a

rational nature in man which transforms the whole problem. [875]

The same criticisms apply in part to the historical treatment of

religion. This, like the psychological, has its own part to play in the

construction of a philosophy of religion; its help, indeed, is of

untold value. By its aid we see not only what religion is in its actual

manifestations; not only get an abundance of facts to check narrow and

hasty generalisations; but we find a grand demonstration of the

universality of religion. Yet the historical treatment, again, like the

psychological, does not furnish us with more than the materials from

which to construct a theory of religion. If the historical student, in

addition to recording and classifying his facts, and observing their

laws, passes judgment on them as true or false, good or evil, his

inquiry is no longer historical merely, but has become theological or

philosophical.

3. Our question is not answered by explaining religion out of the

necessity which man feels of maintaining his personality and spiritual

independence against the limitations of nature. This, as shown in Note

A., is the Ritschlian position, and the passages there quoted

illustrate how Ritschl and his followers develop a "Weltanschauung"

from it. Its value lies in the recognition of the fact that religion

contains not only a relation of dependence, but a practical impulse

towards freedom; and in this sense the Ritschlian mode of

representation has extended far beyond the limits of the school. Thus

Pfleiderer (otherwise a sharp critic of Ritschl) says: "There belongs

to the religious consciousness some degree of will, some free self

determination. And what this aims at is simply to be made quite free

from the obstructing limit and dependence which our freedom encounters

in the world" (Religionsphilosophie, i. p. 323, Eng. trans.). "In the

religious Weltanschauung,'" says Lipsius, "there is always posited on

the part of man the striving to place himself in a practical relation

to this higher power on which he knows himself and his world to be

dependent, in order that through this he may further his well-being

against the restrictions of the outer world, and victoriously maintain

his self-consciousness as a spiritual being against the finite

limitations of his natural existence" (Dogmatik, p. 25). Reville says:

"Religion springs from the feeling that man is in such a relation to

this spirit that for his well-being, and in order to gratify a

spontaneous impulse of his nature, he ought to maintain with it such

relations as will afford him guarantees against the unknown of destiny"

(History of Religions, p. 29, Eng. trans.). [876] In its Ritschlian

form, this theory is open to very serious objections. Professing to

account for religion, it really inverts the right relation between God

and the world, making the soul's relation to the world the first thing,

and the relation to God secondary and dependent; instead of seeking in

an immediate relation to God the first and unique fact which sustains

all others. [877] While, further, it may be conceded to Ritschl and his

followers that the primary motive: in religion is practical (though not

prior to the immediate impression or consciousness of the Divine in

nature, in the sense of dependence, in conscience, etc.), it must he

insisted on that the practical motive is such as can originate only in

beings with a rational nature,--i.e. reason underlies it. [878] Had

this been kept in view, it would have helped to prevent the strong

division which this school makes between religious and theoretic

knowledge.

II. The rational self-consciousness of man being posited as the

ground-work, we may with confidence recognise the following as elements

entering into the essence of religion, and connecting themselves with

its development:--

1. There is first the sense of absolute dependence, justly emphasised

by Schleiermacher (Der christ. Glaube, sect. 4). But this alone is not

sufficient to constitute religion. Everything depends on the kind of

power on which we feel ourselves dependent. Absolute dependence, e.g.,

on a blind power, or on an inevitable fate or destiny, would not

produce in us the effects we commonly ascribe to religion. With the

sense of dependence there goes an impulse to freedom. The aim of

religion, it has been justly said, is to transform the relation of

dependence into one of freedom. This involves, of course, the shaping

of the idea of the Godhead into that of personal spirit.

2. Equally original with the feeling of dependence, accordingly, is the

impulse in religion to go out of oneself in surrender to a higher

object--the impulse to worship. The idea of this higher object may be

at first dim and indistinct, but the mind instinctively seeks such an

object, and cannot rest till it finds one adequate to its own nature.

Here, again, the rational nature of man is seen at work, impelling him

to seek the true infinite, and allowing him no rest till such an object

is found.

3. Another directly religious impulse is the desire that is early

manifested to bring life, and the circle of interests connected with it

under the immediate care and sanction of the Divine. This, which has

its origin in the sense of weakness and finitude is apparent in all

religions, and brings religion within the circle of men's hopes and

fears.

4. As moral ideas advance,--and we do not here discuss how this advance

is possible,--the ground is prepared for yet higher ideas of God, and

of His relations to the world and man. There has now entered the idea

of a moral end; man also has become aware of the contradictions which

beset his existence as a being at once free, and yet hemmed in and

limited on every side in the attainment of his ends; not to speak of

the deeper contradictions (within and without) which beset his

existence through sin. It is here that the idea of religion links

itself with the moral "Weltanschauung" of Ritschl, Lipsius, Pfleiderer,

and others, who find the solution of these antinomies in the idea of a

teleological government of the world, in which natural ends are

everywhere subordinated to moral; which, again, implies the

monotheistic idea of God, and faith in His moral government, and out of

which springs the idea of a "kingdom of God" as the end of the Divine

conduct of history.

It does not follow, because this conception, or rather that of the

Father-God of Christ, is the only one capable of satisfying man's

religious or moral aspirations, that therefore man has been able to

produce it from his own resources. Even if he were able, this alone

would not satisfy the religious necessity. For religion craves not

merely for the idea of God, but for personal fellowship and communion

with Him, and this can only take place on the ground that God and man

are in seine way brought together--in other words, on the basis of

Divine Revelation or manifestation.

III. We may perhaps test the statements now made, by applying them to

two cases which seem at first sight to contradict them, viz. Buddhism,

and the Comtist "Religion of Humanity"; for in neither of these systems

have we the recognition of a God. Are they, then, properly to be

accounted religions?

1. Buddhism is a religion, but it is not so in virtue of its negation

of the Divine, but in virtue of the provision it still makes for the

religions nature of man. Buddhism, as it exists to-day, is anything but

a system of Atheism or Agnosticism; it is a positive faith, with

abundance of supernatural elements. It may have begun with simple

reverence for Buddha,--itself a substitute for worship,--but the

undistilled cravings of the heart for worship soon demanded more.

Invention rushed in to fill the vacuum in the original creed, and the

heavens which Buddha had left tenantless were repeopled with gods,

saints, prospective Buddhas, and still higher imperishable essences,

ending in the practical deification of Buddha himself. Buddhism has all

the paraphernalia of a religion,--priests, temples, images, worship,

etc. [879]

2. In like manner, Comte's system has a cult, in which the sentiments

and affections which naturally seek their outlet in the direction of

the Divine are artificially directed to a new object, collective

humanity, which man is hid adore as the "Grand Etre," along with space

as the "Grand Milieu," and the earth as the "Grand Fetiche"! There is

the smell of the lamp in all this, which betrays too obviously the

character of Comtism as an artificial or "manufactured" religion; but

if it receives this name, it is because there is an application of

Divine attributes to objects which, however unworthy of having Divine

honours paid to them, are still worshipped as substitutes for God, and

so form an inverted testimony to the need which the soul feels for God.

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[870] For a summary view of these definitions, and examination of them,

see Max Muller's Gifford Lectures on Natural Religions (1888), and

Nitzsch's Evangelische Dogmatik, i. pp. 46-109 (1889).

[871] See a good treatment of this subject in Kaftan's Das Wesen der

christ. Rel. (1881) pp. 1-5 cf. also Caird's, Philosophy of Religion

(pp. 314-317), and Note B., "On the possibility of discovering in the

essence of religion' a universal religion," in Conder's Basis of Faith,

p. 438.

[872] Note A. to Lecture III.

[873] Cf. Max Muller, Natural Religion, p. 56.

[874] Cf. Natural Religion, pp. 48, 188.

[875] See Appendix to Lecture III.

[876] Kaftan, on the other hand, finds the root-motive of religion in

the infinity of the "claim on life" inseparable from our nature, which

this world is not able to satisfy. "Generally the claim on life

(Auspruch auf Leben) lies at the foundation of religion. That this

claim is not satisfied in the world, and further through the world, is

the common motive of all religions" (Das Wesen, p. 67, cf. 60). But

whence this "claim on life"? Why this striving after an infinite and

"liberweltlichen" good? What view of man's nature is implied in the

possibility of such strivings? These are questions which Kaftan does

not answer, but which a true theory of religion should answer.

[877] See criticism of this theory of religion in Pfleiderer's Die

Ritschl'sche Theologie, p. 17ff., and in Stahlin's Kant, Lotze, und

Ritschl, pp. 218-250 (Eng. trans.); and A. Dorner's Das menschliche

Erkennen, p. 221.

[878] See further, Appendix to Lecture III. On the other hand,

Hegelianism would have us view religion as but a lower stage in the

progress to pure philosophical thought. I have not discussed this

theory in the text, as it does not represent any immediately reigning

tendency. With Hegel the idea is everything. Religious truths are but

rational ideas clothed in a sensuous garb. It is the part of philosophy

to lift the veil, and raise the idea to the form of pure thought.

Religion gives the "Vorstellung," or figurate representation;

philosophy give the rational conception, or "Begriff." The distinction

is explained by Hegel in the Introduction to his Geschichte der

Philosophie, vol. i. pp. 79-97. A fuller exposition is given in his

Religionsphilosophie, vol. i. pp. 20-25. From this theory the reaction

was inevitable which led to the repudiation of the metaphysical in

theology altogether. One of the most delicate tasks of theology is to

adjust the relation between these opposite one-sidednesses.

[879] On Buddhism, see Monier Williams's "Duff Lectures" (1889); and on

its relation to religion, Carpenter's Permanent Elements of Religion

(1889), Lecture III.; Condor's Basis of Faith, Note A.; Hartmann's

Religionsphilosophie, vol. ii. p. 5; Kaftan's Das Wesen, p. 41, etc.

[880] On Comtism as a religion, see Caird's Social Philosophy of Comte

(pp. 47-55; and chap. iv.); Carpenter's Permanent Elements,

Introduction, 25, 49; Conder's Basis of Faith, Lecture I.; Spencer's

"Retrogressive Religion" in Nineteenth Century, July 1884. On modern

substitutes for Christianity generally, see an excellent treatment in

Bruce's Miraculous Elements in the Gospels, Lecture X.

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LECTURE I NOTE I.--P. 17.

UNDOGMATIC RELIGION.

The type of view described in the text is too Common to need further

characterization. I add one or two illustrations.

"To leave the religious idea in its more complete indeterminateness,"

says Renan, "to hold at the same time to those two propositions: (l)

Religion will be eternal in humanity'; (2) All religious symbols are

assailable and perishable'; such, then, will be, if the opinion of the

wise could he that of the majority, the true theology of our time. All

those who labour to show, beyond the symbols, the pure sentiment which

constitutes the soul of them, labour for the future. To what, in fact,

will you attach religion, if this immortal basis does not suffice

you?"--Fragments Philosophiques, p. 392.

Reville says: "If religions are mortal, religion never dies, or we may

say, it dies under one form only to come to life again under another.

There is then underneath and within this multicoloured development a

permanent and substantial element, something stable and imperishable,

which takes a firm hold on human nature itself." --History of

Religions, p. 3 (Eng. trans.).

M. Reville is a distinguished member of the Liberal Protestant party in

France, whose programme was summed up thus in their organ,

L'Emancipation: "A Church without a priesthood; a religion without a

catechism; a morality without dogmatics; a God without an obligatory

system."

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LECTURE I NOTE J.--P. 19.

ESTHETIC THEORIES OF RELIGION.

The theories which ascribe to the ideals and beliefs of religion only

an imaginative, poetic, or aesthetic value, constitute a large family.

In Christian theology the tendency found a representative in the

beginning of the century in De Wette, whose "aesthetic rationalism" is

explained and criticised by Dorner (Doctrine of the Person of Christ,

v. pp. 51-58, Eng. trans.) and Pfleiderer (Development of Theology, pp.

97-102). On the side of materialistic science, the best-known

representative is Fr. A. Lange, author of the History of Materialism

(1875), whose positions are yet more fearlessly carried out by his

disciple Vaihinger: "We ought to have, and may have, a theory of the

world (or religion), but we must not believe in it theoretically; we

must only allow ourselves to be practically, aesthetically, ethically

influenced by it." See this theory explained and acutely criticised in

Stahlin's Kant, Lotze, und Ritschl, pp. 92, 110 (Eng. trans.); and in

Pfleiderer's Religionsphilosophie, ii. pp. 173-175. From the idealistic

side, this view, again, is represented by Vacherot in his La

Metaphysique et la Science (1858): "God is the idea of the world, and

the world is the reality of God." His theory is criticised at length by

Caro, in his L'Idee de Dieu, chap. v., and in Renan's Fragments

Philosophiques, pp. 207-324. Finally, Feuerbach, from thee atheistic

side, regards the idea of God as a mere illusion--the projection by man

of his own ego into infinity. See his Wesen des Christenthums.

(translated).

Professor Seth has said of this class of theories as a whole: "The

faith bred of ignorance is neither stable, nor is it likely to be

enlightened. It will either be a completely empty acknowledgment, as we

see in the belief in the Unknowable, or it will be an arbitrary play of

poetic fancy, such a's is proposed by Lange for our consolation. Our

phenomenal world, says Lange, is a world of materialism; but still the

Beyond of the Unknowable remains to us. There we may figure to

ourselves an ampler and diviner air, and may construct a more perfect

justice and goodness than we find on earth. The poets, in word and

music and painting, are the chief interpreters of this land of the

ideal. To them we must go if we would restore our jaded spirits. But we

may not ask--or if we do, we cannot learn--whether this fairy land

exists, or whether it lea's any relation to the world of fact. To all

which it may be confidently replied, that such an empty play of fancy

can discharge the functions neither of philosophy nor of religion. The

synthesis of philosophy and the clear confidence of religion may both,

in a sense, transcend the actual data before us, and may both,

therefore, have a certain affinity with poetry; but the synthesis is

valueless and the confidence ill-timed if they do not express our

deepest insight into facts, and our deepest belief as to the ultimate

nature of things."--Scottish Philosophy, pp. 178, 179.

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LECTURE I NOTE K.--P. 26.

RELIGIOUS AND THEORETIC KNOWLEDGE.

A. Dorner states the distinction as it appears in recent theology and

philosophy thus: "It has recently been sought in manifold ways, under a

stimulus derived from Kant, to find an essential distinction between

theoretic knowledge, and a knowledge which does not extend our

knowledge of objects in the least, but stands solely in the service of

purely subjective interests. This latter has only the significance of

expressing in any given case the worth of the object for the subject;

these notions have nothing whatever to do with the knowledge of truth,

but only with practical interests; therefore our knowledge is not

furthered through any of these notions, but they are only the means for

the attainment of subjective ends. Shortly, knowing is placed here at

the service of another mental function, and on this account produces,

not objective knowledge, but only representations (Vorstellungen),

which are formed in a foreign interest, but are perfectly indifferent

as to whether they also extend our knowledge--help-representations we

may call them, formed in order by their means to reach other ends.

Should reference be made to truth, this would still in nowise have

anything to do with knowledge; the truth of such representations would

he measured solely by this, whether with their help one does or does

not attain the wished-for end,--irrespective of whether these

representations were in themselves mere phantasies or not. Just for

this reason is all metaphysical worth refused to such notions, e.g.

aesthetic or religious."--Das menschliche Erkennen, "Die auf

Werthurtheile ruhenden Begriffe," pp. 170, 171.

The kindredship of this view to the "aesthetic rationalism" referred to

in last note is greater than is sometimes acknowledged; in one disciple

of the school, Bender, it becomes indistinguishable from it. (See his

Das Wesen der Religion, 1886.) It should, however, be remarked that

Kaftan has severed himself from the extreme positions of this school,

and has sought in his various works to find an adjustment between faith

and theoretic knowledge which will avoid the appearance of collision

between them. He expressly hays down the proposition that "there is

only one truth, and that all truth is from God"; acknowledges that

faith-propositions have their theoretic side, and that "in the

treatment of the truth of the Christian religion it is the theoretic

side of these which comes into consideration"; explains that "truth" in

this connection means simply what it does in other cases, not

subjective truth, but "objective"--"the agreement of the proposition

with the real state of the case," etc. (Die Wahrheit, pp. 1-7.) Most

significant of all is his statement in a recent article that he has

abandoned the expression "Werthurtheile" altogether, as liable to

misunderstanding. "I have," he says, "in this attempt to describe the

knowledge of faith according to its kind and manner of origin, avoided

the expression Werthurtheile,' although I have earlier so characterised

the propositions of faith (in which the knowledge of faith is given).

They are theoretic judgments, which are grounded upon a judgment of

worth, which therefore cannot he appropriated without entering into

this judgment of worth which lies at their foundation."--"Glaube und

Dogmatik" in Zeitschrift f�r Theol. und Kirche, i. 6, p. 501.

Cf. further on this distinction, Stahlin's acute criticism in his Kant,

Lotze, und Ritschl, pp. 157ff. (Eng. trans.); Hartmann in his

Religionsphilosophie, ii. pp. 1-27; Lipsius in his Dogmatik, pp. 16-93.

Hartmann and Lipsius deal at length with the distinction and relations

of the "religious" and the "theoretic" "Weltanschauung."

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LECTURE 2 NOTE A.--P. 41.

THE CENTRAL PLACE OF CHRIST IN HIS RELIGION.

The unique and central place of Christ in His religion, different from

that of other founders of religion, is attested by writers of the most

varied standpoints.

Hegel says: "If we regard Christ in the same light as Socrates, we

regard him as a mere man, like the Mahometans, who consider Christ to

have been an ambassador from God, as all great men may generally be

called ambassadors or messengers of God. If we say no more of Christ

than that He was a teacher of mankind, and a martyr for truth, we

express ourselves neither from the Christian point of view, nor from

that of true religion."--Phil. d. Rel. ii. p. 287.

Schelling says, in his Phil. d. Offenbarung: "The principal content of

Christianity is, first, Christ Himself; not what He said, but what He

is, and did. Christianity is not, in the first place, a doctrine; it is

a thing, something objective; and time doctrine can never be anything

but the expression of the thing."--Quoted by Pfleiderer,

Religionsphilosophie, ii. p. 16 (Eng. trans.).

Darner bears witness to the valuable service of Schelling and Hegel in

overcoming the older rationalism, and introducing a profounder

treatment of the Christological questions.--Doctrine of the Person of

Christ, v. pp. 100, 138 (Eng. trans.).

De Wette says: "The personality of Jesus, His life and death, and faith

in Him, constitute the centre of Christianity. The spirit of religion

became personal in Him, and, proceeding from Him, exerted an influence

upon the world, which stood in need of a new religious life, in order

to regenerate it."--Vorles. �ber die Religion, p. 444 (quoted by

Hagenbach).

Pfleiderer thus sums up the views of Vatke, a post-Hegelian: "All the

streams of the world's history issue in the kingdom of God, which is

the will of God in its concrete development to a moral commonwealth.

Providence here acts as an actual spirit through all persons and deeds,

through which the idea of the good becomes more real, especially

through the creative world-historical persons, among whom Christ

occupies a unique position as the centre-point of history, as the

Revealer and the Reality of the archetypal idea, as the love of God

grown personal."--Religionsphilosophie, ii. p. 268 (Eng. trans.).

On the views of Biedermann and Lipsius, see the Christliche Dogmatik of

the former, ii. pp. 580-600 ("the central dogma of the Christian

principle"), and the Lehrb. d. Dogmatik of the latter, pp. 535-538. "In

its dogmatic utterances on the Person and work of Christ," Lipsius

says, "the Church expresses the consciousness that its existence has

its historical foundation in the Person of Jesus, not merely in the

sense which would be suitable to all other religions having personal

founders, but in the sense that the Person of Christ is the archetypal

representation of the Christian idea, and therefore the authoritative

pattern for all time to come; and that His work forms the permanently

sufficient, therefore the creative, basis for the constantly

progressing realisation of that idea in the common and individual life

of Christians."--Dog. p. 537.

Ritschl says: "The Person of the Founder of Christianity is the key to

the Christian Weltanschauung,' and the standard f or the self-judgment

and moral striving of Christians."--Recht. u. Ver. iii. p. 193 (3rd

ed.). Cf. the comparison with Moses, Zoroaster, Mahomet, and Buddha, in

pp. 364, 365.

Kaftan emphatically says: "In the question of the Godhead of Jesus

Christ, the discussion turns, not on one proposition among others which

a Christian recognises and confesses, but upon the central point of the

entire Christian confession of faith."--Brauchen wir ein neues Dogma?

p. 52.

Hartmann, too, in his Krisis des Christenthums, treats this doctrine as

the central matter, and discusses it in his first section under the

heading, "The Christian Central Dogma and its inevitable Dissolution."

Cf. Preface to 3rd ed. of his Selbstzersetzung d. Christenthums.

It is needless to adduce instances from writers of a more orthodox

tendency.

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LECTURE 2 NOTE B.--P. 44.

THE DEFEAT OF ARIANISM.

"The Christian doctrine has been accused," says a writer in the Church

Quarterly Review, "of being the result of the base intrigues of

imperial politics, and to one who resolutely looks only at the details

of much of the controversy, such a judgment might seem natural, while a

close acquaintance with the Byzantine Court will not make its odour

more pleasing. But to a wider view, such a judgment is impossible. The

decision of the Council of Nicaea was the result of the free play of

the theological ideas of the time; for Constantine--caring little about

the result, though caring very much for unity--wisely left to the

Council a free hand; but its decision may very well have been owing to

the influence of a sovereign who threw his whole weight on the side

which he saw was prevailing. Arius was condemned by an overwhelming

majority, but the decision of the Council was not sufficient to stamp

out opinions which had a natural hold on a large section of the Church.

So the reaction was obliged to spread. Arianism survived for fifty

years; with the help of imperial patronage it even obtained an unreal

supremacy. But it had no basis of truth, and was naturally hostile to

Christianity. As long as it was established, it continued to exist;

orthodoxy was oppressed and persecuted, but orthodoxy increased. As

soon as the balance of the temporal power swung round, orthodoxy became

supreme, and Arianism vanished from the Empire as if it had never

existed. It had more than a fair chance, but had no basis of truth.

Orthodoxy had a terrible fight with odds against it, but in the end it

was completely victorious."--Church Quart., April-July 1888, pp. 462,

463.

Harnack's judgment on Arianism is equally severe. "Only as

cosmologists," he says, "are the Arians monotheists; as theologians and

in religion they are polytheists. Finally, deep contradictions lie in

the background: a Son, who is no Son; a Logos, who is no Logos; a

Monotheism, which does not exclude Polytheism; two or three Ousias, who

are to be worshipped, while still only one is really distinguished from

the creatures, an indefinable nature, which first becomes God when it

becomes man, and which still is neither God nor man. . . . The

opponents were right; this doctrine leads back into heathenism. . . .

The orthodox doctrine has, on the contrary, its abiding worth in the

upholding of the faith, that in Christ God Himself has redeemed men,

and led them into His fellowship....This conviction of faith was saved

by Athanasius against a doctrine which did not understand the inner

nature of religion generally, which sought in religion only teaching,

and ultimately found its satisfaction in an empty

dialectic."--Grundriss d. Dogmengeschichte, m. p. 141; cf. the

Dogmengeschichte, pp. 217-224.

In his recent lectures on The Incarnation (p. 91), Mr. Gore directs

attention to two striking passages from Thomas Carlyle and Thomas Hill

Green to the same effect as the above. Mr. Froude writes of Carlyle:

"He made one remark which is worth recording. In earlier years he had

spoken contemptuously of the Athanasian Controversy,--of the Christian

world torn to pieces over a diphthong....He now told me that he

perceived Christianity itself to have been at stake. If the Arians had

won, it would have dwindled away to a legend."--Life in London, ii. p.

462. See Green's view in Works, iii. p. 172.

On the later history of Arianism in England, and its transformation

into Unitarianism, see the valuable Appendix by Dr. P. Fairbairn to

Dorner's History of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ, vol. v. pp.

337-466.

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LECTURE 2 NOTE C.--P. 45.

MODERN UNITARIANISM.

The completeness with which modern Unitarianism has divested itself of

every trace of the supernatural will be seen from the following

extracts.

Dr. Martineau, criticising Mr. Greg's Creed of Christendom, writes:

"The education and habits of a refined and devout Unitarian family gave

him the theory of life from which his independent thoughts set out.

Outside observers, both sceptical and mystical, have always upbraided

that theory as a weak attempt to blend incompatible elements and settle

the contradictions of the world by a hollow compromise, while not

denying its correspondence with a certain equilibrium of understanding

and character. It may be described as essentially natural religion,

enlarged and completed by a supernatural appendix. The whole of its

theism, and half of its ethics, were within the reach of the human

reason and conscience; but of the inner and higher range of

morals,--spiritual purity, forgiveness of injuries, love to the

unlovely,--the obligation was first impressed by the Christian

Revelation. And the life beyond death, vainly pursued by the dialectic

Plato, and claimed by the rhetoric of Cicero, became an assured reality

with the Resurrection of Christ. The universe was a mechanical system

of delegated causality, instituted for beneficent and righteous ends,

and, for their better attainment, not excluding fresh intercalary

volitions at special crises. . . . The former of these conceptions it

cost Mr. Greg but little to modify or even to sacrifice,"

etc.--Nineteenth Century, February 1883.

What even Mr. Greg desires to retain of reverence for the spiritual

perfection of Jesus, Mr. F. W. Newman, in his review of the volume,

regards only as an amiable weakness, in total inconsistency with Mr.

Greg's own principles of treatment of the Gospels. See passage quoted

in Note F. to Lecture I. (from Fortnightly Review, vol. xiv.).

In his Loss and Gain in Recent Theology (1881), Dr. Martineau sets

himself explicitly to state the position of present-day Unitarianism;

and the two gains he principally notices are: "the total disappearance

from our branch of the Reformed Churches of all external authority in

matters of religion" ("the yoke of the Bible follows the yoke of the

Church," p. 9); [881] and, second, "the disappearance of the entire

Messianic theology." "As objective reality, as a faithful

representation of our invisible and ideal universe, it is gone from us,

gone, therefore, from our interior religion, and become an outside

mythology. From the Person of Jesus, for instance, everything official,

attached to Him by evangelists or divines, has fallen away; when they

put such false robes on Him, they were but leading Him to death. The

pomp of royal lineage and fulfilled prediction, the prerogative of

King, of Priest, of Judge, the advent with retinue of angels on the

clouds of heaven, are to us mere deforming investitures, misplaced,

like court dresses, on the 'spirits of the just,' and He is simply the

Divine Flower of humanity, blossoming after ages of spiritual

growth--the realised possibility of life in God....All that has been

added to that real historic scene,--the angels that hang around His

birth, and the fiend that tempts His youth; the dignities that await

His future,--the throne, the trumpet, the assize, the bar of judgment;

with all the apocalyptic splendours and terrors that ensue--Hades and

the Crystal Sea, Paradise and the Infernal Gulf, nay, the very boundary

walls of the Kosmic panorama that contains these things, have for us

utterly melted away, and left us amid the infinite space and the silent

stars" (pp. 14, 15).

"Time was," says the Rev. J. W. Chadwick, of Brooklyn, "when

Christianity was universally regarded by Unitarians as a supernatural

revelation, attested by signs and wonders, promulgated by One who, even

if purely human, was endowed with certain supernatural gifts, and

perpetuated in a literature--the New Testament--whose writers were

miraculously restrained from all erroneous statement, whether of

doctrine or fact. These views are no longer held in their entirety by

Unitarians. . . . There are to-day few Unitarians, if any, who believe

in any of the New Testament miracles, from the birth of Jesus to His

Resurrection inclusive, in the proper sense of the word

miracles--violations of natural laws."--In a recent paper, Why I am a

Unitarian.

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[881] The late Principal Cairns observes on this: "It is important to

remark how completely his admission bears out the whole contention of

writers of the school opposite to his in the Socinian controversy, that

the tendency of Unitarian doctrine and criticism was to abrogate the

authority of Scripture, and reduce it to the level of human literature.

This allegation was vehemently resisted in their day by the Polish

brethren, who often put on Scripture a non-natural sense rather than

seem to invade its authority; and in more recent times, by Priestley

and Belsham, and other controversialists. It will be remembered that in

the earnest debate between Moses Stuart and Channing on the Trinity,

the former urged the latter, by the example of Continental rationalism,

no longer to profess unlimited submission to Scripture, but to escape

insuperable critical difficulties which arose on his side, by openly

denying its claims to be a judge in controversy."--Art. in Catholic

Presbyterian, November 1888.

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LECTURE 2 NOTE D.--P. 47.

CONCESSIONS OF RITSCHLIANS ON THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

In this school, as stated in the Lectures, the attribution of Divinity

to Christ is regarded as a simple religious judgment--a judgment of

value--with no metaphysical meaning behind it. It simply expresses the

value which Christ has to the believer as the Revealer of God to him in

His grace and truth, and tells us nothing of what Christ is in Himself.

How Christ came to be what He was, or what lies in the constitution of

His Person behind this Revelation, it is no part of the business of

theology to inquire. This is the original Ritschlian position, but it

is significant that Ritschl's followers feel the need of some

modification of it, and have already made several significant

concessions. "It is increasingly recognised," as I have stated

elsewhere, "that we cannot stand simply dumb before the Revelation

which it is acknowledged we have in Christ, and refuse to ask who this

wonderful Person is that hears the Revelation, and whose personal

character and relation to the kingdom of God is so unique. We cannot

rest with simply formulating the value of Christ to us; we must ask

what He is in Himself. . . . The mind will not stay in the vagueness of

expressions about Christ's God-head,' to which the suspicion constantly

attaches that they are mere metaphors. Thus, in spite of their wishes,

the Ritschlians are forced to declare themselves a little further, and

it is significant that, so far as their explanations go, they are in

the direction of recognising that metaphysical background in Christ's

Person against which at first protest was entered. [882]

Thus, in a remarkable passage in his Der Verkehr des Christen mit Gott,

Herrmann says: "It may be unavoidable that this wonderful experience

should excite in us the question, how a man can win this importance for

us. And it appears to me as if, for all who wish to go back on this

question, and follow out the representation of a union of the Divine

and human natures in Christ, the Christological decisions of the

ancient Church still always mark out the limits within which such

attempts must move" (p. 46, 1st ed., 1886).

In his earlier work, Die Religion im Verh�ltniss zum Welterkennen und

zur Sittlichkeit, Herrmann had expressed himself, if possible, still

more decidedly. "I have certainly the conviction," he says, "the

grounds of which I do not need to state here further, that faith in

Christ was led in a natural progress to the representation of a

preexistence of Christ, and indeed of a personal, and not an ideal,

preexistence. The assumption of a so-called ideal pre-existence seems

to me unjustified. It is still clearly the Person of the exalted Lord,

whose worth for the Church and for the kingdom of God is expressed by

saying that He did not come into being under earthly conditions as we

have done, but that, independently of the world, which represents the

perfectly dependent sphere of His Lordship, He is. This thought finds,

in the expression of a personal preexistence of the Lord, an expression

very full of contradictions indeed, but still the only one which stands

at our command, which, therefore, must also have its salutary truth.

The contradiction will be removed, if once a solution is found of the

problem of time, in which we now view our existence....Faith is led to

this, to regard the Redeemer, whom it knows as the Revelation of God,

as preexistent."--Die Religion, etc., pp. 438, 439 (1879).

Yet more positively do Bornemann, in his Unterricht im Christenthum

(1891), and Kaftan, in his various works, demand a real "Godhead" of

Christ, though still with much criticism of "the old dogma," [883] and

the repudiation of all speculative or metaphysical theologising.

The former says: "Faith in the Godhead of Christ is in a certain sense

the sum of the whole gospel; the aim and the whole content of the

Christian life. Its marks are the same as those of the Godhead of the

heavenly Father."--Unterricht, p. 91.

Kaftan's views are most fully exhibited in his Brauchen wir ein neues

Dogma? (1890), ("Do we need a New Dogma?").

In a section of this pamphlet, under the heading, "What think says:

"Man ye of Christ?" he says: "Many will object that all has no basis

and no guarantee of truth, if it is not established that Jesus has His

origin and the beginning of His earthly life from above, and not from

below. And in this lies something, the truth of which cannot be

gainsaid, At least it is in my view also a consequence we cannot refuse

of faith in the Godhead of the Lord, that He, that His historical

Person, stands in a connection of nature with God perfectly unique and

not capable of being repeated. We know not how we can call a man

God,'--the word is too great and too weighty,--if we do not truly mean

that the eternal God Himself has come to us in Him, and in Him

converses with us....Do we believe in the Godhead of the Lord, then we

believe also in His origin from above, out of God."--Brauchen wir,

etc., p. 58. Cf. the statements in his original work, Des Wesen, etc.,

pp. 308 ff. (1st ed.).

This movement cannot fail to go further, and work itself into clearer

relations with the old dogma which it condemns. [884]

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[882] Art. on "The Ritschlian Theology," in The Thinker, August 1892.

[883] The contrast between the "old" and the "new" is expressed by

Kaftan thus: "The eternal relation of Jesus Christ to the Father is in

the old dogma the peculiar and whole object of the doctrine; it accords

with evangelical Christianity, on the other hand, to know His Godhead

in its living present relations to us and to our faith" (Brauchen wir,

etc., p. 54). But this is not an absolute opposition, nor are the

standpoints necessarily exclusive.

[884] Wendt, on the other hand, in his Inhalt der Lehre Jesu, refuses

to see in Jesus anything but an ethical Sonship (pp. 450-476).

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LECTURE 2 NOTE E.--P. 48.

THE WEAKNESS OF DEISM.

The weakness of Deism as a logical system is universally conceded.

"Deism," says M. Reville, "in sound philosophy is not tenable. It

establishes a dualism, a veritable opposition, between God and the

world, which stand opposite to and limit each other. . . . A reaction,

in fact, was inevitable. It was necessary that it should be at the same

time philosophical and religious, and should come to the satisfaction

of the needs that had been misunderstood and suppressed. In philosophy

Deism could no longer hold up its head against the objections of

reason. In religion, every one was wearied of optimism and of empty

declamations. Deism removed God so far from the world and from humanity

that piety exhausted itself in the endeavour to rejoin Him in the icy

heights of heaven, and ended by, renouncing the attempt."--La Divinit�

de J�sus-Christ, pp. 163, 171. Again: "The eighteenth century little

imagined that natural religion, the religion which humanity was bound

to profess in this age of idyllic virtue, in which le contrat social

had been elaborated before it was corrupted by the artifices of priests

and kings, was nothing else but philosophic Deism. It did not perceive

that this pretended natural religion was merely an extract subtly

derived from Christian tradition, the fruit of a civilisation already

old and artificial, already saturated with criticism and rationalism,

quite the opposite of a religion springing up spontaneously in the

human mind still influenced by its primitive traditions."--History of

Religions, p. 14 (Eng. trans.).

Professor Seth has said: "Deism does not perceive that, by separating

God from the world and man, it really makes Him finite, by setting up

alongside of Him a sphere to which His relations are transient and

accidental. The philosopher to whom the individual self and the

sensible world form the first reality, gradually comes to think of this

otiose Deity as a more or less ornamental appendage in the scheme of

things. In France, the century ended in atheism; and in cosmopolitan

circles in England and Germany, the belief in God had become little

more than a form of words."--From Kant to Hegel, p. 24.

"The philosophic rationalism of the vulgar Aufklarung," says Hartmann,

"appeared with the claim to set up in place of the disesteemed

historical religions a self-evident natural religion' or religion of

reason' for all men, the content of which was first a shallow Deism,

wills its trinity of ideas of a personal God, personal immortality, and

personal freedom of will; but already in the circles of the French

Encyclopaedists this spiritless Deism had struck over into an equally

spiritless materialism."--Religionsphilosophie, ii. p. 24.

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NOTE F.--P. 49.

WEAKNESS OF MODERN LIBERAL PROTESTANTISM.

The modern Liberal Protestantism in Germany, Holland, Switzerland, and

France, which, while discarding the supernatural in history, still

retains the name Christian,--nay, claims to be the true Christianity,

purified and brought into harmony with the "modern" spirit.--meets with

scant mercy at the hands of those who have gone further, who ruthlessly

strip off the veil which disguises its essential rationalism.

Pfleiderer and Reville may be named us well-known representatives. The

party, while claiming the right to criticise and reject every article

of the creed, would retain the traditional forms of worship, and

delight, even, to clothe their conceptions in the familiar forms of the

traditional dogmatics. It is thus that a service of the "moderns" is

described by one of their own number. "Only put yourself," says this

witness, "in the position of those who had never received any other

teaching, for example, than that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, and

suddenly heard their pastor speak on some Christmas Day of 'simple

parents of the man of Nazareth,' or on Easter Sunday of the delusion of

the early Christians that Jesus has returned to earth from the

grave.'...Yet such preaching was actually heard....The Church listened,

thought it over, thought it over again, and finally a large number of

her members accepted the new teaching" (quoted by Wicksteed, Eccl.

Instit. of Holland, p. 59). It is the glaring inconsistency of this

position which is remorselessly satirised by writers hike Strauss amid

Hartmann, and the timing which gives their strictures sharpness is that

there is so much truth in them.

There was a time when Strauss also wrote: "But we have no fear that we

should lose Christ by being obliged to give up a considerable part of

what was hitherto called the Christian creed! He will remain to all of

us the more surely, the less anxiously we cling to doctrines and

opinions that might tempt our reason to forsake Him. But if Christ

remains to us, and if He remains to us as the highest we know and are

capable of imagining within the sphere of religion, as the Person

without whose presence in the mind an perfect piety is possible; we may

fairly say that in Him do we still possess the sum and substance of the

Christian faith" (Selbstgespr�che, p.67, Eng. trans.). But in his The

Old Faith and the New Strauss later faced the question "Are we still

Christians?" with a bolder look, and gave it the uncompromising answer,

"No." He goes over the articles of the Apostles' Creed one by one, and

shows that every one of theism is taken by the "modern" theologians in

a non-natural sense. He invites his reader "to assist in thought at the

cycle of festivals in a Protestant church, whose minister stands on the

ground of present day science, and see whether he can still he

uprightly and naturally edified thereby." He pictures the statements

that such a minister would be compelled to make at Christmas, at the

Epiphany, at Good Friday, at Easter and Ascension Day; compares them

with the book he reads, the prayers he uses, the sacraments he

administers; and shows how completely the whole thing is a ludicrous

pretence. His conclusion is: "If we do not wish to escape difficulties,

if we do not wish to twist and dissemble, if we wish our yea to be yea,

and our nay, nay,--in short, if we would speak as honourable, upright

men,--we must confess, we are no longer Christians."--Der alte und der

neue Glaube, pp. 12-94.

Hartmann is even more severe on the unchristian character of the modern

Protestant Liberalism in his Selbstzersetzung des Christenthums (chaps.

vi. and vii.). "We ask," he says, "what right the Protestant Liberals

have to call themselves Christians beyond the fact that their parents

have had them baptised and confirmed. In all ages there has been one

common mark of the Christian religion--belief in Christ. . . . But we

have seen that the Liberal Protestants cannot believe in Christ as

either Luther, or Thomas Aquinas, or John or Paul, or Peter, believed

in Christ, and least of all as Jesus believed in Himself, for He

believed Himself to be the Christ--the Messiah" (pp. 64, 65).

Apart, however, from criticisms of opponents, which may be deemed

unfair, it is a fact that, through all its history, Protestant

Liberalism has found it exceedingly difficult to maintain itself on the

platform even of Theism, not to speak of that of Christianity . Its

tendency has been constantly "downgrade," till either it has ended in

open rejection of Christianity, or has been displaced by more. positive

forms of belief. Strauss's case is not a solitary one. A parallel is

found in the career of Edmond Scherer, the inaugurator of the modern

Liberal movement in Switzerland and France, who, beginning with the

most uncompromising traditional orthodoxy, went on, according to M.

Gretillat, to the progressive repudiation of all the fundamentals of

Christian belief, religious and even moral, up to the point of absolute

scepticism. The party of Liberal Christianity initiated by him, of

which Reville is a surviving representative, had, according to the same

authority, "only a fleeting existence,' and its name, to speak in

popular language, soon disappeared from the handbill" [885] (article on

"Theological Thought among. French Protestants" in Presbyt. and Ref.

Review, July 1892). In Holland, too, the "modern" school is seen

running a remarkable course. Its originator, Scholten, was at first,

like Scherer of Geneva, quite conservative. Then he passed to a view of

Revelation and of Christianity not unlike Pfleiderer's. His "thoughts,

however, were not expounded with perfect distinctness in the beginning.

They were too much clothed in the old orthodox forms, and had too large

an admixture of conservative elements f or this. Scholten himself lived

in the honest conviction of having discovered the reconciliation of

faith and knowledge, of theology and philosophy, of the heart and the

intellect. He was able also to impart this conviction to others. Soon

the gospel was proclaimed with enthusiasm from many pulpits . . . .

Among his followers the illusion was well-nigh universal, that the

reasonableness of the faith and of the doctrine of the Reformed Church

had been established." This confidence received a rude shock when, in

1864, Scholten himself declared that, while formerly believing that he

found in the Scriptures, rightly expounded, his view of the world, he

was no longer of that opinion. "He now begins to recognise that between

his ideas and those of the Bible there is no agreement, but a deep

chasm. . . . The results soon showed themselves. The illusion had been

dispelled; faith and enthusiasm suffered shipwreck. Some ministers,

like Pierson and Busken Huet, resigned the office and left the Church.

Others felt dissatisfied with the monism of Scholten. . . . A whole

group of modern theologians broke loose from Scholten's system, and

sought a closer alliance with Hoekstra. . . . Some adherents of this

tendency went to such an extreme in the avowal of these ideas, that,

with a degree of justice, an atheistic shade' of modern theology began

to be spoken of."--Professor Bavinck, of Kampen, in Presbyt. and Ref.

Review, April 1892.

Professor Bavinck thus sums up on the development in Holland: "In

casting a retrospective glance at the three tendencies described up to

this point, we are struck with the tragic aspect of this development of

dogmatic thought. It is a slow process of dissolution that meets our

view. It began with setting aside the Confession. Scripture alone n-as

to be heard. Next, Scripture also is dismissed, and the Person of

Christ is fallen back on. Of this Person, however, first His Divinity,

next His pre-existence, finally His sinlessness, are surrendered, and

nothing remains but a pious man, a religious genius, revealing to us

the love of Cod. But even the existence and love of God are not able to

withstand criticism. Thus the moral element in man becomes the last

basis from which the battle against Materialism is conducted. But this

basis will appear to be as unstable and unreliable as the others."

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[885] It was replaced by newer Ritschlian tendencies.

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NOTE G.--P. 52.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE IDEA OF PROGRESS.

"The hopeful view of human history," says Professor J. Candlish,

"according to which there is to be expected a gradual progress in an

upward direction, and an ultimate state of goodness and happiness, was

entirely foreign to the ideas of the ancient world. Its philosophers

and poets either regarded the course of mankind as a continual

degeneracy from a golden age in the past, or as a vast cycle in which

there was a continual return or reproduction of the same events and

states of things. . . . The idea of the perfectibility of mankind, and

of the gradual and steady improvement of the race in the course of

time, which has been so largely used by those who reject Christianity,

and which enables them to make light of the supernatural grounds of

hope for the world that Christians cherish, was entirely strange to the

pre-Christian ages; and though it may be due in part to the progress of

science, yet is much more to he ascribed to the promises and truths of

Revelation, At least it may be said with truth that Christianity, and

more particularly the Christian idea of the kingdom of God, furnishes

the only solid ground for such hopes of mankind. . . . In modern times

the discoveries of science in its investigation of the works of

creation have tended to awaken in men's minds a similar hopeful spirit,

so that the gradual and sure advance of mankind to perfection has been

accepted almost as an axiom or self-evident truth by many who do not

accept the religious basis on which it rested in Israel. But it may be

doubted whether, apart from a belief in God as the Creator of the

universe, and at the same time the God of grace and salvation, there is

any solid foundation for such a hopeful view of the world's history.

The rise and prevalence of pessimistic views in modern times serves to

show this; and some of those who are most sanguine about the prospects

of mankind, apart from Revelation and Christianity, acknowledge frankly

that there can be no certainty of this on a merely natural basis, and

that possibly after all we may have to fall back into Pessimism."--The

Kingdom of God (Cunningham Lectures, 1884), pp. 38-42.

See on this subject the careful history of the idea of progress in

Flint's Philosophy of History, Pp. 28-42; and the valuable remarks in

Hare's Guesses at Truth (referred to also by Dr. Candlish), pp. 305-348

(1871). Cf. Leopardi's (and Hartmann's) three stages of human illusion,

in Caro's Le Pessimisme, pp. 39-49.

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NOTE H.--P. 53.

THE PREVALENCE OF PESSIMISM.

"It is a singular phenomenon," says Luthardt, "that in our time, in

which so much complaint is made of the decay of philosophical study and

interest, a definite philosophical system has attained a popularity

which is almost without precedent in earlier systems; and a

philosophical work has had a success which usually falls only to the

lot of the most spirited literary works, and to romances. I refer to

the philosophy of Pessimism and to the work of E. von Hartmann, The

Philosophy of the Unconscious."--Die mod. Welt. p. 183.

Caro observes: "We can now understand in what sense, and how far it is

true that the disease of Pessimism is a disease essentially modern.'

[886] . . . How strange this revival of Buddhistic Pessimism, with all

the apparatus of the most learned systems, in the heart of Prussia, at

Berlin! That three hundred millions of Asiatics should drink in long

draughts the opium of these fatal doctrines which enervate and act as a

soporific on the will, is already sufficiently strange; but that a

race, energetic, disciplined, so strongly constituted for knowledge and

for action, at the same time so practical, a rigorous calculator,

warlike and stern, certainly the opposite of a sentimental race,--that

a nation formed of these robust and lively elements should give a

triumphant welcome to these theories of despair divulged by

Schopenhauer,--that its military optimism should accept with a sort of

enthusiasm the apology for death and for annihilation,--it is this

which at the first view seems inexplicable. And the success of the

doctrine is not confined to the banks of the Spree. The whole of

Germany has become attentive to this movement of ideas. Italy, with a

great poet, had outstripped the current; France, as we shall see, has

followed in a certain measure; she also, at the present hour, has her

Pessimists."--Le Pessimisme, pp. 25, 26. "There can be no question,"

says Karl Peters, "that Schopenhauerism is for the time the dominating

tendency in our fatherland. One needs only to consult Laban's book-list

to be convinced of the fact; our whole atmosphere is, so to speak,

saturated with Schopenhauer's views and ideas. . . . Hand in hand with

the colossal forward development of our race in all departments goes

the fact that the sorrow of earthly existence is felt to-day more

keenly than ever by the masses. A decided pessimistic current goes

through our time."--Willenswelt, pp. 109, 244.

Pessimism, according to Hartmann, is the deeper mood of humanity--its

permanent undertone (Selbstzer. d. Christ. p. 96).

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[886] Martensen remarks of modern Pessimism that "a Pessimism like it,

though it be far from Christian, can only be found in the Christian

world, where the infinite craving of personality has been

awakened."--Christian Ethics, i. p. 178 (Eng. trans.).

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NOTE I.--P. 56.

TRANSITION FROM PESSIMISM TO THEISM--HARTMANN AND KARL PETERS.

It is a remarkable circumstance that Pessimism also should end by

recognising the need of religion, and in its own way should be found

seeking to provide for that need. The new religion, Hartmann thinks,

will represent the synthesis of the religious evolution of the East and

of that of the West--of the pantheistic and of the monotheistic

evolution: only resting on that which is the indispensable

presupposition of all religion, "the Pessimism of positive

Christianity." He describes it as "a Pantheism, and indeed a

pantheistic Monism (with exclusion of all Polytheism); or impersonal

immanent Monotheism, whose Godhead has the word as its objective

manifestation, not outside of, but within itself" (Selbst. d. Christ.

pp. 93, 97, 121). The basis of this new religious system is elaborated

in the second part of his Religionsphilosophie, entitled Die Religion

des Geistes. A simple reference to the table of contents in this work

will show in how extraordinary a fashion it is attempted to take over

the whole nomenclature of Christianity into this new philosophical

religion. First the human side of the religious relation is treated of,

often very suggestively. Then it is treated of in its double-sided

aspect--Divine and human--under the following headings--(1) Grace and

Faith in General; (2) The Grace of Revelation and Intellectual Faith;

(3) The Grace of Redemption and Faith of the Heart; (4) The Grace of

Sanctification and Practical Faith. The object of religion in turn is

considered in a threefold aspect--(l) God as the Moment overcoming the

Dependency of the World; (2) God as the Moment grounding the Dependency

of the World; (3) God as the Moment grounding the Freedom of the World

(Freedom in God, the righteousness of God the holiness of God). Man is

considered--(1) as in need of Redemption; and (2) as capable of

Redemption. The process of salvation itself is exhibited in a threefold

light--(1) The Awakening of Grace; (2) The Unfolding of Grace; (3) The

Fruits of Grace (!). Yet God, endowed with all these attributes, wise,

omniscient, gracious, righteous, holy, etc., is still regarded as

impersonal and unconscious. Is not Hartmann chargeable with the same

fault which he seeks to fasten on the Protestant Liberals, of trying to

profit by the respect which is paid to the Bible while teaching a

totally different doctrine? (Selbst. d. Christ. p. 62).

Karl Peters is undoubtedly right, when he says of the systems both of

Frauenstadt and of Hartmann, that they represent the transition to

Theism without knowing it. In Frauenstadt's system, he remarks, "the

world in its totality is no more identified with the world-Ego, and we

have, without being aware of it, gone over from Pantheism to Theism."

Criticising Hartmann, be comments on "this absolute, unconscious,

all-wise idea , an omniscient wisdom, which embraces all, and only

knows not itself," and argues that in principle Theism is involved in

Hartmann's doctrine. "Here," he says, "we reach the kernel of the whole

criticism. I maintain, namely, positively, that the Philosophy of the

Unconscious represents the transition from Pantheism to Theism. . . .

As in Schopenhauer we have the transition from an idealistic to a

realistic, so in Hartmann there is executed the transition from a

pantheistic to a theistic Weltanschauung.' The former indeed believed

himself to stand on quite the other side, and no doubt the latter also

thinks that he is planted on the opposite bank. But as Schopenhauer

could not prevent the historical development from growing beyond his

standpoint, so Hartmann will seek in vain to guard himself against such

a breaking up of his system....Ed v. Hartmann's Unconscious is an

almighty and all-wise Providence, raised above the world-process, which

comprehends and holds within itself the whole

world-development."--Willenswelt, pp. 148, 268, 272.

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NOTE J.--P. 57.

MATERIALISM IN GERMANY.

The descent from an overstrained idealistic Pantheism to materialistic

Atheism in Germany--through Feuerbach, Stirner, lingo, etc.--is matter

of notoriety. The following extract from an able article on "Lotze's

Theistic Philosophy," in the Presbyterian Review, vol. vi. (1885), will

illustrate the length to which things went in that direction:--"The

one-sided opposition of Empiricism to Idealism developed into dogmatic

Materialism. From the 18th September 1854, when Rudolf Wagner delivered

at G�ttingen his famous address on The Creation of Man and the

Substance of the Soul,' the Materialistic conflict raged in Germany for

a couple of decades with unabated vigour. Taking up the gauntlet which

Wagner had thrown down Karl Vogt entered the lists with Kohlerglaube

und Wissenschaft,' flaunting, amidst satire and ridicule, in the face

of his opponent, who had declared himself content with the simple

religious faith of the collier, the new famous sentence that thought

stands in about the same relation to the brain, as gall to the liver or

urine to the kidneys.' A flood of writings, more or less popular in

style, followed, and a sort of religious propaganda was made of the

gospel of Materialism, while a fierce crusade was waged against

everything claiming to be superior to matter, or a function of matter.

The hostility against religion was pronounced and bitter. The creed

preached was Atheism, naked and unashamed. Matter is held to be

eternal; physical and chemical forces are the only ultimate agents; the

world exists, Vogt tells us, without organic substance, without a known

Creator, nay, without a leading idea.' Hellwald expressly announces

that the task of science is to destroy all ideals, to manifest their

hollowness and nothingness, to show that belief in God and religion is

deception'; while Buchner, who is ever, if possible, a little more

audacious than the rest, sums up the matter as follows: Theism, or

belief in a personal God, leads, as all history shows, to monachism,

and the rule of priests; Pantheism, or belief in an all-pervading God,

leads, where it is in the ascendancy, to contempt of the senses, denial

of the Ego , to absorption in God, and to a state of stagnation.

Atheism, or philosophical Monism, alone leads to freedom, to

intelligence, to progress, to due recognition of man--in a word, to

Humanism.' . . . The progress of Materialism was rapid. Buchner's Force

and Matter, the Bible of German Materialism,' passed, within twenty

years from its first appearance (1858), through no less than fourteen

editions, and was translated into almost every language in Europe. The

scientific camp was said to be materialistic almost to a man. The

common people, among whom this way of thinking was frequently allied

with the political tenets of social democracy, were, and are still

to-day largely leavened by the infection. The philosophical chairs in

the Universities were feeble to resist it. . . . Materialism in Germany

is no longer as strong as it was; good authorities express it as their

opinion that, as it grew, so also is it waning rapidly " (pp. 652-655).

See also the sketch of the German atheistic parties in Lichtenberger's

"History of German Theology in the Nineteenth Century" (Histoire des

Id�es religieuses en Allemagne), pp. 360-70 (Eng. trans.); and

Christlieb's "Modern Doubt and Christian Belief" (Moderne Zweifel am

christlichen Glaube), pp. 138-140 (Eng. trans.).

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NOTE K.--P. 63.

THE REASONABLENESS OF REVELATION.

Ewald has said, much in the spirit of the passage quoted from

Pfleiderer: "How, then, should not He answer the earnestly

perseveringly questioning spirit of man--He of whose spirit man's is

but a luminous reflection and an enkindled spark, and to whom in his

searching and questioning he ran draw near quite otherwise than to the

visible things of creation."--Revelation: its Nature and Record (Eng.

trans. of first vol. of Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott), p. 18.

Dr. Walter Morison works out in a very ingenious way the argument for

the probability and reasonableness of Revelation from the analogy of

nature. Rebutting the objection that the modern conception of nature

"is altogether against the idea of any interference by Revelation from

Heaven with the closely linked order existing in nature," and permits

"only evolution from within of coiled--up energies," he remarks: "In

whatever way--whether by evolution or otherwise--the system of nature

which we see around us, and of which we are a part, has come about,

that system of nature supplies no presumption against there being a

direct Revelation of religious truth; on the contrary, its actual

testimony, rightly understood, is in favour of that supposition. What

may be called direct revelation is found to he one of the common

phenomena of nature or the system of things. As soon as we pass into

that region in our world where there is need for communication between

individuals possessed of intelligence in any degree, we find

revelation' to be the law. There is direct utterance. Even the inferior

animals are continually telling out by their many voices, none of which

is without signification,' their various feelings. Wherever there is

what may be called individuality, with power of feeling and volition,

there utterance or communication exists; it being part of the order of

nature that there be connecting bond of speech between such as possess

any faculty for understanding and fellowship. And when we ascend in our

observations to the region of human life as social, we perceive a

corresponding development of the powers noticed in the inferior

creatures. Everywhere over society we observe speech of some sort;

communication in a direct way from one to another; a constant immediate

revelation of inward thought and feeling going on. There is really

nothing more familiar in the economy of human life than this phenomenon

of direct communication from mind to mind, sometimes by look and sight,

usually by words. . . . There is another world, then, besides this

tongueless one of inorganic nature! There is in the universe this fact,

that between individuals capable of it, direct revelation is constantly

going on. Where there are beings that require a medium of intelligent

communication between them, there we perceive some sort of speech to

exist. And hence it is not a suggestion prima facie opposed to the

analogy of nature, at all events, which is offered when it is asked

whether there may not be some direct personal and articulate utterance

made by God to man. Is there to he eternal silence between these

intelligences, these kindred natures, with their mutual capacity for

love and communion? Are all creatures in the universe that have any

measure of intelligence, or are even sentient, capable of telling out

directly what is in them; and have they the means and the appetency

thereto? Can man commune with man through the high gift of language?

And is the Infinite Mind and Heart not to express itself, or is it to

do so but faintly or uncertainly through dumb material symbols, never

by blessed speech? Is there no Word of God'? To give a negative answer

here would be at least to go against the analogy of nature. All beings

that we know possessed of any intelligence,--such beings generally, we

can at all events say,--and especially the members of the human family,

speak to each other in some direct way, make an immediate revelation of

what is within them; and one of the strongest presumptions, surely, is

this, that a Personal God, in whose image man was made, would, in His

dealings with man, if sufficient occasion called, express Himself in a

similar direct manner; in other words, give a Revelation!"--Footprints

of the Revealer, pp. 49-52.

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NOTE L.--P. 64.

THE RITSCHLIAN DOCTRINE OF REVELATION.

The Ritschlian theologians found everything on positive Revelation.

This is their distinctive position, and their merit as a protest

against a one-sided intellectualism and idealism. They will not allow

even of the possibility of any knowledge of God outside the Revelation

of His grace in Jesus Christ. [887] Natural theology and theoretic

proofs for the existence of God are tabooed by them. A few remarks

maybe made here on this theory byway of further explanation and

criticism.

I. On the theory itself:--

1. As regards the nature of this Revelation, the Ritschlians are agreed

that it comes to us solely through the self-presentation of Christ in

His historical manifestation. He is the only vehicle of Revelation

recognised by them. It is not a Revelation through doctrine, but

through the felt presence of God in Christ, and through the living and

acting in which Christ exemplifies to us the right relation of sonship

to God, and makes manifest the character and purposes of God, as these

bear on our salvation and well-being.

2. As regards the content of this Revelation, its central point is

found in the design of God to found a kingdom of God on the earth, and

to gather men into it, and induce them to make its ends their own,

through the right knowledge of His character, and their acceptance of

the right relation of sonship to Him. All Christ's work--His doing and

dying--has this for its aim. His unity with God in His world-purpose is

a feature in His Divinity; the significance of His death is, that it

guarantees to us supremely the reality of that religious relation to

God into which He invites us in His Gospel. [888]

3. As regards the proof of this Revelation, the Ritschlians are

obviously in a difficulty, since proof means that a thing is shown to

be objectively true (apart from our subjective thoughts about it),

while yet it is a cardinal principle with them that religion moves only

in the sphere of value-judgments, i.e. judgments on the relation of

things to our states of pleasure and pain. They cannot, however, refuse

the demand for proof that this which they present as Revelation from

God is really such, and not a subjective illusion of our own minds. And

here--

First, and negatively, they reject, as inappropriate to religion, all

merely historical evidence, or proof from objective facts, as miracles,

or the resurrection of Christ (which it is doubtful if most of them

accept as objective fact).

Second, and positively, the proof alleged is of two kinds:--

(l) Immediate--consisting of the irresistible impression (Eindruck)

which Christ makes on the soul historically confronted with Him,

compelling the acknowledgment that God is with Him. This is the theme

on which the changes are incessantly rung by Professor Herrmann in his

recent writings.

(2) Scientific--consisting in showing the correspondence which exists

between Christianity and the religious needs of man, as these may be

deduced from the consideration of his nature and history; otherwise,

the agreement of Christianity with the practical postulates of

religion. This is the sort of proof which Ritschl hints at when he

says: "Its representation in theology will, therefore, come to a

conclusion in the proof that the Christian ideal of life, and no other,

altogether satisfies the claims of the human spirit to a knowledge of

things"; i.e. yields a practically satisfying view of the world (Recht.

und Ver. iii. p. 25, 3rd ed.); and which is undertaken in detail by

Kaftan in his Wahrheit d. Christ. Religion (though on different

fundamental lines from Ritschl's).

II. On this view I would offer the following brief criticisms:--

1. It is to be observed that this basing of everything by the

Ritschlians on positive Revelation does not harmonise well with the

premises of the school.

(l) It does not consist well with their fundamental position that

religion moves solely in the sphere of value-judgments. For if we

really get out to objective Revelation, we have clearly broken through

this magic circle of value-judgments, and are in the domain of

judgments of fact and truth. Or is our judgment that this is a Divine

Revelation itself also only a value-judgment?

(2) The theory of Revelation does not consist well with the Ritschlian

theory of knowledge. For Ritschl is thoroughly at one with Kant in the

view that the theoretic reason can give us no knowledge of God, or

proof of His existence. We are thus driven back on practical

postulates, or "Vorstellungen," beyond which, as it would seem, even

Revelation cannot raise us, for Revelation cannot take us outside the

essential limitations of our faculties.

2. It is to be observed, further, that this theory has no proper answer

to give to the question of the nature of Revelation. With its general

avoidance of the speculative, it gives us no distinct specification of

what precisely this term means, or how much it is supposed to cover.

Enough that we receive from Christ the impression that--in some

undefined sense--God is with Him, and in Him is drawing near to us;

this is to us (subjectively) the Revelation, and nothing else is of

importance. Yet it is very obvious that multitudes of questions may

arise just at this point as to the character, degree, purity, limits,

reliableness, and authority of this Revelation, which Ritschlianism

gives us no help to answer. We cannot but ask, e.g., respecting a

Revelation mediated to us in this way through the consciousness of

another human being--How did it originate? What did Revelation mean to

Him, the original recipient? Was it a really supernatural act? or

partly supernatural and partly natural, with a correspondingly mixed

result? How is such a Revelation even possible, since, according to

another part of the theory, there is no direct (mystical) communication

between the soul and God? [889] Is there not large room left here,

which the Ritschlian (e.g. Wendt) are not slow to avail themselves of,

for distinction and criticism even in the contents of Christ's own

consciousness and utterances? Are we not in danger of coming hack to

the view that in the last analysis Christ's religious conceptions do

not differ in origin or character from those of any other great

religious genius?

3. It is again to be observed that the character of this system compels

it to limit very greatly the contents of the Revelation. Ritschlianism

is, as said, essentially a system of religious positivism. It starts

with data of experience,--the direct impression made on us by Christ,

and the experimental knowledge we have of His power to give us

deliverance and freedom,--and beyond this it declines to go. All in the

Christian system which it regards as transcendental or

metaphysical--however guaranteed by words of Christ or His Apostles--it

refuses to inquire into, or sets aside as of no importance to faith.

The pre-existence of Christ, e.g., His supernatural birth, His heavenly

reign, the constitution of His Person, the Trinity of the Godhead, the

eschatological doctrines, are thus swept aside. It has no doctrine of

objective Atonement, but only one of subjective reconciliation. Other

great doctrines of Scripture are either absent, or have a large part of

their meaning taken from them.

4. Finally, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that, while the

members of this school profess to derive their theology from positive

Revelation, what really governs their construction is, not the

objective Revelation, but their particular theories of religion, and

their ideas of what is necessary for the realisation of man's practical

ends. Every one of the members of this school has his theory of

religion independently determined (the theories, however, widely

differing from each other), and agreement with this theory is not only

employed for the proof of the Revelation, but is also the standard,

practically, of what is accepted or rejected in its contents. The

Revelation, in other words, does not come with authority, but rather

derives it's authority from its agreement with the practical

postulates, which are previously established on quite other grounds.

This is true of all the leading members of the party--Ritschl.

Herrmann, Kaftan, etc. So far as relates to the proof of Revelation, it

is not easy to avoid the appearance of moving in a circle. E.g., in

Kaftan's Wahrheit, while the test of the truth of the Revelation is its

agreement with the practical postulates above referred to, these in

turn are supposed to he confirmed by the fact of the Revelation, and

thus proved to he no subjective illusion. I would not press this too

far, since the argument from agreement with rational and moral

postulates is in itself a sound one, and the only objection that can be

raised is to the particular way of stating it, and the exclusive use

made of it. [890]

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[887] See this position slightly modified in the second edition of

Herrmann's Verkehr, p. 49. Herrmann's general views on Revelation are

stated in his Giessen Lecture on Der Begriff der Offenbarung (1887).

Kaftan discusses the subject in his Das Wesen, etc., pp. 171-201.

[888] Kaftan, however, views the kingdom of God as belonging. not to

this world, but the next.

[889] Cf. Herrmann's Verkehr des Christen mit Gott.

[890] In Kant's hands, as is well known, this method was employed to

eviscerate the gospel of all peculiar supernatural content, and to

reduce it to a nucleus of moral notions.

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LECTURE 3 NOTE A.--P. 75.

PRIMITIVE FETISHISM AND GHOST-WORSHIP.

The theory of a gradual ascent in religion from a primitive Fetishism

through . Polytheism to Monotheism, made familiar by Auguste Comte, and

repeated with unquestioning faith by writers like Mr. Clodd and Mr. S.

Laing, receives scant countenance from the best recent authorities.

Certainly, no case has been found in which it is possible to trace

historically such an evolution. I cite a few statements and opinions on

the subject, and on the rival theories of Ghost-worship, Totemism, etc.

Principal Fairbairn, speaking of this class of theories in general,

says: "They assume a theory of development which has not a single

historical instance to verify it. Examples are wanted of people who

have grown, without foreign influence, from Atheism into Fetishism, and

from it through the intermediate stages into Monotheism; and until such

examples be given, hypotheses claiming to be Natural Histories of

Religion' must be judged hypotheses still."--Studies in the Philosophy

of Religion, p. 12.

Mr. Max Miller, speaking as an expert, condemns the theory of a

primitive Fetishism. He says: "If it has never been proved, and

perhaps, according to the nature of the case, can never be proved, that

Fetishism in Africa, or elsewhere, was ever in any sense of the word a

primary form of religion, neither has it been shown that Fetishism

constituted anywhere, whether in Africa or elsewhere, the whole of a

people's religion. Though our knowledge of the religion of the negroes

is still very imperfect, yet I believe I may say that, wherever there

has been an opportunity of ascertaining, by long and patient

intercourse, the religious sentiments even of the lowest savage tribes,

no tribe has ever been found without something beyond mere worship of

fetishes. . . . I maintain that Fetishism was a corruption of religion

in Africa, as elsewhere; that the negro is capable of higher religious

ideas than the worship of stocks and stones; and that many tribes who

believe in fetishes cherish at the same time very pure, very exalted,

and very true sentiments of the Deity."--Is Fetishism a Primitive Form

of Religion? Lecture II. p. 105 (Hibbert Lectures).

In his more recent Lectures he reiterates this view: "If one

considers," he says, "what Fetishism really is, namely, the very last

stage in the downward course of religion, this attempt to make a

little-understood superstition of some modern negro tribes the key to

the religion of Greeks and Romans, nay of the most civilised nations of

the world, is perfectly marvellous--Natural Religion, p. 159. Again:

"Fetishism, from its very nature, cannot be primitive, because it

always presupposes the previous growth of the Divine predicate. As to

the Fetishism of modern negroes, we know now that it represents the

very lowest stage which religion can reach, whether in Africa or any

other part of the world; and I know of no case, even among the most

degraded of negro tribes, where remnants of a higher religious belief

have not been discovered by the side of this degraded belief in

amulets, talismans, and fetishes. The idea of De Brosses and his

followers, that Fetishism could reveal to us the very primordia of

religious thought, will remain for ever one of the strangest cases of

self-delusion, and one of the boldest anachronisms committed by

students of the history of religions."--Ibid. pp. 219, 220.

Mr. Herbert Spencer passes the same judgment. Repudiating Mr.

Harrison's theory of an original Fetishism, he says: "An induction,

based on over a hundred examples, warrants me in saying that there has

never existed anywhere such a religion as that which Mr. Harrison

ascribes to countless millions of men,' during countless centuries of

time.' . . . I have shown that, whereas among the lowest races, such as

the Juangs, Andamanese, Fuegians, Australians, Tasmanians, and Bushmen,

there is no Fetishism, Fetishism reaches its greatest height in

considerably advanced societies, like those of ancient Peru and modern

India. . . . And I have remarked that, had Fetishism been conspicuous

among the lowest races, and inconspicuous among the higher, the

statement that it was primordial might have been held proved; but that,

as the fact happens to be exactly the opposite, the statement is

conclusively disproved--Nineteenth Century, xvi. pp. 8, 9.

This also is Pfleiderer's opinion: "In presence of these facts, the

evolution theory,' as hitherto stated, which finds the beginnings of

religion in Fetishism and Animism, appears to me to he as much wanting

in evidence as it is psychologically

impossible."--Religionsphilosophie, lii. p. 16 (Eng. trans.).

But then Mr.. Spencer's Ghost theory, which he (and now also Dr. Tyler)

propounds as a substitute for that of a primitive Fetishism, meets with

an equally decisive rejection at the hands of Mr. Harrison, Max Muller,

and other influential writers. "I shall say but little about Mr.

Spencer's Ghost theory," says Mr. Harrison; "I have always held it to

be one of the most unlucky of all his sociologic doctrines, and that on

psychological as well as on historical grounds. . . . It is certain

that the believers in the Ghost theory, as the origin of all forms of

religion, are few and far between. The difficulties in the way of it

are enormous. Mr. Spencer laboriously tries to persuade us that the

worship of the sun and the moon arose, not from man's reverence for

these great and beautiful powers of nature, but solely as they were

thought to be the abodes of the disembodied spirits of dead ancestors.

Animal worship, tree amid plant worship, Fetishism, the Confucian

worship of heaven--all, he would have us believe, take their religion

entirely from the idea that these objects contain the spirits of the

dead. If this is not persistent thinking along defined grooves,' I know

not what it is."--Nineteenth Century, xvi. pp. 362, 363.

Max Muller subjects the theory to an historical examination in his

Lectures on Anthropological Religion, and rejects it as based on

totally mistaken data. "Granting even," he says, "that there are races

whose religion consists of ancestor worship only, though, as at present

informed, I know of none, would that prove that the worship of

nature-gods must everywhere he traced hack to ancestor worship? . . .

If a pleader may tell a judge that he has been misinformed as to facts,

surely we may claim the same privilege, without being guilty of any

want of respect towards a man who, in his own sphere, has done such

excellent work. I make no secret that I consider the results of Mr. H.

Spencer's one-sided explanation of the origin of religion as worthy of

the strongest condemnation which a love of truth can dictate."--Lecture

V. pp. 13-2, 133.

See also the examination of this theory in Pfleiderer's

Religionsphilosophie, iii. pp. 12-16.

M. Renouf has said: "If from pre-historic we pass to historic times, we

at once meet on Egyptian ground with an entire system of notions

wonderfully (indeed almost incredibly) similar to those entertained by

our Indo-European ancestors. There is, however, no confirmation of Mr.

Herbert Spencer's theory, that the rudimentary form of all religion is

the propitiation of dead ancestors. If the Egyptians passed through

such a rudimentary form of religion, they had already got beyond it in

the age of the Pyramids, for their most ancient propitiation of

ancestors is made through prayer to Anubis, Osiris, or some other

gods."--Hibbert Lectures, p. 127.

Totemism, or belief in descent from animals worshipped as Divine, is

another phase of explanation of the origin of religion which also meets

with little favour from the authorities. "Totemism is one of those

pseudo-scientific terms," says Max Muller, "which have done infinite

harm to the study of mythology."--Anthropological Religion, p. 408. See

his remarks on it in this work, pp. 121-124; and in Natural Religion,

p. 159. A careful examination of Professor W. R. Smith's theory of

Totemism, as applied to the Semitic religions, may be seen in an

article already referred to in the Edinburgh Review for April 1892

(art. "Semitic Religions "). M. Renouf remarks on another advocate of

the Totem theory: "Many of you have probably read Mr. M'Lellan's

articles on the Worship of Animals and Plants.' In order to show that

the ancient nations passed through what he calls the Totem stage, which

he says must have been in pre-historic times, be appeals to the signs

of the Zodiac. . . . Mr. M'Lellan is here more than half a century

behind his age," etc. And a note adds: "All Mr. M'Lellan's statements

about the ancient nations are based on equally worthless

authorities."--Hibbert Lectures, pp. 29, 30.

Max Muller, Pfleiderer, Reville, and others reject all these theories,

and find the commencement of religion in the worship of the greater

objects of nature--such as mountains, rivers, the sun, the sky, etc.

But if the other theories begin too low, does not this begin too high,

on the supposition that man started as a savage, and that there was no

primitive Revelation? May not the advocate of Fetishism reply that man

must be already far on in his career of development before this grander

style of worship, which demands a highly evolved imagination, is

possible to him? And is this view historically supported, any more than

the others? Do not the facts point to a higher origin for man, and to a

purer primitive perception of the Divine than these theories allow? See

next Note, and Note F. to Lecture V.

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LECTURE 3 NOTE B.--P. 88.

OLD TESTAMENT MONOTHEISM.

Two mutually destructive theories are held by naturalistic critics as

to the origin of Hebrew Monotheism.

The first is that of Renan, who traces it to a "Monotheistic instinct"

said to be inherent in the Semitic race. "The Semitic consciousness,"

he says, "is clear, but lacks breadth; it has a marvellous

comprehension of unity, but cannot grasp multiplicity. Monotheism sums

it up, and explains all its characters."--Hist. generale des Langues

semitiques, p.5. See this theory explained in the work cited, and in

the more recent Histoire du Peuple d'Israel, I. chap. iv. It is a

theory which scarcely requires discussion, so palpably contrary is it

to all the facts. Cf. in regard to it, Max Muller's essay on "Semitic

Monotheism," in vol. i. of his Chips from a German Workshop; Baethgen's

Beitr�ge zur semitischen Religionsgeschichte; Godet's Biblical Studies

on the Old Testament, p. 68 (Eng. trans.); and an able article in the

Edinburgh Review (April 1888).

The second theory is that of Kuenen and the newer school of critics

(though it had many older representatives), viz., that the Israelites

began as polytheists and idolaters like their neighbours, and only

gradually attained to an "Ethical Monotheism" such as we find in the

prophets. This theory, therefore, is the precise reverse of the former.

See it explained in Kuenen's Hibbert Lectures; in Wellhausen's Prol. to

the Hist. of Israel (Eng. trans.); and in Professor Robertson Smith's

Old Testament in the Jewish Church, and Religion of the Semites The

arguments by which it is supported are plausible, yet, when carefully

looked into, are found to be much more specious than solid. The most

sifting examination is that of Baethgen, in the work above cited,

Beitr�ge zur sem. Religionsgeschichte. See also Konig's Hauptprobleme

d. altisrael. Rel.; Robertson's Early Religion of Israel (Baird

Lectures); and Schultz's Alttest. Theol. pp. 159-167 (1889). A good

discussion of Hebrew Monotheism is found also in Vigouroux's La Bible

et les Decouvertes modernes, pp. 1-86, "La Religion primitive d'Israel"

(1881). Baethgen sums up the results of an exhaustive inquiry, first,

into the general character of Semitic Polytheism; and, second, into the

question, "Whether, as Kuenen and others maintain, Israel's faith in

God was really, in the older and middle periods of its history,

distinct in nothing from that of related tribes?" in the following

words:--"The historical investigations of both parts lead to the result

that Israel's faith in God was from the oldest times specifically

distinct from that of the related tribes; and the contention that the

Old Testament Monotheism has originated out of Polytheism, in the way

of natural development, is proved on closer examination to he

untenable."--Preface.

A strong argument against the development theory in question may be

drawn from the results of the newer Pentateuch criticism itself. It is

surely a remarkable circumstance that, not only in the time of the

prophets, but in the documents J and E, originating in the early days

of the kings (perhaps earlier), and embodying independently the oldest

traditions of the nation, the history already rests on a completely

Monotheistic basis, and expresses (e.g. in the call of Abraham) the

clear consciousness of the nation's universal mission and destiny. In

the -documents referred to, e.g., we have as fundamental, underlying

ideas, the creation of the world by Jehovah, the unity of the human

family, the destruction of the whole race by a flood, a covenant with

Noah embracing the earth, a new descent and distribution of mankind

from one centre, the recognition of Jehovah as the God of all the

earth, etc. Schultz, in his Alttestament. Theologie, also lays weight

on these considerations, though with some preliminary qualifications

and explanations that the Monotheism involved is a "religious" and not

a "metaphysical" Monotheism. "In the old songs," he says, "alongside of

the expression, who is like Jehovah?' there stands clearly the other,

no God besides Jehovah no rock besides our rock (Ps. xviii. 32; 1 Sam.

ii. 2). According to the Book of the Covenant, Jehovah has chosen

Israel precisely because all the world is His (Ex. xix. 5), therefore

not at all because He, as a particular God, was bound to this hand and

people. Psalms such as the 8th, 19th, and 29th praise Him who has made

heaven and earth, in whose holy palace the sons of God stand serving.

In B and C [the J and E of the ordinary nomenclature], the same Jehovah

who is the covenant God of Israel is likewise the Creator of the world,

the God of the patriarchs, whom also, as a matter of course, the

non-Israelites own as God, the God of the spirits of all flesh (Gen.

ii. 4 if., iv. 3, 26, xii. 17, xxiv. 31, 50, xxvi. 29; Numb. xvi. 22,

xxvii. 16). He proves Himself in His miracles and in His majesty the

Judge and the Destroyer, the world-ruler in Egypt, Sodom, and Canaan In

fact, therefore, the other Elohim step back as no-gods, who are not

able to determine the course of time world. He alone is a God who can

call forth faith, love, and trust. He will reveal His glory also to the

heathen world, and He will not rest till it fills the whole earth (Ex.

xv. 2). . . . But a people which itself worships only one God, and

regards this God as the world-creator and the controller of all world

destiny, is for that reason monotheistic. . . . A God whose rule is not

bound to the land and people in which He is worshipped is no more a

mere national God. Thus the particularism of the God-idea in Israel has

already become only the sheltering husk under which the pure Monotheism

of the Old Testament could unfold itself and mature."--Pp. 166, 167.

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LECTURE 3 NOTE C.--P. 96.

KANT ON THE COSMOLOGICAL ARGUMENT.

Kant characterises this argument as a perfect "nest" of dialectical

assumptions.--Kritik, p. 427 (Eng. trans. p. 374). Yet it might be

shown that the objections he takes to it depend almost exclusively on

his theory of knowledge--e.g., that the mind is confined to phenomena;

that the law of cause and effect has no application--except in the

world of phenomena (though Kant himself applies it in positing an

action of things per se on the sensitive subject, and introduces a

"causality " of the noumenal self, etc.). [891] The same remark applies

to the "antinomies" or self-contradictions in which the mind is said to

involve itself in every attempt at a theoretic application of the

cosmological "Idea." The "antinomies" are rather to be regarded as

rival alternatives of thought, which, indeed, are contradictory of each

other, but which do not stand on the same footing as regards

admissibility. Rather they are of such a nature that the mind is found

to reject one, while it feels itself shut up to accept the other. E.g.,

The world has either a beginning in time or it has not. The alternative

here is an eternal retrogression of phenomenal causes and effects, or

the admission of an extra-phenomenal First Cause--God. But these do not

stand on the same footing. The mind rejects the former as unthinkable

and self-contradictory (see Lecture IV.); the latter it not only does

not reject, but feels a rational satisfaction in admitting. Again,

there is the antinomy between natural causation and freedom of will.

But this is only an antinomy if we hold that the law of causation

applicable to physical phenomena is the only kind of causation we

know--that there may not be rational, intelligent causation over and

above the physical and determinate. Something here also depends on the

definition of freedom.

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[891] Cf. Dr. Stirling's Philosophy of Theology, pp. 315, 316: "The

entire nest' may be said to be a construction of his peculiar system."

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LECTURE 3 NOTE D.--P. 98.

KANT ON THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT.

Kant says: "This proof deserves always to be mentioned with respect. It

is the oldest, clearest, and the most suited to the common reason of

mankind. It enlivens the study of nature, even as it derives from this

its own existence, and draws from it ever new strength. It brings ends

and purposes into a region where our observation would not of itself

have discovered them, and furthers our natural knowledge through the

guiding thought of a special unity, whose principle lies outside of

nature. This knowledge reacts upon its cause, namely, on the idea which

occasions it, and raises faith in a highest Author of the universe to

an irresistible conviction. It would, therefore, be not only a

thankless, but also a vain task, to attempt to detract in any measure

from the prestige of this argument." But he goes on to say: "Although

we have nothing to object to the rationality and utility of this

procedure, but have much rather to recommend and encourage it, we are

nevertheless unable to assent to the claims which this mode of proof

may make to demonstrative certainty," and then proceeds to state his

objections to it.--Kritik, p. 436, 437 (Eng. trans. p. 383). [892]

These, however, as observed in the text, seem more in the direction of

limiting its application, than of altogether denying its cogency. The

view which obtains in the Kritik of Judgment, that the idea of design

has only regulative and not theoretic validity, [893] is not dwelt on

in the Kritik or Pure Reason. It is not always noticed, besides, that,

intermediate between full theoretic demonstration and mere opinion,

Kant has a form of conviction which he calls "doctrinal

faith"--distinct from moral faith,--the characteristic of which is that

it is an expression of modesty front the objective point of view, but

of assured confidence from the subjective; and that he places the

doctrine of God's existence in this region.--Kritik, p. 561 (Eng.

trans. p. 500). On Kant's service to this argument by his

demonstration, in the Kritik of Judgment, of the necessity of applying

the teleological conception to nature, see Dr. Bernard's valuable

Introduction to his recent translation of this work (1892), and cf.

Professor Caird's Philosophy of Kant, ii. pp. 406-562.

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[892] The references are to Meiklejohn's translation, but the

translations are independent.

[893] Cf. Caird's Philosopy of Kant, pp. 477, 489, 526.

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NOTE E.--P. 99.

SCHOOLS OF EVOLUTIONISTS.

It is well to recognise the fact that evolutionists do not constitute a

homogeneous party; amid that, while there is a growing disposition to

acknowledge the reality of Organic Evolution, there is likewise a

growing tendency to question the sufficiency of the causes by which Mr.

Darwin sought to account for it.

1. From the first there has been an important section of evolutionists,

represented by such names as Owen, Mivart, Asa Gray, G. H. Lewes, Dana,

and J. J. Murphy (in his Habit and Intelligence), who, with differences

among themselves, held that the rise of species could not be accounted

for by the Darwinian hypothesis of Natural Selection acting on

fortuitous variations. The tendency in this school was to seek the

causes of evolution within, rather than without, the organism. Most of

them were theistic evolutionists--i.e. they held that the development

of organisms could not be explained without the assumptions of

intelligence and purpose. Not all who opposed the Darwinian hypothesis

were of this class. Mr. G. H. Lewes, e.g., writes: "At each stage of

differentiation there has been a selection, but we cannot by any means

say that this selection was determined by the fact of its giving the

organism a superiority over rivals inasmuch as during all the early

stages, while the organ was still In formation, there could be no

advantage occurring from it. . . . The sudden appearance of new organs,

not a trace of which is discernible in the embryo or adult form of

organisms lower in the scale--for instance, the phosphorescent and

electric organs--is like the sudden appearance of new instruments in

the social organism, such as the printing press and the railway, wholly

inexplicable on the theory of descent, but is explicable on the theory

of organic affinity" (!).--Physical Basis of Mind, pp. 110, 117.

2. Important differences exist between Mr. Darwin and his fellow-worker

in the same field, Mr. A. Wallace, involving a distinction of principle

on two vital points. (l) Mr. Darwin's own views underwent considerable

modifications in the direction of recognising that Natural Selection is

not an all-sufficient explanation, and that more must be allowed to

forces interior to the organism. See his Descent of Man, p.61; and Cf.

Mivart's Lessons from Nature, viii., ix., and the articles of Spencer

and Romanes cited below. He specially supplemented it by the hypothesis

of Sexual Selection. These alterations on the theory Mr. Wallace

rejects, repudiating Sexual Selection, and maintaining the hypothesis

in the form in which Mr. Darwin abandoned it. (2) Mr. Darwin held his

theory to be all inclusive, embracing man as well as the lower animals;

Mr. Wallace holds that there are provable breaks in the chain of

evolution, and that man, in particular, has a distinct origin. See

Lecture IV.

3. Yet more significant is the recent tendency to revolt against. the

authority of Mr. Darwin, and to recognise the existence of large

classes of phenomena which Natural Selection does not explain. This

change of front in recent discussions on Darwinism is too marked to

escape notice. I take one or two examples which may show the drift of

opinion.

Mr. G. J. Romanes, who as late as 1882 wrote a book on The Scientific

Evidences of Evolution, in which Mr. Darwin's theory received

uncompromising support, afterwards wrote in 1887: "The hypothesis of

Physiological Selection (his own view) sets out with an attempted proof

of the inadequacy of the theory of Natural Selection, considered as a

theory of the origin of species. This proof is drawn from three

distinct heads of evidence--(l) the inutility to species of a large

number of their specific characters; (2) the general fact of sterility

between allied species, which admittedly cannot be explained by Natural

Selection, and therefore has hitherto never been explained; (3) the

swamping influence, upon even useful variations, of free intercrossing

with the parent form."--"Physiological Selection," in Nineteenth

Century, January 1887. The effect of Mr. Romanes's heresy was to arouse

"a storm of criticism" from the orthodox Darwinian party.

Mr. Herbert Spencer has published two papers on "Factors of Organic

Evolution," in which, while still according an important place to

Natural Selection, he very greatly restricts its field of action. The

articles, he says, "will perhaps help to show that it is as yet far too

soon to close the inquiry concerning the causes of Organic

Evolution."--P. 75. In a subsequent article in the Nineteenth Century;

he thus delivers his soul: "The new biological orthodoxy behaves just

as the old biological orthodoxy did. In the days before Darwin, those

who occupied themselves with the phenomena of life passed by with

unobservant eye the multitudinous facts which point to an evolutionary

origin for plants and animals; and they turned deaf ears to those who

insisted upon the significance of these facts. Now that they have come

to believe in this evolutionary origin, and have at the same time

accepted the hypothesis that Natural Selection has been the sole cause

of the evolution, they are similarly unobservant of the multitudinous

facts which cannot rationally be ascribed to that cause, and turn deaf

ears to those who would draw their attention to them. The attitude is

the same; it is only the creed that has changed."--Nineteenth Century,

February 1888.

In a well-written and appreciative Essay on Charles Darwin in "The

Round Table Series," the same criticism is passed upon the theory that

from the standpoint of biology too much stress has been laid on Natural

Selection. "Natural Selection obviously can never be the cause of

modifications in any given individual. . . . Natural Selection cannot

cause an iota of modification in structure. . . . In the case of Human

Selection, not the least modification in an organism can he produced by

the process of selection itself. The modifications somehow produced in

the animals selected are transmitted to the offspring; but the cause of

modification lies elsewhere than in selection; and it is largely due to

man's own modification of the environment. . . . It would undoubtedly

have been better had Darwin omitted Natural Selection as a modifying

agent altogether."--Pp. 22-26.

Even Professor Huxley sounds a wavering note: "How far Natural

Selection suffices for the production of species remains to he seen.

. . . On the evidence of palaentology, the evolution of many existing

forms of animal life from their predecessors is no longer an

hypothesis, but an historical fact; it is only the nature of the

physiological factors to which that evolution is due which is still

open to discussion."--Art. "Evolution" in Ency. Brit.

4. Yet more deep-reaching is the controversy between the older

Darwinian and Spencerian schools on the One hand, and the newer school

headed by Prof. Weismann on the other, on the subject of the

transmissibility of acquired characters. According to Mr. Spencer,

"either there has been inheritance of acquired characters, or there has

been no evolution."--Cont. Rev., March 1893, p. 446. But this Weismann,

Lankester, and others absolutely deny. See controversy between Mr.

Spencer and Prof. Weismann in Cont. Rev, for 1893; and cf. Weismann's

Papers on Heredity (trans. 1889), Einer's Organic Evolution, Thomson's

Study of Animal Life, chap. xx., etc.

Good general criticisms of the Darwinian theory may be seen in Mivart's

Genesis of Species, Murphy's Habit and Intelligence, Elam's Winds of

Doctrine, Bouverie Pusey's Permanence and Evolution (1882), Van Dyke's

Theism and Evolution, Professor Sehurman's Ethical Import of Darwinism,

Principal Dawson's Modern Ideas of Evolution, Martineau's Study of

Religion, Iverach's Christianity and Evolution, etc.

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LECTURE III NOTE F--P. 103.

KANT ON THE ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT.

Kant holds firmly to the invalidity of all inference from the idea of

God to His reality; but here also it is to be noticed that he allows to

his "Ideal of Pure Reason" an important part in Natural Theology. If

theoretic reason cannot prove, neither can it disprove the objective

reality of this ideal of a supreme Being; and given a proof, or a

conviction, from any other quarter (from the Practical . Reason or a

"doctrinal faith" from design), it is of the highest utility in

correcting and purifying our conception of this Being. "For," he says,

"though Reason in its merely speculative use is far from competent to

so great an undertaking as to reach the existence of a supreme Being;

yet it is of very great service in correcting the knowledge of such a

Being, provided this can be drawn from some other source; in making it

consistent with itself, and with each intelligible view of things; and

in purifying it from everything which would contradict the notion of a

primary Being, and from all mixture of empirical limitations. . . . The

supreme Being, therefore remains for the merely speculative use of

Reason a mere Ideal, though one free from error, a notion which

completes and crowns the whole of human knowledge, whose objective

reality cannot indeed by this method be proved, but also cannot be

disproved; and if there should be a Moral Theology which can supply

this defect, the hitherto only problematic transcendental theology will

show its indispensableness in the determination of its notion and the

unceasing criticism of a reason often enough deceived by sense, and not

always in agreement with its own ideas. The necessity, infinity, unity,

existence apart from the world (not as world-soul), eternity without

conditions of time, omnipresence without conditions of space,

omnipotence, etc., are pure transcendental predicates, and therefore

the purified conception of the same, which every theology finds so

necessary, can be drawn from transcendental theology alone."--Kritik,

pp. 446, 447 (Eng. trans. pp. 392, 393).

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LECTURE III NOTE G.--P. 105.

RATIONAL REALISM.

This argument is well stated by Pfleiderer in the following words: "The

agreement, therefore," he says, " of the ideal laws of thought, which

are not drawn from the outer world, and the real laws of being, which

are not created by our thought, is a fact of experience of the most

incontrovertible kind; the whole certainty of our knowledge rests on

it. But how are we to account for this agreement? There is only one

possible way in which the agreement of our thought with the being of

the world can be made intelligible: the presupposition of a common

ground of both, in which thought and being must be one; or the

assumption that the real world-ground is at the same time the ideal

ground of our spirit, hence the absolute Spirit, creative Reason, which

appears in the world-law on its real, in the law of thought on its

ideal side. The connection of thought and being, subject and object, in

the finite and derivative spiritual being, points back to the unity of

the two in the infinite Spirit as the ground and original type of ours.

This is the meaning of the ontological ' argument, as indicated even in

the word. We may find it anticipated even in Plato, in the thought that

the highest idea, or the Deity, is the cause both of being and of

knowledge; and Augustine follows him in this, frequently and in a

number of turns of thought, tracing back our faculty of knowing the

truth to the fact of our participation in God, who is the substantial

truth, the unchangeable law both of the world and of our thought. In

modern times this thought forms the foundation and corner-stone of

speculative philosophy."--Religionsphilosophie, iii. p. 274 (Eng.

trans.).

The germs of this theory are found in Leibnitz, Herder, Goethe, and

most of the deeper thinkers. It is the thought which underlies Mr.

Green's Prolegomena to Ethics. Professor Samuel Harris, of Yale

College, makes it the ground of his Philosophical Basis of Theism; and

it largely influences current thought.

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LECTURE IV NOTE A.--P. 122.

THE CREATION HISTORY.

The rights and wrongs of the reconcilability of the creation narrative

in Gen. i. with modern science have recently been discussed anew by Mr.

Gladstone and Professor Huxley in the Nineteenth Century (vols. xviii

and xix.). I do not enter into this discussion. But if the one

disputant imports into this early narrative more than it will bear, the

other surely does less than justice to it when he brackets it "with the

cosmogonies of other nations, and especially with those of the

Egyptians and the Babylonians," as essentially of the same character

with these.

I content myself with quoting on this point the tribute to this ancient

narrative by Haeckel, surely an unprejudiced witness, in his History of

Creation. He says: "The Mosaic history of creation, since, in the first

chapter of Genesis, it forms the introduction to the Old Testament, has

enjoyed, down to the present day, general recognition in the whole

Jewish and Christian world of civilisation. Its extraordinary success

is explained, not only by its close connection with Jewish and

Christian doctrines, but also by the simple and natural chain of ideas

which runs through it, and which contrasts favourably with the confused

mythology of creation current among most of the ancient nations. First,

God creates the earth as an inorganic body; then He separates light

from darkness, then water from the dry land. New the earth has become

habitable for organisms, and plants are first created, animals later;

and among the latter the inhabitants of the water and of the air first,

afterwards the inhabitants of the dry land. Finally, God creates man,

the last of all organisms, in His own image, and as the ruler of the

earth. Two great and fundamental ideas, common also to the

nonmiraculous theory of development, meet us in the Mosaic hypothesis

of creation with surprising clearness and simplicity--the idea of

separation or differentiation, and the idea of progressive development

or perfecting. Although Moses looks upon the results of the great laws

of organic development (which we shall later point out as the necessary

conclusions of the Doctrine of Descent) as the direct actions of a

constructing Creator, yet in his theory there lies hidden the ruling

idea of a progressive development and a differentiation of the

originally simple matter. We can therefore bestow our just and sincere

admiration on the Jewish lawgiver's grand insight into nature, and his

simple and natural hypothesis of creation, without discovering in it a

so-called Divine Revelation."--Hist. of Creation, i. pp. 37, 38 (Eng.

trans.).

The grounds on which Haeckel concludes that it cannot be a Divine

Revelation are--(1) the geocentric error that the earth is the central

point in the universe; and (2) the anthropomorphic error that man is

the premeditated end of the creation of the earth,--neither of which

"errors" need greatly distress us. For the rest, the creation narrative

certainly goes back on early tradition, [894] and is not a scientific

precis, written in the light of the latest discoveries of modern

geology. Yet it is possible to hold that the Spirit of Revelation is

active in it, not merely making it the vehicle of general religious

ideas, but enabling the writer really to seize the great stadia of the

creation process, and to represent these in such a way as to convey a

practically accurate conception of them to men's minds. Modern science

may supplement, it is astonishing how little it requires us to reverse

of, the ideas we derive from this narrative of the succession of steps

in creation, assuming that we deal with it fairly, in its broad and

obvious intention, and not in a carping and pettifogging spirit. The

dark watery waste over which the Spirit broods with vivifying power,

the advent of light, the formation of an atmosphere or sky capable of

sustaining the clouds above it, the settling of the great outlines of

the continents and seas, the clothing of the dry land with abundant

vegetation, the adjustment of the earth's relation to sun and moon as

the visible rulers of its day and night, the production of the great

sea monsters and reptile-like creatures (for these may well be included

in "sheratzim") and birds, the peopling of the earth with four-footed

beasts and cattle--last of all, the advent of Man--is there so much of

all this which science requires us to cancel? Even in regard to the

duration of time involved,--those dies ineffabiles of which Augustine

speaks, [895] --it is at least as difficult to suppose that only

ordinary days of twenty-four hours are intended, in view of the

writer's express statement that such days did not commence till the

fourth stage in creation, as to believe that they are

symbols.--Delitzsch defends the symbolic interpretation in his New

Commentary on Genesis, p. 84 (Eng. trans.).

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[894] Modern criticism would bring down the age of this narrative to

the Exile, and explain its origin by late Babylonian influence; but the

Dillmann and Delitzsch have shown strong reasons for rejecting this

view, and for regarding the tradition as one of the oldest possessions

of the Israelites.--Cf. Delitzsch's New Com. on Gen. pp. 63-66; and

Whitehouse in Introduction to Eng. trans. of Schrader's

Keilinschriften, i. pp. 18, 19, on Dillmann.

[895] "Of what fashion those days were," says Augustine, "it is either

exceeding hard or altogether impossible to think, much more to speak.

As for ordinary days, we see they have neither morning nor evening, but

as the sun rises and sets. But the first three days of all had no sun,

for that was made on the fourth day," etc.--De Civitate Dei, xi. 6, 7.

Cf. De Genesis ii. 14.

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LECTURE IV NOTE B.--P. 127.

EVOLUTION IN INORGANIC NATURE--THE NEBULAR HYPOTHESIS.

This famous hypothesis of Kant and Laplace is frequently spoken of as

if it had become an established fact of science; and it forms an

integral part in most sketches of the process of cosmic evolution (as

in Strauss, Spencer, Clodd, etc.). Yet so far is it from being

established, that the objections to its sufficiency seem to multiply

and strengthen as years go on, and many eminent men of science reject

it altogether.

Mr. B. A. Proctor, in an article on the "Meteor Birth of the Universe,"

contributed to the Manchester Examiner and Times, May 29, 1888, thus

speaks of it:--

"The nebular theory of Laplace has long held a somewhat anomalous

position. Advanced by its distinguished author as a mere hypothesis, in

days when the word hypothesis' had still its proper significance (as

shown in Newton's saying, Hypotheses non fingo'), it had from the

beginning a fascination for most minds, which led to its acceptance as

if it had been a veritable theory. Yet it has never been accepted as a

theory by one single student of science who has possessed adequate

knowledge of physics, combined with adequate knowledge of astronomy and

mathematics."

After sketching the theory, he proceeds: "The nebulous speculation of

Laplace is open to two most serious objections. In the first place, as

I have already pointed out, a vaporous mass of enormous size, and of

the exceeding tenuity imagined, could not possibly rotate in a single

mass in the manner suggested by Laplace. In the second place, some of

the most characteristic peculiarities of the solar system remain

altogether unaccounted for by this speculation, ingeniously though it

accounts for others."

These objections are then developed. Mr. Proctor's rival theory is that

of "Meteoric Aggregation." See, further, his More Worlds than Ours,

chapter on "Comets and Meteors."

A searching examination of this theory, embodying the views of M.

Babinet, may be seen in Stallo's Concepts of Modern Physics

(International Library), pp. 277-286.

Sir Robert S. Ball, Professor of Astronomy at Cambridge, says of it:

"Nor can it be ever more than a speculation; it cannot be established

by observation, nor can it be proved by calculation. It is merely a

conjecture, more or less plausible, but perhaps m some degree

necessarily true, if our present laws of heat, as we understand them,

admit of the extreme application here required, and if also the present

system of things has reigned for sufficient time without the

intervention of any influence at present unknown to us."--The Story of

the Heavens, p. 506

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LECTURE IV NOTE C.--P. 127.

THE HYPOTHESIS OF CYCLES.

The idea of an eternal succession of cycles of existence--of

alternating periods of dissolution and renovation--of the destruction

of worlds, and continual birth of new worlds from the ruins of the

old--could not but present itself early o the minds of speculative

thinkers whose theories did not admit of a beginning of the world in

time. We find it in Brahmanism, in some of the early Greek

philosophies, among the Stoics, and it has been frequently revived in

modern times as an alternative to the doctrine of creation.

Zeller says of the Greek Anaximandel: "The assertion which ascribes to

Anaximander an infinity of successive worlds seems borne out by his

system. . . . Plutarch, indeed, expressly says of Anaximander that from

the Infinite, as the sole cause of the birth and destruction of all

things, he considered that the heavens and the innumerable worlds arise

in endless circulation; and Hippolytus speaks to the same effect. . .

.Cicero, too, makes mention of innumerable worlds, which in long

periods of time arise and perish; and Stobaeus attributes to

Anaximander the theory of the future destruction of the world. . . .

The same theory of a constant alternation of birth and destruction in

the universe was held by Heraclitus, who approaches more closely to

Anaximander than to any of the ancient Ionian physicists, and also most

probably by Anaximenes and Diogenes. We have reason, therefore, to

suppose that Anaximander also held it."--Pre-Socratic Philosophy, pp.

259, 260.

This theory was revived by Kant in his Theory of the Heavens in 1755,

[896] and was adopted from him by Strauss (in his Glaubenslehre and Der

alte und der neue Glaube, pp. 153-160). Vatke and others also held it.

Mr. Spencer, with all his profession of nescience about origins, adopts

this theory, as in reason he is compelled to do if he advocates

evolution, and yet refuses to admit a beginning in time.--First

Principles, pp. 519-537, 550, 551.

There is a fascination and grandeur in this conception of endless

cycles of existence,--of new worlds perpetually rising from the ashes

of the old,--but it is a theory which cannot be maintained.

1. Philosophically, it involves all the difficulties which, in

discussing the cosmological argument, we saw to inhere in the notion of

an endless succession of causes and effects. This, as respects the past

(regressus in infinitum), is a supposition which is not simply

inconceivable, but which reason compels us positively to reject as

Self-contradictory.

2. Scientifically, it seems disproved by the doctrine of the

dissipation of energy, and of the tendency of the material universe to

a state of final equilibrium. This doctrine is stated by Sir William

Thomson (now Lord Kelvin) in the following terms:--

"(1) There is at present in the material world a universal tendency to

the dissipation of mechanical energy. [897]

"(2) Any restoration of mechanical energy, without more than an

equivalent of dissipation, is impossible in inanimate material

processes, and is probably never effected by material masses, either

endowed with vegetable life, or subjected to the will of an animated

creature.

"(3) Within a finite past, the earth must have been, and within a

finite period of time to come the earth must again be, unfit for the

habitation of man as at present constituted, unless operations have

been, or are to be, performed which are impossible under the laws to

which the known operations going on at present in the material world

are subject."--Paper "On a Universal Tendency in Nature to the

Dissipation of Mechanical Energy," in Phil. Meg., ser. iv. vol x. p.

304ff. Cf. Tait's Recent Advances in Physical Science, p. 146; Stewart

and Tait's The Unseen Universe, pp. 93, 94, 126-128, 211-214 (5th ed.);

and Jevons's Principles of Science, ii. p. 483. Mr. Spencer himself

admits that, as the outcome of the processes everywhere going on, we

are " manifestly progressing towards omnipresent death,"--that "the

proximate end of all the transformations we have traced is a state of

quiescence."--First Principles, p. 514.

Stewart and Tait say: "The tendency of heat is towards equalisation;

heat is par excellence the communist of our universe, and it will no

doubt ultimately bring the present system to an end."--Unseen Universe,

p. 126.

Professor Huxley says of astronomy, that it " leads us to contemplate

phenomena, the very nature of which demonstrates that they must have

had a beginning, and that they must have an end, but the very nature of

which also proves that the beginning was, to our conceptions of time,

infinitely remote, and that the end is as immeasurably distant."--Lay

Sermons, Addresses, etc., p. 17 ("On the Advisableness of Improving

Natural Knowledge"

Cf. on the cycle of hypothesis, Flint's Philosophy of History, pp.

30-35; Dorner in criticism of Vatke, Person of Christ, pp. 122, 123;

and Chapman in criticism of Spencer, Pre-Organic Evolution, pp.

179-190.

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[896] Kant, however, held a beginning. See Strauss's criticism of him

in passage cited.

[897] Professor Proctor says that only the two hundred and

twenty-seventh part of the one millionth of all the heat from the sun

reaches any planet; the remainder passes into spance and is lost.

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LECTURE IV NOTE D.--P. 130.

"ETERNAL CREATION."

Origen's views are stated in his De Principiis, Book i. 2, iii. 5, etc.

In the former passage he argues that God would not be omnipotent if He

had not eternally creatures on which to exercise His power. In the

latter he deals with the objection: "If the world had its beginning in

time, what was God doing before the world began? For it is at once

impious and absurd to say that the nature of God is inactive and

immovable, or to suppose that goodness at one time did not do good, and

omnipotence at one time did not exercise its power"; and gives for

answer: "Not then for the first time did God begin to work when He made

this visible world; but as, after its destruction, there will he

another world, so also we believe that others existed before the

present came into being. . . . By these testimonies it is established

both that there were ages before our own, and that there will be others

after it."--Ante-Nicene Library, trans. pp. 28, 255. Origen's view of

eternal creation is thus that of an eternal succession of worlds.

That profound medieval speculative thinker, John Scotus Erigena, held

the doctrine of an eternal creation. See the sketch of his system in

Ueberweg's Hist. of Phil. i. 358-365.

Rothe's views are contained in his Theolegische Ethik, i. sees. 40-52

(a special discussion of the point in sec. 52, pp. 193-204, 2nd ed.),

and his Dogmatik, pp. 138-160. His theory turns on the notion that in

positing his I, God must also, by a necessity of thought, posit his

not-I, which is identified by him with pure matter, and is the product

of an eternal act. This is the act of creation proper, and is

beginningless; and from it is to he distinguished the world, which is

the product of finite development, and has its existence in space and

time--has therefore a beginning in time. "What has been created in

time," he says, "that has naturally a beginning; but as undoubtedly has

that which was created when there was not time no beginning. For a

beginning can only be spoken of where there is time. The world is

consequently in no way without beginning (as little in a spatial as in

a temporal reference), and nothing belonging to the world is."--Theol.

Ethik, pp. 198, 199.

Rothe's pure matter is almost identified by him with space and time.

The idea of a beginning of God's creative activity, Schlelermacher

thinks, places Him, as a temporal being in the domain of change.--Der

christ. Glaube, 3. pp. 200, 201.

The views of Lipsius may be seen in his Dogmatik, pp. 292, 293. "It is

only a sensuous representation," he says," to lead back creation upon a

single act now lying in the past, or to speak of a first beginning' of

creation; rather is the total world-development, so soon as it is

viewed religiously, to be placed under the notion of creation,

consequently to be regarded as without beginning or end."--P. 293.

Darner solves the problem by the supposition of a temporal world

standing midway between two eternal ones. "Just, therefore," he says,

"as we have no right to say that this law of succession, and this

progress from imperfect to perfect, must continue for ever,-- so also

we have no right to say that this world, tangible to sense and subject

to temporality, cannot have been preceded by a world of pure spirits

(although spirits not yet subject to laws of historical progress),

which are withdrawn in the first instance from all relation of

succession, and exist in the simultaneity of all their constituent

elements, and in this character surround the throne of God,--a kingdom

of which it cannot be said that a time was when it was not, not merely

because no time was ere it was, but also because for it there was no

time, no succession or becoming. This world can only be brought under

the standpoint of time by reference to the succeeding world. From this

point of view it appears a preceding one, already belonging to the

past. Thus, midway between the eternal world of the end, in which

temporal existence merges, and the world of the beginning standing in

the light of eternity, may lie, like an island in a broad ocean, the

present world bound to temporal existence."--System of Doctrine, ii. p.

33 (Eng. trans.).

Lotze teaches "that the will to create' is an absolutely eternal

predicate of God, and ought not to be used to designate a deed of His,

so much as the absolute dependence of the world upon His will, in

contradistinction to its involuntary emanation' from His

nature."--Outlines of the Phil. of Religion, p. 74 (Eng. trans.).

The authors of The Unseen Universe hold that the resent visible

universe, which had a beginning and will have an end, is developed out

of an unseen and eternal one. "We are led," they say, "not only to

regard the invisible universe as having existed before the present one,

but the, same principle drives us to acknowledge its existence in some

form as a universe from all eternity." Unseen Universe, p. 215; cf. pp.

94, 95.

The theory of an eternal creation is contested, on the other hand, by

Van Oosterzee (Dogmatics, pp. 303, 304, Eng. trans.), Gretillat

(Theologie Systematique, iii. 392-397), Muller (Christ. Doct. of Sin,

i. pp. 224-227, Eng. trans.), etc.

The difficulties which attach to such theories as Rothe's and Dorner's,

which only shift the problem from the absolute beginning to the

beginning of the temporal developing world, are pointed out by Muller

in his criticism of the former: " Do not the difficulties supposed to

be involved in a beginning of the world return now as really insoluble,

because, while denying its beginning, we have to allow the fact of its

eternal creation, and to believe that God, having left it as it was for

a limitless period, barely existing as materia bruta, at length began

at some definite time to think of it and ordain it, i.e. to begin to

develop it towards the goal of its becoming spirit. And if the

beginning of the world involves a transition from non-creation to

creation inconsistent with God's unchangeableness, have we not here

also a transition on God's part from inactivity to action equally

inadmissible, because in this case God's Revelation of Himself in

outward activity becomes a necessity of His nature?"--Christ. Doct. of

Sin, p. 226 (Eng. trans.).

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LECTURE IV NOTE E.--P. 131.

ETERNITY AND TIME.

This difficult problem has exercised the minds of thinkers in all ages.

Augustine has profound thoughts on the subject in his De Civitate Dei.

"For if eternity and time be well considered," he says, " time never to

be extant without motion, and eternity to admit no change, who would

not see that time could not have being before some movable thing were

created? . . . Seeing, therefore, that God, whose eternity alters not,

created the world and time, how can He be said to have created the

world in time, unless you will say there was something created before

the world whose course time did follow? . . . Then, verily, the world

was made with time and not in time (mundus non in tempore sed cum

tempore factus est), for that which is made in time is made both before

some time and after some. Before it is time past; after it is time to

come; but no time passed before the world, because no creature was made

by whose course it might pass."--Book xi. 6. [898]

Rothe goes deeply into the question in his Theologische Ethik, i. pp.

193-204 (2nd ed.); and Lotze discusses it with suggestiveness and

subtlety in his Microcosmos, ii. pp. 708-713.

The following remarks in Dorner are in consonance with a suggestion in

the text: "When, therefore, the world comes into actual existence,

actual time comes into existence. The actual world is preceded by

merely possible time; of course, not in a temporal sense, else must

time have existed before time, but in a logical sense. From the point

of view of actual time, merely possible time can only be mentally

represented under the image of the past; and the same is true of the

eternal world-idea, and God's eternity in relation to the world's

actual existence."--System of Doctrine, ii. p. 30 (Eng. trans.).

Dr. Hutcheson Stirling has also his thoughts on this difficulty. "It is

easy," he says, "to use the words, the predicates that describe what we

conceive to be eternal; as, for example, in the terms of Plato to say

that the eternal, what is always unmoved, the same, can become by time

neither older nor younger, nor has been made, nor appears now, nor will

be in the future, nor can any of those things at all attach to it which

mortal birth has grafted on the things of sense'; but how to bring into

connection with this everlasting rest the never-resting movement of

time--that is the difficulty." I confess that his suggestion that "time

may be no straight line, as we are apt to figure it, but a curve--a

curve that eventually returns into itself," does not seem to me greatly

to relieve the difficulty.--Phil. and Theol. p. 105.

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[898] Augustine, however, in these remarks does little more than

reproduce Plato in the Timaeus. See the striking passage, Jowett's

Plato, iii. p. 620 (2nd ed.).

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LECTURE IV NOTE F.--P. 135.

MAN THE HEAD OF CREATION.

This thought of man as the crown and masterpiece of creation--the goal

of its developments--finds the most varied expression in writers of

different schools. I cite a few illustrative instances.

Kant finds man to be " not merely like all organised beings, an end of

nature, but also here on earth the last end of nature, in reference to

whom all other natural things constitute a system of ends."--Kritik d.

Urtheilskraft, p. 280 (Erd. ed.).

It is the key-thought of Herder's Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte,

that man is the connecting link between two worlds; on the one hand,

the highest of nature's products, crowning its ascent from plant to

animal, and front lower to higher grades of animal life, till finally

it rests in him; and, on the other, the starting-point of a new order

of spiritual existences. "All is bound together in nature; one

condition strives towards another, and prepares the way for it. If,

therefore, man closes the chain of terrestrial organisations as its

highest and last member, he likewise begins, just on that account, the

chain of a higher order of creatures, as the lowest member of it; and

thus is probably the middle-link between two systems of creation,

intimately connected with each other."--Ideen, Bk. v. 6.

It is virtually Herder's thought which Dr. H. Stirling reproduces when

he says: "There is a rise from object to object. The plant is above the

stone, and the animal above the plant. But man is the most perfect

result. His supremacy is assured. He alone of all living creatures is

erect; and he is erect by reason of the Divinity within him whose

office it is to know, to think, and to consider. All other animals are

but incomplete, imperfect, dwarf, beside man."--Phil. and Theol. p.

137.

That man is the apex of the evolutionary movement is, of course,

recognised by all, though not necessarily with acknowledgment of final

cause. Professor Huxley, in his Man's Place in Nature, says: "In view

of the intimate relations between man and the rest of the living world,

and between the forces exerted by the latter and all other forces, I

can see no excuse for doubting that all are co-ordinated forms of

Nature's great progression from the formless to the formed, from the

inorganic to the organic, from blind force to conscious intellect and

will" (p. 108); and Professor Tyndall, in his Belfast Address,

describing how in the Primates the evolution of intellect and the

evolution of tactual appendages go hand in hand, says: "Man crowns the

edifice here." And Mr. Wallace regards man as not only placed "apart,

as the head and culminating point of the grand series of organic

nature, but as in some degree a new order of being."--Nat. Selection,

pp. 351, 352.

Mr. Fiske may he quoted, who says suggestively: "The doctrine of

evolution, by exhibiting the development of the highest spiritual human

qualities as the goal toward which God's creative work has from the

outset been tending, replaces Man in his old position of headship in

the universe, even as in the days of Dante and Thomas Aquinas. That

which the pre-Copernican astronomy naively thought to do by placing the

home of Man in the centre of the physical universe, the Darwinian

biology profoundly accomplishes by exhibiting Man as the terminal fact

in that stupendous process of evolution whereby things have come to be

what they are. In the deepest sense it is as true as it ever was held

to be, that the world was made for Man, and that the bringing forth in

him of those qualities which we call highest and holiest is the final

cause of creation."--Idea of God, Introd. pp. 20, 21. Cf. also the

chapters on "Man's Place in Nature as affected by Darwinism," and "On

the Earth there will never be a Higher Creature than Man" in his Man's

Destiny (1890).

I quote further only the following sentences from Kaftan: "The end of

nature, of its history and its development, can be sought only in

humanity, in the fact that man is the crown of the creation.' We men

can find or discover nothing in the whole world environing us which can

be put in comparison with man and his spiritual life, still less which

surpasses him. . . . We must on this account form the idea of an end of

the natural development, and then what scientific knowledge offers in

particulars advances to meet this thought. For this idea would have no

support if it were not upheld by the conviction of an end pertaining to

man and to his history. That the development of the natural world has

its end in man, becomes a rational thought, first of all, when I can

speak in turn of an end to which the world of humanity itself has

regard."--Wahrheit, etc., p. 418.

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LECTURE IV NOTE G.--P. 148.

MIND AND MECHANICAL CAUSATION.

It is well to see clearly what this "gradual banishment from all

regions of human thought of what we call spirit and spontaneity," which

Professor Huxley speaks of ("On the Physical Basis of Life"), involves;

and the matter could not he much better put than it is by Mr. Kennedy

in his Donnellan Lectures on Natural Theology and Modern Thought. He

calls attention to the way in which this theory must, if true, affect

our belief about the agency of God and the agency of the mind of man.

"For the latter, the agency of the human mind," he says, "it leaves no

room whatever. It tells us that, in attributing the railways and

steamships and cotton-mills of the present day to the fertile mind of

man, we have been making a mistake as great as that of the insane

astronomer in Swift's satire, who had persuaded himself that it was his

watchful care which guided the movement of the planets. The railways,

steamships, and cotton-mills would have been constructed all the same,

though we had no minds at all; just as the stars would have remained in

their proper places, though the attention of the astronomer had been

withdrawn from them. It was the boast of Comte that, to minds

famliarised with the true astronomical philosophy, the heavens now

declare no other glory than that of Hipparchus, Kepler, Newton, and all

those who have contributed to the ascertainment of their laws; but if

the doctrine of Automatism be true, it is the direct contrary of this

which results; it is the glory of Hipparchus, Newton, and Kepler which

is irretrievably destroyed. For the mind of Hipparchus was not the

agent which made known to man the Precession of the Equinoxes; nor were

the thoughts of Newton the cause of the writing of the Principia; nor

did those of Kepler cause the enunciation, either by pen or voice, of

the laws which bear his name. These philosophers were merely conscious

automata; and had they been unconscious automata, the result would

still have been the very same" (pp. 75, 76). This is no travesty of the

doctrine, but a serious presentation of the results of the views

advocated by Professor Huxley in his paper," The Hypothesis that

Animals are Automata" (Fortnightly Review, November 1874, pp. 575,

576). "It seems to me," says this distinguished scientific teacher,

"that in men, as in brutes, there is no proof that any state of

consciousness is the cause of change in the motion of the matter of the

organism. If these positions are well based, it follows that our mental

conditions are simply the symbols in consciousness of the changes which

take place automatically in the organism; and that, to take an extreme

illustration, the feeling we call volition is not the cause of a

voluntary act, but the symbol of that state of the brain which is the

immediate cause of that act. We are conscious automata," etc. It is

difficult to see what place is left for virtue or responsibility in

such a theory of man as this!

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LECTURE IV NOTE H.--P. 149.

MIND AND CEREBRAL ACTIVITY.

This subject is discussed with great care in Professor H. Calderwood's

The Relations of Mind and Brain, with the result that a series of facts

are established which I do not remember seeing brought out as

convincingly anywhere else. The chief value of his book lies in the

proof which it leads of the following positions, which I set here in

order, with reference to passages in which they are discussed:--

1. That the primary function of the brain is to serve, not as an organ

of thought, but as an organ of sensory-motor activity (pp. 196, 290,

302-307, 2nd ed.).

2. That, as demonstrated by experiment, by far the greater part of the

brain--if not all--is monopolised for sensory-motor work, leaving

little, if any, of it to be employed for other purposes (pp. 302, 361).

3. That in the comparison of animals there is no fixed ratio between

degree of intelligence and complexity of brain structure--a highly

developed and convoluted brain finding its chief explanation in " the

much more complex muscular system to be controlled "(p. 149). "Advance

in intelligence and advance in complexity of brain structure do not

keep pace with each other; they are not correlated so as to harmonise"

(p. 148). The dog, e.g., with a brain less elaborate in its

convolutions, shows a higher degree of intelligence than the horse,

with a more ample and complicated series of foldings in the

convolutions of the grey matter. A number of leading cases are examined

in detail in Chap. v. "Comparison of the Structure and Functions of

Brain in Lower and Higher Forms of Animal Life" (pp. 123ff.). Cf. pp.

260, 261.

4. That the view that special cells are appropriated to mental

functions,--as, e.g., the "mind-cells" of Hacokel (pp. 298-303), or the

memory-cells of Professor Bain (pp. 356-364),--is not borne out, but is

discredited by physiology. As against Haeckel, it presents "a

cumulative body of evidence adverse to the hypothesis that human

intelligence can be attributed to the giant pyramidal cells abounding

in the fourth layer of the brain. All available evidence favours the

conclusion that these giant cells are motor cells largely concerned in

the functions of co-ordination of related intra-cerebral movements. It

thus seems warrantable to infer that such co-ordinated movement takes

rank as the highest function of brain. In accordance with this view is

Dr. Ferrier's conclusion as to the frontal regions in the human brain,

based on the whole range of experiments under electromotor excitation,

"that they are inhibitory motor-centres' such as may be associated with

an exercise of attention" (pp. 302, 303). As respects Bain's theory,

"the known laws of cerebral activity do not favour such calculations as

are suggested by Professor Bain. The space appropriated for the sensory

and motor functions includes a great part of the mass of cellular

tissue" (p. 360, see proof in detail). Generally, "physiology does not

discover any new function in the higher part of the system, except more

detailed ordination" (p. 297). "We must regard equally the frontal and

the occipital regions of the grand central organ as concerned with

sensory-activity and correlated motor-activity " (p. 316).

5. That the true relation of mind and brain lies in the dependence of

the former on the latter in sensory functions, and in the use made by

the former (involved in all forms of mental activity) of the brain's

motor functions. The following is an enumeration of forms of brain

action which must be considered as generally attending on the more

ordinary mental exercises: "(1) Action of the special senses, and of

the more general tactile sense; (2) action of the muscles concerned in

the management of these senses, and specially of the organs of sight;

(3) co-ordination of sensory and motor apparatus required for use of

the senses; (4) action of sensory centres consequent on use of

imagination (p. 357), in part a renewal of sensory impressions, or a

movement of sensory cells consequent upon stimulus which imagination

supplies; (5) sensory and motor action consequent upon the stimulus

coming from mental emotion, such as weeping, facial expression of

sadness or sympathy . . . all these phases of brain action, as they

involve active use of brain energy, imply transformation of energy,

consequent waste of brain substance, and inevitable sense of

exhaustion. . . . First, there is large use of both sensory and motor

apparatus in connection with all the ordinary forms of intellectual

activity. Second, all thought proceeds, to a large extent, by use of

language, and thus seems to involve activity of the cells concerned

with the acquisition and use of language and speech. Third,

concentrated thought makes a severer demand upon all the forms of brain

action connected with ordinary thought, and so quickens and increases

the exhaustion of nerve energy" (pp. 412-415). This defines the sense

in which the brain is the organ of mind, and shows that it is not the

organ of mind in the same sense in which it is a sensory-motor organ

(p. 315).

6. That while the mind is thus manifoldly correlated with brain action,

not only are mental-facts, as the highest authorities admit, absolutely

distinguishable from brain-facts (pp. 292, 293, 314, 315); but the

mental phenomena in man (even in sensation and consciousness of

succession in sensations, in memory, language, still more in the higher

mental functions, self-regulated voluntary activity, intellectual

activities, thought on ultimate questions of existence, etc.) transcend

brain action altogether, and are non-interpretable through it (pp.

304-307, 366, 367, 385-396; Chap. xv. "The Higher Forms of Mental

Activity"). "Mind transcends all the sensibilities of our organism. The

whole range of our thoughts,--as we interpret events under the law of

causality, form conceptions of rectitude, and represent to ourselves a

scheme of the universe as a whole,--transcends all the functions of the

nerve system. Known facts are in accordance with this duality;

paralysis of a cerebral hemisphere may leave intelligence unaffected;

though high intellectual life involves good brain development, high

brain development does not necessarily involve a distinguished

intellectual life; but the more highly educated a man is, so much the

more does his life transcend what his bodily functions can accomplish"

(p. 307).

The result reached is--"that the intelligence of man, as known in

personal consciousness, is of a nature entirely distinct from sensory

apparatus, its functions being incapable of explanation in accordance

with the laws of sensory activity. . . . The facts of consciousness

lead to the conclusion that mind is a distinct order of existence,

different in nature from the nerve system, differing in the mode of its

action from the mechanical action of sensory apparatus, and capable of

interpreting the rational sensibilities of our organism, so as thereby

to discover a rational order in things external, or adaptation of

related things in nature to rational purpose" (p. 307).

In establishing these positions, Professor Calderwood at the same time

refutes certain others, viz.:--

1. The theory which identifies mind with brain action (pp.313, 314).

2. The theory which supposes that there is an exact correspondence

between the mental and physical facts,--or that, as Bain and Spencer

put it, they are but two sides of the same thing (pp. 293-296). "That

thieve is an absolute harmony involving a parallelism or

correspondence, and making an exact equation of both organic and

non-organic activity in all cases, it is quite impossible to maintain "

(p. 316).

3. The theory that mental phenomena can be translated into the language

of brain changes, or expressed in terms of the motions, groupings, or

electric discharges of the latter (pp. 314, 315).

4. The view that mind does not act on the brain series to alter or

modify it--"that action and reaction of nerve tissue carries the

explanation of all that belongs to human life" (pp. 326-343). "It was

inevitable that a theory reducing all human action to the play of nerve

force should be propounded" (p. 336); but "(l) There is neither

anatomical nor physiological evidence in support of the theory. . . .

(3) The facts relied on as auxiliary to the theory do not in reality

support it. . . . (4) The facts to be explained--voluntary control of

muscular activity under guidance of intelligence--do not manifest

resemblance to the known facts of nerve action, but present a decided

contrast" (pp. 328, 329).

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LECTURE IV NOTE I.--P. 152.

SCHLEIERMACHER AND IMMORTALITY.

In his earlier writings Schleiermacher undoubtedly speaks slightingly

of personal immortality, and Dr. Martineau enlarges on this as if it

were his whole view.--Study of Religion, ii. pp. 355-360. But in his

Der christliche Glaube he takes much more positive ground. In sec. 157

he distinguishes between "propositions of faith" and "propositions

received on testimony," which, though their truth is not directly

deducible from the contents of the Christian consciousness, are yet so

intimately bound up with the credit of Christ and His witnesses, that

we cannot refuse to accept them. Such, e.g., is the Resurrection of

Christ Himself, which, as shown in an earlier section (sec. 99), is not

directly involved in faith, but yet is to be received on testimony. It

is not otherwise, in Schleiermacher's view, with immortality. Here also

he takes the ground that personal immortality is not a doctrine so

bound up with faith that a man cannot conceivably be a Christian, and

yet deny it. For if there is an irreligious denial of personal

immortality, there may also, he holds, be a denial of it springing from

a worthy and indeed a religious motive. "If, therefore," he says, "any

one in good faith should maintain that Christ's words, on this subject

are to be taken figuratively, and not in their strict sense, and on

this account should not attribute personal immortality to himself,

faith in Christ, as such an one conceives of Him, certainly remains

possible"; though, Q as he proceeds to explain, it would involve a

complete transformation of Christianity if such a mode of

interpretation should ever be established in the Church, or should be

laid at the foundation of Christian faith (sec. 157, 2). But this is

purely a hypothetical case. For in these consequences to Christianity,

says Schleiermacher," it is already implied that we do not presuppose

that such an interpretation can be made in good faith." It can be

maintained " that faith in the continuance of our personality is bound

up with faith m the Redeemer" (ibid.). He rejects all the natural

arguments for immortality (sec. 158, 1), but he thinks it indubitable

that Christ Himself taught His own immortality, and that of believers

as united with Him in fellowship of life; and this conviction is

therefore given to us as part of our faith in Christ (sec. 158, 2). It

must, however, be admitted that this is an exceedingly weak ground on

which to rest so weighty an article of faith; for assuredly faith will

not long retain a doctrine for which it experiences no religious need,

and which finds no support in the facts of human nature.

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NOTES TO LECTURE V NOTE A.--P. 165.

EFFECTS IN CREATION: AN ARGUMENT AGAINST THEISM.

Lucretius already uses this argument. Even were he ignorant, he says,

of the primordial causes of things, he could venture to affirm from the

faultiness of the universe that it was not the work of Divine power.

"Quod si jam rerum ignorem primordia quae sint,

Hoc tamen ex ipsis caeli rationibus ausim

Confirmare aliisque ex rebus reddere multis,

Nequaquam nobis divinitus esse paratam

Naturam rerum; tanta stat praedita culpa."

De.Rerum Natura, v. 195-190.

Seneca held a view akin to Mill's. [899] Among his queries are these:

"How far God's power extends; whether He forms His own matter, or only

uses that which is given Him; whether He can do whatsoever He will, or

the materials in many ways frustrate and disappoint Him, and things are

formed badly by the great Artificer, not because His art fails, but

because that on which it is exercised proves stubborn and

intractable."--Quaest. Nat., Book i. Preface.

Mr. Rathbone Greg seems in the end of his life to have come round to

the views of Mr. Mill "Thoughtful minds in all ages," he says, "have

experienced the most painful perplexities in the attempt to reconcile

certain of the moral and physical phenomena we see around us with the

assumption of a Supreme Being at once all-wise, all-good, and

almighty." These difficulties, he thinks, are wholly gratuitous, and

arise out of the inconsiderate and unwarranted use of a single

word--omnipotent. Only grant that the Creator is "conditioned,

hampered, it may be, by the attributes, qualities, and imperfections of

the material on which He had to operate; bound possibly by laws or

properties inherent in the nature of that material,"--and "it becomes

possible to believe in and to worship God without doing violence to our

moral sense, or denying or distorting the sorrowful facts that surround

our daily life."--Preface to Enigmas of Life (18th edition).

The Pessimists, of course, lay stress on what they consider the evil

and defects of nature, as proving that it cannot have proceeded from an

intelligent cause. Hartmann is quoted by Strauss as saying that "if

God, before creation, had possessed consciousness, creation would have

been an inexpiable crime; its existence is only pardonable as the

result of blind will."--Der alte und der neue Glaube, p. 223.

Comte and Helmholtz have urged the defects of nature as disproving

design. See their views criticised in Flint's Theism, Lect. viii.;

Janet's Final Causes, p. 45 (Eng. trans.); Kennedy's Nat. Theol. and

Modern Thought, pp. 130-134; Row's Christian Theism, chap. ix., etc.

Mr. S. Laing urges the undeniable existence of evil in the world as a

fact irreconcilable with that of an almighty and beneficent Creator,

and takes refuge in an ultimate law of "polarity," i.e. dualism.--A

Modern Zoroastrian, pp. 170-183 (see next note).

Maudsley writes: "The facts of organic and human nature, when observed

frankly and judged without bias, do not warrant the argument of a

supreme and beneficent artificer working after methods of human

intelligence, but perfect in all his works; rather would they warrant,

if viewed from the human standpoint, the conception of an almighty

malignant power that was working out some far-off end of its own, with

the serenest disregard of the suffering, expenditure, and waste which

were entailed in the process."--Body and Will, pp. 180, 181.

There is much that is exaggerated, jaundiced, and subjective in these

complaints, but they point to the existence of great and terrible evils

in the world, which Theism must boldly face, and do justice to in some

way in its view of the world.

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[899] Mill's views are indicated in the text. They are further

discussed by me in two papers in The Theological Monthly (July and

August 1891) on "J. S. Mill and Christianity. "

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LECTURE V NOTE B.--P. 175.

DUALISTIC THEORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

The hypothesis of two principles in the universe finds classical

expression in the Zoroastrian religion. Cf. on this Ebrard's Christian

Apologetics, ii. pp. 186-232. Mr. S. Laing makes an attempt at a

revival of the theory in his book, A Modern Zoroastrian, under the name

of a law of polarity." He would have us devote ourselves with a whole

heart and sincere mind to the worship of the good principle, without

paltering with our moral nature by professing to love and adore a Being

who is the author of all the evil and misery in the world as well as of

the good"; and holds that a great deal of: what is best in Christianity

"resolves itself very much into the worship of Jesus as the Ormuzd, or

personification of the good principle, and determination to try to

follow His example and do His work" (pp. 179, 180).

There is a deceptive simplicity in this idea of dividing off the good

and evil of the world into different departments, giving all the good

to a good principle, and all the evil to an evil principle, which may

impose for a moment on the mind, yet the slightest reflection should

suffice to show the crudeness and untenableness of the hypothesis.

In respect of physical evil, no such sharp division into good and evil

is possible. Rather the terms are relative, and what is good in one

relation is evil in another. Good and evil are often simply questions

of degree; the susceptibility to pleasure is involved in the

susceptibility to pain, and vice versa. Thus the same nerve which feels

pleasure feels pain; the one susceptibility is involved in the other.

Pleasure and pain shade into each other by insensible gradations. If,

e.g., I approach my hands to the fire, I feel a grateful warmth; if I

bring them nearer, I am scorched. It is the same sun which fructifies

the fields in one part of the world, and burns up the herbage or smites

with sunstroke in another. On the hypothesis in question, the sun's

heat would belong in the one case to the good, in the other to the evil

principle; so with the fire, etc.

In respect of physical evil, a self-subsisting evil principle is an

impossible abstraction. Moral evil is a term which has no meaning

except in relation to character and will; and a character or will

cannot be evil, unless along with the evil there is some knowledge of

the good. [900] Natural forces, as heat and electricity, are neither

good nor evil, for there is no knowledge. Bound up, therefore, with the

evil principle, there must be some knowledge of the good, else it would

not be evil. But a principle which participates in the knowledge of the

good cannot be originally or essentially evil, but can only have become

such through its own choice. Evil, in other words, has no reality, save

as the negation or antithesis of the good, which is its necessary

presupposition. Abstracted from knowledge of the good, the so-called

evil principle sinks to the rank of a mere nature principle, of which

neither good nor evil can properly be predicated. This is ultimately

the reason why in dualistic systems natural and moral evil always tend

to be confounded.

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[900] "By its very essence," says Mr. Bradley, "immorality cannot exist

except as against morality; a purely immoral being is a downright

impossibility."--Ethical Studies, p. 210.

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LECTURE V NOTE C.--P. 176.

HEGEL'S DOCTRINE OF SIN.

Hegel's view, as stated in his Religionsphilosophie, may be briefly

summed up thus:--

1. Evil exists by a metaphysical necessity. "The notion must realise

itself. . . . Man is essentially spirit; but spirit does not arise in

an immediate way. It is essential to spirit to be for itself, to be

free, to oppose itself to naturalness, to raise itself out of its state

of immersion in nature, to set itself at variance with nature, and

first through and by this variance to reconcile itself with nature, and

not only with nature, but with its own essence, with its truth."--Vol.

i. p. 268.

2. As respects his original condition, man exists first in a state of

pure naturalness. It is hardly correctly named even a state of

innocence, for innocence implies moral ideas, whereas this is a state

"in which there is for man neither good nor evil; it is the state of

the animal, of lack of knowledge, in which man knows nothing of either

good or evil, in which what he wills is not determined either as the

one or the other; for if he does not know evil, neither does he know

good....In truth, that first state of mere existence in unity with

nature is not a condition of innocence, but of rudeness, of appetite,

of barbarism generally."Vol. i. p. 269.

3. As respects man's essential nature in this state, two opposite

definitions are to be given--Man is by nature good; and man is by

nature bad. To affirm "that man is by nature good, is essentially to

say that man is spirit in himself, is rationality; he is created with

and after the image of God. . . . The other statement arises from what

has been said, that man must not remain as he is immediately, but must

transcend his immediateness. . . . His being-in-self, his naturality is

the evil. . . . He is evil for this reason, that he is a natural

being...The absolute demand is that man shall not remain as a mere

natural being,--not as mere natural will. Man has indeed consciousness;

but he can, even as man, remain a mere natural being, in so far as he

makes the natural the aim, content, and determination of his

will."--Vol. ii. pp. 258-260.

4. That through which the transition is effected from the natural to

the moral state is knowledge. With the awakening of consciousness, man

recognises that he is not what he ought to be; hence arises the sense

of sin, the pain of discord, of contradiction with himself. As the

Bible has it, man becomes evil by eating of the tree of knowledge. "In

this representation lies the connection of evil with knowledge. This is

an essential point. . . . Man's nature is not what it should be, and it

is knowledge which acquaints him with this and sets before him the fact

of his being as he ought not to be. . . . It is not that consideration

(knowledge) has an external relation to evil, but the consideration

itself is the evil. Man, since he is spirit, has to proceed to this

opposition, in order to he altogether for himself," etc.--Vol. ii. pp.

263-265.

It is the annulling of this self-redemption in man--represented as an

essential stage in his development--which constitutes, according to

Hegel, the atonement.

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LECTURE V NOTE D.--P. 176.

RITSCHL'S DOCTRINE OF GUILT.

See a searching examination of Ritschl's doctrine on this subject in

Dorner's System of Doctrine, iv. pp. 60-72 (Eng. trans.). Cf. also

Pfleiderer's Die Ritschl'sche Theologie, pp. 63, 69, 70; Bertrand's Une

nouvelle Conception de la Redemption, pp. 256-273; Stahlin's Kant,

Lotze, und Ritschl, pp. 210-212, 227.

All these writers agree that the logical effect of Ritschl's doctrine

is to reduce guilt to a subjective illusion. This is borne out by the

following particulars of his system:--

1. By the denial to God of everything of the nature of punitive

justice. In so far as the sinner's guilty fears lead him to represent

God as angry with him, or as visiting him with punishment, he is

tormenting himself with needless apprehensions. Punitive justice is a

conception borrowed from the sphere of civil right, and has no

application in the sphere of the Divine. He teaches expressly that

"external evils can only be reckoned as Divine punishments from the

point of view of the subjective consciousness of guilt."--Recht. und

Ver. iii pp. 346.

2. By his doctrine of reconciliation. Reconciliation is defined as the

removal of the separation which has come to exist between man and God

in consequence of sin; and as it is the consciousness of guilt which

keeps sinners far from God, pardon consists essentially in the removal

of this guilt--consciousness (iii. p. 52). But this is not to be

understood as if in this removal of guilt anything objective took p

lace. Rather Christ's work was, as Dorner expresses it, "to reveal God

to us as fatherly love, and scatter the gloomy terrors of an angry God

and a punitive justice"; "to give deliverance from these erroneous

notions of God's retributive and specially punitive.justice, which

interfere with Divine communion."--System of Doctrine, iv. p. 71.

3. The doctrine of guilt is attenuated on another side by Ritschl's

view that all existing sin is sin committed in ignorance. It is on this

ground that he declares it pardonable. But here again pardon does not

mean the laying aside of any real displeasure on the part of God, but

solely the removal of the sinner's (groundless) guilty fears. The one

sin which Ritschl exempts from pardon is that of definitive unbelief--a

problematical transgression which he thinks we have no reason to

suppose ever existed. Here Ritschl's doctrine falls into an obvious

inconsistency. He holds that if such a sin did exist, the one way the

Divine Being could deal with it would be by annihilating the sinner.

But surely this would be an exercise of punitive justice, if anything

is; yet Ritschl denies that punitive justice resides at all in God. On

the whole, there is good ground for Dorner's charge, that "no clear,

connected doctrine respecting punishment, God's punitive justice, moral

freedom, and guilt, is to be found in Ritschl" (iv. p. 67).

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LECTURE V NOTE E.--P. 184.

ALLEGED PRIMITIVE SAVAGERY OF MANKIND.

The hypothesis of man's original savagery rests on certain unproved

assumptions.

I. So far as it is a deduction from the law of evolution, it rests on

the unproved assumption that man has developed by slow gradations from

the condition of the animal. See on this the passages quoted in

footnote to the Lecture, p. 182.

II. As respects existing savages, the hypothesis--

1. Rests on the unproved assumption that the state of existing savages

represents (or most nearly represents) that of primitive man. [901] Of

late, says Max Muller, there has been a strong reaction in the study of

uncivilsed races. "First of all, it has been shown that it was

certainly a mistake to look upon the manners and customs, the legends

and religious ideas, of uncivilised tribes as representing an image of

what the primitive state of mankind must have been thousands of years

ago, or what it actually was long before the be ginning of the earliest

civilisation, as known to us from historical documents. The more savage

a tribe, the more accurately was it supposed to reflect the primitive

state of man-kind. This was no doubt a very natural mistake, before

more careful researches had shown that the customs of savage races were

often far more artificial and complicated than they appeared at first,

and that there had been as much progression and retrogression in their

historical development as in that of more civilised races. We know now

that savage and primitive are very far indeed from meaning the same

thing."--Anthrop. Religion, pp. 149, 150.

Evidence is constantly accumulating, that behind the existing condition

of savage races there stood a state of higher culture and civilisation.

E.g. Dr. Tylor says: "Dr. Bastian has lately visited New Zealand and

the Sandwich Islands, and gathered some interesting information as to

native traditions. The documents strengthen the view which for years

has been growing up among anthropologists as to the civilisation of the

Polynesians. It is true that they were found in Captain Cook's time

living in a barbaric state, and their scanty clothing and want of

metals led superior observers to class them as savages; but their

beliefs and customs show plainly traces of descent from ancestors who

in some way shared the higher culture of the Asiatic nations."--Nature,

1881, p. 29. Tylor's own pages furnish ample evidence of similar

retrogression of the African and other tribes.--Primitive Culture, pp.

42, 43. On the extinct civilisations of Mexico and Peru, the

mound-builders of the Mississippi Valley, and other evidences of

earlier culture in America, see Reville's Hibbert Lectures, 1884, The

Native Religions of Mexico and Peru; Dawson's Fossil Men and their

Modern Representatives; Argyll's Unity of Nature, pp. 429-437.

A fact of the greatest importance here is that pointed out by the Duke

of Argyll, viz, that the degraded races of the world are those farthest

from the centres of distribution of population. "It is a fact," he

says, "that the lowest and rudest tribes in the population of the globe

have been found, as we have seen, at the farthest extremities of its

larger continents, or in the distant islands of its great oceans, or

among the hills and forests which in every land have been the last

refuge of the victims of violence and misfortune."--Unity of Nature, p.

426. See for illustrations, chap. x. of this work.

Whately's statement stands yet un-overturned. "Facts," he says, "are

stubborn things; and that no authenticated instance can be produced of

savages that ever did emerge unaided from that state is no theory, but

a statement, hitherto never disproved, of a. matter of fact."--Exeter

Hall Lecture on the Origin of Civilisation.

2. It overlooks the higher elements which exist even in the present

condition of savages. See these brought out as respects the African

tribes, on the basis of Waltz's Anthropology, in Max Muller's Hibbert

Lectures, 1878, On the Origin and Growth of Religion, pp. 106-113.

III. As respects prehistoric man, the main points are noticed in the

Lectures.

1. Here, again, the assumption is unproved that these cave-men, etc.,

on whose rudeness the argument was founded, represented primitive man,

and were not rather a degradation of an earlier type. Against this

assumption is the fact of their distance from what seem to have been

the original centres of distribution of the race, combined with the

very different spectacle which mankind presents as we approach these

centres. On the argument based on the antiquity of prehistoric man, see

Note U., and cf. Reusch's Nature and the Bible, ii. pp. 265-366 (Eng.

trans.).

2. Many erroneous inferences may be drawn from stone implements and the

like as to the intellectual and moral calibre of the people using them.

See on this the most suggestive treatment in Sir Arthur Mitchell's

Rhind Lectures on "Past and Present," and "What is Civilisation?" (1876

and 1878).

3. The greatest civilisations of antiquity do not show traces of an

earlier period of barbarism. These civilisations certainly did not

spring into existence ready-formed, but there is nothing to indicate

any such slow rise from an antecedent state of savagery as the modern

hypothesis supposes. This is peculiarly the case with the oldest

civilisation--that of Egypt. "In Egypt," says Canon Rawlinson, "it is

notorious that there is no indication of any early period of savagery

or barbarism. All the authorities agree that, however far we go back,

we find in Egypt no rude or uncivilised time out of which civilisation

is developed." Origin of Nations, p. 13. [902] The same writer says of

Babylon: "In Babylon there is more indication of early rudeness. But,

on the other hand, there are not wanting signs of an advanced state of

certain arts, even in the earliest times, which denote a high degree of

civilisation, and contrast most curiously with the indications of

rudeness here spoken of" (ibid. p. 14). This progress of discovery in

ancient Babylonia has carried back civilisation, and a high development

of the arts (as of writing), to a quite unthought-of antiquity (e.g. at

Nipur).

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[901] Of course, from the evolutionist point of view, even savage life,

as Tylor points out, would he "a far advanced condition."--Prim.

Culture, i. p. 33.

[902] On some supposed traces of prehistoric man in Egypt, see Dawson's

Egypt and Syria, pp. 128-136.

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LECTURE V NOTE F.--P. 184.

EARLY MONOTHEISTIC IDEAS.

It has been shown (Note A. to Lecture III.--Primitive Fetishism and

Ghost Worship) that man's earliest religious ideas were not his

poorest. It may now be affirmed that his earliest ideas were in some

respects his highest--that the consciousness of the one God was with

him in the dawn of his history, and has never been wholly extinguished

since.

Ebrard, after an exhaustive examination of ancient religions, thus sums

up: "We have nowhere been able to discover the least trace of any

forward and upward movement from Fetishism to Polytheism, and from that

again to a gradually advancing knowledge of the one God; but, on the

contrary, we have found among all peoples of the heathen world a most

decided tendency to sink from an earlier and relatively purer knowledge

of God."--Christ. Apol. iii. p. 317 (Eng. trans.).

The ancient Egyptian religion was at heart monotheistic. M. de Rouge

says: "The Egyptian religion comprehends a quantity of local

worships....Each of these regions has its principal god designated by a

special name; but it is always the same doctrine which reappears under

different names. One idea predominates, that of a single and primeval

God; everywhere and always it is one substance, self-existent, and an

unapproachable God." (Quoted by Renouf, p. 90.) This, he says, was the

doctrine of the Egyptians in the earliest period. M. Renouf confirms

this statement. "It is incontestably true," he testifies,"that the

sublimer portions of the Egyptian religion are not the comparatively

late result of a process of development or elimination from the

grosser. The sublimer portions are demonstrably ancient; and the last

stage of the Egyptian religion, that known to the Greek and Latin

writers, heathen or Christian, was by far the grossest and most

corrupt."--Hibbert Lectures, p. 91.

The early Babylonian religion was polytheistic; but here also the

monotheistic consciousness breaks through in the exalted predicates

applied to the great gods by their respective worshippers. Each god

seems at first to have been worshipped by its own city as supreme--the

moon-god at Ur; the sun-god at Sippara; Ann, the sky, at Erech; Ea, the

deep, at Eridu; Nebo at Borsippa, etc. Thus the moon-god was celebrated

as the "lord and prince of the gods, who in heaven and earth alone is

supreme"; Nebo, in the belief of his worshippers, was the supreme god,

the creator of the world; Anu, the sky--god, became a supreme god, the

lord and father of the universe, then "the one god" into whom all the

other deities were resolved; Asshur developed peculiarly exalted

traits. "We can, in fact," says Professor Sayce, "trace in him all the

lineaments upon which under other conditions there might have been

built up as pure a faith as that of the God of Israel"--Sayce's Hibbert

Lectures, 1887, p. 129; cf. pp. 116, 160, 191, etc. Others go farther,

and see in Ilu--Heb. El "the Babylonian supreme deity," cf. Schrader,

Keilinschriften, i. p. 11 (Eng. trans.); and conclude, with Duncker and

Lenormant, that the Babylonians in the earliest times worshipped one

god, El, Ilu. (In Ebrard, ii. p. 330.)

The religion of the Vedas in India, in like manner, is purer than the

later Hindu developments, and points back, through philology, to an

earlier stage still, when the Polytheism of the Vedas was as yet

non-existent. "Behind the Homeric poems," says Dr. Fairbairn, "and the

Vedas, and the separation of the Iranic-Indian branches, lies the

period when Colt and Teuton, Anglo-Saxon and Indian, Greek and Roman,

Scandinavian and Iranian, lived together, a simple, single people.

. . . Excluding the coincidences natural to related peoples developing

the same germs, we find two points of radical and general

agreement--the proper name of one God, and the term expressive of the

idea of God in general. . . . A name for God had thus been formed

before the dispersion. . . . The result is a Theism which we may name

individualistic."--Studies in the Phil. of Religion, pp. 22-29; "The

younger the Polytheism, the fewer its gods," p. 22.

Ebrard says: "Immediately after the separation of the Iranians and

Indians, that is, during the first Vedic period, the consciousness was

fully present among the Indians that the Adityas did not represent a

multitude of separate deities in a polytheistic and mythological sense,

but only the fulness of the creative powers of the one God, and that

the holy God, and that in each of these Adityas it was always the one

God who was worshipped. And the farther back we go into the past, the

more distinct do we find the consciousness among the Indians. In the

second, the Indra period, it dwindles away, and gives place to a

polytheistic conception."--Christ. Apol. ii pp. 213, 214. He finds the

common root of the Indian and Iranian religions in "a primitive

Monotheism, or Elohism, as we might call it, since there is no real

distinction between the Elohim and the Adityas" (p. 214). The Iranian

religion in the form in which we find it in the Zend-Avesta

(Zoroastrian) is dualistic; but the conception of Ahura-Mazda, as we

find it in the earlier portions, is so exalted that it may almost be

called monotheistic. It unquestionably springs from the common Aryan

root indicated above.

Herodotus has the striking statement that the ancient Pelasgi, the

early inhabitants of Greece, gave no distinct names to the gods, but

prayed to them collectively. "They called them gods, because they had

set in order and ruled all things." But as for the special names

attached to them, and the functions severally assigned to them--all

this, he thinks, goes no farther back than Homer and Hesiod. "These

framed a theogony for the Greeks, and gave names to the gods, and

assigned to them honours and arts, and declared their several forms"

(ii 52, 53). Max Muller does not hesitate to say, following Welcker:

"When we ascend to the most distant heights of Greek history, the idea

of God as the Supreme Being stands before us as a simple fact."--Chips,

ii. p. 157. This strain of Monotheism in the religion of the Greeks is

never absolutely lost, but reappears in the beliefs of the

philosophers, the' Orphic mysteries, and the lofty conceptions of the

great tragic poets. Plutarch, in like manner, tells of the early

religion of the Romans, that it was imageless and spiritual Their

religious lawgiver, Numa, he says, "forbade the Romans to represent the

deity in the form either of man or of beast. Nor was there among them

formerly any image or statue of the Divine Being; during the first one

hundred and seventy years they built temples, indeed, and other sacred

domes, but placed in them no figure of any kind; persuaded that. it is

impious to represent things Divine by what is perishable, and that we

can have no conception of God but by the understanding." Lives, on

Numa. The legendary form of the tradition need not lead us to doubt

that it embodies a substantial truth.

On this subject see Ebrard's Christian Apologetics; Loring Brace's The

Unknown God; Pressense's The Ancient World and Christianity (Eng.

trans.); Vigouroux's La Bible et les Decouvertes modernes, lii.--"On

Primitive Monotheism"; Rawlinson's Tract on "The Early Prevalence of

Monotheistic Beliefs," in Present Day Tracts (No. 11), etc.

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LECTURE 5 NOTE G.--P. 185

THE ANTIQUITY OF MAN AND GEOLOGICAL TIME.

In illustration of the tendency in recent science greatly to restrict

the period formerly claimed for man's antiquity, the following passages

may be cited from an able article on the Ice Age in The Edinburgh

Review for April 1892, based on Dr. Wright's Ice Age in North America,

and its bearings on the Antiquity of Man (1890). [903]

"The Falls of Niagara," says this writer, "indeed constitute of

themselves in Dr. Wright's apt phrase, a glacial chronometer.' Much

trouble has been bestowed upon its accurate rating; and repeated

trigonometrical surveys since 1842 afford so sure a basis for

calculation, that serious error in estimating, from the amount of work

done, the time consumed in doing it need no longer be

apprehended....The average rate of recession, arrived at through

careful weighing of these and other analogous facts, is five feet per

annum, or nearly a mile in a thousand years. Hence from seven to eight

thousand years have elapsed since the foam of Niagara rose through the

air at Queenston; and the interval might even be shortened by taking

into account some evidences of pre-glacial erosion by a local stream,

making it probable that from the whirlpool downward the cutting of the

gorge proceeded more rapidly than it does now. The date of the close of

the Glacial Epoch in the United States can scarcely then be placed

earlier than 6000 B.C. . . .

"Their testimony does not stand alone. . . . Pre-glacially, it [the

Mississippi] followed a wide bend from Minneapolis to Fort Snelling;

now it flows straight across the intervening eight miles to its

junction with the Minnesota. On its way it leaps the Falls of St.

Anthony; and the rate of their retreat since 1680, exactly determined

from the observation of Father Hennequin, proves them to be about eight

thousand three hundred years old. This second glacial timepiece

accordingly, which, owing to Its more southerly position was started

earlier than the first, gives substantially the same reading. . . . The

ravines and cascades of Ohio, studied by Dr. Wright, agree with the two

great Falls in giving a comparatively recent overthrow of the ice

regime. The unworn condition of the glacial deposits, the sharpness of

glacial groovings, above all, the insignificant progress made by the

silting up of glacial lakes, testify as well, and in some cases quite

definitely, to a short lapse of time.

"But if the Ice Age in America terminated--as we seem bound to

admit--less than ten thousand years ago, so, beyond question, did the

Ice Age in Europe. There is no possibility of separating the course of

glacial events in each continent. The points of agreement are too many;

the phenomena too nearly identical in themselves and in their sequence.

Elevation and depression of continents, the formation, retreat, and

second advance of the ice-sheet, the accompaniment of its melting by

tremendous floods, the extermination of the same varieties of animals,

the appearance and obliteration of Palaeolithic man, all preserved

identical mutual relations in the Old and New Worlds. . . . The point

has an important bearing upon the vexed question of the antiquity of

man," etc. --Edinburgh Review, April 1892, pp. 315-319.

The same view was advocated by Mr. P. F. Kendall in a paper prepared by

Mr. Gray and himself on "The. Cause of the Ice-Age," read in the

Geological Section of the British Association, August 4, 1892. He said:

"Another fact of great importance bearing upon this question was the

exceedingly recent date of the glacial period. It was the custom of

geologists not long ago to talk about the glacial period as perhaps a

quarter of a million years ago, or, at all events, to make a very

liberal use of thousands and hundreds of thousands of years. But now it

was found that all the physical evidence was in favour of a very recent

departure of the ice. They could, for instance, put the date of the

commencement of the great cut of the Niagara Falls at the close of the

glacial period, and other like evidence in America pointed clearly to

the recency of the departure of the ice."--Scotsman Report, August 5.

The remainder of the paper was an examination of the theories of the

late Dr. Croll, Dr. Wall, and Mr. Warren Upham, and the exposition by

the authors of a theory of their own connected with the variability in

the heat of the sun. Sir Archibald Geikie, in his President's Address

at the same meeting of the British Association, while himself putting

in a plea for longer periods on the ground of the geological record,

grants that the recent drift of physical science has been enormously to

reduce the unlimited drafts on time formerly made by geologists. Lord

Kelvin "was inclined, when first dealing with the subject, to believe

that, from a review of all the evidence then available, some such

period as one hundred million years would embrace the whole of the

geological history of the globe. . . . But physical inquiry continued

to be pushed forward with regard to the early history and antiquity of

the earth. Further consideration of the influence of tidal rotation in

retarding the earth's rotation, and of the sun's rate of cooling, led

to sweeping reductions of the time allowable for the evolution of the

planet. The geologist found himself in the plight of Lear when his

bodyguard of one hundred knights was cut down. What need you

five-and-twenty, ten, or five? demands the inexorable physicist, as he

remorselessly strikes slice after slice from his allowance of

geological time. Lord Kelvin, I believe, is willing to grant us some

twenty millions of years, but Professor Tait would have us content with

less than ten millions."--Report of Address. One argument of Professor

Geikie for lengthening the time is the extreme slowness with which, on

the evolution hypothesis, the changes in species have been brought

about--a very distinct petitio principii. It is worth while in this

connection to note his admission: "So too with the plants and the

higher animals which still survive. Some forms have become extinct, but

few or none which remain display any transitional gradations into new

species."

Professor Tait's own words are: "I daresay many of you are acquainted

with the speculations of Lyell and others, especially of Darwin, who

tell us that even for a comparatively brief portion of recent

geological history three hundred millions of years will not

suffice.--Origin of Species, 1859, p. 287. We say: So much the worse

for geology as at present understood by its chief authorities; for, as

you will presently see, physical considerations from independent points

of view render it utterly impossible that more than ten or fifteen

millions of years can be granted."--Recent Advances in Physical

Science, pp. 167, 168. "From this point of view we are led to a limit

of something like ten millions of years as the utmost we can give to

geologists for their speculations as to the history even of the lowest

orders of fossils" (p. 167).

See further on this subject Dawson's Origin of the World, and Fossil

Men and their Modern Representatives; Reusch's Nature and the Bible,

ii. pp. 265-366; and Wright's Man and the Glacial Period, in the

International Scientific Series.

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[903] Dr. Wright's conclusions are reproduced in his Man and the

Glacial Period, in the International Scientific Series, published since

this note was written (1892).

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LECTURE 5 NOTE H.--P. 198.

THE CONNECTION OF SIN AND DEATH.

Ritschl agrees with the modern view in dissolving the connection

between human death and sin. Paul, indeed, he grants, affirms this

connection; but the mere fact that this thought was formed by an

apostle does not make it a rule for us (Recht. und Ver. iii. pp. 341,

342). An able article appeared in the Revue de Theologie (Montauban),

July 1882, on "Physical Death and Sin," by M. Charles Ducasse, which

may be referred to as in agreement with, and confirmatory of, the

positions taken up in the Lecture. The writer speaks of the problem

created by the appearance of death in the world before sin. Before the

appearance of man on the earth, death reigned; death was the law even

of the organic world. He shows that from the first death entered into

the Divine plan for the lower creation--is implied in what the Bible

says of the reproduction of plants and animals, in the command given to

Adam, etc. But he finds no contradiction in the thought that a new

order of things should enter with man. Man forms part of nature. The

roots of his organism penetrate into the past of other beings, and of

the material world. But is man only a superior animal? Does not a new

kingdom appear in him? The terminating point of the organic world, is

he not equally the point of departure of the world of spirit, of

reason, of morality? He is the bond of union between the world of

nature and the Divine world. Why, then, should it not have been

precisely his vocation to spiritualise matter, and lead it up to the

conquest of new attributes? What hinders us from affirming that man was

placed here to acquire corporeal immortality, and that, if he had not

sinned, he would have been able to graft eternal life in his body on

changeable and transient matter? This view, he thinks, agrees with both

Scripture and science. Impartial science brings out the almost complete

identity or our organism with that of the animals, but it establishes

not less decisively the originality of our mental being, the

superiority of our faculties of reason. The human kingdom constitutes

in its eyes a kingdom by itself. There is, then, nothing improbable in

the supposition that originally and in the plan of God the conditions

of death for man were different from those for animals. The actual

death of man would still in this view be the consequence of his sin;

and this is in full accord with the Biblical teaching.

See also a suggestive treatment of this subject in Dr. Matheson's Can

the Old Faith Live with the New? pp. 206-218.

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LECTURE VI NOTE A.--P. 220.

THE DOCTRINE OF PRE-EXISTENCE.

Themore recent theology admits the application of the notion of

pre-existence to Christ in the New Testament, but explains it out of

current Jewish modes of thought on this subject. See on this Harnack's

Dogmengeschichte, i. pp.89-93, 710-719; Baldensperger's Das

Selbstbewusstsein Jesu, pp. 85-92 (2nd edition); Bornemaunn's

Unterricht im Christenthum, pp. 92-96, etc. According to these writers,

the conception of pre-existence was a current one in the Rabbinical

schools and in apocalyptic literature. Not only distinguished persons,

as Adam, Enoch, Moses, but distinguished objects, as the tabernacle,

the temple, the tables of the law, were figured as having had heavenly

archetypes, i.e. as pre-existent. Various causes are assigned for this

mode of representation:--

1. There is the desire to express the inner worth of a valued object in

distinction from its inadequate empirical form, which leads to the

essence being hypostatised, and raised above space and time (Harnack).

2. There is the conversion of an " end " into a " cause "--this

specially in the case of persons (the Messiah), peoples (Israel), a

collective body (the Church). "Where something which appears later was

apprehended as the end of a series of dispositions, it was not

unfrequently hypostatised, and made prior to these arrangements in

point of time; the conceived end was placed in a kind of real existence

before the means through which it was destined to be realised on earth,

as an original cause of them."--Harnack, pp. 89, 90.

3. There is the thought of predestination, which leads to an ideal

pre-existence being realistically conceived as an actual one

(Baldensperger).

This category, existing in Jewish circles, was, it is thought, simply

taken over and applied to Christ, believed In as the Messiah, risen and

exalted to heaven. In this way, Harnack thinks, the first Christians

"went beyond the expressions developed out of the Messianic

consciousness of Jesus Himself respecting His Person, and sought

notionally and speculatively to grasp the worth and absolute

significance of His Person" (p. 90). [904] "The thought of

preexistence," says Bornemann, "was not supernaturally communicated to

the apostles, nor was formed for the first time by Paul, nor generally

was unusual in that time; but we have to do here with a self-evident

application to Jesus of an attribute already firmly established in

Judaism as belonging to the Messiah."--Unterricht, p. 93. In short, the

predicate of pre-existence was only one of several ways which the early

Church took to express its sense of the abiding worth and felt mystery

of the Person of Jesus. Bornemann mentions three of these--1. The

supernatural birth; 2. The thought of pre-existence; 3. The incarnation

of the eternal Divine Word of Revelation "ideas," he says, "subsisting

independently of each other, and alongside of each other, as distinct

but disparate attempts to ground the mystery of the life of Jesus in

its Divine origin" (p. 92).

It appears from this that the application of the category of

preexistence to Jesus was a mere deduction of faith on the part of the

first disciples--the application to Rim, as Bornemann says, of one of

"the religious and philosophical notions and forms of Vorstellung'

generally current in that time,"--and is therefore of no normative

value for the Church to-day. I presume that not one of the writers I

have quoted holds that Christ really pre-existed as the apostles

thought He did. Before we accept this view, we would require to be

satisfied of several things:--

1. That this Rabbinical mode of representation was really so widely

current as is alleged, and that it was indeed the source from which the

apostles derived their belief in Christ's eternal pre-existence.

2. That this belief had not its origin in very distinct utterances of

Christ Himself, proceeding from the depths of His Divine self-knowledge

(John viii. 58, xvii. 5, etc.).

3. That there is a true analogy between the New Testament conception of

Christ's pre-existence and this Rabbinical notion. The Jewish notion,

according to Harnack, was that " the earthly things pre-exist with God

just as they appear on earth, with all the material properties of their

being " (p. 710). They do not exist eternally--at least the Law (which

was exalted most highly of all) did not (two thousand years before the

creation of the world, the Rabbis said). But Christ (1) exists from

eternity; (2) as a Divine Person with the Father; (3) one in nature

amid glory with the Father; (4) His Divine nature is distinguished from

His humanity which He assumed in time; (5) His appearance on earth is

the result of a voluntary act of self-abnegation and love--an ethical

act. It is only confusing things that differ to pretend that the

Rabbinical absurdities alluded to explain a Christian doctrine like

this.

4. Many special facts testify against the sufficiency of this

explanation.

(1) The support sought for it in the New Testament is of the most

flimsy character, e.g. Gal. iv. 26; Heb. xii. 22; Rev. xxi. 2.

(2) It is admitted that " the representations of a pre-existent Messiah

in Judaism were in no way very widespread " (Harnack, p.. 89), and that

they do not appear in all the New Testament writings. In truth, the

writings in which they do appear are not specially the; Jewish ones,

but those in which scholars have thought they detected most traces of

Hellenistic influence.'

(3) It is plain that in the writings in which they do appear, these

Jewish modes of thought were not dominant. Paul, e.g., regards

believers as eternally chosen and foreordained in Christ to salvation;

but he does not attribute to them any such pre-existence as he ascribes

to Christ. On this hypothesis, he ought to have done so.

I cannot therefore accept this new theory as adequate to the facts. Nor

do I believe that the apostles were left simply to their own gropings

and imaginings in this and other great matters of the Christian faith.

I take it as part of the Christian view that they were guided by the

Spirit of Revelation into the truth which they possessed, and that

their teachings laid the foundations of doctrine for the Church in all

time.

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[904] On Harnack's distinction between the Jewish and Hellenistic forms

of this notion, see the criticism by Baldensperger in his Das

Selbstbewusstsein Jesu, 2nd ed. p. 89.

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LECTURE 6 NOTE B.--P. 288.

PHILO AND THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

The most diverse opinions prevail as to the extent to which the Fourth

Gospel and other books of the New Testament have been influenced by the

Alexandrian philosophy--some, like Harnack and Weiss, denying its

presence altogether; others, like Pfleiderer, seeing its influence in

John, Hebrews, Ephesians, and Colossians etc. It will put the matter in

a clearer light if we look briefly, first, at Philo's own philosophy,

and at the sources from which it was derived.

The three main sources of Philo's philosophy were Platonism, Stoicism,

and the Old Testament.

1. From Plato, the chief contribution was the theory of ideas--of an

ideal or noetic world in the Divine mind, after the pattern of which

this visible world was made (cf. the Timaus). It is to be observed,

however, that there is not the slightest indication in Plato that this

idea of the world was conceived of as a personal agent, or as anything

else than an attribute of the Divine mind, in which it resides like a

plan in the mind of an architect. [905]

2. The indebtedness of Philo to Plato is very obvious; but it is not

from Plato that Philo derives the term Logos. He obtains this term from

the Stoics. By the Logos, however, the Stoics as little as Plato

understood a distinct hypostasis in the sphere of the Divine--a second

Divine Being. The Logos, with the Stoics, is simply the Divine Reason

itself--that eternal Divine Reason which is immanent in the universe,

and in substance is one with it (fire). There was a further doctrine

which the Stoics held, however, which is of great importance for the

understanding of Philo. Together with their fundamentally pantheistic

conception of the all-pervading Divine Reason, they held that this

Reason develops or manifests itself in a multitude of powers or forces,

called also Xeiyoe. This is the famous Stoical doctrine of the logoi

spermatioi--the Logos-seeds or powers (dunameis) which develop

themselves in particular things. The theory is very different from

Plato's; yet the step was not great to identify these seed-like Chopsoi

of the Stoics--the immanent rational principles of things--with the

"ideas" of Plato, which also in their own way were active powers or

principles. Here, then, we have another premiss of the theory of Philo.

Philo takes over this doctrine of the Stoics bodily,--identifies their

active iopsom with the "ideas" of Plato,--identifies them, further,

with the Old Testament angels and Greek demons,--and gathers them up,

finally, as the Stoics also did, into the unity of the one Logos.

3. But Philo went a step further. It is the peculiarity of his theory

that this Logos is distinguished from God Himself as the absolute and

highest Being--is hypostatised--projected, as it were, from the Divine

mind, and viewed, though in a very wavering and fluctuating way, as a

personal agent. [906] Now, where did Philo get this last conception?

Not from Platonic or Stoical philosophy-- not from Greek philosophy at

all. He got it from the same source whence he derived his immovable

Monotheism, his firm faith in Divine Providence, his doctrine of

angels, etc.,--from the Old Testament. The Old Testament also has its

distinction between God in His hidden and incommunicable essence and

God as revealed; and has its names for this Revelation-side of God's

nature (His name, glory, face, word, angel of Jehovah, etc. Cf.

Oehler's Theol. of the Old Testament, pp. 181-196; Newman's Arians, pp.

92, 153). There is, in particular, the doctrine of the (personified)

Divine Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs. These germs did not lie without

development on the soil of Judaism, as seen in the curious doctrine of

the Memra, or word of Jehovah, in the Targums (cf. Edersheim's Jesus

the Messiah, i. pp. 47, 48; ii. pp. 659-664--Appendix on "Philo of

Alexandria and Rabbinic Theology")--the Memra being a distinct

hypostasis whose name is substituted for Jehovah's; and that they were

developed on Greek soil is evidenced by the apocryphal Book of Wisdom,

in which we have, as Schurer points out, nearly all the elements of

Philo's doctrine already present (Hist. of Jewish People, Div. ii. vol.

iii. p. 232). We cannot err, therefore, in attributing Philo's doctrine

of the hypostatic Logos to the same Old Testament source.

Once this is granted, many things are clear. The predicates with which

Philo clothes his Logos--those of Creator, High-Priest, Archangel,

Intercessor, etc.--are plainly drawn over upon it from the Old

Testament. But it is also clear how Philo's doctrine should become in a

certain way a preparation for the gospel. Comparing his view with that

of the Gospel of John, we see, indeed--notwithstanding assertions to

the contrary--a fundamental contrast. The evangelist has his feet on a

fact which line seeks to interpret; Philo moves throughout in the

region of speculation. An incarnation would conflict with the first

principles of his philosophy. The whole substance of the doctrine in

the Fourth Gospel is different from Philo's speculations. Even in their

respective conceptions of the Logos, John and Philo are at variance;

for Philo means by Logos the internal Reason, never the spoken word;

while John means the word uttered, spoken. His view is in accordance

with the Palestinian, not with the Greek conception. I cannot therefore

but agree with Harnack when he says: "John and Philo have little more

in common than the name" (Dogmengeschichte, i. p. 85). Even the term

Logos does not occur after the Prologue. But suppose the resemblances

had been greater than they are, would this necessarily have been to the

prejudice of the Gospel? I cannot see it; for it has just been shown

that the one peculiar thing in Philo's theory,--that which brings it

into relation with the Gospel,--viz. its hypostatisation of the Logos,

is precisely that feature which he did not get from Greek philosophy,

but from the Old Testament. It was a very different thing for one whose

mind was stored, as Philo's was, with the facts of the Old Testament

Revelation, to come in contact with the suggestive teachings of Plato,

from what it would have been for another with no such preparation (cf.

Newman's Arians, pp. 91, 92). Philo, working with these ideas, struck

out a theory which is not unchristian, but goes forward rather to meet

the Christian view, and find its completion in it. That there is a

Divine Reason in the universe, and that this universal Logos is none

other than He who is the life and light of men, and who in the fulness

of time became flesh,--this is not less Christian teaching because

Philo in some respects was in accord with it. John, if we assume him to

have heard of this doctrine of Philo's, had no reason to reject it so

far as it went. It harmonised with the truth he held, and furnished a

fitting form in which to convey that truth. Whether even this much of

Alexandrian influence is present in the Gospel, it is not easy to

determine. Meanwhile, it is only doing justice to this great Jewish

thinker to see in him an important link in the providential preparation

for Christian conceptions--even if we do not go further, and speak of

him, with Pfleiderer, as "the last Messianic prophet of Israel, the

Alexandrian John the Baptist, who stretches out a hand to John the

Evangelist" (Religionsphilosophie, iii. p. 176, Eng. trans.).

On Philo's philosophy, and his relation to the Gospel, the works of

Siegfried, Drummond, Zeller, Schurer, Edersheim, Harnack, Pfleiderer,

Hatch (Hibbert Lectures), Martineau (Seat of Authority), Godet, Dorner,

etc., may be consulted.

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[905] The "ideas," however are also regarded as the immanent forms or

essences of things, which become what they are through "participation"

in them,--a point of contact with the Stoical doctrine noted below.

[906] It is a point on which opinions differ as to whether Philo's

Logos was conceived of as a personal agent--was hypostatised (see

Drummond's Philo of Alexandria, which upholds the negative); but the

above seems the preferable view.

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LECTURE 6 NOTE C.--P. 233.

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST AND THE REALITY OF HIS DIVINE CLAIM.

If the premisses of the Christian view are correct as to Christ's claim

to be the Son of God, and as to the connection of sin with death, it

was impossible that He, the Holy One, should be holden of death. The

Prince of Life must overcome death. His resurrection is the pledge that

death shall yet be swallowed up in victory.

On the other hand, the denial of Christ's resurrection leads to a

subversion of His whole claim as unfounded. [907] If historically real,

the resurrection of Christ is a confirmation of Christ's entire claim;

if it did not happen, this alone negates it. The resurrection is thus

an integral part of the Christian view. In this respect also--as well

as in its bearings on our justification--we may say: "If Christ bath

not been raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (1 Cor.

xv. 17). [908] It is only what might have been anticipated, therefore,

when we find the advocates of the modern view--those who refuse

Christ's claim--emphatic in their denial of the resurrection, and

unceasing in their efforts to demolish the evidence of it. It is more

surprising to find writers who claim to be upholders of the true

Christianity playing fast and loose with this fact of the Gospel, and

doing their best to belittle the importance of it for Christian faith.

I refer particularly to the attitude of certain writers of the

Ritschlian school. It is extremely doubtful if leading representatives

of this school, as Harnack and Wendt, accept the resurrection of Christ

in the literal sense at all. Harnack expressly avers that there is no

satisfactory historical evidence of the resurrection of Christ. He goes

further, and pours contempt on the attempt to find such evidence. He

not merely argues--what all will admit--that a faith in Christ based on

mere historic evidence is no true faith; but he scouts the idea of

being dependent on historic evidence at all. Such evidence, if we had

it, would give us, he thinks, no help. Faith must be perfectly

independent of evidence coming to us through the testimony of others."

To believe on the ground of appearances which others have had, is a

levity which will always revenge itself through uprising doubt." This

is professedly an, exaltation of faith . hut it directly becomes

apparent that faith is not intended to give us any guarantee of the

physical resurrection--that, in truth, this part of Christianity is to

be given up. The Christian "has nothing to do with a knowledge of the

form in which Christ lives, but only with the conviction that He is the

living Lord." The determination of the form was dependent on the widely

differing general representations about a future life, resurrection,

restoration, and glorification of the body, which prevailed at that

particular time (see the whole note, Dogmengeschichte, i. pp. 75, 76).'

Wendt speaks in quite similar terms. Christ's sayings on His own

resurrection are interpreted as conveying only the idea that "Jesus

would after the briefest delay be awakened from death to the heavenly

life with God"; and the Church misinterpreted them in applying them on

the ground of "appearances which were held by them as certain facts of

experience to a literal bodily resurrection" (Die Lehre Jesu, ii. p.

543). One would like to know how much objective reality Wendt is

disposed to attribute to these "appearances." To Herrmann also the

exaltation of Christ is "a thought of faith," indemonstrable through

historical evidence. It is an ill service to name the resurrection to

us living to-day as a fact likely to convince unbelievers. "For it is

related to us by others" (Verkehr, 2nd edition, p. 239). [909]

This minimising of the importance of the historical resurrection on the

part of Ritschlian writers accords only too well with the general

subjectivity of the school. A theory which resolves religion wholly

into judgments of value," or, as Herrmann prefers to call them,

"thoughts of faith," has clearly no room for an objective fact like the

resurrection. A view which lays the whole stress on the impression

(Eindruck) produced by Christ's earthly life, has no means of

incorporating the resurrection into itself as a constitutive part of

its Christianity. It remains at most a deduction of faith without inner

relation to salvation. It is apt to be felt to be a superfluous

appendage. It might almost be said to be a test of the adequacy of the

view of Christ and His work taken by any school, whether it is able to

take in the resurrection of Christ as a constitutive part of it. I

cannot therefore but regard the Ritschlian position as virtually a

surrender of faith in Christ's resurrection. The attempt to set faith

and historical evidence in opposition to each other is one that must

fail. Since it is implied in Christ's whole claim that death cannot

hold Him, not merely, as with the Ritschlians, that He has a spiritual

life with God, faith would be involved in insoluble contradictions if

it could be shown that Christ has not risen; or, what comes to the same

thing, that there is no historical evidence that He has risen. It may

be, and is, involved in our faith that He is risen from the dead; but

this faith would not of itself be a sufficient ground for asserting

that He had risen, if all historical evidence for the statement were

wanting. Faith cherishes the just expectation that, if Christ has

risen, there will be historical evidence of the fact; and were such

evidence not forthcoming, it would be driven back upon itself in

questioning whether its confidence was not self-delusion. In harmony

with this view is the place which the resurrection of Christ holds in

Scripture, and the stress there laid upon its historical attestation (1

Cor. xv. 1-19). I cannot enter here into detailed discussion of the

historical evidence. The empty grave on the third day is a fact

securely attested by the earliest traditions. The undoubting faith of

the first disciples in the resurrection of their Lord, and in His

repeated appearances to themselves, is also beyond question. Baur and

most candid writers acknowledge that something extraordinary must have

happened on that third day to hay a basis for this faith, and to change

their despair into joyful and triumphant confidence (see Baur's Church

History, i. p. 42, Eng. trans.). The hypothesis of imposture has now no

respectable advocates. The idea of a "swoon" finds little support. The

"vision hypothesis," which would reduce the apostles to the level of

hysterical women, is inexplicable out of psychological conditions, and

has been refuted almost to weariness (see good remarks on it in

Beyschlag's Leben Jesu, in his chapter on the Resurrection, i. pp.

406-450). The attempt to make it appear as if Paul believed only in a

visionary appearance of Christ, can hardly convince anybody. In all

these discussions the alternative invariably comes back to

be--conscious imposture, or the reality of the fact. This is the

simplest explanation of all of the narratives of the resurrection--that

it really took place. As Beyschlag says: "The faith of the disciples in

the resurrection of Jesus, which no one denies, cannot have originated,

and cannot be explained otherwise than through the fact of the

resurrection, through the fact in its full, objective, supernatural

sense, as hitherto understood" (p. 440). So long as this is contested,

the resurrection remains a problem which the failure of rival attempts

at explanation only leaves in deeper darkness.

For a good statement and criticism of the various hypotheses, see

Schaff's Hist. of the Church, i. pp. 172-186; Godet's Defence of the

Christian Faith (Eng. trans.), chaps. i. and ii. (against Reville); and

Christlieb's Moderne Zweifel, Lect. VII. (Eng. trans.).

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[907] On the same principle that in a hypothetical syllogism the denial

of the consequent leads to the denial of the antecedent. If Christ was

the Divine Son, He could not be holden of death. If He was holden of

death, His claim to be the Divine Son is refuted.

[908] The resurrection has a constitutive place in the Christian view

in connection with Redemption; but into this I do not enter here.

[909] Bornemann seems to hold a literal resurrection, but regards it as

insoluble whether Christ really appeared in the body to His disciples,

"or whether those appearances rested on a miraculous working of the

Person of Jesus on the souls of the disciples," i.e. were subjective

impressions; and treats the question as indifferent to

faith.--Unterricht, p. 85.

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LECTURE 7 NOTE A.--P. 270.

RECENT THEORIES OF THE TRINITY.

Some examples may be given of recent theories of the Trinity which seem

defective from the Christian point of view. Of these, three classes may

be named:

I. Speculative Theories, which do not start from the basis of Christian

facts, but are the products of a priori deduction. These theories are

abstract, speculative, cosmological, with little relation to

distinctively Christian interests. The typical example here is Hegel's,

in his Religionsphilosophie,. ii. pp. 223-251. Hegel speaks of an

immanent Trinity in God--a Trinity of God's being before or outside of

the creation of the world. He does not disdain even the name

"persons,"--"person, or rather subject," speaks of Father, Son, and

Spirit. Yet this Trinity is little more than the play of pure thought

with itself in the element of highest abstraction: thought eternally

distinguishing itself from itself, and as eternally sublating that

distinction. The Father is the pure abstract idea; the Son is the

element of particularity in that idea; the Spirit is the sublation of

this in individuality. The distinction is only ideal, does not become

real till the passage is made into the actuality of the finite world.

Here Hegel is careful to remind us that, though in the domain of

science the idea is first, in existence it is later--it comes later to

consciousness and knowledge (p. 247). This Trinity has therefore no

existence prior to the world or independently of it; it is simply

potentiality and basis. [Hegel's own formula for his immanent process

is--"God in His eternal universality is this: to distinguish Himself,

to determine Himself, to posit another to Himself, and again to annul

this distinction--therein to be in Him self, and only through this act

of self-production is He Spirit" (p. 237).] The supreme abstraction of

all this is very evident. The names of Christian theology are retained,

with no agreement in content. What possible resemblance has "the idea

in its abstract universality" to the Father in the Christian

conception? Yet Hegel's treatment contains many profound and suggestive

thoughts. In consonance with this speculative mode of thought are the

theories which make the world, or the idea of the world, the mediating

factor in the divine self-consciousness.

II. Impersonal Theories, which recognise an immanent distinction in the

Godhead, but one only of potencies, of momenta in the divine life, of

modes of existence, therefore not a true personal Trinity. Thus

Schelling (whose "potencies," however, become personal later in the

world-process), [910] Rothe, Beyschlag, etc. This view lies near akin

to Sabellianism. E.g., Rothe's distinctions of nature, essence, and

personality have nothing to do with the Biblical distinctions of

Father, Son, and Spirit, which he takes to relate only to the sphere of

Revelation. A recent example of this type of theory is afforded by F.

A. B. Nitzsch in his Lehrbuch der evangelischen Dogmatik (1892).

Nitzsch holds that we are compelled to postulate, not simply a Trinity

of Revelation, but a Trinity of essence (ii. p. 442). But it is a

Trinity of potencies, principles, modes of subsistence (pp. 439-446),

not persons. A Trinity of persons, he thinks, would be Tritheism (p.

444). He grants that the Scripture teaches the personality of the

Spirit, in part also of the Logos (pp. 440, 444). But this

representation cannot be dogmatically used (p. 444). The personality of

the Son lies in the human nature (p. 441), and the Spirit is not a

person, but a principle. It is, however, a divine nature, in the strict

sense of the word; is not to be interchanged with the holy disposition

or religiously-elevated state of feeling of man, [911] but is

considered as an objective, real divine power, which is essentially

equal with God (p. 439). Nevertheless, when we go on to ask what this

threefold mode of subsistence in the divine nature is, we find it

difficult to distinguish it from a Trinity of Revelation. God as Father

is God in Himself in distinction from His relation to the world; the

Logos is the Revelation principle in God; and the Spirit is the

principle of the divine self-communication (pp. 445, 446). Christ is

the one in whom this Revelation finds its highest expression; in this

sense He is the Incarnation of the Logos, and has "Godhead." "This

expression," he tells us, "is quite in place" (p. 514). It is evident

(l) that this so-called ontological Trinity is barely distinguishable

from an economical or Sabellian one; (2) that Christ has not real

Godhead--is, in truth, purely man, only the highest organ of divine

Revelation; and (3) that the Trinitarian doctrine sought to be

established is awkward and confused, and has little relation to the

scriptural doctrine. It is made to rest primarily on God's relation to

the world (p. 442), and not on the facts of Redemption. Its

representation of " God in Himself" as the Father has nothing in common

with the New Testament idea of Fatherhood. Then the personality is made

to reside only in the first principle. God as Father is personal; the

other two potencies (Logos and Spirit) are not personal Further, in

this Trinity there is no room for the Son. The divine second principle

is named "Logos," not "Son."--the Son comes into being with Jesus

Christ. We have, therefore, the contradiction of an Eternal Father

without an Eternal Son; the Logos is not the Son of the Trinitarian

formula. The first and third members in this formula are truly

divine--one personal, the other impersonal; the middle member is

personal, but not truly divine. The ordinary doctrine of the Trinity

may be difficult, but it certainly is more coherent and less

contradictory than this of Nitzsch's, which seems to originate rather

in a desire to keep in touch with ecclesiastical phraseology, than in

any real need arising out of its author's Christology or Pneumatology.

Dr. Dorner is a powerful defender of the Godhead of Christ, yet it is

doubtful whether in his later views he has not surrendered the only

basis on which this doctrine can be consistently maintained. In his

History of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ, Dr. Dorner proceeds on

the view (or seems to do so) of a Trinity of personal distinctions

(Cf., e.g., his remarks on Hegel's theory in vol v. p. 150). In his

System of Doctrine, on the other hand, he abandons this ground, and

falls back on a Trinity of impersonal modes--momenta in the

constitution of the one divine Personality. The Hypostases are to be

thought of as "the eternal points of mediation of the Absolute divine

Personality"--as "intermediate between attributes and Egoity and

Personality" (i. pp. 382, 383, Eng. trans.); as "not of themselves and

singly personal," but as having "a share in the one divine Personality

in their own manner" (p. 448). As against a view which would make the

divine Hypostases" three severed subjects, with separate

self-consciousness, and divided self-determination," this has perhaps

its truth. But Dr. Dorner evidently so regards these momenta of the

divine Personality that neither is the Father a Person, nor the Son a

Person, nor the Spirit a Person; but the three constitute together the

One Personality, or divine self-consciousness. There is not such a

distinction between Father and Son as could be expressed by the

pronouns I and Thou. The strained character of this construction is

seen in the attempt to retain the names Father and Son for these

internal modes of the divine self-consciousness. It is not, it is to be

observed, the completed Personality who is the Father, and the

historical Christ who is the Son; but Father is the name for the first

"point of mediation," Son for the second point, Spirit for the third,

in the one self-consciousness. But how, it may be asked, can an

impersonal moment in a process be described as Father, or how can an

impersonal principle be described as Son?

In accordance with this view, Dr. Dorner does not admit that a personal

divine Being became incarnate in Christ, but only that a principle

incorporated itself with the humanity derived from the virgin (iii. p.

163). "God as Logos, as that special eternal mode of being of the

deity, unites Himself perfectly and indissolubly with Jesus, and thus

may be said to have become man in Him, because as Logos He has His

being, His perfect Revelation in this man, and has become a living

unity with this man" (iii. p. 303). Christ is not simply human or

simply divine, but the divine and human natures coalesce to form a

"God-human Ego" or personality (pp. 308, 309). Here, again, one cannot

but feel that Dr. Dorner's theory leaves the divinity of Christ in an

exceedingly ambiguous position. He is constantly objecting to the

orthodox doctrine that it imperils the integrity of the humanity of

Christ--i-makes it unlike ours. But what of his own theory of Christ's

peculiarly constituted Personality? Either it must be held that this

union of the Divine principle with His humanity is akin in character to

that which takes p lace in every believer--in which case his ground is

taken away for asserting a sole and exclusive divinity for Christ; or

it ceases to be a truly human person (as, on the other hand, it is not

a Divine Person), and can only be thought of as a tertium quid, a

peculiar product of the union of divine and human factors. The Church

doctrine at least avoids this ambiguity by saying boldly--it is a

divine Person who appears in humanity,--one who submits Himself to the

conditions of humanity, yet in origin and essence is eternal and

divine. It is difficult to see how, on Dr. Dorner's view, Christ should

he a truly divine being; but if He is so--and there can be no mistake

about Dr. Dorner's earnestness of conviction on the subject--the

conclusion cannot be avoided that as in the theories of Rothe and

Beyschlag, a new divine Person has since the Incarnation been added to

the Godhead. There was but one divine Personality before--not the

Father, but the one God, constituted through the three" modes"; there

is now a second, as the result of the Incarnation of one of these

modes--true God and Man. Surely the mere statement of such a view is

sufficient to show its untenableness.

III. Neo-Sabellian Theories, which resolve the Trinity into aspects of

the divine in the process of its self--manifestation or Revelation. The

ground is abandoned of an immanent or ontological Trinity, and the

names Father, Son, and Spirit are taken but as expressions for the

phases of the divine self-manifestation m nature or grace.

Schleiermacher inclines to this view (I. Der christ. Glaube, sects.

170-172), and we have seen that theories like Rothe's and Nitzsch's

tend to pass over into it. The Ritschlian theologians have no

alternative but to adopt it. It is a view which will always have a

certain popularity, seeming, as it does, to evade metaphysical

subtleties, while giving a plausible, easily apprehended interpretation

of the Trinitarian formula. Its simplicity, however, is all upon the

surface. The moment it is touched with the finger of criticism, its

inadequacy is revealed.

The forms of these Neo-Sabellian theories are as varied as the minds

that produce them. We may distinguish, first, certain popular forms.

The old Sabellianism confined itself to the stadia of Revelation (the

Father in the Law, the Son in the Incarnation, the Spirit in the

Church). In modern times we have a wide variety of triads--God as

Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier; God m creation (Father), in Christ

(Son), in the inward fellowship of believers (Spirit); God in nature

(Father), in history (Son), in conscience (Spirit); God in Himself

(Father), as revealed (Son), as the principle of inward communion

(Spirit), etc. A common feature in nearly all these triads is the

identification of God as Creator with the Father; or again, God in His

absolute, self-enclosed being, is viewed as the Father. But it cannot

be too often repeated that it is not peculiarly as Creator that God, in

the Christian view, is revealed as the Father. Creation is not the

Revelation of God's Fatherhood. It is in Christ only that the

Fatherhood of God is perfectly revealed (Matt. xi. 27). We know the

Father thorough the Son. Still less does Fatherhood, in the Christian

sense, denote God in the depths of His absoluteness. The truth in these

views is that the Son is the principle of Revelation in the Godhead;

that the Father, apart from the Son, is undisclosed and unrevealed. But

that to which the Son heads us back in God is a true Fatherhood of

knowledge, love, and will. The second criticism to be made on these

theories is that they do not give us a truly divine Trinity of Father,

Son, and Spirit. Whether the Son is identified with the "world," or

with "humanity," or with "Christ," the second member of the Trinity is

not divine as the first and third are. It is not God who is the Son,

but the (non-divine) Son reveals God. This, it may be observed, is a

principal distinction between the ancient and the modern Sabellianism.

The old Sabellianism sought to hold by a real Godhead of Christ, though

it failed in doing so. It was the same God, according to it, who in the

old dispensation revealed Himself as Father, who afterwards became

incarnate as Son, and who later was manifested as the Holy Spirit in

the Church. The defects of this view were glaring; for if the phases

were, as the Sabellians held, successive, then the one God ceased to be

Father before He became Son, and had ceased to be Son before He became

Spirit. Then Father and Son are terms without meaning. But, further, in

ceasing to be Son, the divine must be supposed to have left the

humanity of Christ. Thus the reality of the Incarnation is again

denied. [912] We have only a temporary union of the Godhead with the

man Christ Jesus. In the Neo-Sabellianisms, on the other hand, the

Person of Christ is regarded as divine only in a figurative and

improper way, i.e. as the bearer of a divine Revelation, or in an

ethical sense; and the successive phases of the divine

self-manifestation are not regarded as necessarily sublating each

other; i.e. God remains Father, while revealed as Son, while manifested

as Spirit.

Kaftan's view of the Trinity in his Das Wesen der christ. Religion does

not rise above a Trinity of Revelation or manifestation. "The Christian

believes in God," he says, "the supra-terrestrial Lord of the world,

who was from the beginning, and is in eternity. He believes in the

Godhead of Jesus, the historical Founder of our religion, in whom God

has revealed Himself, through whom God has entered into that relation

to mankind which from eternity He had in view. He believes in a power

of the divine Spirit in the history of mankind which, since the

appearance of Jesus Christ, and more precisely since His resurrection

from the dead, has come to its perfection in Christendom, and which

transplants the man, who allows himself to be possessed by it, into the

blessed fellowship of the divine life. But still it is one God in whom

he believes. . . . How can this be otherwise brought to a single

expression than by designating the Christian faith in God as the faith

in a three-one God? The Christian has and knows God only through Christ

in the Holy Spirit" (p. 388). "Understood in a Christian sense, God is

personal Spirit; as such we find Him in the historical personal life of

Jesus Christ; as such we believe in Him ruling in history: this is the

signification of the Christian faith in the three-one God" (p. 390,

first edition). This is a much higher position than the ordinary

Ritschlian one [note the emphatic assertion of Christ's resurrection

from the dead, and the connection of this with the mission of the

Spirit]. The crucial point is the affirmation of Christ's divinity.

Now, whatever this means to Kaftan, it is certain it does not mean the

entrance into time of a pre-existing divine Being; nor would he allow

the inference to a personal distinction in the Godhead as the ground of

the Incarnation (p. 391). His Trinitarian doctrine, therefore, does not

mean more than that God has a super-earthly mode of being, that He has

revealed Himself historically in Jesus Christ, and that He has wrought

since as a spiritual power in the hearts of men. He refuses, indeed, to

admit that this is a mere economical Trinity. The Revelation, he says,

expresses the essence. But Sabellianism never denied that there was

that in God which determined the modes of His self-revelation, or that

to this extent they expressed His nature. Kaftan's midway position is

untenable. Either he must deal earnestly with the "Godhead" of Christ

which he so strenuously maintains, and then he can hardly avoid moving

back on personal distinctions; or, holding to his modal view of the

Trinity, he will find it increasingly difficult to regard Christ as

truly divine.

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[910] Pfleiderer remarks on Schelling's Trinity--"The interpretation of

the three potencies by the three persons of the Church's doctrine of

the Trinity, and the more than bold exposition of dogmatic formulae and

passages of Scripture, we may pass as by a mere hors d'oeuvre without

value for philosophy. Orthodoxy could feel no gratitude to our

philosopher for his deduction of a triple Divine personality which only

began with the creation, and was only to be fully realised at the

conclusion of the world-process. The trinity arrived at is that of

Montanism or Sabellianism, rather than that of the

Church."--Religionsphilosophie, iii. p. 21 (Eng. trans.). A good

criticism of Beyschlag's Trinitarian view may be seen in Dorner, Syst.

of Doct. iii. pp. 258-260.

[911] Pfleiderer explains the Holy Spirit rationalistically as "the

arrival of the Divine reason at supremacy in our

heart."--Religionsphilosophie, iii. p. 305.

[912] Or reduced to a mere theophany. Ancient Sabellianism spoke of an

absorption even of the humanity of Christ.

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LECTURE 7 NOTE B.--P. 276.

DR. MARTINEAU AS A TRINITARIAN.

Dr. advocating Trinitarianism is a veritable Saul among the prophets.

Yet this is the drift of his striking essay (first published as late as

1886) on "A Way Out of the Trinitarian controversy." The object of the

essay is to find a way of reconciling the differences of Unitarians and

Trinitarians, which Dr. Martineau thinks might be accomplished if

parties only came better to understand each other. He says, with great

truth, "Religious doctrine may be only theory to the critic, but it is

the expression of fact to the believer--fact infinite and ever present,

the vital breath of every moment, deprived of which the soul must gasp

and die. . . . It is from the depth of such natures that theology and

churches arise; and if you would harmonise them when they seem

discordant, you must descend into the depths; you must feel their truth

ere you criticise their errors, and appreciate their difference before

you can persuade them that they are one. . . . To feel charity towards

a sin, you must understand the temptation; towards a sorrow, you must

know its depths; towards an erring creed, you must appreciate its

meaning and its ground" (Essay ii. pp. 626, 627). In this spirit he

aims at setting forth what he conceives to be the truth about the

Trinity.

The intention is excellent, but the success of the attempt must be

pronounced doubtful. It is, however, exceedingly interesting as coming

from Dr. Martineau. For his thought leads him to recognise a certain

real Trinitarian distinction in God; and, so far as one can judge, he

does not object even to Trinitarians speaking of these distinctions as

in a sense personal. The gist of his view is expressed in the following

passages: "God then, as He exists in Himself ere Heat all appears,--God

alone with the void,--God as a still presence,--a starless night, a

dumb immensity of intellect, is intended by the First Person in the

received creed. Let now the silence be broken, let the thought burst

into expression, fling out the poem of creation, evolving its idea in

the drama of history, and reflecting its own image in the son of man;

then this manifested phase of the; divine existence is the Son. . . .

The one fundamental idea by which the two personalities are meant to be

distinguished is simply this--that the first is God in His primeval

essence,--infinite meaning without finite indications; the second is

God speaking out in phenomena and fact, and leaving His sign whenever

anything comes up from the deep of things, or merges back again. . . .

Respecting the Third Person in the Trinity, and the doctrine of the

Holy Spirit, . . . the separation of His personality from the others,

as not proper to be merged in them, is founded on a feeling deep and

true, viz., that the human spirit is not a mere part of nature. . . .

We are persuaded of something diviner within us than this--akin in.

freedom, in power, in love, to the supreme Mind Himself. I virtue of

this prerogative, we have to be otherwise provided for, in our highest

life, than the mere products of creative order; we need not control,

simply to be imposed and obeyed, but living communion like with like,

spirit with spirit. To open this communion, to bring this help and

sympathy, to breathe on the fading consciousness of our heavenly

affinity, and make us one with the Father an the Son, is the function,

truly of a quite special kind, reserved in the doctrine of the Church

for the Holy Ghost. What God is in Himself; what He is as manifested in

the universe and history, thought to a focus in the drama of

Redemption; what He is in communion with our inner spirit,--these are

the three points of view denoted by the Persons' of the Trinity" (pp.

332, 334, 336). The "Eternal Sonship" he connects with the doctrine of

eternal creation The most paradoxical part of the essay is where he

seeks to prove that the Unitarians, while imagining they were

worshipping the "Father," have all the while been worshipping the

"Son"--that the Father "is really absent from the Unitarian Creed" p.

536). After the remarks in last note, it is not necessary to say much

in criticism of this theory. It is, after all, only a modal theory--the

substituting of "phases" and "points of view" for the orthodox

"Persons." The distinction of "Father" and "Son" is that of the hidden

and the revealed God; and the "Son" has His raison d'etre in the

existence of a world. There is no room for a special Incarnation. The

"Son" is manifested in Jesus not otherwise than He is manifested in all

history--only in higher (or highest) degree. But it has already been

pointed out that this identification of the "Father" with God in

Himself, "dormant potency," "still presence," "dumb immensity of

intellect," has no resemblance to the Christian idea of the Father. Dr.

Martineau goes here on an altogether wrong track. His theory does not

express the Christian facts.

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LECTURE 8 NOTE A.--P. 299.

THE GERM THEORY OF JUSTIFICATION.

This subtle theory of justification, according to which the manifoldly

imperfect believer is accepted on the ground of his germinal

holiness--"for in the first moment," as Schleiermacher says, "the whole

development is implicitly given" (p. 105),--is not without many

advocates. Its phraseology is found in some who are far from wishing to

remove the ground of acceptance from the doing and suffering of Christ;

and it finds favour with others who reject this objective ground, and

need another explanation.

Dr. M'Leod Campbell finds this view in Luther, whose doctrine he

expounds thus--"secondly, because this excellent condition of faith is

in us but a germ--a grain of mustard-seed--a feeble dawn, God, in

imputing it as righteousness, has respect unto that of which it is the

dawn--of which, as the beginning of the life of Christ in us, it is the

promise, and in which it shall issue" (Nat. of Atonement, p. 34 (4th

ed.)). There is no doubt that some of Luther's expressions in the

Commentary on Galatians give colour to this statement. E.g. "Wherefore

Christ apprehended by faith, and dwelling in the heart, is the true

Christian righteousness, for the which God counteth us righteous, and

giveth us eternal life" (on ii. 16). "We conclude, therefore, upon

these words, It was imputed to him f or righteousness,' that

righteousness indeed beginneth through faith, and by the same we have

the first-fruits of the Spirit; but because faith is weak, it is not

made perfect without God's imputation. Wherefore faith beginneth

righteousness, but imputation maketh it perfect unto the day of Christ.

. . . For these two things work Christian righteousness: faith in the

heart, which is a gift of God, and assuredly believeth in Christ; and

also that God accepteth this imperfect faith for perfect righteousness,

for Christ's sake, in whom I have begun to believe" (on iii. 6). No one

can doubt, however, taking the general drift of the Commentary, that in

Luther's view the sole objective ground of the sinner's pardon and

acceptance is the cross and righteousness of Christ.

In a similar way Martensen expresses himself--"For faith is like the

grain of mustard-seed, a small, insignificant but fructifying seed corn

which contains within it the fulness of a whole future. In His gracious

contemplation God beholds in the seed corn the future fruit of

blessedness; in the pure will, the realised ideal of freedom"

(Dogmatics, p. 392). Yet Martensen is emphatic in declaring--"The

evangelical Church teaches that Christ alone, received by faith, is the

Righteousness of man; and thus she leads man back from what is

imperfect and multifarious to ONE who is Himself perfection; she brings

him back from his wanderings in the desert to the pure Fountain where

freedom springs from grace; to the holy centre where God looks upon

man, not in the light of the temporal and finite, but in the light of

Christ's eternity and perfection" (p. 393).

There is no question of the truth of the view in itself that, as

Martensen further says," Justifying faith cannot possibly exist in the

soul in a dead or merely stationary condition, but that, like the

living, fruit-bearing seed corn, it contains within itself a mighty

germinating power, which must necessarily beget a holy development of

life" (p. 393), and that God sees in this germinal holiness all that is

to proceed from it, and even, if we please, imputes to the believer

anticipatively the yet future result. But confusion is introduced if we

confound or exchange this with the sinner's justification. The

imputation in question is not in order to acceptance, but is a mode of

contemplating the fruition of holiness in persons already accepted. It

is an act of the divine complacency in and towards believers already

justified and adopted on the sole and all-sufficient ground of Christ's

work done on their behalf.

This view, translated into their own peculiar phraseology, is naturally

the one adopted by idealistic writers who treat of religion. Kant led

the way here when, in rationalising the doctrine of justification, he

represented it as meaning that, for the sake of our faith in the moral

good, we are already held to be what, while on earth, and perhaps in

any future world, we are no more than about to become (Religion

innerhalb der Grenzen der bloss. Vernunft, Bk. II. sec. 3). I quote two

illustrative passages from Mr. Bradley and Mr. T. H. Green.

"Justification by faith means," says Mr. Bradley, "that, having thus

identified myself with the object, I feel myself in that identification

to be already one with it, and to enjoy the bliss of being, all

falsehood overcome; what I truly am.- By my claim to be one with the

ideal, which comprehends me too, and by assertion of the non-reality of

all that is opposed to it, the evil in the world and the evil incarnate

in me through past bad acts, all this falls into the unreal; I being

one with the ideal, this is not mine, and so imputation of offences

goes with the change of self, and applies not now to my true self, but

to the unreal, which I repudiate and hand over to destruction. . . .

Because the ideal is not realised completely and truly as the ideal,

therefore I am not justified by the works, which issue from faith, as

works; since they remain imperfect. I am justified solely and entirely

by the ideal identification; the existence of which in me is on the

other hand indicated and guaranteed by works, and iii its very essence

implies them--Ethical Studies pp. 293,294.

Mr. Green says: "We most nearly approach the Pauline notion of imputed

righteousness when we say that it is a righteousness communicated in

principle, but not yet developed in act."--Paper on Justification by

Faith, in Works, iii. p. 202.

In the former of these extracts (as also in Mr. Green's own view) we

are away from the historical Christ altogether, and have to deal only

with "ideals," in relation to which we pass an act of judgment on

ourselves in accordance with the metaphysical truth of things, and

there is neither room nor need for a special justifying act of God.

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LECTURE 9 NOTE A.--P. 325.

RENAN'S ESCHATOLOGY.

Hartmann's theory of cosmic suicide by the concurrent decision or the

race is bizarre enough, but it is outdone by the extraordinary

eschatology sketched by M. Renan in his Dialogues et Fragments

Philosophiques, which, apparently, though he heads the section

"Dreams," it is not his intention that we should take otherwise than

seriously. It is a curious further illustration of how every. theorist

feels the need of some kind of eschatology, as well as of the lengths

to which credulity will go in minds that deem themselves too wise to

accept Revelation. In Renan's view, the great business in which the

universe is engaged is that of organising God. [913] God as yet only

exists in ideal; the time will come when He will be materially realised

in a consciousness analogous to that of humanity, only infinitely

superior (p. 78) The universe will culminate in a single conscious

centre, in which the conception of personal Monotheism will become a

truth. An omniscient, omnipotent being will be the last term of the

God-making evolution (l'evolution deifique); the universe will be

consummated in a single organised being--the resultant of milliards of

beings whose lives are summed up in his--the harmony, the sum-total of

the universe (pp. . 125, 126). The climax of absurdity is reached in

the notion the personal deity thus realised proceeds, now that he has

come into existence, to raise the dead and hold a general judgment! M.

Renan may be allowed here to speak for himself--"Yes, I conceive the

possibility of the resurrection, and often say to myself with Job,

Reposita est haec spes in sinu meo. If ever at the end of the

successive evolutions the universe is led back to a single, absolute

being, this being will be the complete life of all; he will renew in

himself the life of beings who have vanished, or, if you will, in his

will revive all those who have ever been.--When God shall be at once

perfect and all-powerful, that is to say, when scientific omnipotence

shall be concentrated in the hands of a good and just being, this being

will wish to resuscitate the past in order to repair its innumerable

injustices. God will exist more and more; the more he exists, the more

just he will be.--He will attain to this fully on the day when whoever

has wrought for the divine work shall feel that the divine work is

finished, and shall see the part he has had in it. Then the eternal

inequality of beings shall be sealed for ever," etc. (pp. 435, 436).

Comment on such "dreams" is needless. Yet the spinning of such theories

by a cultured intellect which has parted with its faith is not without

its lessons.

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[913] This is not among the "Dreams," but among the "Probabilities"

(pp. 78, 79).

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LECTURE 9 NOTE B.--P. 327.

THE GOSPEL AND THE VASTNESS OF CREATION.

An interesting article on the subject treated of in the Lecture is

contributed to the Contemporary Review for April 1889 by the late Prof.

Freeman, under the title--"Christianity and the Geocentric' System."

The article is full of suggestive and acute remarks. Prof. Freeman

states the objection in its full strength. "It is unreasonable, it is

urged, to believe that such a scheme as that of Christianity, implying

such awful mysteries and so tremendous a sacrifice can have been

devised for the sole benefit of such an insignificant part of the

universe as the earth and its inhabitants" (p. 541). He does not,

however, think there is much in it. "If it is meant," he says, "not

merely as a rhetorical point, but as a serious objection, it really

comes to this: we cannot believe that so much has been done for this

earth as Christianity teaches, because this earth is so little; if this

earth were only bigger, then we might believe it. . . . Surely nobody

ever believed or disbelieved on this kind of ground. An objection of

this kind is a rhetorical point, and nothing more" (p. 542). As a

rhetorical .point nevertheless, he grants that it is telling, and

proceeds to deal with it for what it is worth. He points out, first,

how little the change from the "geocentric" view has done to alter the

general tenor of our thoughts and feelings. It is not the case that the

"geocentric" view led man to take an exaggerated view of his own

importance. On the contrary, the sight of the starry heavens, even when

hooked at with "geocentric" eyes, has always been to make one feel his

littleness (Ps. viii.). "The truth is that the objection attributes to

scientific theories a great deal more practical influence than really

belongs to them. Whether the earth goes round the sun, or the sun goes

round the earth, does not make the least practical difference to our

general feelings, to our general way of looking at things. . . . We are

all heliocentric' when we stop to think about it, . . . but I suspect

most of us are geocentric' in practice. That is, we not only talk as if

the sun really rose and set, but for all practical purposes we really

think so. . . . Nobody really accepts or rejects the Christian religion

or any other religion, merely through thinking whether the sun is so

many thousands or millions of times bigger than the earth, or whether

it is only the size of a cart-wheel, or at the outside, about the

bigness of Peloponnesus" (p. 544) Next, he touches the question whether

we have any reason to suppose that other worlds are inhabited. "

Astronomers do not even attempt to tell us for certain whether even the

other members of our own system are inhabited or not. . . . I believe I

am right in saying that they tell us that Mars is the only planet of

our system where men like ourselves could live; that, if the

other--planets are inhabited, it must be by beings of a very different

nature from ours" (p. 545). But the peculiar part of his argument,

developed with great ingenuity and force, is a working out of the idea

that it is, after all, quite in accordance with analogy that our world

should he a very small one, and yet should play a most important part

in the universe. Here the analogies of his own science of history

furnish him with abundant illustration. "If it should be true that our

earth does hold a kind of moral place in the universe out of all

proportion to its physical size, the fact will be one of exactly the

same kind as the fact that so small a continent as Europe was chosen to

play the foremost part in the world's history, and that so small a part

of Europe as Greece was chosen to play the foremost part in Europe" (p.

558). Incidentally, in developing this argument, he refers to the fact

noted in the Lecture, that the past history of our own world takes away

in large part the force of the argument from the vast empty spaces of

creation. "Here both the certain facts of geology and the less certain

doctrine of evolution, instead of standing in the way of the argument,

give it no small help. . . . We know that our own world remained in

this seemingly useless and empty state for untold ages; there is

therefore at least no absurdity in supposing that other worlds, some or

all of them, are in the same state still. . . . The past emptiness and

uselessness of the whole planet, the abiding emptiness and seeming

uselessness of large parts of it, certainly go a long way to get rid of

all a priori objection to the possible emptiness and seeming

uselessness of some or all of the other bodies that make up the

universe " (p. 548).

A lengthy and valuable note on the subject will likewise he found in

Dorner's History of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ, vol. v. pp.

265-270. Dorner reviews, with his usual thoroughness and learning, the

opinions held by others, but finds nothing to shake his confidence in

the Christian view. "Concerning our planet, as thousand others we

compared with a, must say that it is the Bethlehem amongst the rest,

the least city amongst the thousands Judah, out of which the Lord was

destined to proceed " (p. 267). He reminds us that Steffens and Hegel,

like Whewell, "regard our planetary system as the most organised spot

of the universe; the earth, this concentrated spot on which the Lord

appeared, as its absolute centre, which both Hegel and Becker designate

the Bethlehem of worlds" (p. 269).

Ebrard likewise discusses the objection in his Christian Apologetics,

i. p. 253 (Eng. trans.). Fiske, in his little book on Man's Destiny, is

another who refers to it. Chap. i. is headed "Man's Place in Nature, as

affected by the Copernican Theory." He concludes--"The speculative

necessity for man's occupying the largest and most central spot in the

universe is no longer felt. It is recognised as a primitive and

childish notion. With our larger knowledge we see that these vast and

fiery suns are after all but the Titan-like servants of the little

planets which they bear with them in their flight through the abysses

of space. . . . He who thus looks a little deeper into the secrets of

nature than his forefathers of the sixteenth century, may well smile at

the quaint conceit that man cannot be the object of God's care unless

he occupies an immovable position in the centre of the stellar

universe" (pp. 16, 17).

Among the Ritschlians, the question is touched on by Ritschl, Recht.

und Ver. iii. p. 580; and by Kaftan, Wahrheit, pp. 562, 563 (Eng.

trans. ii. pp. 399-401).

Finally, I may refer to the beautiful treatment of the higher and more

spiritual aspects of the subject by Dr. John Ker in his sermon on "The

Gospel and the Magnitude of Creation" (Sermons, p. 227).

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LECTURE 9 NOTE C.--P. 341.

ALLEGED PAULINE UNIVERSALISM.

The two strongest passages in favour of Pauline universalism are

undoubtedly 1 Cor. xv. 21-28 and Eph. i. 10, yet the ablest exegetes

concur that in neither can Paul be held to teach the doctrine of

universal salvation. With this view I cannot but agree. It is easy to

read such a meaning into certain of Paul's universalistic expressions,

but an unbiassed study of the passages and their context makes it plain

that it is far from the apostle's intention to affirm any such

doctrine. As respects 1 Cor. xv. 21-28, we have first the

statement--"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made

alive" (ver. 22). But to affirm that in Christ all shall be made alive

is a very different thing from affirming that all shall be made alive

in Christ. And that the latter is not the apostle's thought is made

evident from the next verse, which declares that this making alive of

those that are Christ's takes place at His coming. "Each in his own

order: Christ the first-fruits; then they that are Christ's, at His

coming" (var. 23). This making alive, therefore, is the making alive at

the resurrection at the Parousia. But no universalist maintains that at

that period "they that are Christ's" embraces all humanity. The

subsequent clauses are not more decisive. "The last enemy that shall be

abolished is death" (ver. 27); but here again it is foreign to the

context to suppose that Paul has in view any other abolition of death

than that he has been speaking of throughout the chapter, viz. its

abolition at the resurrection. The putting down of all (rival) rule,

authority, and power (ver. 24), the putting all His enemies under His

feet (ver. 25), the subjection of all things to the Son (vers. 27, 28),

do not naturally suggest reconciliation or conversion, but rather

forcible subjugation--the destruction of all hostile authority and

influence. In this sense, accordingly, must be interpreted the final

expression--the strongest of all--"that God may be all in all." Meyer

observes--"Olshausen and de Wette find here the doctrine of restoration

favoured also by Neander, so that en pasi would apply to all creatures,

in whom God shall be the all-determining One. . . . The fact was

overlooked that en pasi refers to the members of the kingdom hitherto

ruled over by Christ, to whom the condemned, who, on the contrary, are

outside of this kingdom, do not belong, and that the continuance of the

condemnation is not done away even with the subjugation of Satan,

since, on the contrary, the latter himself by his subjugation falls

under condemnation" (Com. in loc.). Weiss similarly says: "Even the

context of this passage excludes any referring of it to a restitution

of all things (Apokatastasis), for the dominion which God henceforward

wields immediately can be no other than that which Christ has received

and given up to Him; and that does not consist in this, that all

hostile powers are destroyed or converted, but in this, that they have

become powerless, and are subject to His will."--Biblical Theol. ii. p.

73 (Eng. trans.).

The second passage, again, Eph. i. 10, speaks of a summing up of all

things in Christ as head (I agree with Weiss that there is no need for

weakening or denying the force of the composite word) in the

dispensation of the fulness of the times--a truly wonderful and

comprehensive expression. The ta panta here is in itself quite

general,--all created things and beings,--and might therefore quite

well suit a universalistic sense. But, first, the ta panta is limited

by the succeeding clause,--"the things in the heavens, and the things

on the earth,"--which excludes the demoniacal powers, certainly not

conceived of as "things in the heavens"; and, next, it is a question

whether time annulling of the divided state of "things on earth" is

effected by the conversion of hostile powers, or not rather by their

subjugation, and separation from the holy part of the creation. This is

a question to be determined by Paul's general mode of thought, and

Meyer and Weiss agree that such an idea as the final conversion of the

unbelieving and the demons is not within his view. "With the Parousia,"

says Meyer, "there sets in the full realisation which is the

apokatastasis panton, (Matt. xix. 28; Acts iii. 21; 2 Pet. iii. 10

ff.); when all antichristian natures and powers shall be discarded out

of heaven and earth, so that thereafter nothing in heaven or upon earth

shall be excluded from this gathering together again. . . . The

restoration in the case of the devils, as an impossibility in the case

of spirits radically opposed to God, is not in the whole New Testament

so much as thought of. The prince of this world is only judged" (Com.

in loc., and Remark 2, on the doctrine of Restoration)." A bringing

back of the world of spirits hostile to God," says Weiss,--"which,

moreover, is considered as definitely bad,--is as far away from the

Biblical view as is also a need of Redemption on the part of the angel

world, and therefore the author felt no need to guard his expressions

against either of these thoughts. . . . Enough that they by their

subjection to Christ are stripped of any power which can hurt the

absolute dominion of Christ " (Biblical Theol. of N. T. ii. pp. 107,

109).

The one thing which would be really decisive in favour of a

universalistic interpretation, would be some passage from Paul (or any

part of the New Testament), which explicitly affirmed that fallen

spirits or lost men in eternity would ultimately repent and be saved;

but no such expression can be found. Dr. Cox has no scruple in telling

us that those condemned in the judgment will yet, after a remedial

discipline, all be brought to repentance, to faith; will be restored to

God's Fatherly love, etc. If this is the Scripture doctrine, why do

Christ and His apostles never explicitly say so? Why do they not use

expressions as clear and unmistakable as Dr. Cox's own? Why only these

general expressions, of which the application is the very question in

dispute? The ancient prophets, e.g., had no difficulty in making clear

their belief that a day of general conversion would come for sinful and

rejected Israel. Why does Jesus, or Paul, or John not tell us as

plainly that a day of general forgiveness and restoration will come for

all God's backsliding children--that those whom they describe as

perishing and destroyed, and under wrath, and undergoing the second

death, will yet be changed in their dispositions, and made sharers of

God's eternal life? It is not simply that this is not declared of all,

but it is not, in one single utterance, declared of any; and while this

is the state of the case scripturally, universal restoration, however

congenial to our wishes, must be held to be a dream in the air, without

solid basis in Revelation.

What many passages do teach is the complete subjugation of those found

finally opposed to Christ; and in this way the restoration of a unity

or harmony in the universe, which involves the cessation of active, or

at least effective, opposition to Christ's rule. What may be covered by

such expressions,--or what yet unrevealed may in future ages be

disclosed--who can tell?

Reference may be made to a careful study of the whole New Testament

teaching on this subject in a series of papers by the Rev. Dr. Agar

Beet in the Expositor, vol. i. (4th series), 1890.

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Index of Greek Words and Phrases

\* [470]anomia

\* [471]apokatastasis panton

\* [472]arche

\* [473]Adam, tou Theou

\* [474]en pasi

\* [475]epignosis

\* [476]heauton ek enose

\* [477]hupostasis

\* [478]u le

\* [479]Kurios

\* [480]Chopsoi

\* [481]dianoia

\* [482]dunameis

\* [483]eikon Theou

\* [484]iopsom

\* [485]kardia

\* [486]kat' exiche

\* [487]katallage

\* [488]kuriotes

\* [489]logoi spermatioi

\* [490]menei

\* [491]me on

\* [492]mataio tes

\* [493]nous

\* [494]palingenesia

\* [495]pneuma

\* [496]proton pseudos

\* [497]sarx

\* [498]ta panta

\* [499]ta panta, kosmos

\* [500]telos

\* [501]psuche

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Index of Latin Words and Phrases

\* [502]"Quod si jam rerum ignorem primordia quae sint,

\* [503]Reposita est haec spes in sinu meo.

\* [504]Weltanschauungen

\* [505]caput mortuum

\* [506]causa sui

\* [507]de novo

\* [508]dies ineffabiles

\* [509]donum superadditum

\* [510]in concreto

\* [511]in mutua funera

\* [512]mobile perpetuum

\* [513]mundus non in tempore sed cum tempore factus est

\* [514]mundus, universum

\* [515]pontum aspectabant flentes!

\* [516]regressus in infinitum

\* [517]sensus numinis

\* [518]status integritatis

\* [519]sub specie aeternitatis.

\* [520]tertium quid

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Index of German Words and Phrases

\* [521]Abfall

\* [522]Ansicht der Welt

\* [523]Auspruch auf Leben

\* [524]Begriff

\* [525]Brauchen wir

\* [526]Das menschliche Erkennen

\* [527]Der alte und der neue Glaube

\* [528]Die auf Werthurtheile ruhenden Begriffe

\* [529]Drang

\* [530]Ebenbild

\* [531]Eindruck

\* [532]Gottessohnschaft

\* [533]Gottheit

\* [534]Gottmenschheit

\* [535]Kampf der Weltanschauungen

\* [536]Liebewillen

\* [537]Menschwerdung

\* [538]S�hnung

\* [539]Schw�rmerei

\* [540]Selbstgespr�che

\* [541]Selbstzersetzung

\* [542]Vers�hnung

\* [543]Vorstellung

\* [544]Vorstellungen

\* [545]WELTANSCHAUUNG

\* [546]WELTANSCHAUUNGEN

\* [547]Weltanschauung

\* [548]Weltanschauungen

\* [549]Weltansicht

\* [550]Weltbegriff

\* [551]Weltganz

\* [552]Werthurtheile

\* [553]Zeit-Geist

\* [554]Zersplitterung

\* [555]eine gewordene Gottheit

\* [556]ganz nichts besonderes

\* [557]urbildlich

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98. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xvi-p29.8

99. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xviii-p10.12

100. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xv-p22.3

101. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xii-p3.2

102. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xx-p19.5

103. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xx-p19.5

104. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xv-p22.5

105. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xx-p1.3

106. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xv-p21.8

107. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xv-p21.9

108. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xviii-p10.14

109. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xviii-p10.15

110. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xviii-p10.15

111. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xvi-p16.20

112. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xx-p34.7

113. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xvi-p16.11

114. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xiii-p8.2

115. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xxi-p19.9

116. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xvi-p16.8

117. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xvi-p11.2

118. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xiii-p8.2

119. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xi-p11.6

120. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xi-p11.8

121. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xx-p32.9

122. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xiv-p40.3

123. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xxi-p19.2

124. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xx-p34.2

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126. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xvi-p18.2

127. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xvi-p18.2

128. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xix-p35.5

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133. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xxi-p19.4

134. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xx-p5.3

135. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xvi-p16.16

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170. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#ix-p8.3

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175. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xvi-p21.2

176. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xiii-p8.5

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185. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xx-p32.10

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187. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xix-p10.21

188. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xix-p10.21

189. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xx-p19.4

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213. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xviii-p33.2

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258. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xvi-p12.28

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266. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xvi-p12.41

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314. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xiii-p25.14

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321. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xviii-p9.5

322. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xi-p15.6

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328. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xxii.ix.iii-p1.4

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339. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xiv-p41.3

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344. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xx-p17.4

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354. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xvi-p9.9

355. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xviii-p33.6

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359. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xviii-p36.2

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378. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xviii-p27.7

379. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xviii-p40.4

380. file://localhost/ccel/o/orr/view/cache/view.html3#xiii-p11.4

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