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THE ORIGIN AND MEANING OF CHRISTIANITY 11-E-200



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*TO THE CHURCH OF  
ALL ASPIRING SOULS.*

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## FOREWORD.

This book is the brief summary of results reached by continuous work during twenty years of ministry in Congregational churches.

It may be said to be both critical and constructive, critical because constructive.

It humbly urges reasons against  
the historicity of Jesus Christ,  
the externalising of God,  
the enslavement of man,  
because it seeks to uphold that  
Christ is the Ideal in God,  
God is the Life uniting all things,  
Love is man's true law.

The meaning of these is developed in the following pages. They form a unity, an outlook, and, it is hoped, they will be an inspiration to many.

G. T. S.

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PART I.

THE ORIGIN AND EARLY MEANING OF  
CHRISTIANITY.

## PART I.

# THE ORIGIN AND MEANING OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY.

THE story of Jesus Christ is the greatest of all stories. It is told in all lands. Men everywhere have heard of One who was in the form of God, who left heaven, was born of a Virgin in Bethlehem, who lived in seclusion at Nazareth in Galilee, became a teacher, sent out twelve disciples, cured men of blindness, of demons, of lunacy, raised some from the dead, preached by parables, was transfigured on a mountain, went to Jerusalem, was betrayed by Judas, arrested and tried in the night, was sent to Pilate, was crucified between two thieves, left the tomb after three days, and ascended to heaven.

For centuries it has been thought that this Jesus was a man, a Jew, though lately some have doubted whether this were so. Fierce discussions have ranged around the person of Christ: was he eternal, divine? Had he two natures or one? Did he perform miracles? Did he raise his body from the grave?

The purpose of the present essay is to show that, in all probability, the story is not history but something better. It is symbol. It is a mystic story, a spiritual allegory of God in the souls of the early Christians and of a process ever going on.

The story contains references to the outer history of the early Christian community in Jerusalem, their thoughts, conflicts, experiences. But in itself it is the story of the God these Christians experienced, the God whom they felt as a Love-movement ending the Jewish law, bringing in the kingdom of God on earth. There was no man Jesus. Jesus is not now a Jew in heaven. Jesus

has not "taken to heaven a human brow." Jesus means "Saviour" (Joshua), and was the name given to a real revelation of the Ultimate Reality in the early Christ-men, the Hellenistic Jews who felt the love that fulfils the law, is the Will of the all-pervading God, is the Logos or Wisdom of God, the Way, Truth and very Life of men. "Christ" is an aspect of God, regarded as a distinct person: for the ancient world did not hesitate to personify aspects of God, such as "Wisdom" is spoken of in The Book of Proverbs and The Wisdom of Solomon. As the "afflatus" in the early Christians, the revelation felt by intuitive direct experience, grew less, this "Christ" came to be spoken of as a person who had left heaven, been born, had died and ascended back to heaven. So, after A.D. 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, there grew up Christian writings, epistles of Paul, of Peter, of John, *i.e.*, of the Schools of Paul, Peter, John: and Gospels arose, giving greater "details" of this Christ, and thus grew up the New Testament.

The method of free criticism of the records of early Christianity may seem to some to be destructive, but really it is constructive. The two go together. Copernicus destroyed the old idea of the stars revolving around the earth, as Ptolemy (at Alexandria c. 150 A.D.) had propounded, but Copernicus (a Pole, died 1543) did so because he was constructing a better idea of reality. The word "criticism" does not mean complaining or condemning when used in relation to the New Testament. It means examining. Take an illustration in philosophy. The greatest change in human thought was the realisation of God as the Soul of the Universe, instead of as an Onlooker outside the Universe. Science criticised the old idea, showing by evolution and variation that there were no "special sudden creations," and by astronomy that there was no great Being in a heaven up above. There was no "above," since what was above to those in Britain was below to those in Australia. Biblical Research Science showed that the books of the Bible were by fallible men, and for the most part not by

those whose names they bear. Their morality, too, was not new, nor was it final as expressed in the Old Testament.

Thus the Jewish view of an external Creator who suddenly made the stars, and animals, and men, and who "wrote" the Ten Commandments for Moses, and only inspired a few men in that one nation—all that has passed away. The poets helped to show that God was *in* Nature, as "something far more deeply interfused" (Wordsworth), and the great musicians unveiled new divine depths *in* men's souls. The German philosophers, Kant and Hegel, showed that Universal Mind works *in* men, interpreting and unifying the universe in and for them; while Bergson has shown that in man's intelligent activity the Ultimate Reality (which is Life) can be felt by intuition (or direct experience) to be at work.

All this is a critical philosophy, yet it is constructive.

In the same way the criticism of the New Testament is constructive, and is not to be feared. The truth is our friend in disguise. Man is so made that he needs his head and heart to be both satisfied together. His reason cannot alone give man the ultimate reality, but it can point the way. Reason alone cannot make a man understand the New Testament, but it can join with obedience to the highest, and these together can climb the mountains whence the Vision may be discerned.

### 1.—RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN A.D. 30.

Christianity probably began as a Way of Life, about A.D. 30. The forms of religious thought in A.D. 30 supplied a mould for the early Christian experience of the indwelling Love divine. The earliest Christians were Jews who had knowledge of Hellenistic thought. They were not unlettered fishermen of Galilee. That error arose from these leaders being called "fishers of men," and later being therefore described as "fishermen." The new faith arose out of the spiritual life of Jews who were not satisfied with Rabbinic Judaism, but had

learnt something of the newer forms of religious thought which were promulgated around the Mediterranean Sea, and were focussed at Alexandria. At or near that city, according to Philo (who lived there B.C. 20 to about A.D. 30), there were a multitude of Jews, and the communication between Alexandria and Jerusalem, via Joppa or by land, must have been frequent. Greeks and Jews and Easterns met at this city of learning. Hellenistic ideas influenced Philo profoundly, so that, instead of keeping strictly to the Unity of God, the main tenet (now as then) of the Jewish religion, Philo propounded the doctrine of the Logos, or the divine mediator between the Supreme God and man: and called the Logos, the only-begotten Son of God, the Paraclete, the Second Adam, the Dayspring, the Image of God, the Rock, the Primal Man, and by other terms, many of which are taken from Philo and applied to Christ in the New Testament. Indeed "Christ" came to be another name for the Logos. The Stoics had taught the doctrine of the Logos Spermatikos, the Generative Reason, the all-pervading principle of life, descended from eternity into nature and men.

This idea greatly influenced Philo and the Jews. The influence came to Jerusalem, and the earliest Christians most likely were men who interpreted their religious experience of the wider life (or God) by these Hellenistic terms.

That experience was of the Ideal Life-giving Life which they called Love. It was taught partly in the Old Testament, in such passages as "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and "If thine enemy hunger, feed him." But still more clearly was it taught in such books as The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, wherein love to God and love to man are conjoined, and forgiveness of injuries is laid down as clearly as in the Sermon on the Mount. This Ideal, in their midst, these early Christians felt. when they met: and they realised a Life that did not need Judaism any more. Not that they felt this fact fully all at once, but they soon came into conflict with the Jewish leaders, "Scribes and Pharisees," over questions of tradition

(Sabbath and washings and fastings and foods), and later were excommunicated by the High Priest. Such was the "crucifixion" of "Jesus."

Now this experience of the Ideal Love in the early Christians had to be interpreted.

The terms were to hand in the Hellenistic thought of the day, and in later Judaism.

(a) There was *The Book of Enoch*, a Jewish book of various tracts on the Messiah. The part called "The Similitudes" was written about B.C. 70 at latest, and this tract told of the Christ as a being already existing in heaven, and about to come as Judge of all men. He was called "The Son of Man," "The Elect of God," "named before the creation before the Lord of Spirits." He was thus a divine being. So the early Christians called their Master and Lord by this name "Christ," and thought of him as about to be visibly set forth as Judge of all men.

But it was the Hellenistic influences, which were focussed at Alexandria, that came to afford most of the terms by which this Christ was described.

(b) *Hellenistic thought* (in A.D. 30) was modifying the Jewish conception of God, by introducing intermediaries, as Logos, Wisdom. That the Jewish idea of God was of a transcendent God is clear, not only from the Psalms which say the heavens are the home of God, but also, nearer Christian times, in the Apocryphal and Apocalyptic literature of the Jews.

In Ecclesiasticus God is called "The Most High" (xxiii. 22, xxiv. 23, xxix. 11). God is outside, above man, not necessarily far off, but distinct. Modern Jews rightly protest that Judaism does not put God far off: no, but it puts Him as a Sovereign—On-looker—Providence, all the same. He is "the King of heaven" (Tobit), "the Most High God" (often in The Book of Jubilees). He is apart from the earth and "shall visit it" (Testaments of Twelve Patriarchs). He deposes angels to act for Him, though He can act directly on man. God was thought of not as remote, but He was outside men, just to all, but also gracious to Israel, His chosen.



The Hellenistic movement of thought introduced several intermediaries (Logos, etc.). Why were such needful if God were already in men? He was not considered by Jews to be in men, as Reason or Love, but only was *nigh* to the contrite in heart.

The Christian gospel still, in *form*, keeps to the intermediaries—summing all up in the idea of a mediator, Christ, “in whom the divine fulness (pleroma) dwells.” But in essence, Christianity said God is Love and where Love is God is.

(c) Then *Gnostic influences* were felt on Jewish thought. Gnostics called their God the Soter or Saviour. This Saviour was also the Logos. In a tract called “Poimandres” (the Shepherd), written in the third century A.D., is embedded an earlier document which goes back to a pagan original, a pre-Christian Gnostic work, in which two divine descents are described. One is at creation when the Logos of God descended to fashion into order the chaotic earth, and the next was the descent of the Heavenly Man to mould men out of nature. Thus, there was Gnosticism in Alexandria prior to Christianity, and “Poimandres” was one of its books. The idea of a divine emanation or mediator called Logos, and called Heavenly Man, was a pre-Christian idea. The Christ is called in the New Testament “the second man from heaven,” and the “Logos, or Word of God.” “Wisdom” was another term given to the outgoing divine influence which moulded the world, and this term is partly personified in The Book of Proverbs and The Wisdom of Solomon (Apocrypha). The Christ was but another term for what had been called Saviour, Wisdom, Logos, Heavenly Man, Primal Man, Hermes, Holy Spirit. “The Lord (Jesus) is the Spirit” says the second Epistle of the Corinthians (iii. 17).

That there was a Gnosticism *before* Christianity is indicated by the pagan MS. embedded in “Poimandres,” and also by the Gnostic terms in the “Epistles of Paul,” such as pleroma, ektroma, teleios (initiated), gnosis, the length, depth, height and breadth, mediator, and others.

The Christians used Gnosticism to interpret their

spiritual experiences; and did so from the very first. The Gnostic system was stated in detail by Valentinus about 140 A.D. His writings are explained in the “Philosophumena” or “Refutation of all heresies,” of Hippolytus (bishop of Portus, near Rome, c. 220 A.D.). Valentinus showed that in the “pleroma” or fulness of the eternal attributes of God, were Logos (reason), Nous (mind), and Aletheia (truth); also Bythus (profundity), Monogenes (only-begotten), Paracletus (comforter), Pistis (faith), Agape (love), Elpis (hope). Also Sophia, who fell into chaos. To rescue her the aeons (eternities) projected Jesus “the joint fruit of the Pleroma,” and he went to save her. The myth is set out in a book “Pistis Sophia,” probably written by Valentinus.

Other Gnostics (Marcus, etc.) said that Christ was one of the aeons of the Pleroma, and Valentinus so speaks of him.

The idea of the “pleroma” was in Gnosticism in times B.C., for it occurs in the New Testament. Were Jesus and Christ regarded as aeons of the pleroma in times B.C.?

It is quite possible the latter was.

Anyhow, here was, in Gnosticism, an effort to bridge the gulf between God and man, as left by both Platonic and Hebrew thought. It is this that was set out also in the idea of the Logos spermatikos of the Stoics.

Hippolytus tells of the Naasenes as among the very earliest Christians who were not orthodox. They were called after “naas,” a serpent (in Hebrew Nachash). “They styled themselves Gnostics, having, they said, sounded the depths of knowledge. They magnify as the originating cause of all else, a man or a son of man (primal) Adam. Hymns are made to him.”

These Naaseni believed there was a man Jesus, for they lived when the Church had come to believe this. But their Gnosticism goes back to probably pre-Christian times, and helps us to see the origin of the Christian interpretation of the Christian experience. They believed in Attis, as a god who had left earth for heaven, where there is “a new

creature." They believed in the Logos, incomprehensible and unportrayable, and this was Christ. This Logos "scattered seeds upon the world, through which the whole cosmical system is completed: for through these also it began to exist. And this is what has been declared: The Sower went forth to sow."

Here we get the origin of the Gnostic parable of the Sower. It meant to set forth the Logos as differentiating himself into souls, scattering seeds out of himself, as a tree does upon the earth. The seeds are souls, the product of the Logos, set into human lives on earth (see Matt. xiii., Mark iv. in Moffatt's translation). This Logos "lighteneth every one" (John i. 9, ix. 1), said the Naasenes. Hippolytus' account of the Naasenes ends with a poem of the Gnostics, worked over perhaps by these Christians, saying that Jesus was a divine being who descended through the aeons to impart the Gnosis of God to poor struggling men on earth. Such a hymn must have been pre-Christian in its idea of "descent" even if the name of Jesus was added by Christians.

We see in pre-Christian Gnosticism how aspects of God were easily personified and the descent of divine aeons to earth easily imagined in those days.

(d) Further, *the mystery-religions* were all over Greece, Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt.

The famous Eleusinian mysteries were held at Eleusis on the seacoast near Athens. Here the death and resurrection of the goddess Persephone were dramatically enacted. The worshippers bathed in the sea, in a baptism symbolising that they were cleansed of sin. They then proceeded to the temple, remains of which have now been discovered. There were enacted the descent of Persephone to the god Pluto, and the weeping of Demeter, her mother, the Earth-goddess. Later, Persephone rose from the gloom of Hades (a cave in the Earth) and the worshippers rejoiced. Thus was typified the dying of life in winter and its re-birth in spring. But, before the Christian era, this Mystery-religion had become moralised, and the worshippers regarded themselves

as one with the goddess, dying *themselves* to sin and rising to eternal life.

Other vegetation deities were Tammuz, Attis, Dionysus, Mithras.

Tammuz was worshipped in Jerusalem in the days of Ezekiel, as his book tells us (viii. 14). That would be nearly six centuries before our era. Women mourned the death of Tammuz or Adonis, and rejoiced in his resurrection, *i.e.*, in the coming of life in the spring.

Attis was worshipped in Bethlehem, according to the Church Father Jerome (fourth century A.D.), but the cult must have been there much earlier. Attis was worshipped through Syria and Asia Minor. He was said to have been killed by a boar, or, according to another version, to have mutilated himself and bled to death. The latter version arose because the priests of Attis mutilated themselves at one time. A description of the moralised Attis-worship was written about 346 A.D., by Firmicus Maternus, but the worship had an inner, moral side to it centuries before that. Arnobius, who lived about 300 B.C., tells of it. The description by Firmicus says that the central act was a sacred drama of the death and resurrection of Attis, and at the close the priest came and said to the worshippers, "Be of good courage, oh ye of our mystery, for our god is saved, for us there shall be salvation after sorrows."

Dionysus was worshipped by Greeks for seven centuries before our era. This god was a product of Thrace, where the peasants worshipped him as the life-force of nature. He was the son of Zeus by the earth-goddess Semele. It was said he was born at Thebes, and travelled in Thrace (so Euripides). He was persecuted in Thrace, and torn to pieces by the Titans, and buried at Delphi or Thebes. But he rose again. His worshippers held a sacrament together. They killed a bull and ate its flesh, believing that thus they were one with the god. The vine was also one of his symbols. This religion laid stress on the idea that man may become divine, and share God's immortality. Dionysus was said to be

“born” where his cult flourished. He was said to be persecuted because his worshippers were persecuted. This religion was one in which men and women (Maenads) felt the life-force of nature in themselves, and personified and projected it as a god.

It is possible to get an insight into the working of the unscientific religious mind in regard to these mystery-gods, for we know that when Alexander the Great went to India three centuries B.C., he came to a town called Nysa, near the Khyber Pass. This awoke in his Greek soldiers the memory of their god Dionysus, who was said to have been nursed at Nysa. They concluded this was the place, as no one knew where it was. Therefore they said Nysa was founded by Dionysus, and were alert to find there other traces of their beloved god.

Mithras was a Persian God for centuries B.C. His worship was especially strong in Asia Minor at Tarsus (Paul's birth-place). By 70 B.C. it had spread to Rome. Mithras was the mediator between Ormuzd, the Supreme God, and the earth or the demon-rulers. He was thought to have descended to earth and slain the bull, representing the wildness of nature. He held a last supper with his followers, and ascended, without death, to heaven. Such was the myth. His worshippers were men only. Women were excluded, and this fact may have helped to make Christianity win in its struggle with Mithraism over Europe in the first four centuries of our era. The brotherhood met in underground temples. One such is to be seen now in Rome. They worshipped the Life which the sun brought forth, and the power of life to produce the world of organic beings. Roman soldiers were especially attracted and spread the cult through Europe, even to York, Chester and London, where relics have been found. It is probable that the story of the shepherds at the birth of Christ and the institution of the last supper came into Christianity from Mithraism. Tertullian (200 A.D.) tried to show that Mithraism copied the institution of the supper, which it observed, from

Christianity; but Mithraism was much older than Christianity.

Such were some of the mystery religions existing at the beginning of the Christian era. They worshipped natural life, but had become moralised. Their worshippers believed that in partaking in their dramatic rites, they were cleansed; they “died to sin,” and “rose” to eternal life. The birth of Mithras was put at the winter solstice December 25 and so Christmas was put at that time. The death and resurrection of Attis was put in the spring, to which festival the Christian Easter corresponds.

(e) We know that, besides the more philosophical movements at Alexandria, and the mystery religions around the Great Sea, there were numerous “collegia” clubs: kinds of *brotherhoods* for mutual help; industrial guilds of bakers, cloth-makers, carpenters; as the fullers of Pompeii and the doctors at Beneventum. Such “colleges” were classed as religious corporations, and bore the name of a patron god. There were also sporting clubs, often under the name of a divine hero, taken as a mythic type of vigour. Philo tells of a sect outside Alexandria called the Therapeutæ who lived apart in simplicity, and met weekly for a common meal of bread and water, and sang hymns and prayed together. Later, a Christian writer thought they were the Christian Church at Alexandria, but in reality they had no knowledge of Christianity. The Essenes were a Jewish sect of about 4,000 ascetics in Palestine, living in groups, having a common meal. They were a celibate brotherhood, eager for the life hereafter.

(f) Among the forms of thought at that time (say about 30 A.D., when Christianity arose) must be reckoned the method of *writing by assumed names*, as the Book of Daniel (164 B.C.), the Book of Enoch, the Psalms of Solomon, though none such were by the men named, and it is not likely that any of the books composing the New Testament were by those whose names are attached to them. This was not thought to be deception. It was the literary custom of the age.

(g) It was a time also for the production of *religious allegories* and Midrashim (stories of moral value, but un-historical). The Book of Jonah, the Book of Ruth, the Book of Tobit, and Pistis Sophia (say 180 A.D., written perhaps by the Christian Gnostic Valentinus) may be mentioned. Philo's commentaries on the Old Testament are full of allegorical writing. So if the Gospels are really mystic productions, and not history, it is not to be wondered at. In their present form, the Synoptic Gospels seem to aim at being histories, but their contents are older, and were composed as mystic stories of the Christ, the indwelling God, as felt by the earliest Christians.

As an illustration of the method of religious writing by Jews, we may take what Philo wrote on the Logos:—

“There are, as it seems, two temples of God: one being this world, in which the High Priest is the Divine Logos, His own first-born son: the other is the natural soul. . . . The High Priest is not a man, but the Divine Logos. God is his father and Wisdom is his mother: through whom (Logos) the Universe came into being. . . . The most ancient Logos of the living God is clothed by the world as with a garment. For the Logos of God is the bond of everything, holding all together and binding all the parts.” (cf. I. Cor. viii. 6; Col. i. 15-17).

“Why do we wonder if God at times assumes the likeness of angels, as He sometimes assumes the likeness of men: . . . those who are unable to bear the sight of God, look upon His image, His angel Logos, as upon Himself.” Compare the descent of “Wisdom” to save men, and the ascent thereof, in the Wisdom of Solomon, ix. 17-18: Baruch, iii. 37: Enoch, xlii. 1: xlix. 1.

Thus it was easy for Jews of Philo's day and later to believe in a descent of the Logos or Wisdom, or Christ: for Christ was another term for the Logos and Wisdom. The Logos is also called the mediator between God and man. (For refs. see Friedlander's “Hellenism and Christianity”).

The unscientific literary methods of the Jews may be illustrated from the Jewish Haggadoth, composed from say 100 to 500 A.D.

Haggadah (plural Haggadoth) is an interpretation of the Old Testament. These Haggadoth are given in the Talmud and Midrashim of the Jews, and contain mysticism, folklore, theosophy and legends; also descriptions of the Messianic age. There are Haggadoth in the New Testament also. Parables, as of a man robbed on a road, or a cask full of figs, are introduced in the Talmud, to illustrate the interpretations given. Texts (as Zech. ix. 9, the King riding on an ass) are applied to the Messiah. Speeches are put quite carelessly into the mouth of Moses or Aaron: “Moses replied,” “Aaron said to Moses,” because it must surely have been so, or such would be fitting! Conversations are freely composed, say between Adam and Eve.

Such was the method of religious writings in those days. It was among such a people that the New Testament grew up, and not among scientific historians of Europe in the twentieth century.

## 2.—THE EXPERIENCES OF THE EARLIEST CHRISTIANS.

Christianity began in a group of spiritually-minded Hellenistic Jews in Jerusalem, men and women who were dissatisfied with orthodox Judaism and the “traditions” or new rules of the Scribes. They felt a vast spirit moving in them. It was the Logos, as Philo had called this divine all-penetrating power. As Jews they called this Logos “Jesus Christ,” for He was their Saviour, and was the Messiah bringing the Kingdom of God on earth. It had indeed begun. They were not to say “Lo here,” or “Lo there.” Behold the Kingdom was in their midst already! For the Christ was “where two or three” of them prayed together. He was “in their midst.” Their deeds of spiritual healing proved also that the longed-for Kingdom had come at last. It was a Kingdom of Love, for God is

Love. Their eyes were blessed who saw these things. From small beginnings this Kingdom grew, as a mustard-seed, or as leaven, secretly but surely. The poor in spirit, the humble and meek, expectant loving souls, peace-makers and those mourning their need—such were already in the Kingdom, obeying the invisible teacher, the Christ, the spiritual love-ideal which is God's own heart.

Such a God-consciousness was the result of later Jewish piety on the one hand, and a Hellenistic sense of the Wisdom-Logos-Heavenly Man on the other hand. Yet it was through these there had come a real revelation of God, such as had not been accomplished before. From the Book of Enoch, Jews expected the Christ soon to come. But these pious Christian souls felt that He *had* invisibly come, for they were incarnating Him. They also looked for his visible coming. Thus a new cult arose. It was within Judaism, at first. But it soon began to come into conflict with Jewish externalism, formalism, ceremonialism. In regard to the Sabbath, the rules for fasting, foods, washings, prayers, conflicts took place between Scribes and Christians. In the latter a collective emotion, a Love-Ideal, had arisen, and it would not be bound by such external rules. These Christ-men were drawn together by a spiritual magnetism, by a common spirit of life, called "Christ Jesus," Anointed Saviour. The Christ was the collective Love-emotion, personified and projected, as if he were a person outside them: just as Dionysus was the felt life-force personified and projected by his worshippers.

The earliest Christians had been trained as Jews to regard God as the Power which upholds the Moral Law. Since Amos (760 B.C.), such had been taught in Judaism. The universe is on the side of justice, and against cruelty: God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble; give and it shall be given to you. Such is the Moral Law. In these Christians it was focussed

(a) into *one* law of Illimitable Love.

(b) into a principle *within* the hearts of men.

So were fulfilled the words of Jeremiah, that God would put His law in men's hearts (xxxi. 31-34).

The Christians felt this Love-principle as fulfilling the Law. They knew that Jeremiah also said the Messiah would be "The Lord our Righteousness" (xxiii. 5-6). So the Christians called the inward Moral Love-Ideal "the Christ." They said the Christ was "in their midst." They felt Love to be most real *in* their Community—see 1 John, iv. 7. "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and everyone that loveth (his fellow-Christians especially) knoweth God." These words, though written in the second century, express what was always felt in the true Church-group.

"The Love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts," said the Christians. Hence love was "the fulfilling of the Jewish law." They must needs even "love their enemies and do them good," and "bless those who persecuted them." They knew that "everyone who loveth habitually is born of God, and knoweth God: for God is Love." It was a spiritual liberation and a magnificent gospel. It gradually came to be elaborated into seven mystic pictures of Christ. For different experiences came to these earliest Christians concerning the Christ.

#### (a) *The Teaching Christ.*

The Christians, by virtue of the Love-urge they felt, selected teachings out of Jewish writings and sayings, and added parables thereto. Thus arose early versions of the "Logia" or Sayings of Jesus. It was probably not till after A.D. 70 that anything was written down. But from A.D. 30 (about the time the Christ-cult began) there would be such a process of selecting and meditating in the meeting of Christians on such truths.

They soon felt they had out-grown the Jewish rules, as the Scribes gave, on the Sabbath, fasting, foods, washings of hands. But since opposition came when they spoke of such to Jews they realised that "new wine needs new wine-skins." It was open-minded souls that were necessary to bring in

the New Kingdom of the spiritual life, moved by a spirit not by mere rules of external conduct.

As an example of a late Jewish book of pious thought from which these Christians drew inspiration and ideas of what the "Christ" (God in their souls) would teach, take The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, composed about B.C. 107. It consists of twelve sections ascribed to the patriarchs—Dan, Joseph, Issachar and so forth. There are a few Christian interpolations in it; but the book is a unity, and the ethical passages are on one level, a high level of thought, so that a sentence here and there cannot be detached, and labelled "a Christian interpolation," because it happens to be like a saying in the Gospels.

The following passages show that there was a Christianity before Christianity, and that the Sermon on the Mount is not an absolutely original production, but rather it contains the flowers of the best ideas of Judaism, selected by the Christians in whom had arisen the Christ-spirit of Ideal-Love. "I coveted not any desirable thing of my neighbours. A lie passed not through my lips. I shared my bread with the poor. All my days I kept truth. I loved the Lord (God), likewise also every man with all my heart. Show compassion and mercy without hesitation to all men, and give to every man with a good heart . . . that the Lord may have compassion on you. Anger is an evil thing, my children. Anger is blindness . . . When any one speaketh against you, be not moved to anger. Depart from wrath and hate lying, that the Lord may dwell among you, and Beliar (devil) may flee from you. . . . Love the Lord through all your life, and one another with a true heart. . . . Now my children, love ye each his brother, and put away hatred from your hearts. Love ye one another from the heart, and if a man sin against thee, speak peaceably to him, and in thy soul hold not guile: and if he repent and confess, forgive him. But if he deny it, do not get into a passion with him. And if he be shameless, and persist in his wrong-doing, even so forgive him, and leave to God (the punish-

ing). . . . A man is not to keep a ledger account of the evil done him by his neighbour."

These last words seem to have influenced the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, where the phrase "love thinketh no evil" really means "love keeps not a ledger account against a man!"

Thus, the teaching Christ was not a man Jesus teaching disciples, but was the divine Love-spirit in the early Christians, by which they selected ideas from current Judaism, and added their own thereto, and so produced a body of ethical and spiritual truths, some of which came to be focussed into the gleaming mosaic of gems called The Sermon on the Mount. That sermon was no sermon really, but a long process in the Church lay behind it. It implies, *e.g.*, that persecutions had taken place, and false teachers had arisen, and so is not a product of a teacher Jesus, teaching at the beginning of Christianity.

The epistles contain other Church decrees on matters of ethics, on Church procedure, and on the relation of Christians to the world and the State.

Christianity is not the only religion that tells of a "teaching God."

#### (b) *The Healing Christ.*

It has generally been thought that there was a man Jesus who "went about doing good and healing all possessed with the devil," for so a Christian writer described "the Jesus" about 110 A.D. But an examination of the stories of healing will probably lead to another result. It is true that there were some early Christians who had healing powers (I. Cor. xii. 9; James v. 13—16), and the effect of mind over body is very real, but it is very limited also, or the many hospitals and lunatic asylums would not be as full as they are. Suggestion and joy can help the sick towards health, but they do but little to suddenly cure fevers, lunacy, epilepsy. They do not raise the dead to life. Hence the stories in the gospels of such healings and raisings of the dead are probably symbolical stories.

This is confirmed when it is remembered that the

prophecies in Isaiah which refer to the healings in the Day of the Lord, are really of spiritual blindness and deafness. When God comes "then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing." Is. xxxv. 5, 6; so in Is. vi. 9, 10, quoted in Matt. xiii. 14, 15, the word "I will heal them" clearly refer to the healing of the *soul* by truth. Examples of such are given in the Gospel of Mark, and copied by Matthew and Luke.

They tell in symbolic form of the spiritual effect of the new truth in controlling and enlightening and comforting human souls.

The stories themselves indicate this often. The "demoniacs" call Christ "the Son of God." In the case of the paralytic, the chief point of the story is that the Christ (by the Church) could forgive sins. The Centurion, whose servant was healed, symbolises the Gentiles, who were coming into the kingdom before the Jews. No such faith as the Gentiles had in Christ was known among the Jews. Such a story has, as its point, something spiritual, and is not a story really of a physical healing: or was not such in its original form.

In the case of the Syro-phenician woman, we get another symbolic story of how the Gentiles partook of truth.

The tale of the blind man who "followed" Jesus, means a spiritually blind man who followed the truth as it is in "Jesus," the Jesus-way of life by giving life, the way of Love.

The feeding of the five thousand is really a symbolic story of Christ as the bread of life for the multitude, as the Fourth Gospel actually explains it (John vi.). The story is fashioned on the words descriptive of Elisha dividing a few barley loaves among many and even having some left over (II. Kings, iv. 42-44). Several Christ-stories are based on those of Elijah and Elisha.

The healing works of the Christ are summed up in the idea that he healed those who were "demoniacs." Now, in The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs,

we read that the Messiah would make war on the evil spirits, but these were really, not diseases, but sins personified. According to these Testaments, the demons caused fighting, pride, fornication, injustice, jealousy, anger.

So in the writings of Justin Martyr (150 A.D.), the demons are false gods or false ways of life, and not the causes of diseases. They are said to be responsible for the heathen mythology. They caused the sufferings of Christ and Christians, and instigated heresy.

Though there may be references in some Jewish literature, *e.g.*, Josephus, to demons as causing diseases, the New Testament says that to cure demoniacs meant that the Kingdom of God had come, and that kingdom was "righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." We read also there of the "worship of demons and idols," the two being evidently akin: and of "the doctrines that demons teach."

Further, the idea that it is a good thing for a man to have a fever suddenly cured is an error in medical science. A sudden reduction of temperature is no boon.

The stories of healing, then, are really and originally of the *spiritual* effects of the new teaching. The early Christians sent out some of their number to preach Christ as coming to judgment, and calling on men to obey the Law of Love. Thus was "blindness" cured by the Light that dawned in human souls.

### (c) *The Participated Christ.*

The Christians experienced a union with the indwelling divine Ideal, and "fed" thereon. "The bread which we bless is it not a participation in the body of Christ?" (*see* I. Cor. x. 16-21, which implies that a similar rite was held in other cults). The origin of the form of the Lord's Supper is probably from Mithraism and kindred forms of a common meal by which worshippers "ate the God" (*see* Frazer: "Adonis, Attis and Osiris").

Tertullian thought Mithraism had borrowed the

supper from Christianity, but Mithraism had long before observed this feast.

At Serajevo there is an ancient carving of a Mithraic altar-piece, exhibiting the Communion Service of the cult, a service held in commemoration of the Last Supper which Mithras and Sol (Sun-god) took with the disciples of Mithras ere he ascended.

The central act of the Mithras soldier-cult was to celebrate the slaughter of the sacred bull of Ormuzd, by Mithras. A sculpture representing this slaughter is in the British Museum. The bull represented Life. From the dying bull sprang the vine and corn. These were set forth in wine and bread, and so the Life-force of nature was worshipped (*cf.* Dionysus in Greece and Thrace). At the common meal a bull was slain and his blood drunk, or bread and wine partaken of. Many sculptures represented this.

Thus the Lord's Supper in its *idea* was the symbol of the Christian "feeding" on Christ, and in its *form* it came from Mithraism and other Mystery Religions.

(d) *The Crucified Christ.*

The "crucified" Christ was a view of Christ not appreciated at first by the early Christians. They realised Christ in the heart and in their midst, as the Love-spirit fulfilling the Jewish Law. They knew that by this Ideal men would be judged, indeed were being judged. They preached this "Christ" and had spiritual results which confirmed them in their faith that the Kingdom of God had begun its reign on earth, "in their midst" (Luke xvii. 21).

But it was not till they were *rejected* by the Jewish hierarchy, excommunicated, cast out of the synagogues, persecuted and some of them killed, that they realised that Christ was a Suffering Christ.

The fact that the Jews rejected "Christ" while Gentiles accepted Him is a fact which made a deep impression on the early Christian Community, later called the "Church." Many parables express this,

while one of the tracts that make up the "Epistle to the Romans" is devoted to it, viz., Chapters ix. to xi.

The story of Martha and Mary, and that of the woman who was a "sinner" (the name for Gentiles) anointing the head of Jesus—these tell of the coming in of the Gentiles. So also does the parable (later told as a miracle) of the fig tree. Why did the Jews reject Christianity?

Justin's "Dialogue with Trypho" tells us this. It was because Christianity meant a gradual denial of the value of the Jewish Law. This is clear from Mark ii. (on forgiveness, fasting, Sabbath), and Mark vii. (on washings, and on "unclean" foods). The early Christians dared to criticise the Scribes. At first, perhaps, there was no mention of a "Jesus Christ." It was the deep experience of God as Love that created Christianity and the Christian-life and cult.

How should the sense of this indwelling righteousness of Love be interpreted? The Stoics taught of the Logos spermatikos, the seed-like Logos. Philo (a Jew) had elaborated this idea within Judaism. The Logos was the Son of God, Paraclete, the Image of God in men. Here was the idea at hand. The parable of the Sower (*see* section on "the Logia") declared that God sows the Logos. This is the Logos spermatikos, as seminal in man. So the Christians said the Logos was in them. Now they soon appropriated the term "Christ," for the Christ was the Son of God (name of the Logos in Philo). The Christ was "in their midst," they said. (Matt. xviii. 20; Luke xvii. 21.)

The new Christian Love-Ideal, fulfilling and so ending the Jewish Law, was naturally rejected by the Jews. This fact fills the Gospels (*see* Mark, chaps. ii., vii., xv., and the Gospel of John; also Romans ix. 11).

The "death of Christ" was the historical event, not of a man dying, but of the Christ-ideal being rejected by the Jews. Hebrews vi. 6 speaks of those who "crucify Christ," meaning those who prefer Judaism to the spiritual life.



It was the custom of that age to attribute to the god what happened to his worshippers: *e.g.*, the persecution of Dionysus in Thrace was really that of his worshippers.

So the earliest gospel was of the Love-Ideal fulfilling Judaism, and this Ideal was called the Logos (sown in men) and so the Christ or Son of God, in their midst. Then, when Christians were persecuted and rejected, they began to see that Spiritual Life is only reached by suffering. After A.D. 70 this was interpreted as Christ "dying," and stories as of a man dying began to be told. The Christians soon interpreted the rejection of Christ by the Jews as the "death of Christ" according (i) to the Mystery-religions, (ii) according to Isaiah liii.

(i) Thus, the symbolism of the Mystery-religions was used. The Christ was said to be a "dying and rising" Christ. The word "mystery" was actually applied to the message of "Christ crucified" (I. Cor., ii., 1, 2). And the worshipper of Christ was said to be "crucified with Christ," to "die as He died," to "die daily," to "take up the cross daily," to "fill up the sufferings of Christ," to "be crucified to the world by the cross of Christ." In such a way, though on a lower level of experience, the worshippers of Attis were thought to die to sin and rise again to eternal life. The Christian shared too in Christ's "resurrection." The Christian "was raised with Christ," and sat "in the heavenly places with Christ Jesus."

Since the Lord's Supper came into the Christ-cult from the Mystery-religions, and is spoken of in conjunction with them (I. Cor. x. 16-21), it can hardly be denied that the whole idea of a dying and rising Christ came from the Mystery-religions in Palestine, Syria, Egypt, and Asia Minor and Greece.

(ii) Isaiah liii. was applied to Christ, for He had been "despised and rejected of men." The true Israel, the suffering Servant of God, was now seen to be the Christian Church, and so the prophecy was applied to Christ in the early Church (*see* Acts viii. 28-33; 1 Peter ii. 21-24; Mark xiv. 21, x. 45).

Christ was the "Lamb" (*see* Is. liiii. 7, and so throughout the Apocalypse).

Why was "Christ" said (after A.D. 70) to have been "crucified"? Why this form of death?

Four sources of this idea are open to us:—

(i) There was Ps. xxii. 16, which said the Christ had his hands and feet "pierced" *cf.* "They shall look on him whom they pierced" (in Zech. xii. 10). We know the early Christians so interpreted these passages of the Messiah.

(ii) There was the idea, in Is. liiii., that the Christ was bearing God's curse on himself, instead of the Jews bearing it: and the Jews regarded a man who was "hanged on a tree" as accursed of God (*see* Gal. iii. 13, from Deut. xxi. 23: quoted twice in Acts v. 30, x. 39). That may have influenced the Christians in selecting crucifixion as Christ's mode of death.

(iii) There was a famous passage in Plato's "Republic," in which the "Just One" is said to be crucified or impaled. Christ is often called "The Just One," in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, the Book of Acts (thrice), and elsewhere in the New Testament.

In two Church Fathers, the passage from Plato's "Republic" (II. 361) is quoted, connecting Christ's crucifixion and the crucified life with that passage in Plato. Apollonius, about A.D. 187, wrote "The Apology and Acts" in Greek. He says there "Christ was slain at last, as were also before him philosophers and just men. . . One of the Greek philosophers (*i.e.* Plato) said: 'The just one shall be tortured, he shall be spat upon, and last of all he shall be crucified (or impaled).' Just as the Athenians passed an unjust sentence of death, and charged him falsely. . . so also our Saviour was at last sentenced to death by the lawless."

In Clement of Alexandria, c. 250 A.D., the following words occur in his "Miscellanies": "To us the Apostle said, 'Now we know this, that our old man is crucified with him' . . . Such also are the words of Plato in the "Republic," 'The just

man though stretched on the rack, though his eyes are dug out, will be happy!"

The story of the Passion of Jesus is like Plato in *two* respects. The passage in the "Republic" says the Just One "will be *scourged* . . . and will be *impaled*." The last word is peculiar, but is used interchangeably, in Greek writers, *e.g.*, by Philo, with the word "crucified." It means 'to fix on a pole or stake' (Philo in Greek: Mangey Ed. 237 and 687: Pfeiffer Ed. II. 280, V. 194). Plato's word would thus be taken by early Christian Hellenists as meaning crucified. Here then is a source probably of the idea of crucifixion: for Christ is often called the "Righteous" or "Just One," in the New Testament. He was the New Righteousness of the heart (Jer. xxiii. 6).

(iv) Other Messiahs had been crucified by the Roman Government (*see* Jewish Encyclopædia on Cross and Crucifixion). So, after A.D. 70, when the Christians took the story of a dying Christ as that of a dying man, they supposed he must have been crucified by Pilate. Plato and the Old Testament confirmed this to these Christians.

The punishment of crucifixion was a Roman one, not a Jewish one. Hence in Mark's story, the case of Christ was taken to Pilate, for, as the Fourth Gospel declares (xviii. 31) plainly, the Jews could not crucify a man.

All this weaving of the idea of Christ as a sufferer, as a dying and rising divine being, as fulfilling the Old Testament passages on the suffering Servant of God, and as "crucified"—all this was *the work of the Church* and was gradually evolved. It was not till after A.D. 70, when the so-called "Epistles of Paul" arose, that Christ was described as Christ crucified. Later still, in the Gospel of Mark, the detailed story appeared, using the passages from the Old Testament.

Later still, the Gnostics of the second century stated the truth to which Christians had been moving, *viz.*, that there was a Cosmic Cross; *i.e.*, the Cross was a principle in God's Life. God dies to live, He gives His Life away to redeem, and so

raises His life. The New Testament really tells this in saying that the Christian is "crucified with Christ," "dies" with Christ. The law of all life is by giving life. "Love and you shall be loved" said Emerson. "Die and live again" said Goethe, "for till that is accomplished, you are a stranger on a dark earth." It is the law of the macrocosm of God, and of the microcosm of the individual soul, and there is no escape! As a grain of corn falls into the earth and dies, so does it live in new form; if it remains outside alone, it "dies" not, but it lives not again. The Gospel of John, in this allegory, tells the secret of the universe (xii. 24, 25).

This secret goes beyond Judaism. It reveals not a God outside his universe, because He is so "holy," but a God who has "died" into His universe, and ever gives away His life, and so ever has life inexhaustible. This is the paradox of God, and of the individual soul (as a cell) in God. (*See* also Romans vi. 1-11; Gal. ii. 20, v. 24, vi. 16; 2 Cor. iv. 10, 11, xiii. 4; Col. i. 24, iii. 1-6.)

#### (e) *The Risen Christ.*

The idea of the "risen" Christ meant that life comes by giving away life to help a wider good than one's own. The life that "dies," lives again in a larger life. When Christians, *after* A.D. 70, came to try and describe the "risen" Christ, they had come to picture Christ as somehow a man, as "in the guise of a man," or "in the semblance of a man" (as the Epistles say, Philip ii. 6-10). The story of "a death and resurrection" of such an one, could only be imagined in their own Jewish terms. He died and was buried and rose again "according to the Scriptures" they said, *i.e.*, as Isaiah liii. and Psalm xxii. had depicted: so they told of a man dying on a cross, and rising from a tomb.

How could a man rise? The Jews believed in a Sheol, or Hades, as the Greeks did. It was as a cave in the earth, whither the dead went. The Jew could only think of the resurrection as the lifting of a body from the grave. He thought that, at the Last Judgment, all men, in their bodies, would so

rise: and the sea would give up its dead. Till then men were asleep.

So when Jewish Christians came to describe the Christ "rising," it was by telling of a man lifting his body from the tomb!

Modern science has shown that bodies go to dust, and may enter into the composition of other things. They are not lifted from the tomb. Modern feeling does not desire the decayed body to rise again, though many Burial Services still read passages as if it were true that there would be a physical resurrection of bodies placed in their tombs!

The story of Christ rising physically is thus only the way in which Jewish Christians could think of a man rising from death. It "must have been so," they imagined! Some twenty years ago an Oxford tutor read the Book of Esther with a Syrian, in Syria. When it was finished, the tutor asked the Syrian to tell the story. He began correctly, but soon departed from the Bible story and told an imaginary tale. The tutor pulled him up, and said such was not in the Bible. "But that is how it must have been," said the modern Syrian. The ancient Syrian composed his religious tales much in the same spirit.

The "crucified and risen" Christ means that the Love-law moves a man to suffer in giving away life for a wider good, but that he finds more and abundant life thereby: and this is the *via crucis*, which is true of God. It is also true of man's true life, because it is true of God, and God lives in the spiritual life of a man. This is Christ in men.

(f) *The Ascended Christ* is an aspect of the Risen Christ. The Christians felt Christ pervading all things, and so thought of Him as having ascended. The idea of the ascension is often merged in that of the resurrection in the Epistles, but is distinguished in the Gospels. Still, it is referred to in the Epistles. "He ascended on high."

Whence came the idea?

Perhaps from the Mithras-story, which was in vogue in Asia Minor long before the Christian era, and reached Rome 70 B.C.

From Mithraism, it seems, there came into Christianity—

1. The story of the Shepherds at the birth of Jesus.
2. The time of the Nativity, which was placed at December 25.
3. The institution of the Lord's Supper (*see above*).
4. The idea of the Ascension of Christ to heaven.

Mithras was born from the rock (cave), he killed the sacred bull of Ormuzd, he held a last supper with his disciples, and he ascended (without death) to heaven, rising in the Sun's fiery chariot.

Mithraic symbols appear on Roman tombstones, *e.g.*, the bull, the pine-cone of resurrection, fire. Such has been graphically shown by Mrs. Dr. Strong (Rome).

The story of Dionysus may have come also from Persia. He too was associated with the vine, and a mystic resurrection, from sin to eternal life, was believed in by his worshippers long before the Christian era.

#### (g) *The Coming Christ.*

*Eschatology* (the doctrine of the last things, Parousia, resurrection, judgment, heaven or hell) occupies a considerable place in the New Testament. The Christ was to come "on the clouds," a general resurrection and judgment were to follow. But all this is taken from Daniel vii. and The Book of Enoch (Similitudes). It was not new. Now, there was *no* such Parousia, and no such resurrection, and final judgment. In 2 Peter (written about 150 A.D.) the Christ is still expected, but the hope of any external appearance of Him was growing fainter. In the Gospel of John (say 120 A.D.) there is an effort to spiritualise the Coming of Christ. As the Holy Spirit, He *had* come, and was *ever* coming (John xiv. to xvi.). The Judgment is ever going on—as in the Great War (1914), which is a result of sin. But the eschatology in the New Testament was a passing mode of thought, a varying Jewish doctrine of the Messiah: in no way was it history.

Nor was it, in the form given, the essence of Christianity, as Albert Schweitzer (Strasburg) declares it was. It was an imposed form of thought. Really Christians, while using it, were struggling against it. They felt the kingdom was not merely in the future. It had *begun* "in their midst" (Matt. xviii. 20; Luke xvii. 21.) The Christ says "If I by the finger of God cast out devils, then is the Kingdom of God come upon you" (Luke xi. 20). Men were then entering the Kingdom (Luke xvi. 16). Some were "not far" from the Kingdom of God: while it already belonged to the poor in spirit and the meek, or was beginning for them. The Church was the earnest of the kingdom, which was like a seed growing quietly from that small beginning. The Community experienced the kingdom and knew it would come in fulness, but their eschatology was a mere imaginative way of describing this.

It is true the early Community thought of a catastrophe soon to come when the Christ should appear. Then there would be a "peirasmos" or time of trial, as is mentioned in the "Lord's Prayer," "lead us not into the temptation," or tribulation of the last days. This idea appears also in the Apocalypse, and in the Epistles. "The Lord is at hand." The disciples contended for the good places in the kingdom. But all that is just Jewish thought, imagination of what they believed must come, since evil had reigned so long in the world. It was not new: and it was not essential Christianity (*i.e.*, the sense of the divine Love-urge or Christ as ending the Law). Albert Schweitzer lays far too much stress on it, as if this form of thought was the deepest reality in Christianity. It was ephemeral, a passing form of thought, a Jewish mould into which the Christian experience of God (so near and strong) was run for a time.

Looked at as throwing light on the question of the historicity of Jesus, the use of this form of thought is rather an indication that no man Jesus lived, than otherwise. If a man, a Jew, Jesus of Nazareth had lived and claimed to be the Messiah, he then *had* come; there he was. The prophets and the Book of Enoch were fulfilled. Why look for a *second* coming?

To go to heaven and come back again soon (as he was later pictured to have declared he would do—Mark ix. 1) would be strange indeed. Why should he succeed better a second time than the first, in bringing in a resurrection and a judgment of all men? The prophets and The Book of Enoch only know of *one* parousia of the Son of Man (*cf.* Enoch lxii. 14, on the Messianic feast). They know of no second parousia.

Clearly something is wrong with the idea of there having been a man Jesus who knew he was the Messiah, and yet expected to die, rise again and come a second time soon! It is in the Gospels, but is all confusion if taken as the history of a man Jesus. But if there was no man Jesus, the confusion is explained. The earliest Christians felt the new Love-Ideal in their hearts and in their community. They (as Jews) called this "Christ," "Son of God." The Gnostics and Hellenists had thought of the descended Saviour (Soter), and the all-pervading Logos, respectively: while Philo had called the Logos "Son of God." It was thus easy, and almost inevitable, to call this Love-urge the "Christ." He was also "the Coming One," according to the Book of Enoch. Such was their thought before A.D. 70. But after A.D. 70, the writings began, and the speculations arose. "Christ" was spoken of as a man: and his "descent" as the birth of a man (Philip ii. 6-10). It was said he had died and risen (*see* above), and that he predicted he would come a second time: "Ye shall see the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mark xiv. 62). Hence confusion arose, because Jesus was described as a man on earth, and yet also as "the Coming One."

The earliest Christians (before A.D. 70) experienced the Christ-life, or Love-urge divine, and used the Jewish eschatology, which was known to them, to describe Christ's *fuller* future reign on earth, in which they believed, for they saw the new life spreading, as leaven in dough. They knew Christ would reign, *i.e.*, Love would increase in the world: but they described this in the Jewish Eschatology: for every idea has to be given in some form.

## 3.—THE APOSTLE PAUL.

Where is there any authentic record of the life or ideas of Paul?

It is customary to go to "the Epistles of Paul" so-called, or at least to four that Baur allowed to be genuine, viz., 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians and Romans. But it is now not at all certain that Paul wrote any of these. Possibly some fragments by the Apostle have been preserved embedded in these epistles, *e.g.*, Romans xvi. is a list of names which seems to come from a letter to Ephesus, where Aquila and Priscilla lived. It would be of little interest if composed after the death of the persons named: and may be therefore by Paul. There are six reasons for rejecting the Pauline authorship of the epistles usually ascribed to him.

(a) The custom was for writers on religion to *hide their names*: *cf.* The Book of Enoch, the Psalms of Solomon, the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Book of Daniel, all composed in the last two centuries B.C.

It is agreed by many scholars now that the First Epistle of Peter was not by Peter, and all deny the authenticity of Second Peter. So these epistles probably came from a Petrine School. The same is true of the Epistles of John from a Johannine School long after the death of John. Thus it is probable the Pauline Epistles came from a School of Paul, writing about 80-90 A.D. Other books as the Acts of Paul and Theekla, the Gospel of Peter, the Acts of John were composed later, and many other such there were, none being by the persons named.

(b) The "Epistles of Paul" were *not generally known* till Irenaeus (180 A.D.). In his works we find the first clear quotations of 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians. The First Epistle to the Corinthians has a little better record. It is clearly quoted by the writer of an Epistle to the Corinthians, ascribed to Clement of Rome. But when Clement wrote (90 A.D. or 110 A.D.) is not known, and whether he was

the author of that Epistle cannot be proved. Even if he lived 90 A.D. and had seen a copy of the "Epistle of Paul," his ascribing it to Paul might only be a reference to the opening words of 1 Corinthians.

Ignatius (120? A.D.) quotes 1 Corinthians in his Epistle to the Ephesians, and Justin Martyr (150 A.D.) does in his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, but neither ascribe it to Paul the Apostle.

All that can be inferred is that 1 Corinthians was in existence by 120 A.D.

(c) The *language concerning Paul* in these epistles is one of self-praise. A list of his sufferings is given in 2 Corinthians. A list of his journeys is recorded in Galatians, where also he is praised in opposition to Peter and James and John. He is said to have "received nothing" from them. In 1 Corinthians he is referred to as in the past: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase"; while in 2 Corinthians these words occur: "I reckon I am not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles." It seems clear that a School of Paul wrote thus of their bygone hero, putting the epistles as from his pen, as Deuteronomy was written as if by Moses, and the Proverbs and Ecclesiastes and Canticles as if by Solomon.

(d) Paul was a *strict Hebrew* of the Hebrews, a Pharisee of Pharisees, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, one who kept the law blamelessly, and said nothing against it, according to the later chapters of Acts, which are fairly authentic owing to the use of Luke's Diary. But the "epistles of Paul" present quite a different picture. Paul there is a Hellenistic Jew. All his quotations of the Old Testament are from the Septuagint Greek version, which orthodox Jews despised, because made by "heathen."

The epistles are full of references to the mystery-religions and Gnosticism, as in the terms *pleroma* (fulness), *teleios* (initiated or perfect), the length, depth, height and breadth, mystery, the *ektroma* and many such words. Law is put in opposition to grace, a thing no Rabbinic Jew could do. If Paul

was first a Rabbinic Pharisee, and then a Christian, but did not write the Epistles, all is clear.

(e) These "Epistles of Paul" are not really letters to churches, but *Church treatises* on questions of theology or ethics, Church decrees on Doctrine thrown into the form of letters: just as Seneca and others at that time wrote moral tracts in the form of letters.

(f) The epistles ascribed to Paul have a *variety* which indicates that some are by a different author from others. If that is so, all may be by members of a School of Paul, for it was then clearly a custom to write epistles (short treatises) under the name of Paul. The epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians were by one writer, a different man from the writer who composed 1 and 2 Thessalonians, for the style of thought is quite distinct. The Epistle to the Romans is a collection of tracts, chapters 1-8 being one tract, and chapters 9-11 another distinct tract. Moreover, Paul had not been to Rome when it is said he wrote it (about A.D. 58). In that Epistle the faith of the Church at Rome is supposed to be known "over all the world," *i.e.*, around the Mediterranean Sea anyhow. The Church must have long existed. The Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles is generally rejected now, except for a few verses, but these epistles are as plainly ascribed to Paul as the others. Their language is very different, and their ideas also, and a later Pauline School must have composed them in the second century. The Epistle to the Hebrews is not ascribed to Paul. It is the work of a cultured Alexandrian teacher, in an ornate Greek style.

Thus it is impossible to go to the "Epistles of Paul" to get an authentic record of the Apostle.

The latter half of the Book of Acts, excepting the composed speeches therein, is much more reliable.

The inclusion of passages there from the Diary of Luke shows that the compiler had access to some faithful records of Paul. The Diary is produced in the "We-sections," where "we" is used instead of they," *viz.*, Acts xvi. 9-17: xx. 5-15: xxi. 1-18: xxvii. 1-28, 16. These are from a diary of a com-

panion of Paul, *viz.*, Luke, and are very carefully done, the topography of chapter 27 being exceptionally accurate. In these verses we have the earliest portion of the New Testament, and historically the most correct.

The speeches in the whole of the Book of Acts are not to be relied on. The unknown compiler, writing about 110 A.D., composed the speeches to suit the occasion, and so careless was he, that he gives three very varying accounts of Paul's conversion within the one book! In one account he puts into the mouth of Jesus in heaven a quotation from Greek poets as to it being hard for Paul "to kick-back against the ox-goad." That Paul had an experience when on the road to Damascus is no doubt accurate history, and that he became a Christian then is true. But exactly what happened we shall probably never know. He accepted Jesus Christ the Lord of the new cult, having long in his mind been moving thitherwards, even when most furiously persecuting the Christians: such is human nature. He remained a good Jew, kept his vows, resorted to the temple at Jerusalem when opportunity offered, and held to his Pharisaic ideas about a physical resurrection. It was only to the Gentiles that Paul taught that circumcision was unnecessary, as many Jews teach to-day concerning adult Gentiles.

But Jesus (in heaven) became "Lord" to Paul. The only reference in the "We-sections" to Jesus is where Paul says "I am ready to die for the name of the Lord Jesus." The word "Lord" to a Jew meant at least a divine title. Paul now believed in a divine Coming One, the Christ. Paul's conversion meant that he believed the Christ was already existing in heaven, and was soon coming to judgment (so The Book of Enoch declared) and men therefore ought all to repent and prepare for this Christ. The presence of Christ was also felt in the Christ-cult, the groups of mystic men who met to meditate and see what sort of lives they ought to live. Paul joined them, and preached the Coming Christ, and the general resurrection and moral judgment which then would take place.

“Repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ” is said by the Book of Acts to sum up Paul’s teaching. It was clearly in form eschatological, a doctrine of the last things. But the Jews rejected the new message because the “Christ” in it was a second divine being, who thus threatened the Unity of God (the idea of which was, and is still, the main Jewish tenet), and the will, or presence of Christ was an *inward* righteousness of love, which threatened the externalism of Jewish ceremonial rules. Such was the first Christian message which Paul also preached, a message which meant men breaking away from Judaism more and more. Paul had no idea of a man Jesus who was crucified. That came after A.D. 70. The earliest Christians, and even the New Testament writers, did not fully realise all that this Indwelling Mystic Christ (whose will was love) involved for them.

They realised that God was a different Being, since He had “descended,” as this “Christ,” into their lives and hearts, but they still held that God was an Onlooker in heaven, outside—even if near—Nature and Man. They did not realise that their experience of “Christ in the midst” meant that God Himself was self-limited into creation, and self-imprisoned into souls! As a matter of fact, there is no second Person “Christ.” Christ was an aspect of God, God as descended, incarnate in human lives as Love. Further, they did not understand that this Ideal changed the “status” of slaves, women, citizens, and the poor. Instead of slaves, all should be free as (at least, possible) sons of God: women should not be subordinated to men, but equals, though different; citizens should be brothers to all in other nations, and the poor should become citizens, not hirelings for the profit of a few, but partners in the work of life. The early Christians only began to see these things, and said “in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male or female.” But they still failed to criticise slavery directly. They still said the wife was to obey the husband “in everything,” and the State was barely

tolerated or regarded as anti-Christ, as well it might be then. It has not even yet given up un-Christian methods of revenge in its criminal law, and the cruelty of war.

But the essence of Christianity was the experience of the inward righteousness of Love, as taught by the inward Divine Spirit called “Christ,” felt in the Church-group, and so bringing on earth the veritable Kingdom of God, which Christ was expected to soon establish fully by His visible Coming to judgment.

Such was essential Christianity, and before A.D. 70 there was no preaching of Jesus as a man who was crucified. He was preached as a divine being in “heaven,” felt in the Christian community, giving an inward law of Love, and soon to come visibly to judgment.

\* \* \* \* \*

A new era for Christianity came with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70. The Christians were scattered. Many fled to Pella, or elsewhere. Ten years perhaps passed ere the Church-groups formed again—in Alexandria, Antioch and other places. Then came the demand for some *written* account of Church decrees. These are given in the “Epistles of Paul.” The mystic life of “Jesus” was called for, and the Church produced, perhaps in Alexandria, the Synoptic gospels. The “Logia” came first, gathering teachings current in churches, and then Mark’s Gospel relating mystic stories of the “Christ” (who had lived in the Church, His Body).

The order of books produced was probably somewhat as follows:—

- A.D.—80-90.—The main “Pauline” epistles.  
 90 .—The Logia (used by all the Synoptics).  
 95-110.—The Synoptic Gospels in this order:  
     Mark, Matthew, Luke.  
 110 .—The Book of Acts, by the compiler  
     of the Gospel of Luke (*see* Acts i.  
     1).  
 120 .—The Gospel and Epistles of the  
     Johannine School.

The reason for this order is that the "Pauline" Epistles did not use the Logia, but Mark did. There are many places in the Pauline Epistles where the argument could have been strengthened by an appeal to the Logia, the Teaching of Jesus, had the compilers known of it. The Epistles know of no "Life" of Jesus, of no parables or miracles. The Logia and Mark were not compiled when the main "Epistles of Paul" were sent out. Where the writer of an Epistle speaks of the Lord as "teaching," he means the Word of the Church as greater than his (the writer's) own private view of a question. "Unto the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord, etc." A Church decree follows this, on wives not leaving their husbands. "I received of the Lord" meant that the Pauline writer had been taught, viz., of the Lord's Supper, by the Church (the Lord's Body). By "the commandments of the Lord" (I. Cor. xiv. 37) is meant the teaching of the Church, on such matters as that women should "keep silence in the Church" (verse 34). But such decrees had not apparently been collected into the "Logia" or Oracles of the Lord of which Papias, of Hierapolis in Phrygia, wrote (c. A.D. 140). No reference is made to such a book in "The Epistles of Paul." The "Logia" probably had some "incidents" of Christ's supposed life on earth, as well as His "Oracles."

Matthew and Luke used such a Source or Book, called (by Papias) the "Lord's Logia," for they give two versions evidently of the same collection of "sayings"—*cf.* the Beatitudes, and the Parables of the leaven and mustard seed, and their varying accounts of the temptation-scenes.

Mark too used the "Logia," for in that gospel is the passage on taking up the cross and following Christ. This passage is from the Logia, since Matthew gives it twice, once where the first gospel follows Mark (viz., Matt. xvi. 24, 25), and once in another place (Matt. x. 38, 39), where the Logia is followed. Mark probably used the Logia in the Parable of the Sower, and in other places. Mark has many Pauline ideas, as Christ as "a ransom for

many." So Mark is later than the Pauline Epistles. It seems clear that the Logia, then, comes after the Pauline Epistles and before Mark, Matthew and Luke. It is this fact that is decisive in regard to the order of the books, as above stated.

#### 4.—THE EPISTLES OF THE PAULINE SCHOOL.

What is the picture of Jesus in these Epistles? The story is as follows:—

Christ was the firstborn of all creation (Col. i. 15; Heb. iii. 12, 13 (*see* Moffatt).

He was in the form of God (Philip ii. 6).

All things were made through Him (Col. i. 16 and I. Cor. viii. 6).

He holds all in a cosmic unity (Col. i. 17).

He descended to be born of a woman (Gal. iv. 4).

This body he took so as to fight the demons (Heb. ii. 14, 15; Col. ii. 15).

Of the seed of David He came (Romans i. 3).

He was found in the "semblance" of a man (Phil. ii. 6-8).

He held a last supper with his disciples (I. Cor. ii. 23-25).

He was crucified by demons and buried (I. Cor. xv. 3, 4; ii. 6-8; Col. ii. 15).

He rose from the grave and ascended (I. Cor. xv. 3, 4; Ephes. ii. 6).

He fills all things, and is the Lord of all (Ephes. iv. 10; Acts x. 36 (Pauline)).

His body is the Church (Ephes. iv. 12, 15, 16).

He will come soon visibly to judge the world (II. Cor. v. 10).

This picture is clearly *doctrine, not history*: Christology, not biography. The whole must be taken together. It is of a mystic "person," a divine ideal personified. It is akin to the gods and lords of the Mystery-religions, for Mithras was said to have held a last supper ere he ascended. Other gods descended and ascended. The influence of the Old Testament "Messianic" passages had begun. Christ is said to be born of a woman,



because Isaiah prophesied "a virgin ("young woman" in Hebrew, "virgin" in Greek translation) shall conceive and bear a son Immanuel." The Christ had a pre-existence with God because in *The Book of Enoch* he is so described. He was of the seed of David because Isaiah said "there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse." He was not a real ordinarily-made man, but only in the "similitude" of a man, like a man. This is doctrine clearly. The Divine "Son" could not have been outright a man, but he looked like it. Doketism had begun in the earliest Christology.

Isaiah liii. predicted he would suffer death, and be buried and rise again.

The picture is of the Gnostic "Saviour," the "Logos," the "Heavenly Man," who descended to save and ascended to heavenly places. He is the Mystery-religion God who died and rose again. These epistles are thus Hellenistic, full of the terms of Gnosticism and the Mystery-religions.

Their Christ was really God in a certain aspect, God the descended Love, now filling all things. "The Lord is the Spirit." Christians were "baptised into Christ Jesus," "baptised into his death," "crucified with Christ." But no ordinary death *can* be shared. So this last idea arose, first as a mystic doctrine, and later was there put forth the story of a literal death of a man, Jesus Christ: which story had begun when these epistles were written. The Pauline School consisted of mystics who would "know Christ in the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings," for this Christ was "the likeness of the unseen God, prior to all things": and "the head of the Body, the Church."

Even the crucifixion was of a peculiar kind. The demons are said to have brought it about: the "Rulers of the world" cannot mean Caiaphas and Pilate, for *they* were not "coming to nought" (I. Cor. ii. 6-8). Christ at the cross "stripped off these demonic rulers" (Col. ii. 15). These are Gnostic ideas of their "Saviour," and Jesus means "Saviour," or the early Christians thought it did.

The idea of the cross held by the Pauline School

is set out in Romans i. to viii. The ways of righteousness by the Jewish Law and Gentile conscience had failed. Now a new way had come, by faith in (*i.e.*, union with) Christ in his death and resurrection. These events are referred to as if history (for the writer so believed), but their fundamental idea is mystical: a death to sin and a rising to new life: Romans vi. 1-10. The "blood" originally = the Life given.

Thus Christ in the Pauline Epistles is a divine being *vaguely* thought to have lived on earth and died and risen. The idea of Christ here is not the earliest, mystic idea of Christ invisible "in the midst" of the Community, but it is not yet the fully historised idea that we find in Mark. It shows the *transition* from one to the other. The Pauline School taught Christ as an aspect of God, but this idea was put forth as if Christ had been born and died and ascended again. The "crucifixion" was really that of God, a cosmic process, shared in by Christians, and discovered by the early Community *when* that Community was persecuted. But the crucifixion was spoken of in the epistles also as if it were of a man Christ on earth, and the resurrection "must have been" of a literal body from the grave, for no other kind could be imagined by Jews, concerning any man.

The story of the resurrection of Christ was really doctrine, not history, in I. Cor. xv. Some denied that there was any resurrection (verses 12-14). These would be Greeks at Corinth, who could not thus early have denied that Christ rose, had it been history (*see* verse 16: "If dead men never rise, Christ did not rise either"). The whole is doctrine.

This is also clear in regard to the spiritual body, which was the physical body but somehow changed! It was thought that Christians would have their bodies changed too. Such an idea cannot now be accepted. We know what becomes of our bodies in the grave.

The Epistles of Paul (excluding the later Pastorals) thus stand between the earliest mystic sense of Christ as Love divine in souls, and the later "Life of Christ" given by Mark. The writers

thought of the "Christ" as somehow having been a man long ago at the start of Christianity (forty years back), but they only used a few prophecies to describe this Messiah on earth, and the "crucifixion" was revealed in the persecution of the early Community, when their Christ was despised and rejected by the Jews.

### 5.—THE "LOGIA" OR TEACHINGS OF JESUS.

Exactly what these "Oracles" contained we shall perhaps never know. But it is most probable that the story of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ was absent. Yet the idea of the cross was there, given in Matthew x. 38. The main portions of the "Logia" seem to have been:—

The Sermon on the Mount.

The Parables of the Kingdom.

Isolated, but important, sayings.

All these were composed by the Church, some being ideas that were discussed in the Churches, and some sayings reflecting the experiences of the Church (or the early Community).

They imply that the Community had been established for *some years*. Hence they could not have been by a teacher who taught for a year or two at the very beginning of the Christian movement. The "Logia" grew up, but the documents quoted by Matthew and Luke were two versions of the "Logia" composed after A.D. 70.

#### (i) *The "Sermon on the Mount."*

The idea of a new law given from a mountain recalls the Law given to Moses on Mount Sinai, while the Twelve Disciples recall the Twelve Tribes of Israel. The "Sermon" is thus a composition from thoughts gradually selected by the early Church from Jewish writings and sayings, mainly to illustrate the new Christ-life of inward righteousness, greater than that of the Scribes and Pharisees who propounded external rules of conduct and ritual. This was to fulfil Jeremiah's great prophecy that

God would "put His law in their inward parts, and in the heart would He write it" (Jer. xxxi. 31-34). Luke gives the "Sermon" in several separate settings, artificially imagined: Luke vi. 20-49, xi. 1-13, xii. 22-32. The two compilers had two versions of the "Logia" before them.

It is necessary now to briefly indicate the origin and meaning of the "Sermon" as the new Christian law of life.

#### (a) *The Origin of the Sermon on the Mount.*

The sayings here are not original, but compiled from Jewish thoughts, thrown out in the meetings of the early Community by leaders well versed in Jewish literature, and by others. Peter, James and John were not ignorant fishermen of Galilee, but men of Jewish culture, deep thinkers who were alert to grasp the best Jewish and Alexandrian piety of their day. Moreover, the Logia slowly grew up. Many minds went to its composition. The "Christ" spoke in the midst of the early group-meetings in the Christ-cult, as now in the meetings of the Society of Friends. Little regard was paid to the speaker. He was but a channel for the Christ, present where even a few met "in His name," in His spirit and mind. The inward love-ideal was this spirit, and it was a progressive love-life that opened up before these early Christians.

The inward righteousness consisted of humility, sincerity, forgiveness, purity and confidence in God as the Father-Spirit.

The terms in which this inward Christ-ideal were expressed have their origin in the Jewish literature current in that day.

The following comparisons will clearly indicate that the "Sermon" is not an original production by one Master Mind called Jesus, the one incarnation in a man of the eternal "Son of God," but a gradual composition by the Community in which "Christ" was incarnate.

THE IDEAS IN THE  
"SERMON."

- Mt. v. 3, 4*—"Blessed are the poor in spirit. . . . Blessed are they that mourn."  
*Mt. v. 5*—"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."  
*Mt. v. 8*—"Blessed are the pure in heart."

*Mt. v. 9*—"Blessed are the peacemakers."

*Mt. v. 16*—"Your Father which is in heaven."

*Mt. v. 28*—"But I say unto you, every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her, etc."

*Mt. v. 34, 37*—"Swear not at all. . . . Let your speech be yea, yea: nay, nay."

*Mt. v. 39*—"Resist not an injury." (Moffatt's trans.: for the Greek is in the neuter: so McNeile; and it does not refer to the Devil.)

[It means be not revenged, harm not the aggressor]

THE SAME IDEAS IN  
PRE-CHRISTIAN WRITINGS.

*Is. lvi. 1, 2*—"Good tidings unto the meek (pious poor) . . . to comfort all that mourn."  
*Ps. xxxvii. 11*—"The meek shall inherit the land."

*Ps. xxiv. 3, 4*—"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? . . . He that hath clean hands and a pure heart."

*Secrets of Enoch, lii. 11*—"Blessed is he who implants peace and love." [The "Secrets of Enoch" was written c. A.D. 1-50, says Dr. Charles. It was in existence before A.D. 70, and so may have been used for the "Logia."]

*Ecclus. xxiii. 1, 4*—"O Lord, Father and Governor of my whole life. . . O Lord, Father and God of my life."

*Ecclus. ix. 5*—"Gaze not on a maid that thou fall not." cf. *Job. xxxi. 1, 7, 9*. "I made a covenant with mine eyes: how then should I (a married man) look upon a maid?"

*Secrets of Enoch, xlix. 1*—"I swear not by any oath, neither by heaven, nor by earth . . . yea, yea: nay, nay."

*Secrets of Enoch, l. 3*—"Endure for the sake of the Lord every wound, every injury, every evil word and attack."

THE IDEAS IN THE  
"SERMON."

*Mt. v. 43*—"Love your enemies."

*Mt. vi. 6*—"Thou, when thou prayest enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, etc."

*Mt. vi. 9-12*—"Hallowed be Thy name: Thy kingdom come: Forgive us our debts."

[The idea of sins as debts is "thoroughly Jewish": McNeile.]

*Mt. vi. 14, 15*—"If ye forgive men their trespasses, etc." "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

*Mt. vi. 19*—"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth . . . where thieves dig through and steal."

THE SAME IDEAS IN  
PRE-CHRISTIAN WRITINGS.

*Secrets of Enoch, l. 4*—"If ill-requitals befall you, return them not, either to your neighbour or enemy, because the Lord will return them for you and be your avenger on the day of great judgment, that there be no avenging here among men."

*Is. xxvi. 20*—"Enter thou into thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself."

[Phraseology same, though the idea is not exactly concerning prayer.]

*Shemoneh-esreh*, a collection of Hebrew prayers reached its final form A.D. 70, and existed earlier.

"Thou art holy, and Thy name is holy . . . Forgive us, our Father."

The Kaddish has "May His kingdom reign." (McNeile, p. 77.)

Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (above) and *Ecclus. xxviii. 2*—"Forgive thy neighbour the hurt that he hath done unto thee. So shall thy sins also be forgiven when thou prayest."

[Exactly the thought in *Mt. vi. 14, 15*, and in connection with prayer too] . . .

*Secrets of Enoch, li. 2*—"Hide not your silver in the earth."

THE IDEAS IN THE  
"SERMON."

Mt. vi. 22—"The lamp of the body is the eye."

Mt. vii. 7—"Seek and ye shall find."

Mt. vii. 12—"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, even so do ye also unto them."

Mt. vii. 13, 14—"Enter ye in by the narrow gate . . . for broad is the way that leadeth to destruction."

Mt. vii. 23—"Depart from Me ye that work iniquity."

[Friedlander and others have collected many parallels.]

Such are the parallels, and so numerous are they that they show the "Sermon" is not a sermon, but a gradually-produced mosaic of fine spiritual ideas, worked out in the early community, and forming the inward righteousness of illimitable faith and love, which was "greater than the righteousness of the Scribes" (Matt. v. 20). The "Sermon" was

THE SAME IDEAS IN  
PRE-CHRISTIAN WRITINGS.

Prov. xx. 27—"The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord searching all the innermost parts of the belly."

Prov. viii. 17—"Those that seek me diligently shall find me."

Tobit, iv. 15—"What thou thyself hatest, do thou to no man." The positive form is really in Levit. xx. 18—"Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

Ecclus. xxi. 10—"The way of sinners is made plain . . . but at the end is the pit of hell."

Jer. xxi. 8—"Thus saith the Lord: Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death."

[The words were by the prophet but attributed to a Person Jehovah, or the Infinite Life imagined as a Person. So the sermon was by Christians but attributed to the Lord Christ.]

Ps. vi. 8—"Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity."

composed when Christians had been persecuted (v. 10), when they were recognised as the salt of the earth (v. 13), when they had experienced anxiety concerning food (vi. 32), when false teachers had arisen in their midst (vii. 15).

(b) *The Meaning of the Sermon on the Mount.*—*Matthew v.*

The meek and sincere (pure in heart) had the Kingdom of God already. It had begun on earth (Luke xvii. 21). The ethics of the "Sermon" are no mere "Interimsethic," for a short time till the Christ should come. To love is an eternal law—to pray and forgive and be pure and keep from anger—let us hope these are not to be given up in a few years! Oaths are forbidden, for Yes and No are sufficient. To take an oath to assure a person that what you say is true makes light of Yes and No.

Matt. v. 38-42 has given rise to much discussion. It says in effect: Of old, men took an eye for injury to an eye, but all that revengeful process is to end. You are not to do injury to those who do you injury. Rather bear more injury if it comes. (a) Be ready for a blow on the other cheek; (b) let your inner garment go if the outer one be taken in a law-court; (c) if you are impressed by force to carry post-bags a mile, be ready and go two if you can help others thus; (d) if a man forcibly demand money, as "gift" or "loan," let him have it and do not ask it back!

Thus four examples of injury are given. They are meant to be taken as they stand, not explained away to mean the opposite. Matt. v. 42, "Give to the man who begs, etc.," has been wrongly put. Luke vi. 30 has the true idea: "Give to the man who forcibly demands of you, and ask not back from him who has taken your goods!" It is the case of an injury by a sturdy beggar (see the Commentary of the late Dr. Bruce on the passages).

Force used merely to ward off a blow from oneself or another, or to restrain an evil man for his good may be a right act.

Then follow (in Matt.) the words "Love your

enemies, etc." The enemies = the Jewish persecutors of the Church, and not mere private enemies. So the words are applicable to a nation, though as yet there is no Christian nation which obeys them. To kill or stab one's enemies is not to love them and seek their good.

*Matthew vi.*

In Matt. vi. 1-18, sincerity is again urged, and three examples given: alms, prayer and fasting. The Lord's Prayer (so-called) is a collection of brief Jewish prayers put together, not as a model of prayer, but an example of *brevity* in prayer, as the context shows. Such prayer must be made in a forgiving spirit, for only those who obey the moral ideal can truly pray. Prayer is listening for, and energising in, what God wills.

The Christian is to be free from Mammon-worship, the passion for wealth and trust in it. He is to be ready for simplicity, and daily doing his work, he is to rely on God to feed him! He is not to hoard his money in chests.

Anxiety helps no one, but makes men less fitted to work well. Christians are to live without fear even of poverty or pain, for evils they cannot overcome they can transmute into spiritual good.

*Matthew vii.*

(Matt. vii. 3-5, is a new section on helping others to get rid of their faults). In vii. 1 "Judge not" means here "condemn not to punishment" (social or criminal). (See Alford's Greek Testament and references.) Luke vi. 37 "Judge not . . . condemn not . . . let go," shows this is what is meant in Matt. vii. 1, 2. Then Matt. vii. 1: "That ye be not judged," *i.e.*, by God (this penalty is really self-imposed on the soul) as in vi. 14, 15; Mark xi. 25, 26. The idea is Pauline really, and profoundly true. There is a realm of legal relationships in morals. If a man keep in that and demand reparation, revenge, reprisal, punishment of one who has done an injury to him (or to society, in which he is, for society is really a number of individuals), then that revengeful man will be

judged by law. Romans ii. 12: "As many as have sinned under law (Gentile or Jewish law) shall be judged by law." But there is a higher sphere, the Christian realm of "the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 2), the "faith (in God as Love) active by love" (Gal. v. 6), which is the heart of Christianity. Those in that sphere, love, and it is their new inward righteousness, greater than that of the Pharisees (Matt. v. 20). Then they condemn not to penalty. Anyone who has done ill, may be exposed, and sorrow felt for him. If he be a lunatic or confirmed drunkard or feeble-minded criminal, he may be confined and treated medically, and taught to be a useful citizen: but the Christian, the reasonable man of the future, must rise above the legalism which condemns to penalties.

The way of forgiveness is illustrated in John viii. 11, where the criminal law was set aside by a higher method. The man who so forgives is forgiven by God, "let off" the self-imposed Divine Judgment; *i.e.*, he is in a new sphere of life, in the realm of Love.

*The feeble objection usually urged (e.g., by Von Bernhardi) against the Christian foregoing all the penalty-method with evil-doers, is that the words of the Sermon on the Mount only apply to private quarrels, not to matters of the State or of nations: as if these were any more than collections of individuals. If two people can forego retaliation, two million can do so. The call to "love your enemies" meant all, both private and public enemies, for the word at first signified "foreigner" (Gentiles) see Matt. v. 38, "love your neighbour (fellow-Jew) and hate your enemy (foreigner), it was said." Moreover, the special application was to the Jewish nation persecuting the Church. Thus it was by no means a private concern only. The Christian must not do an evil, when he represents others besides himself, which evil he would not do when he represents himself only. To take revenge or kill is evil in itself. It would be as reasonable to talk of "a holy infanticide, or a holy adultery, as to talk of "a holy war." All ill done to men is prohibited. Revenge,*

by one man or by many represented by one, is always prohibited: for the Christian is in a new realm of the Spirit. He now conquers evil by pouring out goodwill illimitably. Any physical force he ever uses is to help and bless, not to harm men. Evil results which follow evil-doing should be natural and self-imposed, as a headache following a carouse, estrangement following anger, or a child losing a meal if he is wilfully late for it.

It is urged that the legal penalty (say by the criminal law) is not revenge at all, but necessary for keeping order among men. Really there was more crime when there were more penalties. But it is said that if there were *no* such penalties, thefts would abound, assaults and murders would increase. That is supposing there were present no *higher*, stronger force against evil. But the Christian unveils that higher force. He may be a policeman, in the new kind of "guardians," men who help to keep order by Christian methods of goodwill: only using any physical force to that end.

But the criminal law is not merely that. It is from the retaliatory *feeling* of society against anyone who does an ill to society, or to any person in it; it is the old Adam, it is revenge incarnate, it goes back to an "Eye for an eye," which law Christianity abolished. In the Roman Law of the Twelve Tables (B.C. 451) theft led to a *civil* action for damages, and the punishment thus was really revenge. The law organised this revenge. The modern ill-will to a murderer is un-Christian. It is also now unscientific, since *all* society has produced the murderer and the thief. Sin is a call for social shame and education, not for punishment by hard labour for years, a process which hardens a man. So not only private revenge, but the legal retaliation by War and the Criminal Law are condemned by the Sermon on the Mount, and Christians must avoid supporting these effete and sinful methods any more. A Christian is more than a citizen.

The "Sermon" thus sets forth the inner Christ-life, which is a life-giving life, together with a confidence that such a life is "backed up" by the

Tendency of all things, *i.e.*, by God. It is Love, relying on Love as the principle of the Universe. Such is the inward righteousness by which any soul may be at one with God.

"Jesus" may be said to be this life regarded as a divine person. In reality it is the divine principle. But in those days it was the way of human thought to personify any nature-force or ideal-principle. To "come to Jesus" is to learn of this Christ-ideal. To "accept Christ" is to accept this way of life as one's own. To "find Christ" is to feel this Indwelling Love-urge divine. "To me to live is Christ" (Phil. i. 21) means that faith (in the Love-unity of all things), active by love, is the principle of one's life, day by day (Gal. v. 6). Jesus is the "Way" to God, for "he who loves (habitually) knows (*i.e.*, communes with) God" (I. John iv. 7).

When the Community was cast out, persecuted by the Jews, it was found that Love means suffering in this world, and the *Via Crucis* came to describe this Path into God. Such is the way of salvation.

(ii) *The Parables of the Kingdom* are given in Matt. xiii. and xxv., Luke xv. and other chapters. They imply a time when Christianity had been existing for years, and so they could not have been composed by a man Jesus at the very beginning of Christianity.

They imply that the Church thought the Parousia had been delayed (Parable of the Virgins), that some members of the Church, or earlier Community, had been in prison, and had been visited by other members (Matt. xxv, 36). "Tares" had grown up in the Church. The Jews had rejected the Christ-cult, and the nation would be "cut down" as a fig-tree bearing only leaves.

To say that Jesus, a man of Nazareth, spake all these parables with a knowledge of the future is hardly possible, for the parables at times imply the very *thoughts* of the Church, as their ideas on the delayed Parousia, or on the wickedness of the Jews who "killed" the Christ (*see* the parable of the wicked husbandmen—Mark xii. 1-12), a late production, as many scholars agree.

The way in which it was the Community that gradually composed or collected these parables—many after A.D. 70—will be made clear by a few examples.

*The Parable of the Sower* opens to us the earliest Christian interpretation of Christian experience in the idea of the Logos sown in men. The experience was of the Love-Ideal as an inward righteousness (*see* Matt. v. and Heb. viii. 8-12, quoting Jer. xxxi.), greater than the righteousness of keeping external rules, such as the Scribes taught. The *interpretation* was by Hellenistic thought which had been Judaized by Philo. The Stoics taught the "Logos spermatikos" permeating men's lives. Philo called this the Image of God, Paraclete, Rock, Only-begotten Son of God, Primal Man. The Parable of the Sower says in effect—God sows the Logos as seeds in human lives. The Logos is the principle of life in souls, and is sown by God in different bodies or animal-natures of men. The parable in Mark and Matthew has often been misunderstood. The seed is not the Gospel, but exists as seeds, *i.e.*, as different souls. The translation in Mark iv. should be: "As for *him* who is sown on the road. . . him sown on stony soil . . . him sown among thorns . . . him sown on good ground": and in Matt. xiii. it should be: "*those* who are sown on the road, etc." (Moffatt). The seed is *souls*, sown by God as aspects of the Logos, into the form of bodies of human lives. The idea is Gnostic and pre-Christian. God makes the Logos scatter its life as seeds or kinds of souls.

The parable of the Sower is found in Hippolytus' quotation from the books of Christian Gnostics, called the Naasenes, who were Christians of the first century probably. "The seeds are scattered from the unportrayable One and through them the cosmical system is completed: through these also it began to exist. This is what has been declared: the sower went forth to sow, etc. None becomes a hearer of these mysteries, except only the perfect Gnostics."

The earliest interpretation of Christian experience

was probably this one of God sowing the Logos, differentiated into seed-souls, sown as human lives on the world: a Hellenistic interpretation, and yet here it is in the Gospels!

Now the word "Christ" would soon be used for this Logos, for Philo called the Logos "Son of God" and this was the title of the Christ, to a Jew.

In the New Testament Christ is called the Logos in Heb. iv. 12, John i. 1-4, Rev. xix. 13. "His name is called the Logos of God" (Moffatt). Heb. iv. 12 runs: "The Logos of God is a living thing, active and more cutting than a sword, penetrating to the division of soul and spirit. Such was Christ to the Christians (Col. i. 27, "Christ in you"). So the indwelling God was called Logos and Christ. The Love-ideal was thus personified and projected.

He was called "Saviour" for the pre-Christian Gnostics spoke of the Logos as Saviour (Soter). Hence the name Jesus was adopted, for Jesus = Joshua = Saviour, or such was thought so to be the translation, *cf.* Matt. i. 21.

The Parable of the Sower helps us to see how "Christ" came to be the name for the God experienced by the Christians in their hearts (Jer. xxxi. 31-34). It was through the Stoic idea of the "Logos" which Philo had brought into Jewish thought and called "Son of God." Syncretism was the order of that day. Cumont (Ghent) has told of a sect in Asia Minor at that time whose god was Jehovah-Attis: a strange combination (*see* "Hypsistos" by Cumont).

It is not hard to see that Hellenistic Jews, cultured in the piety of humble love, as taught by The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, and interpreting this felt Love-urge as the Logos all-pervading, should call it Christ, who, according to the Book of Enoch, was already existing in the unseen world. They called it Christ, and felt the Kingdom of God had thus begun in their cult and in their hearts. The Parable of the Sower expressed this for the initiated, but was not grasped by those outside (*see* Mark iv. 10-13; Matt. xiii. 10-17 on this distinction).

Another indication that the Gospel Sayings are not a history of what was spoken by a man Jesus, is given in the probability that parts of these sayings were *originally in poetical form*, or at least in Hebrew parallelism. Dr. Moffatt's Translation gives many passages in English prose-poetry though not all of these were in Greek or Hebrew poetical form: but some probably were. Dr. Burney has argued that *the parable of the Last Judgment* in Matt. xxv. 31-46, was originally in Hebrew poetical form. The Old Testament has a great many poetical parallelisms, especially in its prophetic writings—in Lamentations and the Psalms, as: "I made the earth, and man upon it I created," or "Her hand to the tent-peg she stretched forth, and her right hand to the workman's mallet" (Judges v. 26): *cf.* Zech. ix. 9. "Riding upon an ass, even upon a colt," which passage is wrongly used in Matthew, as if *two* animals were intended. Dr. C. F. Burney says: "It is an interesting fact that if the parable of the Last Judgment is translated into Biblical Hebrew it falls immediately into a rhythmical form, quite as regular and striking as the forms which are found in the Old Testament prophetic and poetical books. Even the English suggests this, as in the words:—

"Hungry was I, and ye fed me;  
Thirsty was I, and ye relieved me;  
A stranger was I, and ye housed me;  
Naked, and ye clothed me.  
Sick was I, and ye visited me;  
In prison was I, and ye came to me."

Dr. Burney suggests that poetry was "a new medium" by which Jesus conveyed truth, and such a method was used by Hebrew prophets. But surely the *writings* of the prophets was not the form of their burning popular speeches. Their writings involved art and composition. And the poetical forms in the sayings in the Gospels involved artistic composition, viz., that of the spiritually-minded Christians who composed the poetical passages. Such a writer here seems to have used the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs (Joseph i. 5, 6) as

well as the Book of Enoch in his composition—for the former says:—

"I was beset with hunger, and the Lord nourished me:  
I was sick and the Lord visited me:  
I was in prison, and the Lord showed favour unto me."

To think of a peasant Jesus, using a literary poetical art in composing a speech to fishermen is hardly possible.

The parable depends on the Book of Enoch in its description of the Son of Man seated on the throne of glory.

*The parable of the wicked servant* probably has its origin in the story of Akihar, given in "Pseudepigrapha," which Dr. R. H. Charles has edited. The story, like that of Tobit, seems to be folklore, and is a tale of ingratitude. It occurs in the supplement of The Arabian Nights. Akihar (in the story) was Grand-Vizier to Sennacherib, King of Assyria, about 702 B.C. He adopted his nephew as his son, but was by him betrayed to the king. Akihar, however, escaped death and was hidden for years. He then was reinstated, and imprisoned the adopted son Nadan, and talked parables to him—till he died! The Book of Tobit alludes to the story (i. 21). The language of the story has coloured the parable of the wicked servant in Matt. xxiv. 48-51, as to the beating of the men-servants and women-servants. Nadan was set up by the king in the place of his uncle Akihar, supposed to be dead. "And Nadan began to seize the servants and the hand-maids and cruelly tormented them . . . and gave them a sore drubbing." (iv. 15).

If not the source of the parable in the Gospels it shows how the Jews composed such parables, or folklore, or midrashim, or adapted current stories for religious or ethical ends.

*The parable of the Prodigal Son* has been shown to be composed from the writings of Philo. The Greek word translated "riotously" in Luke xv. 13 is not found again either in the New Testament nor in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, but it occurs in Philo. So the use of the words "citizen" and "ring" indicate a dependence on



Philo. The actual words in Philo are as follows:—

“God is not a tyrant. . . . He is rather a King. And there is no title more appropriate to a king than the name of Father. Parents are not wholly indifferent to even prodigal sons (riotous sons), but, having compassion on their unfortunate dispositions, they are careful and anxious for their welfare. . . . They even give more to such children than to those who have always been well behaved. Prodigal Sons had no other hope except in their parents, or if they are disappointed in that, they will be destitute of even the bare necessities of life. So God, who is the Father of all rational beings, takes care of all endowed with reason, even of those who are living in a sinful manner.”

In another fragment by Philo are these words:—

“Where there are two sons, one good and one wicked, the father says he will bless (this Greek verb is only found in Luke in the New Testament, and in Philo) the latter, not because he prefers him to his brother who is better, but because he knows that the good son can, by his own merit, follow the right path; whereas the wicked son has no hope of salvation without the prayer of the father.” (Bohn’s Translation iv. 223, 4; 278, 9.)

Thus the parable of the prodigal son is not original in Luke. It is worked up from Philo’s writings, on which the unknown compiler of the Third Gospel depended: or the sources that compiler used depended on Philo, as Rev. G. Friedlander has shown in his book “The Grace of God.”

The parable of the Ten Virgins implies that the kingdom was thought to be delayed: hence a long period must have elapsed since the beginning of Christianity ere that parable could have been composed in the Church.

The parables of the wicked husband-men and the wedding feast imply that the Jews had rejected Christianity. These parables were composed then by the Church, after A.D. 70.

(iii.) *Isolated but important sayings* also occur in the “Logia.” Symbolic utterances in the Church

became twisted into literal stories as if of a man Jesus: e.g., “Let me go and bury my father,” “Let me first say good-bye to my people at home,”—these as literal requests, denied by Jesus, would be most unlikely, if taken literally. In the East, where all moves slowly and filial piety is so strong, such sayings could only be used metaphorically. A Jew (Jesus) would never have denied that would-be disciples should say good-bye to their parents. These sayings were parabolic utterances in the Church to any new disciples who might be worldly in disposition. In Matt. x. (from the Logia) we have an important chapter implying that Christians had been persecuted and families been divided by the Gospel-truth. But the whole is attributed to “Jesus,” as if spoken by a man. Really it was spoken by “Jesus” living in the community, and could not have been uttered at the commencement of Christianity.

The saying in Matt. xi. 25-30, Luke x. 21-22, is important: especially these words:—

“All things have been delivered to me of my Father, and 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.

Come unto Me, &c.”

Some have urged that this proves Jesus to have known himself to be divine. But the language is that of Ecclesiasticus li. 23-27: “Draw near ye unlearned. . . . Put your neck under the yoke. . . . I have found much rest.”

The ideas are of the Pauline School and are taken from 1 Cor. i. 19-21: iii. 1.—“In the wisdom of God the world through its (Jewish or Greek) wisdom knew not God, &c”—while “babes” (the same Greek word) is used of the humble initiated Christians: cf. Isaiah xxix. 9-24.

Moreover that the doctrine is here that of the Church concerning “Christ,” and not by a man Jesus, is clear by comparison with the “discourses” in the Fourth Gospel where “the Son” and “the Father” are of frequent occurrence: cf. viii. 35 “Come unto Me” means repent into Goodwill.

So Matt. xxiii. 1-12 tells of trouble in the Church, arising because some Christians called themselves Teachers, Leaders, Rabbis. The Martha and Mary story (Luke x. 38-42) is really symbolic of the Jew and Christian. These are contrasted—the anxious legal-minded Jew and the humble-minded Christian set on Christ alone (“one thing is needful”). The words “All you utter in the dark will be heard in the light” (Luke xii. 4-12) indicate that the Christians held secret meetings. The Christ in their midst (Luke xvii. 21) spoke these words to them.

Luke xxi. 20 actually mentions the destruction of Jerusalem, and it is implied in Mark and Matt. also.

Thus the Logia shows the life of the troubled community, not the words of a teacher who was supposed to have started Christianity.

We shall see that the Gospel of Mark also represents the Christology of Christ in the Church, not the history of an actual Jew called Jesus of Nazareth.

### *The Gospel of Mark.*

This Gospel was composed after the *Logia* but before the Gospels of Matt. and Luke, which used Mark. In Mark, Jesus is the wonder-working Son of God, fulfilling Old Testament Messianic prophecy. He is a divine being manifested on earth. The Gospel as we have it may not be the earliest form of the collection of Jesus-stories. There may have been several prior collections made by the Church, after A.D. 70. But even as we have it, the Gospel shows signs of being mystical or symbolic writing, and not the history of a man Jesus. That stories were told of divine beings comparable to the stories of “Jesus” is clear from the writings of Justin Martyr (150 A.D.). In his First Apology to the Senate of Rome he said:—

“By declaring the Logos, Jesus Christ, to be born of a Virgin, to be crucified, and risen again, we say *no more than* what you say of those you style the sons of Jove. There is Mercury your teacher, Æsculapius the physician, Bacchus torn to pieces,

and Hercules burnt to get rid of his pains. As to Christ being born of a Virgin, you have your Perseus to balance that.”

Thus Justin early compares the stories of Christ to the stories of Roman and Greek gods. Justin no doubt vaguely believed that those gods existed, as demons perhaps. The historicity of these gods was not enquired into. “It was,” said the late Dr. Cheyne, “an age of unbounded credulity.”

The Gospel of Mark begins with the story of the forerunner of the Christ, John the Baptist. At the very beginning is thus laid bare the source for many of the stories of Jesus, viz., the Old Testament. Isaiah xl. 3 and Malachi iii. 1 are quoted. The figure of John is that of Elijah, for according to Malachi, the forerunner of the Messiah would be Elijah revived. Hence the description of John is taken from I Kings i. 8: “He was a hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins.” The Christians thought such a figure must have ushered in the Christ: so they invented him! What “must have been,” was, to these unscientific imaginations. So, according to prophecy, the scene of Christ’s ministry was Galilee, for Isaiah (ix. 1-6) said: “In the former time God brought into contempt the land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time hath He made it glorious, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations. The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light. . . . For unto us a son is born.” In Matt. this prophecy is actually quoted (iv. 15-16).

Had Christianity arisen by a great Teacher teaching in Capernaum and Nazareth and Cana, there would have been strong churches in these places, as there were in places where John Wesley taught. But the “Acts” and Epistles know of no churches at all at these places! As to Capernaum it is doubtful if the town existed. It is not mentioned in the Talmud or the Old Testament. In Josephus the nearest name is that of a fountain only, not a town. It may have been a symbolic name as

Barabbas, Golgotha, Gethsemane—all of which were composed by the Evangelists or the Church.

The story of the Temptation of Jesus represents symbolically the trial the community had in order to put away ambitions for external power and wealth. It follows on the lines of Zarathustra's temptation-story. Zarathustra dispersed the demons by the utterance of an Avesta text (see Mueller: "Sacred Books of the East": 47, page 63).

The healing of the leper (Mark i. 23-28) perhaps arose from a symbolic story to indicate the attitude of the Jesus-group towards the Jewish Law. The early Jewish Christians upheld the Jewish Ceremonial Law while it did not conflict with Christian principles of Love and Liberty, just as Christians obeyed the State so long as it dictated merely matters of expediency. In Mark's story, the Christian (symbolised by the Christ) touched the leper who was "unclean." Yet the Christian also sent him to the priest to be pronounced clean, when he was cured. This double attitude represented how the Christian community rose above the ceremonial law, yet so far as it could, obeyed it.

There are two kinds of leprosy—with tubercular nodules, or with degeneration of nerves. Cure is rare, but it is very slow, and a cure by a word must be considered highly improbable. The story is symbolical.

The stories of the healing of demoniacs were really stories symbolic of the *spiritual* work of "Christ" in and by Christians. They taught men and won them to the Christ or Ideal Love Divine.

To declare the stories of the miracles to be allegories is no new thing. In 1729 Thomas Woolston wrote "Six Discourses on the Miracles of our Saviour," in which he urged that the miracles were not to be taken literally, but allegorically or mystically. He was prosecuted and found guilty of blasphemy against Christianity, because his book "tended to a dissolution of civil government"!

As to the raising of the dead (the daughter of Jairus) it should be noted that Ireneus (180 A.D.) related that the Gnostic Christians held that

"resurrection from the dead means a recognition of the *truth* that is taught by the Christians." The Gnostics were correct. The *soul* arose from the dead: see Ephesians ii. 6: v. 14: "Arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee." The stories of Jesus walking on the sea and stilling the storm are symbolic stories of how Christ in the Church can overcome trouble and calm anxiety. Did not the Psalm (107) say "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still?" The story of Peter declaring Jesus to be the Christ is a story exalting Peter as the leader of the early community. "Mark" was perhaps partly composed by the Peter-party, as "Luke" by the Paul-party. But the latter influenced Mark too.

The story of the Transfiguration symbolically represents Christ as greater than the Law and Prophets, represented by Moses and Elijah.

The feeding of the 5,000 is a story symbolic of Christ as the bread of life, as John vi. 1-35 clearly indicates. The basis of the story, as to its form, is the Elisha-legend in 2 Kings iv. 38-41. "Twenty loaves of barley . . . give to the people that they may eat . . . they shall eat and leave thereof."

The feeding of the 4,000 is generally recognised as a duplicate of that of the 5,000. This implies that viii. 19-21 is a conversation composed by the Evangelist, only one of many such.

The story of Jesus on the colt comes clearly from Zechariah ix. 9. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion: shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation: lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass." Matthew goes to the length of making Jesus ride upon *two* animals, thus taking literally the prose-poem of Zechariah's words.

The account of the cleansing of the Temple is composed from Psalm lxxix. 9: "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up," which is actually quoted in John ii. 27.

The story of the fig tree (xi. 12-14, 20, 21) is a parable (see Luke xiii. 6-9) re-told as a miracle.

Mark xiii, contains old Jewish apocalyptic matter, and also implies the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (*see vi. 14*).

Another version of Mark xiv. 3-9 (woman with ointment) is Luke vii. 36-50. They come from a symbolic story of the Gentiles' repentance and faith in Christ. The Gentiles were called "sinners": *see Gal. ii. 15*.

The story of the Crucifixion uses the old idea of a dying god. It is composed of material mostly from the Old Testament. The story is placed in the days of Pilate and Caiaphas, because it was then that the early community suffered persecution by the Jews, and so learned that their Christ was a suffering Christ. Crucifixion was selected as the manner of death partly because of a famous passage in Plato's Republic II. 361 E (*see above*): but primarily because those who claimed to be the Messiah had at times been crucified by the Romans.

The parallels between Mark's story and the Old Testament are very numerous. It is surely impossible to resist the idea that the story is Christology, not history. This is confirmed when it is remembered that no reporter or disciple was present (*a*) in Gethsemane, when the disciples were asleep: (*b*) in the Hall of Judgment: (*c*) beside the cross, so that the words there ascribed to a man Jesus cannot be historical. The story that John was beside the cross is very late, and is again but a symbol of how John cared for the early Jewish Christian Church, the Mother of the Jesus-cult (John xx. 25-27).

*For the Judas-story* the following passages seem to have been used: "Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me" (Psalm xli 9). "They weighed for my hire thirty pieces of silver . . . cast it unto the potter (Syriac version—into the treasury), the goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them unto the potter, in the house of the Lord" (Zech. xi. 12-13).

In Matt. xxvii. 3-10 both the Hebrew and Syriac renderings of Zech. xi. 12-13 are used in the

composition of the Jesus-story. Thus the dependence of the story on that prophecy is clear.

Proverbs xxvii. 6: "The kisses of an enemy are profuse" may have suggested the story of Judas who "kissed Jesus much" in Gethsemane (Mark xiv. 45. R.V. margin *see*). The story of the *Lord's Supper* in Mark comes from I. Cor. xi. 23-25, which was written before Mark. [Originally the rite came in from Mithraism.] The writer of I. Cor. xi. had the story "from the Lord," *i.e.*, from the Church (in which the Lord lived): *see I. Cor. vii. 10, 25*. The phrase in I. Cor. xi. 23 "he was betrayed" should be "he was delivered up." The idea of a betrayer may have come from a wrong interpretation of the phrase. Then in the Old Testament were found passages on which a story could be built up about a betrayer. Judas = Judaism, which betrayed its Messiah.

*For the Gethsemane-story* we may see its source in Isaiah lxiii. 2-3: li. 17: "I have trodden the wine-press alone: and of the peoples there was no man with me. . . . Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury: thou hast drunken the bowl of the cup of staggering, and drained it."

Gethsemane is a coined word from the prophecy, so as to suit the Mount of Olives. The term "Gethsemane" means "wine-press of the Olives"; *cf.*, "I have trodden the Wine-press" (Gath). That the Messiah would go to the Mount of Olives is stated from Zech. xiv. 4.

The story of the disciples sleeping is composed from the Church teaching of Mark xiii. 36, "Watch, in case he comes suddenly, and finds you asleep."

The story of the cock crowing in xv. 68-72 is a confusion from xiii. 35. Cock crowing was a time in the night, near dawn.

*The story of the trial of Jesus* is based on Psalm ii. and Isaiah liii. 7: "He opened not his mouth" (hence the silence of Jesus: Mark xiv. 61: xv. 4). while the scourging and spitting on him arose from Isaiah l. 6: "I gave my back to the smiters . . . I hid not my face from shame and spitting."

*Barabbas* is a figure inserted not from the Old Testament, but from the manner of conducting the Jewish Feast of Purim, which was a continuation of the Babylonian "Saccæa." In the Feast of Purim a man represented Mordecai, and an effigy was made of Haman and this effigy was hanged on the gallows prepared for Mordecai. So the Jews perpetuated the story of deliverance by Esther. It seems that the compiler of the crucifixion-story in Mark inserted a scene on the lines of such religious festivals, for the story symbolised the choice between Barabbas (son of the Rabbi, *i.e.*, Judaism) or Christ, the Son of God. The Jews rejected the Christ. This was the historic fact herein symbolised.

*The story of the Crucifixion* has used the following passages from the Old Testament: "The assembly of evil-doers have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. . . . They look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them and upon my vesture do they cast lots" (Psalm xxii. 16-18): "He was numbered with the transgressors" (Isaiah liii. 12). We note that two criminals were therefore said to be crucified with Jesus. "Eloi, eloi, lama sabach thani" (Psalm xxii. 1). These words are ascribed to Jesus. "They gave me also gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink" (Psalm lxix. 21: see vv. 8-20). So also in the fourth Gospel extra passages and stories based on them are worked in: "A bone shall not be broken" (Ex. xii. 46): "They shall look on him whom they pierced" (Zech. xii. 10). So Jesus was said to have had no bone broken, but his side was pierced!

*The Burial-story* comes from Isaiah liii. 9: "They made his grave with the rich." Joseph of Arimathea was the rich man.

*The story of the Resurrection* of Jesus is based on I. Cor. xv. and is a composition of what "must have been," supposing the Son of God was a man on earth. Originally the "resurrection" meant the Life of the Spirit which exists through "death," in God or man, in the macrocosm or microcosm. But Jewish Christians came to describe Jesus as a man, and so

his resurrection as that of a body (bones and all) from the grave!

*The Resurrection-idea* came from the Mystery religions, but the following passages were used to support it: "He shall prolong his days" (Isaiah liii. 9). "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol" (Psalm xvi. 10 quoted in Acts ii. 25-28).

True was it, as Mark xiv. 21 records: "The Son of Man goes the road the *Scripture has described for him*" (Moffatt's translation). The pictures are thus largely taken from the Old Testament.

The fact that the story of the Passion is a composition, not a biography, is made clearer when it is realised that the trial was at night when no meetings of the Sanhedrin were held. No meetings were held either on a day preceding a Feast-day, as the Passover. The time selected is symbolical, for Christ was reckoned as the Lamb slain (Isaiah liii. 7: I Cor. v. 7).

Again, Pilate in the Gospels is a lay figure. A man who washes his hands in public to declare his innocence, argues with the mob, and says to Jesus "What is truth?" is not the cruel procurator of whom Josephus tells.

Again, there were no reporters to take down words said in Gethsemane or in the Hall of Judgment or by the Cross. The whole story is thus an artistic composition, based on the *historical rejection of Christianity by the Jewish authorities*, a composition using Old Testament material for details, and the Mystery-religions for the conception of a dying and rising god or lord.

The Christian Community suffered in "dying" to legalism and "rising" to spiritual life: and the Way of this Cross became recognised (after A.D. 70) as the way of Salvation, an experience of being crucified with Christ (Gal. ii. 20: v. 24: vi. 14) for human good.

*It is possible here to sum up the origin of Christianity so far.*

(1) The consciousness which Christians had of Christ was just their consciousness of Jehovah, but

felt as the Indwelling Moral Ideal of Love, and not thought of as the "holy" or separate Supreme God in heaven, who gave the rules of the Jewish Law. This indwelling Ideal or Christ was felt through the process of thought which had been going on in Hellenistic Judaism in Alexandria and elsewhere. The Love Ideal was taught in *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. The idea that a divine eternal Christ already existed was taught in *The Book of Enoch* (B.C. 70). Philo taught that the pervading Logos was the only-begotten Son of God, Paraclete, and Image of God, Heavenly Man, Primal Man; and Jeremiah had predicted that God would put His law in men's hearts (xxxii. 31-34). *The synthesis of such ideas produced the new spiritual movement.* (2) It was within Judaism at first, but soon it found it could not hold to their ceremonial law. Soon *controversy began* over the forgiveness of sins, fasting, the Sabbath (Mark ii.), washings and "unclean" foods (Mark vii.).

The *Dialogue with Trypho*, by Justin Martyr (150 A.D.), shows it was over this ceremonial law that the conflict came between Judaism and Christianity.

The upshot was that the new cult was formally rejected at Jerusalem by the High Priest. This was later recorded symbolically in Mark xiv. and xv. as the rejection or crucifixion of "Christ."

*We come to Paul.*

A persecution broke out, as recorded slightly by *Acts*. Stephen and James were killed. Paul haled men to prison till he was convinced that Christianity, not Judaism, was God's will. Paul knew nothing of the phrase "Christ crucified." That was a later mystic interpretation of the meaning of the suffering in all who accepted the Love-Ideal. Paul remained a Jew, but preached freedom from the ceremonial law for *Gentiles*, declaring they need not be circumcised. They could believe in Christ as the Law of Love without the Jewish ceremonial law relating to circumcision, fastings, foods, sacrifices. The early Jewish Church insisted that the *Gentiles* coming into the new sect should abstain

from partaking of blood and animals strangled or offered to idols, and of course from sexual vice. This was a kind of Jewish minimum for Christians (*Acts*, xv. 20, 29). *Christianity was thus a sense of the Inward Love-Ideal*, set out later in *Matt. v.*, as a new righteousness greater than that of the external rules of the Jews. This Ideal was felt as the Saviour-God in the Community, who was the Coming One, but even then He was teaching Christianity. Christ was "in their midst," where two or three even came together to pray and help one another (*Luke xvii. 21: Matt. xviii. 20*). The Jews wanted the whole law kept. To cut it down for *Gentiles* was obnoxious indeed. To introduce a kind of second god or divine lord was a breach in the unity of God (the cardinal Jewish doctrine now as then). They could not grasp a complex God, a God of planes of life, as the modern mind grasps, however inadequately. They loved God as a bare unity, in a deistic way: just as the writers of the *Upanishads* loved a bare unity in a pantheistic way without differences or distinctions within their God (*Brahm*).

(3) We reach the "Pauline" epistles, so-called. Before A.D. 70 the early Christians did not preach that a man Jesus had lived. They did not speak of Christ crucified and risen. *When later the Church reflected* on the stories of Christ from the Old Testament collected, and on the rejection of Christ (in the Church) by the Jews, *they came to speak of Christ as a divine man*, or in "semblance as a man," who "died and rose." It was inevitable that since the Love-Ideal was called Christ, that this Christ should come to be regarded as a man, for the Old Testament had so spoken of the Messiah. *Thus Jer. xxiii. 5-6* said: "Behold the days come saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king" (*cf. Isaiah xi. 1: ix. 6*). The idea of this Christ-Logos as dying and rising was from the *Mystery Religions* (*1 Cor. ii. 1-2*). It was after A.D. 70 that the New Testament (except the "We-sections" in *Acts*) began to be written. The second stage of the religion had begun, the stage when the first afflatus

of faith working by love had passed. Now the intellect began to *describe* what had happened, and describe it often unspiritually, *i.e.*, as the words and deeds of a Jew Jesus. Yet it was all doctrine—see Philippians ii. 1-10: 1 Cor. viii. 6.—Christology, as to how “it must have been.” It was doketic-Christology from the beginning. The Church now perceived that the rejection of the Christ (in the early Church) meant that those who take up the Love-Ideal do so through a “death” to sin, and to the legalism which upholds sin. They thus died and rose again. This is a cosmic principle (Gal. vi. 14) the “Via crucis,” the Way ever taken by the spiritual life. Those who early explained Christianity, viz., the Pauline School, interpreted Isaiah liii., and Psalms xxii. and lxix. as “Messianic.”

(4) A “life” of Christ on earth began, and led to the *Gospel of Mark* (Pauline), which was used by the other later unknown Evangelists. “Christ crucified and risen” is the law of the spiritual life shared by Christians, who are thus “crucified with Christ,” and “raised to heavenly places with Christ,” though still living on earth.

The Christian enters, by the cross, a new sphere of Life, a new order of facts (Eph. iii. 9), a new plane in God’s consciousness. This was so, before A.D. 70, but was not described, as sharing a “cross,” till after that crisis in Jewish history. In detail the Marcan story of the cross is from the Old Testament, and gives a new period in Christianity. “The Son of Man goes the road that the Scripture has described for him” (Mark xiv. 21). Lists of such Messianic passages were prepared, as is clear, from Luke xxiv. 26, 27, 46: Acts iv. 25-26: viii. 32-33: xxvi. 22; Romans xvi. 26. The story of the cross was given, the details being obtained from Isaiah liii., Psalms xxii. and lxix., Zech. ix. 9, &c. (See Acts viii. 32-33: 1 Peter ii. 22-24: cf. 1 Cor. xv. 3-4: John xx. 9, which show that Isaiah liii. was so used).

The way of salvation was now called a “death to sin,” and to the legalism which upheld sin, and a rising to the spiritual life of “faith working by

love.” This was entrance to a new sphere, won by self-crucifixion or sharing Christ’s “cross” (Gal. vi. 14: v. 24: Rom. vi. 4: vii. 4-6).

The Christ was this Way, Truth, Life regarded as a second person in God, and “filling the universe” (Eph. i. 23: Col. i. 15-17). Jew and Gentile could both enter this new sphere of the kingdom of Love (Eph. ii. 13-16), for all could die with Christ, or into Christ, and live even now in heaven with Him.

## 7.—THE INFANCY-STORIES IN MATTHEW AND LUKE.

The first two chapters of Matthew and the first two of Luke contain independent narratives of the Infancy of Jesus, “as it must have been.” They are deeply Jewish in character. Each contains a genealogy of Joseph, and yet the stories assert he was not the father of Jesus! But Christians thought that the Christ must be shown to be “legally” descended from David, so as to fulfil prophecy which declared he would be of the “stock of Jesse” (Isaiah xi. 1). The earlier names in the genealogies are taken from 1 Chronicles, chapters i. to iii., but there are inconsistencies in the later names given in Matt. and Luke’s versions.

Matthew’s story of the Infancy is built up from “Messianic” prophecies, as follows:—

- Matt. i. 23. *cf.* Isaiah vii. 14 (the Greek Septuagint) has parthenos, a virgin.
- ii. 2. *cf.* Numbers xxiv. 17 for the “star” over Bethlehem.
- ii. 6. *cf.* Micah v. 2. Bethlehem as birthplace of the Saviour-King, for David was supposed to have been born there.
- ii. 15. *cf.* Hosea vi. 1. “Out of Egypt have I called my Son,” refers to the Exodus, but is here taken to mean that Jesus went to Egypt. Hence the story of his going.

- ii. 18. *cf.* Jerem xxxi. 15. Weeping for children. Hence there must have been (it was thought) a massacre of infants.
- ii. 23. *cf.* Isaiah xi. 1. "There shall come a branch." Hebrew, Netser. Hence Christ's town was to be Nazar. There was thus invented or selected the village Nazareth in Galilee, as the home of Jesus. In Matthew it is a place new to Mary and Joseph. In Luke they lived there before Christ's birth. Clearly, the whole of both stories is imaginary, composed with regard to what "must have been."

When we compare these stories with those in *The Protevangelion of James*, their non-historicity becomes clearer. The *Protevangelion* is an early work of the second century, written in the style of Matt. i. and ii. No one believes it to be history. Why then are these chapters in Matt. still read and expounded in churches as history?

Luke i. and ii. is also a free artistic composition on the infancy of Christ.

Luke i. 8-15 on the birth of John the Baptist is modelled on Judges xiii. 1-5, the birth of *Samson*.

The story of the infancy of Jesus is modelled on the story of the birth and infancy of *Samuel* in 1 Samuel, chaps. i.-iii. Samuel was the first-born son, so was Jesus. Hannah sang a song (1 Samuel ii. 1-10) which is largely reproduced as Mary's song (Luke i. 46-55). Samuel was presented in the house of the Lord at Shiloh, to aged Eli, when his parents went up to their yearly worship at Shiloh. Jesus similarly is said to have been presented in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, to aged Simeon, when "his parents" went up yearly to worship at the Temple. The words "this shall be a sign" occur in both stories. Young Samuel is called in the temple of the Lord. Jesus is found in the temple when twelve years old. Before and after the incident in Samuel's story we read the words "the

child grew before the Lord" (1 Samuel ii. 21: iii. 19). Similar words occur before and after the story of Jesus being found in the temple (Luke ii. 40, 52).

These first two chapters in Luke were simply composed to glorify the Christ.

The story of the Shepherds is based on the myth of Mithras (the Persian god, said to have been born in a cave as Jesus was, according to Justin), for as Prof. Cumont (Ghent) writes: "Shepherds witnessed the miracle of the entrance of Mithras into the world. . . . Worshipfully the shepherds drew near, offering the divine infant the first-fruits of their flocks and their harvests."

The story of the Christ in the Temple is paralleled in the Egyptian story of Si-Osri (son of Osiris): "The child grew, he grew strong. He began to speak with the scribes in the temple. All who heard him were lost in wonder at him." (Stories of the High Priests of Memphis, edited by F. Ll. Griffiths). We see thus how Easterns composed stories to glorify their divine beings. This story is pre-Christian.

Thus Matt. i. and ii. and Luke i. and ii. are independent idealised compositions as to how a divine being, the Son of God, must have been born into the world. They are not history. The census in Luke is placed too early. Mary's journey to Bethlehem is a work of imagination, for women were not required to travel thus to be enrolled. The name "Mary" for the mother of Jesus is the nearest Hebrew word to Greek Maia, the mother of Hermes, who at Alexandria was called "Wisdom" and "Logos." It may have been selected because of this.

## 8.—THE BOOK OF ACTS.

This book is by the same writer that composed the Third Gospel:—see Acts i. 1 and Luke i. 1-4. The unknown writer wrote when the Church believed there had been a man Jesus. He imagines this Jesus had actually been on earth, been crucified, and had risen, and ascended to heaven. The early persecutions of the Church of which he had



some record, he thought occurred after this resurrection and ascension. He composed speeches to suit, as he thought, the situations of which he wrote: *cf.* the speeches put into the mouth of Moses in *Deuteronomy*, or Daniel in *The Book of Daniel*. The writer is no doubt on sure ground in reporting the deaths of Stephen and James, and the persecutions by Paul. But the speech of Stephen is clearly a free composition. No reporter had taken notes of it. That Paul was converted on the road to Damascus is history, but the writer gives three varying versions of it in this one book! This shows how careless as a historian he was. In one version he makes Jesus quote a saying from Greek poets as to it being "hard to kick against the ox-goad."

The compiler of the *Acts* has some good material recording the places Paul visited, and especially had he a first-class authority in the Diary of Luke which he quotes in the sections where "we" occurs instead of "they"—viz., in Acts xvi. 9-17: xx. 5-15: xxi. 1-18: xxvii. 1—xxviii. 16. Because of these sections it used to be thought that Luke wrote the Book of Acts, and so the Third Gospel also. But Luke had long since died, when the *Acts* was compiled. His diary is only quoted in it. These quotations are the chief part of the New Testament literature composed before A.D. 70, though short passages in the *Logia* and stories in *Mark* may have been written down in some form before that date.

Though the places Paul visited may be accurately given in Acts, the speeches of Paul (as of Peter) are composed by the writer to suit the occasions, such as that at Athens, the speech on Mar's Hill being highly artificial. The address at Miletus is in praise of Paul really. The address of Peter in the story of Cornelius is Pauline, *i.e.*, by the compiler of *Luke* and *Acts*.

The soteriology of *Acts* is Pauline, *i.e.*, like the Pauline Epistles. Its idea of salvation is that of escape from the last judgment by the cross of Christ. By that death remission of the penalty of sins was granted by God (Acts xiii. 38, x. 43, xxvi. 18). Thus was the cross interpreted in the light of Isaiah liii.

and Jewish-Christian Rabbinical thought, *cf.* Gal. iii. 13; Romans v. 9, "justified or reckoned righteous by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath by Him." The blood = the Love-Life originally.

The *Book of Acts* thus gives an idea of Jesus as once "a man going about doing good," a man crucified by the Jews (through Pilate), and one who ascended to heaven, whence he would come in judgment. It is a late book (say, 110 A.D.), and is of little value as to early Christian *ideas*, though of historical worth as to the places visited by Paul.

## (9) THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

Modern scholars already regard this gospel as a "treatise in theology" rather than a history of a man Jesus. It was composed by the Johannine School, perhaps at Ephesus or Alexandria. The writer who wrote it wrote the three "Epistles of John," whose style and language are those of the Gospel. The language of the Fourth Gospel differs greatly from that of the Synoptic Gospels, but that does not make the Synoptic Gospels to be history. Both may be symbolic stories in two different styles. Indeed, if the author of the Fourth Gospel could give speeches as he does to Jesus, when such speeches were never spoken, it is clear that such was a mode of writing not only not condemned in those days, but used by Christians: *cf.* Pistis Sophia (a Gnostic work c. 140 A.D.), which also has speeches ascribed to Jesus. The writer of the Fourth Gospel used the ideas of Philo, and knew the Synoptic Gospels which he treated freely, altering them to suit his dogmatic tastes, *e.g.*, the date of the crucifixion.

The miracles are really parables in this tract. The turning of water to wine symbolises the movement of Judaism into Christianity, which is better than Judaism. The healing of the man at the pool of Bethesda symbolises Christ as able spiritually to heal the Jews, for the five porches are the five books of Moses, and the thirty-eight years are those the Jews passed in the wilderness. Then the man born

blind symbolises the Gentiles. So the 153 fish in John xxi. 11 symbolise the Gentiles according to II. Chron. ii. 17, where the number of the Gentiles in the land of Israel is said to be 153,000 odd. The Gentiles would be "caught," gathered in, is the meaning of John xxi. 11. The early Christians were not fishermen really. They were "fishers of men" at Jerusalem. This phrase later came to be used as if they were humble fisher-folk in Galilee! (see Matt. iv. 19, xiii. 47, 48).

Thus it is unnecessary to consider the miracles as apart from the discourses in the Fourth Gospel. They are all really discourses, and by the author of the gospel, not by any man Jesus. The whole is a free composition on the Spiritual Life called "Christ," just as much as Pistis Sophia is a composition, probably by Valentinus the Gnostic.

The message of the whole book is that the Eternal Divine Life had come to earth and lived in Christians—"I (Christ) in them and Thou Father in Me." The truly human and the divine are one in Love. This was the original Christianity which shines through this gospel written, however, when men believed a man Christ had lived and been crucified. Really, Christ was God in the soul.

The discourses of the Fourth Gospel start with a philosophy of the Logos, which was with God, and was divine (not "God," for the Greek article is omitted before "theos"). "Through him all existence came into being" (Moffatt's translation).

There is no verse saying the Logos was a light in all men. Rather, he was "the Light for men, and amid the darkness the Light shone." John i. 9 is not to be taken as meaning Christ lighted all men from the beginning of history, but "The real Light which now enlightens all men was coming then into the world." The world did not recognise him. Those who did became children of God. "The Logos became flesh and tarried among us." This means he became a man, or like a man, for a brief episode. The writer no doubt so believed. He wrote about A.D. 120, and by then all in the Church thought "Jesus" had been a man. But the writer believed, as

II. Cor. viii. 9, and Phil. ii. 1-10 had long before stated, that the earthly life of Christ was only a brief appearing in the fashion of a man. So to this writer, as to all the New Testament writers, Jesus was not thought of as an ordinary Jew of Galilee. He was thought of as the incarnate Logos, by whom all things were made. The story of Jesus was doctrine, Christology, from the beginning (I. Cor. viii. 6; Col. i. 15-17). In a word, the putting of Christ into past human history was not that anyone had so known him, but it was a result of Christology, of the idea of the Messiah, joined to the experience of "Christ in their midst," which the early Christians felt.

It was the writer of the Fourth Gospel, clearly, who composed next the story of John the Baptist and of Nathaniel (i. 19-51), enlarging here freely on Mark and Matthew. He makes John call Jesus "the Lamb of God, who is to remove the sin of the world" (i. 29, 36). John has no hesitation, as in the Synoptics, about Jesus. The witnesses to Jesus are John the Baptist, then Andrew (41), then Philip (45), then Nathaniel (49). These are artificial stories. The persons named are mere lay figures, as in *Pistis Sophia*, the Gnostic work of Valentinus.

The Fourth Gospel is thus not history, but a free composition on the divine spiritual life called "Christ," but written when Christians thought Christ had been once a man. That spiritual life is better than Judaism, as wine is better than water, is next shown (ii. 1-11).

A man must be born anew to have the spiritual life. To show this the story of Nicodemus is composed (iii. 1-15).

The Spiritual Life is eternal life (iii. 16). Otherwise, men are liable to perish, if they have it not. They are to believe in the Light, *i.e.*, accept and walk by it practically (iii. 20).

The Logos, Light, Christ, Spiritual Life, is also the Water of Life welling up in those who welcome it (iv. 14). It freed men from blindly worshipping God only at *one* place, one temple (iv. 20-24), for "God is Spirit," everywhere. This Logos—Light—Life is also the Saviour of the World (iv. 42).

That was a Gnostic term, the Soter, and the Fourth Gospel is largely Gnostic, and though the First Epistle of John protests against tenets of doketic Gnostics, it too is influenced clearly thereby.

The "Life" can heal the Jews who had failed to be saved by the five books of Moses (v. 5). This is told in an allegory as if a miracle had occurred at Bethesda.

The Christ is the Son of God (v. 19-21), loved by the Father, and having life in himself (26).

The Scriptures told of Christ, but men needed the Christ, *i.e.*, spiritual life, in itself (v. 39-40). This Son of God and Logos is the bread of life (vi. 1-59). He came from heaven, and gives eternal life. Thus is the feeding of the 5,000 shown to be an allegory, and not a miraculous event. It could only have been composed long after men had found that the Christ-ideal was for all kinds of people. A reference to the Lord's Supper is given in vi. 53, 54. "He who feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood possesses eternal life." But what is meant is not literal bread. It is "the Spirit alone that quickeneth." The writer really says—"Sacraments are not needed," as the Society of Friends and the Salvation Army say to-day. The partaking of the Love-Ideal is what gives spiritual life to men.

Not only is Christ the Bread of Life, but similarly the Water of Life (vii. 37-39), and the Light of the World (viii. 12), for all who will receive Him. He was older than Abraham! (viii. 58). He could heal the Gentiles born blind (spiritually): *see* ix. 1-21.

He was the Shepherd (x. 2) and also the Gate (x. 9), being one in will or ideal with the Father (x. 30). He was the Resurrection-power also (xi. 25), and He was this deep Law personified:

"Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains a single grain; but if it dies, it bears rich fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who cares not for his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life." He died to live. And "if any one serve Me, let him follow Me." All must die to live (xii. 24-26). As He washed the disciples' feet they were so to do to one another—to serve one another (xiii. 1-17).

The Logos was the real Vine in which disciples were as branches, drawing sap from Him. He sent the Helper (Paraclete), who is Christ Himself really, in a new form. "I will ask the Father to give you another Helper, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth. . . I will not leave you forlorn. I am coming to you." (xiv. 16, 18).

This Son of God was with the Father "from the foundation of the world." (xvii. 24).

Then follows the story of the Passion taken from Mark, but freely enlarged, many speeches composed by the Johannine School being inserted.

It is clear from chapters xiv.-xxi. that this School thought of Jesus as having in some sense been a man, dying and leaving the disciples and returning in the Spirit of Truth. This book is really a "tendency" writing partly to indicate that there was to be no external Parousia, as expected by many in the Church. John xxi. 22 saying that John would tarry on earth till Christ returned, is not meant to imply that there would be a visible return (*see* verse 23).

Thus the Gospel is Christology in symbol, not a biography.

*Its Christian message here given is one-sided in two ways:*

(a) That love in it meant love to one's "brother," one's fellow-Christians (*cf.* I. John iv. 7). The Church had become a garden walled around (xiii. 33, 34). The prayer of "Jesus" was not for the world, but only for the Christians, present and future (xvii. 9, 20). So in I. John (Epistle), love was to the brethren, especially to those in need. It tells not of love to *all* men and women, taken as human beings. The gospel gives Gnostic philosophy rather than a moral Ideal. It is a late Church production.

(b) Also it is dualistic. Men outside the Church were regarded as perishing unless they had a new birth. The Jews were "children of the Devil." A harsh unreal distinction runs through the book between the saved and unsaved, those who have eternal life and those who have it not. It is a late ecclesiastical work, not reaching the glory of the Synoptics, which reflect the early aflatus of the

inner God-consciousness. This dualism is really based on the idea of God as outside man, and the Logos as an intermediate divine being sent down, connecting God and sinful man by the Spirit (a second mediator). The Son and the Spirit are here Gnostic emanations, connecting the distant or distinct God with evil man. This is an idea of God which persisted from Plato to Philo and on to Plotinus (240 A.D.), but it has now passed away from philosophy. God himself has descended into time, limited his power in creation, and is ascending in the vast cosmic process of ascending Life-forms.

The idea of Christ as the all-pervading Logos is found also in *The Odes of Solomon* (c. 150 A.D.), an early Christian Psalter, Gnostic in character. Odes 11 and 12 contain these sentences:—

“The Most High clave my heart. I drank and was inebriated with the living water that doth not die, and my inebriation was not without knowledge (Gnosis). The Lord possessed me by His Light. He lightened my eyes. The swiftness of the Logos (Word) is inexpressible. It is light. From it came love and concord. For the dwelling-place of the Logos is man: and its truth is Love. Blessed are they who by means thereof have understood every thing, and have known the Lord in His truth. Hallelujah.”

*Ignatius' Epistle to the Trallians* was written in the second century, to protest against the Doketic Gnostics who asserted that Christ only seemingly became a man and died on the cross. The Gnostics had various views of how these “events” happened.

On Ignatius, Lightfoot said: “He wrote the epistles in the early years of the second century, when the writer was on his way from Antioch to Rome, having been condemned to death, and expecting to be thrown to the wild beasts in the amphitheatre on his arrival. The Letters to the Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians and Romans were sent from Smyrna, while Ignatius was staying there, and was in personal communication with Polycarp the bishop.” Says Ignatius: “Jesus Christ, who was of the race of David, who was the son of Mary, who

was truly born, and ate and drank, was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate, was truly crucified and died in the sight of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the earth (sic!): who was truly raised from the dead.” (Trallians ix.).

Such seems at first sight to be clear evidence that Jesus was once a man. But the passages are simply taken from the Gospels. The need of so vigorously asserting that Jesus lived shows how strong must have been the Doketic position. The First Epistle of John reveals the same Doketism, which denied that Christ had come in the flesh. Some said an aeon Christ came on the man Jesus at his baptism, and left him before the crucifixion. Others said Christ was only seemingly a man (*see* Phil. ii. 1-10). The fact that speculation thus early arose—indeed there was only speculation since A.D. 70—shows that this Jesus was not an ordinary Jew, a real man, as Caiaphas was. He was a subject of various opinions, of Christology from the beginning.

*The Apostles' Creed* was composed from phrases in Ignatius, which go back to various parts of the New Testament. It was composed to assert as *history* that Jesus was born of a virgin named Mary, and died and so forth. Men who recite this creed to-day protest against the Doketics and assert these “events” as history! To repeat the creed and put mystic or symbolic meanings into its phrases is to deny it. It was composed to exclude such meanings. Ignatius' “*Epistle to the Trallians*” and the later “*Apostles' Creed*” both indicate that “Jesus Christ” was not to be taken necessarily as a real man, a Jew of the first century. The Doketics had their views on theological grounds no doubt. Matter was evil to them, so was human flesh. They therefore thought that God could not have really been a man on earth. Some scholars say that these Doketics, therefore, are mere speculators as to Christ. But they imply that *the early Church believed Christ to be a Divine Being* who had only come in the likeness of men, and the orthodox Ignatius agreed to this. That doketic speculation could arise as early as the *Epistle to the Philippians* (ii. 4-10) shows that the idea of Christ as divine was primary, and ideas as

to how he must have come to earth were secondary and derived. Some of these ideas were doketic, some otherwise. No doketics could arise as to the birth of a real man, say, Caiaphas or Peter or Paul. Jesus Christ was not regarded as one incarnation among many such, "*primus inter pares*": but as a divine being, the Son, pre-existing, and it was thought he must have been on earth, for he was felt as the divine life in souls, and spoken of as "in their midst" (Matt. xviii. 20; Luke xvii 21). Thus it was that speculation arose (after A.D. 70) concerning the mode of Christ's life on earth, and the Doketics at once held the field (Phil. ii. 4-10; Rom. viii. 3). The *Gospel of Peter* (c. 160 A.D.) is also a Gnostic Doketic work.

Thus, though cast out by the others, the Doketics really go back to the earliest times, and show that there could not have been a real man Jesus, since, had he lived, it was psychologically impossible for disciples at once to have written of him as having been a Divine Being in the form only of a man.

What, then, is meant by "*Jesus Christ*"? We answer—the life-giving Love divine, the "*modus vivendi*" for souls, who must therefore die to the rule of the animal, natural life, and rise to spiritual life. Thus, the Christ means the Spiritual Life as the source and goal of the animal life, and, indeed, of the Universe. The Spiritual Life in man is his law or ideal or life-principle. By it he is to live: for the animal round of eating, sleeping and propagating its kind does not satisfy a man. He reaches out wistfully and bravely, to something vaster. It is by the Christ-urge in his soul that he does so. There is a tendency in the universe to evolve organisms, and these to clash, and evolve souls, and these to move on into Truth, Love and Beauty. Since this tendency unites, and is in, all men, it is the Idea of the Universe, or "*Christ*" (Col. i. 15-17). It is the half-expressed Unity of the Universe. Ignorance, greed, lust, war, vice, pride and fear, may hold Christ back, but it is by conquering these that He shines forth and is realised! "*Matter*" and animalism must needs come first as the basis of,

and as foils for, the spiritual life, *i.e.*, the tendency towards Truth, Love and Beauty.

Opposition, uncertainty, strain and tension are thus all included in the One Loving Purpose of Good which binds "matter" and minds in one vast whole, or God. In crystals and flowers the spiritual begins to emerge or be visible, still more in lovely faces and good laws. The Truth of all truths is this Spiritual Tendency, so that Christ is Truth and Life. He is the true life for men, which is Faith working by Love: faith in a Universe that has this Tendency of Good.

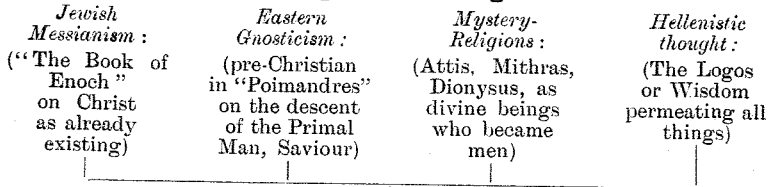
If men persist in pride, greed and lust, the Universe disciplines them, for such sins result in miseries (*e.g.*, wars) in the long run. Within inorganic forms there moves a unifying Love-Will as a World-Aim, whereby the inorganic was organised so as to be a school for the organic, and that organic was (and is) capricious and uncertain, as a further foil for the education of the spiritual life. A universal Love-purpose moulds or weaves all things together. To feel this spiritual aspiration is to know "*Christ*," by whom all things hold together, the Idea of the Universe. The New Testament can be understood from this standpoint alone. If instead of "*Jesus Christ*" is written "*Spiritual Life*" all becomes clear. It was spiritual life (faith in Love, being active by Love) which was eternally divine, descended, and was incarnated, suffered crucifixion (persecution), and rose to world-authority and power in the Church, and will win all the kingdoms of the world. To have "*faith in Christ*," *i.e.*, be one with this Love-Ideal, is to be "*justified*," reckoned right with the Universal Will, be at one with God. By external works of the Jewish Law such real oneness never could come. Spiritual life means confidence in intelligent love, as the victorious mainspring of the universe, the heart of God. Such Love suffers by evil, but so overcomes it. That is the principle of the Cross and the way it saves and conquers. It patiently bears injustice and cruelty even, all difficulty, uncertainty and death, by Faith, *i.e.*, the sublime confidence that Love can bear and use up and end all these things.

## DIAGRAM OF THE ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

### Jewish Piety

as recorded e.g. in the "Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs,"  
awoke in some the sense of the indwelling Spiritual Life, as the  
"descended" or incarnate God (see above)

### Interpreted through

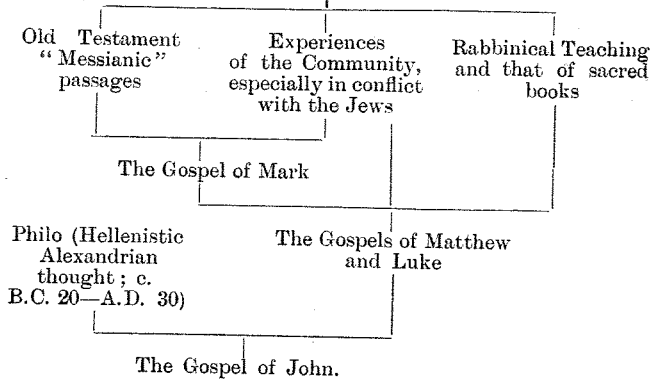


### THE IDEA OF CHRIST.

The *Spiritual Life* was personified and projected as Jesus Christ (Saviour-Messiah) called the Logos or Word of God, who descended to save men by conquering demons that held men in thrall.

The *Community* who worshipped this Christ (Spiritual Life) and met to cultivate it, was persecuted by the Jews, yet so became strong: in these experiences they came to see that Christ was a suffering and rising Messiah. The "Pauline" Epistles after A.D. 70 projected this Christ as crucified and risen as if a man Jesus had died and risen.

### In writing the Gospels the Church used



[The above seeks to roughly represent the way Christianity and its chief books arose: not, of course, to explain the ultimate source of inspiration in the depths of the Divine Life.]

## 10.—ANSWERS TO DIFFICULTIES.

(a) The first difficulty brought forward against the view that Jesus was not a man but a personification of the Spiritual Love-Ideal, is that Josephus, Tacitus, Pliny and Suetonius—non-Christian writers—mention Jesus as if he were a man.

But all these wrote when the idea that Jesus had been once a man, existed among Christians. Josephus wrote *The Antiquities* about 93 A.D. Tacitus his *Annals* about 110 A.D., Pliny wrote to Trojan the Emperor about the year 111 or 112 A.D., while Suetonius was still later.

The passage in Josephus is clearly an interpolation, for it gives the *Christian* standpoint, and Josephus was not a Christian. It says: "Jesus, a doer of wonderful works . . . He was the Christ, and he appeared on the third day alive. The divine prophets foretold this, and a myriad other wonderful things about him." The mention of "James, the brother of Jesus" (in Josephus) is also a Christian interpolation, for it quotes Galatians i. 19, a passage which does not mean that James was a brother of Jesus by physical birth, but that he was one of the Jesus-group: cf. I. Cor. ix. 5, i. 12).

Pliny refers to hymns being sung to Christ, "as if to God," so that his evidence hardly upholds the idea of Jesus as a man. But anyhow Tacitus, Pliny and Suetonius wrote too late for their evidence to be of any value.

It is a pity that so eminent a writer as Dr. Frazer (in *The Golden Bough: Scapegoat*) declares he believes that Jesus was a man because of Tacitus and Pliny!

(b) Another objection to regarding Christ as a personification, and not as a man, is that the Roman Emperors were deified. It is asked: why could not a great Teacher be deified? It has been said "among Gentile peoples the idea of divine sonship was common and widespread, and that not simply in the case of mythical characters, but also in the case of historical personages of eminence, more especially of rulers and sages." So Pharaohs were regarded often

as incarnations of the deity Horus, and prayers directed to them. Alexander the Great was styled "son of Ammon-Ra" (Egyptian god). After their deaths the Roman Emperors were at times called "divi." (This was as victorious generals.) Plato was said to be born of Apollo, and his mother Perictione. Scipio Africanus was called a son of Apollo. Buddha was said to have had pre-existence. But Dr. Estlin Carpenter has shown that it was 300 years ere Buddha was deified, *i.e.*, it was not the historical man Gautama, but an imaginary being who was so described. The kings and others who were called "divine" or "sons of God" were not given pre-existence as divine beings, and called "Logos Eternal," "Agent of Creation," "Alpha and Omega": nor said to "fill all things" after their deaths. Jesus, according to the story, was a peasant-teacher, not a King, nor a Teacher of renown as Plato. Yet the divinity ascribed to him was far exceeding that ascribed to Augustus or Plato. Moreover, the "Christ" was believed to exist in heaven *before* "Jesus" was said to be born (if Jesus ever lived). The Christ was thus supernatural *first*, being called (in the Book of Enoch) "Elect One, named by God from before creation, the Son of God, and Judge." Later the humanising came. It was not so with Plato or Augustus. They were human first, then deified. Augustus was a man who was made a god. Jesus was a divine being historised as a man. "Jesus Christ" is more on a level with Attis and Mithras and Dionysus and Osiris—in that he was a personified power, regarded as having somehow lived on earth, and as a dying and rising lord. Mithras did not die, but was thought to be coming again as Judge (Cumont: "Mysteries of Mithra").

*Obscure Jews were NEVER deified, especially by Jews (strict monotheists).* Jesus, according to the literal story, was an obscure Jew, who for only one and a half years taught some disciples. No such Jew could ever be called "Divine Lord," "Logos," "Eternal Son of God," "Firstborn of all creation," "Alpha and Omega." It could only be the unseen

but felt Love-urge, re-creating souls and society, that could be so called by Jews.

Professor Harnack tries to show that the term Lord, which is often applied to "Jesus" in the New Testament (I. Cor. xii. 3; Rom. x. 9; Phil. ii. 11; Acts x. 36), meant simply that He had sovereign powers, and so could be used of a man Jesus. But I. Cor. viii. 6 is the key passage for the explanation of the sense of "Lord" (Kurios) as applied to Christ. "To us there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, *by whom are all things* and we by Him." This is a stupendous claim: *cf.* Col. i. 15-17. So also Christ "fills all things," and is Alpha and Omega! Christ really thus meant God in a certain aspect, even if the early Jewish Christians did not so speak of him.

(c) The objection which is most obvious and is often made to the idea of the non-historicity of Jesus is that *the writers* of the New Testament clearly speak of a man Jesus of Nazareth who was crucified under Pontius Pilate. They all refer to such a man. Even the symbolic Fourth Gospel clearly does so. "The Word was made flesh, and tabernacled among us." It must be remembered, however, that the writers of the New Testament were not the primitive Christians. They wrote about A.D. 80 to 120, and by then the idea was current that the "Jesus Messiah" had been a man. At first "the Jesus" was a name for what was really the presence of God as felt in the Love-urge of pious Jews. "He" was the Saviour, Messiah, bringing in the Kingdom of God who is Love. As such this experienced God-urge was personified, according to the then custom, as a second divine person. The ideas of the Logos, Wisdom, Spirit, Messiah was attached to this "Person," for *The Book of Enoch*, a century before, had spoken of the Christ as already existing in heaven, "elect" from before creation. By the time the New Testament came to be written (the "epistles of Paul" first, and then the more elaborated story of Jesus in the Gospels), the idea was generally held that Jesus had been a kind of man, the Son of God descended and incarnated, who died and rose again. Mark vi. 3 tells of the brothers and sisters of Jesus,

but this passage seems to have arisen by some confusion with Mark xv. 40, 41, which says: "Mary the mother of James the less, and Joses and Salome, who, when Jesus was in Galilee, followed him." Thus there was a confusion, the Mary who followed Jesus (originally this meant she was a Christian) being taken as the mother of Jesus in Mark vi. 3).

But human elements were bound to appear when once it was thought that the Christ who descended and died and ascended was a man who did these acts. Hence it is not surprising that it was imagined that Jesus had a mother, and lived in a certain place, and taught, and hungered, and died. Of several of the divine beings who were worshipped in those days, such things were related. The story of the god Dionysus is illuminating on this point.

(d) It has been conjectured by G. R. S. Mead that perhaps Jesus was born about 100 B.C. The Talmud has a record of a Jesus then. The Talmud gives Jewish Midrashim (amplification of Biblical topics quite in the unscientific Eastern style), with added Gemara or completions, dating A.D. 100-500.

In the Babylonian version of the Talmud (Sanhedrin 107 b, and Sota 47 a) is given a story of Jeschu (Hebrew for Jesus) who lived when Jannai reigned. Jannai was a Maccabæan ruler over the Jews (B.C. 104-78). This Jeschu was excommunicated for heretical tendencies. The story says: "There is a tradition that on the Passover Jeschu was hanged" (not crucified). "There is a tradition: Jeschu had five disciples, Mathai, Nakkai and Netzer, Bunni, Todah." Netzer = Nazarene (Notzri).

But (1) may not the Talmud's likenesses to the story of Jesus in the Gospels be by Talmudic writings attributing to this Jeschu (B.C. 100) stories they had heard of Jesus (of the Gospels).

And (2) if the Jesus of the Gospels did live B.C. 100, it is strange if two centuries passed before his life was written (in Mark).

But Mr. Mead's volume "Did Jesus live 100 B.C.?" does not pretend to prove that such was the case: but only to ask a question.

(e) Again, it has been urged that by A.D. 20 the

making of myths had come to an end. Certainly the making of Greek myths had come to an end, but myth-making went on into the Middle Ages. Legends or myths arose as to the Wandering Jew, St. George, the Piper of Hameln, and others. The story of William Tell is not history. It was first told about 1476, in nine stanzas. It related how Tell was a clever marksman, and how he shot dead a cruel Austrian bailiff. The story grew, and came to include other feats (*e.g.*, the story of the boy and the apple). About 1746 a pamphlet was issued showing that Tell never lived. He was an ideal marksman, a character like others described in Denmark, Sweden and Ireland. The pamphlet was at first publicly burned in anger: but the truth emerged all the same!

(f) It is said that the disciples did not understand Christ, and so could not have composed the story of Christ. The argument refers to Mark viii. 32, 33, where Peter refused to believe the Christ must suffer. That all Christians equally understood the Christ, the Ideal Life, is not to be expected. The origin of such a story may be that Peter (or his "school") discouraged the application of Isaiah liiii. to Christ, while the later Community believed that the persecutions of the early Christians were a sign that such application was justified. In their afflictions Christ was afflicted. He was (in them) the suffering Christ. But Peter (or the school of Peter) did not believe this to be so. So with ix. 32. The earliest disciples did not realise, when suffering first came to them, that it was in fulfilment of the scriptures that Christ should suffer. Love is sin-bearing, and unarmed meets the wickedness of men. Hence the spiritual man bears the "cross."

(g) Again, it is urged, that the disciples were *not spiritually strong* enough to create the Picture of Jesus. But they did not create it altogether. Its features were derived from Isaiah and the Psalms and the Book of Enoch. There it was, in times B.C., gradually being produced by spiritually-minded men.

(h) Again, it is said that men need a perfect *ideal*



man to follow, and if Jesus never lived as a man, the root of all goodness is cut. But this is like an absurd book, which sought to show that if it were believed that the physical resurrection of Jesus from the tomb never took place, men would fall back into savagery, and vice and cruelty! The reason men grow out of savagery is not because they believe a resurrection took place, but because they learn the joy of divine humaneness. The soul does not need a man to have been perfect, in order for the soul to aspire to perfection. Men aspired in Greece and India in the centuries B.C., when they never thought that any one man was perfect, just as artists work towards an ideal of beauty, without seeing it completely in any one human form. Moreover, since Jesus, as a man (in the story) was not married, had no real citizenship, knew not disease, had no hold on art, science or literature (except in the Old Testament), since indeed very little is known of him even if he were a man, it can hardly be said that there is there an *ideal* man for the soul's worship.

As a matter of fact, the soul does not desire such an immaculate ideal man. It is God the soul craves for. "Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are not at rest until they rest in Thee," said Augustine. In prayer it is to no man Jesus, but to an aspect of God that souls pray, if they still name Jesus in their prayers. An ideal is needed, but the Sermon on the Mount gives this, and by obeying the principle thereof men can reach God.

(i) It is urged that a Great Person was needed to start Christianity. Great movements truly need personalities, but not one great personality. There was no one Founder of the Greek religion (Olympic gods), nor of Mithraism, which competed with Christianity for four centuries and spread over Europe, nor of Brahmanism in India, nor of Judaism indeed; and query *re* Zoroastrianism, if Zoroaster was a man. The greatest religions have sprung up by personalities, but without any one great Founder.

(j) Again, some say they believe what is said in the Gospels and Epistles about the Eternal Christ,

and know that this Christ lives to some extent in all men, but they think this Eternal Christ was *supremely* manifested in one man Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified, even if his body did not rise from the grave. The first part of this belief is undoubtedly true and a great truth, that the Eternal Christ lives, in degree, in all men, though the New Testament scarcely tells of him thus. But the rest is a belief which is merely a rationalistic guess. There is no such idea in the whole of the New Testament, that Jesus was a man beside other men, the best incarnation of a divine being distinct from him, viz., the Eternal Christ, while the others were less incarnations of the same. The New Testament only knows of one incarnation of the one divine pre-existing being called Christ, who was once in the form of God, and left heaven and descended once to be a man, and died, and lifted his body from the tomb to heaven! (See Phil. ii. 6-10; I. Cor. viii. 6; John i. 1-18; II. Cor. viii. 9; Matt. xi. 27; Heb. i. 1-3.) "The Word was made flesh," once and once only, according to the New Testament. Jesus was the Eternal Christ come to earth. The story (in the N.T.) is the story of a Divine Being, intermediate between the Supreme God and man, the Logos—Mediator. In other words, the story is doctrine, and not history. It came to be later woven as if it were history, but it is really doctrine, a description of the Love-Urge felt by the Christians, a personification and projection of the Life-giving Spirit that arose in their hearts, and fulfilled the Jewish Law. Less and less is it possible to find a man Jesus, or to point to what he said and did. More and more does it become clear that the story has been composed, as has here been indicated.

The Christology of the New Testament is, at best, only an effort to describe the ineffable. It cannot last. Indeed, it is based on a dualism which can no longer be maintained. The New Testament does not tell of an Eternal Christ in all men. That is true, but a modern revelation, a re-stating of the Christian message that God is Love: for such love is the latent law in all men.

(k) Many cling to the idea of a man Jesus because most *scholars* believe he lived. It is still true that most scholars believe there was a man, Jesus of Nazareth, a wonderful teacher, or the one incarnation of the eternal Son of God. But these scholars have each given up believing in the historicity of *sections* of the story of Jesus. One (Cheyne) doubted if the crucifixion-story were history, because the idea of a dying god was very ancient. Another (Sanday) has questioned the nature-miracles, as the walking on the sea, feeding the five thousand, or stilling the storm. These are deemed to be really symbolic, or parables. Another scholar (J. E. Carpenter) shows that the stories of the temptation and transfiguration were woven by the Christians and are not history. Yet another scholar (Friedlander), a Jew, has indicated that parts of the Sermon on the Mount are to be found in such writings as The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, The Book of Tobit, and other pre-Christian books. Other scholars show that the stories of the virgin-birth and physical resurrection of Jesus cannot be historical: while many point out the number of passages in the First Gospel that are late, for they clearly indicate that the Church had undergone persecution, or had made rules for its guidance and reproduces such rules in that Gospel. Thus, the tendency of thought is away from the historicity of the stories of Jesus, though stories of the early Christian Community are embedded in the Gospels.

One scholar (Schmiedel) asserts that at least five sayings attributed to Jesus must be historical, because they imply a human speaker. But that is to assume there was a man Jesus. When the Church came to believe (vaguely) that Jesus had lived as a man, it was only natural to attribute to him such sayings, and also to name his mother and relatives.

The god Aesculapius, healer and "Saviour," worshipped in Greece from 421 B.C., and in Rome from 293 B.C., was said to have been a man, been married, and had two sons, and a daughter Hygeia or Health.

Another writer (Dr. McNeile) indicates throughout his valuable Commentary on Matthew, that many parts of the Gospel are doubted: such as the appearance of the star, the flight into Egypt, the Voice at the baptism of Jesus, the walking on the water. If all that is doubted by scholars *be subtracted* from the Gospels, there would be but little left, and it is candidly recognised that no "Life" of Jesus can now be written, such as used to be composed by Edersheim or Farrar.

The intellectual vice which still clings to scholars is of starting articles, say in Encyclopædias, on "Jesus," by assuming that he lived as a man, and then proceeding to assume that all in the Gospels is true of him, unless serious reasons appear for doubting any passage. The truly scholarly attitude would be "Here are certain ancient documents, what is to be made of the pictures given therein?" It is time now that scholars must prove Jesus to have lived as a man before they can assume he said this or did that. The whole story may be the gradual composition of the Community concerning, not a man, but the Ideal Life which they felt, uniting their members together. This Ideal Life they called "Jesus Christ," and when the Community was rejected by the Jews, they rightly said it was Christ who was rejected and "crucified."

Most scholars now refuse to take the Fourth Gospel as giving literally the words and deeds of Jesus, except in the story of the Passion. But they have yet to leap to the idea that if *one* such Gospel could be sincerely composed, earlier ones may have been composed also. They urge that the Fourth Gospel is in a different style of speech from the Synoptic Gospels. That is true, but that does not prove the Synoptics are history. Both may be records, by various "Schools," of the Mystic Story of Jesus Christ, the Divine Love-Ideal experienced by the Hellenistic Jews who started the new religion within Judaism.

Those earnest souls who cling to the idea of a man Jesus because most scholars believe in it, should surely see that most scholars doubt much, and that

the tendency of research is to doubt more and more, and to regard the Gospels as products of a Community in its second generation, after A.D. 70. They record, in symbolic stories, the ineffable afflatus of a real divine revelation. That tendency should at least make these earnest souls ready to examine the above study of the subject, put forward after long, painstaking effort and discussion.

(l) There are other earnest souls who cling to the idea of a man Jesus because they "like" it, thinking that it is necessary for their religious lives, believing devotion needs such a man. This is because they have grown up to associate religion with a man Jesus in whom they focus their ideas of God. It seems a help to know that the Ultimate Reality focussed His life in one man on earth, at one period of time and at one place. And there is truth in this. God *was* so focussed in one time and place, but in a Community, not in a man Jesus. The Community (later called the Church) arose from humanity, and continues until this day, and is the Body of the Christ, the beginning of the Kingdom of God on earth. Not only in the visible churches (often alas! very unchristlike), but in the invisible real church of *all* loving souls aspiring Godward, the Christ is now expressed. Surely this is a deeper and more satisfying idea than that in one isolated man, a Jew of Nazareth, the Eternal was once incarnated! Devotion does not really need a man dying on a cross, suffering for three (or six) hours: but a God who ever bears human sin and need, God "crucified," and ever thus "rising" to higher and richer life and power, in which dying and rising the Christian shares. This is what devotion really needs, even if for a time it finds it a help to picture it as happening once in history. Pious souls have ever thought not of a past man, but of a present Christ, "Jesu, Lover of my soul," which is a name for God redeeming souls *now*. A man, a Jew in heaven, no one can find: and if found, he has a limited life, and a small consciousness, so far as he can be imagined at all.

The Epistle to the Hebrews tells of Jesus as a

sympathetic High Priest in heaven, who has been tried in all points when on earth. But the man Jesus (of the Gospels) knew not marriage nor fatherhood nor citizenship nor art nor science nor disease—so he certainly did not feel all human trials. It is God the soul needs, the all-pervading, self-imprisoned indwelling Lover of souls, who succeeded in the early Christian Community in unveiling His life as the life-giving life (called Love), and called on men to do this His Will, for it was their own deepest Will. This ineffable God arises in hearts that today obey Him, and it is the Christian religion to so obey and so feel the inexhaustible Life, and rejoice therein. Devotion need not fear, but welcome, the loss of the idea of a man Jesus, for that loss only comes by a deeper gain, the gain of the Presence of God as Inexhaustible Spiritual Life in the souls that love and aspire.

In many devotional hymns this is clearly perceived. It is Christ as a picture of God in the loving soul that is really worshipped. Thus, in the hymn "Pierce raged the tempest o'er the deep," the devotional element appears in the last verse, but it cannot use the story of the stilling of the storm as history. The storm that is stilled by Christ is in the soul, the storm of trouble and self-will!

"And when our life is clouded o'er,  
And storm-winds drift us from the shore,  
Say, lest we sink to rise no more,  
Peace be still!"

So the "walking on the water" which the soul needs is not a literal one, but a Presence which can come to the soul over seas of difficulty. Francis Thompson's lines on "The Kingdom of God" indicate this:—

"When so sad thou can'st no sadder,  
Cry, and upon thy so sore loss  
Shall shine the traffic of Jacob's ladder,  
Pitched 'twixt Heaven and Charing Cross.  
So in the night, my soul, my daughter,  
Cry, clinging Heaven by the hems:  
And lo! Christ walking on the water,  
Not of Gennesaret, but Thames."

It is this "insistent Lover," and not a Jew in

heaven that the soul needs really. So also in Wesley's—

“Jesu, Lover of my soul.”

the soul is really in confusion if it keeps before it One who was a local man in Galilee and has “taken to heaven a human brow.” It is God as the indwelling Lover that is meant, and only this can bring out the glory of the setting of the hymn to music in “Aberystwyth” tune.

“Spring Thou up within my heart  
Rise to all eternity.”

could never really belong to the old realm of ideas: and in such words Wesley soars above the idea of one who ever could be limited into being one man, even if Wesley did not realise that here he had left such thoughts far behind. There is really no transition from a man, a Jewish Teacher, to “Christ in you, the hope of glory.” No beloved teacher, as Plato or Hypatia, was spoken of as being in the disciples, and the death of a Socrates was not regarded as being shared by his followers, as the cross of Christ was shared. While then, men of devotion have uncritically believed there was a man Jesus, because the New Testament and the Church taught this, yet such an idea was not needed by them, and it is now become (to our modern mind) a veritable hindrance to devotion and spiritual life, giving, as it were two Gods, the Father and Jesus: so that the soul knows not to which to pray. This confusion is a cause of the modern weakness of the Churches, which will continue while the symbolic picture of Christ as God—the Love-urge in souls—is taken as the literal history of a man on earth. The New Testament writers did not say “Jesus is God,” because they were monotheists of a strict type, and could not grasp a complex God, and Jesus is not God in all His Mind-energy. But Jesus is the heart or life-principle of God as unveiled in sacred love in men.

There are those who urge that men that have had *experience of Christ* know he is a person and so he lived on earth! They rely on his death as an

atoning power, and so there must have been such a death! This is confusion.

Man does not need a historical Jesus. It is God he needs. Any story which helps him to find, feel and love God is a ladder up to heaven for him: but such does not prove the story is history. The story of the prodigal son has helped many nearer to God, but it is not history. Some novels also have helped souls to God.

Moreover, belief in Dionysus or Osiris, or Attis or Mithras affected the worshippers' lives, but that did not prove that these gods had been men on earth, even though the worshippers thought so.

Moreover, if scholarship cannot prove that Jesus was a man and reliance has to be placed on subjective experiences, the idea of the historicity of Jesus is in a bad position. It is nigh to being surrendered, as Dr. K. C. Anderson has well pointed out (“Ward Chapel Magazine,” Dundee, April, 1916).

(m) There is another difficulty in the way of earnest souls considering the non-historicity of Jesus as a man, and that is their belief that salvation is dependent on a *Man Jesus having died* upon a cross in the past. This is the doctrine of salvation which seems to need a Man, in order to obtain “forgiveness” from God. That such a doctrine is in parts of the New Testament is true: for the Jews thought of death as the punishment of sin, and of hanging as a sign that the man so hanged was accursed of God. Hence, when it came to be thought that Jesus had been a man who was crucified, it was said by some (of legal mind) that his death in innocence was a bearing of the curse of the law, and so an atonement to God, a setting forth of the result of evil, or the judgment of God. Those who accepted Christ as the sinless Saviour were thus freed from the Last Judgment. There was no condemnation resting on them, no wrath of God. It had been borne by Christ dying innocently.

But death is not the penalty of sin, for it existed on earth among animals before man sinned: and there is no impending last judgment. The sinner still bears the loving discipline of God against sin.

The whole doctrine is thus Rabbinical, Jewish, not Christian, much less is it modern or necessary in the present day. Men are not saved by escaping judgment, but by accepting the principle of the cross in their own lives, by "crucifying the flesh," by dying to the rule of their lower animal nature, and rising to the rule of the spiritual life. No past event in itself wins forgiveness from God. A sincere repentance is needed for that. Forgiveness is not a letting-off from the last judgment. No one being crucified can save men. The soul is saved as it shares in a *cosmic* cross of God. A story can reveal this cosmic cross, but no one divine man is needed to die to express it. It is *ever* being expressed, in millions of lives, and in other ways than by dying. It is often better expressed by a patient life!

Not the death of a historic man, but a mystic union with God, who ever lives by giving away His life, is the way of true salvation (see Rom. vi. 1-10: Gal. v. 24: vi. 14). The "blood" is the Life!

The sinful soul may cry out: "I cannot repent sufficiently. I need an objective Person who can reveal the evil in sin, its deserts, and then I can associate my poor weak will with such a Person, and thus become one with God." The reply is quite clear. Man does need to see that God, in a "dying Christ," has condemned his sin, unveiled its baseness, before that man finds union with God. The condemnation is done in the Sermon on the Mount and the Thirteenth of First Corinthians combined. Those who think it is done by a man Jesus, suffering for three hours, really see their sin exposed in their own *idea* of Jesus. It is no man they *now* see, but an Ideal which they get simply from reading the Gospels and seeing Christly lives. This Ideal is God's Will, and they accept it and are saved. The Prodigal Son was saved by accepting an Ideal that was latent in his mind, an Ideal of sonship. He "came to himself" and so he soon came home also.

No elder son was crucified first. The "dying Christ" that really saves souls is the principle of God's life, the life that comes by dying to the lower narrow self.

To blindly believe a divine Man has died, and so won forgiveness from God is magic, and is unmoral. It is legal not spiritual truth; not Christian, but Jewish.

The value of it only arises when that Man is regarded as the embodiment of an Ideal of Life: but then it is that Ideal of Life (God's life) that is accepted. The Ideal the Christian accepts is given through the New Testament, not through any man. It was the Ideal Love which the earliest Christians felt as a divine movement in their souls, and which they called Logos or Christ.

"He who loves is born of God" (1 John iv. 7).

*Conceptions of Christ are as follows:—*

(a) The *orthodox* conception: that Christ was on earth the Eternal Incarnate Logos—Son of God, a Divine Man, born of the Virgin Mary. He was baptised, tempted, transfigured, crucified, and raised from the grave outside Jerusalem, about A.D. 33. He ascended into the sky, whence He is to come on the clouds. Criticism has riddled this idea so greatly that only unreasoning prejudice keeps it alive to-day. Men will long hold to old ideas, as to the Ptolemaic theory, long after they are exposed.

(b) The *liberal-Christian* conception is of Christ as a good man, a great teacher, who was born in the natural way, and whose body did not rise. The upholders of this cut out (arbitrarily) the miraculous and leave the rest of the Gospel of Mark. But they do not show why the monotheist Paul who knew Peter, James and John, could preach a man Jesus Christ as risen from the grave (1 Cor. xv.), as the Lord by whom all things were made (1 Cor. viii. 6), as pre-existing and eternal, for so He is described even in 1 Cor., which liberal Christians ascribe to Paul.

(c) The third view is the *symbolic-mystic* view of Christ. The meaning of Christianity then is that some men came into God-consciousness at the beginning of our era. By a synthesis of religious influences, Jewish, Hellenistic and Eastern, there arose men who felt, experienced, the Inward Urge towards Illimitable Life, which gradually they

found meant a dying to legalism, and the sin it protested against and yet upheld, and thus a rising to a more spiritual life, joy and power. They interpreted this Ideal as the Logos sown in their hearts and called the Son of God. This experience culminated in their being cast out and rejected by the representatives of legalism, the Scribes and Priests at Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin. The "Christ" or Ideal Life was thus "crucified!" Spiritual Life could only be realised in these Christians by this process of dying to the world, to the natural man and the external rules that vainly hedged him in, and thus arising to a new life "in Christ," in the Ideal of the Christian Community. They still spoke of God, as the Jews did, as the Father outside nature and man, in "heaven": but they had hold of a revolutionary principle, viz., that God was Christ, descended or translated or self-imprisoned into this finite, struggling world in time, and His life and law were love. The message is two-fold.

(a) God is Love. God, we now must see, dies ever to live. *God ever gives away his life, and so gains it.*

(b) And such too is man's true life, ceaseless aspiration to spiritual life in himself and others. *In that aspiration he proceeds by Crucifixion, by suffering struggle, as in climbing a mountain, and ever thereby reaching new power, joy and Vision!*

What really is the Lord of all? What is it that ultimately governs the lives of men? What is the Alpha and Omega, the power that binds all things together? It is not a man, a Jew in heaven, the finite consciousness of one whose thoughts follow one another. It is the Moral Ideal that majestically is King! The rule of the Moral Ideal is the moral law or principle of the Universe. This is what Amos and Isaiah realised to some extent, so that God to them was king, ruling all nations by the moral law. They said: "Do good and ye shall live, and so God will be with you" (Amos v.: the whole chapter is a splendid exposition of the dark "day of the Lord," when sin brings its penalty).

To be just and humane was the Moral Ideal in Amos. In Christianity, it was summed up in Love, and put within the heart of man. There is God known as "Christ," the Love-principle of God deep in the human soul. To obey that is joy and peace, it is more life and fuller. Not to obey brings less life, unrest, "hell" (*i.e.*, the morally purging pain, not unreasonable endless torment).

There is no escape for men or nations from this moral law, the rule of the moral Ideal of justice and love, the Passion of life-giving Life. Those who obey are blessed. Those who refuse are painfully disciplined. Thus, the Great War's agonies, losses, waste and wounds was the "hell" resulting from the greed, pride, revenge and fear of all the belligerents in the preceding 150 years. They had worshipped wealth, and cultivated armies (or navies) to seek thereby to gain or keep colonies and concessions. The war was the offspring of sin. Those peoples that did not start it had taught those who did start it how that colonies and concessions could be obtained by war. Fear of loss by others ruled each people. Germany feared Russia, France and Britain feared Germany. God was left out. But God is not mocked. Hence the war, as a dark day of the Lord, a world-judgment on avarice and fear. The Moral Law is "Love and ye shall be loved" (Emerson), but covet and ye shall be shunned, and hated maybe. It is well with the pure, just and magnanimous, now and forever. So does "Christ" rule the world and fill all things: but that Christ is no man in heaven. He is God in the inner principle of His complex, vast life. Christ is self-givingness in God and man. To find Christ is salvation.

The principle of "Christ crucified" is the moral law of God. Life becomes enriched by death, *i.e.*, by giving life away in love, intelligent and illimitable love. The soul that refuses to obey, decays, and goes into some "hell" of purgatory (the two really are one) here or hereafter. The Moral Law is the Universe acting on the side of this moral ideal or "Christ" or principle of the cross. The soul that follows this Mystic Way of the cross can

rest in the Lord. "To fly to the bosom of Christ" and "come to Him" means just that—to humbly die to live and rely on the Living God (whose law a soul thus obeys) to "back up" one's seemingly feeble efforts. There is no escape from this cross-life or Moral Ideal. If men reject this Christ, there is no other salvation. He that seeks to secure his own pleasure or those of his friends by doing ill to others (or another nation) cannot thus mock God. Such is the way of War and more wars. They come by fear and greed and pride. The minority who teach that war is not the will of God may seem feeble, but can rest in the Moral Law which ever prevails in the long run, however much men may suffer in persistently refusing its "still small voice." The Christ or ultimate principle of the universe is a Moral Love "that will not let us go."

## PART II.

### THE MEANING OF CHRISTIANITY IN MODERN THOUGHT AND LIFE.

Those who fall on this "stone," this eternal rock of ages, this need to give life if we are to have life, are broken, but on whom it falls in judgment, they are ground to dust! That is, this Rock rules! Even nature is ruled by the Moral Ideal. Nature is so organised as to evolve and educate souls. Its very "hardness" and seeming callousness is to draw out man's courage in work and endurance and inventiveness. So by "Christ" all things were made (1 Cor. viii. 6: Col. i. 15-17: John i. 1-3). That this Christ, this inner law of humanity, unveiled in the early Christians, should be by them personified and projected was inevitable. Amos has so thought of the Moral Ideal as a Sovereign Law-giver in heaven, a Person. (God is Life, super-personal and infinite, and so ineffable, indescribable). Christ was really God, but, since the Jews thought of God as outside (even if near) man and nature, and yet they felt God in their hearts, they called this latter "Christ," for Saviour and Lord and Logos was this Love-principle within them felt to be. Christianity is that experience uniting man to God and to his fellow-man, and opening up more life and fuller, here and hereafter.

## PART II.

# THE MEANING OF CHRISTIANITY IN MODERN THOUGHT AND LIFE.

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### A. *CHRISTIANITY IN MODERN THOUGHT.*

From what has been written above it is clear that the essence of Christianity is the experience of an inward Life of Faith active by Love. By faith is meant a buoyant sense that the Ultimate Power is Love, is good, is a "Father"-Spirit: or as it might be now said, faith is trust in the Universe, because it is ultimately ruled by an indwelling Life, which we cannot comprehend or describe, but is at heart an Eternal Love that "will not let us go." This Love is called Christ in the New Testament. Christianity is the experience that God is Love, and Love is man's deep law. To live in this sphere, by this "Way" or Christ-life, is to die to mere legalism and sin, and to rise to the spiritual realm of the Kingdom of God.

How can this experience be wrought out in modern life?

There are many aspects of the early Christians which do not appeal to us now.

Their scheme of things was certainly deficient—and in two directions, viz., thought and life.

(a) In thought, they were limited to the dualism of the Jews who teach (and taught) that God is the Creator, a limitless, unchanging spirit, but distinct from nature and man, his creations (see Jewish Encyclopædia: "Theology"). Some Jews were not confined to this Judaism, but had begun to overcome it by means of the Hellenistic Logos, otherwise



called Christ, Wisdom, Spirit of God, Son of God, Saviour. Such a picture of a Supreme God in heaven connected with earth only by a mediator is yet quite inadequate for *modern* thought. Again, the Jewish idea of the resurrection of the bodies of all men at the Last Judgment is also crude and unscientific, and will not last. It was believed in by the writers of the New Testament who thought that as Christ "rose from the dead" it "must have been" in that manner! Thus, the theology of the early Christians was not a final one!

(b) In matters of life, the New Testament is also inadequate as a guide to-day. The belief of the early Christians that Christ would soon come to judgment gave them an "interimsethik" in some matters of external life, as in the status of women and slaves. They neglected social reform, and science and art (so far as these then existed). Citizenship was almost unknown to them, for Cæsar was contrasted with God. Thus both in their ideas in theology and ethics the early Christians and the New Testament are not now adequate. It is necessary to see how essential Christianity (Faith active by Love) is still profound and practical Truth amid the newer intellectual ideas of to-day.

[The principles of Christianity were not an "interimsethik": they are eternal: *e.g.*, to "love one's enemies" is a principle, not a temporary rule about external conduct.]

## 1.—THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE OF GOD.

The experience which men called being "in Christ," or to "know Christ," was really an experience of God, of the Ultimate Reality, apprehended, not comprehended. Christ meant the Ideal Spiritual Life, the life of Faith active by Love, the Indwelling descended God in the soul at work. This was what fulfilled the best in Judaism and all legal systems. The Christians felt they had been translated into the kingdom of the Spirit. Christ was

the Way to God (John xiv. 3). This was the Mystic Way. It meant

(a) Repentance from the life of fear, greed, pride, lust and hate:

(b) Illumination by Christ, or the Spiritual Ideal, opening up faith, love, humility, purity and joy:

(c) The dark hours of cross-bearing, loneliness (apparent, not real), disappointment and doubt:

(d) A resurrection to influence in the world, the soul becoming a light of the world, sharing God's own life eternal.

Such stages do not necessarily follow one another. They may interpenetrate, or be in a varying order, or be repeated: but they are phases or aspects of the Mystic Path.

The Christian life is such a "Way," in taking which the soul becomes conscious of God, of eternal realities, as its own true life. The Way is one in which the soul feels it is helped along, or carried by a stream of life that has something inexhaustible (and so infinite) about it. "Love never faileth," *i.e.*, never passes away, is never exhausted. The more one loves the more love one has to give. This is the fact also of truth. Truth given is truth more clearly realised. Such is the nature of all spiritual life. It grows by being given away, by being shared. Thus it is inexhaustible, infinite, eternal—divine! Obedience to the Christ-Ideal is thus the way to find God, the Eternal Reality imprisoned in the universe.

It has been asked: Whence comes this inexhaustible life, of which Bergson writes? It is a Life beyond time and so beyond causality. In man it is as a well of water ever springing up (John iv. 14). This is the paradox of Spiritual Life: the more it is given the more it absorbs!

It is not enough for a man to see signs of there being a God: such signs as are in crystal-forms and flower-forms which indicate a Great Mathematician, or even the Moral Law (Love and so be loved) which proves a Moral God to exist.

The soul wants to know God in the sense of actually communing with God. That is what to "know" God means in the New Testament. This face to face knowledge is a felt or experienced sense of God, and it comes by the soul being true to the life-principles of the fifth and sixth chapters of the Gospel of Matthew!

To live humbly, to cease from anger and hate, to forgive dark wrongs, to love one's foes, to be sincere and pure—in that Way the soul comes to feel it is being carried along, the Vista opens up, a purpose in life appears, an influence of good upon others arises. This world is known then as a School for souls. Glimpses are experienced of the Cosmic Will, working all things together for good to those who love Him. Even pain is used up for the soul's enrichment. The soul gains a "sense of something far more deeply interfused" (Wordsworth), which yet is not closed within a "block" universe, finished and complete, nor is He bound by fore-ordained events. The soul feels a freedom which is God's own freedom, a freedom to love in new ways as the need arises.

The question: Are we free is wrongly put. Man can become free. True freedom is a gradually realised divine life. Then man is truly himself.

The soul cannot see the goal, but feels that something timeless is being worked out in time; an Aim of Eternity is gradually being realised, viz., a Kingdom of souls like God! What in detail this means none can tell. But the soul reaching the deep law of spiritual life, viz., more life by giving life, has real communion with God, whose law it is. God eternally "dies" and so lives the more. "Love is the consciousness of survival in the act of self-surrender" wrote R. J. Nettleship, and God is this Love. Man as love is at-one with God.

It is often that men seek God in the wrong way. They kneel and pray—but there is heard no Voice. The dreadful silence appals them, and they rise unhelped. Or they brood in speculation as to whether there be any God who cares. They seek intervention

from an outside God in their affairs, and none comes, and so they declare God does nothing. But really they are seeking a God whom they would soon tire of did He exist—a finite local God, whose voice can be heard, or who is only in some events and not in others, a local God who is outside the world-process, and occasionally interferes in it, a patronising God, who cares only for some people. Such a God certainly does *not* exist, and really the soul would not long be satisfied with such a God.

God is an Ineffable Life that aspires by sacrificing itself for its children.

It is in a certain *quality* of life that God is found, experienced, not seen or heard. "He that loves habitually knows God" (1 John iv. 7), for "God is Love." Christ is the name for this descended Ideal, whose urge or pressure or aspiration men feel in their hearts. They find God as "Christ," *i.e.*, as the movement of the Love-Ideal, the Life-giving Life, in their souls: and prayer is listening for His message in regard to life's affairs.

In prayer the soul must worship Life as it ascends to Truth, Beauty and Goodwill. in souls.

Such a *cosmic consciousness* is the goal of the Mystic Way into God. Christianity asserts that there is a unifying Love-principle which binds together all the energies of the universe and is especially unveiled in Christian souls. This is called "Christ," the binding force which makes all things "a harmonious whole" (Dr. Weymouth's translation of Colos. i. 17). Christ is the Idea of the Universe. As the parts of a printing machine are united by an "Idea," viz., printing, and all parts exist somehow for that end, or as the parts of a tree are held together by the inward unifying life, whose sap goes into all the twigs, so "Christ" is a name for the Logos or Reason of the Universe, the Idea of the whole, seeking expression in many forms. Christians feel this as an Illimitable Life, by which "more life and fuller" comes to the self that gives itself away to bless a world. Such an experience has been called "cosmic consciousness" by Dr.

Bucke, in his excellent volume of that name. He gives a number of cases, such as Mahomet, Paul, Dante, Walt Whitman, wherein men grasped the Universe as a Unity, in an uplifting experience, and felt the Heart of all things as Eternal Love and Life.

Paul's "conversion" was really an illumination rather than a turning from sin. He was "kicking against the ox-goad," in resisting the deep spirit of Good-will which Christianity unfolds as the life-principle of God to be accepted by man. The crisis came on the road to Damascus. He saw a "light." This was no external light, but a physiological accompaniment of the mind in a sudden flash of illumination. Many men have "seen a light" in such an experience. Paul felt the Cosmic Life, and passed into the Central Consciousness at least for a time, and again and again he knew that experience.

Dante (1265-1321) wrote "Vita Nuova" in 1309, and told of the oncoming of Cosmic Consciousness, when he was 44 years of age.

Francis Bacon (1561-1626) probably wrote the original form of "Shakespeare's Plays," which Shakespeare put into a later form fit for the stage. Bacon was a learned man, who wrote history, and also was a traveller. Shakespeare was none of these, but it needed such a man as Bacon to produce the histories and tragedies of the Plays. This Bacon had cosmic consciousness at times, as Dr. Bucke shows. The Sonnets reveal it.

So Walt Whitman (1819-1892), who obtained glimpses of the Universal Life, wrote "I know that all the men ever born are my brothers, and the women my sisters and lovers, and that a Kelson (or binder) of creation is Love." There is the Illimitable Life shining through Whitman. So also with Edward Carpenter. Dr. Bucke also describes the experiences he himself had in an English city. How "all at once he found himself wrapped around as it were by a flame-coloured cloud. For an instant he thought of fire, the next he knew the light was in himself.

Directly afterwards there came upon him a sense of exultation, of immense joyousness, accompanied or immediately followed by an intellectual illumination quite impossible to describe. He saw and knew that the cosmos is not dead matter, but a living Presence, that the soul of man is immortal, that the universe is so built and ordered that, without any peradventure, all things work together for the good of each and all, and that the foundation principle of the world is what we call love."

Thus "the spiritual man can read the meaning of everything" (1 Cor. ii. 15: Moffatt's translation).

The new life is variously named in various religions and forms of thought, and it is apprehended in varying degrees. It is called

Spiritual life, in the "Pauline" epistles.

The Kingdom of God, in the Gospels.

The Pearl of great price, also there.

Nirvana, in Hindoo thought.

The Spirit-filled life, in modern evangelical sects.

The new birth, in the Fourth Gospel.

Gabriel, as Mahomet called it.

Beatrice, as Dante called it.

My Soul, in Whitman's phrase.

Arahatship, in Buddhism.

Brahmic splendour, to the Hindoos.

My friend, in "Shakespeare's" sonnets.

This experience of God as the Vast Love-life is the essentially Christian experience which created the Church and the New Testament. Men have sub-consciousness, dream-consciousness, sense-consciousness (as animals), self-consciousness (higher than animals apparently), and may move into glimpses of cosmic or God-consciousness. It is this last which brings joy and peace and liberty from the assumed authority of priests or the narrow legalism and patriotism of States.

Dr Bucke's cases are mostly of outstanding men, giants in imaginative sympathy; but it is possible for ordinarily intelligent people to have their experience, though with less width of Vision. If only a

few select souls could gain such an experience, the cause of spiritual religion would be hopeless indeed. But reality is a Vast Life, whose inner life-principle (or character and aim) is Love, called "Christ Jesus." The soul that dares habitually to love can turn itself on itself and feel the *divine* Life-movement in its love-activities. Not able perhaps to theoretically see the meanings of this, the souls of ordinary folks can yet catch a glimpse of the Invisible, and know by intuitive vision of their deeper soul-life the Reality that is final, called God.

Matthew Arnold in his poem "The Buried Life" helps to that vision, as does Edward Carpenter in "Towards Democracy," where Democracy means the rule of the Mass-man in men.

Thus it is possible to reach God, not by the intellect alone, but by the active practice and experience of Aspiration and Love, and in such experience to "see" (by intuitive insight) or feel the flow of a loving Life, which bears all things on its bosom, and works all together for good.

The early Christians *interpreted* their sense of the Love-Ideal imperfectly, as if it were a second Person in the Godhead (1 Cor. viii. 6: Col. i. 15-17: Phil. ii. 1-10: John i. 1-4). They took the mediators which Jewish Hellenistic thought provided—Wisdom, Logos, Christ, Son of God, Heavenly Man. But really this movement from Deism should still go on, as now it does go on, on to the idea that God is one but complex, as man is complex: that God has descended by His Love, to evolve souls, like Himself, in time. There are not two conscious Persons or three in God, but God is One Super-personal (and so ineffable, indescribable) Life, in which souls are being born and trained into His image! Thus the New Testament does not give a final theology. There cannot be one, for theology is a science, and the queen of sciences. All science is progressive. The Christian *experience* really goes beyond the dualism of Hellenistic thought, which told of God separated from man and only joined by a Mediator-Logos or Christ. That expe-

rience is of God himself, direct. The Supreme or Ultimate Power is in man expressed. Man is a microcosm. The Love-Soul of the Universe is wrapped up in him. The heart of man, as of God, is life-giving Love, and to feel and accept this is salvation, the "new birth."

Those who are aspiring to be really like God—Him who sends his sunshine on good and evil—they are the aspiring souls by whom God acts, His children in very deed, and He holds them for ever. As they climb upwards they find they are, as it were, on a moving staircase. The way upward itself lifts them upwards, and seconds their efforts. Even in sleep they sub-consciously are moved upward. Metaphysically, it is impossible to comprehend the nature of this Vast Unifying Background-Life, men call God. He is a complex Personality, or super-personal Life. But man, made in His image, is also complex. Man has a conscious life, but also a dimly conscious life, and a sub-conscious mental life. May it not be so in God; the world of nature (acting automatically) being His sub-conscious energising life? In man God is self-conscious, and in some He has cosmic consciousness. But though theology as a science must be progressive, yet the religious experience ever is of the response of the Universe to those who dare to do the good-will, even when it does not "pay," and is seemingly but folly. They, faithful over few things, find themselves rulers over many things: having loved, without ulterior end, they find they are loved, unsought. This experience is of the All-Unifying Good Life deeper than, yet working in and by, nature and men, stars and souls!

Fyodor Dostoevsky, the Russian novelist, in his story of wonderful insight, called "The Brothers Karamazov," writes thus:—

"Brothers, have no fear of men's sin. Love a man even in his sin, for that is the semblance of Divine Love, and is the highest love on earth. Love all God's creation, the whole and every grain of sand in it. Love every leaf, every ray of God's

light. Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things. Once you perceive it you will begin to comprehend it better every day. And you will come at last to love the whole world with an all-embracing love. Love the animals. God has given them the rudiments of thought and joy untroubled. Do not harass them, do not deprive them of their happiness. Love children especially. They live to soften and purify our hearts. At some thoughts one stands perplexed, especially at the sight of men's sin, and wonders whether one should use force or humble love. Always decide to use humble love. If you resolve on that once for all, you may subdue the whole world. Loving humility is marvellously strong, the strongest of all things, and there is nothing else like it. Brothers, love is a teacher, but one must know how to acquire it, for it is hard to acquire, it is dearly bought, it is won by long labour. For we must not only love occasionally, for a moment, but for ever. Every one can love occasionally, even the wicked can. My friends, pray to God for gladness. Be glad as children, as the birds of heaven. And let not the sin of men confound you in your doings. Fear not that it will wear away your work and hinder its being accomplished. Do not say 'sin is mighty, evil environment is mighty, and we are lonely and helpless.' There is only one means of salvation; make yourself responsible for all men's sins. You will see at once that it is really so, and that you are to blame for every one and for all things. Seek no reward, for great is your reward on this earth, viz., the spiritual joy which is only vouchsafed to the righteous man. When you are alone, pray. Love all men, love everything. Hell is the suffering of being unable to love."

Such, then, is the Mystic Way to God, or into God, for all souls who live for Him. By love men get more deeply into union with the Infinite, and become God! "He that loveth (habitually—see the Greek text) knoweth God."

It is by intuition, not by mere intellect, that man can get a glimpse or moment of this Cosmic Consciousness, of the Meaning of the Universe.

By intuition we mean insight through sympathy, based on experience: as against the calculating of ideas which the intellect does. One man feels the Urge towards Truth, Beauty, and goodwill-illimitable. This is no passing whim. It is daily, continuous. He is thus urged on to fuller spiritual life. He thinks of it because he feels it. In this thought no doubt he uses intellect, but he does not argue about it. It is just a wonderful, beautiful experience, the best thing in his life. As he obeys it, life opens up its glories, its meaning, its all-uniting Life, or God. God he feels, by intuitive sympathy, is this Life-stream, which gives life away and so has it ever the more. He dimly realises that this kind of Life holds *all* things, and disciplines for their good the men who disobey it. Such a reaching to God by humble obedience to the aspiring Life-urge is clearly different from arguing intellectually that there *is* a God, by proofs from crystals or history, good and valuable and accessory though such intellectual effort is.

The Christian feels this—that "he who loves (habitually, the Greek means) is born of God, and knows or communes with God." "The fruit of the spirit" is said to be "Love, joy, peace, good temper, kindness, generosity, fidelity, gentleness, self-control" (Moffatt's translation). But really the fruit is Love, Confident Love, and the rest follow.

Love means the life-imparting life, the soul going out of itself, dying, and so living. God ever gives life and so lives. Love is inexhaustible. "Love never faileth" (1 Cor. xiii.), *i.e.*, never passes away. The divine Spirit or "Christ" (for "the Lord is the Spirit," 2 Cor. iii. 17) is realised in Love, in this conscious life-imparting energy.

Joy is an aspect of it.

Love is glad, profoundly joyous, in spite of earth's dark sorrows.

Peace is joy in another aspect—peace with God, *i.e.*, with the universe, for when a soul is living the God-life of life-imparting energy, it is at peace. All things must and do work together for its good and through it for the world's good. Evil is transmuted by Love.

Love is long suffering and kind and good. Love suffers long (1 Cor. 13). The early Christians were experts in the meaning of this spiritual or Christian life. Faithful is love, not insincere: meek and self-controlled. Love is not angry or bitter or revengeful or lustful. It ever imparts Life.

"Suppose," wrote R. L. Nettleship, "suppose for a moment that all human beings felt permanently and universally to each other as they now do occasionally to those whom they love best. It would follow that all the pain in the world would be swallowed up in the joy of doing good. . . . Such would be the atonement of man and God, God eternally living in His own death, eternally losing and eternally returning to, Himself."

## 2.—THE FULLER MODERN THOUGHT OF GOD.

The New Testament doctrine of God is the Jewish one, *plus* the idea of the indwelling Christ or Love-Ideal: *i.e.*, it is a confusion. It is in transition. It is not final.

The New Testament was written by strict monotheists, who could not let go the idea of the Supreme God outside though near Nature and man, and yet they felt the Christ within, the Logos eternal descended into their souls.

To-day it is necessary to move into a fuller, clearer, more reasonable idea of God as the living Unity of the Universe, moving onward, reaching through nature moulding man.

(a) The first question which confronts the modern enquirer into Reality or the nature of God, is *What is this we call "matter"?* What are air, rock, water, from which the rest of things seem to come.

What are wood and iron? Are they a "fortuitous concourse of atoms"? Or are they essentially related to mind? If so, to man's mind or to Another's? The ancients often believed that chaotic matter was eternal, and God formed it into an orderly system (see Genesis i. 1-4, taken from Babylonian ideas). But this harsh crude dualism does not content the modern mind.

What then is matter? Is it unknowable? Is it a substance in itself? To answer such questions fully is not possible yet, but it is not hard to realise that the distinction between matter and mind is one made by mind. It is, as Prof. Wm. Ward points out, a duality of subject and object really, and not a dualism of mind and matter. Both subject and object are mental facts, or energies rather.

It is not possible to describe matter fully, because it is the energy of the Ineffable God. But we may say that matter is energy. This is seen in coal from whose unloosed energies comes electricity (through turbines and magnets). Power emerges only so far as power is used. So sand, water and air are energies, not conscious, but not dead: for they exist only in relation to other energies in one vast universe. This universe has a unity and a purpose in evolution and history, and so is the energy of One Will, organised by Mind. It is the Will which is God, and is good, though acting under the limitations of time. This view of matter must now be explicated more fully.

*Take a piece of wood.*

It is cut out of the "continuum" of matter by the intellect, and considered abstractly and apart. It has colour, shape, opaqueness in sunlight, transparency in X rays, it is fibrous, hard, inflammable, grown in cells, includes carbon, and so forth.

Such facts are all in the mind, by means of the sunlight or X rays, and the eye and hand. Colour is a fact, then, but not a simple fact. It implies the wood *plus* sunlight *plus* eyesight *plus* consciousness.

In the dark, or if a man be asleep, there is no colour or transparency. What *then* is the wood?

It is said to be atoms composed of vibrating electrons. These, seen in sunlight, give a sensation of colour, shape, etc. Is it possible to get at what vibrating electrons are? The colour, etc., partly reveal the wood. Another thing will yield in sunlight another colour, and other experiences. The wood is partly realised by qualities experienced. But there seems to be a "ding-an-sich," as Kant said, a thing behind the effects it produces, a substance holding the qualities, producing the sensations. Is that so? Undoubtedly, the wood is more than man's ideas of it, and all believe this, but it is yet a *spiritual* set of facts, some of which man knows. It is a Life-Energy which man can experience. It "appears" in sunlight as coloured, and what does not appear is *more* of the same stuff as what does (in relation to sunlight, etc.) appear. All things are vibrating electrons, in various degrees and forms. But this term "vibrating electrons" is also derived from the experiences of man. Indeed man cannot apply any term to describe reality but such as is a mental term. Anyone who has experienced a buzzing in his ear for some years may take that as an illustration. The buzzing is vibrating energy, in such a place and of such intensity, that it can be experienced. Now such is a mental experience or state or energy of *mental* life. It may be in the conscious mind or in the sub-conscious mind, as when a man is asleep. So vibrations are mental facts and matter is the living pulsations in the sub-conscious mind of God, and such, in wood, *plus* sunlight, eyesight and consciousness of man, appear as colour, shape and heat, according to the degrees of vibrations, or the kind thereof. Different things are different forms and degrees of living energy, felt as vibrations by man, and as colour, hardness when eye and touch are used.

So Prof. Aliotti (Padua), as a scientist, wrote: "Matter with all its attributes is at bottom of spiritual stuff. . . . We must conceive reality in terms of consciousness."

Matter, then, is *God's life, energising* in various sub-conscious ways, for certain ends.

It is organised by God's thought, moved by His *Goodwill* (Christ).

Every atom is *organised*, every stone or plant is organised by the all-pervading Mind, whose energies are there pulsating.

Moreover, matter is of *inter-related* energies: they all act on one another, and form a Whole, One Life. They are not the whole of God's vast life, but a sub-conscious phase of it, acting now automatically, since He by thought once arranged them.

The points to be noted on "matter" are as follow:

- (1) Every description of matter must be and cannot be in terms of man's *experience*, or mental life. If man has reached matter, as all believe, he has reached something intelligible. "Vibrations of electrons" are words descriptive of the mental energy of Life.
- (2) Life has two aspects, mind and energy. They never exist apart. Mind is not mere passive ideas. It energises. Even to think is an activity. Stones are *mind - energy*. Materialistic Scientists only believe in energy (or substance with energy). "Christian" scientists (the sect) only believe in mind. But the two are one fact. The distinction between subject and object, or mind and energy, is made *in* mind.
- (3) Much matter is *organised* into crystals (granite, and even many metals as iron are crystalline). All matter is in molecules under "laws." Amorphous things have "laws" of their own nature. Air and water are organised. Such organisation was by God's thought. Mind-energy is organised by mind as its vehicle.
- (4) All forms of mind-energy are *interrelated*: as water, ice, steam, are forms of  $H_2O$ , as related to the temperature of air. All things are mind-energies, organised by thought, and related in one vast whole or unity.

A thing, say a stone, only exists in its relations to other things, air and stones, &c. It exists as part of a whole, which is the living energies of One Life.

- (5) There are *planes* of being of mind-energy. The sum is God: or the unity (in variety) is God. In God's Mind are energies of sub-conscious life, and such are matter: as in a man's life may be a vigorous intellect yet in abeyance while he is asleep: or passionate sex-love (a kind of refined "matter") may be in abeyance while a man is alone. Life is complex and has grades of consciousness.
- (6) Energies organised by mind tend to become *automatic* when mind has succeeded in organising them, *i.e.*, organising its own lower planes of life. Thus matter was once thought out by God, but now seems to act automatically, having been moulded to its uses. It is now reliable for man to use, *e.g.*, to build houses, cook, run trains. It is really now a School for Souls. The attention of God is withdrawn, so it is automatic.

Compare how man had to think of skating or cycling till, when learned, he does these automatically.

- (7) The *aim* of God in organising his energies into automatic matter-vibrations of life was to give life to souls, more life and fuller, *i.e.*, the aim was Love. This is felt by Christians as their deepest life. It is the Christian revelation and law. God loved men into being, but in time and under conditions, so that pain and sin have temporarily arisen in the process. But there is a Love-Tendency in the universe, holding it together. This is Christ, the Moral Ideal which rules as the Moral Law winning souls to its obedience.
- (8) This aim of God to produce and save souls is accomplished by *evolution*. It will probably be shown that the protozoa came from the warm sea, from colloids therein, *via* proteids and protoplasm. If so, matter has produced

the body of man. Matter must be spiritual to produce a vehicle for spiritual life: *i.e.*, air, rocks and water are energies of God, woven by the indwelling God whose "body" they are, into vehicles for souls.

- (9) The spiritual nature of matter is also shown by its effect on consciousness in the case of food and drink. Thus, alcohol, which is a poison, not a food, at first acts as a stimulant. The man feels elated. Then it acts as a narcotic. The man feels sleepy. If matter can affect thought, it must exist in relation thereto.
- (10) Further, Nature educates the imagination of men, and so is itself spiritual. The artist draws inspiration from scenery. So the study of stars and rocks draws out man's sense of wonder and of orderliness. Not enough are children educated in the open air.

Moreover, it is by being conscious of matter that the mind grows into self-consciousness.

Thus matter is no hard substance unrelated to mind. What exists is Mind-Energy in various forms, and all organised as a school for souls.

Matter is one of those forms. The stars are the "cells" of God's body, and aspiring souls are His brain, the organ by which He moves onward.

Man can never know what matter is completely, for it is the life-energy of a Super-personal Being, God: but man can know that matter is a spiritual fact, a Life-energy organised by Love, called Christ, as a school for souls.

*Space* is the orderly arrangement, in God's mind, of the mind-energies of matter. As in a song, the notes follow one another, such is space. Stones and trees are in space only because they are differing mental states or energies. Space is a diagram flung by the intellect over mental states. The stars are "millions of miles" away, but what is a mile? An experience of man amid mental states. The scientific idea of space as a reality in itself is largely an illusion.



*Time* does not exist apart from experience either. It is the changing of mental states, which thus come to interpenetrate one another. Space and time are forms of the existence of mental states or mind-energies.

Reality is a Vast Ocean of Life (God). In it are icebergs (matter) of congealed life. They are of the ocean, and in it, and yet resist it and can move back into it. They exist for a purpose, and are a form of life.

The *mathematical* forms (crystals, flowers) and the *moral* world-purpose (to educate intelligence and love) also show that nature has its Source in an Infinite Mind in which it lives.

#### *How is matter created?*

Matter is a relic of living organisms. It is Life or living energy from which the tension or attention has been withdrawn, and so it acts automatically, but is spiritual all the same. A cut flower dies away into dust. So is matter produced. The stars are compacted star-dust of the hot nebula. But that star-dust may have once been in living forms. Life or lives organised them, and then went on to attend to other things. The stars are not now conscious, as Fechner suggested, but they are composed of living mental energies, unconscious and automatic in the One Life, much as a man's lungs go on automatically, and practically unconsciously, though once life thought of breathing in order to breathe, *i.e.*, in past generations of animals.

Life ever has a living body, a vehicle. We throw off carbonic acid gas. Such is the creation of matter, which may be lifted into conscious forms again, as in plant life, which uses the carbon up once more.

The relation of God to matter is like that of a Musician to the songs he forms of his own energy, in his mind. Thus, Schubert created 600 songs, which then would exist in his memory sub-consciously. So matter is in God, the Super-Mind.

Matter seems to have been produced by God from his own mental energy, which He wove into thought-forms. Thus electrons came and so atoms and mole-

cules and star-dust in nebulae and so stars with their planets. The whole is still the sub-conscious mind-energies in and of God, and to some small extent in and of man now. The Infinite Central Consciousness imprisoned his life within His organised energies, in and by which He has evolved this earth, its warm condensed vapour, the ocean, protoplasm in that ocean, protozoa, fish, and on to reptiles, apes, man, civilised man, Christian civilised man. The indwelling God has guided the process, for His aim is Christ, the intelligent illimitable Love, and all things work together to uphold and evolve this Love. Such is the Moral Ideal which is not mocked, and which no man can oppose and go unpunished.

Into all plants, animals and men God put points or "aspects" of His own vast life, and they are as twigs of one tree, put forth by the invisible tree, and one sap is flowing in them all. These "souls" use up the "matter" of God's life as their vehicle of expression and education. Matter thus is the inter-related, energising, automatic, mental states of the sub-conscious mind of God. Because it is spiritual it is partly knowable by man in its various relations.

(b) The next point to the spirituality of "matter" is the *Dynamic Unity of the Universe*: the planes of Life are in One Life. Stars and souls are aspects of One Ineffable Life, for ever nameless, though names must be used. God is the Unity of the Universe—and *more*, for He presses on and is not exhausted by what already is seen to exist. But consider this Unity. It is the pre-supposition of all science. When a fact (*e.g.*, a star) is first discovered, it is presumed it is related to the rest, and so it turns out to be.

The ordinary mind sees the universe at first as consisting of *many things*—loosely existing together, chairs and tables, and roads and stars. But the scientist seeks their *relations*, and finds more and more facts to assure him that they form one inter-related universe. The philosopher then grasps that those relations are constituted by *mind*, and things are mental energies of One Mind. Hegel's "Logic" works this out in its idea.

The *Upânishads*, written from 1000 to 500 B.C., seek to indicate the spiritual unity of the universe, Brahm and the Soul (Atman) being one reality.

Brahm-Atman is the sum of the *Upânishads*; and to reach Brahm, tranquility and self-control are needed. God and the Universe are synonymous, and are known in the soul, one knowing subject in all men. Nature is "maya," illusion. Matter is illusion. The Soul is all, and it is Brahm.

Such an undifferentiated Unity was the philosophy before modern science and the idea of Evolution.

The Hindoo Brahmin priest is a contemplative soul. He cannot see that activity is a reality too. His unity of the universe is a pantheism, and what seems to deny it, *viz*, matter, is merely called "maya." The solution is too easy.

Matter affects the soul, *e.g.*, alcohol gives a hilarity (for a time) and then acts as a narcotic. To a Brahmin all this is ignored. A stone bridge and a man are one reality. He cannot grip *degrees* of reality. He cannot see that Brahm (God) is complex, including planes of life. The Brahmin says the soul goes out of the head at death, and the body, mere "maya," is left behind. It is only appearance. But the Brahmin does not explain why appearances arise.

Such a Unity is not the true nature of God; it gives a sense of the deep reality of Spirit, and of the Unity of the Soul of God. But these are not sufficient in our day. "Matter" must be accounted for. Another kind of Unity is conceived by Dr. MacTaggart (Cambridge). He thinks that the Universe consists only of souls and their states. He rejects the idea of energy. A pillar-box may be "an assemblage of souls" he writes to the present author. God is non-existent as a person or a conscious Being. The only unity of souls is by their love or fellowship, as of men forming a college. There is no personal College. Yet these men are united and have an "esprit de corps." The illustration is unfortunate, for a College had a personal founder or founders. And even if the men came together and agreed to be a college, they could

only do so because of a common Reason in them all. It is this Reason, which permeating all men and things, is God, who is super-personal.

Dr. MacTaggart most reasonably argues that only souls and their states exist: but what of the immense masses of rocks, and the number of stars? They are not the states of finite souls, nor are they souls. They act not as either. But yet they are mental energies—of the Soul-Unity of God (see § on matter).

The Unity of all things is a spiritual, complex Life, having planes of existence—as subconscious "matter," conscious animals and men, and souls of men and angels that gain at times His own cosmic consciousness.

The unity of the Universe is a Life which works! The universe is not static but dynamic. Science traces (a) the long evolution from protozoa, to reptiles, to man, to the cultured and good man: and (b) the movement of agitation or vibration in every "atom," by its "electrons." The Unity is one of mental energies and souls, unconscious, semi-conscious, conscious and super-conscious Life—the whole moving onward, dying to live, urged by the "Love that makes the sun and all the stars," as Dante said in closing his great poem.

It is as if the Universe were the body of God and God its soul: but the universe is spiritual, in degrees, or planes of being. God once acted consciously in granite: but now matter acts automatically. Where then is God acting consciously now, but in aspiring souls (the true Church).

Aspiring souls—in all lands—are as the brain of God. The early Christians likened the Church to a Body, Christ being the Head.

The truer picture now is that the Universe is the Body of God, aspiring souls are the brain of God, or God's organ of activity in His vast adventure of Love, by which he ever seeks to evolve, within Himself, souls that He may love and be loved by for ever!

The Unity of the Universe is God, but this does not exclude *prayer to God*. Mr. A. J. Balfour has well said, in his Gifford Lectures (1914): "The

highest conceptions of God seem to approximate to one of two types. . . . The metaphysical conception emphasises His all-inclusive unity. The religious type emphasises His ethical personality. The metaphysical type tends to regard Him as the logical glue which holds multiplicity together. The religious type . . . worships a Spirit among spirits. . . . Some of the greatest religious teachers, Christian and non-Christian, have held both . . . Nor (so far as I know) has religious mysticism ever felt the least difficulty in bridging the chasm."

It is in the practical mystic that the reconciliation is surely found. The soul that lives in active intelligent love is in God, is God, feels God, "knows" God. "He who loves (habitually) is born of God and knows God" (1 John iv. 7). Not in mere speculation, which only may prove that a God exists, nor in external ritual itself, which can be taken mechanically, nor in animal happiness, nor even in natural amiability, but in humble intelligent love is God found. Till a man believes and feels that love is the basic motive of the Universe, he reaches not the practical mystic Path into union with the Infinite. Such a soul can ask for blessings in prayer, *i.e.*, listen for the Voice of Indwelling Eternal Truth on the practical needs of every-day life, and energise on that line.

Is God "transcendent?" Is He greater than nature and man? Undoubtedly, but He is not outside nature and man. May it not be that he transcends, or is more than, his manifestation in nature and man, for evolution (His method) is not finished. God is still thought of by many as outside nature and man, as a Being apart, as a Providence overlooking human life, and interfering occasionally by miracles, or providences or revelations.

The Jews seem still to think of God so, for they cling to the Old Testament, which put God in heaven, apart from man, so "holy" (separate) was He!

Thus Mr. Montefiore writes:—"The great teachers of Israel were led by God to realise that He was the

lord of nature, but not a part of nature: He was the creator of all, but Himself other than and distinct from all that he had made: above, beyond and outside the world of sense and sight."

Such a view cannot persist, for man sees signs of God in the forms of crystals and flowers, and feels Him in the Moral Law within, saying "Love, and you shall be loved and helped: hate, and you shall be unhappy."

Thus God is the immanent Unity of the Universe, yet He is not fully expressed by any or all facts. In that sense he transcends all existing events.

### (c) *God's Method of Evolution.*

Some have thought that the idea of Evolution will bring Theism to an end. It has been said to-day that Nature governs herself, is a republic, not a monarchy: and that all moral law is explicable from humanity finding gradually a "modus vivendi" on earth. Morality is simply then rules of a happy life among men. Moreover, it is stated that the universe is eternal and needs no God for its creation or continuance. And further, it is argued, man can do without religion, for Buddhism and Confucianism and the modern Ethical movements have no clear idea of God, but are expressions of the laws which rule man's happiness. Many old religions simply personified a force in nature or a law in morals, and were largely superstitious beliefs in demons and other imaginary spirits. Plato practically taught that God was the embodiment of Truth, Beauty and Goodness, living in the eternal realm of Ideas, which described or sent revelations into the phenomenal world. In reply, a modern scientist may urge that Truth, Beauty and Goodness grew gradually in evolution, and did not come from another world. Ideas do not exist apart from men.

Those who study evolution are thus, at first, inclined to explain away the arguments for the existence of God, drawn from the Mathematical order and the moral order in the universe. Mr. J. McCabe may be taken as one such scientific mind, arguing against the argument that order in the

world indicates a God. Science shows that there is only order in *some* things which have come to a "modus operandi," or "modus vivendi" (in the case of man). It is urged that there is also much chance and disorder, as among stars that collide. Disasters happen by earthquakes or wars, or wrecks or fires, in spite of man's ingenuity. There may come a new glacial age and kill off millions of men. Nebulæ are loose, wild, whirling star-dust. Nothing is fixed. The radium atom disintegrates. Atoms come from very slight disturbances or electrons in the "ether," which is but a finer form of matter. No God, it is said, is needed, for this "matter" is eternal, and its throbbing or condensation produces all things.

But why, it may be asked, does either (electrons or atoms) *evolve any forms* of orderly arrangement, and move on to evolve living organic orderly arrangements, and so on to evolve man? Scientists do not meet this "Why?" They only say we know little of ether and it may be eternal. But whether eternal or not, is not the question. Why did it not remain as an unmoved ether-mass? What stirred, and still stirs it? How does it produce the mind which thinks about it? How does it become self-conscious? Even if molecules in crystals are themselves orderly little "bricks," which build up crystals, as is very likely, why are they orderly, and why do they build? What so orders them that they build up granite crystals (quartz, felspar and mica) and from these come all sand and sandstone, shales and slates; and then come cliffs and soil, in which plants can grow, and on plants, animals and men can grow? There is an immense aim and organisation here which agnostics do not account for.

As to beauty in nature, it is true that man selects beautiful forms (bays surrounded by trees, some flowers, or a lovely woman's face and figure) and neglects the myriads of unbeautiful things and persons in the world. Not all flowers even are beautiful. These various shapes are evolved by nature for her own ends, *e.g.*, flowers to attract bees, beauty in women to attract men, while bays are due to ocean effects.

True, but why are there any "ends"? Sex-appetites tend to propagate the species, even if a species be unconscious of this aim in satisfying its sex-appetites. There is an over-ruling end here, in sex. Whence comes it?

As to goodness, morality is said to be merely a finding out of how to live together happily. Mr. McCabe says: "For me morality is but the servant of a higher ideal, the happiness of mankind."

But what of conscience? It truly is not a guide always to what is right. But conscience, even if ill-informed, is more than a desire for happiness. It is a consciousness that some things are *right*, some *wrong*: and men move into a morality which is no mere way of being *happy*. They even choose death than some forms of immorality. They choose a *quality* of soul than pleasure on a lower level. The moral law is not merely a seeking of one's own interests, nor is it a clan or nation seeking its interests. That is confounding morality with a lower legalism which merely makes rules for the physical happiness of a people. Man can be "born again" into a life which lives, not to gain, but to give happiness, a life-giving life. The laws—"do not lie, steal or kill or commit adultery" are the basis of a social happiness: but again we ask, Why?

Why is there *any* law or basis? Why does not confusion alone reign? Why do men find that they want more than their own physical well-being? Further, why (in Christianity) are these rules of external conduct brought into a new sphere, and felt to be the inner-written principle of human life, focussed in a sincere illimitable Love?

The whole reliance on Evolution to disprove theism is an arguing that, because the lower precedes the higher, the lower explains the higher; that (1) matter explains mind and (2) customs explain the Ideal which emerges at last. But what is evolved must have been involved. The very process of evolution to higher forms of Life points to a moral God in the world. The Moral Law rules in the long run, and inwardly punishes men who do

not seek something more than happiness. The man who deliberately forges money, or deceives a girl by promises he never meant to keep, or is consistently cruel to a child, lays up a "hell" of purgatorial pain for himself, here or hereafter. There are levels of "happiness"—that of the brute, and that of the scholar, and that of the saint! Or more accurately there is a search for passing pleasures, and a search for eternal values. Why are these *two* courses open to men? Evolution explains nothing, but only shows how *outwardly* changes have come. It does not explain the steady *aim* of life towards intelligent goodwill expressed in forms of beauty.

The movement of Life-forms upward by struggle at times, but also by co-operation and cross-breeding perhaps even more, is not explained by showing that it is through adaptation to environment, and by cross-breeding. The life that *so* acts needs explanation. Its mathematical, æsthetic and moral *orderliness* (or laws) all imply a Mind indwelling the universe, as the human mind also gives order in life.

Evolution aims at unfolding the eternally-valid principles of God's life—mathematical (as in crystals), æsthetic (in beautiful shapes), and moral (in the law of life by self-crucifixion). Thus God, or the Unity of the Universe is a Life-process and includes evolution. Evolution does not go on blindly outside God, even if it has an element of the automatic about it. Darwin may not give all the truth, but there has surely been a process by each creature seeking to satisfy its appetites of hunger and sex, not knowing in the latter, that, in so doing, it perpetuated the race, and not doing it to mean to accomplish this. There have been variations by cross-breedings, and heredity has handed on such variations. Given protozoa in a warm sea, and the rest follows—plants and fish in the sea, fir trees and reptiles on land, flowering plants and man at last. The rest follows because the process, though contingency is in it, is not altogether blind and without Reason. It goes on in the lower plane of God's life, as the conflict between phagocytes and bacteria that

invade the blood, goes on in a lower plane of a human life. The very fact of sex-appetite being blindly followed (for relief) by the animals, and yet producing thus the future lives, shows there is an overruling reasonable aim or Will, acting almost automatically, in these lower animals, and in man similarly, if man lets his life be ruled by such things. But in man God moves on into a free moral Ideal.

(d) *The Self-Limitation of God.*

The idea of God, or the Ultimate Reality, best in accord with modern thought, is that God is ineffable and inexhaustible Life, with planes or spheres of being, "matter" being His automatic unconscious or sub-conscious life, organised in the past as a school for souls: that God is a Unity, but an open unity, a life pressing on, not a static unity: that God is the Soul of the Universe, not outside it, though He is not exhausted by it. He is not the Unity in a world of Ideas separate from this world—as Plato often suggested, and Aristotle emphasised, and the Neo-Platonists (*e.g.*, Plotinus A.D. 240) confirmed. God is not an abstract eternal Being, a Static Eternal Intelligence. Plato left (in his last dialogues) the world of phenomena in sharp antithesis to the eternal world of ideas. Aristotle hardened this contrast between the eternal and the temporal. Neo-Platonic mysticism used it still further.

We have now to affirm that God is self-limited into creation in time. He is only immanent. His transcendence is not one outside nature and men, but is simply the unexhausted nature of the immanent God.

On the self-limitation of God in creation the following passage is of interest from "The Realm of Ends," by Dr. James Ward, Professor of Mental Philosophy, Cambridge.

"We cannot regard God as absolute in such wise as to deprive ourselves of all personality or initiative. How God created the world, how the One is the ground of the Many, we admit we cannot tell:

but since it is from the Many as real that we start, we are forced to say that *creation implies limitation*: otherwise the world would be nothing. While we have to maintain that in determining the world—his world—God also determines himself, it would be absurd to suppose that in thus determining himself, he, so to say, diminishes himself. Such determination may be negation, nay must be, to be real at all: but it is not abnegation. God does not transform or differentiate himself or fractionate himself into the world, and so cease to be God. Such theism would only be pantheism, which is truly but atheism.” “God implies the world and is not God without it.” “Of this living world, God is the ground . . . an active, living, interested spirit: . . . and the world is God’s self-limitation or self-renunciation. For men ‘faith is striving and striving is faith.’ So God is love, and ‘love creation’s final law.’”

It is clear there is no external God who calmly looks on at human suffering, yet helps no one: a God who sees men struggle for centuries, in pain, with laws they do not understand, and yet “stirs not a finger” to assist them. Such would be no Father, but a mighty fiend!

God is *in* the struggle, and is limited, by being self-imprisoned into this universe, so as to evolve souls.

There may be said to be six ways in which God’s power is limited.

(1) God is limited eternally by His *rational* nature: He cannot make  $2 + 2 = 5$ , or two straight lines enclose a space, or the whole to be less than the part of it. If the stars are spheres, they are not cubes.

(2) God is limited eternally by His *moral* nature. God “cannot lie,” or “deny Himself,” or hate His children, or be revenged.

(3) God is limited by *Time*. Having “descended” to act in time, He must take time. God could not create another Infinite, and so, to express or realise His love, He had to translate His life-energy into

time. Hence came finite things and souls. All events take time. Healing and Justice take time.

(4) God is limited by “*matter*.” It is not only in time He acts now, but He could only evolve new lives by a ‘foil’ to life. Life is a strain, or effort, and so God made part (or all?) of His vast energy to become organised into automatic forms, called “matter.” This is seen in stars—in water, rocks and air. It is in dealing with this organised, automatic energy that Life expresses itself in lives. Bergson has worked this out in “Creative Evolution.”

Now the intricacy of the brain as an organ for intelligent goodwill is immense. The atoms, molecules, nerve-centres, etc., take a long time to arrange or evolve. Hence the “delay,” as it seems to men. God is in the whole process, the organising of energy into stars is His work, evolution is guided by His life-plan. The tendency or Idea of the whole is to express the Spiritual Life (or Christ) in souls: and it cannot fail.

(5) God is limited also by the fact that He is *evolving moral beings*, not machines. It is sons He craves, not automata. His sons are part of and in His life, as currents are in the ocean, and God disciplines them within Himself, as a mother may feed and influence the unborn child within her. Even a terrible war may act as a cleansing process, in the self-healing of Humanity, a fever, which tries to throw off or at least expose the long-cherished poisons of fear, greed and pride.

(6) The self-limitation of God is also in the condition of *progress being realised by problems*, by the efforts made by organisms against something which hinders or thwarts them. Difficulty is the way to development. “Cresco sub pondere.” By discussion truth emerges.

The child develops his mental powers by meeting sums in arithmetic, problems in geometry, events in history, and wrestling with them all. No quest, no conquest: no uncertainty, no efficiency. A foil is for soul-life, as the mountain to the climber. Animal

passions and appetites (hunger and sex) form the foil for the moral life. It grows by controlling these lower energies. Sin is the choice of the lower appeal, due to the animal instincts being still very strong. God has woven His energies into matter and animalism as a School for Souls, who develop by the antithesis set before them. Life evolves in the soul by its facing difficulty, by a strain or tension, day by day.

God has transmuted His life into the all-uniting Ideal Tendency of the Universe. Lowell saw this.

"Truth for ever on the scaffold,  
Wrong for ever on the throne:  
Yet that scaffold sways the future,  
And behind the dim unknown  
Standeth God within the shadow  
Keeping watch upon His own."

In other words, God gave up the bliss of isolation in eternity to descend into creation in time, *i.e.*, He limited Himself. He acted and action is limitation. God imprisoned His life into matter so as to work through it, to evolve men. God is not omnipotent, because His love and reason limited His power. God set out on a Great Adventure of Love, for He needed souls to love, and be loved by. He needs man, and man needs Him.

In this adventure God evolved stars out of His own Life-energy: and at last a planet on which life-forms could appear. Apparently they cannot appear on any of the other of our planets. They are too cold or too hot. In *this* solar system, probably, life is only here, on Earth: unless Mars has it also!

In the experiment, God had failures, such as the Dinosaur, 84 feet long (see the Natural History Museum in London): and the Mammoth. Not on those lines could God make headway. The anthropoid apes gave God more opportunity. Life found brain power more to hand in these creatures. But in mankind, many have been the "failures"—Nero, Alva, Napoleon: freaks, lunatics and idiots.

Yet evolution moves on to higher mental and moral life. And God overrules the evil incidental to the way He goes: for "there is nothing the body

suffers that the soul may not profit by," as George Meredith wrote in "Diana." Cruelty, lust and war are not God's will for man. He is working against them by the Moral Law which brings pain and loss to men who use these evils. It is His will to evoke Beauty, Reason, Love, Social Fellowship and Joy.

Why, then, do sin, poverty, pain, ignorance, contingency and death exist?

*Because God is self-limited*, hampered, acting in time, and so He must take time. He is involved in the intricacy of His creative work (*e.g.*, the brain): it is too wonderful to be completed suddenly.

It is this deep fact that must now be made clear, for if there be one thing more than another which hinders men to-day from the faith that says God is Love, it is the presence of stupid prejudices and cruelties in the world, contingency, and all the sin and pain and death that are ever with man on earth.

### 3.—THE DIFFICULTIES OF CONTINGENCY, SUPERSTITION, SIN, PAIN, AND DEATH.

#### (a) *Contingency.*

The idea of God as an external omniscient Sovereign was held in Judaism and in Islam (which was largely dependant on Judaism), and exists in many minds to-day. It is one which cannot much longer be held. Science has dispelled the idea of a flat earth and a heavenly sphere above it, as the home of the Gods. If heaven be up there to those in Britain, it would be in a different place to those in Australia! Astronomy can find no such heaven, any more than geology can find a Sheol or Hades-cavern in the earth. No God has predestinated all events, or can even fore-see all the ways the lambs of next spring will leap about the fields or the fish in the sea. The idea of Fate or "Kismet" is played out. This is not a block universe, but open at one point, *viz.*, where Life is acting, and especially where conscious aspiration is. Its events are not therefore pre-arranged. God does not know all He will do next by the living organisms in which He

acts, even if the events of material things (automatic states of his mind) may be said to be inevitable. God makes His plan as he goes along, for the realisation of the Ideal or Aim or "Christ," the Kingdom of loving intelligent souls, within Himself. The curves of each leaf, of next autumn, in its falling down, are not surely "known" even to God: though they may be largely determined by law. But certainly the names of all the brides of next year, in the whole world, are not all settled! If they were, men would be mere machines and moral life be impossible. Men feel they are *not* mere machines. Choice is a possibility, even if they choose by their motives: but those motives are self-given, and cannot be pre-arranged. When we say all is by law, we only mean that all things (including men) act by their natures: but man's nature changes as he progresses—or becomes degraded.

Millions of times, men and women meet by some "accident," a look, perhaps, and they "fall in love," and hence come children to the *n*th generation!

"La vie est aléatoire," wrote Bergson. Life is contingent, uncertain, adventurous, not fore-ordained, pre-determined, machine-like. This contingency is partly in man's free-will, in so far as free-will means caprice, a real fact in human life. In regard to free-will, the question practically means—Is man cut off from God, as a spark cut off from the fire from which it comes, as a raindrop is cut off from the ocean from which (*via* the cloud) it came? Does man act on his own initiative, freely, apart from God? Is man solely responsible for his actions? The only answer is in the negative.

Then is man's action the mere resultant of forces in the past? Again a negative answer must be given, for man is not a machine. There is something fresh in human lives. There is an indeterminate or contingent element in man's life. There is something unforeseeable in the deeds of all organisms, and so in man. There is an element of caprice, it is true, though such is a limited fact, or has limited scope in human life. But man is as a twig of the tree of

life. He is not cut off from God, but God only gradually comes to rule the man's life. Thus man becomes truly free, by becoming divinely ruled, for God's will is man's own deepest will. As an animal there is some caprice in man, but he moves up towards the angel, and so becomes truly free, and feels it in glad obedience to God, the Soul of his soul. Man, being in this transition, the question "Is man free?" is wrongly put. Man is not a mere machine, but he is becoming truly free. He *can* do better because an Inexhaustible Spiritual Life is pressing into him. An example of contingency occurs in the cross-breeding of plants. Such must come at times, but when is undecided. The question of whom men will marry and what children they will have is again an uncertainty. Some 100,000 babies, out of 800,000 born in England, die in their first year. There is no foreseeing these things; and they cannot be said to be known even by God, for that would mean that God is a machine and all his deeds are pre-determined. God is vastly greater than any machine, however complicated. The assurance of that is in the wild processes of evolution, and in man's sense of freedom and a future! There is surely some uncertainty even in God's Life.

All this helps us to see why some "stupid" events occur in human life: such as the Thirty Years' war (1618-1648) which ruined Bohemia and did not lessen bigotry. Or consider the centuries of superstition by which girls in China have had their feet unnecessarily bound, because a fashion arose, perhaps through some princess having small feet! What a stupid, needless creation of pain. Or consider the sacrifices of children offered to deaf gods, supposed to be angry, but not really existing as persons! What of the inquisition and of witch-burning: the latter because of a mere text "Thou shalt not permit a witch to live"! What horrible and useless suffering the world has seen!

Consider the results of caprice in wars made for some king to get a wife or a piece of land he has desired: in marriages, which result in years of



misery, or in feeble-minded children coming into the world: caprice in a thousand ways ruling the events of the world!

It is such unreasonable and senseless things happening that make men feel there is no Reason in life's course, no God, no One that guides or cares, but a blind mass of forces, which sooner or later kills us all!

The reply is—there is a sphere of Contingency, but

(1) It is limited within laws:

(2) Where it occurs it can be over-ruled for good by the brave soul.

(1) It is *limited*.

Marriages and Births may be uncertain, but their regularity can be predicted, as the statistics year by year afford. Men and women will marry, and generally to those near them, and of the same race. There is no absolute contingency. The jump of a kitten or lamb may be by unforeseeable impulses, but they are limited within the range of the field or home. Caprice exists, but it is allowed for in the whole aim of God, as a farmer allows for caprice in the lambs which he yet confines in the field.

(2) When (within limits and laws) contingency rules events, they yet can be *overruled* for good by the brave soul. The world has some contingency in it, but it is a test for souls. Not that it is put into the world for that end. God does not plan the cruelties of caprice. But God in man can overrule evils that come by contingency, so it is true that "there is nothing the body suffers that the soul may not profit by." Powers of forethought, courage, alertness, decision, sympathy are evolved by men who meet uncertainties bravely,

"With a heart for any fate,"

as Longfellow called men to do. Did men know all that would happen, these qualities would never be evolved, maybe.

Contingency is part of the soul's opportunity. No External Providence says aloud to the soul praying for guidance—"Go and live there," "go and do that." But the soul can be ready to see in the

clashing of opportunities, and in his own powers, the guidance he needs. If he follows this gleam, and waits till such a gleam appears, he will not go far wrong. Caprice is temporary, spiritual principles are permanent, and win in the long run. God experiments, but his aim is towards Intelligent Love, and this is what is evolved more and more. The unconquerable soul will say—"I may be the victim of caprice, or of uncertainty: but I shall not complain. I am greater than events in time. In me is something eternal and divine. The universe is essentially good. It rewards all honest effort. If I can reform my evil circumstances, I will: if I cannot, I shall not rebel against them, or envy another man's lot. Taken as a gift from God, 'there's no fun like work.' There is something of interest in it, though it be only crossing-sweeping. The passers-by are a study! One sees life! I will assume an air of cheeriness and hope." Sweet are the uses of adversity, if the soul knows thus how to meet adversity, and refuses to be conquered or made to despair. Should one end in the workhouse, there will be one's fellow-men there who need a word of cheer! Certainly death is the lot of all—worse than the workhouse, from the view-point of happiness on earth. But if a soul can get good out of the worst trials, he has already conquered death. In a universe essentially good, God is, and prevails, and death can be no evil to such a soul. His attitude is that of W. E. Henley, who wrote:—

"Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods there be  
For my unconquerable soul.  
It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishment the scroll,  
I am the Master of my fate,  
I am the Captain of my soul."

(b) *Superstition*.

The extraordinary credulity of uneducated men has led to the persistence of superstitions which have given men incalculable work and trouble, and all to no good purpose apparently.

Scholars say that The Book of the Dead, in its earlier parts, consists of mere "spells," by which the African medicine-man obtained his hold over people. They are sheer imaginings of the wild mind in face of death. The spells are supposed to protect a dead person uttering them, when he goes into the other world. The saying of them will keep away demons!

The mummies in the British Museum are a few out of millions made, and quite needlessly! They were made because the ancient Egyptians had hold of the superstition, the guess that at death the spirit goes out of a man, and returns later to the body, and a ghost-form arises from that body to be a vehicle of the returning spirit. Hence the body must be preserved, and the picture of the man be painted outside the coffin, so that the spirit may recognise which is his body! What needless labour!

In China, ancestor worship has characterised the people for centuries. To hold a good life in respect, and copy it, is a good and reasonable thing: but of what value are the paper money and paper sedan chairs burnt at the graves of the dead, to give them money and sedan chairs in the other world! If these things be good, why do not *we* do them? They were the superstitious ways by which respect was shown. Granted, but with what needless trouble for centuries! The Chinese will leave a hole in a wall near a grave, for the spirit to go in and out. *Cui bono?*

To calculate the number of men killed as sacrifices to unreal gods, would be a difficulty indeed, but in Mexico alone thousands of Aztecs yearly were bound, cut open, and their hearts torn out. Such hearts were offered up in sacrifices. In Canaan, animal sacrifices were offered after the exile, but before the exile some human sacrifices were offered. Yet there are no gods thus needing to be appeased by precious offerings. Psalm 51, except the last two (added) verses, protests against such sacrifices. It is only the right heart God needs. It was unscientific and needless fear that made men offer their myriads of sacrifices to appease the gods. What unnecessary

worry has been borne over the superstitions that certain places were haunted, that witches ought to be killed, that the king was king by divine right, that Friday was an unlucky day, and 13 an unlucky number! Each nation has its own superstitions, wrong guesses at truth for the most part.

In China, the idol representing the god of rain has been known to be dragged from its place in a temple, and put in the sun at the time of drought. He would feel the sun and so send rain! The wooden idol would have a hole made in its neck, and a mouse or some living creature would be put therein (and die), and so it was thought that the idol was alive! What prayers have been offered for good crops, to the gods who did not exist nor control those crops! And there was no subjective good effect either, but more superstition, if a good crop came by nature's laws, and more sacrifices and more urgent prayers if a bad crop came. In either case the result was evil.

Diseases used to be attributed not to insanitary conditions, but to God's anger, or to the devil. And so diseases continued for centuries to break out needlessly. The same of famines: *cf.* The Book of Joel, in regard to locusts, thought to be a punishment from God. God's anger was said to be appeased when the locusts departed!

Why does a good God of Love, a Father, allow such superstitions to continue harassing men for centuries? The reply is He does not "allow" them. He is struggling in men to evolve better brains by which men can think. He is not outside the evil, but in the midst of all, enduring all. Still, they go on unchecked for centuries, till another evil, blind unreasoning prejudice arises and upholds these superstitions even after they have been exposed by reasonable men! It is so because God is self-imprisoned. He is a sub-conscious life in the stone, and only awakening to self-consciousness, so far as He is in man. In the sex-instinct God is a blind life-force, urging women to the men they fancy, and men to the women they fancy: blindly urging them, making each

idealise the other till, perhaps, after the little family has come, the illusion falls away, and the man and woman regard each other aright, as human beings. God is only partially in such animalism. The lives of the uneducated are on a low plane in God. It takes centuries ere brains are evolved wherein a higher plane of God's complex life is realised. The work is so intricate, every cell of protoplasm being vastly complex, as a chemical formula, and the combinations of such cells necessary for a scientific effort, being most elaborate, and but slowly produced.

God is the Unity of the Universe, but He is not a closed, fixed Unity. "Our God is marching on." His will for man is that man aspire to the fuller life—of Truth, Love and Beauty for all souls! This is God's adventure into time! For this He was "crucified" into creation and ever is so crucified, self-limited so as to love effectively.

It has been thought that sin, pain and death are inconsistent with such a Love at the heart of the Universe. They may be inconsistent with an omnipotent deity outside his world, One who could interfere, a mere onlooker, who planned suffering and watches it carelessly. But if God be self-limited so as to act at all, the existence of evil on earth is consistent with His love. Being in time God cannot but take time. It takes time, *e.g.*, to weave the intricate brain which shall be able to find out cures for disease and poverty. The bubonic plague from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century ravaged Europe at periods and took off some twenty-five million people, in a feverish, painful death. Man takes time. God in man takes time, to learn that the disease has a cause in some unsanitary conditions. Life is full of such problems: and if God were a careless onlooker, who could help, but would not, it would be difficult to trust or love Him. But He too may be baffled for a time! His power here is limited, but not His love!

Sin exists not because man has free-will, for free-will does not explain why he chooses evil, but sin

exists because the animal is strong in man and the spiritual has not yet learned to control it. Sin exists in souls who are in God, but in the lower reaches of God's complex life. For in God there are ranges or degrees of life—unconscious stones, sub-conscious plants, conscious animals, self-conscious civilised men and men rising to cosmic consciousness, God's own life! Man sins when he is in transition between the animal and angel! The animals are not great enough to sin!

Death, too, may be no such evil as is imagined, when it comes at the end of a long and useful life. It is then natural, the schooling of earth is over. The Home of heaven is nigh at hand. If man lives in God, and can feel the Vaster Life welling up into his soul, "as a well of water springing up into eternal life," death can only mean that the soul remains as a rill or current in God's ocean of life. If a fiord were filled up, the water would return to the ocean, and might be a current in it, in it and of it, yet distinguishable in itself. So aspiring souls are not lost in God at death, but may be for a time half-conscious, awaiting, some new "fiord" or vehicle of self-expression, here or elsewhere. They are "somewhere afar in the labour-house vast of being," as Matthew Arnold spake of his father, in "Rugby Chapel."

Pain, sin and death are not inconsistent with a God of Love, but rather to be expected since God is self-limited, is evolving souls, and is schooling them on earth for a time only.

The secret of the "crucified" God gives to man the meaning of his own life, and really unfolds the reason why evil exists on earth. So that the modern mind may receive the Christian revelation in its essence, and with the further illumination of modern thought. It is necessary now to see these points in a little detail.

(c) *Sin.*

The presence of sin in God's world has ever been a difficulty.

Some say sin exists because man has free-will.

He chooses evil: but why? Has he a bias to evil? If so, he is not really free.

Others say there is a devil, who has under him many devils, or demonic agencies, and these cause sin. Such an idea goes back to Persia, where a dualism prevailed. Ormuzd was the God of good, and Ahriman the God of evil. All evil was caused by demons. Thence the idea came into Jewish thought, and so into the New Testament. But this does not explain sin. Why do the devils exist? By sinning, it is said. They are supposed to be fallen angels. But this only puts back the problem.

In the light of evolution, the origin of sin is not so hard to find.

Sin exists because man is still an animal, and animal self-regarding tendencies are still strong in his nature. He is enticed by them from the higher, nobler ideas he is taught. He is in transition between the animal and the angel.

Anger, greed, lust, hate—such we can see in the monkeys at the Zoo! We know whence they come in us. Man's animal instinct is to hit back.

Why is man so *slow* in learning humility, forgivingness, honesty, sincerity and loving kindness to all he meets? There is a battle going on in man (Romans vii.). The good he would do, he often does not. The evil he hates, he often does. Why does not God enter in and help him? Because God is in the struggle. God is not an onlooker. It is God's struggle really. God is "baffled" at times by the "matter" or animalism of the lower planes of His own life. Animalism cannot be conquered all at once. Being into time descended, God must take time. Every building takes time, and soul-building is not excepted.

Progress *has* been made. Mankind has for the most part cast off infanticide, cannibalism, tribal wars, slavery, incest. To get men to fight in war, rulers have to invent a moral pretext now. Laws reflect public opinion, and show a great increase of humaneness. Cruelties have largely decreased. Carelessness in regard to old age or suffering is less.

Man is "working out the beast" and letting the ape and tiger die!

Sin is not permanent in souls. As men grow in self-knowledge they cease from sin. There is thus hope for the worst.

Marcus Aurelius said that no soul wilfully misses the truth, and Socrates (died 399 B.C.) explained that goodness could be taught to men. Men sin because they think that the sin is the way to satisfaction. They err in this, and by pain learn that they err, and thus they move into spiritual life. Goethe showed, in "Faust," that a man cannot sell his soul to the Devil for ever, while

" Whoso strives and perseveres  
May be redeemed from evil."

The soul is made for the spiritual life of God, the life of Truth, Goodness, Beauty and Social Fellowship. The animal life holds man in thrall for long, but it is an essential to life on earth, and essential for the evolution of souls. Souls learn to control it and use it as a ladder to spiritual life. If the sinful man have evil done to him, he becomes worse, his sin being driven inward. Evil is not thus overcome by evil, but by goodwill. This is why war lingers so long in the world. Often those called Christians will not meet evil by forgiving goodwill, but by ill-will and revenge. But sin is really foreign to the Man in men, and cannot last for ever.

In God there are ranges of the unconscious (crystals) and the sub-conscious (plants), the conscious (animals and men). God has, in part of His Life, made beings who have failed to reach up and on. So God includes souls that refuse to love Him, men who drift into more and more cruelty in business or in war, women who step aside from virtue and cannot recover and go on into lying and vice. So the bestial, the avaricious, the hypocritical, all are in God, though not yet doing His will. There is more in the evil man than his evil. God is in him. But God is complex. These evil lives are in the less conscious degrees of God. They are in animalism and its narrow, illusive and ephemeral consciousness.

Sin is explained as the temporary rule of the animal life in an organism that can and will reach the spiritual life. Such souls will go through "hell," not as a senseless torment for ever, but as a purgatory (the two are one) by the Love that will not let them go. Why did they not rise to the spiritual life? The animal nature got a hold. It was too strong. God has not yet succeeded with them, for He is hampered, limited, hedged in by time and finitude, and the need of producing intricate brains to be organs for spiritual life. He cannot succeed all at once. Yet these erring souls are in the One Life. God is not "holy" in the Jewish sense that He keeps outside such souls. They are part of His Life, as a diseased finger is in a man who is yet set against disease, and working against the local inflammation. God is complex, living in degrees of Life, but God's best life is not in the warring people, or in those set first on national fame, political liberty, or riches, but in strong, humble, aspiring Love-souls. By these He is "marching on," feeble though (in the world's eye) they seem to be.

(d) *Pain.*

Pain is a danger-signal, warning man that something is wrong. It is a judgment of the indwelling God. It hedges man in, so as to train humanity into God's ways. "God dealeth with us as with sons." "God is not mocked." Having some 1,600,000,000 children on earth, besides innumerable animal centres of consciousness, God rules by laws. It is for the general good that the child who touches the fire is burned. Only by laws could man arrange his life. Were he uncertain of them, he would have no security anywhere. He can trust flame and subdue it to myriads of purposes—cooking, heating, lighting—all the world over.

Pain is not a good, but it is to prevent worse evils. A blacksmith is said to have complained of pain. A spirit appeared and offered to remove it for him. When next the blacksmith took up a hot piece of iron, he felt no pain, but looking later saw his flesh

all burned away. His hand was now useless. Then he knew an evil spirit had visited him. Pain is partly from sin and acts to warn men against sin; it is partly from disease and again so acts: it is partly from ill-assorted relationships in life, and warns against the hasty undertaking of such, and pain comes partly by love undertaking to bear the ill-effects of sin and ignorance, but so love ends them. (1) First, there is pain, *caused by sin.*

Many diseases are so caused, many broken lives and homes. But the present outstanding example is the Great War. Its real cause was sin, an accumulation of greed, fear, pride, revenge: greed for colonies and commerce even at the point of the sword; fear of losing concessions to some competitor; pride in possessions and power, so that songs arose "Germany over all" or "Rule Britannia"; and revenge to retake lost lands, and "crush" the "enemy." Germany wickedly started the war, but the war was an epitome of long-standing sinful quarrels over Alsace-Lorraine, Poland, the Balkans, Belgium, Africa.

The sin that caused it (and its horrors by lyddite, as well as by other lesser "atrocities") was sin that had been going on for 150 years, since British colonies arose by war for trade in India (1757), Canada (1759), Hongkong (by the wicked opium War, 1841). The Crimean War was from fear of Russia (1854-5). The Boer war at last led Germany to seek a great navy also (1900). Since then the pace has quickened. The secret and sinful military Entente (1900) was the result, not of a fearless goodwill, but of atheistic fear of Germany. Germany's wicked aggressiveness was partly caused by the sin of France who conquered Prussia in 1806 at Jena, and so led Prussia soon to start a great army. Also the French all-absorbing passion for revenge after 1870 encouraged Germany's military system. French aggression in Morocco, backed by England, almost brought war in 1911 (see the writings of the French Colonel Boucher for signs of the French military ambitions). Then there was Russia. Her

ambitions were to get Constantinople and break up Austria-Hungary to secure a greater Serbian Empire. Russia was preparing strategic railways and had greatly increased her army, when Germany took advantage of the Serajevo affair to strike for herself: a wicked act, but not an isolated one.

Thus Germany's ambition to get expansion (especially in Africa—see Bernhardt) by war, was *not an isolated fact*. It was created and nourished by the actions of British colonization through war, by the actions of French conquests by Napoleon and passion for revenge after 1870, and by Russian ambitions. In a word, greed, fear, pride and revenge were in *all* these peoples or their leaders, and the Great War was the result of long-nourished sin in them all, though in Germany at the last especially.

They had no idea of the alternative Christian way of life, as applied to nations. They believed, every one of them, in the war-method, atrocity though it be. They let their diplomacy be based on their armed force, not on what was just. They put property for themselves before the persons of other peoples. They were not taught by their churches (except in a few cases) that Christianity meant a humble, strong, fearless and magnanimous goodwill, as the Law of God.

But God is not mocked!

If men do not obey His law, they suffer. It is no excuse to say they were conscientious. The Inquisition was a body of conscientious, superstitious men. They said it was better to torture a man for days and so get him to be orthodox than that he should have hell-fire for ever! Nor is wondrous heroism enough.

Bravery is in all the nations, but it is not a sufficient plea for breaking the moral ideal.

The horrors of the Great War were the outcome of the spiritual horrors of the last 150 years.

The War was the Judgment of God, not imposed from without, but developing from within, long-delayed, but falling sure at last, and revealing the sin that caused it to come.

The Great War was "a day of the Lord," and

"the day of the Lord is darkness and not light, very dark, and no brightness in it" (Amos v. 20). The Great War was a judgment of God, as much as a headache follows a carouse, or a fever comes when poisons accumulate in the blood.

The Great War was the result of the Great Sin of the worship of wealth sought by war, *i.e.*, by State-murder of those who stood in the way of merchants getting wealth. For this were the Boers shot down by the British, that Uitlanders might have freer course to get wealth. For this did Italy openly grasp Tripoli, as her official report says, so as to have Italian banks and Italian-built railways there. For this did France seize Morocco after sending troops to Fez, and keeping them there (1911). For this was opium forced on China. When Germany, with growing population and needs, wickedly, on a larger scale, sought to use the same method, having learned from Britain to build a large navy, then she is blamed, and rightly: but all are guilty of teaching her so to do. Humanity is a solidarity.

The pain of the Great War—its fearful slaughter, woundings, blindings, men sent mad: its horrible waste of wealth, increasing the taxation for many years, bringing poverty in its train—all this, and more of mental agony and moral degradation that cannot be told, were the result in a moral world of that Sin of *greed working by lyddite*. It all shows that this universe is built on moral lines, and the Moral Law (called "Christ") has "all authority in heaven and on earth" (Matt. xxviii. 18). God is, and God is not mocked!

The pain was a danger-signal, fierce enough surely to teach even obtuse minds that the war-method is wrong (because it is ill-will) and futile (because it blesses no people). It is played out! *Positive Goodwill* (which feeds one's enemies and converts them to friends) and *passive resistance* (which quietly refuses to be enslaved to do evil) are the Christian methods against any ambitious nations that may arise in the future. To prepare for war does not give peace. The Great War was prepared for!

Only obedience to the indwelling Moral Ideal will give a lasting peace, and transmute man's fighting spirit to a contention against ignorance, disease and sin, over the whole earth.

(2) Pain from *disease* is illustrated by the Plague which ravaged Europe, on and off, for four centuries (1330-1750). Daniel Defoe wrote "A Journal of the Plague Year (1665). He said the plague came from Holland in ships' goods, but though its progress was by natural infection, such infection was "to execute the fierceness of Divine vengeance." 40,000 died in five weeks in London. "The pain of swellings was very violent." It was "a distemper eminently armed from heaven," it was "God's judgment." People foolishly tried to exorcise it by amulets, wearing charms, writing Abracadebra in a triangle form of acoustic! But it was "the hand of God."

Now this, in a sense, was true. As Defoe says, it was by nature, yet nature is the work of God. The doctors tried to have infected clothes burnt and to isolate cases. "Orders" were published by the Lord Mayor of London, and are quoted by Defoe, giving sanitary methods so far as they were known—*e.g.*, the streets to be kept clean, unwholesome meat or fish destroyed. Man was learning a "modus vivendi" in this strange world. He is still learning this. Many diseases are yet unconquered—*influenza*, *consumption*, *cancer*.

This is so because the world's struggle is God's struggle, the process of Spirit-life into time descended or transmuted. The purpose is that in souls that Spirit-life shall be evolved. So shall God be vaster than before, enriched by the sons of God!

God's crown is by the cross.

Man's life is a struggle: into this finite struggle God has descended and imprisoned His life. The pain of *influenza*, *cancer*, *consumption* come because man does not know the value of fresh air and cleanliness and natural life. Savages often live in filth. The Chinese lack in sanitation. God does not *plan* that men shall suffer, for He is the Ideal Tendency (or Christ) in things, seeking the establish-

ment of Reason and Love. But man is in a transition state. The slowness with which man discovers cures for diseases is not due to God being careless. It is God's Reason in man by which man finds out all he does find. Man's knowledge of, say, sanitation must be given in his language, in his mind. Such knowledge of a law of nature is different from the law itself in nature. God is in that law, or that law is in God's life: but it is in the sub-consciousness of God, and acts thus automatically. For God to produce in a man a thought of that law, in the language of that man, is a *long* process, just as a child cannot at once be taught the binomial theorem. But more than that. There is no God outside nature and man to teach man by a fiat or sudden revelation how to cure cancer or consumption or plague. The effort of man to know the cure is God's *own* effort in man, for it is the effort of loving intelligence seeking to help mankind. This in time, and working in finite animal lives (for men are still largely animals) must take time. Marvellous discoveries have already been made, *e.g.*, in surgery and chemistry: and many diseases would be less if man lived in obedience to his simple animal needs of fresh air and a fruit diet (corn, nuts, salads, etc.), with rest in mind and body.

(3) Pain may exist as worry, the cause of many evils. It is from imagination or from tiredness. The vigorous man faces difficulties bravely, if he has found God in the Christ-life. Sleep and prayer are the best cures for worry.

(4) Pain that is caused by the *incompatibility* of those who have to live together is one of the worst kinds of pain for, like toothache, it is a gnawing, oft-recurring pain. The most frequent case is that of husband and wife. Very often they knew but little really of each other before marriage, little of the sullen obstinate temper of the man, or the desire of the woman to have her own way in every detail in the home. Chaucer's "Tale of the Wife of Bath" in his Canterbury Tales, illustrates this. The thing a woman loves best is this detailed control at home. The man may soon find he is not really wanted at

home. He, on his part, finds his wife takes no interest in his work, his plans, his ideas. They are nothing to her. These two are made differently. After the illusions which the sex-passions bring, have subsided, the two are left face to face, not even friends really. For the sake of avoiding scandal, and because their financial affairs do not allow two homes, and for the sake of their duties to the children, they keep together: but their secret wishes to get away they dare not disclose even to one another for fear of bitterness arising. There is no relief, and the years pass by all too slowly for both.

Well is it if the man and woman come to see each other as human beings needing help, and so to love one another on a new and higher level. Only thus can peace be restored, and the kiss of husband and wife in "the dusty afternoon" of life, may have a deeper joy than the wilder pleasure of earlier days.

*In spite of the pain of life, it is worth living.*

It is worth while going on, because life has many joys, because pain is passing, because it can be overruled by God in us for some spiritual good, and because nature is so intensely interesting and human hearts so noble, if treated aright. Each bears only his times of pain, and all are going to die (death must be therefore a good), so that we must not exaggerate the pain of the world, even of a world at war. To be shot is perhaps one of the least painful deaths especially if it be in the excitement of battle. The wounded are helped by anaesthetics, modern nursing, and by the cheerfulness of one another. These things do not make war less than ghastly, but they mitigate its horrors in many cases. Again, for one case of accident or starvation there are millions who avoid these evils. Again, the poor who grow up in poverty, probably feel it far less than those better off, who pity them, think they feel it. This does not mean that to live in one room is healthy or to ever seek cheap meat is desirable, but the pain may be less than is thought. There are also many joys in life. "There's no fun like work." That's the right spirit in which to face the toil of life, with

an unconquerable soul, that can get something of value out of all experiences, and pass it on to help others. The fellowship of life too helps its pains to become more bearable, and doubles its joys. Even in nature there is less pain than men have imagined, for where nerve-organisation and sensitiveness are less, pain is not so felt as by men.

A missionary from Africa told the present writer how he knew of a negro whose hand was cut off as a punishment. The man watched the process, had the stump treated, and walked off home. The lower animals probably feel far less pain than their noises seem to imply.

*Life on earth is not meant primarily for happiness*, pleasure, outward success, recognition, wealth, fame, ease. It is so planned, its idea is, that it may evolve and educate souls in intelligence, self-control, goodwill and trust in God. To this end nothing is spared: even wars are allowed if nations cultivate greed, fear and hate to such an extent as to poison their very "life-blood." The fever of war is then caused. If man learns his mistake he is purified: if not, there is more fever (more war).

So John Pulsford wrote: "There is an order in things. That order is divine. You must observe that order or pay a severe penalty. God is good, but His order must be regarded, for His goodness operates according to that order. Men sin and suffer because they have lost out of themselves the foundation of all righteousness and well-being. Christ is no new foundation. He is the only foundation of well-being from eternity to eternity. If you are rooted in Christ, you are rooted in all the holy powers of God and of eternity" ("Quiet Thoughts").

In this life, happiness may visit man, and many are the innocent joys of life. But, if he outwardly fail, if he be troubled, if after his best efforts he be rejected by men or diseased, he has not *really* failed if he still aspires to the increase of knowledge and Love, to the Wider Life, and to the Great Silence!



(e) *Death.*

Man has in all ages believed that there is some after-life. The Hebrews believed in Sheol, imagining a dreamy cavern in the earth where their dead were buried. The Greeks called it Hades. African tribes and the Chinese have spoken of a spirit-world, while Hindoos have looked to a transmigration of the soul into another body-vehicle on earth. It is the scientific modern mind that doubts and such "doubt is not devil-born" (Tennyson). He is not sure. His friend's body lies before him, no longer responsive, and not merely asleep as often he had seen him.

Psychical Research Societies have collected evidence, but though they have probably proved the fact of telepathy between the living, and sometimes such occurs at the moment a man is going to die, yet no *certain* clear communication between the "departed" and one on earth seems to have been proved. The physical resurrection of "Christ" is doubted now. It was a Jewish belief that men would so rise, when they lived again. Dr. MacTaggart (Cambridge) has tried to show that the self (soul) is immortal both in the past and future. He indicates that the soul is greater than the body, and cannot be created by the body (or brain). Prof. Bergson (Paris) and Dr. Macdougall (Oxford) both show the same thing in different ways. The soul is a unity, the body is not. The brain has no unity; it consists of convolutions and of nerves and nerve-centres, but there is no gathering up of these into a focus-point. Hence the brain cannot explain the unity of the soul. The brain is but a machine, like a telephone-exchange, and the soul is like the operator who cannot express himself except by the telephones, but can surely leave one exchange and go to another. So an organist can make no music if the organ have no wind, but he can leave one organ and take up another, or perhaps some other instrument. The soul, or self, sits at the brain, is connected with it, is limited, but also expressed, by it. The soul is only conscious as to things on earth if

the brain has sufficient blood, and is in a sufficiently pure condition: but yet the soul exists when man is asleep, or in a trance, or under anæsthetics, or in a faint, *i.e.*, the soul is more than consciousness. It can be unconscious, or in a sub-conscious condition, and still exist. The soul is greater than the body. The body is but part of the soul's modes of expression. The body did not produce the soul.

Both soul and body are psychical substances, but the soul has powers of aspiring life, which the body has not. The soul can "light up" the eyes of a man, and so is greater than the body.

Bodies are composed of cells and these of "matter," *i.e.*, congealed energies of Life, as icebergs are congealed waters of the ocean, and in it and of it and yet resisting it. Souls seek bodies as vehicles. Souls may be thought to wander around the mothers of the human race, and be able to pass through and win bodies to themselves, such vehicles as they can best use: and so often a noble soul is found in an ignoble body, and *vice versa*.

The fertilising of the ovum seems to be a merely chemical process (*see* Halliburton's "Handbook of Physiology," p. 882). In that process, or later, the embryo draws on the All-pervading Life (God), and becomes the vehicle of a soul.

Parents do not explain their offspring altogether. A man may suddenly have a passion, say for Greek art, directly he sees any, and yet there be no artistic tastes in the parents or grandparents. Villains may come of good parents, and saints be born of the depraved. The fact that two persons (not necessarily of opposite sex) may fall in love at first sight, seems to be because, unknown to or unremembered by both, they have loved in a past life somewhere. Souls do not remember a past life perhaps, but nor do they remember being babies. Yet they were babes. They may yet come to remember this life in a future life; but memory of a past is not essential to the existence of a life: and many things are better forgotten.

It is possible to distinguish, then, the soul from the body. Take old age.

There seems to be no help to the man or woman growing old. The person feels more tired and oftener tired. He needs more rest and shrinks from exertions of mind as well as body. Matthew Arnold describes old age thus:

Is it to feel our strength—decay? Yes, this, and more.  
It is to spend long days

And not once feel that we were ever young.

It is to add—month to month with weary pain.

It is to suffer this,

And feel but half, and feebly, what we feel.”

(“ Growing Old ”).

But an old friend or some great joy may cause the latent soul to awaken in the old man, to spring forth, to use up bodily energy quickly in expressing itself, recall old scenes in glad reminiscences. Thus, it seems that in growing old and tired, with shortened memory, what really happens is that the blood pressure is less, and so recollection (not real memory) is more difficult, and the brain has less energy. But the soul—the real memory and character, aspirations and affections—especially fearless Love (by which men know God)—are still existing. In the same way the soul exists, though there be the unconsciousness of sleep, trance, or that produced by anæsthetics. So the soul at death may be in abeyance, not destroyed. Its *expression* by the body is less in old age.

So then, man has sub-conscious powers which may persist in death as they do in sleep. (1) Part of such powers are man's true memories, which, says Bergson, are in the soul. The part of the brain that *recollects* is only a small part, and could not contain the many millions of memories (of words and ideas and things) which the soul has. The brain only draws down out of the soul what memories it needs to explain a sensation and make it a perception, say of a rose or a lily. (2) Again, the soul has aspirations to *ideals*: the brain has not. The animal has not either, but only eats and sleeps and does other such instinctive

acts. Thus the soul is greater than the body, though to act on this earth—plain the body must be in a condition fit to be used: as the window of a house must be fairly clean if the man inside is to see objects outside. Yet the man can get out of the house and still see those objects. But the soul is not “in” the body. Rather, the body is in the soul. The body is a phase of the soul's life. The soul is greater than the body and includes it. Hence, the soul had a pre-existence. It is a “spiritual substance,” and it is one of myriads of immortal souls, into which the Infinite Life has descended. Yet that Life unites all souls in one, as the ocean unites all the currents in it; which are also of it, yet distinct from it.

Bergson, in his Gifford Lectures in Edinburgh, showed that mind is not in body, but body is in mind: *cf.*, Lotze “We are not in space, space is in us.” The mind is greater than its “bodies.” The body is part of the instruments of the soul. The mental fact of thought—even a perception which includes a memorised fact, and time, and feeling—is larger than the bodily fact (of nerves conveying light-waves, or sound-waves). The mind seeks to act on this world, and when the brain, rested by sleep, is ready, the mind at once uses it. The mind exists, in sleep, though its consciousness may be dim as regards things on earth. It, with its (1) memories, and (2) character and aspirations, all exist, when in sleep, and so why not in the death of the body? The dead body consists of mental states being disintegrated, just as a cut flower dies away into dust. The unifying Life has gone, but persists in God.

It seems then, that the fertilised cell in the female plant or the female of the animal or of the human species provides only a frame or form of mental states (body) which draws into it from the all-pervading God or Ocean of Life a drop or current of that One Life: which is again withdrawn into God at the death of the plant, animal, or man, and may find another vehicle.

Man is incarnated to develop in this school of

souls. The embryo draws in a soul, or is seized by a soul. It seems, that, since the body does not create the soul (for the automatic cannot create the free), the soul must have come "to" the body: or be essentially out of time and space, and assume the body. It has powers of Reason and Idealisation and Love that are not of "matter." So it may be true that souls come here "trailing clouds of glory from God," as Wordsworth said. Certainly, in men, there are powers of understanding and love and beauty, which are not "of earth": and though unfolded by evolution from the animals, they are the result of the pressing-in of the Vast Life who has led on evolution, or pressed it on, from a "beyond that is within." In other words, in the higher men, there are unveiled powers that are infinite, inexhaustible, stretching beyond the capacities of three-score years and ten to unfold: and hence these indicate a previous "life," or timeless Source of the lives of men on earth, and they also point forward, to a future, in which such powers may be more adequately developed, even if it be "somewhere, afar," as Matthew Arnold suggests in "Rugby Chapel."

Thus the fact of death is not only not inconsistent with the Ultimate Power being good, but if life be a school for the Greater Home to come, while men should get all the schooling they can, they will not be sorry for the event that takes them Home!

How the soul persists after the body has gone to decay is not clear. It is invisible then, but it is invisible now. Reason and Sympathy are ever real, but unseen. The corpse does not explain what a moment before was a thoughtful and loving mind. Where is the rest? Even the dead body of a dog or fly does not explain the dog or fly. Their life, too, must persist in some way. It may be said their lives fall into the universal soul, as drops of rain lost in the ocean. These rain-drops originally came, by evaporation, from the ocean: and they return thither. In the case of a civilised man, it may be said, his life is drawn back into God, but rather he is as a *current* in the ocean of life, in it

and of it, yet distinct from it, and able to flow somewhere else.

The old Jewish belief that the body in the grave will arise at the last judgment is one which cannot continue in face of modern science. But some new vehicle must be found by the soul after death.

A help to the subject is given in the fact that minds affect bodies and bodies give out fine vibrations of nervous ether from the blood. The late Dr. B. W. Richardson called this blood emanation "nervous-ether." By it the soul is daily materialising itself *outside* its body. The "aura" of a person, seen by a clairvoyant, may be this blood-emanation. Anger can poison the blood to some extent and so alter the aura. Love can cleanse this nervous ether.

The soul may ever create an invisible magnetic body around the ordinary body and through it, an etheric body, which may persist at death: and such may be by the blood's activity. Or the blood and the soul may meet in such a body, which permeates even now the ordinary body. The subject is not worked out yet, but guesses have been made. We know that bloodhounds *scent the odour* of the person gone past, and that some persons can exert *magnetic influences* on others, even at a few yards distance. Thus, the ordinary body is not the *whole* body of the man. *Telepathy* also indicates that the mind has powers not confined to the ordinary body's activities. There are finer vibrations in which some (if not all) souls may persist after death. The fact that they (when departed) do not *seem* to be able to do anything on earth may be but a semblance, and it may be that people on earth cannot at present apprehend their mode of activity: or, it may be, that they function on some other planet or star! If not, what are the millions of stars for? The soul may use finer vibrations after death, and flow through seas (if the man was drowned) and reach other planets easily, or find work here which it can do to the glory of God in the good of other souls.

Science and philosophy tend, then, to point to the

reasonableness of a future life: and *the experiences of sacred souls* confirms this. They feel in them at work the urge of an Ideal Life which seeks more Truth, Beauty, Goodwill, Social betterment—in a way no animals are capable of. The animal life is a round of sensuous existence, dimly lit by thought: but there seems to be no Urge, no Aspiration in it.

The soul of a man or woman is capable of more knowledge and more love—this is its promise of a future life, and it feels that this is so.

The soul true to the best it can be or do, finds itself the organ of an inexhaustible and eternal, spiritual life, for truth and love grow as they are exercised. They are limitless. The soul *feels* itself greater than the body, which is in flux and is finite. The soul gains often as the body decays. "As our outer man decays, the inner man is renewed, day by day." Even in painful experiences the soul finds it can grow thereby, and so is greater than these also. It has something in it that is greater than the body even in its pain or decay. It is being loved by an Underlying Vaster Life, and that Love will not let it go. This is the spiritual confirmation which arises in souls that live the Christ-life. "Christ abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel," that (in its essence) says, that "God is Love," and Love is "creation's final law."

Thus, *God is to be known as "Christ."*

Man cannot comprehend or adequately name the super-personal Life-Unity of the Universe. But the heart of God has been gradually laid bare, and in Christianity men felt it to be an illimitable intelligent life-giving Love. This is the "sap" which comes from the Stem into all the twigs (souls) of the Tree of Life (God). Souls feeling this Moral Ideal and accepting it can "rest in the Lord" and work and wait for Him. They know God as "Christ," as the indwelling Love-Ideal, felt in their souls. This cares for all who will obey Him, and loves all men, seeking their spiritual good. This is "Jesu, Lover of my soul," to whom the soul can fly, and be at rest.

The modern idea of the "sap" includes not only the moral, but the Logical and Aesthetic ideals. Reason's laws (*e.g.*, in mathematics) are eternal and felt to be moving the lives of men. The Realm of Beauty also (in forms and in sounds) is an intrusion of the Eternal into time, or a translation of God into souls. To follow these is salvation, the saving of the best in man: and it is a Quest for a good beyond his own narrow interests. It is a "dying" to live, the very law of more life and fuller, and one no man can escape.

"Glories of our former state  
Still gleam before our eyes,  
And lure us onward to the great  
Eternal enterprise—  
The brave endeavour of the soul  
Again to know the Whole."  
(W. F. Cobb.)

## B. THE MEANING OF CHRISTIANITY IN MODERN LIFE.

### 1.—THE INWARD CHRISTIAN IDEAL.

The ideal set forth by Christianity was in contrast to the legalism of the Jews. They had propounded a set of rules of mostly external conduct—do not kill, do not steal, do not take usury from a Jew, observe the Sabbath, avoid “unclean” foods, avoid blood, circumcise your males, attend to ceremonial washings, fastings, purifications, sacrifices.

But Jeremiah had said that God would put His law in men’s hearts, and it was this that the early Christians realised. The Moral Law as unveiled in their hearts they called “Christ,” for such a law was their Saviour, the divine life “descended” into them. They worked out this ideal in the “Sermon on the Mount,” which yields a seven-fold Law of human life.

**Humility:** meekness, lowliness of mind, no censoriousness (“judge not”), no proud exclusiveness, or “caste” spirit.

**Forgivingness:** no revengeful anger: no claiming “an eye for an eye,” but a readiness to welcome a wrong-doer, directly he repents, *i.e.*, will let himself be welcomed.

**Magnanimity:** illimitable, giving goodwill and service even to one’s enemies. These first three are all akin: aspects of Love.

**Sincerity:** no oaths, but use only ‘yes’ and ‘no.’ An oath makes light of ‘yes’ and ‘no.’ No hypocrisy in prayer or almsgiving.

**Purity—even in desire:** no divorcing a wife so as to obtain another woman. This, too, is a phase of Love (goodwill) viz, to one’s wife.

**Fearlessness,** even as to food and raiment, for God lives and loves. Work is not forbidden, but anxiety is forbidden.

**Prayer:** to seek God’s will, not one’s own caprice: to co-operate with God, for the bringing in of His rule on earth.

In a word “Christ” means Faith active by Love, faith in the Universe, or in its Unifying Life (God) as being Good Will, and Goodwill as therefore the law of every man.

It is necessary, in every age, to express this ideal, this Christ, in ever new forms. It has to be preached or rather taught in each age: and to-day by the Press as well as by the voice. It is an ineffable, spiritual life, but may be described as a courageous life-giving Love, an adventure of faith in a Universe whose heart is Love. The soul that grips this life as the very meaning of his own life cannot be a miser or a cad. He cannot keep up the disdainful exclusiveness of caste or sex or race: He cannot uphold the method of war, patriotic slaughter of other peoples, for his “kingdom” is “not of this world.” His aim is not riches or colonies or land or concessions or even political liberty on earth. Such things are good, maybe, but the value of every human life comes first—goodwill is the Christian’s principle. He would abolish capital punishment and all revengefulness in criminal law. His business becomes a service and if it be not a service he changes it. As when two men in London gave up their part in two lucrative businesses, formed for the sale of wine and spirits, since they found they were doing a disservice to society. That is the Adventure of Love. A Christian in business will seek to serve, and prefer a less salary if for a work by which he can serve the better: for it is God’s will he is here to do: and that will is Love.

The New Testament but inadequately applies this Spiritual Life. It does not condemn slavery in itself. It advises slaves to obey their masters. But in the beautiful little Epistle to Philemon, it suggests that Philemon, while having a right to the services of the slave Onesimus, should yet receive him “as a brother-beloved.” So with regard to women. They are still considered, in the Jewish fashion, as subordinate to men; but the Christian principle of the sacredness of all human lives, makes an opening for a change. “In Christ is neither

male nor female." Thus, in regard to "status," further expressions of the Christian Ideal are needed to-day.

Also in regard to Industry. The command to give alms to the poor is quite inadequate now to heal poverty. It has produced the beggars on the steps of Continental Cathedrals. To give useful well-paid work is now the truer Christianity. To end "sweated" labour, to open up a system of partnership and co-operation in Work, this is what the Christian must now seek to do.

Also in regard to war, the early Christians (before Constantine foolishly made Christianity a worldly State-established religion) generally condemned war as inconsistent with the Sermon on the Mount. A State-established Christianity upheld "defensive" war, and so till this day. It is necessary now to re-assert the sin and futility of the method of war, as well as its waste and horror.

In these ways, then, Christianity has a special relation to modern life.

## 2.—THE MODERN APPLICATION OF THE IDEAL.

### (a) *Freedom for Women.*

Milton in *Paradise Lost* speaks thus of women:

"For contemplation he, and valour, formed:  
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace:  
He for God only, she for God in him.

Eve to Adam says:

"What thou biddest, unargued I obey.  
God is thy law, thou mine."

Later, Lord Chesterfield wrote in 1748:

"Women are only children of a large growth. A man of sense only trifles with them, plays with them, humours and flatters them, as he does a sprightly, forward child."

The Jew still separates women from men in religious services, and the men say "Lord, I thank Thee I was not made a woman." (This last sentence is curiously explained by some Jews that it means women cannot fulfil the Law so fully as men).

The ideas in the New Testament about women are Jewish—"A wife should obey her husband in everything," is the command. They come together mainly, it is urged, to supply each other's sex-needs. The husband is as much the head of the wife as Christ is of the Church! Women should keep silence in the Churches. They were made for men, not men for women! (Ephes. v. 24: 1 Cor. xiv. 34: xi. 9: cf. Genesis iii.). But inner Christianity had a glimpse further and said:

"In Christ is neither male nor female." A woman is thus a human being primarily, and only a feminine life secondarily. This position is often still considered by men to be reversed. They treat women as 'the sex,' look on them as possible 'toys,' and the fantastic dress of some women supports this idea. Ibsen's play 'The Doll's House' has set forth this attitude, and it is still largely observed. It is even encouraged by millions of women themselves. They like to be petted and noticed, even if the status accorded to them be one of subordination and inferiority. Only gradually do they grow into real freedom as human beings, aspiring souls, with special powers of *artistic* dress and self-expression maybe, but still souls first of all. The spread of education for women, and the undertaking of various kinds of work outside that in the home, are broadening women's outlook.

All who have a sense of the Life-giving Life must needs seek to help women into the freedom which is the condition for their development and true happiness.

There is freedom needed for them in regard to a living income. No woman should feel she must seek or accept marriage in order to be sure of a living. There should ever be well-paid work for her outside marriage. Women must, by Trade Unions, free themselves from the low wages so often accorded to them.

Moreover, as a wife, a woman should not be economically dependent on the caprices of her husband. Some form of marriage settlement should be

accorded to her, since at home she does her share of the work of life: and State Endowment for her children should be extended, though the State (Society as a whole) should have then some voice in regard to the age and medical fitness of the man and woman for marriage, and perhaps as to the number of children that Society will provide for. Some oversight or report of the proper care of such children will be necessary, if the State is to pay for them. If the amount paid to Mothers resulted in too great fertility, it would be lessened: and increased if the general will hoped to secure a larger population. Eugenics must become a practical science. The veil of secrecy must to some extent be drawn aside. Moreover, the wife should be free to choose, each time, as to whether she will go down into the valley of shadows in order to bear a child. It should not be reckoned a legal duty for her to "submit" to her husband. Wives have been, and often still are, enslaved by this false idea, an idea enforced by economic servitude, that they are the instruments of their husbands' pleasure, and must do as they are told. The East still upholds this, *e.g.*, in China. For all this real liberty, women need to be trained from their teens, trained in self-respect, self-ownership, and into an understanding of their own bodies. Self-knowledge is power. Besides *economic* and *personal* freedom, they need *political* freedom; to be citizens with a share in the management of a people's affairs. It takes but five minutes to cast a vote, and the understanding of civic affairs so to vote intelligently will not harm any woman, but make her more companionable to her friends, and to her husband, if she be married. Questions of education, of wages, of alcohol, or war—do not these affect women as well as men? It is not only in local but in national affairs she should have the franchise, and this will help her to realise herself as a human being, and to get free from the illusions of sex, its infatuations and jealousies, its enslavement to the will of others, and veritable animalism. She will own her sex-functions as sacred gifts, and

not be owned by them. The movement towards this new status for women is a comparatively recent one. Mary Wollstonecraft wrote her "Vindication of the Rights of Women" in 1792. She had immense pity and sympathy. To her, woman was not a toy of, or appendage to man, but an individual, a soul, a person, capable of development. Women, said Mary Wollstonecraft, needed a scientific training of the mind. Women should be taught to reason, and be freed from narrowness. Self-reverence came before sex-attractiveness. "The desire of being always women, is the very consciousness that degrades the sex." They need to unfold their faculties, and seek equality and friendship, not empire and "conquests." Women should be rational beings and citizens. In the cause of this emancipation, the Church, especially the established Church in England, has helped but little. The Prayer Book Marriage Service is a disgrace: as is the Burial Service. The one emphasises and practically enjoins careless fecundity, the other asserts the resurrection of the body put into the grave! The Churches have not yet taught women among the "working-classes" (a detestable term!) that they should be self-owned, with self-knowledge. Their submission and "wifely duties" are what have been insisted on. But the Churches have too often opposed reforms.

In regard to Divorce, the New Testament allows none except for unchastity (Matt. v. 32: xix. 9). But that was a law for women as *then* regarded, viz., as appendages to men: and the modern conditions of life had not come into existence. The recent Royal Commission called for new conditions of Divorce. Such conditions as continued drunkenness, insanity, desertion, frequent cruelty or vice, or venereal disease should now be possible conditions for divorce. Indeed, the real ethical principle is that where *love is killed*, where co-habitation therefore is degradation, divorce should be possible. A period of separation may be advisable, to prove that no re-union is desired, but Judicial separation

should be abolished, as it tends to immorality. The care of children should be arranged by the Courts, if not by the parties to divorce: and local courts should be able to grant divorce. The Church is the opponent to these reforms, clinging as it stupidly does to the letter of the New Testament, without any regard to the changed conditions of women and of social life to-day. The New Testament has a few great inner principles such as "Love your enemies and do them good." Those are unchangeable. But the New Testament also has many rules of mere external practice, and that concerning divorce is one such. The principle is to make for more life and fuller: and, to do so, the conditions of Divorce must now be extended.

There would be fewer unhappy marriages if there were more opportunity for men and women to know each other *before* becoming engaged. "What do you know of me, Philip, except that I'm to marry you?" John Masefield makes one of his characters ask. Lads and girls should be taught, by their fathers and mothers respectively, as to the nature and functions of their bodies, as to the illusions of sex-passion, whereby a false idealisation often takes place, only to be dissipated on fuller knowledge, *after* marriage. They should be taught that *souls* are to be sought and loved, and that Nature deceives men and women who do not do this. Many find this out before marriage, yet dare not say so or propose to end the engagement. They marry, and are never really happy in each other, for they are not real comrades, human mates, but merely man and woman. A magistrate of great human experience has said that most marriages are merely comfortable, and but few are happy. Home becomes to many a dull place, something to be escaped from. The husband and wife never read to each other, never pray together, never talk over questions of any depth. The glamour of sex has departed with time and its troubles. The stupidity of novels and plays which merely work up to end with a wedding is now apparent. Clearly things are in transition the world

over. The message that should help it aright is that God is ceaseless aspiration to spiritual life, and that men and women are meant to share in that aspiration. The cult of the female, in dress that merely emphasises sex in fashions (often a contrast to the beautiful), in erotic novels and plays—all this palls on the taste, is unreal and unsatisfying. A great protest is needed. The dearer, lovelier fact of women as first the human comrades of women and men—this must surely now come to the fore. Only this can undermine unchastity. A man will then be true to his future wife: and women prefer spinsterhood to "a marriage of convenience." The graces and brightness and artistic tastes of women will not thus die out, but become saner, and really beautiful. Women will lose something of their timidity, vanity, and their caste-spirit (*e.g.*, towards domestic servants, or to those who are poorer). They will cease to be deceived by mere animalism, by Nature's sex-trickery, for her own blind ends. They will become, economically, personally and politically, free souls, aspiring to know and love and work, in a new spirit. This is so in many already, but it must extend throughout the world.

In a word, women must die to the rule of the natural life of the female of the species, and rise to the Law of the Spiritual Life, be Souls, children of God, self-owned, self-knowing, and self-directed by the Christ-self in each.

(b) *Work by State Ownership, Individual Freedom, and National Guilds.*

The life that lives by giving itself to a wider good must needs move into a New Order of Work. For the present system of competition and the using-up of men and women primarily as means to profit cannot but be condemned. If true wealth is the lives of these men and women, the present social system is a denial of true wealth. It puts profit before production for use, it places second the real needs of men. It seeks to sell even if the buyer needs not the article sold. Christianity puts persons before property. Competition puts property before persons.



Men in the system may not be able to wholly help themselves at present. But they can be dissatisfied and seek a way out, and teach it to others.

Initiative and inventiveness are ever needed, thought and effort are needed: but work need not be done badly on a co-operative basis. Done in competition it is done on a stimulant that is like alcohol, a whip which curses the workers in the long run. Men come to feel they are now machines in a system, and not wanted for themselves. A kind of fear and hurry spoil their lives, and take real zest out of their work.

The Christian must learn the ideal of society to which Capitalism, which is now unstable, should move. Even if he be a lowly obscure worker in a factory, a man can study such an ideal by combining the best in the schemes put forward in such works as

Bellamy's "Looking Backward."

Wm. Morris' "News from Nowhere."

and these as leading up to the practicable system in A. R. Orage's "National Guilds."

There is truth in State Socialism—for the common ownership of monopolies is needed, such as of land, railways, roads, postal and telegraph system, and locally of markets, trams, gas, electricity and water supplies. But why should all these be bought up on borrowed money? Such is merely State Capitalism.

State Socialism has its limits. There is truth in Anarchic Individualism. The lives of men must not become machines. Freedom to choose food, dress and work, freedom of speech and discussion and press—these we must keep.

There is truth in Syndicalism also—the worker is not to be a means for the creation of profits to a few. He is to have a share in the concern, be a partner, feel one with all working with him, have a part in the election of those who control the factory or store, and such an ideal is developed in the system of Guilds. The ideal of the National Guilds combines the good in Socialism, Individualism, and Syndicalism.

The State would *own* the mines, but the miners (including foremen and managers) would together *organise* the working of the mines to obtain the amount of coal needed by the State. The miners would settle their hours, elect their foremen and managers (directly or indirectly). The Guild would receive the income from the sale of coal, pay a large tax to the Central Government, and divide the rest among themselves, not equally (for such is an unjust and feeble way of dealing with men of unequal value and spending-power), but in varying salaries and pensions. The Guild would be responsible to supply the nation. All the workers would be as partners, would feel ennobled thereby, would not be as things, machines, dividend-producers as so many are now. So with each trade and profession. There is now practically a guild of lawyers, a guild of doctors. Then there would be a guild of railwaymen, another of textile workers, bootmakers, trained domestic servants, and so forth. Craft guilds would form branches of Trade Guilds. Consider now the movement towards Guilds.

The State, the Individual and the Guild—all are needed, and all can have their places in the Great State to come. The dead hand of the past seems against social reform. The vested interests are so great. William the Conqueror took England by force, and divided much of its land among his chief barons, some being ecclesiastics also. The feudal system was established. There was a great wrong. Then Henry VIII. took the lands of the monasteries and many of his favourites obtained them and thus more landed proprietors called "nobility" (!) arose. Then from 1760-1810 were passed Acts of Parliament by which Common lands were enclosed. There was a third social injustice.

Then the Industrial Revolution came at the close of the 18th century, and merchants grew rich. The poor gained more wages, but at the price of crowding into towns, and they were now made into living machines to grind out profits for the few, dividends for shareholders. Not that dividends are altogether an evil. In some way money lent should be repaid

with an addition for the inconvenience and risk of lending. But the system goes on and on for many years, like rent. Its perpetuity and size are its evil.

A fifth wrong was war; the Napoleonic wars by which the National debt rose to £865,000,000; and the Great War against Germany, by which the debt rose to three times that amount. Such a debt meant especially more interest for the rich who had loaned money.

By these wrongs a social system of vested interests has grown up and it seems more than ever difficult to bring in a New Order of Industrial Comradeship, wherein the principle prevails "from each according to his ability: to each according to his need." Wars make it worse by increasing national debt. The international character of modern competition makes any co-operation more intricate; a cheap labour in India and China and Japan competes almost unfairly with the colder conditions in Europe.

In spite of all, Collectivism grows—in State or Municipal ownership of portions of land, of docks, roads, tramways, gas works, electricity works, markets, Postal System, Telegraph System: also, by even multiple shops and great trusts and co-operative societies, we get a voluntary Collectivism. By forms of profit-sharing and shares for workmen we move towards guilds. By Garden Cities men are taught town-planning and the need of healthy surroundings for factories. The nationalisation of railways is not far off since their management was by the State during the Great War. The minimum wage is recognised by Trades Boards and the Miners' Act: and this can be extended. Trades Unions are more and more organised. Their spirit needs purifying perhaps at times. But by them a new day is dawning.

Would it were possible for the Masters' Federations to co-operate with Trade Unions for the introduction of a Commonwealth, in which both would be truly wealthy! Surely the unstable and unhappy condition of Capitalism is patent to all! The evils of the Competitive System are—that it needs a reserve army of unemployed, it makes the wage-

earners (four-fifths of the community) to live lives of uncertainty and subservience, it includes a number of middlemen seeking orders, it involves a vast waste of advertising, too many offices and shops, and in the general insecurity, science and art are half stifled.

The difficulties in replacing the capitalist competitive system by one in which there will be room for initiative, inventive and organising power, and yet security and sufficiency for all, with humane relationships between men—these difficulties are very great. No man can say how events will fall out. "Solvitur ambulando." But (1) the national collectivism that increases; (2) the growth and fusion of Trades Unions, and (3) the multiple shops and Trusts—all point away from the present unstable Capitalist System.

Many smaller industries will always be carried on by individual effort: *e.g.*, newspapers, millinery, jewellery, book publishing. But in regard to what everyone needs—bread, boots, clothes, chemist-products, railways, houses, land, coal, and in regard to national products—cotton goods, woollen goods, steel products—a change will come.

The "wage," a mere market-price for labour, treated as if it came from a machine and not from a man, must go. It is non-human. It is not a recognition of man's special needs. If a man be a single man or a father of six his wage is the same. If the man cannot be used as a dividend-producing machine, he is dismissed. As men grow into a sense of their value as "souls"—as Christianity teaches—they will refuse to be thus treated, and the end will be a general change, a dignified strike of immense moral meaning! It will be, of course, opposed when it is even being prepared. It will be said that "reform" is all that is needed, more "sops," a bigger Old Age Pension and a higher minimum wage. But the men (and women) will not be put off thus. Lloyd-Georgism has had its day, however well-meaning it was.

*State Socialism* is only State Capitalism, still paying interest to the lenders of capital.

*Syndicalism* asks for every Trade Union to own its "tools" (railways, mines, factories, etc.), whereas only the Community (and not one group) can reasonably own such.

*National Guilds*, as Mr. A. R. Orage has shown, alone gives a just arrangement, and makes provision for initiative, variety and progress within each Guild.

Guilds existed in England even before the Norman Conquest. The Guild paid for a monopoly of a trade, received a Charter, met in a Guild-hall, acquired property, exacted fees for apprenticeship, arranged marriage portions and old age pensions and relief for their destitute members. In the coming Guilds the workers will be paid as soldiers are, receiving their pay from their Guild, whether working or not, and no profit for a few being made out of a man's work. Though in a Guild, the worker will have a share in the management of his Guild, and in deciding on his rate of pay and hours of work.

The transition will be partly by Trades Unions, *e.g.*, that of railwaymen, getting power to elect foremen, station-masters and other officials. Each grade eventually will elect its own head, a man known and trusted. The railway men will "suggest," and carry out some arrangements, *e.g.*, as to automatic couplings, and interchange of goods wagons, and the building of carriages protected from fire: for the men who do the work know "where the shoe pinches." Unification of management will precede nationalisation, and probably that will precede Guild Socialism in regard to railways. Everyone is interested in such a system (including as it does the development of the abilities of the workers) should come about and at no distant future. The one vast strike of Sorel's imagination may be a "myth," but it stands for a change, a Movement. Whether there will be one event of change, or a set of quick transition stages, no one can see: but that the present system of Capitalist-competition (with rent, interest and divi-

dends) should remain is impossible! It is already unstable, and the Great War rendered it more so.

Individual Capitalists have done splendid service to their day and generation by their inventiveness, organisation and energy. They need to be rewarded in any new System of Industry. But clearly the present Capitalist system is unstable. It is in confusion. State Socialism by purchase will not heal the sore of modern industrial life, for it is really but State Capitalism. Money is borrowed by Municipalities for its purchase of the trams or gas works, and interest is paid on this money. So the workers are still not free. Similarly with mere nationalisation of land or railways or mines. These would involve the granting of national stock to the present shareholders, the interest on which would be paid from profits out of the land, railways, mines: and so on for ever or for a long time. Some patching-up of the present system by Insurance Schemes, Old Age Pensions, a minimum wage in some industries will not do. The wage-system is still there, and can make prices rise. The system of exploiting the labour of the poorer people, or landless, or politically weaker ones, has gone on since the Norman Conquest brought in Feudalism and the Industrial Revolution brought in Capitalism. If these came rather suddenly, why cannot a New Order come at last suddenly too, since the minds of men are becoming prepared for it?

It is not "meliorism," but emancipation that is needed now, not higher wages but no wages, *i.e.*, *a new system which will lift the nation* out of its national debt (made huge by the Great War) and out of the whole present system of interest, rent, and dividends. It is a spiritual revolution that must come, a revolution springing from the spiritual idea of man as a person, not a machine, of persons as of more worth than property, of women as human beings first and of a certain sex second, of the lives of foreigners as equally sacred as those of one's own people!

This is the Christian sense of Love because it looks on people as ends in themselves, made for more life and fuller, and not to be used as mere means to the profits of a few.

Many who get gain by the present system, hate it, and would fain change it. Indeed they are more ready to change it than the worker who often only seeks a little better wage, and does not feel always the shame of his "status," as a mere wage-earner and dividend producer. It would be unjust to give nothing to the shareholders or landlords in making this new order of life: but if good posts are given them in the New Order, or adequate pensions, they cannot complain, for too long have they and others done injustice (unwittingly perhaps) to the mass of toilers.

Those who work towards the New Order must needs do so *in the Christian spirit*, or it will be merely another soulless and cruel system. The spirit of class-war should be absent, for it is the system, rather than the capitalists, that is evil. How can capitalists pay higher wages when to do so would mean failing to pay dividends on money lent, and failing to compete with other firms. They too are slaves of the system. It should be the effort of those advocating National Guilds to get the salaried men, partners and shareholders, to see the splendour of Guilds, and to agitate for them too. The whole of society must repent, for the Kingdom of Love is at hand!

It may be said that the present "successful" merchants, manufacturers, financiers and rich shareholders and landlords will not consent to be merely partners in Guilds of manufacturers or farmers, even if offered the more highly salaried posts, nor will they agree to be well pensioned, if it means their children must seek posts in the New Commonwealth of Guild work. Some of the "successful" will be mean enough to thus complain, even though security and sufficiency be theirs and for their children. Hence it is needful to create a new "esprit de corps."

Some timid souls will still urge that all shareholders be fully bought out. But why should the landlords and capitalists be bought out? That would only mean State Capitalism. Have these men not long enough made gain by rents and dividends? And as for the present "owners" of land, and present shareholders—what compensation more do they desire in a moral community, than a good place in the New Communal Life, and (if old) a good pension? They will not have the face to ask for more than the common security and sufficiency which all will have then, just as in war all stand together for a common good. If fellowship can be real in an evil thing, why not in a good thing? J. Morrison Davidson wrote to the present writer (September 5th, 1912): "In my view it would be equally impossible and immoral to attempt to buy out the lords of lands, rails, and factories. . . . What economic readjustments will take place the day after the General Strike no seer has yet ventured to foretell, but somehow I have a lively faith that the process will be far simpler than any we have now reason to anticipate. . . . Great is Evolution, and it will prevail."

Such is the path, then, of progress to Guilds by the co-operative efforts of Trusts and by the fusion of Trade Unions, but whether there will be a General *Strike* of men who wish to be partners in the world's work is not clear.

It is sincerely to be hoped that such will not be a civil war. Can a Christian kill to get more wages or better hours for himself and others? To use violence to force a company to pay more wages hardly sounds a Christian method. A man may quietly give notice and leave his work and go elsewhere, and so protest against the conditions he has endured as being unhealthful. Such is no coercive measure, and may be done in a Christian, humble spirit. Men may come out, especially by giving notice, and refuse to work, unless a higher wage is paid. This may be done in a dignified, quiet way, for a general good. So at last there may

be a *Universal Strike to bring in the New Order peaceably*, an Order of men and women who refuse to work unless they can love.

Meanwhile there is much to be done to help life for the poorer ones become more bearable.

- (1) They can be *gathered* in Church-groups and be taught the essentials of Christianity and the meaning of National Guilds.
- (2) They can be encouraged to *train* their young people for posts such as clerkships, domestic service, gardeners' work, farming.
- (3) They can be helped to realise the sin and folly of careless *sex-indulgence*, which leads, in marriage, to the undertaking to care for more children than the wages allow for. This is unfair to the children. Over-fecundity is a cause of misery.
- (4) The knowledge of the value of *fresh air* night and day: of vegetable *foods* and fruit: of the evil of alcohol, as a poison, not a food: all this can be made clear.
- (5) The directing of the use of the *franchise* is a work badly needed. A new kind of labour M.P. may be forthcoming soon. Parliament can still usefully help till the Guilds be established: *e.g.*, in establishing a minimum wage, and in rebuilding large parts of London.

(c) *War*. (Pages 174-206.)

What is the effect of essential Christianity (faith active by Love) upon war. The points to be noted are:

- (i.) The New Testament, in word and spirit, condemns the method of war.
- (ii.) The early Church Fathers, till Constantine's foolish establishment of Christianity by the State, condemned war: and in later history wonderful results followed where men adopted unarmed goodwill to their enemies.
- (iii.) Several honest excuses are now made for the use of the war-method.

- (iv.) The cause of the Great War lay in the pride and greed in each nation, so that the horrors and losses of the War came as a judgment of the indwelling God on the sins of all nations.
- (v.) The cure for War lies in a recognition of the Christian principle of Illimitable Goodwill leading to new methods of the distribution of land, and the organisation of international commerce.

(i.) *The Christian principle distinctly teaches men to avoid war*. The following passages should make this abundantly clear. The translation (not the words in brackets) is by Dr. Moffatt:—

“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you: bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If a man strikes you on the one cheek, offer him the other as well. If anyone takes your coat (forcibly), do not deny him your shirt as well. Give to anyone who asks (demands of) you, and do not ask your goods back from anyone who has taken them. As you would like men to do to you (*i.e.*, any good helpful action, not a bad deed), so do to them. If you love only those who love you, what credit is that to you? Why, even sinful men love those who love them. If you help only those who help you, what merit is that to you? Why even sinful men do that. No, you must love your enemies and help them, then you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind even to the ungrateful and evil. Why call me, Lord, Lord, and obey me not? You have heard the saying: An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I tell you you are not to resist an injury. The kings of the Gentiles rule over them, and their authorities take the name of Benefactor: not so with you. He who is greatest among you must be like the youngest, and he who is chief like a servant. Blessed are the humble: they will inherit the earth. Blessed are the merciful: they will find mercy. Blessed are the peacemakers: they will be ranked sons of God. It is the lowliest of you that is great. Whoever tries to secure his life will lose it. Father forgive

them; they do not know what they are doing. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find your souls refreshed. Never pay back evil for evil to anyone: be at peace with all men, if possible, so far as that depends on you. Never revenge yourselves, beloved, but let the wrath of God have its way, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will exact a requital: the Lord hath said it. No, if your enemy is hungry, feed him: if he is thirsty, give him drink: for in this way, you will make him feel a burning sense of shame. Do not let evil get the better of you: get the better of evil by doing good. What is the credit of standing punishment for having done wrong? No, if you stand suffering for having done right, that is what God counts a merit. Yet who *will* wrong you, if you have a passion for goodness? Even supposing you have to suffer for the sake of what is right, still you are blessed. It is better to suffer for right doing, if that should be the will of God, than for doing wrong. Jesus said, My realm does not belong to this world, if my realm did belong to this world, my men could have fought to prevent me being handed over to the Jews. No, my realm lies elsewhere. Put your sword back into its place: all who draw the sword shall die by the sword." (Luke vi. 27-35, 46: Matt. v. 38-39: Luke xxii. 25-26: Matt. v. 5-7, 9: Luke ix. 48: xvii. 33: xxiii. 34: Matt. xi. 29: Rom. vii. 17-21: 1 Peter ii. 20; iii. 13-14, 17: John xviii, 36: Mat. xxvi. 52).

Some urge that these passages are concerning the dealings of *individuals* with one another only. Let the individual soldier obey them in his relation to the individual of the "enemy," and he will not be able to drive the bayonet into him. But, these passages are not merely concerning individuals, but concerning groups, viz., those Jews who persecuted the Christian groups. These persecutors were to be treated kindly and not harmed in return. Such a method of positive goodwill (not mere cold passive resistance) will the soonest end evil, by undermining

it. Thus these passages apply to nations, and not merely in private life, as many declare.

Some urge that Jesus used a whip of cords in the temple: but, supposing the story to be history, it was only against the cattle that the whip was used: see John ii. 15. Revised version.

Some say Jesus told men he was come to send "not peace, but a sword" (Matt. x. 34). But the context shows that the word sword was clearly used allegorically, referring to the dividing of families, not the killing of men (Matt. x. 35-37). So in Luke xxii. 36 where "Jesus" told the disciples to buy swords. He clearly did not mean it literally for he refused to allow them to use swords in Gethsemane, but they took it literally, and said "Here are two swords" (or knives, such as were used by travellers against wild beasts). "Jesus" said "Enough, enough"—*i.e.*, enough of your misunderstanding my parabolic speech. "Jesus" only meant—Be ready for all emergencies.

(ii) *The leaders of the Church, before Constantine* foolishly made it a state-established Church (313 A.D.), opposed war, and interpreted the New Testament as opposed to war.

Thus:

*Justin Martyr* (150 A.D.). "We who formerly used to murder one another do not only now refrain from making war upon our enemies, but also willingly die confessing Christ." ("Apologia" I. 39).

*Lactantius* (300 A.D.). "It will be neither lawful for a just man to engage in warfare, nor to accuse anyone on a capital charge, because it makes no difference whether you put a man to death by word (a charge against him), or rather by the sword, since it is the act of putting to death itself which is prohibited. There ought to be no exception at all: it is always unlawful to put to death a man, whom God willed to be a sacred animal. . . . It is in no way permitted to commit homicide." ("Divine Institutes" VI. 20).

*Cyprian* (246 A.D.). "The whole world is wet with mutual blood: and murder, which in the case

of an individual, is admitted to be a crime, is called a virtue when it is committed wholesale. Impurity is claimed for the wicked deeds, not on the plea that they are guiltless, but because the cruelty is perpetrated on a grand scale." (Epistle to Donatus).

*Tertullian* (200 A.D.). "Now inquiry is made about this point, whether a believer may turn himself unto military service, and whether the military may be admitted unto the faith. There is no agreement between the divine and the human sacrament (the word "sacramentum" meant an oath, as the military oath of obedience), the standard of Christ and the standard of the devil, the camp of light and the camp of darkness. One soul cannot be due to two lords—God and Cæsar. How will a Christian war without a sword, which the Lord has taken away. The Lord in disarming Peter, unbelted every soldier." ("On Idolatry," 19).

"Our religion commands us to love even our enemies, seeking a higher type than the commonplace goodness of the world" ("Ad Scapulam").

"We must first inquire whether warfare is proper at all for Christians. Do we believe it lawful for a human oath to be superadded to one divine, and for a man to come under promise to another master after Christ? Shall it be held lawful to make an occupation of the sword, when the Lord proclaims that he who uses the sword shall perish by the sword? Shall he apply the chain and the prison and the torture and the punishment, who is not the avenger even of his own wrongs? . . . .

When a man has become a believer, there must be either an immediate abandonment of it (the work of a soldier) which has been the course with many, or all sorts of quibbling will have to be resorted to in order to avoid offending God, or for God the fate must be endured which a citizen-faith has been no less ready to accept" (*i.e.*, death). ("De Corona," 11).

*Origen* (250 A.D.). "We no longer take up sword against nation, nor do we learn war any more, having become children of peace, for the sake of Jesus, who is our leader." "The more any one

excels in piety, the more effective help does he render to kings, even more than is given by soldiers. . . . We, by our prayers, vanquish all demons who stir up war, and we in this way are much more helpful to kings than those who go into the field to fight for them. . . . We do not indeed fight under him (the king), although he require it, but we fight by offering our prayers to God" ("Contra Celsum": V. 33: VIII. 73).

The cases of early Christian pacifists are thus recorded:

"In A.D. 295 at Treveste, an episcopal city in Numidia, the recruiting sergeant brought before Dion the Proconsul, one *Maximilian*, a young man of 22 years, as fit for military duty. He said: 'I cannot engage in military service: I am a Christian.

. . . . I cannot fight, I cannot do evil, I am a Christian.' He was examined, but persisted: and so was 'put to death with the sword.' The body was taken to Carthage, and buried near Cyprian's grave (see Backhouse and Tylor: 'Early Church History,' pp. 278, 9).

Another case is that of *Pachomius* (292-346 A.D.). He became a conscript in Constantine's army in Egypt. Being delayed near a city, probably Esneh, the inhabitants brought his men food ("necessaria corporis attulerunt"). Pachomius was astonished at this act to enemies done, and found that these people called themselves "Christiani," and "did good to all men." This converted Pachomius to Christianity ("illustratus divino lumine"), and after the campaign he left the army, and became a monk, and a founder of monasteries in Egypt. His "Life" was written in Greek and translated into Latin by Dionysius Exiguus (see Migne: "Patrologia").

The story of *St. Martin of Tours* (baptised 334 A.D.) is given by his friend and admirer Sulpicius Severus (363-420 A.D.), in these words:

"Martin was brought up in Italy. In his youth he followed military pursuits, first under King Constantine, then under Julian Cæsar (the 'Apostate').

This, however, was not done of his own free will, for the boy aspired rather to the service of God. He was compelled, when fifteen, to take the military oath. . . . He met at the gate of Amiens a poor man; so he divided his cloak in two pieces, and gave one part to the poor man. . . . In the following night Martin had a vision of Christ arrayed in that part of the cloak with which he had clothed the poor man. He now hastened (aged 18) to receive baptism. He did not all at once retire from military service, yielding to the entreaties of his tribune, for the tribune promised that he soon would also retire from the world. . . . Then, when the barbarians were rushing within Gaul, Martin said to Julian Cæsar: 'Hitherto I have served you as a soldier: allow me now to become a soldier to God. I am the soldier of Christ: it is not lawful for me to fight.' He was thrust into prison, but later released. The story goes on to tell how Martin converted a robber who threatened him with an axe. (Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers: Oxford: Vol. XI.)

Le Blant, in "Inscriptiones chrétiennes de la Gaule" (I. 84 sq.) tells *how few* Christians engaged in warfare before the time of Constantine.

"Une question importante pour l'histoire de l'antiquité chrétienne, à savoir si l'exercice de la profession de soldat repugnait ou non à l'esprit des fidèles. Les autorités citées pour l'affirmative sont tirées du traité 'De idolatrie' et des courageuses réponses de saint Maximilien martyrisé pour avoir refusé, comme chrétien, le service militaire. On a opposé à ces textes l'existence de la légion Fulminatrix, de la légion Thébéenne, le nombre considérable de soldats que citent les Actes des Martyrs et les historiens ecclésiastiques."\*

\* Le Blant here points out how an important question for the history of Christian antiquity exists in knowing if the exercise of the military profession was repugnant or not to the spirit of the faithful. On the one hand, the authorities cited for the affirmative are drawn from the treatise "On Idolatry" (by Tertullian) and the courageous replies of St. Maximilian who was martyred, as a Christian, for refusing military service. On the other hand, opposed to these we have the existence of the Thundering Legion, and the Theban Legion, and the considerable number of soldiers mentioned by the "Acts" of the Martyrs and ecclesiastical historians.

Le Blant then takes leading archæologists and the inscriptions they have found. On 10,050 pagan inscriptions "j'ai compté 545 soldats" (pagan). On "4,734 inscriptions chrétiennes ne m' a donné que 27 soldats." How few in proportion,  $\frac{1}{175}$  as against  $\frac{1}{8}$  pagans. Some also may have left the army (see Tertullian, above). (Specimens of the inscriptions of Christians who were soldiers:—

"Anneus Fortunalis milis": "Titulus Aurelius Karus Centurio Coh. VII.": "Vitalianus magister militum.")

Thus Le Blant shows the number of Christians in the Roman army was very few. So Edward Westermarck in his "Origin and Development of the Moral Ideals" (I. chap. 15) says:

"Christianity introduced into Europe a higher regard for human life than was felt anywhere in pagan society. The early Christians condemned homicide of any kind as a heinous sin. And in this the distinction of nationality or race was utterly ignored by them. The sanctity which they attached to the life of every human being, led to a total condemnation of warfare." He continues "Christianity could never become a State-religion unless it gave up its attitude towards war. And it gave it up. Already in 314 A.D." (Constantine made Christianity an "allowed religion" 313), "a Church Council condemned soldiers who deserted their colours. . . . St. Augustine tried to prove that the practice of war was quite compatible with the teachings of Christ. He said St. Peter baptised Cornelius, the centurion" (is this history?). "David was a man after God's own heart" (Sic) "so" (according to Augustine in "De civitate Deo" 19) "war may be sometimes a necessity in this sinful world."

Thus it was, as Christians became worldly and worshipped the State, instead of the Christ, that they excused war. So it has been to-day.

When, under Constantine, bishops were State officials, how could they avoid upholding the army? The very sign of the cross was emblazoned on standards, says Eusebius. Ernest Nys, Professeur a l'



Université de Bruxelles, published in 1894 his important work "Les Origines du Droit International" (Bruxelles, Alfred Castaigne). In chapter III. he says:

"La doctrine de Jésus était essentiellement pacifique . . . et, dans les premiers siècles, la guerre trouva dans les Pères de l'Église de rudes adversaires. Clément d'Alexandrie, Tertullien, Origène, Lactance, et autres encore déclarèrent injuste tout recours aux armes. Origène ' Nous ne portons les armes contre aucune nation, nous n'apprenons pas à faire la guerre, car nous sommes les enfants de la paix par Jésus-Christ.' Sous les empereurs païens, des chrétiens se refusèrent au service militaire. L'avènement de Constantin le Grand et la transformation radicale qu'il amena dans les rapports de l'Église et de l'État provoquèrent une réaction contre ce sentiment absolu. Saint Augustin surtout fit prévaloir l'idée de la légitimité de la guerre" (pages 44, 45).\* But the Church has ever had men who protested nevertheless, as Wycliffe, Colet, Thomas More ("Utopia") and Erasmus, George Fox. It was thus the influence of the sub-Christian State that led the Christian Church to encourage war after 313 A.D.

*Erasmus*, one of the greatest minds of the Renaissance, wrote a letter in 1514 in which he said:

"Brute beasts fight with their natural arms, and not like us with machines, upon which we expend an ingenuity worthy of devils. For us, who glory in the name of Christ, of a Master who taught and exhibited nothing but gentleness, who are members of one body, quickened by the same spirit, attached to the same Head, called to the same immortality—can anything be of so great concern as to provoke us to war, which, even when it is most righteous, no

\* "The doctrine of Jesus was essentially pacific, . . . and in the early centuries, war found in the Fathers of the Church some sturdy opponents. Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Lactantius, and others declared all recourse to arms to be unjust. Origen said 'We do not take arms against any nation, we make no war for we are the children of peace by Jesus Christ.' Under the pagan emperors Christians refused military service. The coming of Constantine the Great and the radical transformation he brought about in the relation of Church and State provoked a reaction against this absolute idea. Augustine made the idea of the legitimacy of war to prevail."

truly good man can approve it . . . What kingdom can you set against the lives and blood of so many thousand men? Even the conqueror weeps

The greatest amount of the mischief affects those who have no part in the fighting. War comes to us from Hell. Why do men slaughter one another? For the phantom of glory? That is no true glory which is mainly sought by wrongful acts."

Then in "Querela Pacis" he says that war is "so impious that it cannot at all be reconciled with Christianity," yet there are not wanting "learned flatterers who to this plain insanity give the name of zeal of fortitude, having devised a way in which a man may draw his sword and sheathe it in his brother's body without any violation of Christian charity."

Truly Erasmus was a pioneer, a seer.

*Isaac Penington, the younger*, wrote "Somewhat spoken to the weighty question concerning the magistrates' protection of the innocent; also a brief account of what the people called Quakers desire, in reference to the civil government" (1661). It is a small tract of 16 pages. Penington tells of those in whom God has awakened the law of the Spirit, and who are redeemed "out of the fighting nature." "How can he (a Quaker) fight with creatures, he in whom is love and good will toward those creatures? Fighting is not suitable to a gospel spirit, but to the spirit of the world and the children thereof." Then he puts forward an objection which is still put forward by those in fear: "If all men were of this mind (in a nation) and none would fight: Suppose a nation should be invaded, would not the land of necessity be ruined?" He says that the non-fighting good spirit must, if it is to arrive at all, be begun in some. In Quakers it is begun. The happiness of the world depends on the growth of this spirit. Then "the lion shall eat straw like the ox." Magistrates are to restrain a man who walks disorderly, but with "the spiritual rod and sword," not "to imprison, fine, banish or put him to death," (2 Cor. xx. 4). The true Church finds the Sword of the Spirit sufficient. Thus the Christian is not

against all law, but against carnal weapons. This Penington is to be distinguished from Sir Isaac Penington, lord-mayor of London, lieutenant of the Tower (died 1661).

*William Penn* was made Supreme Governor of Pennsylvania and sailed thither in 1682. He formed a Christian State on a Quaker model, with a court of arbitration, but no soldiers. He made friends with the Indians, and paid them for their land. Of course there were difficulties in a new colony, but worse difficulties arose where soldiers were used in other adjacent colonies, for the Indians massacred white men and burnt their houses. For some seventy years Pennsylvania was governed, and grew, without an army.

Considerable light is thrown on the Christian alternative to war by the experiences of the *Quakers in Ireland*, during the Rebellion of 1798. They sided with neither party, but fed the hungry of either side. They were respected and hardly molested at all.

*Livingstone* went unarmed through districts of wild men in Africa, and was loved because he loved them.

The life of *James Chalmers* in New Guinea shows how a courageous Christian could actually stop tribal wars, running unarmed as he did between the combatants! True, at last he was killed, but after years of useful work. Had he used arms he might have killed a few men, but would have been himself killed at once.

The experience of *Robert Moffat* with Africaner (about 1818) shows how a man can go unarmed to an outlaw, and win him to the Christ-life, though on his way to Africaner's kraal, Moffat was told of the raids and cruelties of the outlaw, and how that Africaner would kill him and make a drum of his skin!

The life-work of *Theodore L. Pennell, M.D., B.Sc., F.R.C.S.*, in N. India illustrates the same theme. He landed in India in 1891 and worked as a doctor in and about Bannu, near the Afghan

frontier. At times he had 200 patients a day. Lord Roberts wrote of him: "Dr. Pennell was quite fearless: he never carried a weapon of any kind." It is true, that when travelling with converts, he sometimes had an armed guard, but never seems to have used their services. If a scuffle arose, he prevented his men from retaliating. If he was stoned, he walked away. When, after a shooting affray in 1879, against the British, it was suggested that the Mission at Bannu should have a guard of soldiers, Dr. Pennell "distinctly disapproved," wrote his widow, "as he maintained that the surest way of calling forth the kindness and protection of the tribes was by showing them that he did *not* rely upon material arms for his defence. For this reason he never carried arms of any description himself, and on more than one occasion, it was this fact which saved him from assassins, who deemed it cowardly to attack an unarmed man."

And among what sort of people did Dr. Pennell go unarmed? He wrote: "The Afghans have enmities, which, working on their fiery and blood-thirsty temperaments are constantly a source of tribal feud and bloodshed. It has been aptly said that the Afghans are never at peace except when they are at war." They slept with guns and swords near them. One armed priest said to Dr. Pennell: "There are but few houses here which have not their own blood feud." Yet from 1892 till his death in 1912 this doctor worked unarmed, protected by divine fearless Love, which broke down opposition in those who might desire to injure him.

The aim of Dr. Pennell was to establish a line of hospitals (not forts) along the frontier. On one occasion an Afghan chief refused to enter a quarrel and a local war, because he respected Dr. Pennell. It was said that the doctor was equal to a regiment of soldiers for keeping order in that wild region!

Much might be written of the "Tertiaries" of St. Francis, who bore no arms, of the Doukhobors in Russia (now in Canada), of the Quakers in America, of the life of John Hunt and of others who

prove the power of a real unarmed Goodwill. Even if such men do at times suffer, they prefer to do so than to kill their fellow-men.

(iii.) *Excuses for War.*

Nine excuses for war have been made.

(1) It is often said *that war brings out heroism*. Wonderful indeed have been the heroic deeds of soldiers, sailors, nurses, doctors, and of quiet workers at home. A soldier, a bomb-thrower, by accident dropped a bomb he was about to throw. It landed near his comrades. He cast himself on it to save them, and was instantly killed. Innumerable have been the brave deeds, such as this one, during the Great War. But in *all* disasters, heroism is called out; yet we do not create disasters such as a mine on fire, in order to call out heroism!

Men are often very conscientious in war. True, and all such have a reward in their souls.

On both sides, in a war, there are men most heroic, and most conscientious—and patriotic. But more is needed for a right life on this earth.

What is needed is Christian Enlightenment, and spiritual bravery to obey God's law of Goodwill to all men, even to one's enemies!

This is a courage more deep and effective than the courage of a physically strong man who bravely kills his enemies. Such courage needs to be transmuted by Christ into spiritual heroism that bears evil and yet does only good to men.

In considering what line the Christian takes in facing the passions and brutalities of men and peoples it is clear that Goodwill—fearless, unarmed, and hopeful—is his true attitude. That Goodwill is prepared for loss; but "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things he possesseth," nor does a nation's life consist in vast lands or great exports and imports. As a matter of fact, the man, or nation, of fearless Goodwill is far *less* likely to suffer than he (or they) who seeks to wound and kill any aggressor or burglar.

In the Boxer riots in China, the Christians fled, or refused to resist by arms and were at times killed;

but far more would have suffered had they killed some of their enemies: and so it ever is.

(2) The objection is often brought up that the "Christian may refuse to resist by aggressive counter-violence when he is himself attacked, but must use such *when a third party is involved*, some weak child, say, being attacked." The Christian will certainly not stand idly by in such a case. He will, however, keep the attitude of forgiving, calm goodwill, knowing the assailant is self-deceived by his passion. He will calmly say—"Friend, why are you doing this? Let me help you if you are in need. Is it the child's money you seek, or has the child done some wrong?" for children can be wilfully bad at times.

Such is the first line of defence, and it will often succeed, between individuals, and similarly between nations, where fury will fail. The second line is to offer some money or other gift, if the man of passion will go away and leave the child alone.

A third line is to get between the man and the child, to let the child escape, or to protect the child, not in anger—that only makes the aggressor worse—but in pity, rather, that a man, a soul, should have so forgotten his divine calling.

A fourth line is to passively resist, *i.e.*, not in aggressive violence to harm or kill the man, but to restrain him in goodwill, to clasp him, begging him to be calm and desist. If he be a lunatic, it will be the act of goodwill to try to get help to secure him, to put him under restraining influences, so far as is necessary.

But war is *not parallel* to any of these cases! Both sides in war are armed, and may both have been burglar-nations in the past. Each has provoked the other. Both desire to keep their lands even if they kill their fellow-men in the effort so to do. In a word it is the unchristian attitude of ill-will that leads to war.

(3) *Take a Third Excuse.*

Matt. v. 38-48: Luke vi. 27-38 are against war, and all that harms others, but it is urged that the prohibition against resisting evil and the command

to love one's enemies *cannot be taken literally*, as other commands "give to everyone that asketh you" and "Lay not up treasure on earth" and "Lend hoping for nothing again," are not taken literally.

An examination of the two accounts of the Sermon on the Mount in Matt v. and Luke vi. yields (a) this—that where clearly a simile is used, as in "Ye are the salt," "the light," "cast not your pearls"—they must be treated as similies, yet as pointing to realities: *e.g.*, the pearls are spiritual truths. (b) On the other hand, statements of moral law are meant to calmly express truth. Be not angry without a cause, divorce not except for unchastity, blessed are the poor in spirit and the peacemakers, do good to your enemies—are ideas to be recognised as they stand. Otherwise they are meaningless. "Lay not up"—hoard not. To invest in a good use for one's money was not thought of then. Hoarding was by keeping gold or silver or clothing in chests, or holes in the ground. To invest is to use, not hoard. "Lend or give to any one who asks." The asker was the sturdy beggar who takes by *force* if he is not given or lent the money—such is Luke's clearer version in vi. 30 ("Give to him who demands of you and ask not your goods from him who has taken them"): and so there is a fourth example of injury if this be put in Matthew v. 42. Such violent taking or borrowing is not to be resisted or revenged. The enemies were not merely private ones but persecutors of the church.

(4) Again, it is said that some wars have greatly benefited the world, such as those against the Huns (451 A.D.), the Saracens (734), and slavery in U.S.A. But Attila and his Huns were not stopped by the battle of 451. They came and burned cities in Italy in 452, and it was only by Pope Leo I. and his entreaties that they were turned back (see Ency-Brit: "Attila"). They were subdued by moral power! The Saracens, after defeat by Charles the Hammer, near Poitiers, would have probably returned, had not disturbances in Africa called them there (see "The Saracens," by A. Gilman). Their rule in Spain was very tolerant too (see "Spain,"

by H. E. Watts). They allowed Christians to have their own property, worship and churches. The Civil War in U.S.A. was not to end slavery, but preserve the union, as Lincoln declared. Anyhow, slavery would have been ended, without war, as in other lands.

(5) Treaties are said to be a cause of necessary wars. Thus, an excuse for Britain entering the Great War was the violation of Belgium. As to the *Belgian neutrality* 1839 Treaty, there is a vagueness in its clauses taken together and no mention of a guarantee as in the 1831 treaty. Anyhow, Gladstone would not regard it as meaning armed intervention should take place *regardless* of circumstances (see this speech, as quoted by Sir Ed. Grey on August 3, 1914), and in 1870 Gladstone only regarded the treaty as binding England to send troops to Belgium, but *not* to engage in a European war (France v. Germany). Belgium, prior to the present war, did not insist on armed intervention, but only asked for "diplomatic intervention." Britain herself did not treat neutrals strictly according to the Hague Convention 1907 (Article 1): *e.g.*, Greece.

The fact is Britain was really committed to *help France* on August 2, 1914, when Sir Ed. Grey sent a telegram saying that if German ships came down the Channel against France, the British fleet would engage them, and the agreement of Parliament to this was a formality. So the making of war by Britain against Germany on the violation of Belgium was probably the finding of a convenient pretext. Germany merely crossing an unresisting but protesting Belgium was not a sufficient violation in itself to call for British arms. The "Entente" led Britain into the war really. It was secret in its military aspects, and never agreed to by Parliament and the nation. Again, the "Times" in a "leader" on March 8, 1915, declared that Britain made war really in defence of her own interests, and that Belgium was quite a secondary matter.

The fact is, Britain has always stood for her interests first, and often adopted pious pretexts afterwards. In 1887, when there might have been war

between France and Germany, the "Standard" (then the semi-official organ) declared that if German troops came through Belgium there was no need for Britain to fight Germany, as it would only be using Belgium as a right of way. It was then believed that no British interest would be endangered, and the Treaty of 1839 would not be seriously broken, if Belgium remained free and independent as before. The "Pall Mall Gazette" (Liberal then) agreed about the Treaty, declaring the guarantee to be in common, not applying to separate nations. The "Spectator" agreed that Britain could not bar German troops from merely traversing Belgian soil. Yet that was all that Germany wanted to do in 1914. Even that would have been a wrong, but in 1887 it was not considered enough a wrong to embroil Britain in war.

Thus, though Germany was by far the worse offender in bringing on the War in 1914 (and her methods in it were often unscrupulous and wickedly against the Hague Convention), yet she was only one of several burglar-nations, prepared for war, nations who for long had based their covetous diplomacy on their armed forces, and who in the past had gained expansion by war. All were guilty, and Britain had taught the world to gain colonies by war.

(6) Again, it is said that only by war can "Prussianism" be destroyed. It is an evil to be crushed. But the Allies cannot crush it, for they are guilty of imposing their wills on Manchuria, Finland, Poland (Russia): Egypt, Persia, China (1841) and the Transvaal (Britain): Morocco (France): Tripoli (Italy). The Germans learnt the Machiavellian force-rule from Bismarck. But, less brutally, other States have also acted on it. Prussianism everywhere should be ended, for it exalts the military power to curtail the hard-won liberties of the people.

All honour to all soldiers who, believing that by war they could end Prussianism, endured all kinds of suffering or death. Their noble desire will help to end the belief in force-rule.

But Prussianism was not the cause of the Great

War, or why did Germany keep the peace for forty years? The cause was the mutual *fear* among nations armed in their competition for concessions and colonies. Germany struck for *her* ambitions before Russia and France were ready to strike for theirs.

Prussianism has rather increased than been diminished by the war. In Britain there has been a serious curtailment of the cherished liberties of the Press, of speech, of contract, and of the person even, while hated conscription has been twice forced on men. All this was really Prussianism. But can Satan cast out Satan?

The treatment of honest conscientious objectors was often a farce, and often illegal. Many honest and peaceable citizens were imprisoned, and brutally used, whose only crime was that they refused to kill their fellow-men! Thus the use of the war-method by Britain did not end Prussianism in Germany, but increased it in Britain. Prussianism is a state of mind: violence cannot end it. Only a new idea of Life can end it.

The desire to increase the army and navy of U.S.A. is a further increase of Prussianism.

(7) But, again it is said, that *Pacifism cannot make secure a nation's liberties*: preparation for war is needed. This is an illusion. The peoples now under the yoke of other peoples, as the Poles and Finns, have been in the past armed and fighting peoples. There has been no pacific nation yet, no people who dared to trust in God and do His will, which is unlimited goodwill. Isaiah, "Christ" and Buddha all told men that they would make hate cease by such a course. Supposing such a people were invaded, the invasion would be a tame affair, no fighting, no "iron crosses" to be won. The invaders would be fed by the invaded people, as Camillus' army by the people of Tusculum, who refused to fight the Romans about B.C. 386 (see Livy, Book vi., 24-26). Some arrangement would be come to with such a people. It is not easy to see how the invader would

find any moral pretext for invasion, if he were not going to be resisted: for now-a-days such a pretext must be given out to the world (*e.g.*, the violation of Belgium). If a colony or concession or indemnity were lost by the invaded people, such would be a far more "practical" way than entering into a long and bloody war. Moreover, a whole nation's quiet passive resistance (so far as consistent with good will) against paying taxes to the invaders or recognising their rule, would soon make their rule a thing obnoxious, even to the invaders. It may be said that Belgium has been forced to submit. But, with all her pluck to fight, Belgium had not the deeper courage to refuse to fight and do only good: to protest against her "violation," but to kill not. Belgium elected to stand by her treaty, and a weak reed it proved itself. She was told she was "expected" to resist: see White Paper of telegrams leading to the war. An invaded people who resisted not, but cared for the invaders, would not long be enslaved. Better to lose even civic liberty for a time, than kill and maim thousands of one's fellow-men, peasants and factory-workers, against whom one really has no quarrel. The Jews for seven centuries paid tribute to foreign rulers, yet had a noble theocracy, and produced piety and literature of deathless value to the human race. Political liberty is a good, but not one to be obtained at the cost of killing and maiming millions of one's fellow-men. It is not the *summum bonum* for a Christian. The Pacifists seem to be idle "in face of a national danger." Often were they taunted with this. But the "danger" was made by those who for years piled up armaments against Germany, and then used them to kill her men, adding evil to evil. As for the idleness of pacifists—"What can a man do," asked Tolstoy, "when he sees a crowd destroying one another, pushing and pressing against a solid door, hoping to open it outwards, while *he* knows it only opens inwards?" (see Tolstoy's "Thou shalt kill no one"). England, undefended, would not be conquered if she were defended by hearts, spiritually brave to do no ill to the "enemy," but only good.

Even if some losses of land came, yet it is to be remembered that man is not on earth to seek first any political or external good, but to seek the kingdom of God. That gives an inner freedom no conquest can touch. To win Christ the world is well lost!

(8) *It has been urged that atrocities must be revenged by war.* The lies and atrocities by Germany horrified all.

As a matter of fact, it is the resistance of armed men by killing and maiming of them that leads to atrocities. The Bryce Report on the Atrocities in Belgium shows that they were largely caused by the German officers and men being "exasperated" by the action of the Belgians at the forts of Liège. They shot down thousands of Germans. No doubt technically the Germans were in the wrong in crossing Belgium, but the resistance of that wrong by a greater evil (killing those who would take a way across Belgium) "exasperated" the Germans. The shooting at them in villages and towns, if such took place, increased this exasperation. But vile treatment of some women by Germans (mostly intoxicated) is like what happened in other wars. It is war which brings atrocities. Revenge leads to more revenge (re-named "reprisals"). The submarine blockade led to the Order in Council, March 11th, 1915, by which Germany was blockaded by the British and war made thus on women and children. That led to more revenge by "piracy" and Zeppelins: and that to aeroplanes of the Allies attacking places in Germany. A trade boycott, if adopted against Germany, would lead to other reprisals and an intrigue for yet another war. There is no real peace by revenge.

*The prevention of more atrocities* was thus a foolish excuse for continuing the war against Germany. It is true that the German Staff ordered the needless burning of houses in Belgium, and for a time allowed the viler elements of their soldiers to go unchecked: they let ships conveying non-combatants be torpedoed without warning, on the pretext of having an "effective" blockade around

Britain. Many cases of individual soldiers behaving unscrupulously are recorded also. They used "gas." These things were "atrocities." Over against them is to be put the atrocity of the blockade of Germany by Britain, the effort, daily and in cold blood, to starve her people. Sir Ed. Grey upheld it by quoting Bismarck (1885) and Caprivi (1892)—German Chancellors! Food riots and an increase of infant mortality were among the results of the blockade. See "The Daily News," May 11, 1916. The late Professor Westlake (Cambridge) spoke of the cruelty of blockades. Also atrocities have been done in peace by many peoples—by the Russians against political prisoners in Siberia, by the British Opium traffic for fifty years.

But the greatest atrocity of all is the use of *lyddite*, even if allowed by the Hague Convention. The Hague Convention only tried to curtail war, to make some of its evils less, but it did not expose *war as itself an atrocity*. The daily maiming and blasting of men by *lyddite* is far worse than any occasional atrocities: and that all the combatants did. Why complain of gas if you use bayonets?

To continue a war to prevent atrocities is to go on causing greater atrocities to prevent lesser ones. And to fear that, if unresisted by arms, Germany would overrun, capture and enslave the world, is the wild dream of unspiritual men, who know not the response that men make to calm, honest goodwill, which is ready to share the riches of the world with others.

(9) It may be said that *unruly men need a firm hand*. Even if the possession of arms were prohibited, an unarmed police could easily be overpowered by a gang of ruffians with knives. Romans xiii. 1-6 refers to the "sword" which the magistrate (or his men) wields against the turbulent. That is so. But why should ruffians *desire to kill the police*? So that they can *thieve*? Are they very poor, and illiterate in moral knowledge, then? And whose fault would this desire to *thieve* be but the fault of the State? If all healthy men formed an unarmed

police force, and were trained as such to use force only to restrain evil men, if necessary, and for their good: and if the spirit of goodwill in a nation prevailed, it is not easy to see why resort should be had to kill anyone. Severe penalties do not lessen crime. It is a more healthy public opinion that does that. All penalty is a relic of revenge. To punish men as a deterrent to others is unjust to those who suffer. Wm. Penn (1681 and following years) and those who ruled Pennsylvania had no soldiers for 70 years, even among half-savage Indians. Without such a new spirit, no new polity other than the use of arms and wars is possible. The need to-day is the positive preparation for Government by goodwill, force being used only to restrain the lunatic, passionate and cruel, who will not desist from evil otherwise. No violence should be resorted to, to make a man pay taxes, though public exposure may be necessary and a limited "boycott," if his deed be from an evil motive (Matt. xviii. 17).

(iv.) *What then was the cause of the Great War?*

The Great War was an epitome of all the past European quarrels. Even if started by Germany it was prepared for by all, and had not Germany started it (pushing Austria against Serbia, it seems), it would have been started a year later, maybe, by Russia or France, when they were ready. The belief in the war-method existed in all. A valuable memorandum to President Wilson was drawn up by the Reform Club of New York. It said:

"Serbia wants a window on the sea. Austria wants an outlet in the East, Constantinople or Salonica. Russia wants ice-free ports on the Baltic and Pacific, and Constantinople (also). Germany needs the facilities of Antwerp and Rotterdam, security against being shut out from the East by commercial restriction on the overland route. England must receive uninterrupted supplies of food and raw materials. So with France and Germany.

Japan must have opportunities for her expanding population, industries and commerce. . . The desire for commercial privilege and for freedom from commercial restraint is the primary cause of war."

Thus, destroy avarice and wars are unnecessary: and when men cease to believe good can come by them, they will cease.

Taking it for granted that the nation mainly responsible for the Great War (at the opening of it) was Germany, it must be remembered that Germany's wicked ambition to get expansion by war was *taught to her by Britain*, among other peoples. This is clear from the writings of Treitschke. Treitschke, not Nietzsche, was the teacher of the German officers, for he lectured on politics in Leipzig, Freiburg, Heidelberg and Berlin to these men for nigh forty years (1858-1896). *But what influenced Treitschke?* He said:

"Britain's position as a Power was created in those good old times when wars were still decided by sea-fights and hired mercenaries, and it was thought politic in all dominating countries to seize piratical hold of well-situated sea-fortresses and fleet-stations. The time will come when Gibraltar will belong to the Spaniards, Malta to the Italians."

Jamaica was captured by a naval force, 1655: Gibraltar taken from Spain after three days siege, 1704: Malta taken from French by troops, 1799: Aden taken by force and annexed 1839: India by Clive in 1757: Canada, 1759, battle of Quebec by Wolfe: Transvaal, 1902, by the Boer War. Thus Britain taught the world that colonies for commercial ends could be obtained through war and that it was *right* to use war for this end.

Treitschke wrote: "Over-rich and over-satiated, the Britons feel they have nothing more to desire in the wide world." (Lecture on Turkey and the Great Nations, 1876).

Treitschke saw that England had colonies by war, for trading was not enough to win these vast lands.

Hence Treitschke wanted similar colonies, where the German language would be spoken. He said:

"England seized upon everything. The Germans have been obliged to miss this and to sleep through it. Without any doubt a great colonial development is a fortunate thing for a nation. Germans in America—they are lost to the fatherland for ever! The working power as well as the capital of these emigrants is lost to us. What incalculable financial advantages would these people afford us as colonists."

Treitschke goes on to speak of the participation in "the domination of the world by the white race."

So the British cannot now say they have been as innocent lambs in having no share in causing the Great War! They were the first armed burglars on the field. The rest followed! Their giving of free institutions to some of the conquered peoples is no excuse. It was the best for all concerned, and made for peaceful economic life. The spread of the English language, the choice of Governors by England, and openings for commerce and civic posts are not matters of light account.

Again, in his Lectures on "Politics," Treitschke further said: "All the States known to us have arisen through wars. . . . It is a favourite fashion of our time to hold up England as especially inclined to peace. But England is always making war. There has hardly been a moment in modern history in which she has not to fight somewhere. The great advances of mankind in civilization can only be entirely realised, by the sword."

Others also influenced Treitschke, *e.g.*, the bellicose nature of the French, who seized Alsace-Lorraine in the 17th century, and conquered Prussia in 1806 (Jena). No wonder Treitschke wanted to get back Alsace-Lorraine in 1870 and spoke at length on this.

Machiavelli also influenced Treitschke. Machiavelli wrote "The Prince" (Principe) in 1513. From him Treitschke learned that "the State is power," and was free from morality. But France



too has used that idea. "Napoleon III's *coup d'état* was evidently prepared according to Machiavelli's recipe." But Treitschke criticised Machiavelli. "A power that treads all right underfoot must in the end itself perish."

Thus it was the *example of England*, and of France, too, in the past that moved Treitschke. Even in finances, in war-loans, Treitschke quotes England.

And "was it an unproductive war-policy that brought the Cape of Good Hope, and who knows what else, into England's big pockets. The richest countries in the world had been won."

To understand the cause of Germany's desire for expansion by war, it is necessary to understand Treitschke, and to understand him, it is necessary to see how he accepted the current ways of "politics," and had learned the effect of war for expansion from England and France. This he taught. But it is a great mistake to suppose that German armed ambition stood alone. All the Allies had their ambitions and believed in the war-method. Russia had tried to gain expansion in Manchuria and Korea (1904), England in Egypt and Persia, France in Morocco, Italy in Tripoli. France had Boucher who wrote three books before the war under the title: "La France Victorieuse dans la guerre de demain." Britain had refused arbitration before the Boer War unless her suzerainty was acknowledged. The wickedness of German aggression in 1914 did not come as a "bolt from the blue." It had a history, as all wickedness has. England and France share its guilt. To meet it by more war was the worst course. Can Satan cast out Satan? The evil was only increased. The Great War was really begun in 1904 when the "Entente" with France was made. Something inevitably would bring on a war, sooner or later, on those lines. The burglars, all armed to the teeth, believing in spoil and in the war-method, would fall out sooner or later, when one (Germany) took the lead. The whole method is animal, not spiritual. It is played out. It is devilish. It is now futile as well.

The War was the Son of Man, the Moral Ideal, sitting in judgment. The Moral Ideal rules, and only "hell" comes from continued disobedience. The War was hell. The War came, as a fever comes when poisons continue in the blood. It was caused by sin, by the greed of the rich in many nations, and their belief that this could be satisfied by war. Even in England were many military and political writers who extolled war (*e.g.*, Cramb). While this was so in Britain, it existed still more in France (*e.g.*, Colonel Boucher) and Germany (Von Bernhardi), and even in Russia (*cf.*, the grasping effort of the Russo-Japanese War). Britain has tried to throw all the blame for the Great War on Germany. This is hypocrisy or gross ignorance. In making war on Germany (1914), Britain did not propose to give up her places conquered by war, as Gibraltar, Malta, Hong-Kong: or to free the Boers; or the Finns, and Poles (of Russia). Britain had led the way in expansion by war! Germany had become a strong organised military power, no doubt, and many wanted expansion by war: but the other powers had *obtained* expansion by wars, and taught Germany this wickedness during 150 years (since England seized on India, for trade, by a war against the French, 1757). It is this *armed covetousness in all the nations* (even Italy had just taken Tripoli) that really caused the Great War. It came as a vast judgment of God on that unrepented sin, for the Moral Law rules Humanity, and is not mocked, any more than is the law of gravitation!

The Allies are called "Christian." Had they been so, they would not have competed with Germany in a race to pile up armaments, but have relied on goodwill, and shared the world's lands with Germany. Thus would have been prevented the rise of envy and enmity—and war! Britain made war on Germany "in defence of British interests," really: as Sir Edward Grey said five times in his speech on August 3, 1914.

If the nations (enslaved to their ruling classes) do

not learn a better way than war and cast off the rule of diplomatists and financiers and armament firms, they will be still conscripted and driven soon to a senseless slaughter again! God must be obeyed! The Great War revealed the Moral Law of God in its terribly kind judgment on Sin.

(v.) *How are wars and preparations for war to be ended?*

(a) If Christians now realised *what the war-method meant* and kept to the Christ-Ideal, they could not support war. They would see that the latter condemns the former. The newspapers hide the horrors of war, and only tell of its "glory," and the real bravery in it, which all must acknowledge. But men have been brave under all wars, and often in bad causes. What war means has been described thus by one who has seen many wars, Mr. H. W. Nevison, in an address given on March 22nd, 1915, in Westminster:

"War is murder sanctioned by the State. People do not realise what war is. . . . I remember a Belgian bank, which had been converted into a dressing station. I could not describe the horror of the scene, as revealed by two or three little candles, that were set beside the surgeons while they did what they could for the wounded who were brought in, shattered forms of mankind, the awful holes which had been made in the human bodies, welling with dark liquid, the basins into which the surgeons threw the fragments of men as they cut them off, and the awful smell of hot blood. At Neuve Chapelle alone, 30,000 must have been killed and wounded, including the loss of the enemy: 30,000 men in the prime of life, just for a piece of ground hardly big enough to bury them in, two miles in front, and three-quarters of a mile in depth. . . . Take the cases of people blinded by explosions of shells, their eyes being driven into their heads; more terrible cases of the men who lose their minds, or who come out dumb with the shock of the shells, or the horror. . . . Near Dixmude I saw a pit made by a 'Jack Johnson' (shell) in which 27 men and

some horses had been mixed up so inextricably that you could not distinguish one from another."

The basis of civilisation is the sacredness of human life seen in the care for the unborn even, for children, for the sick and aged, and for women. War denies that sacredness and is a ghastly fratricide. And "What doth war but endless war still breed?" (Milton).

The Allies, in the Great War, said they fought to free Europe from German aggressiveness which ever threatened a war, and made all nations arm. But war cannot cure the armed ambition of a people or its rulers. Prussian military power started after Prussia was crushed in 1806. Russian armed ambition did not end after the Crimean War in 1854-5. The war-method is a mistake.

Thus, from a consideration of the Christian's better way than war for meeting ambitious men or nations, and the consideration of the waste, the cruelty and futility of the war-method (for it leads to more arming and hatred) it is surely time that a firm stand was taken by Christians, not for a cold passive resistance merely, but for the positive effective might of magnanimity. All who see no better way than war will still want to fight—and so prepare to fight by raising armies: but it *is* possible for the people to learn the better way (which God Himself supports!) cast off subservience to oligarchies, and end the nightmare of fear and greed and jealousy which makes men prepare for and use the method of war.

War has become both horrible and futile, as well as sinful. It is horrible as it is "murder by machinery," cold-blooded murder from three miles distance, followed by a bayonet charge, which can only be done in a kind of frenzy. But it is futile too.

What it settles leads to unsettlement and to plans for more war: as *e.g.*, concerning Alsace-Lorraine, which was German till 1648, when it became French, and then belonged to Germany in 1870, leading to a craving for "la revanche" by the French.

War does not make the fittest survive, but kills or maims the fittest in each nation at war. The cost of a war is the cost of preparing for it in arms and men, then the cost of the war itself, then the cost of fuller preparations afterwards, to defend what has been won by war, or to seek to recover what is lost. All this is done for some bit of land or concession, which is a poor thing at best! War is not even necessary now to preserve a nation's independence. Passive resistance and positive goodwill and international fellowship alone can do this: but even if one nation be ruled by another, or pay taxes to another, such is far better and nobler than the slaying of a million lives in war, maiming other millions, and laying up a store of hate for more wars. The will of God was not political independence for the Jews. For God they paid tribute. But they did their spiritual work in the world for God during that time. Political independence is a great good, but not the greatest good.

(b) Besides a vivid knowledge of what war means, there is needed a *new consciousness of Goodwill*. Men must learn that there is something better than earthly colonies, concessions, land, glory! Their true kingdom is not of this world. A State may hold a small land and yet be great: cf. ancient Athens: or Judea when even paying tribute to Assyria, Babylonia or Persia. Man must be recreated into the spiritual plane of life. He needs to be "in Christ." Then his combative tendencies will be controlled, as now largely his sexual tendencies are controlled, viz., by an Ideal. Covetousness in private life is largely controlled also by a sense of honest dealing as good for all. Combativeness can be transmuted into the spiritual war for the ending of ignorance, disease, poverty and crime in all the world! The duel has been eliminated by ridicule. Let us ridicule war as a stupid way of trying to settle who is right. It only says who is the stronger, and all stand to lose and suffer terribly by it. Man's progress is by the "Via Crucis," by dying to the rule of the animal nature in him: and

war is the tiger-method *plus* weapons of scientific precision. Evil is not overcome by evil, but by good. This is eternal law and God is not mocked!

(c) *There is also needed an International Council* to adjust the needs of peoples. War cannot do it. War wastes the wealth of all and is no settlement: e.g., if one nation "crush" another's army, that does not end the need of that defeated nation for an ice-free port or some other form of expansion. No family takes to a scramble; and its members do not fight each other to settle their various needs for work, or money, or land in the family inheritance. If they do, they are fools, for nothing is so settled. War leaves only unsettlement and an inconclusive peace. It is sub-human. So a Conference must end a war, and an International Council do what men hoped to do by war. But towards such a Council there must be the education of the peoples to believe in it. Will, not force, is the basis of the State, taught T. H. Green: and will, not force, is the basis of the new International Council or Parliament of federated races. What keeps peoples from it is the old stupid illusion that States are independent, isolated units and the need of one can only be satisfied by the impoverishment of others. That is the idea which oligarchic Governments work upon. They each exist (in foreign relations) simply to bolster up one State. They cannot see that States are now members of one body of Humanity.

It will be the work of the Council to arrange for gradual disarmament and the rule of arbitration, but first for the application of certain principles.

The International Council would need to act on certain just principles. Goodwill, if it is to live, must be expressed in arrangements for the good of all. There is to be no favouritism. "Patriotism is not enough," as Nurse Cavell said.

One such principle is *free-trade*: a fair opportunity for all to obtain concessions, to build a railway in Morocco, to gain orders for jute to be sent to South America, to work oil in Persia. Lands of half-civilised peoples should be helped by the Inter-

national Council to develop themselves, and not be exploited by one nation. Spheres of influence must be open to all. The greed that craves monopolies leads to war. Cobden said: "Free trade is the best peacemaker." Protection is a sign of ill-will. "Retaliation" is unchristian, *i.e.*, unreasonable, if not also robbery.

Many advocated a Trade War to follow the Great War. German goods were to be excluded. It was said that only thus would Germany be hindered from preparing a new war. The British Empire Union arose to "Keep Germans and German goods out of the British Empire." A Colonial Prime Minister supported such a policy! English statesmen said that only so could Germany be kept from preparing a new war. But any new war could be otherwise prevented, as by a rule of the democracy in Germany, or a mutual agreement of the Powers to limit severely their expenditure on armies and armaments. If a Trade War was necessary, it was a confession that the Great War was a wrong method to end Prussianism.

Anyhow, it was the wrong method, and something else was needed, *viz.*, a new spirit. The late Professor Westlake in 1862 urged that commercial blockades in war should cease, for each nation has its own work in industry (*e.g.*, Russia to supply corn), and such will be upset if a blockade can interfere with the food of great peoples. Free exchange has become essential to efficiency.

Besides free-trade there is needed *free self-government*. If a people has long been cultivating a land it has a title to it. It should be free to choose its own government, or what Power it desires to be under. This applies not only to Belgians, but to the Finns, the Poles, the Boers, the Persians: and even to the peoples of India and Africa ultimately.

Britain must restore Gibraltar to Spain, Malta to Italy, Hongkong to China. What was forcibly robbed must be restored.

Arbitration can never be fair, while Britain claims all her conquered Empire for herself. It is

as a burglar suggesting arbitration after he had been first in the mansion and secured most of its prizes for himself. "Now arbitrate on the rest, but preserve the 'status quo,'" he says!

What is the *sanction* which such an International Council will use? Public opinion expressed in some measure of boycott, the cutting off of a people from travel and postal arrangements with the outside world, if that people persists in arming. In the same way a child is not allowed to mix with others if he cannot behave himself.

The *outward ideal to aim at* is that each people cultivating a country shall be a free, self-governing unit (small or great) in a World-Republic, whose world-relations shall be arranged by a world-Parliament. All dependencies of European Powers, such as Poland, Finland, Morocco, Canada, Australia, shall be independent units in the fellowship of the World-Republic, and their Ruler shall be God. All this should be taught to our children.

The world of *human life is based on a Moral Law* of happiness by justice and goodwill. There is no escape. There is no other way. Nations may puff themselves up with pride and greed, but the simple right of every man of every nation to be treated as a man, not as a thing, is eternally valid. War, and all its miseries, come from a denial of this just goodwill to all. Accept it, and mankind will see the new Dawn of a brighter Day.

The need of peoples is of a great repentance—from pride into humility, and from greed into generosity, from fear to faith. It is sin that caused the Great War—and all previous wars: the sins of greed and pride, greed for gain and pride of power.

The peoples did not make the Great War: their Governments did that folly. But the peoples had allowed themselves to believe in the War-method. They had enslaved themselves to their Governments. They had allowed foreign relationships to be secretly arranged, by "conversations" and secret clauses of treaties. Of this reliance on Oligarchies and on

guns—the peoples must repent. War is “the offspring of fear,” mortal fear. The peoples must repent from fear to faith!

Faith means trust in the Universe as good, as morally-ruled, as unified in a Power or Life we call God, who backs up those who live by love. This mighty faith, or intuitive feeling that Love (Goodwill) is the deepest and strongest Reality—this alone will cure the world of its animal instinct to kill any who oppose its course.

The peoples must and can repent from fear to a faith that is active by love. The diplomatists, generals, financiers, editors—they (being for the most part older men and often with unreasoning prejudices) will not repent.

But they can be deposed by Jesus Christ, the King of kings!

The New Enlightened Democracy in each land can arise. It can unite into One Brotherhood, and no longer will men fight or make munitions! This will be the great international passive resistance. This it will do because it has a better War, the really holy war against ignorance, sin, disease and poverty in *all* lands. Into this New Government by goodwill and this New War the peoples can and will repent—and behold, the world shall be changed!

### 3. THE NEW CHURCH-GROUPS.

It remains to briefly consider the effect of a radical view of the New Testament upon the groups of Christians called “churches.”

#### (a) *The past.*

The earliest Church was an outcome of the Community of mystic Jewish Christians in Jerusalem. By being persecuted they scattered, and formed new groups (Acts viii. 1-5) in Joppa, Antioch in Syria, and further afield.

These men met in groups to encourage one another in the belief that there was the “Christ” “in their midst” (Matt. xviii. 20), *i.e.*, they felt the glow of the spiritual love-life, as the inward Urge which arose after they had been educated in the Jewish

Laws. “Love does no ill to one’s neighbour: love therefore is the fulfilment of the law” (Rom. xiii. 10). They did not realise all the implications of this (*e.g.*, the way it would end slavery), but they knew that this Love-principle was the law of God, “the new commandment,” the “righteousness greater than that of the Scribes and Pharisees.” It was God’s will unveiled in them, and this they personified as “Jesus Christ,” for this Love was the divine Life which would save the world. Unfortunately—and yet inevitably—this spiritual faith of the mystic Christ-idea had to be brought into the lower forms of the Jewish and Roman religions, and lose its pristine glory. The figure of Jesus Christ became dressed in Messianic stories, till it was historised as a man. This was after A.D. 70. Then the influence of Roman religion gave the churches the idea of “sacerdos,” and in Cyprian’s writings (in N. Africa, c. 250 A.D.) the conception was put forward that the priest was necessary to the existence of a Church. This was a pagan, not a Christian idea (see Matt. xxiii. 1-10). Thus a hierarchy of priests arose, the priest of Rome becoming the “Papa” or Pope. The Church, under Constantine (313) became a State Church, the bishops at Rome being State officials. The deterioration had gone far indeed!

Against this secularisation of the Church, this de-spiritualising of it, came the Reformation (in 1517). It drew men from the rule of the Papacy and Romish Church in religious thought and practice, but it substituted, or still kept, the idea of the Bible as the infallible guide. Biblical theology was deemed to be authoritative and unquestionable, even all the Old Testament being, in some way, true! Many denominations arose simply upon disputed points of Biblical doctrine.

This held churches of the Protestant Order, till freedom of thought came by a combination of the sciences. Biology, in Darwin’s “Origin of Species” (1859), revealed that man was not a special creation some 6000 years ago, but that he had descended from

anthropoid apes. Geology showed the world was say 100,000,000 years old, since its period of gaseous heat!

Astronomy found no place "heaven" in the skies. The study of Comparative Religions showed that there was no one true religion, the rest being false, but religious systems were all efforts of men to reach the Ultimate Reality, and find its Will. It was discovered, too, that in many faiths there had been personifications of nature-powers or moral-powers, or other aspects of Life experienced by men.

Then Biblical Research and the Higher Criticism (the examination of the origins of the books of the Bible, as distinguished from the lower criticism of the texts used) brought a flood of light and made it possible to show the growth of the Bible during about a thousand years (from Amos to II. Peter), and of many other Jewish and Christian books, not included in it. The Bible was re-examined as literature. Such a combination of sciences has brought a new problem for the Churches. Yet many refuse to face it!

(b) *The present.*

Denominations have done their work. They arose by insistence on some aspect of truth, or of a controversy whose meaning has now largely departed. Men of wide sympathies are less and less able to tie themselves down to the creeds and articles of the Anglican Prayer Book, or to say "I am of Luther," "I am of Calvin," "I am of Wesley." All the great teachers held some truth: but none had a monopoly of it.

The Sacraments are still held magically by the Roman Catholic Church. God, by the priest, is supposed to do something. The bread becomes not merely bread. Hence it is taught it should be taken before other food is taken! That is magic, and really superstition. The value of the Lord's Supper lies for those who regard it as a beautiful symbol of the union of Christians by the one crucified life (or Christ) that is in them all expressed. "The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the Body

of Christ?" The "Body" of Christ is the Church. The bread is thus a symbol that Christians all feed on one spiritual life or "Christ." To partake of the bread preaches that. But there must be a real passion for one another. The Christian must be ready to help his fellow-Christian in his need, or he takes the Supper in vain.

The origin of the form of the Lord's Supper was in Mithraism and other mystery-religions. It is a "mystic" rite, and was symbolic of brotherhood because of a common union with the god. 1 Cor. x., 16-21 actually refers to other cults than the Christian, in which such rites took place. Men thought they "ate the god." The Lord's Supper does not appeal now to all men. The Salvation Army and Quakers have it not, and yet among these are found many of the noblest souls. Thus it must cease to be regarded as necessary, or as a sign of a Christian. So with baptism. Regeneration is not by it, be there used little water or much. At most it is but a symbol of discipleship, for infants or adults. The whole system of an official priesthood and sacraments must pass away as education advances. (Matt. xxiii. 1-10.) The old creeds too, interesting as historical documents, must needs be largely left behind. These are still used in the Prayer Book of the Anglican Church, and in those who let their minds be governed by the Council of Trent, but their power is on the wane.

Thus to take one phrase—"I believe in the resurrection of the body." This is said by many every Sunday who simply do *not* believe in it. All the oldest forms of the Apostles' Creed (the Roman Symbol) have the word "flesh" at the end of the creed, and that is what the word "body" means there (*cf.* Tertullian: "De resurrectione carnis"). The Apostles' Creed was meant to be taken in its simple meaning. It was not a set of mystic phrases. It was rather a protest against the mystic phrases of the Gnostic Christians (called heretics). It is not honest for a clergyman to say he believes in the "resurrection of the body" placed in the grave, when he means "I do not believe in that resur-

rection, for the body goes to dust, or enters into the composition of other organisms." To say he does not take the creeds "in their literal sense" is a sophistry, for they have no other sense, as they were written. So, *e.g.*, "I believe Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary" is set out as if a historical fact, and does not mean "I do not believe Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary"; nor does it mean "I believe a non-historical aspect of God, personified as Jesus Christ, who is ever being produced in the natural soul." This last is a glorious and deep truth, but the Creed does not declare it, and the worshippers take the Creed historically, as it stands, and as it was originally meant to be taken. A clergyman who does not frankly believe these creeds had better surely become a nonconformist minister, and suffer the "disabilities" which thousands of nonconformist ministers have suffered. These who cling to positions for the sake of the income attached, when only by sophistry can they remain, cannot lead on the people, for the foundation of Christianity is sincerity and truth, an honest life which is set on giving spiritual life to all.

Prayer, too, has of necessity, come to be largely limited in religion, where prayer is to be intelligent, free and sincere. To pray for rain, or for victory over one's enemies, or for pleasures for oneself will be less and less encouraged: and the almost "vain" repetition of a few prayers, however beautiful, when fresh, must lead to a certain insincerity. It was to protest against similar insincerity that the "Lord's Prayer" was composed, as a specimen of a short, sincere utterance (Matt. vi. 7-13). Prayer will become rather a listening for the Will of God, alone or in fellowship, than a petition for any outward good. It will still be thanksgiving and adoration also. The way in which, further, the Churches of all denominations, weakly fall in with the State's war-method, whenever a war comes along, though pretending to stand for peace when no war is on, is a terrible sign of the hollowness of present-day Church life.

Most churches failed to teach essential Christianity,

and insisted on dogma and ritual. Hence, to their shame, came the Great War between "Christian" peoples. Churches that supported then the war-method, must needs continue so to do, lest any other Power, as Japan or Russia, threaten British "interests" abroad. They must so continue or repent.

It is a question whether God will not pass by these churches that refuse now to freely think and greatly love. How empty many of them are already! How slightly their opinions are held by the people! Man is incurably religious, but not incurably church-going. It is a reasonable, sincere religion he needs, a religion of intelligent aspiration to more Life and fuller!

#### (c) *The Future.*

How shall such aspiration be helped to-day, and be propagated in the world?

By new groups of sincere souls, rather than by denominational churches and formal services. There are already many groups outside the usual churches: *e.g.*, New Thought, Spiritualists, Literary Societies, Ethical Societies, Socialist Groups, Theistic Churches, Quakers, Liberal Christians, Adult Schools. This is not the place to discuss their merits. The point is that the *living* souls are by no means all in the ordinary denominations, but rather otherwise.

The spiritual religion of the future will be brought in mostly by informal sincere groups of freely-thinking but aspiring souls.

The Church of the Future might be called The Church of the Spiritual Life. This is its aim and aspiration. Jesus Christ is the Spiritual Life (of Faith active by love) personified, and whether those in the new church believe that intellectually or not, they will allow it is a possible explanation of Christ: their minds will be "open" on the question. Anyhow, the Church of the Future will not worship a man Jesus, who has "taken to heaven a human brow," but will worship what they feel, *viz.*, the Spiritual Life working upward, yet using aright the

animal life. This Ideal is the very life of God, the Ineffable (because Super-personal) Ultimate Reality.

This church will be in free groups, each of which may be different in regard to forms of worship, read or free prayers, style of building or private house for meeting, membership-roll or none, and so forth. But each will be eager to apply Spiritual Life to daily human life, to express the Infinite in the finite. So it will make against all that is harsh and unloving, all war and positive grasping for money. Men may still offer estimates for a piece of work that needs doing, but do so in cheery goodwill, and free from avarice. In industry the Christian will move towards partnership in Guilds.

In regards to the State, the new Church groups will be greater than the State in its narrow patriotism and its use of fire-arms to enforce its will. The Church stands for a New Order, and must transmute the State into that Order, abolishing all treatment of evil-doers by punishments, and substituting education in isolated homes: for *all* Society is responsible for the creation of criminals. Every church-group of aspiring souls will stand for, and point to, a Commonwealth of Sons of God, as the present sub-Christian State fails to do.

Every Church-group will be a "High" Church, in the sense that the Authority it recognises is not the State, but God, known as "Christ" in the soul. To understand Christ, a Church will gladly consult aspiring souls in all generations: but submit to no official priest and no Parliament in matters of ethics, thought or prayer. The Church will only obey the State so far as it is non-moral (expediency) or in accord with the Christ-Ideal. Thus, a Church will not feel bound by any pledge or Treaty, by which the State undertakes to kill men of another nation in war.

The Church of the Future will exercise real prayer. *Prayer has the following four aspects now:* It may be adoration, wonder, aspiration to the Ideal, Infinite, Sublime. It need not be in a church, or offered on bended knee. It may be in the microscopic study of nature, or in the presence of the silent stars.

Prayer is also confession, penitence, an honest acknowledgment of one's unworthiness and failure, involving a solemn acceptance of the Christ-ideal, by which the soul is forgiven, *i.e.*, reconciled to God by the Moral Ideal or Christ, God's inner life-principle.

Prayer is also a listening for the guidance of that Ideal or Christ, in regard to the affairs of every-day life. After a talk on some aspect of the Christ-life, the soul may fittingly pray and bring his affairs to the searchlight of the Christ-ideal.

Prayer includes also the sending of telepathic Love-messages to those with whom the soul is in sympathy or can reach to help. This intercessory prayer is not lawless or capricious. It acts on or uses God's laws, as all prayer does. Such a use of telepathy, or thought-transference, is at present but little understood, but its laws will more and more be appreciated.

For a church-group to meet, each person with a "prie-Dieu," and (say) a copy of Moffatt's new translation of the New Testament, and note-sheets; for them to frankly talk over the meaning of Christianity and its relation to poverty, war, womanhood, a future life, or some other selected theme: for them then to sing, not formally, but because they must: for them to have silent prayer, the silence of fellowship and thought-transference, and to note down any truths or impressions which then arise—that would be a way to power for the bringing in of that reasonable Faith and Love which must rule the souls of all men. Such men and women will be led on to plan to reach others near or afar, by voice, or pen, or publications.

In such a group, there would be no Priest, and in many there would be no paid minister, and no one called "Reverend," for all present would be enlightened lives. "Call no man your Teacher." Several leaders might guide those meetings in turns. The indwelling Christ-spirit would teach. The intellectual life would have its place, but be subordinate to that spiritual intuition or sympathy which goes more deeply into life, and lays hold on



God Himself! There would be freedom of thought combined with prayerful intuition and active goodwill.

Such a group could not have any State-patronage or rule. Any external authority would be an unworthy control for spiritual men.

In these new Church-groups, the sincere groups of Christ-manifesting souls, there will be something corresponding to the "communism" of the earliest Christians. They were ready to sell lands and help any in trouble in their midst. The New Testament has many references to this, especially in the First Epistle of John—where to love the "brothers," and give to any in need, was a proof that a man was a Christian. To shut up one's compassion from such was a sign that the love divine did not dwell in such a soul. The well-known passage in Matthew vi., as to Christians not being anxious for food and clothing if they sought the Kingdom of God (6-33) can only be reasonable if interpreted as a practice in the early Community. The Kingdom was begun in that Community. It was in their midst. Those who were united by the Christ-ideal were to care for one another, and desired so to do with a love deeper than patriotism or sex-emotion, a veritable enthusiasm for the divine life manifested in one another, a life more sacred and lovely than anything sexual or political. To "sell and give to the poor" (Mark x. 21: Luke xii. 33) probably meant to the poor in the Church, to the Love-Society of Jesus, for whom collections were made. (1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2; 2 Cor. viii.: Acts ii.—: Acts iv.—).

In such new, free Church-groups, there would be probably no Church Roll, though a list of addresses might be kept for the convenience of calling men and women together at times. The question of paying leaders an income would be an open one, but a man so paid is rarely free to be sincere. He must "please men" or his income falls away; and the congregation tend to let such a man do their thinking for them. Paul worked at tent-making rather than take a salary. There can, of course, be no rule in this matter. Some who have studied history and

the Greek New Testament may be called to give time to prepare discourses on such, and so be paid; but the principle is one to be jealously guarded that sincerity is absolutely essential, and the humble and unlettered often have hold of the spiritual truths, which the intellectual man may miss.

The songs sung will be really expressive of spiritual truth in poetical form, not of dogmas outworn. They will be sung no longer in a formal way. Sometimes two or three will be proposed, one after the other, as "the spirit moves" the Church-group. Such a Church-group will have forms of activity in which to express its faith in Love.

Thus, in the Church of the Future a place will be given to those who help the mind into the best condition for promoting physical health. The "Christian Scientists" ignore facts when they declare that "matter is an illusion," and "pain is illusion," and since God is good and almighty, there cannot really exist evil and pain. That the most religious personality could cure a compound fracture of the leg with prayer only, or get no harm from drinking prussic acid, believing it to be water, is truly absurd. Even Mrs. Eddy ate, and died! To say that it is lack of faith that keeps a man from doing the wonders claimed to be possible is really to say it is impossible for man to do them. God is not omnipotent in the literal sense. God cannot lie or cease to love or make two straight lines enclose a space. Many cures ascribed wholly to Christian Science are really caused by common sense and the *vis medicatrix naturæ*, though helped also by suggestion and joy, however these were given or produced. The "cases" given in the "Christian Science Sentinel" abundantly show this is so. But that a trust in the Ultimate Reality as Love does calm the mind, and so help towards general health, and even help towards some cures, is undoubtedly true. Joy helps health, and by suggestion cure is accelerated. And in a Church-group there is room for these truths to be used to bless many.

Faith may banish fear. A "retreat" for rest

and prayer may give new courage, which will help to cure evils, or transmute them into spiritual good.

The Church of the future will stand for Science and Love, progressive sciences and illimitable Love. The first principle of a Church in the future, must be liberty to think. Its basis is, however, not only liberty to think, but aspiration to spiritual life: but that common aspiration being its spiritual not dogmatic bond of union, liberty to think is implied in it.

"Let there be many windows to your soul:  
Why should the spirit peer  
Through some priest-curtained orifice, and grope  
Along dim corridors of doubt, when all  
The splendour from unfathomed seas of space  
Might bathe it with the golden waves of Love?  
Throw your soul wide open to the light  
Of Reason and Knowledge. . . Be not afraid  
To thrust aside half-truths and grasp the whole."  
(Ella Wheeler Wilcox).

The Church will arrange to teach rather than to preach, to expound rather than to declaim. While large gatherings in halls or the open-air are needed, the basis of the Church will be the group meeting, with the "Christ in the midst."

In these days when the world is weary of its sins, when competitive prices are worked out to a half-penny, when conscription and killing make the rearing of sons an absurdity, when mechanical sciences have increased machines but brought no heart-rest: in these days, when churches seem to exist to get money, and give entertainments to whip up their fading powers, when newspapers and novels present a merely political or erotic view of life—then surely it is a deep joy to meet some mystic souls to learn to pray into God, to find His Will and to work to a New Brotherhood of the Sons of God!

In such an atmosphere only can the religion of aspiration to spiritual life live. The union being by spiritual *aspiration*, and the atmosphere being intellectual *freedom*, the message will be that God is Love, felt as a sacred fire, not held as a cold intellectual dogma. The Infinite Spiritual Love-life

will be the message, and by word and disposition and deed will it go to "all the world," giving the actual God to men.

The name of "Christ" may not last in common use. Perhaps it is not now needed, except for historical reference to what the Life was once called.

The message must be a Spiritual Passion, not an Intellectual Dogma. The old message was that man had been suddenly created some six thousand years ago, he had been given free-will, and had chosen evil ("The Fall"). In that choice he involved the race. But the Second Divine Person, Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, offered himself to the Father in heaven, and descended to earth being born of a Virgin, about B.C. 4. He spake the Sermon on the Mount, collected disciples, was transfigured, performed many miracles of healing, as walking on the sea, and raising the dead to life. He was betrayed by Judas, and condemned at night (!) by the Sadducees and put to death by Pontius Pilate, by crucifixion. That act was of great merit in God's eyes, for the Christ being sinless need not have died, as death was the result and penalty of sin. So Christ bore the curse of the law, viz., death, innocently: and being "hanged on a tree," he was especially the bearer of the wrath of God. It descended on him. Hence God is able now to forgive the guilt of sinners, receive them, and let them off the condemnation of the Last Judgment soon to come, if they believe in Christ: otherwise there is no hope of escaping the torment of hell eternal.

This old message has a spiritual truth—that God has come (and ever comes) to save men. In the early Christians the spiritual life emerged, and was a well of water springing up unto eternal life. But the rest of the old message is largely outgrown by minds to-day. It now remains for all who are interested in religion, and not only those professing to teach it, to *re-examine the central figure in Christianity, Jesus Christ*. Was he a man, with limited thoughts, a Jew of Nazareth, Capernaum and Jerusalem: or was he not something better, viz., a personification

of the Spiritual Life, experienced by Christians, the Life which will outgrow all creeds, denominations, ritual, will move into fuller truth, love, beauty and joy, and will lead men through the school of earthly discipline to the Home of unending fellowship in God?

## APPENDIX.

List of some authors whose works throw light upon the origin and meaning of Christianity.

## PART I.

The Jewish Encyclopædia.

Encyclopædia Biblica.

Professor Cumont: "Mysteries of Mithra":  
"Hypsistos" (in French).

Frazer: "The Golden Bough," especially "Adonis,  
Attis and Osiris."

"Pseudepigrapha," edited by R. J. Charles.

G. Friedlander: "Hellenism and Christianity."  
"The Grace of God."  
"Rabbinic philosophy and ethics."  
"The Jewish Origin of the Sermon  
on the Mount."

J. Estlin Carpenter: "The First Three Gospels."

McNeile: Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew.

A. Drews: "Historical witnesses to Jesus Christ."

W. B. Smith: "Ecce Deus."

Dill: "Roman Society from Nero to Marcus  
Aurelius."

A. Schweitzer: "The Quest of the Historical  
Jesus."

Farnell: "Greek Cults."

A. Neumann: "Jesus."

Jane Harrison: "Prolegomena to the study of Greek  
Religion." "Themis."

G. R. S. Mead: "Fragments of a Faith forgotten."  
"Has Jesus lived 100 B.C.?"  
"Thrice Greatest Hermes."  
"Pistis Sophia."

- "The Doctrine of God in the Jewish apocryphal and apocalyptic literature," by H. J. Wicks, D.D.  
 The works of Ignatius, Justin Martyr (Blunt's edition), Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus.  
 The Apostolic Fathers.  
 Philo's works: 4 volumes (Bohn).  
 Zeller: "Stoics," translated by O. Reichel.  
 Josephus: "Antiquities."  
 Pliny's "Rescript to Trojan."  
 J. B. Bury: "History of Greece."  
 Conybeare: "Monuments of early Christianity."  
 Lightfoot: Commentaries on Philipians and Colossians.  
 Edersheim: "Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah."  
 "The Protevangelion of James" (N. T. Apocrypha).  
 Davidson's "Introduction to the N.T."  
 Scott: "The Fourth Gospel."  
 Rendel Harris: "The Odes of Solomon."  
 "Journal of Theological Studies," volume xiv. (April, 1913).  
 G. B. Gray: "Forms of Hebrew Poetry."  
 A. J. Balfour: "Theism and Humanism."  
 Professor Aliotti (Padua): "The Idealistic Reaction against Science."  
 Professor B. W. Bacon: "Jesus, the Son of God."  
 S. J. Case: "The Historicity of Jesus."  
 T. J. Thorburn: "Jesus the Christ: historical or mythical."  
 A. Souter: "Pocket Lexicon of the Greek New Testament."

## PART II.

## A.

- Plato: Dialogues.  
 Plotinus: Select works translated (Bohn).  
 Kant: Critique of Pure Reason.  
       Critique of Practical Reason.  
 Edward Caird: The Critical Philosophy of Kant.  
       The Evolution of Religion.  
 Hegel: Logic (translated by W. Wallace).  
 MacTaggart: Some Dogmas of Religion.  
       The Cosmology of Hegel.  
 The Upanishads (translated by G. R. S. Mead).  
 Bergson: Matter and Memory.  
       Time and Free-will.  
       Creative Evolution.  
       Introduction to Metaphysics.  
 William Ward: Naturalism and Agnosticism.  
       The Realm of Ends.  
 MacDougall: Body and Mind.  
 G. Berkeley: Philosophical works (volume I.).

## B.

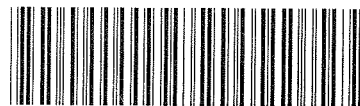
- W. L. Blease: The Emancipation of Women.  
 Orage: National Guilds.  
 William Morris: News from Nowhere.  
 J. E. Thorold Rogers: Six Centuries of Work and Wages.  
 Tertullian: Apologia.  
       De Corona.  
 Dionysius Exiguus: In Migne's Patrologia (on Pachomius).  
 Erasmus: Querela Pacis.  
 Edward Westermarck: The Origin and Development of Moral Ideas.

- Publications of The Society of Friends on William Penn, Quakers in Ireland, etc.
- Isaac Penington: "Somewhat spoken, etc." (1661).
- Alice Pennell: "Pennell of the Afghan Frontier."
- Lives of Livingstone, Fox, Wycliffe, Chalmers, John Hunt, Dr. Moffatt.
- Professor Westlake: In "Transactions of the Juridical Society" (on blockades), 1862.
- Tolstoy: Twenty-three tales.
- Report of Hague Conventions 1897 and 1907.
- Ernest Nys: Les Origines du Droit International.
- Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers: Eusebius and Sulpicius Severus.
- Von Bernhardi (translated): "Germany and the next War": "England as Germany's vassal" (the title in the English edition is a pure invention: there is nothing about England as Germany's vassal: see preface).
- Colonel Arthur Boucher: L'Allemagne en péril (1913).
- The White Paper on the War (1914) with Sir Edward Grey's speech (August 3).
- The Bryce Report on the Atrocities in Belgium.
- Hy. Marshall: War and the Ideal of Peace.
- Brailsford: The War of Steel and Gold.
- Morel: Ten years of Diplomacy (on Morocco).
- Stephen Graham: Russia and the War.
- Bertrand Russell: Justice in War-time.  
The Policy of the Entente.
- Delisle Burns: The Morality of Nations.
- A. L. Gowans: "Selections from Treitschke's Lectures on Politics."
- Treitschke: "Germany, France, Russia and Islam."
- Hodgkin: The Fellowship of Silence.
- Hunter: The Church of the Future.

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