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THE DOCTRINE OF THE FALL

A Question of Validity

by H.T. Powell, B.D.

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## INTRODUCTION.

"The idea of the Fall may be said to have been for some time past under a cloud". This statement, taken from the Preface to Dr. Williams' Bampton Lectures, will command general assent; nor will it be denied that the reasons given for the gathering of this cloud are correctly stated, viz. the verdict of Biblical criticism upon the ancient stories with which the doctrine has for many centuries been connected, and, secondly, the revolution effected by modern science in our conception of the universe and the place of man within it.

It is interesting to notice that shortly before the delivery of the Bampton Lectures the simile of the 'cloud' had been used in reference to the related doctrine of Original Sin. In an essay on the Problem of Evil, incorporated in Father Cuthbert's "God and the Supernatural", Mr. E.J. Watkin laments the fact that "for the Englishman a cloud of Protestant distortion still veils the Catholic doctrine of Original Sin". Here again the existence of the cloud is recognised, but a very different source is

suggested. The treatment of the subject by the two writers in question forms a further interesting comparison.

As might be expected from a loyal son of a Church which condemns "whoever says that the Roman Pontiff may and must reconcile himself and come to an understanding with progress, liberalism and modern culture", Mr. Watkin restricts himself to an exposition of the Catholic position as defined by authority, re-affirming the fall of Adam with the loss of the super-added gift, in consequence of which fall and loss we are now "generated with a nature deprived of that supernature which in God's original plan for humanity was to have been its complement and end". No more could have been expected from this quarter.

Unfettered by the necessity of exact allegiance to ecclesiastical authority Dr. Williams proceeds on different lines. From a critical examination of the history of the doctrines under consideration he extracts the irreducible minimum of Fall-doctrine, the highest common factor of its various presentations, and then, using this as a basis, he constructs a theory as speculative as it is interesting. In criticism of his conclusion it may fairly be argued that it seems to

land us in that very dualism against which, as he constantly reminds us, the doctrine of the Fall was so often re-asserted. If we can bring ourselves to accept the theory of an interior perversion of the World Soul, corrupting itself "in some transcendental and incomprehensible manner", no more remains to be said. We shall have accepted something admittedly incomprehensible, to which we must despair of attaching meaning. If, on the other hand, we refuse to stop thinking at this point and, questioning the possibility of self-perversion, postulate the existence of some principle of evil to render such self-perversion intelligible, then we are lapsing into dualism. It would seem then that Dr. Williams' criticism of Kant's theory as being "meaningless or Manichean" could be applied to his own suggestion of a self-perversion of the 'anima mundi'.

But, apart from the criticism of Dr. Williams' actual conclusion, the question arises whether a satisfactory result could be expected from an enquiry which starts with a search for the 'irreducible minimum'. No modern science would follow this course nor hold itself committed to the necessity of finding room for

the conclusions of former pioneers<sup>1</sup>; and if theology be the 'mother of sciences', she too must be free to re-state her position, unencumbered by former beliefs, however great may have been the degree of unanimity with which such beliefs were entertained. It may, of course, be objected that theology is not on a par with other sciences, its subject matter being revelation. The objection, however, will not be counted formidable by those who realise that revelation has been progressive, that all truth is one, and that modern scientific discovery is no more than a fuller revelation of God's method of working.

But perhaps the greatest obstacle to acceptance of Dr. Williams' explanation is the difficulty we find in reconciling his theory with belief in the perfect Love of God. Can we possibly ascribe to the action of a God of Love the creation of a World-Soul capable of vitiating itself with such disastrous consequences? Doubtless an entirely satisfactory theodicy is beyond the wit of man, and, as Dr. Rashdall

1. It should be stated that Dr. Williams explicitly disclaims all idea of using the Vincentian Canon for any other purpose than that of discovering the content of the doctrines in question. None the less, this highest common factor having been so discovered, his subsequent effort is devoted to the task of reconciling it with the requirements of modern thought.

said, "the man who declares that he has got a theory of the Universe which involves no difficulties, is simply a man who does not think"<sup>1</sup>. But, whatever be the measure of our success, the citadel to be defended at all costs is the truth of God's love. It can scarcely be maintained that we are safeguarding it in any scheme that postulates a pre-cosmic Fall. Dr. Williams' brilliant venture may well leave us with the conviction that, if the cloud which envelops the doctrine of the Fall is to be dispersed, illumination must be sought in another direction.

This essay proceeds from the belief that the 'irreducible minimum' cannot be maintained. The validity of the doctrine of the Fall has to be challenged on the ground that the doctrine can no longer be defended. In the preceding sentence the emphasis rests upon the words 'no longer'. Doctrines have their day, and having served their purpose must give place to others more approximate to the truth. They were no more than conjectures or hypotheses; for a hypothesis is but 'a conjecture on its trial'. Mankind's 'first thoughts', as Canon J.M. Wilson puts

1. The Theory of Good and Evil. vol.II.p.354.



it, cannot continue to hold the field when 'second thoughts' - the fruit of increased knowledge - are forcing themselves to the front. Foremost among these 'first thoughts' is the Doctrine of the Fall. Can it any longer be accounted 'de fide' in the larger light which has given us our 'second thoughts'? The Doctrine of the Fall was doubtless a legitimate inference from the premisses on which it is based. But as a doctrine implies the truth of the premisses on which it is built, so the doctrine of the Fall, deduced from views of God, Man and the universe which have had to be revised in the light of God's further revelation through the sciences, cannot claim the authority it possessed for earlier thinkers. We are more familiar with the term 'dogmatic theology' than with Dr. Whitehead's expression 'dogmatic idolatry'. The latter, however, becomes a real possibility, whenever, in the sacred name of tradition and authority, the right is denied of revising formulas in the direction of a closer correspondence with new knowledge. Dr. Raven forcibly states the penalty that follows such a course of action. "We are paying the price", he says, "in emptied churches and starved ministries, in the antagonism of many an honest and spiritual personality,

for our lack of intelligence and courage. We have come near to making the Word of God, the eternal and creative Spirit, of none effect by our tradition; we have too often been guilty of the sin against Him, that moral blindness which assigns His gifts of new truth to Beelzebub, and which in so doing proves us unforgiven and out of touch with Him"<sup>1</sup>.

In particular, our attention is called to the doctrine of the Fall - a doctrine formulated as a hypothesis to account for the empirical universality of sin, in days when the idea of the immanence of God in the modern sense of the concept was not entertained, when the principle of evolution had not assumed importance, and the nature of personality was most inadequately understood. The question to be considered centres round the meaning that can still be attached to a Fall when due allowance has been made for the contributions of relatively modern thought.

All this is obvious and will be readily admitted by those who concede the possibility of progressive revelation and have not made a fetish of literal Biblical accuracy or of ecclesiastical authority. But for fundamentalist and rigid traditionalist alike

1. The Creator Spirit. p.95.

the way is barred to the acceptance of new truth, for it stands suspect by the simple reason of its newness. Quite distinct, however, from both fundamentalist and traditionalist, there is a large body of intelligent and unbiased thinkers, of whom the teachers in our elementary and secondary schools may be considered typical - men and women, whose training for their profession has given them a considerable knowledge of psychology and no small acquaintance with the latest findings of physiology, biology and physical science. Those who are in close touch with professional teachers and their work know the extent of the difficulty they experience in reconciling their secular knowledge with what they believe to be the orthodox interpretation of theological truths. In no department of religious instruction is the trouble more acutely felt than in the presentation of the early narratives of Genesis - the Creation and the Fall. It was recently agreed at a meeting of the Southern Provincial Sunday School Council that the unwillingness of laymen to volunteer for religious teaching was due to their uncertainty about the opening chapters of the Bible. Desire to be loyal to the Church is in conflict with a suspicion that there is a radical opposition between her teaching



and the accepted results of scientific enquiry. Such suspicion has given birth to an uneasy conscience. Confining our attention to the doctrine under consideration, we must admit that this opposition really exists, and that the time has fully come for a re-statement of our belief and the removal of harmful stumbling-blocks.

This essay consequently sets out to establish the thesis that the doctrine of the Fall, conceived either as a rebellion of humanity, attended by disastrous issues, or as a general misdirection of man's evolution, resulting in an unbalanced nature, can no longer be held and taught, if due weight is to be given to the arguments furnished by philosophy, the theory of evolution and psychology. A quotation from Dr. Gore's *Belief in God* will serve to put the issue in a crucial form: "It is only with the greatest difficulty that we can represent to our imagination what the world would have been as God meant it to be - that is, if sin and rebellion had not been, or had been but a rare and intermittent tendency"<sup>1</sup>. Still more emphatically, Dr. Bicknell declares that "our present condition is a libel on human nature as He purposed it"<sup>2</sup>. These are

1. *Belief in God*. p.158.

2. *Essays Catholic and Critical* p.223.

statements which we are not prepared to accept; nor are we ready to pass without challenge any expression suggesting God's having been 'surprised', 'disappointed', 'thwarted'. Nothing, we affirm, has happened in the course of the development of the universe that was unforeseen by God or ultimately without His permission. Man is not to be described as God's failure. The real but limited freedom of finite selves involved the possibility of evil, with the result that some portion of the world's evil is to be traced to man's misuse of his gifts; but nothing unanticipated by the Creator ever intervened to wreck His plans. "Can we", asks Dr. Sorley, "regard the Supreme Mind as having so little foresight as to be unable to see the result of his own purpose?"<sup>1</sup>. Answering that question in the negative we are compelled to reject the idea that the Incarnation was anything of the nature of an afterthought, or, as Mr. McDowall says, that the development of man along wrong lines made necessary a further display of God's selfless love. "There was a cross in the heart of God before there was one planted on the green hill outside of Jerusalem"<sup>2</sup>. The Incarnation, as the Scotists maintained, was in the purpose of God from all eternity;

1. Moral Values and the Idea of God. p.464.

2. Dinsmore, quoted in Foundations p.322.

it was "the crowning moment of human history". In the fullness of time God sent forth His Son. Here, surely, is a worthier conception of God than any which would represent Him as resorting to an expedient necessitated by contingencies.

The content of the chapters that follow may briefly be indicated. In the first chapter our Lord's contribution to the subject positive and negative, is examined: this is followed by a consideration of S. Paul's teaching. Chapter III attempts to deal with the idea of God underlying the traditional doctrine of the Fall, contrasting it with later conceptions. Chapter IV compares the idea of Creation entertained in early times with its present significance in the light of Evolution. In Chapter V the problem of the 'self' is approached and the nature of our inheritance. Chapter VI deals with the central problem of Evil. In Chapter VII the origin of the doctrine of the Fall is traced, the effect of our re-statement upon the pivotal doctrines of our Faith is considered, and a pragmatic test is applied.

It may be objected that in all that is here written a note has been struck more optimistic than can be justified by the facts of the Universe as we actually see it. To this it may confidently be

replied that pessimism is a sin against the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, unpardonable in a teacher of the young, and fatal as an ingredient in any gospel that sets out to grip the world and claim it for Christ.

Amid the sorrows of the Great War and the depression that followed, it was only natural that a certain amount of impatience should have been felt and expressed at the facile optimism of those whose cry had been "God's in His Heaven - All's right with the world!" The first half of Pippa's song is true and always has been true: the latter part has never been a fact, man's freedom, limited though it be, admitting continuous divergence from the ideal. But few will deny that at the present juncture there is good ground for optimism. God is manifesting Himself again as "malarum voluntatum ordinator". In the drawing together of the nations of the world there is evidence of the Divine power that brings good out of evil and turns the wrath of man to its purpose. Humanity has been passing through a vale of misery, but in God's Providence is using it for a well.

## CHAPTER I.

### Our Lord's Teaching.

Students of the Old Testament must be thankful that the relation of the Genesis narrative to the doctrine of the Fall has been established and stated. The doctrine rests, as Dr. Williams clearly shows, upon a psychological foundation, the third chapter of Genesis serving as "a quasi-historical façade" or "a decorative after-thought". Reflection upon the universality of sin, coupled with a depressing sense of human failure, had led pious Jewish thinkers of post-exilic times to the conclusion that the condition of things must have changed from their original character. That assumption having been made, the story of Eden readily presented itself and supplied both the primal disaster postulated by *à priori* reasoning and a source of the infirmity under which mankind was labouring. As a matter of fact, the Yahwist writer is not conscious of giving any more in his story than an account of the beginning of sin. Aetiologist as he is, he finds here



an explanation of universal death, of the troubles of agricultural life and of the pain and peril of childbirth. That the sin of Adam and Eve transmitted to their posterity an evil taint has no place in his thought and intention, nor indeed does the suggestion occur in any of the Canonical writings of the Old Testament.

The ground has been considerably cleared for an examination of the doctrine when thus it is seen that its origins are to be looked for in the uncanonical scriptures. Consideration of these passages and their authorship must be deferred until we come to the contribution of St. Paul to the subject. For the present, the point that calls for emphasis is the fact that the Scripture that supplied the reading of the Synagogue, the basis of our Lord's education and the subject of His studies, contained no doctrine of a Fall and an inherited infirmity<sup>1</sup>.

The extent of our Lord's acquaintance with the apocryphal writings extant in His day and of their influence upon Him is a matter on which there is a

1. The range of our Lord's scholarship has been variously estimated. Quite recently Canon Anthony Deane has seriously suggested that He spent the first year of His ministry qualifying in Jerusalem for the position of a Rabbi.

great diversity of opinion. If, as Dr. Burkitt says, "some of the best known Sayings of Jesus only appear in their true light if regarded as Midrash upon words and concepts that were familiar to those who heard the prophet of Galilee", that is, upon apocalyptic ideas, we shall have to admit that our Lord's knowledge of the uncanonical writings may have been considerable. To the same effect Dr. Charles asserts that "the influence of I Enoch on the New Testament has been greater than that of all the other apocryphal and pseudepigraphical books put together": and Schürer, speaking of the growth of revolutionary tendencies which followed the imposition of the tax of Quirinius, suggests that it was essentially promoted if not exclusively caused by the apocalyptic literature<sup>1</sup>..

On the other hand, it has to be remembered that many scholars are of opinion that the apocalyptic and eschatological ideas contained in the Gospels are to a very great extent the importation of the Gospel-writers themselves, and that our Lord's acquaintance with these ideas was scanty and by hearsay only. Two quotations from Dr. Moore may suffice to present this aspect of the case. "Jesus and his disciples were

1. The Jewish People in the Time of Christ. Vol.III. p.473.

Galilaeans, from a region in which the expansion of Judaism was comparatively recent, and where the great rabbinical schools were still of the future. Jesus himself grew up in an obscure little town even the name of which is not found outside of the New Testament. All were men of the people; there was no scholar among them. What they knew of the words of Scripture and its meaning they had learned in the synagogue from the readings and the homilies; no other source of knowledge was accessible to them. Many apposite references to the Scriptures, or quotations from them, were probably introduced into the Gospels in the course of transmission, but when all deductions are made, and within the limits of what has the presumption of being authentic tradition of the words of Jesus, the range of quotation and allusion is remarkably wide, embracing the Pentateuch, the Prophets, the Psalms, and occasionally some others of the Hagiographa: the number of references is large, and the aptness with which they are adduced evinces notable intimacy with Scripture. That the synagogue gave opportunity to acquire such familiarity is sufficient testimony to the quality of its instruction"<sup>1</sup>. Our Lord, then, would learn

1. G.F. Moore: Judaism in the first centuries of the Christian Era. Vol.I. p.288.



nothing of the apocryphal writings from the synagogue, in which the canonical scriptures alone were heard. Earlier in the same volume Dr. Moore writes: "If Jesus and his immediate disciples had any acquaintance with notions such as we find in the apocalypses, say in Enoch 45-58, it may be taken for certain that they did not get them by reading the books, but by hearsay, perhaps remote hearsay. In the same way they had their knowledge of the teaching of the Scribes from the homilies of the synagogue and other religious discourses"<sup>1</sup>.

Whatever view may be entertained on the question of our Lord's firsthand knowledge of apocryphal writings, the fact remains that no word of His is recorded criticising favourably or otherwise any of the conflicting theories of the origin of evil which characterise those writings. Had He been familiar with these theories, it is remarkable that He should have refrained from expressing His opinion or showing His predilection indirectly.

We are thus led to the conclusion that our Lord saw no reason to dissent from the teaching of the synagogue on the subject of the origin of evil and that

1. *ibid.* p.131.

on this question His views were orthodox. If this be so, then we must regard Him as accepting the doctrine of the *yēcer ha-ra'*, with which, as we shall see presently, His teaching on the subject of sin is not inconsistent.

What we must at this point deprecate most strongly is the suggestion recently put forth that Christ was cognisant of the clash of theories on the origin of evil but deliberately refrained from discriminating between them, leaving to His followers the task of sifting and deciding. On questions of relative unimportance it was His policy doubtless to maintain silence; but the question of the origin of sin could not be so classified. We are forced to the conclusion that in this matter He accepted the orthodox teaching of His day and that here alone is to be found the explanation of His silence. It would follow from this that our Lord neither entertained nor taught anything corresponding to a Fall of humanity and an ensuing heritage of moral and spiritual disabilities. He certainly taught the empirical universality of sin, of wide-spread alienation from God, and the prime need in the case of all men of establishing a right relationship with God. At the centre of His teaching is the

Kingdom of God - the rule of God in the heart of man - and the Fatherhood of God. God is the Father of everyone, whether the relationship be realised or not. The realisation of the relationship is the "becoming sons" of which Christ spoke when to the duty of universal kindness He added the purpose of its practice - "that ye may be sons of your Father which is in Heaven"<sup>1</sup>. Loyal citizenship and a filial attitude are the keynotes of His message. God and His righteousness are to be the main interests of life: self is to be dethroned, the individual is to be God-centred. This re-orientation of the self, this acquisition of a new focus, is essentially a 'new birth'. For man is naturally self-seeking and self-centred. Salvation is the state resulting from the admission of the claim of God to regulate the life. The fraudulent tax gatherer is but one instance of the many who made the re-adjustment and in making it brought salvation into their houses. But there is no suggestion, all the same, that this new attitude to God represents a return to a condition previously occupied by man but lost in some great primal catastrophe. Had our Lord claimed, as the object of

1. Matt.V. 45.

His mission, the announcement of humanity's restoration to the conditions of a lost Paradise, it would indeed have been a Gospel closer in character to the interpretation which later thought put upon His life and teaching. But, in reality, the Gospel which Christ Himself proclaimed was rather the good news of restoration to the masses of the privileges of which the legalists and ecclesiastics had assumed a monopoly. In this matter Christ was a revolutionary. The 'am ha -' āreḳ, 'this people that knoweth not the Law', had been ousted from their place in God's Israel; and to this class Christ belonged. It was His good news that there is a place in God's family for the ignorant and unlearned, and that neither worldly position nor scholarship are essential to entrance. "It was the burning centre of His message", says Dr. McNeille, "that since character and not privilege constitute true sonship, every blessing provided for God's sons is attainable by anyone. That was fundamental in His good tidings"<sup>1</sup>. We should be grievously misrepresenting our Lord's conception of His mission, if, importing Pauline language, we should ascribe to Him a consciousness

1. New Testament Teaching in the Light of St. Paul's.  
p.8.

of being 'the second Adam' charged with a commission to reverse the ruinous effects of the Fall.

How far, indeed, the conception of an original Fall and consequent corruption is alien to our Lord's thinking is clear from an examination of the very texts that are quoted by writers in support of the opposite view. Dr. Williams, for example, after noticing our Lord's assumption of the universality of sin, gives us three sayings which he assures us "appear to take the further step of assuming, behind the empirical universality of sin, some kind of sinful disposition naturally inherent in the human soul"<sup>1</sup>. It will be realised that the interpretation of these passages is of critical importance. The first is S. Mark VII. 21.22, with its parallel S. Matt. XV. 19 "For from within, out of the heart of man, evil thoughts proceed, fornications, thefts, murders .... all these evil things are from within and defile the man". The word of primary importance in this statement is, of course, the "heart". An examination of the passages in which our Lord speaks of man's heart lead us to conclude that He regarded it not as an evil inheritance

1. The Ideas of the Fall and of Original Sin. p.96.



common to the sons of men, but rather as, to use Dr. Wheeler Robinson's description, "the laboratory in which the poison of life is distilled by each for himself"<sup>1</sup>. It is the contents of the heart which count, and for these contents the man himself is responsible. It would appear that the "heart", in the usage of Scripture, corresponds to the modern idea of the subconscious - all that part of the mind which at a particular moment is not in the fore-front of consciousness. Here is a curious medley of good and bad memories, ideas and associations. Dr. Selbie assures us that for the items of this collection the possessor alone is chargeable. "The fact is that, as we are responsible for the contents of the subconscious mind, so are we for the use of the material which it presents to consciousness"<sup>2</sup>. It is this responsibility that gives weight to St. Paul's exhortation: "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely ..... think on these

1. The Christian Doctrine of Man. p.94.
2. The Psychology of Religion p.302. It will be noticed that no account is here taken of the racial subconscious, supposed to be the seat of the instinctive dispositions.

things"<sup>1</sup>. Pure, honest, lovely thoughts do not die when other things push them from the focus of our thinking. Passing into the subconscious they become part of our mental and spiritual stock. Murders, fornications rise to the consciousness of him who has had these same things in his thinking: they are the ghosts of previous thoughts, that played awhile on the stage of the conscious and then retired to the heart, from which, censor or no censor, they can emerge again to the light. This subconscious serves, as Dr. Paterson tells us, in the intellectual and in the moral life much the same uses which are served in the economic life by the bank in which we deposit our gains, and on which we can draw when we require money<sup>2</sup>.

It is with this meaning of the word 'heart' that we must also interpret the third of the quotations given by Dr. Williams, viz. St. Matthew XII 33.34: "Either make the tree good, and its fruit good: or make the tree corrupt, and its fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by its fruit. Ye offspring of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Here

1. Phil. IV. 8.

2. The Nature of Religion. p.122.

our Lord plainly accounts for the inability of His opponents to speak good things by the fact of their being evil. But it is evil for which they are responsible, or there would be no justice in the scathing reproach. Evil of their own devising has polluted their heart - the subconscious - from which consequently evil and not good proceeds. Decisive testimony in support of this view comes in our Lord's next statement, which ought to have been added to the extract: "The good man out of his good treasure bringeth forth good things: and the evil man out of his evil treasure bringeth forth evil things"<sup>1</sup>. From this it appears that there are good men and good hearts, and bad men and bad hearts. If this be taken to point to "a sinful disposition naturally inherent in the human soul", it may be said to point equally to a good disposition similarly inherent. But it seems clear that our Lord regarded the 'heart' as a treasure-house - a receptacle to be judged by the nature of the store we place within it.

We turn to the remaining quotation: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?"<sup>2</sup> Dr. Gore

1. St. Matthew XII. 35.

2. St. Matthew VII. 11: St. Luke XI. 13.



has been heard to translate the words *πovηροὶ ὄντες* as "being rotten", agreeing with Dr. Williams and Dr. Bicknell in finding here an argument for Original Sin. But does not the adjective really derive all its force from the distance between God and man? Compared with the perfect Fatherhood of God, man's greatest success parentally must be a sorry failure. We should be prepared to maintain that this *à fortiori* argument is really an evidence of our Lord's hopeful estimate of human nature, and that the following paraphrase does no more than bring out the force of the question: "If you, with all your faults, are still led by your innate goodness to do your duty as fathers, what may not be expected of the ideal Parent?"

Further indications of our Lord's estimate of human nature are to be found in His parables, from which that of the Sower may be singled out as a pictorial classification of human hearts. The point here to be observed is that the fate of the seed is not decided by the villainy of the soil but by external conditions that have given the soil a character - in one case, hard by the trampling of feet: in another, shallow by the proximity of the rock: in the third, overcrowded by the presence of undesirable vegetation.

Intrinsically, however, the soil is in all cases good, and, but for the exterior influences, would have been, as in the last instance it actually was, good ground - the type of "an honest and good" heart.<sup>1</sup>

Instances might be multiplied from our Lord's parables of side-lights refuting the claim that He believed in an inner corruption at the heart of man. It must suffice to limit further illustration to the inference to be drawn from the story of the Prodigal Son - our Lord's supreme exposition of every man's normal relationship to God. In the description of the son's conversion as "a coming to himself" we have a convincing indication of what our Lord conceives man's natural condition to be, until the wilfulness of sin breaks the harmony with the Father. Bearing in mind the actual circumstances that prompted the trilogy of parables of which this is the crown, we cannot maintain that our Lord is thinking largely of a humanity lapsed as a whole. It is the individual publicans and sinners that are in His mind, just as indeed they were in His actual sight. His association with them might scandalise the Pharisees, but it was to be justified by its success in rescuing men and women whom He described

1. St. Luke VIII. 15.

not as 'lost', but as 'losing themselves'.

So far then from its being a fact that our Lord 'speaks and acts in a way that implies the truth of original sin'<sup>1</sup>, it may more plausibly be maintained that the very reverse is the conclusion to which the study of His teaching brings us. "There is an optimistic note in His outlook on the multitude" says Dr. Wheeler Robinson: "the positive righteousness of the Samaritan springs from his natural humanity, lying beyond the boundaries of 'religion': the fact that little children are made the type of believers points to a deep sympathy with human life in its natural relationship rather than to its condemnation. The sinfulness of man is conceived dynamically rather than statically, and as an intermittent, if universal, element in human life"<sup>2</sup>.

But this conception of man's sinful activity is closely connected with our Lord's vivid apprehension of external powers of evil ever ready and waiting to exercise dominion over the soul of man. Modern psychologists may choose to rationalise our Lord's

1. Bicknell. The Christian Idea of Sin and of Original Sin. p.37.

2. op. cit. p.93.

references to spirits of evil and decide that He is projecting upon the outer world the temptations and conflicts that are felt within. Without staying to estimate the validity of such a hypothesis, we cannot doubt that to our Lord Himself these external powers of evil were real indeed; He had Himself met the Evil One in real conflict. To their activity He traced not only the incitement to moral evil but also the bodily infirmities to which flesh is subject. It was not a case of Christ's accommodating Himself to the knowledge of His day: of such accommodation He was never conscious. At the same time, by reason of His perfect humanity, His convictions could only be expressed in the language of the science of His contemporaries. To this limitation, therefore, His psychology was subject. This being so, we shall be content to find in our Lord's constant allusions to evil spiritual agents no more than an indication of His belief that human sinfulness is not to be accounted for by the operation of an inherited internal vitiation. Dr. Headlam speaks clearly on this point: "The belief in a personal evil spirit and a kingdom of evil implies that sin is no part of man's nature. His flesh may be weak, his heart may become full of evil imaginings; but the source of

these is outside him. He listens to temptation, but it comes to him. No part of him is necessarily evil, no part of him need be cast away"<sup>1</sup>.

The admission of our Lord's limitation carries with it the necessity of insisting upon the weight and unique authority of His contribution to our subject. "Jesus", says Montefiore, "was a man of the intensest, but also the simplest, religious faith. He was not a philosopher"<sup>2</sup>. It may readily be conceded that our Lord was not a philosopher, if by a philosopher is meant one who arrives at conclusions by discursive reasoning. On the other hand, there is to the apprehension of truth a road more direct, on a higher level and more reliable. It is the way of spiritual intuition, the scientia intuitiva, the pre-eminence of which, recognised by Spinoza, has in modern been emphasised by M. Bergson. In this immediate grasp of truth, this apprehension of a conclusion simultaneously with its grounds, Jesus was unrivalled. His insight was swift and unerring, while its keenness was only matched by the directness of the language that clothed its findings. He spoke, as Dr. Whitehead tells us, in

1. The Life and Teaching of Jesus the Christ. p.126.

2. Some Elements of the Religious Teaching of Jesus.p.87.



language divorced from dialectics, in the lowest abstractions that language is capable of, if it is to be language at all and not the fact itself<sup>1</sup>. "Jesus was no philosopher": He was more than a philosopher: He was in touch with the ultimate truth of the Universe with an immediacy behind which philosophy and scholarship lag heavily.

We cannot allow ourselves to be led by the concession of our Lord's limitation into a discussion of the Two Natures in Christ and the controversies which have marked the history of the problem. Modern thought has happily rejected the idea of there being in Christ two consciousnesses and two wills, coupled yet distinct, in consequence of which distinction His thoughts, words and actions proceeded on one occasion from His Manhood, on another from His Godhead. The modern mind, it must be admitted, has shown much impatience with the old Christology, forgetting at times that the ancient Creeds of the Church were framed rather as warnings than as dogmatic pronouncements. As warnings they have their use still, reminding us that in our definition of the Person of Christ full justice must be

1. Religion in the Making. p.46.



done both to His divinity and to His humanity. No despite is done to either by insistence upon Christ's 'unitary consciousness' by virtue of which His thoughts, words and actions are always and everywhere equally those of "the Christ" and equally authoritative.

We have been trying to show that our Lord, so far as His words and actions are concerned, entertained no belief in a corruption of man's heart resulting from an anterior lapse of mankind from harmony with God. On the contrary, His emphasis is always laid upon actual sin, the source of which is to be found in the Will, - in the self-will, which by putting self before God destroys the balance and harmony of life. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness". God being in the first place, other interests will find a relatively correct position.

With this insistence upon the supremacy of the Will, our Lord is supremely untroubled by what is for us a standing problem - the question of Determinism. It may be that logically we can be shown to be no more than puppets. Christ recognised no such possibility. In every case where action had to be taken, He threw full responsibility upon the individual. Everywhere He assumes that man is self-determining and free to

take which he will of the alternatives before him. Modern thought has in most quarters come to anchor in a belief in partial determinism. Interpreted as a recognition of the handicap of circumstances, this is a belief not unc congenial to the mind of Christ, Who in His own person experienced the trial consequent upon the willingness of the spirit and the weakness of the flesh.

It is most important, however, to notice that in calling upon men to repent, that is, to re-adjust their relationship to God, our Lord claimed for Himself - at times, precisely, at other times, implicitly - a unique relationship to the Father. His words, "Come unto me, and ye shall find rest for your souls" are no mere invitation to find by His guidance the way to peace with God but rather a claim to be able Himself to take that place in their lives which would ensure the right relationship with God. This claim, never far to seek in the Synoptists, is paramount in the Fourth Gospel, where He describes Himself as one with the Father and the sole avenue of approach to the Father.

We conclude, then, that conflicting theories of the origin of evil were not present to our Lord's consciousness. We cannot imagine that He entertained

a private view on so momentous a question and yet, from consideration of the relative unimportance of speculation or of the shortness of the time at His disposal for the training of the Twelve, deliberately adopted a policy of silence, leaving the Church to discuss the relative merits of the theories and to make a choice. If this were the case, as Dr. Williams suggests that it was, we are left with the extraordinary but inevitable inference that St. Paul was more sensitive than the sinless One. "We may well believe", writes Dr. Williams, "that the great Apostle's keen spiritual and ethical perceptions were revolted by the unedifying emphasis laid on sexual sin by the Watcher-story, especially as expanded in the Book of Enoch, and that its eventual dispossession in favour of the more austere and elevated Adam-story was not the least of the services which his genius rendered to the Christian Church"<sup>1</sup>. But, surely, if Christ had the alternative stories present to His mind, would not He have found the Watcher-story exceedingly more revolting even than it appeared to St. Paul? Could He have kept silence and have left to His Apostle the task

1. op. cit. p.121.

of rendering Christianity "the considerable service" of discrediting a discreditable theory? This consideration alone is sufficient to destroy belief in the possibility of our Lord's having faced the conflicting theories and deliberately abstained from judging them. From all the evidence at our disposal the truth would seem to be that He was satisfied to regard the possibility of sinning as being by God's permission part of Man's natural constitution - and this is, in substance, the doctrine of the *yēqer ha-ra<sup>c</sup>* - and that He was unconscious of any necessity to go further back in search of a primal happening to which could be attributed the origination of this possibility.

Nor did our Lord take a gloomy view of the world and its varied phases and activities. "It is only a jaundiced eye that can see evil in the world in excess of, and overcoming, the good"<sup>1</sup>. Our Lord never described the world as fallen, nor does He appear to have regarded it as such. The world, to His view, was God's world - a manifestation of a loving Father. The oft-quoted words "Nature red in tooth and claw with ravin" are utterly foreign to Christ's estimate. He recognised indeed the presence of evil and the

1. J.Y. Simpson. Landmarks in the Struggle between Science and Religion p.87.

ravages of sin; no one was ever more alive to them. But He looked upon both as things destined to be progressively overcome and finally to be destroyed when the Kingdom of God should have come in its fullness.

The significance of Christ's silence with regard to a Fall and the importance of the inferences legitimately to be drawn from His positive teaching cannot possibly be over-estimated. His guidance is paramount in any search for truth, the value of belief in Jesus being, as Dr. Raven says, that "we have in Him a canon of objective reference by which we escape from our own pre-suppositions, an example of supreme spirituality from Whom, as we understand Him, we can learn of God"<sup>1</sup>.

1. The Creator Spirit p.101.



## CHAPTER II.

### The Teaching of St. Paul.

The contrast between the simple good news proclaimed by Jesus and the elaborated scheme of salvation expounded by St. Paul has led some writers to the conclusion that the Apostle came to the knowledge of Christ with a pre-conceived idea of what the Christ was to be, and fitted into that *à priori* conception the limited information he had gained of the historic Jesus. As a typical exponent of this view of the relationship between the Jesus of history and the Christ of St. Paul, Wrede declares that "the picture of Christ - that is, as St. Paul painted it - did not originate in an impression of the personality of Jesus" - but "Paul believed in such a celestial being, in a divine Christ, before he believed in Jesus".<sup>1</sup> According to this view the Apostle after his conversion made an identification between the newly found Jesus

1. Wrede. Paul p. 147. 151: quoted by Dr. McNeille: op. cit: p.68.

and the Christ of his prior theorisings. If such a view could be shown to be sound, then a real gulf would be set between the Jesus of the gospels and the Christ of theology, and we should be really left with the choice that is often assumed to confront us - Jesus or Christ. Happily, such a choice is not logically forced upon us. On the contrary, a convincing case has been made out by those who find in the early history of the Church a natural and inevitable development of outlook and teaching. It was only to be expected that the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord and the outpouring of the Spirit should shift the centre of thought from the teaching of Jesus to the meaning of His Person. In this process, however, the good news proclaimed by Christ lost nothing of its appeal and urgency: on the contrary, it assumed a larger meaning and an increase of authority from reflection upon the mystery of our Lord's divinity. It is not true, of course, that the first generation of Christians identified Christ with God. St. Paul nowhere speaks of Christ as God. It was improbable, as Dr. Anderson Scott tells us, "that one in whom the monotheistic faith of Judaism was so deeply ingrained could have

taken this step".<sup>1.</sup> At the same time, it is not going too far to say that Christ had for St. Paul "the value of God", and from this to the assertion of Christ's equality with God was a short step that was bound soon to be taken. The fact that the Apostle had not taken that step is the clue to the meaning of his description of the pre-existent Christ as ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων. The εἶνα ἴσα Θεῷ was within His reach, but instead of grasping it, He relinquished His privilege and assumed the form of a servant. For this voluntary humiliation God gave Him "the free gift" of elevation to the dignity and authority implied in the title κύριος - the highest title by which a Jew could speak of God. Such were the terms, according to Dr. Anderson Scott, in which St. Paul conceived the Person and rank of Christ.

It is not surprising, then, to find the Apostle developing a scheme of salvation which places Christ in the position occupied by God in the Gospel message of Jesus. The God-centred life, to which our Lord called His hearers and the acceptance of

1. Anderson Scott. Christianity according to St. Paul. p. 274.

which constituted for Him the coming of the Kingdom of God, gives place in St. Paul's scheme to the Christo-centric life. To be 'in Christ', to be one in heart and soul with Christ in a mystical union that brings the believer so near to Christ that the redemptive acts of the latter are reproduced in His follower - this for St. Paul is salvation. Christ has here taken the place of God: but Christ for St. Paul is God in all but name.

It will thus be seen that the life in Christ, regarded as the core of Christianity, is an easy and natural development of our Lord's teaching of the Kingdom. We are approaching a more difficult question, however, when we come to compare St. Paul's conception of man's natural condition with that entertained by our Lord. Prior to his conversion the Apostle, in common with the educated classes of his day, may be supposed to have held the Rabbinic doctrine of the yecer ha-ra.<sup>c</sup> In accordance with this doctrine, which was based upon the statements of Gen. VI. 5 and VIII. 21, God was accounted to implant in every individual at birth 'an evil inclination', as an antidote to which He had in His mercy

provided the Law. An early and clear exposition of this conception is to be found in Ecclesiasticus, from which the following quotation is taken :

God created man from the beginning,  
 And put him into the hand of him that would spoil him,  
 And gave him into the hand of his inclination (yēqer).  
 If thou choose, thou mayest keep the commandment:  
 And it is understanding to do his will:  
 If thou trust in him, thou shalt even live.  
 Fire and water are poured out before thee:  
 Upon whichsoever thou choosest stretch forth thy hands.  
 Death and life are before a man:  
 That which he shall choose shall be given him.<sup>1.</sup>

If, following Dr. Williams, we identify the yēqer with the "libido" - the psychic energy - familiar to students of modern psychology, extending to this 'libido' the larger significance accorded to it by Jung, in contrast to Freud, we may then state the doctrine of the yēqer in the following terms. Man is by God's ordering so

1. Ecclesiasticus XV. 14 ff.



constituted that there is in him a fund of energy moving him perpetually to act along the line of his natural instincts. But it is not God's will that a man, as a rational being, should be the slave of his instincts. God therefore would have him control them, and to this end He has given man a regulating principle and a standard of conduct. This is the Law, whose study and assimilation are potent to save a man from the unbridled excesses into which his yēqer would otherwise certainly lead him. It is, in fact, this latter certainty that accounts for the presence of the standing epithet 'evil'. Man sins in failing to curb his yēqer, indulging it in defiance of the dictates of the Law: but in itself the yēqer is not evil, being morally neutral, the "fomes peccati" rather than "peccatum". The Rabbis do not appear to have been exercised by the reflection that to ascribe to God the existence in each individual of an energy so difficult to curb is perilously near to making Him the author of evil.

Assuming, then, that the Apostle at the time of his conversion acquiesced in the doctrine of the yēqer as a sufficient explanation of the origin of sin, the important question arises: Why did he subsequently

give a place in his teaching to the theory of a taint contracted by Adam and transmitted to his posterity, or, allowing Dr. Williams' hypothesis, why did he attempt to make a fusion of the yēqer-teaching and the Adam-theory, modifying the former to the extent of ascribing to Adam's sin the introduction of the evil yēqer? This, it may be noted in passing, is practically the position taken up by the writer known as 4 Ezra, whose opinion on the subject is generally acknowledged to have been influenced by Christian teaching.<sup>1</sup> "The first Adam, clothing himself with the evil heart, transgressed and was overcome: and likewise all who were born of him<sup>2</sup>:...."A grain of evil seed was sown in the heart of Adam from the beginning, and how much fruit of ungodliness has it produced unto this time, and shall yet produce, until the threshing-floor come."<sup>3</sup>

In the former of these two verses Adam is stated to have 'put on' the cor malignum as a garment: in the latter, the evil seed is described as having

1. See Edersheim, 'The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah. I. p. 167.

2. 4 Ezra. III. 21.

3. *ibid.* IV. 30.

been sown in his heart. The position has almost been reached of attributing to Adam responsibility for the existence in his heart of the evil seed, which then was passed on to his descendants.

But we revert to our question: Why did St. Paul adopt the Adam-theory, modified or otherwise? Before suggesting an answer to that question, we must point out that the Apostle can have been under no misapprehension with regard to the status of the Adam-theory in intellectual circles. The Rabbis seem to have playfully speculated with the narrative, indulging semi-seriously in conjectural estimates of Adam's pre-fallen greatness; but the only real consequence that followed from his sin was, in their judgment, the penalty of physical death for mankind. Not even this it will be noted can legitimately be gathered from the Yahwistic story, where the threat placed in the mouth of God is an assurance of death to follow instantly upon the infringement of the prohibition. Rabbinic theology, to meet the fact of Adam's survival for a thousand years, assumed that the penalty of death was by God's clemency deferred for a while: but physical death for Adam and his progeny constituted the whole of the consequences of

the Fall according to the Rabbis. This and no more is also the meaning of the passage ἀπὸ γυναικὸς ἀρχὴ ἁμαρτίας, καὶ δι' αὐτὴν ἀποθνήσκουσιν πάντες (Ecclus. XXV. 24), in which statement it has been established, by reference to the corresponding Hebrew word, that the LXX ἀρχή bears a temporal and not a causal significance. The important point to be borne in mind is that the Rabbis held no theory of a taint of sin transmitted by Adam to his posterity. Dr. Tennant states this conclusion definitely: "It must be concluded, then, that the only consequences of the Fall, for the human race, which were asserted in Rabbinic teaching, are death and loss of the various supernatural adornments of Adam's life at its beginning. No diminished freedom of will, no permanent ascendancy of the *yēqer ha-ra'* established for all generations, were ascribed to the first transgression."<sup>1</sup>.

It is to the apocalyptic writings that we must turn to find the idea of transmitted sinfulness. In connection with the Adam-story, as opposed to the Watcher-story, it appears definitely for the first

1. Tennant. The Fall and Original Sin. p. 176.

time in the Book of Jubilees, at the beginning of the last century before Christ, and from thence onwards it provides the explanation of the origin of sin in the pseud-epigraphic writings. Adam by his sin had infected his progeny and was responsible for a hereditary taint of evil in the whole human race.

Why - to repeat our question - did St. Paul turn to this theory? It was unorthodox, a figment of apocalypse, which carried no more authority for doctrine than we, in later times, attach to such flights of imagination as the Pilgrim's Progress, to which composition the apocalyptic writings bear a marked resemblance. Why, then, did St. Paul turn to it? Dr. Williams has answered our question by the suggestion that the Adam-theory was both accepted in the circle of our Lord's friends and tacitly acknowledged by our Lord Himself. On the ground of the authority and prestige thus associated with it, St. Paul - so Dr. Williams argues - adopted it as the basis of his Fall-doctrine. It will be seen at once that we cannot reconcile this explanation with the conclusion of our last chapter, in which we decided that the doctrine of the Fall was not held by our Lord.



There is, however, a more obvious answer to be given to our question. St. Paul's belief in a corruption inherited from Adam was, we believe, the inevitable development of his Rabbinic views, when these views were brought, as he was bound to bring them, into connection with Christ. Before his conversion he had held that Adam's sin was the cause of human mortality: with his conversion came the conviction that Christ was the source of man's immortality. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Cor. XV. 22.). But was it likely that the Apostle, having made the contrast in one connection, would fail to follow it up in other directions? In union with Christ he had discovered a resolution of the conflict of which he had previously been the victim - the conflict between the ideal self and the promptings of his evil *yēqer*. Would not the contrast between Adam and Christ at once supply the explanation of the existence of this lower self? If Christ supplied the strength that brought victory, was not Adam responsible for the conditions that favoured defeat? We conclude that reflection upon the work of Christ was bound to lead the Apostle to

exploit to the full the contrast between "the first man, who is of the earth, earthy" and the Second Man who is "the Lord from heaven". If this be so, then the resort to Dominical authority, as an explanation of the Apostle's interest in the Adam-theory, becomes unnecessary.

We have assumed all along that before his conversion St. Paul's views were those of the Rabbinic Judaism of his time. But the religion of the Apostle, before the coming of Christ into his life, has been the subject of much dispute. Whatever else St. Paul may have been, says Montefiore, he cannot have been a Rabbinic Jew. In proof of this assertion, the writer just named draws attention to the Apostle's pessimism, contrasting it with the joy and hopefulness of the typical Jew. For the latter, as for Christ, the world was God's world and good. St. Paul sees all nature in a bondage of corruption. "All creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now". "How little," says Montefiore, "can we picture Paul smelling the rose and thanking God for its fragrance."<sup>1</sup>.

1. Judaism and St. Paul. p. 69.

This alleged pessimism, combined with the Apostle's attitude towards the Law, leads the writer to conclude that, as a Jew of the dispersion, the Apostle's religion was greatly different from the pure teaching of Judaism, and that he was under the influence of the apocalyptic school of thinkers. If this were the case, we should have to revise the conclusion we came to with regard to the reason for St. Paul's adoption of the Adam-theory. It may, however, be fairly maintained that St. Paul was, as he himself declared, an orthodox Jew, loyal to the Old Testament, and "a Pharisee of the Pharisees". We need not hesitate to admit that the Apostle was of the temperamental type to which Jung has given the name "introvert": to this natural disposition, and not to any declension from Rabbinic Judaism, may be attributed the gloomy view which the Apostle took, before his conversion, of the world in general and of man in particular.

As we are concerned to know the limits of the Apostolic teaching, upon which the elaborate doctrines of the Fall and Original Sin were subsequently erected, we must look briefly at the

the classical passage in the fifth chapter of Romans, on which so much has been written. It is to be remembered that it is introduced as a digression, without vital connection with the argument - the righteousness of God - upon which the Apostle has been engaged. He has just come to rest in the thought of our reconciliation with God through the sacrifice of Christ, and he then proceeds:- "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed to all men, for that all men sinned" - the sentence is not completed, the idea of sin's possibility before the coming of the Law leading the Apostle on to a side-track. The apodosis, however, virtually comes in the words  $\text{ὡς ἔστι τὸ πᾶν τοῦ ἡλλόντος}$  and the finished sentence would manifestly have been: 'As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed to all men, for that all sinned, so also by one man righteousness entered into the world and life by righteousness.'

It will be seen that the Apostle has made an abstraction of sin and hypostatized the abstraction. He represents Sin as being outside the world until Adam's treachery admitted him. Sin introduced with

him an inseparable companion - Death; with the result that the latter made his way to all men, in as much as all men sinned. But how did all men sin? If it were necessary to follow Bengel's comment "*omnes peccarunt Adamo peccante*", we should probably admit that Stevens' explanation, adopted by Dr. Tennant, is preferable to the others and maintain that the Apostle is using the language of 'mystical' realism. "St. Paul identifies the race as sinners with Adam in the same sense that he identifies the believer with Christ."<sup>1</sup> But Bengel's guidance has perhaps been misleading. When St. Paul wrote the critical words  $\epsilon\phi' \hat{\alpha}\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\epsilon\varsigma \eta\mu\epsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$  he probably meant that all men sinned actually and in their own persons. This seems to supply a better reason for the remark that immediately follows - "for until the Law sin was in the world" - than to suppose that the Apostle was thinking of one specific act of sin in which all prospectively participated. Sin, he tells us, continued its activity from Adam to Moses, in as much as men continued to sin over the same period. The view that the Apostle meant that all men actually and personally sinned is supported by the passage from

1. See Tennant. The Fall and Original Sin. p. 262.



Wisdom - a book with which St. Paul was probably most familiar and to which he was much indebted.<sup>1</sup> The following is the passage in question :-

ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἐκτίσεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπ' ἀφθαρσία,  
καὶ εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας ἰδιότητος ἐποίησεν αὐτόν.  
φθόνῳ δὲ διαβόλου θάνατος εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον.  
πειράζουσι δὲ αὐτὸν οἱ τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος ὄντες. 2.

Commentators do not appear to have noticed that just as St. Paul's ἡ ἁμαρτία εἰς τὸν κόσμον εἰσῆλθε finds its parallel in Pseudo-Solomon's θάνατος εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, so equally may πάντες be the equivalent of οἱ τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος ὄντες. "They experienced death, who were of his party," says the writer of Wisdom: "all experienced death", says St. Paul, "for all sinned." "They sided deliberately with the enemy," is the thought of both writers, the enemy being the devil or sin. If this be the Apostle's meaning, it is plain that he is contemplating individual sinners comprising the whole of mankind, each sinning

1. Schürer speaks of the 'loud echoes' of Wisdom heard in the Pauline Epistles. The Jewish People in the time of Jesus Christ. III. p. 233.
2. Wisdom II. 23, 24:

on his own account. In this event, Adam's action is conceived as limited to the introduction into the world of premature death, the free-will of his successors being left unimpaired. Each one of them severally must fight his own battle with sin: Adam introduced the enemy, but he did not, to use a modern expression, queer the pitch. This is the position so strongly maintained by 2 Baruch, writing shortly after St. Paul: "For though Adam first sinned and brought untimely death upon all, yet of those who were born from him each one of them has prepared for his own soul torment to come; and again each of them has chosen for himself glories to come. Adam is not therefore the cause, save only of his own soul, but each one of us has been the Adam of his own soul."<sup>1</sup>. And this, too, has always been the teaching of Judaism, as Dr. Moore brings out clearly in his chapter on the origin of sin. He there quotes from an old homiletic Midrash a passage in which the righteous descendants of Adam upon whom death was decreed are represented as reproaching Adam "Thou art the cause of our death". Adam replies "I was guilty of one sin, but there is not a single one among you who

1. 2 Baruch. LIV. 15. 19.

is not guilty of many iniquities." Continuing his exposition of the Jewish view Dr. Moore proceeds: "Death came in with Adam, but every man has deserved it for himself: his descendants die in consequence of his sin, but not for the guilt. It is substantially what St. Paul says.  $\delta\iota' \epsilon\nu\theta\varsigma \alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\upsilon \dots \kappa.\tau.\lambda.$  (Rom. V. 12)" To the same purpose Dr. Moore writes later "There is no notion that the original constitution of Adam underwent any change in consequence of the fall, so that he transmitted to his descendants a vitiated nature in which the appetites and passions necessarily prevail over reason and virtue, while the will to good is enfeebled or wholly impotent."<sup>1</sup>.

But was this all - we may conceive St. Paul asking - that could be said in the way of explanation of universal sin? Why did all sin, if everyone had a fair fight and a fair opportunity of victory unprejudiced by Adam's failure? To this question the Apostle gives nowhere a direct answer; but just as before his exploitation of the Adam-parallel he would certainly have replied that sin was due to the  $y\acute{e}\varsigma\epsilon\rho \text{ ha-ra'}$ , so with the second Adam in his mind he would probably have replied

1. G.F. Moore. Judaism. I. p. 479.

that the result was due in some way to men's connection with the offending Adam, from whom they had by descent derived a bias to sin. Adam by his sin had not deprived his progeny of free will but had imparted to them a predisposition to sin. We can well imagine that St. Paul would be glad to have found in this explanation a way of clearing God of responsibility for the existence of evil, if that objection to the yēçer doctrine had ever confronted him. It would seem, then, that the Apostle at one time regards sin as an external enemy, renewing his attack upon men individually; at another time, thinking of human solidarity, he sees it as an internal malady, inherited and deep-seated. In both cases, sin is an invader; it invaded the world, it has invaded our bodies. What shall dispossess it from the latter but the admission of a mightier power - the spirit of Christ abiding in us?

We have been trying to discover the considerations which led St. Paul to a modification of the orthodox doctrine of the yēçer, and we have concluded that he was led to this revision by the parallel, or rather the contrast, between the first and the second Adam. But when all has been said, it must be admitted

that the theory of the yēcer, if we keep in prominence its morally neutral character, is more easily to be harmonised with modern knowledge as an explanation of sin than the doctrine of an innate infirmity derived from an antecedent transgression. Man is a creature whose life is based on instincts, and he has behind him an animal ancestry. The possession of these instincts is nothing to be accounted irregular. But an obligation lies upon man to control these instincts to the higher purposes of which he has become aware: to fail to do so is sin - an offence against God, Who has with these instincts given also a portion of His Spirit - a moral sense, the dictates of which are imperative.

It must be remembered that St. Paul approached the problem of the significance of Christ with a firm belief in the literal truth of the Genesis narratives. It was natural that the contrast between Adam and Christ should capture his imagination and lead him to attribute to Adam's failure the sin for which the second Adam provided the cure. With a larger knowledge of human origins and a revised estimate of the Genesis story, we can no longer trace the source of sin to its



long-accredited origin. The meaning of Christ, the glory of man's destiny, the gravity of sin are in no way discounted in our new view of what has gone before. "If any man be in Christ, there is a new creation." That remains true, whether we think of man-without-Christ as a fallen creature, or unfallen and waiting to be lifted. 'The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ' is the splendid goal to which mankind, in any case, is moving, and to which in due time man will attain. Humble was his origin, slow has been his progress, faltering have been his steps. But no one great rebellion or refusal marred his start, both surprising his Creator and necessitating revision of His plans.

We close this chapter with a reflection upon the relative mildness of the conclusions to which, following his premisses, the Apostle naturally was led. He teaches no doctrine of Original Guilt, that a man should be accountable for the actions of his progenitors: nor does he deepen the heinousness of a Fall by exalting the position and dignity of original man. In fact, we should be justified in saying that the Apostle's grand exposition of the work and cosmic significance of Christ loses nothing by the elimination

of the Fall-teaching and the substitution of an account of man's origin more in keeping with modern evolutionary hypotheses. A perusal of the Apostle's later expansion of his doctrine, in the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Philippians, might leave us wondering whether he held any theory at all with regard to the origin of human infirmity. The disciple's outlook is that of his Master, his thoughts are all concerned with the future of humanity, the perfection to which 'in Christ' mankind is progressing. We cannot lay too much emphasis on this fact and on what we have called the relative mildness of his Fall doctrine. Asperities were to be added later, and of these later asperities some are still accounted to be the teaching of our Church.

Dr. Fairbairn long ago maintained that our formal source of knowledge should be the "consciousness of Christ".<sup>1</sup> Had that test been applied through the ages, the development of Pauline Fall-doctrine would have been of a character wonderfully different from the turns successively given to it by St. Augustine, Luther and Calvin. It may, of course, be objected that a return to the test just mentioned fails to make

1. Christ in Modern Theology. p. 450.

allowance for the Church's authority to develop her doctrine. The authority is not denied; it is, on the other hand, maintained that when the progress of human knowledge casts doubt upon the validity of particular developments, no claim of authority can stand in the way of enquiry into such developments.

### CHAPTER III.

#### The Idea of God.

The argument of our first chapter led to the conclusion that the doctrine of the Fall was not entertained by our Lord. Whatever may have been the extent of His knowledge and use of apocalyptic writings, we could find no proof of the view that He assumed "some kind of sinful disposition naturally inherent in the human soul". Turning to St. Paul, to whom is due the introduction of the Fall-story into Christianity, we decided that the consideration influencing him in his adoption of the Adam-theory was not the fact of its acceptance in the circle of our Lord's followers, for which there is no evidence, but its patent congruity as an extension of the contrast he had been led to form between Adam and Christ. It was finally contended that the central doctrine of the Christian faith - the Incarnation - suffers no diminution of grandeur by the substitution of the idea of man's continuous progress for that of a humanity disordered at the very start.

We have in the chapter before us to look at the doctrine of the Fall in its relation to the idea of God, considering, first, the idea of God involved in the doctrine itself, and then the effect upon the doctrine, if due recognition be given to the conception of God's immanence.

The hypothesis of an initial sin, upsetting God's plan and affecting man's subsequent history, will at once be seen to accord most easily with a deistic idea of the supreme Power behind the universe. There is no telling what man, with freedom to do as he pleases, may choose to do, when, to speak deistically, God's back is turned. Some such naive idea as this lies behind the old Yahwist's simple story of the garden of Eden. With God thus conceived as purely transcendent the defection of man presents little difficulty. It is only with the introduction of the idea of God's immanence that the difficulty begins. Thereafter, the greater the emphasis laid upon the immanence the harder the doctrine becomes, until at last, with the adoption of a purely immanental view, such as Absolute Idealism involves, the doctrine of the Fall has become impossible. There can be no Fall, if everything that is is equally an expression of God. Good and bad have



lost all moral significance: whatever is is just as God would have it be. That being so, criticism of alleged imperfections becomes almost an impertinence.

Such an interpretation of the world presents, of course, manifest difficulties, foremost among which is the fact that it fails entirely to account for the phenomenon, or perhaps we ought to say the appearance of the phenomenon, of progress and moral ideals. Any attempt to enlarge upon these difficulties would be out of place here, our aim being not to contrast theism with other "live options", but to discover the implication of immanence in reference to the theory of the Fall. It may be noticed, however, that the use of the term "Immanentism" as a synonym for Absolute Idealism is, as Dr. Matthews points out, open to serious objection<sup>1</sup>. Immanence, implying the existence of one thing within another, carries necessarily with it, in its application to God, the idea of His transcendence. But this latter idea is exactly what Absolute Idealism repudiates, the Absolute being the one and only real being, of which all existent things whatsoever are appearances of a greater or less degree of reality.

1. Matthews. Studies in Christian Philosophy. p.85.

A study of the literature of the Old Testament shows that Judaism had little, if any, grasp of what is really implied by immanence viz. the presence of God in His world, expressing Himself "in" and "through" His creatures. To the writers of the Old Testament, God is One and personal, the ruler of the world, and omnipotent. His abode is heaven, whence He contemplates the earth: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh"<sup>1</sup>: "The Lord is in His holy temple, the Lord's throne is in heaven"<sup>2</sup>. But high above the world as He is, yet He is not outside the world, so as to be out of the reach of His creatures: on the contrary, He is very near, nearest of all when the righteous man needs Him. Isaiah is expressing no more than every pious Jew of his day believed "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity: I dwell in the high and holy places with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit"<sup>3</sup>. Jeremiah, too, insists upon the same fact with even greater emphasis: "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?

1. Ps II.4.

2. Ps XI.4.

3. Is.LVII.15.

Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord"<sup>1</sup>.

Passages are to be found both in Scripture and in Rabbinic writings which exactly express the thought of Tennyson's lines:

Speak to Him thou for He hears, and Spirit  
with Spirit can meet -  
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than  
hands and feet.<sup>2</sup>

Universally present God knows all that is happening in the world, its big movements, its smaller events, down to the minutest details of a man's private life.

It is well to emphasise the Jew's appreciation of God's nearness, because it has lately been affirmed that Judaism exiled God from His world, setting Him aloof in solitary greatness. Proof has been sought for this assertion from the character of the titles by which God was named and from the disuse of the tetragrammaton - a disuse due, it is alleged, to feelings of awe and majesty. But the prior reason for this abstention was, it would seem, not fear but an intense reverence and anxiety to guard the sacred name from all possibility of improper and trivial use. We repeat that it would not be true to say that the Jews

1. Jer. XXIII. 24.

2. The Higher Pantheism.

had come to regard God as extra-mundane. Supra-mundane He was, and yet as accessible and near as person could be in answer to prayer and humble approach, standing away, but only "as it were a hand breadth off". Dr. Moore, to quote again from his late work, writes: "That imagination pictured the sovereign of the universe throned above the highest heaven, surrounded by a countless host of worshipping and ministering spirits, did not hinder the Jews from believing him near when they called upon him: nor did they think him so preoccupied with the great affairs of the world as to have no interest in their very small affairs. Reverence might dictate a phraseology which seems to us artificial or turgid. Precautions might be taken where they seemed necessary against the tendency of the common mind to image God as an unnaturally magnified man; but, on the other hand, the teachers are fond of dwelling on what we may call the humanity of God, and that not merely as an example to men, but as a revelation of his own character"<sup>1</sup>.

But, with all this intense realisation of God's presence, the Jew never passed beyond the idea

1. op.cit.I. p.439.

of God's transcendence: he realised that God could and did come near: he never realised that God was all the while the life and sustaining spirit of the world. God remained external, however close might be His proximity to His creation.

When we turn from the Canonical books and examine the apocalypses, we are conscious of being in a less spiritual atmosphere. In contrast to the lofty thought of Isaiah and Jeremiah, we are now among relatively crude conceptions. As Dr. Burkitt says, the Apocalypses "are not great in themselves. They are not worth much as literature or as contributions to thought ..... If one goes to the apocalyptic literature for edification, one does not get it"<sup>1</sup> Particularly noticeable is this in the matter of the idea entertained of God. Whatever progress we may have marked in the writings of the greater prophets in the direction of spiritualization of the conception of the Almighty, we are back again in the Apocalypses to anthropomorphic and comparatively primitive ideas. That the transcendence of God and His separateness from the world should be a prominent characteristic of these writers appears

1. Jewish and Christian Apocalypses. p.15.



to be only natural, when we remember that their hope amid the troubles of their times lay in a positive and practical intervention of a God, whom they conceived to be for the present only watching. In His own time He would make Himself felt in the world: meanwhile He was holding His hand. Thus, the Books of Enoch, the most important of the apocalyptic writings, give us a purely transcendent picture of the Supreme Power. The following lines from the first chapter of I Enoch are typical of the general view:

The Holy Great One will come forth from His  
dwelling,  
And the eternal God will tread upon the earth,  
on Mount Sinai,  
And appear in the strength of His might from the  
heaven of heavens.<sup>1</sup>

In similar terms the patriarch describes to the weeping Watchers the story of his journey to present their petition to the Holy Great One;

And I looked and saw therein a lofty throne:  
its appearance was as crystal, and the wheels  
thereof as the shining sun, and there was a  
vision of cherubim. And from underneath the  
throne came streams of flaming fire so that I

1. I Enoch Chap.1. v.3.4: translated by Charles.

could not look thereon. And the Great Glory sat thereon, and His raiment shone more brightly than the sun and was whiter than any snow. None of the angels could enter and could behold His face by reason of the magnificence and glory, and no flesh could behold Him. The flaming fire was round about Him, and a great fire stood before Him, and none around could draw nigh Him: ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him, yet He needed no counsellor. And the most holy ones who were nigh to Him did not leave by night nor depart from Him<sup>1</sup>.

It is unnecessary to accumulate illustrations of this conception of God: it runs through all the books, including the Parables, in the second of which we have the Enochian version of Daniel's vision of the Son of Man:

And there I saw One, who had a head of days,  
 And His head was white like wool,  
 And with Him was another being whose countenance  
                                   had the appearance of a man,  
 And his face was full of graciousness, like one  
                                   of the holy angels.<sup>2</sup>

1. *ibid.* Ch.XIV. 18 ff.

2. *ibid.* XLVI. 1.

Now it was in this atmosphere, charged with the thought of God's transcendence that the ascription of the origin of human evil to one great untoward happening came to be formulated. In Enoch it is the sin of the Watcher-angels, who by their union with the women of earth corrupted mankind and taught all unrighteousness on earth. Later the one great disaster is found in the sin of Adam and Eve, from whose disobedience there issued a stream of evil infecting their descendants. It is probable that there is no earlier definite statement of this teaching than that which is found in the longer version of the Slavonic Book of Enoch - a work which Dr. Charles assigns to the first half of the first century of the Christian era. At the commencement of Ch.XL. we read "And I saw all our forefathers from the beginning with Adam and Eve, and I sighed and wept, and spake of the ruin caused by their wickedness. Woe is me for my infirmity and that of my forefathers."

The point to be emphasised is that, in both the stories, the primal trouble is due to a happening in which God is regarded as interested but quite apart from it. In other words, the conception of God present to the originators of the Fall-theory, in both its versions, was purely transcendental. Trouble came,

man sinned, God learned of it, enquired into it and took action. Such a view of God is entirely transcendent: but to this view the origin of the Fall-theory is to be attributed.

At the present time, in certain quarters, the pendulum has swung to its limit in the opposite direction. It is the transcendence of God that is now in question, while His immanence is so interpreted as almost, if not entirely, to identify Him with His universe. It might almost be said that just as the doctrine of transcendence gave us the fall of Man, so the theory of pure immanence is threatening us with the fall of God.

A recent writer<sup>1</sup> has made a careful collection of the views of many of the twentieth century's philosophers and theologians. Their religion, he tells us, centres not about God but about man. "It is man first and not God: it is as much God only as man may seem to suggest or prove. Above all, it is God revealed by man and not man by God. Our revelation today is from earth to heaven - not vice versa as in the old days"<sup>2</sup>. This quotation Dr. Sheen

1. Dr. Sheen: Religion without God.

2. John Haynes Holmes. The New Basis of Religion.p.218.

follows with a second to the same purpose: "The scientific interpretation of natural phenomena has made the interest in God more remote, God's existence more problematical, and even the idea of God unnecessary. Mathematics and physics are making it increasingly difficult to assign a place for God in our co-ordinations and constructions of the universe; and the necessity of positing a first cause or of conceiving a designer, a necessity which seemed prima facie obvious to a pre-scientific generation, does not exist for us"<sup>1</sup>. We may conclude our extracts from Dr. Sheen's book with one of the many definitions he has collected of modern religion. "The existence of a supreme being as a person external to ourselves and to the world, like a magnified human creature, is not affirmed by the religious consciousness, and if it were known to be a fact, would have no bearing on religion"<sup>2</sup>.

The last quotation expresses exactly the position of a large section of modern philosophers and scientists. There is no desire to reject religion; on the other hand, a large value and an important place

1. Professor H.W. Carr. Changing Backgrounds in Religion and Ethics. p.74.
2. Bosanquet. Value and Destiny of the Individual p.254.



in life is found for it. But it is a religion, if it may really be so called, which, dispensing entirely with revelation and a personal transcendent God, gathers round a vague consciousness of ideals towards which man finds within himself an urge. Personalize this urge and we are in touch with the Christian doctrine of the immanent God. With one step further - the recognition that this Spirit is that of a God Who exists independently of ourselves and the Universe - we have reached Christian Theism. But it is this last step that costs, and at the present day many who have honestly questioned the Universe in search for Reality are unable to take it.

Many besides Dr. Gore must have laid down Dr. Pringle-Pattison's Gifford Lectures wondering whether or not he meant to encourage his hearers to a belief in transcendency or was himself in doubt. "As soon", he says, "as we begin to treat God and man as two independent facts, we lose our hold upon the experienced fact, which is the existence of the one in the other and through the other. Most people would probably be willing to admit this mediated existence

in the case of man, but they might feel it akin to sacrilege to make the same assertion of God. And yet, if our metaphysic is, as it professes to be, an analysis of experience, the implication is strictly reciprocal. God has no meaning to us out of relation to our own lives or to spirits resembling ourselves in their finite grasp and infinite reach; and, in the nature of the case, we have absolutely no grounds for positing his existence out of that reference"<sup>1</sup>. Is God adjectival to the Universe? we ask: or, to put the same query differently, if there were no Universe, would God be? Christian theism answers in the affirmative. God willed in love that there should be a world. The world therefore exists as the outcome not merely of Will, but of active Love. "The Christian conceives of God as first transcendent over all, and secondly present in and with all created things..... He is immanent in Creation, He functions through it, but this is only possible because He is transcendent above it, and as the Absolute, is not conditioned by it, nor in any sense dependent upon it"<sup>2</sup>. So we

1. The Idea of God. p.254.

2. Relton. A Study in Christology. p.168 f.

safeguard God's transcendence and His immanence. It is doubtful, however, whether the foregoing quotation would be acceptable to the majority of modern philosophers of religion. The fundamental principle of Bergson's philosophy, for example is a conception of God as unceasing life, action, freedom. And this activity is conceived as immanent in the phenomenal world. As Dr. Relton points out, reconciliation between theology and philosophy on this point is not an impossibility: for God may be thought of as transcending change without ceasing to be the Creator of a world which is ever in a state of becoming<sup>1</sup>.

Christian Theism is vitally concerned in the task of bringing about this reconciliation. In the result, it may safely be anticipated, no such recognition will be made of the transcendence of God as will render possible the hypothesis of a Fall of Man. If God be the Beyond, He is also, even more undeniably, the Within.

At this point we turn naturally to the consciousness of Christ, expecting to find there an intuitive grasp of the truth: and we are not disappointed.

1. *ibid.* p.119.

The transcendence and the immanence are alike recognised: but it is the latter that is central in His teaching. The sovereignty of God, dominating the parables of the Kingdom of heaven, provides the recognition of His transcendency: the Fatherhood of God, by which figure Christ more frequently describes the relationship of man to God, reveals God's immanence in the world and in the individual. And here it is to be noted that the Fatherhood has, on the lips of Christ, a very much deeper meaning than it bore for the Old Testament writers. For the latter, awed as they were by the sense of the holiness of God, fatherhood suggested little more than kindly rule and interest. For Christ, on the other hand, the term was significant of the ontological relation of man to God. The truth that lies in the line quoted by St. Paul to the Athenians - "for we are also his offspring" was a reality to our Lord. Every child of man could in His judgment be described as a child of God, inheriting from the source of his being characteristics of his Divine origin.

This recognition by our Lord of God's transcendence and immanence is nowhere more clearly seen than in the prayer that He left for His followers of all times - "Our Father, which art in heaven .....

Thy Kingdom come". The change of figure expresses the transition from the immanent to the transcendent: but the immanent comes first, just as man is a child of God before he realises that there is government in the family of God.

We referred a little way back to a feeling of uncertainty that followed the reading of Professor Pringle-Pattison's book. Happily, this was to a large extent relieved by his later contribution to the question under consideration. In the article to which we refer<sup>1</sup>, we mark the expression "the immanence of the transcendent", and interpreting the phrase by some words that precede - "the illuminative presence of God operative in every soul which He has created", we ask no more. The expression brings us back to our standard of reference - the consciousness of Christ, Who saw the divine in every child of man. In His company we are far from that deistic conception of God, in the atmosphere of which the doctrine of the Fall came to birth, and in which alone it can find a congenial setting.

1. The Spirit. Immanence and Transcendence.



We conclude with the reflection that the immanence of God in His creation justifies us in taking an optimistic view of the Universe, its present attainment and its future destiny. If this be so, then it is surprising and disappointing to find that Dr. Temple can insist on God's immanence and yet draw so gloomy a picture of the world's condition. Thus he writes: "We reach, then, a conception of God as at once comprehending the entirety of things in the whole range of space and of time, and also as constantly at work within the process of His own creation, shaping it as a master-artist till in its completeness - not its result only but its whole cause - He finds the good for which He made it"<sup>1</sup>. This, we believe, is the truth, and in it we find assurance. But if God be thus engaged within the process, we wonder whether we may not be mistaken, if with Dr. Temple we can see no more in man's progress than "the substitution of enlightened selfishness for stupid selfishness"<sup>2</sup>. We prefer to think that just as a dire Fall of man is incompatible with belief in God's immanence, so a pessimistic view of life fails to do justice to the fact of His constant working.

1. Christus Veritas. p. 101.

2. *ibid.* p.88.

## CHAPTER IV.

### The Idea of Creation.

We came in our last chapter to the conclusion that the doctrine of the Fall is not happily housed in any system of interpretation of the Universe that makes adequate allowance for the idea of Divine Immanence. But although we have laid stress upon the immanence of God in the belief that, if we are to see God with the deepest conviction of His presence, we must look within ourselves and find Him in an inward illumination, we still decline to accept the view which regards creation as beginning with humanity and denies that there was a finite universe until spirits were created. We believe, with Dr. Raven, that "if God is in the universe at all, He is in it all and is everywhere to be studied sincerely and exactly"<sup>1</sup>. Similarly we hesitate to draw any line between the natural and the supernatural, fearing lest we be drawn away again in the direction of that deistic conception of God which so readily accounts for

1. Creator Spirit. p. 113.

what is to our limited intelligence extraordinary by postulating an intrusion of the Divine. All Nature is an expression of God from the lowliest form of existence at the lowest limit to the highest grade of an ascending series seen in man's self-conscious personality.

We have used the term 'creation' in explanation of the existence of the world, aware all the while that the word has to be protected against the meaning that a pre-eminently transcendental idea of God attributed to it in the past.

It may be that our Bibles are no longer furnished with dates in the margin. But many of us, reading the volume that has been ours for some years, can still look with wonder at the figures given with the first chapter of Genesis - before Christ 4004; and we observe that, whereas in the case of Abraham the possibility of doubt is met by the addition of the word 'circiter', no such saving qualification accompanies the date of Creation. At one time, indeed, the month and precise day of the month and even the hour of the day were confidently asserted. The extent to which all this has been changed, the stirring

accompaniments of the changes and the contributing causes are familiar to all students of scientific progress. How fast things are moving may be judged from the fact that Dr. Pringle-Pattison could say as recently as the year 1913 "It is a significant fact, on which I cannot help remarking, that, although the whole face of physical science has been changed by the remarkable discoveries of the last twenty years, there has been no attempt to exploit the changes either in a theological or an anti-theological interest."<sup>1</sup> That statement could scarcely be made to-day, although, in correcting it, we should have to add that those who have essayed to set forth the bearing of new knowledge upon the old hypotheses have not generally received a sympathetic hearing. In this matter it will be recognised that history is repeating itself. The new knowledge, however, is being circulated, text-books have been brought up to date, and the rising generation is learning the new views by the medium of lectures delivered by expert scientists and conveyed by wireless from studio to schoolroom.

1. The Idea of God. p. 300.

The mention of schoolroom brings us face to face with the Church's problem. The children are kept up-to-date in their scientific knowledge: their Old Testament teaching is generally where it was a generation or longer ago. For this disquieting state of things the teachers themselves are not to blame, the fault lying with the Church that is so dilatory in her task of re-adjustment. Particularly is there need of a more adequate apprehension of what is implied in the concept 'creation'.

Before attempting, however, to define the idea of creation in terms that will recognise God's immanence without obscuring the truth of His transcendence, we must understand to what we are committed by insisting, as in loyalty to our Christian theism we are bound to do, upon the personality of God. It is, of course, no longer possible to speak of God as a Person: at the same time, we ascribe personality to Him. It is naturally objected that in thus ascribing personality to God we are guilty of anthropomorphism, in as much as our procedure has been from the search for the attributes of personality in man to an application to God of these attributes when discovered. We must admit that this is our procedure: we must admit,



too, that the objection is just. We plead, however, that no other course is open to us. As men we are bound to think as men, using the language and categories which alone are within our range. If we deemed that we needed further justification, we should not hesitate, as Christian theists, to appeal to the example of our Lord, Who, to use Canon Streeter's adverb, was "unashamedly" anthropomorphic. "The whole basis of Christ's practical religious teaching is just one great anthropomorphic thought": and later Canon Streeter adds "I submit that the anthropomorphism of Jesus is intellectually in advance of the rationalised abstractions of a Hegel, a Haeckel or a Herbert Spencer"<sup>1</sup>. Some writers appear to find comfort in thinking of God as super-personal, a description to which no exception need be taken if the prefix be not so interpreted as to bear a privative force. Super-personal, as implying the filling-out to their fullest capacity of the attributes characteristic of personality, may well be an expression not only comforting but also instructive. We know nothing higher than personality, nor dare we apply to the Supreme Power any category but our best.

1. Reality. p.142.

"To think or speak of the Infinite in abstract and impersonal terms is unconsciously to liken Him to forces lower, poorer and less full of vitality than ourselves, such as the electric current or the life principle in a tree. To say that God is 'personal but something more' is to say that the Creative Principle must be higher than the highest, richer than the richest, more full of life than the alivest of all the things It has produced - and that surely is merely common sense"<sup>1</sup>.

Approaching the question of the characteristics of personality, we assume that it can be predicated only of a being who is self-conscious, self-determining and actuated by a dominant ideal purpose. Personality, further, is essentially creative and social, being justly described in one of its aspects as "the capacity for fellowship". Such is personality, as we discover by analysis of it in ourselves and other selves like us.

From among the characteristics of personality just enumerated we single out one for further consideration: it is the possession of an ideal purpose. If we ask what we mean by purpose, we find that in our

1. Streeter, op. cit. p.140.

experience purpose always involves two things: first, that an idea of the end precedes the activity or attainment, and secondly, that the activity is determined by the idea<sup>1</sup>. The mechanical explanation of the Universe, popular a generation ago, may be said to have lost the status of a respectable hypothesis. It is recognised that even a machine postulates a mind that conceived its making, its adjustments and its purpose. The Universe has been questioned and cross-examined and has yielded up its secret. There is purpose running through the whole, and even if it be more difficult to discover purpose on the quantitative side of reality, its presence is written large over the qualitative, the moral aspect of phenomena<sup>2</sup>.

But the point upon which we desire to lay the emphasis is that the purpose discoverable in the Universe presupposes an idea of the end to be attained. From that position it is natural that we should take a further step and ask - Whose idea? It is here that we meet the conception of "unconscious purpose", assumed

1. See Sorley. Moral Values and the Idea of God.p.393.
2. It should be stated that certain modern scientists - Julian Huxley for example - refuse to allow the existence of purpose in the cosmic process, describing our discovery as 'a mere projection of our own ideas into the economy of Nature'. Essays of a Biologist p.215.

to supply the clue to the riddle of progressive life. Whether there can really be such a thing as unconscious purpose is another matter. To many the expression seems as meaningless as the kindred phrase 'immanent teleology' employed to denote the theory that purpose, apart from the idea of ownership of the purpose, is to be detected in the phenomena of the universe.

Passing over this objection, however, it may be affirmed that Vitalism at the present day has taken the place of dignity from which mechanism has fallen. Defenders of Theism will certainly look upon this change of seats with equanimity if not with positive satisfaction. With mechanistic and naturalistic theories we had nothing in common: it is impossible to join argument with opponents who find in 'thought' no more than the complicated response of the nervous system and who assert that man's use of the term "mind" "is the greatest evidence of that very primitive animal attribute - his conceit"<sup>1</sup>.

With vitalism the case is different. We can contemplate the idea of an elan vital or a nisus as a thing of fact calling only for further questioning.

1. Professor McDowall, in *The Mind*. p.78.

M. Bergson, it is true, deprecates the application of intellect to what he tells us can be apprehended only by intuition. None the less, we are driven to wonder whence comes this vital impulse or, as in Professor Alexander's theory, this urge: we would find for it an origin and an author. At this point Idealism comes to our assistance with its claim that the intelligibility of things is evidence of a Mind behind them. Must not this vital impulse, this urge, purposeful as it is found to be, be the Mind of the Creator in action? In any case, we cannot leave such a concept as that of "unconscious purpose" to go unchallenged. Purpose necessarily implies a will, and a will implies someone who wills. For Theism the world is purposive from beginning to end, the purpose manifested by it being the expression of the will of an immanent personal author. If, then, we would know the nature of God, we must look to the Universe for our answer. Here He has ever been expressing Himself, for it is as inconceivable that God could be ever without essential relations as it is that the Universe so conceived should fail to be indicative of His character. If, therefore, we must define creation, we may say that it is the eternal activity of God, to Whose nature it belongs essentially



to be creative. We look, then, for continuity in the phenomenal world, and we find it: but it is, as Dr. Matthews points out, continuity of an 'immanent' kind, differing from the earlier idea of transcendent continuity caused by the providential government of an external God<sup>1</sup>.

Having come to this point we turn to the sciences to hear what can be told of the gradual unfolding of the great Purpose of Him Who is the ground and support of the Universe. We propose to follow Professor Lloyd Morgan, accepting his theory of Emergent Evolution. What the theory stands for and its relation to Evolution as commonly understood has been clearly stated by its author. "Evolution in the broad sense of the term is a name we give to the comprehensive plan of sequence in all natural events. But this orderly sequence, historically viewed, appears to present, from time to time, something genuinely new. Under what I here call emergent evolution stress is laid on the incoming of the new. Salient examples are afforded in the advent of life, of mind, and of reflective thought. If nothing new emerge, if there

1. The Gospel and the Modern Mind. p.24.

be only regrouping of pre-existing events and nothing more, then there is no emergent evolution.... Through resultants there is continuity in progress; through emergence there is progress in continuity"<sup>1</sup>. But, in following Dr. Lloyd Morgan's account of the world's progress, we are not losing sight of the fact that it is descriptive rather than explanatory. Dr. Matthews has playfully criticised Professor Lloyd Morgan's account as giving as much in the way of real explanation as the conjurer does, who producing rabbits from a hat professes to reveal the secret by associating the appearance of the rabbits with the rapidity of the passes of his wand. Possibly Professor Lloyd Morgan's theory tells us really no more than did Spencer's high sounding phrases 'definite stable heterogeneity' evolving from 'indefinite unstable homogeneity'. Why homogeneity should issue in heterogeneity is unexplained. What or who supplies the drive in this development? Spencer left us unenlightened, and perhaps Professor Lloyd Morgan gets no further behind phenomena. With this provision, we accept the statement that Nature is "fundamentally

1. Emergent Evolution. pp.1.2.5.

jumpy", aware, as we accept it, that no determining reason is being given us for its jumpiness. But that need not trouble us: we are not turning in this direction for explanations. As Christian theists we have already gone as far behind the scenes as we desire and have found there a Divine Purpose. "Somewhere", says Professor Taylor, "behind all evolutions and supplying all with 'material' and 'driving force' there must be the strictly eternal"; and again he writes, "The full and ultimate cause of every effect in a process of evolution will have to be found not only in the special characters of its recognizable antecedents but in the character of the Eternal which is at the back of all development"<sup>1</sup>. We are turning, then, to Professor Lloyd Morgan for no more than a description of the working of the progressive Divine Purpose with the object of asking, when we have heard it, whether we can find room for such a dislocation or misdirection of evolution as is implied in the doctrine of the Fall.

In Professor Lloyd Morgan's presentation seven stages or levels are to be traced, each being marked by a characteristic that did not exist in its antecedents. Briefly stated, these stages are: Atoms,

1. Evolution in the Light of Modern Knowledge. pp. 454. 460.

**Molecules, Solids, Life, Mind, Reason, Spirit.** There is indeed room for wonder in the working of the Creative Spirit, ever bringing in the new and the higher till the series, which began with protons and electrons, ends with the production of a saint.

But to come to the crux of the matter we ask: Is it conceivable that at any point in this progression the plan embodying the purpose of the Creative Spirit broke down, rendering what followed other than it existed in the pre-conceived idea of the Master Mind? If we could allow such a possibility, we should next ask - At what point did this hypothetical setback take place? We wonder, too, where in this scheme which we are accepting we should have to fix the place of the 'anima mundi', whose self-corruption was, according to Dr. Williams, the beginning of sorrows, long before Man came upon the scene. Did the primal catastrophe issuing in "vitiated streams of the disintegrated Life-force" synchronise with the appearance of life or is Mind to be associated with the downfall of the Logos Spermatikos? It could scarcely be called a "rebellion" otherwise. On the other hand, as it is a pre-mundane disaster that is presented in Dr. Williams' theory, we are probably being invited to look back for the trouble

behind the beginning of the whole series of stages. But keeping to the generally accepted view of the Fall we shall be compelled to locate the lapse at the entry of life upon the sixth stage, where reason, anticipation and reflection, supervene upon mere cognition and instinctive action. This is at the appearance of Man, heir of all the ages but endowed with additional powers newly emerged. Now, it is generally admitted that every child rapidly recapitulates the whole story of its ancestral development. It should be possible, then, to rediscover the Fall in each instance at that period of life which is characterised by the dawn of Reason and Conscience, that is, of the power to grasp general principles and of the appreciation of obligation. As a strange and interesting matter of fact we do indeed make a discovery at this critical point of a child's life, and it is one of vital importance. But it is not a "fall" that we find, but the struggle for real freedom in the conflict that accompanies the passage of the lower to the higher. This significant development must be dealt with later, when we come to the consideration of the self from a psychological point of view.



Meanwhile, it is interesting to notice the contribution recently made to the subject by Dr. Temple<sup>1</sup>. Adopting the principle of Emergence he distinguishes four stages - Matter, Life, Mind and Spirit, each being an "emergent intrusion" upon the preceding. But with the Incarnation a new evolutionary phase has been initiated. "Upon Spirit, as hitherto known, there supervenes what we may call Adoption. After vegetables, animals - in which the vegetable principle persists: after animals, man - in whom both the former persist: after man, made in the image of God, the sons of God." All this is clear and carries conviction with it. We dare to suggest that it is otherwise with the Archbishop's treatment of the Fall. He admits that the theory of Evolution has made it impossible to hold any longer the Augustinian formulation of the doctrine. But he goes on to say "the substance of the doctrine always was that we are by nature now, through whatever causes in the past, such that if left to ourselves we cannot be what God desires and requires us to be". To this statement we are tempted to take exception on the ground that it is misleading. Man never was such

1. Future of the Church of England. ch.II.

that if left to himself he could be what God requires, nor has God ever so left him. The substance of the doctrine of the Fall, moreover, would be, we venture to think, more correctly stated if a change were made in the tenses of the verbs which we have underlined. God, in creating man, had a plan for him: man failed, went off the lines. That surely has always been the central point of the doctrine of the Fall. The following statement, too, leaves us unconvinced: "It is worth while to point out that Evolution itself involves a very real Fall. For an act which is done at the prompting of desire by an animal conscious of no principle condemning that act or desire, is morally less evil than the same act done at the prompting of the same desire by a man who is conscious of the contrary principle and defies it. Thus human wickedness is worse than anything among the animals can be. This Fall is an element in the advance to the level of true morality". The Archbishop would appear to be confusing the individual with the race. An individual sinning against the light is indeed more reprehensible than an animal that does what we judge to be evil, although most of us would refuse to associate moral evil with an animal's behaviour. But the added gift of Reason and Conscience

raised Humanity as a whole to a higher level, however often individual members of the race might fail in a moral struggle that was new to them. If this be a Fall, it is a Fall of the kind often so absurdly called "a fall upwards." It is this posse peccare - we dare call it a privilege - not the Fall, that is the real "element in the advance to the level of true morality".

In conclusion, we must draw attention to two points on which, if our argument is to stand, it is necessary to avoid misunderstanding. The first concerns the ascription to God of an ideal purpose dominating His activity. It was in the possession of such a purpose that we found one of the conditions of personality. Now it is of the essential nature of an ideal that there be a "discrepant actuality" over against which it is held and from relation with which it draws its character<sup>1</sup>. The question at once arises - what is the discrepant actuality in the case of God's purpose? Of His purpose we have no doubt: "the one far-off divine event" is a humanity conformed to His own likeness and raised to "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ"<sup>2</sup>.

1. Cf. Matthews. Studies in Christian Philosophy.p.199.  
2. Eph. IV. 13.

In what, we ask, does the present discrepancy consist? Our whole case rests upon the answer that we give. This discrepancy, we affirm, does not lie in any divergency of the actual, at any point in the progress, from what was Divinely anticipated for that point, as though at any stage of the advance the level attained had fallen short of a preconceived programme. Any such conception of the discrepancy would simply mean the re-admission of the hypothesis which we are rejecting - the hypothesis of a breakdown and failure which underlies the doctrine of the Fall. The discrepancy, as we see it, is to be sought rather in the gulf that has all along separated man's high destiny from his lowly, but not unnatural, condition on the road to that destiny. As God knows whereof we are made and whence we came, so, too, does He see our end and our future glory. This simultaneous apprehension of present and future at once reveals the discrepancy and actuates the Divine purpose.

In the second place, it must not be thought that in what has just been said we have had the least intention of minimising human failing. With the emergence of Reason and Conscience a new factor was added conditioning all subsequent progress. Man had

awakened to a sense of freedom: good and evil lay before him: it was in his power to choose. Apart from that freedom God's high purpose would be unattainable, His desire being to win the affection and willing service of beings who have it in their power to refuse Him both. Man, then, is free to work out his own purposes, to attain the values of which he has become aware, to co-operate with the indwelling Spirit or to oppose Him. In such conditions a measure of failure is inevitable.

At the same time it must be pointed out that this individual freedom constitutes no menace to God. It constitutes a Divine limitation no doubt; but if He be infinite, then it must be within His power so to limit Himself. To deny this is at once to reject the idea of His infinity. Man, then, is free - with a freedom that God has willed and of which He foresees the use that will be made. "The independence of finite beings is a communicated and limited independence, their spontaneity a restricted spontaneity: they are due to the divine will and do not exist in spite of it"<sup>1</sup>.

1. Sorley. Moral Values and the Idea of God. p.485.



The statement that God foresees in every case the use to which His gift of freedom will be turned raises a problem that is perhaps beyond human solution. It may be, as Dr. Matthews says, that we shall be wise in reconciling ourselves to the existence of antinomies. We may well revert to this wisdom in the case of omnipotence in relation to human freedom. Man is free and creative: yet, for all his freedom and creativeness, the world has not got out of hand, nor can it. "At every moment God is controlling the results of human choice and turning them to the fulfilment of His own purpose: but the choice is human and the wrong choice is an evil thing. But if the whole of history is indeed an ordered system such as the intellect demands for the satisfaction of its ideal of coherence, we are led of necessity to believe in an Eternal Knowledge to which the whole process, endless though it may possibly be, is present in a single apprehension. For the Omniscient Mind every episode is grasped as an element in that glorious whole of which it is a constituent part"<sup>1</sup>. Anxiety to synthesise apparently contradictory truths that are best left lying side by side has sometimes led

1. Temple. *Mens Creatrix*. p.363.

to the use of illustrations that betray the premisses. Among such illustrations must probably be included the artistic analogy to which many writers have resorted. A novelist's characters are certainly his own creation, and, if they do seem to take the bit between their teeth, they are still, even in their waywardness, expressing no more than the novelist's movements of thought, and their independence is fictitious. It would seem that the artistic analogy, if it were to the point at all, would most appropriately be found among the equipment of the emanationist.

We have already repudiated any desire to minimise the fact of human failing. That man with the power of choosing should have invariably chosen the high values in preference to lower and more immediate ends was not to be expected. There is consequently failure not only of individual selves, but of communities also, of nations, and even of races. Professor Taylor has warned us of the ambiguity of the term progress: "A society may be progressing in the sense that it is becoming morally better, or it may be progressing in the sense that it is moving steadily further and further on the broad road which leads to destruction"<sup>1</sup>. We must

1. Evolution in the Light of Modern Knowledge. p.470.

not, therefore, he tells us, hope to discover what are the right lines in social and moral development by simply finding out what line is actually being followed. This is undoubtedly true: there is such a thing as 'progressive deterioration'. But, in all such cases, it is necessary to remember that we are dealing with units, smaller or greater, ranging in magnitude from an individual finite centre of experience to a great corporate community, from a village to a continent, from a day to an era. But in God's sight, with Whom a thousand years are but as yesterday, such relapses, for all the significance that they assume in our limited outlook, may be accounted but episodes in a story of continuous and irresistible advance. "The presence of vast numbers of unprogressive forms of life, side-tracked as it were from the central line of advance, helps to accentuate the fact of progress"<sup>1</sup>. The 'painful inch' that in our life-time, or generation, or even era, seems to be either gained or lost, may be a poor index of the silent cosmic tide that is rising and will continue to rise until "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea"<sup>2</sup>.

1. The Future of Christianity. p.241.

2. Is.XI.9.

The prophet, whose vision of the future led him to write the words just quoted, was under no impression that the ideal state present to his imagination was to be a Paradise regained. So, too, in our vision of God's great purpose of Love we see a progress from the lower to the higher: but it is the lowness of humility and not of relapse. Science, with its tale of continuous evolution, has no place for the doctrine of the Fall. If, then, Science be, as we believe it to be, further revelation of the method of God's working, we must not cling to an old hypothesis based on smaller knowledge - a hypothesis which upon examination is found to be incompatible with God's nature, His relation to the Universe, and a worthy conception of His great Purpose.

## CHAPTER V.

### The Self and its Inheritance.

Why should God make bad souls and so cause bad acts to be done? Faced with this question, to which his theory of Determinism has brought him, Dr. Rashdall makes answer in the statement that "God causes bad souls to appear as a means to an ultimate good - a good which is unattainable without them"<sup>1</sup>.

We are not at this point concerned to examine the premisses upon which his question rests, namely that "actions are the necessary results of the man's original nature or constitution, as modified by the series of influences, social and physical, which have acted upon him from the moment of birth up to the moment of action"<sup>2</sup>: nor is it to our purpose here to consider the contention that in thus restricting the factors determining conduct to heredity and circumstances we are making God the author of evil. There is an objection even more vital than this. Does God, we ask, make souls at all? What is a soul or self?:

1. The Theory of Good and Evil. Vol.II. p.341.

2. *ibid.* p.302.



whence is it derived?: when does it begin to be?

Neither Creationism nor Traducianism can be reconciled with a satisfactory psychological description of the self. It will be admitted, however, that there is in both a large element of truth. On the one hand, every individual life is by procreation, life proceeds from life and is passed on from parent to child. This statement, however, does not involve the theory which was expounded by Tertullian. In his view the soul is a substance, a kind of mysterious condensation completely occupying the human body and so penetrating it that death alone can sever the union. God in the beginning infused it into Adam: thereafter, at procreation a portion of the father's soul accompanies the germ-plasm, providing a soul for the child and conveying to the offspring the characteristics of the parent. In its bearing on the question of heredity, Tertullian's quaint idea is not without interest. Of how little value it really is, as an explanation of the genesis of the self, is seen from some words recently written by Professor Taylor. "On the biological side there is continuity of an unmistakable kind between the parent organism or organisms and the organism of the offspring. What becomes the organism of the offspring has been at

one stage in its history an integral constituent part of the parent organism or organisms..... On the psychical side this condition is wholly absent. My mind has never, at any stage of its development, been a part of the mind of a parent or parents.... My personality is not, as a fact, continuous with those of my parents in the same sense in which my organism is continuous with theirs. We can understand the notion of a 'continuity of germ-plasm': to speak of a continuous 'psychoplasm' would be to speak unintelligibly"<sup>1</sup>. In rejecting Traducianism we are dismissing a theory, whose materialism makes it, in Dr. Tennant's words, "psychologically barbarous"<sup>2</sup>.

Creationism, too, is burdened with ideas that not only conflict with modern biological knowledge but are also unacceptable on theological grounds. It was possible, no doubt, in olden days to think of souls as waiting to be housed in an earthly tenement and of God as allocating to them their respective abodes. Rabbinic theology had actually - in the word - *gūf* - a name for the repository in which souls not yet embodied were kept until it was time for them to be born.

1. Evolution in the Light of Modern Knowledge. p.461.
2. The Future of Christianity. p.189.

With such a dualistic conception of soul and body it is not difficult to understand the origin of that explanation of evil which would trace it to a pre-natal fall of each soul that is joined to a human body. Along these lines Origen boldly speculated in the Alexandrine period of his life, lifting the origin of evil out of the phenomenal sphere and placing it in the supersensible. In modern times this theory is generally associated with the name of Julius Müller, who was, none the less, fully conscious of its defects. Kant, S.T. Coleridge and others who explored the possibilities in this direction were equally unsatisfied. Canon Peter Green, however, has quite recently declared his conviction of the need for the acceptance of a pre-mundane Fall. To such a happening he attributes the lonely isolation of the individual. The result of this Fall, he tells us, was a twist or inversion of man's nature, by which he became an egoistic instead of an altruistic being<sup>1</sup>. Pursuing lines not altogether dissimilar Mr. Formby postulates a pre-organic Fall. "The spiritual energy of life was fallen and vitiated before its bodily existence began"<sup>2</sup>. This he maintains

1. The Problem of Evil. p.135 ff.

2. The Unveiling of the Fall. p.76.

was St. Paul's own belief, strangely finding in the Apostle's "hazy" language an indication of his inspiration. But, reverting to the theory of the pre-natal fall of individual souls, it is sufficient to point out, as has often been done, that it would compel us to regard the world as one great penitentiary whose inhabitants are all exiles, banished from elsewhere for something which they have now forgotten, and now being given an opportunity of "making good".

In reality it is difficult to think of the soul as something quite distinct from the body, associated with it at birth, lodged as it were in a prison-house. If we persist in starting with this dualism of soul and body, treating soul as something altogether apart from body, we find ourselves confronted with the problem of explaining how the two are inter-related - a problem which no psychology has ever been able to solve. What we experience is a single, indivisible, growing whole, which is in part material, in part spiritual.

Does God make souls at all? we asked. Rather than accept Dr. Rashdall's statement that God makes bad souls, we should reply that the soul is not already made when a new finite centre of experience comes into



existence. Its physical life, which is God-given and can be explained in no other way, carries with it the potentiality of a soul. With the dawn of self-consciousness a spiritual life becomes possible and not before: it is then that the individual becomes aware of his mental content. In all this manner of speaking we must not be understood to be making that distinction between self and its interests upon which Dr. Moberly has poured such scorn. He warns us that the concept of possession cannot seriously be applied to the philosophy of personality. The writer whom he quotes runs through a long catalogue of man's supposed possessions, concluding with his individuality, his virtues, his vices, his ego, his soul: and then he asks - "Who is the owner of these job-lots? He is behind the scenes: but if you seek him there you will not find him. When you think you have got him, he turns instantly into one of his own possessions"<sup>1</sup>. We needed, perhaps, the reminder that the self is not an entity standing away from its attributes and contemplating them as a not-self. We are that of which we are conscious in ourselves. That we are self-conscious at all is probably a wonder greater

1. Foundations. p.497.



than Professor McDougall seems to find it. "Some psychologists", he says, "make a great mystery of consciousness of self. But whatever mystery is involved in thinking of oneself is the mystery of thinking in general, of consciousness or awareness of anything. The mystery of self-consciousness is not a new and additional mystery.... One thinks of oneself as that which knows and strives, enjoys and suffers, remembers and expects"<sup>1</sup>. There is in self-consciousness, however, a mystery greater than that of awareness of external objects, and it comes just in the fact that other things are external. In self-consciousness it is the subject that has become its own object, while all the time the subject is not to be detached from its relations.

Analysis of the self is a study and process of peculiar difficulty for us - a study in which the average thinker can do no better than follow expert guidance. It would seem, then, that just as in scientific investigation analysis of a whole discloses, in addition to the constituent parts, both the relations in which these constituent parts stand to each other and the whole and also a specific character belonging to

1. An Outline of Psychology. p.426.

the whole but not included in the separate parts, so analysis of the self reveals something in addition to mere dispositions, ideas, tendencies and such like. These are indeed parts of the self: but the self is more than the sum total of these parts: we are presented, in addition, with properties belonging to the self by reason of the union of these parts and not by virtue of their distinct existence. This is the principle of unity, the 'spiritual bond' of Goethe's lines, the something whose being may evade the grasp of the analyst<sup>1</sup>. The self, then, is not a mere composite whole consisting of a variety of presentations to be taken and examined by the psychologist in isolation from each other. It is rather the centre to which all these psychological items are related: it is the principle of unity making ideas and dispositions to be what they are. Dr. Sorley, whom we have here been following, has clearly shown us the peril at which we neglect this subjective principle. For example, this error of the analytic understanding underlies the hypothesis of Determinism, which, in assuming heredity and circumstances to be the sure and sole explanation of subsequent conduct, neglects the subjective unity which gives to

1. See Sorley. Moral Values and the Idea of God.p.248.

inherited influences and environment a capacity which must remain for the outsider entirely incalculable.

Failure to recognise this self - a self unifying diverse qualities and tendencies - has led others to postulate a 'pure ego', an extra element to be added after the parts discovered by analysis have been duly tabulated. Dr. Tennant, for example, insists upon the existence of an abiding "pure ego" - a monad or spiritual atom - attributing the desire to dispense with it to reasons connected with economy in descriptive concepts rather than with considerations of adequacy<sup>1</sup>. But we are assured by others that there is no such entity as a 'pure ego' set over against an "empirical ego", and accounting for the subject-object relationship which self-consciousness seems to indicate: it is a logical abstraction: "it has no being separate or separable from the being of the self with its character"<sup>2</sup>. Dr. Temple states the same position emphatically. Asking whether the unity of a Person depends on and consists of an organic relationship between the constituent elements or is some point of reference

1. Future of Christianity p.186.

2. Sorley. op. cit. p.434.

which remains fixed while these change, he replies that "the point of reference" is the consciousness of an abiding Self through manifold experiences. "The self is the self-conscious system of experience. If the self qua subject is abstracted from all its experiences, it becomes a mere possibility of experience and no actual entity at all. If there is no experience, there is no self". And later he writes, "We cannot, then, find the ego, or principle of unity and selfhood, in any psychological point of reference which acts as a pivot for the experiences, active or passive, of any one Person. The unit is the whole psychic life"<sup>1</sup>. It is, then, by a process of abstraction and hypostatization that we arrive at that concept of the Soul which is so familiar to us in devotional literature. What is left after such abstraction has been made affords a fair field for the attention of empirical psychology: but if the latter fail, as it must, to find a soul, it must not therefore conclude that no reality at all belongs to the conception. The psychologist is being constantly advised to leave this central personality to the consideration of the metaphysician - a warning

1. Christus Veritas. p.66.

which many have taken to heart. Mr. Shand, for example, can write, "The science of character will try to understand those forces with which our personality has to reckon, to trace the laws of their organisation, of their growth and decline, of their action and interaction: but it will leave out of account the mystery which lies behind them".

The fore-going enquiry into the nature of the soul has an important bearing upon the subject under consideration - the doctrine of the Fall. Its importance lies in the conclusion to which we are again brought - that the soul or self is supervenient upon existing life. This is no more than we should expect from the theory, to which allusion has already been made, of recapitulation. As in the story of the evolution of man there came a time when consciousness or awareness of an external world - that which Professor Lloyd Morgan calls "projicient reference" - was super-added to mere sentience, so the post-natal life of the individual has a period to run before the beginnings of cognition, prompting to striving, give sign of their appearing. Till then a self is waiting to be made, and unification of mental dispositions has not commenced.



The description of the world as "a vale of soul-making" is justified, if the new life that comes into the world be regarded as a finite centre of sentiency only with potentialities subsequently to be developed. We are thus brought again to the conclusion that if we are to insist, as Dr. Bicknell maintains that we must, upon our being "fallen" by nature, we must look for such fallenness in the pre-organization already existing when consciousness comes into play.

The ground is considerably cleared when thus our enquiry is restricted to what is commonly called our "inheritance". And here we shall have to distinguish carefully between the "natural" inheritance and the "social" inheritance. Both are involved in the following quotation from Dr. Bicknell: but we are not sure that the distinction is clearly kept. "The balance of our nature as we receive it is upset. We have lost that sympathy with God which should govern and guide the development of our life"<sup>1</sup>. We do not accept the statement, nor are we certain to which form of inheritance the writer is referring. He continues, however "In this sense original sin may be inherited

1. The Christian Idea of Sin and Original Sin. p.40.

through our social environment. The infant that is born into the world is a mere bundle of possibilities. By the time that its moral life becomes possible, its nature has been largely shaped by the influence of our social environment. Our mental make-up is to a very large extent conditioned not only by our home and early training but by all the subtle influences that stream around us. If we perforce grow up in social surroundings that reflect the estrangement from God that all men more or less share, we inevitably come to share that estrangement". Here Dr. Bicknell has passed to what is strangely called "social heredity". No one will disagree with him, nor deny the immense influence of environment. We shall have occasion to speak of this later. But what does Dr. Bicknell mean by saying that the infant born into the world is "a mere bundle of possibilities"? If the words are intended to convey no more than they appear to, then how can they be reconciled with the previous assertion - "the balance of our nature as we receive it is upset"? Continuing the quotation, we find Dr. Bicknell writing: "Our nature lacks its true balance. When once we grasp that human nature does not come into the world ready made, we see that the distinction between nature and nurture is only

partially true. Nature is only developed through nurture". Again we fancy we detect a suspicion of confusion. If the balance of our nature as we receive it is upset, then it would not seem to be true to assert that human nature does not come into the world ready made. It would surely be more correct, on this showing, to say that it comes into the world ready made and already deranged. And this is just the point where disagreement is possible. But, after all, we are not sure as to what stage of existence is intended in the words "as we receive it". Is the writer referring to birth, or to the beginning of the moral life?

Before, however, we proceed to the consideration of the alleged want of balance in the bundle of possibilities, a further word must be said about that part of our inheritance which is called 'social'. The relative importance of the contributions made respectively by nature and by nurture in the production of an adult individual has been variously computed. At the one extreme we have the statement of our Article 9: "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam..... but it is the fault and corruption of the Nature of every man". At the other extreme we have men, like

Professor G. Elliot Smith, discounting the force of inherited influences and laying all the stress upon the moral and intellectual effects of the community in which the individual is born and brought up. "Whatever the inborn mental and moral aptitudes of any individual, whatever his race and antecedents, it is safe to say that if he were born and brought up in a vicious society he would have learned, not merely to converse in the language distinctive to that particular group of people, but in all probability to practise vicious habits. The fact that his skull was long or broad would count for little in this process in comparison with the potent moulding force of the atmosphere of the family and the society in which he grew up during the years of his mental plasticity"<sup>1</sup>.

We have placed the extremes together, and viewing them in juxtaposition we conclude that here, as so often, the truth lies between them. No one who has had even an average experience of children can fail to have noticed the influence of the home and its surroundings and its power, where it is bad, to undo the good that is being done by other agencies. Further,

1. G. Elliot Smith. The Evolution of Man. p.133.

psycho-analysts are increasingly realising that for many, if not most, of the nervous ailments of adult life the cause is to be found in repressed complexes of early infancy. Shocks administered, often unintentionally, during these years, bear their fruit in a subsequent lack of moral balance, which the observer, unaware of the real origin, is too ready to ascribe to innate causes. The real source, however, is to be found in some deficiency of that reverence with which every child should be treated. On the other hand, the increasing importance that is being attributed to social environment, coupled with the breakdown of Weismannism, has its encouraging aspect. If acquired characters can, after all, be transmitted and if the environment counts for more than heredity, then it is possible to anticipate such lasting fruits of education as could not be contemplated in a theory by which the parent was merely a carrier of the germ-plasm passing it on just as received. New hope, too, has thus dawned for the future of races now behind in the march of civilisation.

But we must now turn to the consideration of that which is commonly understood by 'natural' inheritance, for it is here that we are to find, if anywhere,



the inherited infirmity, the fundamental flaw, or the distortion of balance, by which terms original is designated in modern phraseology. And now we are within the recognised province of the psychologist proper. His is the task of analysing the "empirical" self, if for convenience we may still be allowed to abstract from the self as a diversity in unity and revert for a while to the old dualistic terminology.

We have come, then, to the problem of the structure of the mind. The mind, it is almost universally admitted, is built upon a foundation of instincts, an instinct being according to Jung 'the energetic expression of a definite organic foundation', or, as in another definition, 'an inherited mode of reaction to bodily need or external stimulus', or according to Professor McDougall's generally accepted description, 'an inherited or innate psychological disposition which determines its possessor to perceive, and to pay attention to, objects of a certain class, to experience an emotional excitement upon perceiving such an object, and to act in regard to it in a particular manner, or, at least to experience an impulse to such action'. In other words, an instinct involves cognition,

emotion and conation. It is not necessary here to enter into the question of the number of the instincts and their classification. In most quarters three instinctive tendencies are recognised as being of outstanding dominance, namely, those of self, sex and herd<sup>1</sup>. But it is important to notice that nature has made provision for the due emergence of these instincts by a pre-organisation of the material tissue of the brain. In fact, in the whole activity of man there are two stories to be told - that of the biologist and that of the psychologist: but the subject of the narration is one. To all but the specialist the difficulties are many - such difficulties as the relationship between mind and body, a relationship easily obscured in hyphenated terms such as psycho-physical, and the extent to which there is further pre-organisation of dispositions.

It may be well to notice at this point that the pre-organisation of which we are speaking is generally pictured in terms of the psychologist in preference to those of biologist or physiologist. Resorting to a free use of the spatial metaphor, the New

1. Trotter adds a fourth - nutrition.

Psychology, led by Freud and Jung, has given us a sub-conscious, in which are housed all the paraphernalia of thought, including the mental formations, not present at a particular moment but capable of presenting themselves or of being summoned to the focus of consciousness. That the psychologist's story is more popular than the biologist's causes us no wonder. The layman naturally feels no great stirring as he reads a technical description of the workings of the cerebral cortex. But the same events in the other story are given a positively romantic glamour. Every reader must have appreciated the charm of Dr. Sanday's description of the subliminal region - "the inner cornucopia", as he calls it, from which "one never knows what will come forth"<sup>1</sup>. Dr. Paterson's story of the same region, as a vast repository and workshop, is almost Vergilian in its picturesqueness.<sup>2</sup> Compared with these writers Dr. Williams is prosaic, the activities of house builder and plumber not lending themselves so readily to poetical treatment.

There is no harm, of course, in all this use of the spatial metaphor, so long as it is remembered that

1. Christologies Ancient and Modern. p.144 ff.

2. The Nature of Religion. ch.IV.

it is metaphor only and that the actual facts belong to the physical conformation of the human organism. The tendency to seek detailed fact from the metaphor has led Professor McDougall to write "My own opinion is that any service performed by these confused and confusing fictions (namely, the 'ideas', the dark and the illuminated chambers of the mind, 'the threshold of consciousness' and 'consciousness' as a light which illuminates 'ideas') is far outweighed by the vast mass of confused and loose thinking which they have engendered. They should be sternly banished to the psychological museums"<sup>1</sup>.

We repeat that no harm is done by this use of metaphor if we remember what we are doing. It will be seen that Dr. William Brown recognises this condition in giving us the following helpful description of the mind: "Speaking metaphorically one may compare the mind to a pyramid or mountain ascending to an apex. Corresponding to the apex there is the conscious personality, which has below it the personal unconscious: and still below that, stretching indefinitely, there is the collective or racial unconscious, merging in the general

1. An Outline of Psychology. p.15.

unconscious of the entire physical universe"<sup>1</sup>.

It is of course in the collective or racial unconscious that - if we care to use this metaphorical language - we must give a place to the inherited instinctive dispositions. Lurid pictures have been drawn of this subterranean region. Mr. Bertrand Russell has even personified it, describing it as "a sort of underground prisoner, breaking upon our daylight respectability with dark groans and maledictions and strange atavistic lusts"<sup>2</sup>. Freud speaks of it as "a veritable Hell": others, in language more restrained, recognise here "the dead hand not only of a human but of a subhuman past"; This last description is more tolerable than the others, for it does no more than remind us of the humble origin from which, in the Divine working, man has gained a place of dignity only a little lower than the angels. But, with regard to the Freudian psychology as a whole, most people will heartily endorse Dr. J.S. Haldane's recent criticism of it as a mixture of "a very imperfect physics, an equally imperfect physiology, and a gross and often extremely nasty misrepresentation of human nature"<sup>3</sup>.

1. Mind and Personality p.13.

2. The Analysis of Mind. p.28.

3. The Sciences and Philosophy.



Returning now to the three main instinctive tendencies, we ask whether we can detect in the hypertrophy or atrophy of any of them that fundamental flaw to which the doctrine of Original Sin would point us. Is there here a de-ordination resulting in the alleged lack of balance in our nature as we inherit it? No one who has studied the history of the doctrine which we are examining is likely to forget its long and close association with the sex-instinct and the peculiar meaning which the term "concupiscence" in consequence acquired. More generally, the disorganisation of human nature has been connected with excessive preponderance of the ego-instinct, resulting in selfishness, which is indeed the root of all sin. So Dr. Temple points to the disposition of individuals to assert themselves unduly and out of proportion to their place in the scheme of things or the true structure of society. "This tendency", he adds, "is Original Sin: and it is present both in every individual and in the whole social influence, these two reinforcing one another"<sup>1</sup>. Lately, Dr. Williams has discovered the fundamental flaw in an

1. Christus Veritas. p.215.

arrest of the development of herd-instinct. Proceeding on a priori lines from the moral sentiment, where he finds the issue of the trouble, and assuming, probably correctly, that the moral sentiment is ultimately to be derived from the herd and its dictates, he comes not unnaturally to the conclusion that the herd-instinct has received a set back with the result that "man has just enough herd-instinct for an anthropoid, but not enough for a man"<sup>1</sup>. The reason given for this arrest of the development of herd-instinct is highly speculative, namely, the intervention of some unknown and positively malignant factor in the crisis of the birth of the race. Here we recognise his debt to Mr. Formby: but we find it very hard to accept the explanation, primarily on the ground that we can see no deficiency of herd-instinct in man as we know him. On the other hand, the instinct in question would seem to be particularly strong, as is seen in the capacity of man to sacrifice himself for the good of others and to subordinate sexual instinct to the requirements of public opinion. If any further proof were needed of

1. The Ideas of the Fall and of Original Sin. p.XXXIV.

the strength of the herd-instinct, the evidence of the Great War would be conclusive with its tale of millions fighting and dying in allegiance to their herd. The instinct is indeed strong: what is needed is, as Mr. Trotter has pointed out, a further enlargement of the unit. Rapid progress has indeed already been made. It is not so long ago since in our land clan fought clan to the death. Had that condition persisted, there would have been no Great War: but equally there would never have been a great peace. We have extended our unit, till as a sequel to the last great clash of arms we have been led to take steps towards the realisation of the ideal of one unit only - "the social whole which is co-extensive with mankind"<sup>1</sup>. The human race stands, as Mr. Trotter says, at a nodal point today<sup>2</sup>. Under Divine guidance it is recognising that the herd is Catholic and as large as the world itself. It would seem that we are reaching that standpoint of which Lord Haldane was thinking when he wrote the following words - "There is an outlook that is cosmopolitan, because no other end than that of humanity

1. Sorley. op. cit. p.103.

2. Instincts of the Herd in Peace and War. p.101.

simply as such can satisfy it"<sup>1</sup>. Mr. H.G. Wells has recently declared that patriotism is the enemy of civilisation. On the other hand, the Boy Scout movement, comprising two millions of lads of all nationalities, is proving that it is possible to be patriotic and at the same time to cultivate the ideal of a brotherhood of man. History will doubtless give to this organisation an honourable place among the factors that contributed to the widening of the herd-unit.

The mention of herd-instinct brings us to the consideration - to which we are bound to revert continually - of our descent from an animal ancestry. We have no need, as we have said before, to be ashamed of it. It was God's plan that man should rise from lowly origins and in his rising should bear with him conclusive proof of his pedigree. Such incontestable proof is to be found in man's instincts and in the fact that he shares them with the animals. But man, endowed with higher powers than the animals, the possessor of reason and a conscience, capable of apprehending higher values and of realising them, is called

to a control of appetite impossible to the animals. The story of man's spiritual advance is not exhausted in the description just preceding: he has come to appreciate the further truth that he is a temple of the Holy Spirit of God, and that, as God is holy, so must the human body be guarded from defilement. A great dignity is this to which man has attained; and great is the struggle imposed upon him with the accession of the dignity. Does his struggle onward with its frequent lapses prove that the heritage from the past is other than God proposed, that he has fallen from a state in which he ruled his passions without any such conflict as is now entailed, that there is a flaw in his composition due to his failure to co-operate with the course designed by his Creator? We think not; nor do we believe that such evidence as we have compels us to such a conclusion.

It was stated earlier that, affecting our instinctive dispositions, there was a form of pre-organisation to which further attention would have to be given. We had in mind what are called inherited tendencies. That tendencies and particular aptitudes are inherited by individuals cannot be doubted. "As a matter of fact", says Sir Henry Jones, "we have never



met a Melchisedec. All the men and women we have ever known, or expect to know, had a father and mother and very long ancestry: and they bore physical and mental traces of their descent in their very make and structure"<sup>1</sup>. This admission, however, is not equivalent to saying that virtues and vices are inherited. A man inheriting a tendency to some particular form of moral weakness is not thereby condemned to be a sensualist or a drunkard, any more than the person born with one leg shorter than the other is thereby doomed for ever to describe circles. The tendency is there: but, just as in walking a man corrects this physical leaning, so, too, with the help of the indwelling Spirit may he master inclinations of a psychic nature.

The statement just made brings us to what we may happily believe to be the truth about instincts and tendencies. They are simply the material out of which a man may fashion virtues or vices. In themselves they possess no moral quality, being neutral: they are inevitable, they are necessary, they are God-given. But man has learnt that the emotional

1. A Faith that Enquires. p.181.

energy, which is the subjective aspect of an instinct, can, and in many cases must, be sublimated, that is, diverted from its normal channel of expression and utilised to a kindred, but legitimate, end. So man builds up a system of interests or sentiments, taking up the whole of his psychic energy. Among these sentiments one will be allowed the dominance or will assume it. When this dominant sentiment is loyalty to an ideal purpose or to an ideal self or, as is the case with the Christian, to an ideal Person, the result is an integrated life marked by the absence of serious mental conflict.<sup>1</sup> But the ultimate driving force comes from these natural instinctive tendencies of which we have been speaking. We have already said that they are God-given. We wonder, therefore, whether Dr. Tennant can be justified in calling them "an ancestrally prescribed handicap". Ancestral they are: but in God's plan their purpose would seem to point rather to our moral advance than to our burdening, to our opportunities rather than to our disabilities. In either case, the possibility of sin begins when the moral consciousness comes to its task of dealing with

1. Dr. Oscar Hardman has dealt with the Christ-sentiment in 'Psychology and the Church'. Ch.IV.

the natural dispositions already entrenched in the physical organism.

Sin and evil, of which we have to speak in the next chapter, are grim realities. Too strong a protest cannot be raised against a facile optimism which proceeds from a failure to recognise and face facts. Sin is a malady whose effects are not confined to the individual offender. "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge". The disorder produced by sin is a patent fact: there can be no closing of the eyes to it. But the whole point of our argument is that sin is not the proof of an initial moral breakdown of man at the beginning of his career. It is rather the chronic evidence of failure on the part of individuals and communities to follow in their generation the guiding light of the indwelling Spirit. If thus we refuse to recognise in sin a testimony to a radical corruption of our nature, we shall scarcely wonder that the description of a babe as "being by nature born in sin" gives great pain to sensitive parents. In Augustinian thought the words carry suggestions which in these days are to be utterly repudiated. We could wish that our Baptism Service and the Catechism we teach our children had laid more

emphasis on God's love and less on His wrath - more on man's great future, and less on the assumed failure of his past.

## CHAPTER VI.

### The Problem of Evil.

It will be well at this point to review the course of our argument and the conclusions reached in the preceding chapters before attempting to speak of the central problem of evil, as a solution of which the doctrine under our consideration was originally formulated. From an examination of the teaching of our Lord, in which we could discover no evidence of His belief in a Fall and the corruption of man's inner life, we passed to the testimony of St. Paul. It was natural, so it seemed to us, that the Apostle, coming to his new faith with a pre-established belief in the historicity of the Adam-story, should extend the parallel between Adam and Christ, so that, whereas in Rabbinic theology Adam was held responsible for no more than the universality of physical death and the hard conditions of human life, St. Paul seems to credit him with the further responsibility of having caused the sinful condition from which the Apostle in his experience had discovered salvation "in Christ". At



the same time we saw that the theory of a Fall was not essential to the Apostle's soteriology, the contrast in reality being between man without Christ - psychic and earthy - and a new humanity in Christ - spiritual and heavenly.

Approaching the question from the point of view of philosophy we were led to the conclusion that the theory of a disaster subverting God's plans was incompatible with the idea of His immanence. Similarly, we concluded that the doctrine in question involves a belief in Creation as a specific act and not, as we account it to be, a continuous evolution. And, finally, an examination of the human self drove us to look for the alleged fundamental flaw in the preorganisation existing at the birth of the individual. We could not, however, bring against any one of our instinctive dispositions, being immoral and a legacy from our pre-human ancestry, the charge of perversion or even of disproportion. The arrival of moral consciousness brings to every individual, as it brought to the human race at a particular stage in its evolution, the task of subordinating instincts to realised higher ends and of making these instincts the material of a virtuous life.

If the accumulated weight of these disjunctive considerations be such as to throw doubt upon the validity of the doctrine of the Fall, we have still to consider the question whether in what has been asserted there can be found anything like a reasonably satisfactory explanation of evil.

There is no need to enlarge upon the evil that is in the world - its universality, the variety of its forms, and the intricacy of its ramifications. No one can be under any illusion on this matter. But we ask: Can God, Who is all goodness and mercy, be said to be in any way or to any extent responsible for the presence of that which He must resent even more than we do? In other words, can we arrive at even the beginnings of a theodicy, if we dispense with the doctrine of the Fall?

There are certain roads of apparent escape which are closed to the Christian theist. One of such roads is the negation of God's omnipotence. "It seems to me", wrote Dr. McTaggart "that when believers in God save His goodness by saying that He is not really omnipotent, they are taking the best course open to them, since both the personality and the goodness of God present much fewer difficulties if he is not

conceived as omnipotent"<sup>1</sup>. For such thinkers - and they included Dr. Rashdall - God is reduced to the level of an "elder brother", our ally, but fighting against odds with the possibility of defeat. "All that God's utmost efforts may be able to do" continues Dr. McTaggart, "is to make the inevitable calamity a little less calamitous". But dualism in any form is a road closed to the Theist. Nor may he look in the direction of monism for a way of escape. Tempting as it may be to question the reality of evil and to wonder whether good and evil may not be equally necessary in the kaleidoscope of the world, such excursions are on forbidden ground.

For the Christian theist God is omnipotent, in the sense that He can do everything that is intrinsically possible. He is limited, consequently, by His own nature, to which it is inconceivable that He should act in opposition. Beyond this, His only limitation is self-imposed and proceeds from the fact that He has created finite human beings and endowed them with freedom of will. It was only by the gift of

1. Some Dogmas of Religion. p.260.

such freedom that morality could be made possible: without such freedom man's action could never be other than that of a machine. But the inevitable consequence of this gift is the possibility of evil. Along this line of thought there seems to be no means of denying that it was the Divine action that opened the way for possible moral evil. Are we then to admit that God is its author?

It may be observed at this point that a distinction is commonly made between 'causing' and 'permitting' evil. About God's permitting evil there can be no question: evil exists and no more is to be said. But if we may dare to speak of responsibility for evil and to look alternately from man to God, we may well wonder whether we are justified in drawing this distinction between causation and permission, and in assuming that the thought of the one in reference to God is to be repudiated at all costs, while the other can be tolerated, as in fact it cannot be escaped.

Theologians who represent God as having taken a risk in creation, or as having made a venture, are evidently of opinion that less responsibility lies with an agent who initiates an action from which evil follows than with another who allows the continuance of an evil to

which he could, if he would, put an immediate end. We are not for a moment suggesting that the foregoing represents the case between God and man: we are simply questioning the value of theodicies that set out with the prime object of allocating responsibility for evil. The difficulties of the problem have not been solved by a demonstration of man's sole responsibility. Consequently we hesitate to accept Canon Peter Green's last paragraph as the conclusion of the whole matter: "I find the only explanation of this unintelligible world is supplied by a deep conviction that the whole race of men is a fallen one and deeply corrupted", and he adds that serious thinking yields a conviction that "sinful man is alone responsible"<sup>1</sup>.

Canon Peter Green, like many another, is passing over what appears to be a matter of supreme importance. It is the question of God's foreknowledge. Allowing for the sake of argument that Creation may be regarded as an event in time, we ask - Did God foresee the consequences that would ensue upon His creation of finite beings endowed with freedom? We confidently answer that God foresaw the whole of the future in its smallest detail. Nothing that has happened or is

1. The Problem of Evil. p.204.



happening or will happen is to be put outside God's foreknowledge. If required to defend this statement in its relation to human freedom, we might resort to insistence upon the timelessness of the Eternal, God's apprehension of all things - past, present and future, as a 'totum simul', or we might try to justify our position by maintaining, as Professor Sorley does, that God's knowledge need not be external, like that of the human observer. "It does not follow that divine foreknowledge works by the same method as human anticipation..... Why then should not all time be seen as one by an infinite intelligence? Assuming that God's knowledge is not limited to a finite span of the time-process, the whole course of the world's history will be seen by him in a single or immediate intuition... What we call foreknowledge will be just knowledge: past and future, equally with present, lie open to the mind of infinite time-span"<sup>1</sup>. But whatever might be the line of argument adopted, we should insist that God's foreknowledge is an essential constituent of His omnipotence. This we claim as one of the pre-suppositions with which, as Christian theists, we approach the problem of reality.

1. op. cit. p.465.

Still allowing the assumption that creation may be regarded in the light of an event, we proceed to examine the inference to be drawn from the fact of God's foreknowledge. The inevitable conclusion is extraordinarily important and fundamental in its implications. Nothing, we affirm has happened in the nature of a surprise to God: not even the abuse of the gift of freedom was unforeseen by God, nor even the use to which individual finite beings would severally put His gift. Is not that, it may be asked, an intolerable thought in view of the consequences of the gift - "the sin wherewith the face of Man is blackened"? In answering, we must face the alternatives which present themselves:- Either we must discount His omnipotence by denying His prescience and persisting in speaking of His 'venture' be left with the task of justifying His continued permission of evil: or we must admit so much causation of evil as is involved in the fact of His foreknowledge of all that would happen, and having made this admission attempt to reconcile the evil with a purpose of Love and Goodness. To many of us the latter alternative seems to be preferable. It amounts, as will at once be recognised, to a negation of the doctrine of the Fall. Man's

condition is not due then to something that happened outside the calculations of his Creator. Moral consciousness was 'a late arrival in the house of personality'. We must admit that it was so, and we must admit, too, that the posteriority of its arrival rendered the avoidance of sin extremely difficult. Dr. Williams, it will be noticed, keeps Dr. Tennant to his original description of sin as being "empirically inevitable", although Dr. Tennant long ago withdrew the words as a slip and stated his meaning to have been "universally present, in some degree, in the lives of men"<sup>1</sup>. It is not, however, a distinction of great importance for those who are prepared, as we are, to allow that the late arrival of moral consciousness was in accordance with God's plan. This, of course, Dr. Williams questions, postulating a prior corruption of organic life to account for the relative lateness of the development of the moral will. He further asks why the moral consciousness, when at last it did appear, should have been weak. "An omnipotent God presumably might, and could, so have ordered matters that the moral consciousness, when it did appear, should have

1. The Concept of Sin. p.260.

sprung into existence endowed with the fullest control and power over the animal impulses, like Athene springing fully armed from the head of Zeus"<sup>1</sup>. It is sufficient to answer that God might indeed have so ordered matters, but that it was not in accordance with His purpose to do so. The sudden accession of a moral consciousness endowed with the 'fullest power and control' over the animal impulses would have allowed no place for the conflict and struggles - and, we must add, defeats - which accompany the acquisition of moral power and stability. If we may read His purpose, we should describe it as designed to secure man's progress by the hard road of conflict. In this statement we make God the author of morality. But the question that we left unanswered a few pages back still faces us: are we not also making God the author of evil? We admit, in reply, that we are making Him the author of the possibility of sin: in no other way could the moral status be acquired.

If it be further objected that we are confining sin to moral failure and ignoring its malignity and positive character, we must reply with Dr. Tennant

<sup>1</sup>op. cit. p.532.

that much exaggeration has commonly accompanied the description of sin. "Human nature is terribly libelled when every sin, not to speak of every imperfection, is called an act of defiance or hostility to God"<sup>1</sup>. We are too apt to look to intellect and will for the springs of sinful action: whereas intellectual motives are by no means the only moving influences. Man is naturally constituted a feeling and conative being, by virtue of which fact he is subject to solicitations to action without reference to volition. Evil is not chosen because it is evil, nor are men devils. When deliberate choice comes in and the evil course is chosen, that evil course is chosen not because it is evil but because it seems to the agent preferable from his point of view. He may know that it is evil, but it is not this knowledge that supplies the decisive factor in the choice. None the less, this assumption seems to have been made by many who have thought that piety required them to find as little good as possible in man. There are indeed actions which we do not hesitate to describe as diabolic. These we must count

1. The Concept of Sin. p.276.



abnormal; their study belongs to the province of pathology and medicine.

How greatly moral conduct can be affected by the physical conditions of the agent is generally recognised. At the present time the tendency is even towards exaggeration of the connection between conduct and the state of the physical organism, between mind and body. For example, the functioning of the glands of internal secretion, has lately been receiving much attention with reference to its bearing upon personality. From the account given by certain writers it would almost seem that not only are we "as old as our arteries" but we are also "as good as our glands". It is to be remembered, however, that in all our treatment of the subject of sin we are dealing with the normal person, leaving out of account the idiosyncrasies occasioned by disease, moral as well as physical. We need indeed to be on the look-out for the signs of such abnormalities in children and to be prepared to deal with them. But we do so, says Dr. William Brown, always with the feeling and conviction that "as in every child there is a natural tendency towards health, so in the wider sense there are tendencies towards goodness, beauty and truth, which may be checked by

various difficulties"<sup>1</sup>. Speaking again later on the problem of organization which every child has to solve in the course of his own life, this same writer points to the duty which rests upon all who have care of a child. They are to recognise that "although there may be a certain amount of 'original sin', a certain amount of crass impulse, there is much more that is genuinely good, genuinely useful, and a positive contribution to the reality of the world and to the value of existence"<sup>2</sup>. It is interesting and instructive to find a psycho-analyst of repute thus equating "original sin" and crass impulse. This bears out our point, namely, that, if we must speak of original sin, it means for us only instinctive tendencies waiting to be moralised.

Dr. Tennant has given us a clear definition of the real nature of sin, for which we may well feel gratitude. "Sin" he says, "will be imperfect compliance ... with the moral ideal in so far as this is, in the sight of God, capable of apprehension by an agent at the moment of the activity in question, both as to its content and its claim upon him: this imperfect compliance being consequent upon choice of ends of

1. op. cit. p.130.

2. ibid. p. 136.

lower ethical worth when the adoption of ends of higher worth is possible..... More briefly, sin may be defined as moral imperfection for which an agent is, in God's sight, accountable"<sup>1</sup>. In the foregoing definition emphasis must be laid upon the words "in God's sight", for God alone knows in each case the relative weight of all the factors contributing to the resultant reaction. From man's point of view, it must be allowed that the agent is partially determined by circumstances over which he has no control, while sufficient spontaneity belongs to him to justify the moral responsibility which he is led intuitively to admit. He can do wrong, he can do right: for the existence of the alternatives God is responsible by reason of His having made His creature a moral being.

In days when the psychology of volition was but imperfectly understood, it was usual to find the seat of Original Sin in the Will. The faculty of Will was thought to be impaired, its defect being the result of man's fall from his original constitution. The old faculty - psychology is, however, no longer

1. The Concept of Sin. p.245.

respectable. We now realise that the Will is not an innate endowment but rather the outcome of education and discipline. It is, we are told, the "character in action", character being the organised system of sentiments or interests in which our psychic energy, the libido, finds outlet and expression. It might then be argued that by the admission that an individual is controlled by his character we have introduced determinism pure and simple. This might be so, if character were ever fully formed. But the perfectly integrated self is never completely realised. If man were never conscious of any motive but the pursuit of an ideal, then indeed he could be truly described as determined by that ideal. It is not, however, with the problem of freedom that we are here concerned as with the fallacy which, having rightly ascribed action to will, proceeded wrongly to regard will as an inherited natural endowment. An impaired will can no longer be indicated as the fundamental flaw of our humanity.

The evil, however, that is in the world is not exhausted by any account of man's wrong choices and their consequences, however far-reaching these consequences may be. Pain and suffering, in the animal as well as the human world, the cruelty of Nature, accidents and

calamities, cannot be traced indiscriminately to human sin. Many of the conditions that we now deplore were in existence when man made his appearance upon the scene. This fact has led many thinkers, as we have seen, to postulate a pre-cosmic perversion of the life-principle. Those, however, who look in this direction for a solution of the problem of evil, can supply no answer to the question we raised concerning the distinction between causation and permission.

Realising, then, that the evil in the world exists by the permission of God, we naturally enquire what grounds of justification are discoverable.

On some points we are offered considerations which afford a degree of comfort. For example, the so-called inexorability of the laws of Nature proves upon examination to be a blessing in disguise: for a little thought shows that man's material progress is dependent upon the uniformity of Nature's working. Similarly in the matter of animal suffering we are largely reassured on realising that we have been labouring under the pathetic fallacy. We are making a mistake, so we are told, if we assume that creatures, so different from ourselves in their organisation, are yet as sensitive as we are to the pang of suffering.



"It may be doubted" says Dr. Raven "whether there is any real pain without a frontal cortex, a fore-plan in mind, and a love which can put itself in the place of another: and these are attributes of humanity. The others suffer, each in the measure of its capacity: their range is not ours, nor anything at all closely resembling it. And to assume it to be so is to set up the bogey of a nightmare as truth"<sup>1</sup>. Dr. D'Arcy gives it as his opinion that the animal world, in spite of all the hunting and slaying which it involves, is, on the whole, a very happy world. The flight and escape of a deer, he tells us, is probably a delightful sensation; and if it end in death, there is probably little that is painful in the dying<sup>2</sup>. We devoutly hope that it may be so. If indeed it be so, then Mr. Clutton Brock may be right in declaring that all our talk about Nature as red in tooth and claw is mere myth-making<sup>3</sup>.

Further, it is not impossible to find purposes which are subserved by human suffering. The value of human pain as a danger-signal, a warning that the human machine is out of order and needs attention, the virtues -

1. The Creator Spirit. p.120.

2. God and Freedom in Human Experience. p.165.

3. The Spirit. p.342.

patience, heroism, sympathy - brought to birth and fostered by human suffering both in the patient and in the observer, the necessity of suffering as an exercise of discipline in the school of manhood, the transmutation of suffering by the spirit in which it is borne - all these considerations have been marshalled before us and collectively, no doubt, are of considerable cogency. We begin to realise that 'Pain is not the last word of pain'<sup>1</sup>.

But, when all has been said, humanity continues to wonder whether the sad mass of its manifold griefs is not greater than a good and merciful God can be deemed to find sufficient reason for allowing. Can any further alleviation be discovered to save us from casting our eyes back again to the theory we are trying to avoid, namely, that things are very different from what God originally meant them to be - in a word, that Man is fallen?

Happily, two such considerations do exist. The first is to be found in the recollection of God's immanence, to which truth this chapter, so far as it has gone, has given scanty recognition. In all that we

1. Professor Hocking. The Meaning of God in Human Experience. p.219.

have written we have been adopting the role of spectators, standing away from the world and contemplating its sorrows. And in so doing we have unconsciously been thinking of God as occupying the same attitude, falling thereby into the very mistake to which we attributed the origination of the Fall-theory. As belief in the immanence of God caused us to re-consider the validity of the idea of the Fall, so does the same belief compel us to look upon evil in a new light. Dr. Raven has recently drawn attention to what he calls a very grave defect in our theology, namely, that "we have effected a divorce of Creation from Redemption and Inspiration and instituted a contrast between them, whereas "there cannot be a radical dualism between the manifestation in Nature and the manifestation of grace"<sup>1</sup>. The source of the mistake, he tells us, is to be found in our neglect of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and a tendency, which has more or less characterised religious thought all down the ages, to regard the world as merely the setting for a divine drama of regeneration. It is an easy step onward to look upon Nature not as

1. op. cit. p.15.

something neutral but as a thing inherently evil, and from that position to postulate a principle of evil existing in its own right and eternally in conflict with the good. We remember that it was as a protest against this solution of the problem that Deutero-Isaiah ventures to attribute evil to the ordering of God. "I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I am the Lord that doeth all these things"<sup>1</sup>. Whatever may be the resulting and necessary modifications of our theology, we are justified, says Dr. Raven, by our faith in the Holy Ghost in believing that He is and has been working in the whole process of evolution and that the whole sphere of existence is the scene of his activity<sup>2</sup>. We have, then, been wrong in setting up a division between the natural and the supernatural.

But when we have thus insisted upon the immanence of God as the Eternal Spirit, revealing Himself in and through the whole of the universe, have we, it may be asked, done anything in the way of alleviating

1. Is. XLV. 6.7.

2. op. cit. p.19.

the difficulty of the situation we are considering? Are we not, it may be urged, rendering it even more acute, if all the pain and suffering of the world, apart from such moral evil as is occasioned by the sin of finite beings, is to be regarded as the inevitable accompaniment of the unfolding of God's purpose? It may be answered that we have, at least, involved God in the travail which we are trying to probe. No longer can we think of Him as impassible, cognizant of, but not partaker in, the struggles of His world. But even while we try to extract what comfort we can from this reflection, we must be on our guard lest we be betrayed again into the dualism we are seeking to avoid. Some tinge of it may perhaps be detected in Canon Streeter's chapter on the defeat of evil. "So far from being the best of all possible worlds, it is a world that God meant to be a great deal better than it is. It is a world that has gone awry, and that mainly through the ignorance, the folly, the malice, the greed and the passions of men. But though the world is not now what it should be, God is not "just leaving things alone", but is engaged in fighting the evil. God does not stand outside the world serenely contemplating the misery



and the strife. He is, no doubt, in a sense outside and beyond the world, but He is also inside it, immanent in it, as the philosophers say: and by the fact of His immanence He takes His share in the suffering: and God's share is, if I may use the phrase, the lion's share"<sup>1</sup>. Similarly, on the following page, he writes "God shares in the suffering and captains in the fight. And God summons us to assist Him in the task, to enter into partnership with Him". It is presumption, no doubt, to criticise Canon Streeter's stirring appeal to action. Still, the word 'mainly', which we have underlined, forces us to ask: what other source of evil has he in mind beyond the actions of finite beings and the abuse of their freedom?; and is the fact that the world has gone awry to be ascribed in part to the operation of this additional factor, in whatever form, personal or otherwise, we may speak of it? A worthy conception of the nature and character of God compels us to believe that apart from human sin, defined, in Professor J. Arthur Thompson's words, as a deliberate turning away of our faces from the sunlight

1. Reality. p.243.

of God, there is nothing intrinsically evil in the world. Its pain and its suffering, where they cannot be traced to sin, must be serving a beneficent purpose known to God, albeit largely passing our comprehension.

The following statement of a prominent biologist helps us to the assurance we need: "The problems of evil, of pain, of strife, of death, of insufficiency and imperfection - all these and a host of others remain to perplex and burden us. But the fact of progress emerging from pain and battle and imperfection - this is an intellectual prop, which can support the distressed and questioning mind and be incorporated into the common theology of the future"<sup>1</sup>.

To these words of a biologist we would add the testimony of the mathematician "God has in His nature the knowledge of evil, of pain, and of degradation, but it is there as overcome with what is good. Every fact is what it is, a fact of pleasure, of joy, of pain, or of suffering. In its union with God that fact is not a total loss, but on its finer side is an element to be woven immortally into the rhythm of mortal things. Its very evil becomes a stepping-stone in the

1. Julian Huxley. Essays of a Biologist. p.62.

all-embracing ideals of God"<sup>1</sup>.

In any case, God is not standing only outside the world. Immanent in it from all time, the Godhead in the fulness of time became Incarnate, content for us men and for our salvation, as St. Athanasius said, to become man that man might be raised to the divine. The genesis and meaning of sin is not beyond our comprehension, little as we may be able to fathom all the mystery of suffering. But the one God has in the flesh met both sin and suffering, vanquishing the power of the former, drinking the cup of the latter to its lowest dregs. In union with Him men and women have found that the sin in their lives can be fought with hope of success, and that the path of suffering leads to blessings, to which they might otherwise have remained strangers.

It was stated earlier that there was a second direction in which possibly might lie some alleviation of our problem of evil. We had in mind the principle of Relativity, which Dr. Matthews assures us appears to be not less revolutionary in its probable consequences than the idea of evolution.

1. A.N. Whitehead. Religion in the Making. p. 139.

It is evidence, perhaps, of something more than ordinary temerity to venture upon a line of thought which demands, on the one hand, an appreciation of Einstein's discovery and, on the other, some knowledge of what is implied in the expression - relativity of morals. Still, we ask: what is the bearing of the work of Einstein, associated, as it primarily is, with mathematical physics, upon other fields of knowledge? To what extent is the principle of relativity applicable to the problem of evil, and to what conclusion would its application lead us? That the principle is to be extended beyond the province of the physical sciences is plainly asserted by Lord Haldane. "It is to be regretted that the title 'Theory of Relativity' was ever appropriated to the extent it has been for Einstein's doctrine, just as if it belonged to that doctrine in a special way. What he is concerned with is relativity in measurement of space and time only, and relativity extends to other forms of knowledge as much as to that merely concerned with quantitative order"<sup>1</sup>.

From what he may have learnt of the theory in question the layman will have gathered that considerable

1. The Reign of Relativity. p.129.

changes are involved when two observers are considering the same event, each observer seeing it in the reference-system belonging to his particular location. Thus, in the familiar illustration, the flight of a bird bears a different significance to the spectator lying on his back on the deck of a moving vessel from that which it assumes for the individual standing up in a boat passing in the opposite direction, the difference arising from the fact that there is a relative motion between two spatio-temporal reference systems. In practical consequence the bird may for the one observer be stationary: for the other it is flying swiftly. This simple illustration supplies the clue to the general statement that an idea is only completely adequate when it is from every point of view true. "Each form of test that is applicable must be satisfied in the conception of perfect adequacy: for otherwise we can have only truth that is relative to particular standpoints." It is natural, then, that, with this theory in view, emphasis should be laid upon the part which mind plays in fashioning our knowledge. Knowledge - so Lord Haldane assures us - has many standpoints from which the object which is relative to it is always moulded. The entirety of knowledge seems



to consist in a plurality of general standpoints which belong to different orders in thought.

The great problems raised by the application of the theory of relativity are immediately apparent. Is, then, truth polymorphous? it may be asked. Or again, what is the implication of this theory for our belief in the objectivity of moral ideals? Good and evil must surely be essentially independent of the particular reference-system in which a moral judgment is passed. An action is not necessarily good or evil because it is judged to be so from a particular standpoint. The Borneo head-hunter and the Quaker, of whom Dr. Sorley speaks, have conflicting judgments on the subject of homicide. Conscience, to be defined as 'the mind of man passing moral judgments', enters into the mental exercise of both parties: but both cannot be right. If the one says 'this is good' and the other equally emphatically declares 'this is not good', one side must be wrong; for a particular proposition cannot be at the same time both true and untrue. In such a conflict of statement final judgment rests with one who, seeing the action in question from without, transcends all possible human standpoints. As theists we believe in the existence of a Mind for which the

moral ideal is objectively as real as the world itself. It is only by the road of belief in God that we can reconcile the conflicting judgments of divergent systems of reference with an eternal absolute ideal. "Our moral ideal can only claim objective validity in so far as it can rationally be regarded as the revelation of a moral ideal eternally existing in the mind of God"<sup>1</sup>.

The story of Man, it will be admitted, is the record of an increasing appreciation of the absolute ideal. The record may legitimately be examined from differing points of view, the historian tracing the continuous evolution of moral ideas, the psychologist finding its counterpart in the progressive moral consciousness of the individual. But whatever be the line of approach, the rationality of the world can only be maintained on the assumption of its progress towards the pattern eternally existing in the mind of its Author - a pattern which man is gradually being led to discern by the working of the Divine Spirit immanent in him. Were this pattern the possession of a transcendent Deity only, we should be left without explanation

1. Rashdall. The Theory of Good and Evil II. p.212.

of the authority of the moral ideal. But as it is, the purpose of the Deity finds an echo in the human soul, the apprehension whereby we discern the Good being evidence of the immanence of the Divine<sup>1</sup>.

From this conclusion two inferences may be drawn, the one supplying that second alleviation for the problem of evil at which we hinted, while the other may throw light upon the genesis of the doctrine of the Fall and the question of its validity. We deal here with the former only of these considerations, leaving the latter for the following chapter.

If, as has been stated, man's apprehension of the ideal is progressive, and if his sense of obligation springing from lowly beginnings has been ever extending its authority and enlarging its reference, it would be manifestly irrational to apply to the earlier stages the advanced standard of later development and, finding by this assessment that the evil is very great, to proceed to the arraignment of a system in which such evil could be possible. Such a proceeding ignores the fact that, though the ideal be objectively real, there is, none the less, a relativity of evil

1. See Matthews. Studies in Christian Philosophy p.142.

in the consideration of the various stages of the progress. As Sir Henry Jones asks, may not the process, rather than the stages, be the true object of judgment?<sup>1</sup> It is plain that St. Augustine had some such idea, in view. It lies behind such repeated statements as 'omnis natura, in quantum natura est, bonum est'<sup>2</sup>, and again 'voluntas conditoris conditae rei cuiusque natura est'<sup>3</sup>.

We must, then, admit that it is an illegitimate proceeding to apply to beginnings a standard appropriate only to a later level of attainment. Whatever is true to its nature is good: and for its nature God is responsible. It is this error that has led to much indiscriminate condemnation of the world of Nature. Many before and many after Hume have indulged in the exercise of exposing Nature's badness. Few perhaps have gone about their self-imposed task more bitterly than Carl Snyder. "Nature", he writes, "is not wise, it is not loving, it is not economical, it is not moral. It is flaunting in its unchastity, shameless in its impudicity: its prodigality is not so much reckless as

1. A Faith that Enquires. p.360.

2. De Natura Boni I.

3. De Curitate Dei. XXI. 8.

it is riotous. Its cruelty is savage... plundering and murdering at every step, it knows no justice. Fecund as an ale-wife, it abandons its children to every danger and every ill, careless alike of those who survive or fall"<sup>1</sup>. Much more of the same quality follows, but none of it would have been written had the writer realised that Nature is an abstract fiction, neither good nor bad, neither moral nor immoral. That we can find so many faults is only a proof of the moral elevation to which we have attained. The same error is responsible for many a harsh judgment passed on agents of relatively immature moral discernment.

Evil is that which, at a particular point, ought not to be: it cannot therefore, without a challenge to God, be carried beyond the sphere of man's moral obligation and responsibility. For all the evil that is not to be traced to the deliberate moral defect of finite beings we might succeed in finding a happier name, if we could but see in a timeless glance the whole world-plan as it is present to the apprehension of its Supreme Author.

1. The World Machine p. 17.



## CHAPTER VII.

### A Re-statement considered and tested.

Dr. Temple concludes a chapter on the nature of man with a quotation from Emerson that goes very far towards explaining the origin of the doctrine of the Fall. "It is very unhappy, but too late to be helped, the discovery we have made that we exist: that discovery is called the Fall of Man." "With that discovery" adds Dr. Temple, "human history begins".<sup>1</sup>

Man, as we now know, had already a long history behind him when at length he reached the stage of consciousness of self and the appreciation of moral values. The advent of these powers lies so far back in the story that all our estimates as to the time of their beginnings and the length of the dawning period are but speculations. But whatever may be the truth in the field of anthropological problems, - whether it be true, for example, that humanity is of monophyletic origin, - the time did eventually come when moral consciousness

1. Christus Veritas. p.73.

supervened upon a condition from which it was absent. A late arrival it has been called in the house of personality: but with its coming man became conscious of an ideal and he was able to make himself the object of his own contemplative criticism.

It is not within our province to discuss any of the questions that gather round the dawn of the religious consciousness - the animism to which Professor Tylor traced its source, or the animatism, - the tendency to regard with awe everything that is mysterious - wherein Dr. Marett finds the origin of religion. It is sufficient to say that when our enquiry is pushed as far back as possible in the history of human origins, man is discovered re-acting to his circumstances after a fashion to which we can give no other epithet than religious. "In other words he cannot help being religious, and the whole vast and terrifying business which we call religion is rooted in a nature which works in this way and can do no other."<sup>1</sup>. The 'mysterium tremendum', in Otto's phrase, met man at his birth. He has reasoned about it since: at first he simply experienced the cosmic emotion, the numinous, the sense of the existence of a power above

1. Selbie. The Psychology of Religion. p.31.

and beyond the phenomena of nature.

So at length humanity had reached that stage, in the series of emergent advances, where Reason and Conscience became factors in its life. It is true that before their appearance man could not rightly be described by that name. We shall not for that reason be led to look upon all that preceded as insignificant, for God is the author of all life and its support. Still less, as we have said, shall we be tempted to feel shame in contemplating our pedigree. That would be simply "generic snobbery": so we are told, and we feel it to be true. "Science has told us the truth about our genealogy: we are not angels that have seen better days, but animals still in the making."<sup>1</sup> It is a reflection that need cause us no regrets: rather should it quicken a desire to promote the welfare and happiness of our humble relations, lower on the ladder than ourselves, but, along with us, "bound in the bundle of life."

No doubt, the essential difference between man and the highest forms of sub-human life is this capacity to apprehend an ideal. Chronologically it was a capacity that followed the coming of reason and reflection. The

1. Clutton Brock, in *The Spirit*. p. 342.

intellectual preceded the moral, for man was a thinking being before the advent of a sense of values transformed ideas into ideals. But the recognition of value and the adoption of a valuational attitude towards the world was a tremendous step forward - not a fall, but an epochal ascent: it was, we believe, nothing less than an increased communication of Himself on the part of God to a world that had never been without Him. God has from all time been immanent in His world - even in that portion of it which we, in our lack of perception, have been accustomed to call inorganic. But, from the position at which we stand, we can scarcely help regarding as less than a crisis that new accession of the Spirit by which man became aware of himself, of his Maker, of the indwelling Spirit of his Maker. Thenceforward the creature was in possession of the knowledge of good and evil, he had a vision, he had received the gift of power to appreciate an ideal. In a previous chapter we defined an ideal, in Dr. Matthew's words, as "a mental content held over against a discordant reality." There could be no ideal if the mind of man could fashion no picture of possibilities out-stripping the actual. Humanity has that capacity, and from it proceed alike its sins and its sorrows, its satisfactions and its spiritual ambitions.

It is by no means difficult, as Dr. Tennant tells us, to account psychologically for the idea of "a golden age", accounted to have existed at the beginning of man's history.<sup>1</sup> The disappointments of life, the consciousness of higher things entertained in vision but in fact unrealised, the reach that exceeds the grasp - all these familiar experiences generate almost inevitably the idea of a time that has passed when the ideal was also the actual. Projection is a word that lies justly under suspicion at the present time: for a certain school of psychologists resorts to it as an explanation of all the highest conceptions of man. But the word is harmless in the connection in which we are here using it and expresses we believe precisely what happened. The contemplation of the present and its failures gave birth to the dream of a past of which happiness and satisfaction were the supposed characteristics. The possessor of an ideal sees in a comprehensive glance both the "is" and the "ought-to-be": primitive peoples went further than this, arguing from the character of the present and the quality of their dream to the nature of the past. What is not but ought to be, - so they reasoned - is that

1. The Fall and Original Sin. p.65.



which has been but is no more. We can easily understand this process of thought, while we realise at the same time that it is not valid. What ought to be is not an indication of what has been. On the other hand, the apprehension of what ought to be, the reaching out towards it, the satisfaction that accompanies its realisation in ever so small a degree - all these experiences are proof, as Descartes insisted, of an immanent Being who is Himself the Perfection of which our aspirations and yearnings are a dim reflection. "The presence of the Ideal is the reality of God within us."<sup>1</sup> The sense of sin, dissatisfaction at failure, admiration of the better, are all evidences of the indwelling of that Spirit whose presence supplies the explanation of all moral striving and progress.

The interpretation of the past in the light of present dissatisfaction and of a visualised ideal gave rise, as we have seen, to the conception, so generally entertained, of a Golden Age in the remote beginnings of the human race. To the same train of speculation belongs the kindred theory of the Fall of Man. It makes its appearance, as was to be expected, at a period in Israel's

1. Pringle - Pattison. The Idea of God. p.246.

history of national trouble and an awakened sensitiveness to sin and failure. Such was the period that followed the disaster of the Exile. How firmly Israel clung to its monotheistic creed, in spite of the temptation to relapse supplied by suffering accounted to be excessive, is seen in the words of Deutero-Isaiah already quoted. Evil could not be due to the activity of a power existing and operating in opposition to God, nor again could the present state of suffering and moral ineffectiveness be in accordance with God's original purpose. The fault must therefore lie with man and was to be found in the frailty of human nature. But this solution, voiced by the writer of the book of Job, had inevitably to be modified on further reflection. Was not God responsible for the nature of man? If, then, God was responsible for the moral as well as the physical quality of man, and if evil was to be traced to this native quality of man, was not God then responsible for the evil? The only way of escape from this conclusion lay in the assumption that human nature is not as God made it or intended it to be. There had been a time, it was concluded, when man's relation to God was all that God intended it to be: for the present unhappy state of things, the moral weakness and universal presence of sin,

there could be no other explanation than the catastrophe of some primal act of sin, which both affected all subsequent generations of men and brought the age of happiness and harmony to an end. We are back again to the doctrine of the Fall. It rests, as Dr. Williams plainly shows, upon a psychological foundation. The discrepancy between the actual and the ideal led Isaiah to draw an inspired idyll of the future: the same discrepancy led the Maccabean writers to a theory of the history of the past.

It was suggested at the conclusion of the preceding chapter that the principle of relativity, in addition to supplying some alleviation of the problem of evil, might also give us some guidance in our consideration of the validity of the doctrine of the Fall. Dr. A. N. Whitehead, dealing with the question of the relativity of dogma, tells us that our pet dogmas may require correction, that they may even be wrong. "You cannot claim finality for a dogma without claiming a commensurate finality for the sphere of thought within which it arose. A dogma in the sense of a precise statement - can never be final: it can only be adequate in its adjustment of certain abstract concepts. But the estimate of the status of these concepts remains for determination .... Progress

in truth - truth of science and truth of religion - is mainly a progress in the framing of concepts, in discarding artificial abstractions or partial metaphors, and in evolving notions which strike more deeply into the root of reality."<sup>1</sup>. It would seem, therefore, that a dogma is valid only within the sphere of thought in which it originated: and, secondly, that a re-statement is necessitated when the concepts involved in the dogma are found to be unstable. Now this is precisely what has happened in the case of the doctrine of the Fall. Within the sphere of thought in which it arose it could claim validity: outside that sphere it is on its defence. Similarly with regard to the concepts employed, the significance they bear for modern thought is vastly different from the ideas they suggested to the authors of the doctrine in question.

It was upon the foregoing fact and its implications that the argument of our earlier chapters was based. The concepts of God, creation and human personality were all involved. If we approach the problem of man's condition with a conception of God almost if not entirely deistic in its emphasis upon His transcendence, if we

1. Religion in the Making. p.116 f.

interpret the creation of the world as a specific act of God accomplished at a particular time in the history of the Universe, if we conceive that there was a completion of the Divine activity leaving an established order of which the maintenance of the "status quo" constituted the intention of its Author, then the doctrine of the Fall will supply a satisfactory explanation of the human condition that we are studying. On the other hand, if our idea of God be that of a ceaseless energy immanent in the world and controlling its course, if we regard creation as the continuous exercise of a creative activity, if man be a creature who under the influence of this indwelling Life has come to be what he is and is still far from the full realisation of his potentialities, - in the midst of such ideas the doctrine of the Fall is incongruous and superfluous. In this case we are in a world of new ideas: we have left the static for the dynamic in our conception both of God and of man. It is true, then, that a dogma can never be final but only relative, for thought never ceases the process of moulding the objects on which it is exercised and consequently of modifying its concepts.



Comparing Hellenic wisdom with the teaching of Christianity Dr. Matthews draws attention to the idea of progress as a characteristic of the religion founded by Christ.<sup>1</sup> We extract the following sentence from a passage there quoted from Dr. Bosanquet: "For almost the first time in the world's history the golden age is transferred to the future."<sup>2</sup> A candid perusal of the synoptic gospels can leave no doubt in the mind of the reader as to the relation of past present and future in our Lord's estimate of man's story. He gives no hint of a golden age in the past: His emphasis is all upon future possibilities, or perhaps we ought to say future certainties. The Kingdom of Heaven is coming, He declares at one time, it has come, He says at another. Its beginnings are small, but like that of the mustard seed the growth is to be rapid and vigorous: its beginnings are hidden, but like that of the leaven its influence is to be all-pervasive. The future teemed with glories and prospects: but Christ gives no hint that He is anticipating anything in the nature of a restoration. His message is simply one of progress and of the privilege and joy of sharing

1. Studies in Christian Philosophy p.58.

2. Bosanquet. Civilization of Christianity. p.84.

in it and personally promoting it. Had subsequent generations of Christians been true to the spirit and consciousness of Christ, the doctrine of the Fall would never have been given the importance accorded to it in the Western Church and magnified later by Protestant theologians.

It was suggested in an earlier chapter that a seeker after the truth might well be deterred from questioning the validity of the Fall doctrine if it should appear to him that his doubts in this direction might lead to an undermining of faith in the central doctrines of Christianity - the Incarnation and the Atonement. So far, however, from this being the result, we confidently assert that the doctrines just mentioned are powerfully enhanced by the removal of a theory which would base them upon a necessity occasioned by the miscarriage of God's original plan. We have seen reason for regarding such a theory with suspicion on the ground that it provides no foundation for an even tolerably reasonable theodicy. But that the world indwelt from all time by the Spirit of its Author should at length reach a stage in its progress at which the Deity Himself could take flesh and tabernacle awhile with men - this we can reconcile with a Purpose conceived from all eternity and developed in

accordance with a plan. In the Person of Christ Jesus the world has seen the face of the Godhead and has learnt the truth concerning the character of God.

This, however, does not exhaust the purpose of the Incarnation. Manhood has been taken up into God, so that the sons of men in union with the God-Man may themselves become the sons of God. Thus a new humanity has been inaugurated consisting of those who by virtue of possession of the Spirit of Christ are thereby constituted His brethren. This is the company of Christ's Church, a visible Society of faithful people, with whom Christ is present and making His presence felt and realised, especially in the Sacrament ordained by Himself to effect this very end. Admission into this fellowship is sealed, in accordance with Christ's instruction, by the Sacrament of Baptism, signifying for the adult participant a break with the old life in which the Spirit of Christ was not the dominating influence. A new start on a higher level is appropriately accompanied by an outward visible sign symbolical of a death to the past and a birth to a life in union with Christ. In the case of the infant the Sacrament simply marks the admission of a new member to the company of Christ, happily anticipating the time when, coming to years of discretion, the child will be capable

of making the personal response demanded of an adult at the time of his baptism. That there is any 'ex opere operato' virtue in the ordinance, such that the status of an infant in the next world should be affected by the fact that he died unbaptized, is an intolerable thought and a libel on the character of God. The 'limbus puerorum' is but one of the atrocities to which a rigid Fall doctrine, coupled with heartless logic, has given birth. Attention has frequently been drawn to the unsatisfactory terms of the rubric in which our Prayer Book, attempting a compromise, deals with this point. Relief happily is to be found in the reflection that "the love of God is broader than the measure of man's mind."

Nor is the doctrine of the Atonement shorn of any of its grandeur and saving power in the re-interpretation rendered necessary by relinquishment of the traditional doctrine of the Fall and the adoption of an evolutionist theory. The old idea associated with St. Anselm, that Christ by His perfect obedience, manifested in His response to the extreme test of dying, made it possible for God to forgive man, still colours much of our presentation of the story of the Cross. It is probable that most modern statements of the doctrine of the Trinity could be charged with approximation to one or another of

the many heresies condemned in the past. At the one extreme is tritheism: at the other a unity which confuses the Persons. If we must err, then let it be in ranging ourselves with those who are determined at all costs to insist upon the unity of God. "It is the one God, at once transcendent and immanent, eternal and revealed in and through the universe, Who for us men is uniquely manifested as incarnate in Jesus Christ, and with Whom in our moments of inspiration we are in communion."<sup>1</sup> We can find our interpretation of the Atonement in the text upon which Ritschlianism rested "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself."<sup>2</sup> It is not to any primal lapse and its consequences that we attribute the necessity of the reconciliation, but rather to the many deliberate failings, individual and corporate, that have in every generation held back the advance to the consummation of God's purpose. Perfect love demands no apology, only recognition and a response. In Christ we have seen perfect Love: we have had revealed to us, as Canon Streeter points out, the quality of Ultimate Reality. We see it in the old story of Calvary - an event in time but

1. Raven. op. cit. p.27.

2. II Cor. V 19.



eternal in its significance and effectiveness. The death on the Cross is at once an evidence of the love of God and of the length to which that love will go to gain a response from the human heart. God, as we have said, demands no apology. Apology, however, comes spontaneously from the soul that is touched by that love and recognises its own unworthiness.

But there would be no response nor the possibility of response, were not the Spirit already present in man in some measure, albeit unrecognised. There is some good in all, even in those who are accounted the worst: there is some seeking by all, some sense of need, even in those who are reckoned the least impressionable. The Cross is the Power of God to discover this good and, breaking down the barrier of sin and selfishness, to link this good in man with Him Who is its ultimate source. Such has been the saving power of the Cross, mighty in finding out the deity in man: so indeed did Christ give His life "a ransom for many". Would any one care to maintain that here is a conception of His atoning work less worthy than that which presupposes a corruption of God's image in man or the loss of supernatural grace?

The value of the pragmatic test as a principle of criticism has in recent years been accorded a larger

measure of the recognition that is its due. Nowhere, says Professor Hocking, is this instrument so significant as in the field of religious knowledge. "No religion is a true religion which is not able to make men tingle, yes, even to their physical nerve-tips, with the sense of an infinite hazard, a wrath to come, a heavenly city to be gained or lost in the process of time and by the use of our freedom."<sup>1</sup> It is in criticism of Dr. McTaggart's idealism that Professor Hocking is speaking. We may with profit, however, apply the test to the relative values of the traditional Fall doctrine and its modern re-statement. Which teaching, we may ask, is the more likely to arouse a man to respond to God - that which assures him that he is by nature a fallen creature, born unbalanced and very different from God's intention for man, from which condition the grace of God - a power coming "ab extra" can save him, if he seek it, or, alternately, the message which tells him that God is indeed within him, that what he calls his "better self" is the reality of God's presence, that there are heights to be climbed, that his worst enemy is a natural inclination to remain on the lower level from which God would have him rise, that the

1. Meaning of God in Human Experience. Intro. p. XIV.

Kingdom of Heaven needs him in its service, that Christ goes before bearing a Cross that speaks of Love and the awfulness of sin? Canon J. M. Wilson calls for a gospel that will "grip" in these days. Is not the latter of our contrasted messages the more likely to have that effect? Experience has shown us that it can at least grip the young with a healthy enthusiasm that is so often absent from the "twice-born" presentation of the Gospel.

It is characteristic of the appeal to the good in man that it gives due prominence to the social aspect of salvation. In the past the stress was generally laid upon the individual's danger and the urgency of his duty to save his own soul. This atomistic view of redemption is yielding to something nobler, larger and more akin to God's own character of self-sacrificing love. The individual is, after all, only an abstraction from humanity and should see himself as organic to it. The Father has indeed a value and a love for every individual child in the family: but the well being of the family is the child's first concern, taking precedence of his own safety and private interest. Fellowship and service, therefore, must be the motto of the followers of One who came not to be ministered unto but to minister. Here surely is a healthier, worthier and more attractive conception of the

Church than that which would see in it a refuge from a bad world or a nursery of souls intent on the cure of the fatal disease of their heredity.

The mention of healthiness leads us to take exception to Professor Hocking's inclusion of the idea of 'a wrath to come' among the considerations productive of the "tingling" of which he speaks. Whatever may be the true conception of hell, the wrath of God is not one of its constituent factors. Man may make a hell for himself, but God does not contribute. Nor can man make a permanent hell for himself, unless we are to admit that here or elsewhere any soul of man can be absolutely God-forsaken. Because we cannot believe that there is any limit to God's love and power to save even in

that sad sequestered state

Wherein God unmakes but to remake the soul,  
we find ourselves troubled by Dr. Gore's words: "Finally lost souls - only so by their own persistence in refusing the known good and choosing the evil - I feel bound to believe there may be ... But I believe that the lost also will recognise that the mind of God towards them was only 'good'."<sup>1</sup>. But surely, it may be answered, such

1. Belief in God p.159.

recognition of the goodness of God's mind towards them is the herald of salvation. How can a soul be finally lost that can appreciate God's goodness? Such a soul is well on the road to penitence.

If Dr. Gore causes us misgivings, a modern popular apologist of Christianity makes us positively wince. Answering objections to belief in the endless misery of the lost, he writes "The fourth and last objection refers to man rather than God. It is that the endless misery of the wicked would destroy the happiness of the righteous: for how could a man enjoy heaven if he knew that his own father and mother were in endless and hopeless misery elsewhere? .... It may be pointed out that memory is never more than partial. No one remembers all the friends he has met: and possibly persons in heaven may remember and recognise those they meet there, without being troubled by the thought of absent ones. And even if they should remember the others and know their fate, they will certainly know their character also, and that their fate was deserved. .... While, lastly, the joys and activities of heaven may be so engrossing as not to leave any time for useless regrets."<sup>1</sup>.

1. Lt. Col. W.H. Turton. The truth of Christianity p.556.



We are looking for a gospel that will 'grip'. What has just been quoted is repellant and barbarous. Happily it is no more than a speculation and not the "truth of Christianity". It would, however, admirably serve our purpose, if we <sup>were</sup> endeavouring to show how hard Calvinism finds its dying and how earnestly the Church may at times pray to be saved from her friends.

If it be objected that the message to which we have attributed the power to 'grip' savours too much of Pelagianism, we shall reply that we do indeed make the most of man's responsibility, as Pelagius did; but that, unlike Pelagius, we conceive the response to proceed from the divinity in every man, deliberate resistance to which constitutes actual sin.

It may be further objected that we are belittling the gravity of sin. On the contrary we believe that we are intensifying it, its blackness being never so great as when it is discerned as rank treachery to a Captain who is leading and looking so confidently for loyal following. In any case, this appeal to the best in man "works": by the pragmatic test it justifies itself.

Further, just as we would not detract from the perfidy of actual sin, so would we avoid over-estimating the significance of the sense of sin. The

sense of sin is no infallible gauge of guilt. Degrees of guiltiness can be truly estimated, as we have already seen, by God only, for He alone knows all the contributing factors in each case. So far from being a criterion of guilt, the sense of sin is often most acute just where the real guilt is least. Still further, it carries with it all the hope of the future, being in essence the realisation of a falling short of a better to which the eyes have been turned. "There is a feeling of homesickness in our yearnings for goodness," says Mr. W. H. Moberly in his presentation of the Conservative case.<sup>1</sup> This is so: but it is a yearning for a home that lies in front, not behind, a home of our vision, a home that derives its attraction from the beauty with which our ideal has invested it.

It is only in the light of the foregoing consideration that the phenomenon of 'conversion' can be given its true interpretation. Associated generally with the period of adolescence it is both an evidence and an effect of rapidly developing powers physical and mental. We shall not, however, allow that there is any essential connection between the spiritual awakening and the

1. Foundations. p.284.

stirring at this period of the sex-instinct. Conversion may be more correctly defined as a change of general mental attitude from a merely naturalistic outlook to a definitely spiritual.<sup>1</sup> The change may be slow and gradual, in which case it may rightly be called normal and healthy. On the other hand, the change may in some cases be sudden and accompanied by such a degree of mental strain and stress as to render it pathological. But we shall be missing the true meaning of the experience if we connect it with a "fallenness" of human nature. It is rather the crisis that marks the transition from one normal standpoint to another: the natural is giving place to the spiritual. With the mental unrest that characterises the conflict there may be associated a pressing realisation of particular failings: but the experience itself has an origin more deeply seated. If we may still speak of the unconscious and, following William James, conceive it as the sphere in which the self comes into contact with the Divine, then the phenomenon of conversion, gradual or convulsive, is but another evidence of the presence and activity of the immanent Spirit. To His movement is due that restlessness of the human heart

1. See Wm. Brown. *Mind and Personality* p.262.

of which St. Augustine spoke. Psychology may describe the experience: but the ultimate fact of the "immanence of the transcendent" in man, though it may be explained, can never be explained away. It cannot too often be insisted that a psychology of religion can never supply the place of philosophy or theology. Its "limited aims and pretensions" should frankly be recognised.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the whole of the preceding enquiry the writer has had in mind the many teachers who are dissatisfied with the conception of God which they themselves were led to form and are wondering how far they can adapt their teaching to new ideas without disloyalty to the Church. Such teachers - and we repeat that they are many - may well recall Mr. Clutton Brock's assertion that education ought to teach us how to be in love always and what to be in love with.<sup>2</sup> Is, then, our presentation of God such as to lead the young to be always in love with God? Is God, as we portray Him, lovable? Are we trying to hold out for the appreciation of our children a Character in which beauty, truth and goodness are seen in a degree as full as is possible to human

1. See J. B. Pratt. *The Religious Consciousness*.

2. *The Ultimate Belief* p.99.

comprehension? If that be the aim of our teaching, we shall not need to tell the young whom to be in love with. If we show them the Christ, the response will be spontaneous, for the Spirit within them will move in answer to the telling of the truth. It must be a dogma with us, as Mr. Clutton Brock further reminds us, that there is this Spirit in everyone and a desire for goodness, truth and beauty, which are to be found only through that desire. "We needs must love the highest when we see it."

But we must be equally emphatic in identifying the lovableness of Christ with that of God: there must be no suspicion of the contrast that lies behind all forensic treatment of the Atonement. We can only escape it by identifying the Spirit of Christ both with that of God and with the Spirit within ourselves that goes out to meet the approach of God. We shall not teach our children that man's condition denotes "a parody of God's purpose in human history,"<sup>1</sup> nor that they inherit a nature displeasing to the Author of their life. That is bad news to have to break to a child at the beginning of a glorious adventure. Happily there is no need to convey any such

1. Tennant. *Origin and Propagation of Sin*. p.131.



intelligence. We shall give a very different answer to what Professor Pratt calls the real and basal question of religion, viz. what is the attitude of the Determiner of Destiny towards us and our interests?<sup>1</sup> From the dawn of self-consciousness the child may be led to realise that the Determiner of Destiny is a Loving Father whose love and service may be the dominant sentiment of his life. He will have temptations to meet from within and from without, adjustments will have to be made and adaptations to circumstances. All this constitutes the problem of character-formation, and here we can help by surrounding the child, as far as possible, with an atmosphere of love and sympathy and optimism, and so save him from the fears and complexes which are at the root of most of the nervous troubles of later life. "Never mind" says Dr. Wm. Brown, "about doctrinal views. Religion as such is certainly truth and cannot be avoided. The little child will spontaneously believe in a spirit of goodness, and that is sufficient until later in life."<sup>2</sup> If in our teaching of the young we had always acted on Dr. Brown's advice, we should not have laid ourselves open to the charge that it

1. The Religious Consciousness. p.6.

2. Op.cit.p.134.

is the inconsistency between the teachings of theology and the growing sense of the real nature of goodness and justice that gives rise to the more serious doubts in the mind of the thoughtful child.<sup>1</sup> It would be a wise proceeding, in the education of young children, to dispense with many of the familiar narratives of the Old Testament presenting, as they do, characteristics of God that offend a child's natural feeling of righteousness.

Ought we, then, to continue to place at the beginning of our teaching the picture of an expulsion of man from a fabled garden? Ought we not rather to show the child that God's actual world is a garden, of which Kipling's lines hold true, inasmuch as there is work in the world waiting for all:-

There's not a pair of legs so thin, there's not a head  
so thick,

There's not a hand so weak and white, nor yet a heart  
so sick,

But it can find some needful job that's crying to be  
done,

For the Glory of the Garden glorifieth every one.

Here, too, is something to 'grip', for nothing, as Sir

1. J. B. Pratt. op. cit. p.102.

Henry Jones says, could be more stale than existence in a perfect world.

. . . . .

There are voices being raised in the Church of England today lamenting its lack of spiritual power, its failure to reflect in its teaching the progress made in modern knowledge, its refusal to interpret religion in the light of new discovery. The way of renewal lies, we are assured, in the direction of a worthier conception of God. With new light flooding in upon us, it were idolatry to worship the concepts of the grey dawn. But the coming of a worthier conception of God will necessarily be accompanied by a more adequate estimate of Man's history and destiny.

In all this effort to re-interpret the Universe we see evidence of the activity of the Lord and Giver of Life. We are not intended, as Professor J. Arthur Thompson reminds us, "to bow in the temple of the God of things as they are;"<sup>1</sup> we are not intended

1. What is Man? p.211.

to prison thought within the categories of ages less enlightened than our own. If we are led by our larger knowledge to the belief that life, in spite of temporary set backs and local retrogressions, has, on the whole, been one long process of gradual advance towards the fulfilment of the Divine purpose, we shall without regret part with a doctrine that postulates a primal disastrous declension. It is a doctrine based, as we have seen, on premisses that can no longer stand. Its validity, therefore, must be disputed in obedience to the Spirit of Truth, Who from age to age is guiding man into all the truth.