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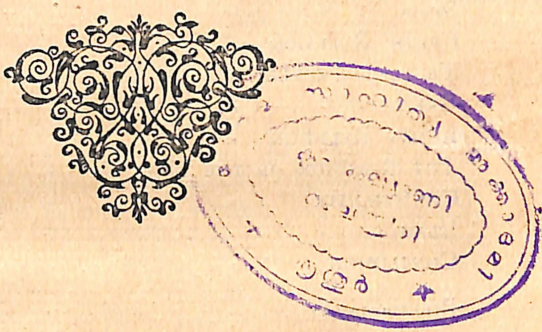
THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD

By the Rev. C. C. MARTINDALE, S.J.



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INTRODUCTION

THE method of any science is: To collect and register relevant facts; to group them; to seek to generalise and to assign "laws," or constants, that hold good within the given area of research. But what facts *are* "relevant"? At first you can only guess. You take a rough "working-definition" of your subject. A man might begin by observing "all that shines in the night sky," and end by laying down exact laws about comets. Again, on what principle will you group your facts? On that of cause and effect? But you are seeking to find out which facts *are* causally connected. You may then start with facts "rather like one another," guarding carefully against the assumption that similar facts *are* causally connected facts. Meanwhile you will be constructing, testing, correcting *hypotheses,* no less careful lest an attractive hypothesis be exalted into the realm of demonstration; lest what probably may be, slip into the realm of what *is.*

In this tiny book, even the facts concerning its vast topic—The Religions of the World—cannot be properly exhibited. Only primary, organic ones can be offered. Yet no mere heap of bones, so to say, is demanded, but at least a skeleton! Facts must be interconnected. Yet neither would a museum of religious skeletons suffice. Religions must be appreciated for what they were and are—living things, provoking human reactions. This demands "sympathy" in the writer; *men* are religious; fail to "sympathise" with men, and you write nonsense about their religions. But is not "sympathy" alien to

"cold" science? When the subject is abstract, like mathematics, or material, like chemistry, it may be; as the subject-matter tends manward, like music, or military tactics, it is necessary. Hence while the present writer does not disguise, but affirms, that he is a Christian in obedience to the See of Rome, he insists that he is wholly able to "sympathise" with religions—that is, with religious men; and no less able impartially to collect, examine, and exhibit facts. That an artist cannot study and write of art with scientific impartiality and objective serenity, is untrue as a fact, and out of date as a surmise. We propose, then, having briefly stated how men have addressed themselves to the study of "religions," to set forth some account of the main religions that have as a matter of fact existed, without philosophising on these religions, or on religion, or defending the special value or nature of a special religion, which would belong to a different sort of book altogether.

* * * * *

Had you asked the men of whom we have our first historical records: "What is religion?" they might have answered: "Ways of worshipping the gods." By "gods," roughly, they would have meant the unseen powers that manage the world or interfere with it; by "religion," the whole attitude to be taken towards them. But one family, one tribe, took one attitude; their neighbours, different ones. One group ousted another, and brought its gods and its religion. Hence, comparisons; adjustments; even theories. A conquered god subsided into the rank of hero, or survived as "father" of the invader, or was identified with him—names were hyphened. A self-satisfied group could say: "Our neighbours call our god So-and-so"; modest men might confess: "We learnt our gods from So-and-so." No group wanted quite to abandon its traditional assets, nor quite to disregard new facts. Hence juxtaposition meant observation: observation provoked theory, especially where minds rationalised, like Greek minds; elsewhere,

less desire to account for differences was felt. Gods could be worshipped "parallel."

Thus Greek poets (Homer, Hesiod) developed genealogies of gods: inquisitive travellers (Herodotus) used similarities of names, traditions of conquests and racial interminglings to prove that Greek gods were derived from Egyptian ones: philosophers, anxious to find one physical principle for the universe, decided that the gods were personifications of natural phenomena or elements: others, more "moral" in intent, allegorised myths to render them, and with them the gods and their worship, respectable. The great metaphysical systems (Plato, Aristotle) produced various schools: commerce, war, travel, for enquiry's sake, provided these with an infinity of new facts, and thus genuine theories based on observation and comparison came to exist—a Euhemerus (*c.* 310), helped by the deification of Alexander the Great, argued that gods were ancient kings: the Roman Scævola (*c.* 100 B.C.) concluded that there was one religion—pious stories—for the poets; another—rationalist—for philosophers; a third, composed of traditional rites, for "keeping the people in control." A laborious scholar like Varro (b. 116 B.C.) piled up facts till he decided that even the Jewish Jahweh was but Jove under another name. The system of "fusion"—syncretism—showed itself best a couple of centuries later, when educated men agreed that there was one force, identical in essence, behind the universe, expressed in various ways—religions—according to temperament, place, and time. The practical man objected to no form of cult, if it did not object to his own, nor interfere with the State.

Christianity cut across this. It said it was the only fully true religion. Differentiated, first, from the Jews, then from the flood of Oriental cults pouring into the West, its seemingly anti-social as well as anti-religious isolation brought down persecution. Apologists therefore stepped forth to point the contrast between their faith and contemporary pagan cult, which they said was materialist, immoral, and foolish. Pagan religious oppo-

sition, when not just persecution, took the shape of a fuller working out of the syncretist idea: all special myths or cults, Christianity included, might quite well be treated as more, or less, satisfactory expressions of the one eternal thing. Rationalism was less and less invoked: with Neo-Platonism and Neo-Pythagoreanism the world went towards mysticism: the sheer fact of the Empire helped: in the sky, no better symbol of the one ultimate life-giving fact, than the Sun: none better upon earth, than the Emperor.

Christians retorted that religions and their symbols were not equivalents: similarities were due to the natural knowledge of God common to all men but easily deformed by circumstances: to the "Seed-Word," or partial knowledge of God infused by Him into all that is: to imitations of true religion by fallen angels: to plagiarism of Moses and the prophets by philosophers: to the "condescension" of God who educated the childhood of the race by notions and rites, tolerated, but not lastingly sanctioned. When Origen (b. 185) argued that what was apparently similar (*e.g.*, pagan and Christian prayer) yet bore such different results as to prove a difference in nature, few if any themes remained to elaborate. But just when the pagan synthesis seemed due to triumph, when the Empire seemed ready to bask beneath the bland imperial smile of the Sun-God in his pantheistic haze, the old order passed; barbarians made an end of Rome; Christianity survived with only heresies to distract it till Islam came.

The early Middle Ages renewed the clash of ideas as between Mohammedans, Jews, and Catholics. Roughly, Aristotle stood behind the Arabs, Augustine's Platonism behind Catholics. Ibn Rochd (Averroes, 1126-1198) captained the former. Rabbi Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides, 1135-1204) must represent Hebrew thought. Each granted to his religion a *relative* superiority; each regarded its details as symbolic, and relied on their pragmatic value. Catholics parried by working out the doctrine that our knowledge of God is analogical—*i.e.*, we

know, *truly*, yet in our human way, what is in God even more truly and in *His* way; and their doctrine of the Sacraments. Aquinas (d. 1274), towering above the rest, yet like the rest preferred to obtain metaphysical principles and apply them to special instances. A few, spurred by vast new material supplied by explorers (Marco Polo) and missionaries (especially the Franciscans), began to compare these data with one another and with Christianity. The reaction against scholasticism was foreshadowed, and a certain despair of the rationalising intellect prepared the way for subjectivism.

The Renaissance refilled the imagination with ancient myths, brought back Plato, and soon enough compared Christianity with pagan cults, often to its discredit. Scholasticism began to seem barbaric; with the Reformation, individualism triumphed. But the Protestant polemic against papistry, which it wished to prove pagan, provoked new comparisons; the very thesis that Rome had deformed the early faith, involved the study of antiquity; so did the substitution of the Bible for the Pope as central authority. But Catholic and Protestant alike still assumed that the Hebrew and the Christian religions were divine in origin: hence theories of idolatry are re-formed: plagiarism of Moses by the "Greeks" is re-suggested; linguistic knowledge advances and the notion that divine *names* gave rise to divine personalities becomes popular—*nomina = numina*. Eyes turned hesitatingly to India, China, Japan, even Mexico, for analogies. Francis Bacon had tried to explain myths as fictions with an ethical sense; scholars, like Voss, Grotius, regarded paganism as containing fragments of original Revelation half-drowned in the sea of the inventions of sin-weakened human reason. The theory, that God used rites and ideas tolerable in themselves to prepare for better things, was set forth anew—*e.g.*, by J. Spencer, in his *De legibus Hebræorum Ritualibus* (1630-1695), which Robertson Smith says laid, such was its erudition, "the foundations for the science of Comparative Religion." Cudworth at Cambridge (1678) argued, in his *True Intel-*

lectual System of the Universe, that men were never atheists; that idols were purely symbolic; that Plato's "trinity" was derived from Hebraism and barely differed from the Christian one. Thus the Renaissance had provided, it has been said, "Summas" of myths; the Reformation, "Summas" of cults: the Jesuit missions, especially in India, also Africa and America, by their original work on Sanskrit, their translations of Eastern texts, offered a mass of new material, and serene scholars like Calmet (d. 1757) were meditating on the best *methods* for using all this, and on what inferences might legitimately be drawn.

Alongside sentimental subjectivism, rationalism was growing. When a Catholic rite or formula was not visible in antiquity, it was called an "accretion": when it was like something found among pagans, it was regarded as "borrowed." Only a step was needed to reduce Christianity to "natural" proportions. Thus Blount (1630) edited the "life" of Apollonius of Tyana; miracles were found there; *therefore* Christian miracles became incredible. Latitudinarianism became just theism; and to the "natural" man, continually discovered by missioners and merchants, a "natural" religion must surely correspond. The theory was developed by Herbert of Cherbury, Tindal, Locke; then by a Voltaire and the Encyclopædists; by a Wolf, Lessing, Eichhorn in Germany. Names are innumerable; the aim, identical—to prove Christianity "reasonable"—*i.e.,* to de-supernaturalise it. Lack of documentation still left room for rash generalisation: most unscientific methods were used to extract "fact" from "myth": the effort to find one substratum for all religions issued into books like Dupuis' *Origine de tous les Cultes;* he (using the earlier work of Abbé Pluche) reduced everything, even the person of Christ, to solar myth (and prepared the recent astrological school): Rousseau, with his "natural man," stimulated and even governed research among "savages": C. de Brosses (1757) argued that "fetishism" was the primitive, universal, source of wor-

ship and belief; and Abbé Bergier (1767), accepting the postulate that "primitive" man is best studied in the person of "savages," reduced this astrology and this fetishism to what is simply modern "animism" (p. 10). In a word, during the end of the rationalist and the dawn of the romantic periods, "savage" cults were studied at the expense of historical ones; a flood of "facts" was used by theorisers in search of one explanation for everything, and mostly anxious for an arsenal whence to bombard Christianity. This opened the road to scientific work, but was seldom scientific.

But a new era of discovery re-enthroned History. Anquetil-Duperron and then Burnouf (1771, 1833-1835) translated the Avesta and based Persian studies anew. The Asiatic Society, Bopp (1816), Hodgson (1824), and again Burnouf, regenerated Indian research. The Rosetta Stone was found in 1799, and Champollion interpreted Egyptian hieroglyphics. Lepsius in 1842 edited the Book of the Dead. But now philosophy, no more rationalist, began to talk of categorical imperatives, of the religious sense, and applauded religions even when their historical foundations appeared ruined: Hegel's influence facilitated the application of Darwinian evolutionist theories to the whole realm of fact: he regarded religions as necessary "moments" in the evolution of the Idea. You could not then sneer at the "gods," without sneering at man, who mysteriously and inevitably created them; nor at him, without deriding the whole cosmic impulse. Reaction against the subjective method (with its haphazard illustrations drawn from maltreated evidence, as in Creuzer's *Symbolik*, published at Leipzig from 1810 onwards) was soon felt: still, Comte having established that metaphysics was an outpassed stage of human evolution, and H. Spencer having proclaimed the Unknowable, how easily modern pragmatism is reached! A vital urge drives us to richer experience: if it helps you to externalise this in creeds and rites, do so, *because* it does so help you.

The last half of the optimist nineteenth century, and

the first decade of our own disheartened one, not only provided still more material (Oriental texts, especially for India and Japan, Max Müller; for India, Barth; China, Julien, etc.; Assyria and Babylonia, Layard, Taylor, Smith, Oppert; Egypt, Mariette, Maspero; Semitic religions, Robertson Smith; Palestine itself, the Catacombs themselves, classical areas, too, and Crete, were exploited anew), but tempted critics back into the immense antiquity that biology suggested, to seek for the origin of religion itself, and to picture a pre-religious world, even as they did the prehistoric world. Impossible to catalogue the "schools of thought" thus formed. The "philological" school (Max Müller) taught that language sufficed to make a genealogy of gods: you came to an aboriginal "intuition" to which names were attached, whence gods arose, and once more *nomina=numina*. The "anthropological" school again reached by way of "folk of lower culture" and their "lore" to the pre-religious states of mind of "primitive" men: E. B. Tylor's "animism" taught that they regarded all things as "animated": whence spirits; whence gods. This theory was contested. Andrew Lang ended by deciding that the pre-animist world was theist — everywhere he found an aboriginal "All-Father." Others derived everything from just a sense of "awe" in presence of the extraordinary—a quality called *mana* attached to it; how, was and is disputed. Tribes, bearing the name of, considering themselves in close union with, some vegetable or animal (totem) which they surrounded with taboos, caused J. F. McLennan, S. Reinach, and at first J. G. Frazer, to see in this a universal origin for religion. Magic, or the power to coerce natural phenomena unmanageable by average men, founded another theory. Individual or social psychology offered other clues: ecstatics and hysterical persons were studied: the collective effect on the mind of some tribal dance. . . . Astrology revived in the Pan-Babylonic school, which announced the world-wide influence of Mesopotamia. All these theories are

weakened by their assumptions, if not that "primitive" men can be seen in the person of contemporary "savages," at least that human history has developed equably upwards, and that less spiritual notions must have preceded and given rise to more spiritual ones. Above all, one key has been sought for the opening of every lock. Not only strict historians like Wissowa, Toutain, Cumont, chastened rash speculation, but a much more "total" system, like that of Gräbner and Ankermann (1904), followed up by W. Schmidt since 1908, which combined historical method with anthropological material, and called itself the "historico-cultural" school, will probably appeal to minds tired of specialist theorising. These scholars arrive at defining "culture-types"; and if they can be trusted, it looks as if the whole history of human evolution might have to be rewritten.

The success of the science of "hierology" has been retarded by the use of any one of these or other methods in isolation. The incompleteness of the record of facts must be remembered. If hypotheses be framed, they must never be allowed to fill lacunæ with non-existent evidence. Introspection and observation of contemporary psychology must recognise the extreme improbability of the minds of races other than that of the student (in time, origin or culture) acting as his does, save in what can be proved to be fundamental in human nature. When this is found, the probability of similar parallel consequences always takes precedence over the theory of loans between one cult and another, when these cannot historically be proved. Above all, experience has warned us against any assumption that a grosser form necessarily precedes a more refined one: humanity moves by zigzags, in cycles, by way of complication, and indeed degeneration quite as often as, if not more often than, by advance. Nowhere has the shoddy, the flimsy, reigned so triumphantly as among speculators as to the origin and development of religions. We cannot omit this warning to those who would fain draw conclusions from the few facts we can select to write down in the following pages.

We propose, then, after a few lines on the religions of "primitives," to write of the religions of the further East, beginning with India, because the "Hindu heresy," Buddhism, affected so deeply the religions of China and Japan, which follow; then, of Persia, between which and the ancient Aryan worship the links are so close; then of Babylonia, Assyria, and Syria; then of Egypt, because though Mesopotamia may have affected the West no earlier than Egypt did, yet Egypt affected it much longer. We then interpose sections on those northern religions which have transmitted little to ourselves; then on Greece and on Rome, which have transmitted much. Finally, we speak of Hebrew religion and of Christianity, because the latter is organically connected with the former, and last of all of Islam, which was a modification of Arabic belief by means of a drastic infusion of Jewish and Christian elements.

THE RELIGION OF THE "UNCIVILISED"

THE name "Primitives" begs the question and indeed is false, but is at least not uncomplimentary. All tribes known to us have elaborate cultures, and are indescribably far from primitive. Indeed, they are often degenerate. Moreover, the assumption that they are "primitive" suggests that their religion (if any) will reveal some element to be judged as at the back of, and the origin of, all religion. To pass any judgment on such peoples is all but impossible: what is sacred to them, is usually secret: they would not yield it up to aliens even if they could, which deficiencies in their language and our intelligence render anyhow unlikely. Very briefly, then, and without theorising, we write a few lines descriptive primarily of the Bantu race, widespread in many tribes throughout Central Africa, as it appears racially intact, and uncomplicated by invasion of Mohammedan or Christian ideas. We then allude even more briefly to one or two other racial groupings.

The Bantu visible world is woof to a warp of spirits:

every action in the former involves a spirit-ward act. Religion therefore is not departmental, but consists of innumerable "customs" of kinds as many as there are sorts of things. He who "knows" these "virtues" and the right "address" to them is "mganga." Some such spiritual qualities are so strong as to persist after the decay of the material vehicle, so to say: then, according to their nature, they must be pursued with suitable homage, fear, hate, and be given a domicile—the dead like to maintain their old sort of life: they are given the red-painted skull of their old body; or, some statuette, duly surrounded with gifts. Other spirits are quite discarnate, but can be controlled by magic ceremonies or incarcerated in almost anything. Such fetishism is a consequence, not an origin. Spiritual entities then fall into the classes of *mi-zimu,* human ghosts; *pepo,* spirits, never human, but controllable by wise men; and *Mu-lungu,* a word without plural. This being has no image; sorcery gets no grip on him: his names are from "life," "power," "action." The notion is as certain as it is undefined. In quality it surpasses all the rest: in mass, the rest far outweighs it. Without doubt "ownership" enters into the notion of the Bantu God: hence offerings, abstentions, taboos. Parallel, and quite disconnected, exists the behaviour proper to "magic," "brutally utilitarian," as it has been called. It is the obverse of religion, and while here and there it may contain a degenerate form of religion, it shows no sign, and indeed contains no possibility, of an evolution into religion. Totemism appears as a social arrangement, issuing at times into magical rites, but neither becoming, nor growing out of, religion. It is a method of consolidating a family or clan by strengthening the bonds that unite it with some object which chance, maybe, has associated with that clan, and is specially impregnated (if you will) with the spirit that is that of the total group.

Unnecessary to dwell on the other African peoples. God, spirits, family, are everywhere interconnected and form the stuff of life. The Hottentot prays to the

"Father of Fathers": the name for God, En-Ngai, is ever on Massai lips, little as his nature or whereabouts can be stated. The quite special race of Pygmies deserves a special study; yet it would yield similar results. The rapidly vanishing peoples of Australia cannot any more be said to be without a notion of an all-powerful being behind the many pieces of ritual behaviour which have quite different objectives. The extremely complicated and often precipitately applied evidence afforded by this area needs new and intensive study (since it will not for long be accessible), probably on the lines of Gräbner-Ankermann-Schmidt.

The religions of the American aborigines can be briefly summed up. Their world was more than "animistic"—the presence of "spirit" or "soul" in things gave them their more "real reality." Everything was as "personal" as man, if not more so. Hence the "religious" attitude of the native was taken toward spiritual agencies which he required to appease or win to his side: hence while his every action seems involved in dramatic prayer of a part-magical sort, so too he relies upon and is the victim of the "wizard" who knows how properly to perform these rites. There was no special solar worship, as the sun, though powerful and important, had no unique character, but was simply the abode of solar spirits. So far as the spirit-world was differentiated, this was due first to the parts of the country where the tribe in question lived, and important animals entered into what little myth existed. Thus the fish, the deer, the raven. The cults were, moreover, regulated according to the group or clan to which a man belonged: hence the laws of "totemism." Human sacrifice existed, and among the Aztecs reached astounding dimensions: but although the Aztecs and other Mexican tribes have much more of a religion than other groups, including a notion of a supreme, invisible, non-representable creator, yet (to our mind) the origins of Mexican relics are so entangled that it is impossible to say what was produced simply by natural instinct, what by Buddhist influence, and what

by Christian (Icelandic or Norse). Generalising so far as possible, the uncivilised races deal with a world interpenetrated with invisible beings, capable of knowledge and of good or evil will. These may have been, and be, totally discarnate, but others have been incarnate, and may possess, or "haunt," or act through almost anything. They may be so vague as merely to seem a kind of aroma of *unusualness* floating round an object: or, again, a special being is acknowledged as so unique as to be indescribable, unnameable, superior to worship. And this Ultimate, "vague" not because of its emptiness, but because of its transcendence, is to be discerned as existing, or as having existed, in the minds of morally all such peoples.

INDIA

In this vast peninsula "Aryan" immigrants found two sorts of people—Kolarians, in, or driven into, the Centre; the Dravidians, still predominating in the South. Imperfect fusions were made. Speculation alone can carry us behind the Vedas, or Sacred Books, of which the oldest part is the Rig-Veda. Yet even this seems to mark a certain development, if (as we think) personifications of natural forces (Dyauspita, god of the shining sky; Varuna, god of the darker sky; Mitra, god of light; Agni, fire; Vishnu, a sun-god, and many others) have specified themselves between man and the vague deity behind and pervading everything. It would seem that in this earlier period caste, child-marriage, food-restrictions, transmigration, were unknown. Material prosperity was the ideal; yet sanction existed for the moral life; and a happy future state was conceived. Perhaps the Rig-Veda belongs to 1500-1000 B.C. Between (roughly) 1000 and 800 the three remaining Vedas will have been composed ("composition" allows for a great antiquity of idea and probably material): also, the commentaries called Brahmanas; the Aranyakas, to be read by Brahmins (*infr.*) in their ascetical probation; the Upanishads, "guesses at truth," and the beginning of a philosophico-theological

system; none of which yet stereotyped the caste system, food-taboos, or the degradation of womanhood. The "rationalist" period (800-500) followed with its Sutras, treatises of ritual, law, theology. The previous period was already highly artificialised: this period is often atheistic and monist, and contains six Shastras, or systems of philosophy, of which the Vedanta is the most famous, in its undiluted form (there is but *One:* the world is pure delusion), or the "qualified" form, in which world and souls have reality, but are yet forms only of the One. Leaving to one side Buddhism as such, we recall that Brahmanism revived (*c.* A.D. 500), and by modifying itself profoundly modified the Buddhism that had practically eclipsed it, and finally ousted Buddhism from India proper almost altogether. This new "Puranic" Brahmanism consisted of an amalgam of the most elaborate Hindu cults and some of the old doctrines, and despite the exuberant crop of myths and rites, this latter, stronger element imparted a unity of principle and aspiration which enables us to speak of "modern Hinduism" as a whole.

This synthesis was the work of Brahman influence: usually it is put down to calculated diplomacy and desire to maintain their absolute supremacy. Granted; if it be granted, too, that they believed in the validity of their philosophy, the relative value of inferior modes of belief and worship, and the genuineness of their class-superiority. We attempt to indicate (in barest outline) that philosophy below. Enough now to say that it taught, in some sense, that all things were but more or less illusory forms or aspects of the One; so, there was nothing that could not be tolerated provided it was not considered to be *more* than that. Hence admission of every non-exclusive form of "religion," and condescension towards popular movements, such as those which exalted into the loftiest positions both Vishnu and Siva, and the at first quite inferior figure of Krishna. Vishnu came into prominence in the fourteenth century A.D., a cheerful god, coming down to men by way of "avatars"

(descents), by means of which the god is manifested (rather than incarnated) wholly, fractionally, or barely at all, in all manner of beasts and men and gods, including Krishna and the Buddha. Such notions tend to "devotion" rather than to effort, asceticism; to affection, even licentiousness; to polytheism and even fetishism (the tortoise, the fish, were recipients of Vishnu's avatars), rather than pure theism. Siva, on the other hand, was "preached" into eminence in the eighth century A.D., was aloof, needing to be reached by ascetic works, and gave birth thus to penitential and fanatical sects or individuals who reach, by self-torture, that emancipation which allows their absorption into the All. Limited things imply no "avatar," but are manifestations of Siva's power: the most adequate is the generative power of man. These two cults threatened to divide the Hindu world. The Brahmans by a masterful declaration united them in theory and in fact. They set forth the Hindu Trimurthi—Brahmā, Vishnu, Siva—the Ultimate One God, and His aspects or energies, Creative, and Destructive. He, the Unconditioned, was all but unsusceptible of so much as worship: let the main cult go to what of Him was manifested and thus accessible. However, in Hindu mythologies, there had always been female counterparts to the gods, a notion explained by divine productivity: divine power, as it were combining with matter, produced innumerable forms. In the concrete, the goddesses assumed separate values, especially by the twelfth century A.D., when Saktism, called also after its books Tantrism, prevailed widely. This was canonised licence of an appalling sort. Hindus were "right-handed," who based themselves on the relatively sound notions and worship of the Puranic Veda, or, left-handed, who worshipped the goddesses by means of sexual aberrations and magic, and used the Tantras as authority. Reforming sects arose, led by men sometimes of the loftiest intellect and ethical mysticism; at present, the linga-element in Siva-worship cannot possibly be called licentious: such sanctified license as exists is connected with

Vishnuism, especially in relation with the lustful myths of Krishna. Thousands of picturesque details could illustrate the popular version of religion, due to the Puranas, called the "Veda of the common folk." All the "idol"-worship, the pilgrimages to famous shrines, washings in sacred rivers conveying the absolution from all sins, all this dates in its widest sense from these. A smear of red paint (standing presumably for blood) upon a stone, puts that stone "into relation" with a god. Naturally, the masses have no philosophy by which to explain that relation—whether the stone is the god; whether the god is in, or near, the stone, and so forth. Heredity is the great power that preserves "Hinduism": a new notion is an immediate solvent. The doctrine of transmigration has been in itself valuable, and can (but need not) issue into much hospitality and tenderness towards others, even to animals: female child-life seems hopelessly discounted, since perhaps sex-experience is the only ideal for vast numbers. Yet even in the use of hideous symbols there is the more or less conscious acknowledgment that all these things *are* symbols—even the figure of the limbless, featureless god, who has lost these human attributes through disgraceful diseases is explained as *meaning* the suffering endured by the divine for the love of man, on whose account he laboured.

A powerful factor in the formation of old "Hindu" religion must have been (1) the care to preserve racial integrity, (2) the conviction of family continuity. This strongly assisted development of caste, and again, of Brahman superiority, and the doctrine of transmigration. "Assisted," not "created": causes are manifold. Thus, in the earlier strata, existed the conviction that the dead yet so lived that their well-being depended on the rites duly done for them by their descendants—hence the duty of marrying for your ancestors' sakes. Yet the notion that the dead could pass into bliss along with Varuna and the first man, Yama, co-existed with this. The solidarity of the family, in all its generations, may have originated the idea that a discarnate being (an ancestral soul) desired

reincarnation; the idea may have spread till it included other discarnate entities besides direct ancestors; and again, have thus been moralised so as to account for this need of new life by the presence of imperfections not yet got rid of; and finally, treated metaphysically as we shall see in a moment. Even if the notion of this god or that sprang up from the personification of a material object, like the house-fire, minds like those of Hindus were not slow to invert the process and see in the fire a manifestation of the divine Fire, and then, even the various gods as manifestations of That which was behind even gods. Hence the austere idea of Brahmă, the absolutely Undifferentiated, whereof all "things" were *in some sense* at least illusory aspects, or real, though fleeting manifestations. The first way in which Brahmă could be *"thought,"* was, as sufficiently "masculinised" (Brahmā) to be a "god," supreme, yet to that extent specified. He could then be thought of in a whole series of ways, right down to the inanimate stone. But 'who" thus thinks of Him? He can, in the long run, but be said to think of Himself: but then, how can He do so limitedly? A double theory: He "unfolds" Himself into the multiplex forms of the Universe—the eternal Lotus blossoms—only to reabsorb these manifestations into that Super-One which transcends all notional unity. A doctrine of emanations of *power*—a sort of less and less impregnation of undifferentiated matter — seems coexistent with this, and even harmonised with it. A comparison may serve: I have been assured that it is no illegitimate one. We speak of *eddies* in streams. They exist, therefore. But how? Their individuality is a negation. Let them flatten out, as the stream flows forward —the hollow disappears—there is no more eddy: yet there is just so much water and force. Even so, the "individuality" of each thing will disappear, yet none of its reality (in the case of the "soul," none of its "personality") will be lost. The All therefore could be thought—*i.e.*, limited by a mind, in a thousand ways: there are in It no real limitations: but in whatever nega-

tive way a limited mind could exist, in that way it could also think, and thus conceive limitedly of the All. This All, therefore, is "aware" of its own richness; and thereby, of those negations which minds would be, and of their negative conceptions of Itself. Hence It transcends our notion even of Being: as true to say it "is" not, in our sense, as that it "is." Similarly, it does not "act" in any of the ways we know as "action." In this system, Not-Being is not Nothingness; nor Inaction, Inertia. After all, an Aristotelian or a Platonist alike can grasp this notion. From this follows the doctrine of Nirvāna—*i.e.*, that the limited and active will in the end achieve that perfect Peace which is Brahmă; and, since the series of forms is unbrokēn, the Law of Action bears constantly its own fruit: Karma reigns absolute: what I have done issues into what I do, and what I do, into the subsequent action. Why any particular process begins, and why a downgrade series reaches none the less an identical End with an upgrade one, perhaps no Western can see, nor Eastern explain, nor why this is not fatalism (it mostly acts as such), nor how the developed practice of meditation and of asceticism, both intended to rid the soul of its ignorances as to its true being, or anything else can be *chosen*.

Across this struck Buddhism. Its origin is so disputed that we will but say we think it ascertained that a young prince of the Gotama family of the Sākya clan became, as he claimed, "Enlightened"; "the Buddha" means The Enlightened One. We think that he (1) was certainly wearied by the mass of mere ceremony that surrounded the Brahman doctrines; and (2) found life so painful that this made the starting-point of his purely practical doctrine. Life is painful; it is so, because of men's Desires: surmount Desire, and you enter into Bliss. Almost at the same time was founded the parallel "order" of the Jainists, for, not only did such men move the masses, but grouped disciples more definitely round themselves. Leaving these, however, aside, the Buddha taught the all-importance of that Action, which is

Thought: he went then all but to extremes in deprecating those sacrifices which the Brahmans held essential, especially that of the Soma-juice. The latter, too, though regarding the "gods" as destined themselves to absorption in Brahmă, did not degrade them to the Buddhist level, where these imperfect beings are seen as far lower than a Buddha, having yet to escape their wheel of existences which he has already done. Buddhism naturally praised celibacy, and even weakened the caste-notion, since it tried to open out the Brahman notions to the world at large. The Buddhist monk, however—though there was also the "forester" sort of extreme ascetic—led a measured life of "neither too much nor too little," the Buddha apparently holding that violent asceticism can involve just as much self-will and illusion as sensuality can. Here is one point of opposition to the Jainists, who may practically starve themselves to death from *desire* to be free from "this" life. From such a desire, Buddhism would also free a man: suicide is the extreme of "will"-action. I think that Sākya-muni, having an entirely practical aim, appeared to deny "god," and to be atheist, to deny "soul" in the sense of surviving personality, and to deny existence in Nirvana (as well as non-existence) to this extent—he refused to assert anything at all about them, because he did not know the unknowable, and proposed to teach only a "way" to emancipation from "lives" (all of them painful)—a *Middle Wgy,* intellectually, between assertion and denial, and morally—*i.e.,* between indulgence and contradiction, each of them implying desire. When he ridicules the Brahman god, he ridicules only the things that can be said, and are said, of Him, simply because, being sayable, they are untrue. But the Brahmans would have said the same: I hold that in the long run, both Brahmans and Buddhists meant exactly the same thing.

I cannot even outline the various Buddhist schools of thought and sects. Enough to say that one great current was set by those who taught that Buddhas could renounce even their own entry into bliss and remain to

instruct the unenlightened how to reach enlightenment. These were "Buddhas of Compassion," Amitabha, for instance, who had a great success in China and Japan. Definitely, however, just in so far as Buddhist compassion involves the *sentiment* of compassion, it is false to the essential notion of Buddhism, for such sentiment connotes desire, and creates suffering. So, too, a cult of the Buddha, such as everywhere grew up, is false to the true notion that in Nirvana there is no one left to pay a cult to. Let us say that among humans, both for the true Brahman and the true Buddhist, the loftiest state short of the perfect one is a sort of immobile contemplation: below this would be the pure thought of metaphysics: next to this, the wilful, even emotion-tolerating, method of religion. Later Buddhism was propagated by King Asoka (third century B.C.).

CHINA

CHINESE "history" begins about 2700 B.C. Ancient fragments subsisting in the books of Odes (Shih-Ching) and of Annals (Shu-Ching), edited by Confucius (p. 24), and tradition (which students personally acquainted with China value more than academic foreigners do) show that early China was monotheist: its supreme Being was called Supreme Heaven, Supreme Ruler, and was certainly not the material sky-vault. From him came existence, human relationships, reward, and punishment: he had no idols. Victims, especially oxen, were immolated to him; events made known to him by fires upon the mountains, whose smoke carried the information. Hence importance attached to atmospheric conditions; hence too divination, especially by means of tortoises—their arched shell represented heaven; their flat nether plate, the earth; their flesh, mankind. But alone the Emperor, Heaven's predestined and long-prepared-for representative, dealt with this Ultimate. "Spirits" of nature (wind; thunder; rivers; regions) were what important persons worshipped each in his own district, nar-

rower and narrower in scope, down to those of door and stove (*cf.*, p. 56). Across this cut the notion of ancestor-cult: regional "spirits" were those of important predecessors in office: family-cult went to physical ancestors, and had enduring invaluable social effects. Indeed, though the Supreme Heaven would punish wrong, right and wrong meant, what pleased parents or the authorities. Actual cult consisted chiefly in setting forth food and clothes for the ancestors, whose presence was invoked. Even a living representative would "dramatically" be fed, and clothed and done homage to. Under the Chou dynasty (from 1122 B.C. for over eight centuries), germs of decay developed—infiltrations from India especially complicated the earlier simplicity; the names given to the Supreme Ruler, representing his Unity, his heavenliness, his governorship, tended to suggest polytheism. But the Chinese were never metaphysicians, despite certain simple notions, such as Yin and Yang, repose and action, which alternated in and constructed the universe. The other world was ever more crassly pictured: hunger therein was the great fear. In 535 for the first time, it is said, Izu-ch'an stated a psychology which has survived in practice till our day—man's soul is double: the inferior soul is generated with the body, and soon after physical death dwindles to extinction: the higher soul survives, with qualities dependent on its level of education and nourishment: if ritually attended to, it will keep quiet; else it is mischievous.

Early, perhaps sixth century B.C., Lao-tzu propounded notions afterwards united into a philosophy. His word "Tao," "Way," came to be regarded as the Prime Principle, which progresses and retrogresses by way of *ch'i*, breath, which underlies all phenomena. This swept aside even the Supreme Heaven, itself but a manifestation. We are, then, exhaled into brief illusory being, only to be reinhaled. Wise who dispenses, then, with the senses; even with ideas; above all, with action. Hence war is fiercely denounced; nay, all laws that shackle "nature"—*i.e.*, instinct. Put no finger into the

mysterious machinery! Abstain; wait. Easiest remembered was its instruction to "empty the head and fill the belly of the people." For educated people ruined the State. It soon borrowed all that was most crass and exterior from Buddhism: no system so negative could survive. It is now a sort of atheist ritual, and never was really a religion. Somewhat after Lao-tzu, Confucius (Kung-fu-tse), born probably about 550 B.C., took exactly the opposite course. Each was disgusted by the degeneration of the times: Lao-tzu preached the perfect abstention; Confucius, the practical life of each day. Lao-tzu wished to destroy the whole of the past: Confucius, to go back to it in every detail. No speculation as to gods, or soul, or other world. No abstract morality. He compiled the Odes and the Annals, that immemorial lore might be re-learned and preserved; he wished for a practical governing class, worshipping the ubiquitous spirits and using a sober divination; cult must be respectful, not tender; the intellect, not the heart, was to regulate it. The governed class was to be taught proverbs—day-to-day duties were to be inculcated by sheer authority and none but this official teaching must exist. Absolute loyalty throughout the social mass was to exist, but constructed from the molecular family upwards entirely by kindness. Violence, whether to embrace or to repel, must be quite eschewed: the middle way between extremes alone was right, and must be taken without preconceived plan from moment to moment. This strengthened considerably whatever was traditional and temperamental in Chinese social life, but created only an incredibly conservative cabal of the *litterati,* who, absorbing all authority, and alone vocal, have for centuries stood, for us, as "China," masking many things. Rival philosophers had but small influence: a crash occurred in 213 B.C., when the Emperor Shih-Huang, destroyer of the Chou dynasty, was so angry at the censures constantly passed by the Confucians on his "innovations" that he had the Sacred Books burnt and went over to the Taoists, descendants of Lao-tzu.

The only real change, however, came in A.D. 65, when under Ming-Ti Buddhism was officially introduced, and a long series of invasions at last achieved its material success first in North, then in South China. Its psychological success was due to the insufficiency of Taoism (held to be revolutionary) and of Confucianism, hopelessly and inhumanly dry. The Mahayana, or Greater Vehicle, the inclusive, later Buddhism, was what triumphed in China, with its ever-increasing mythology and ritual, satisfying the imagination and affections.

In 960 the fateful Sung dynasty began. To the Emperor T'ai-tsung, in 984, a Japanese bonze expounded Japanese Shinto (p. 26). Its divine Mikado fascinated him. In 1015 his son declared that his aboriginal ancestor was simply the Supreme Ruler: Buddhists, Taoists, were embosomed in the new State Church: the Court consisted entirely of reincarnate spirits of either sex. But in mid-twelfth century, the Sung were expelled southwards, and the religious system survived only as "Heroic Taoism," or Chinese Shinto. In the south, Confucianism revived, but split into reactionaries and progressists. The latter wished to put into the purely practical Chinese tradition a philosophy like that of the Indian books. Condemned by the Emperor Hsiao-tsung in 1178, as "abandoning the text of the classics" and occupied wholly with "abstract philosophy," and with disputing about "intangible notions in unintelligible terms," their leader Chu-hsi died in disgrace, A.D. 1200, but in 1227 was granted the diploma of Grand Master, Authentic Exegete, and Ideal Classic. He denied absolutely the existence of God, and the immortality of the soul. All was *li* (Norm, Law), *t'ai-chi* (Great Axle, because it moves everything), *wu-chi* (imperceptible), or *ch'i* (matter). *Li* is one, eternal, immutable, unconscious, fatal. Matter is no less eternal, but serves only to limit, give a term to, *Li*. Both "souls" are material—they ripen, over-ripen, decay. A man who has lived right, dies when ripe; his soul forthwith decomposes: souls of the "unripe" (as of bonzes, who meditate too much)

are tough and stringy. Decomposition takes time. Hence ghosts. Worship of ancestors marks merely *our* gratitude for that act whereby they transmitted life to us. Existence is like a sea—waves differ, yet they are the *same* water driven by the same force. *Li* is unconscious; matter, unintelligent: the special combination of *Li* and matter that makes man, strikes out intelligence like spark from flint: the consequent "vibration" is emotion. Emotions and their subsequent acts are "right" when, erring neither by excess nor deficit, they are in keeping with nature. Chu-hsi's system has been well compared to Haeckel's "all is Force and Matter"; rather as the imperial regulation of religion has been compared with the ideas of Hobbes's *Leviathan*. The *litterati* made this their religion; from 1416, despite the Buddhists, it was taught in all schools, and examinations gave the entry to everything till 1905, when after the Boxer rebellion the examination system was abolished. None the less, officialdom lived in sympathy with Confucius interpreted by Chu-hsi, but henceforward shot with not a little of the spirit of, say, Herbert Spencer.

Our personal opinion, derived entirely from men who have lived very long in China, in intimate association with all classes, is that the people at large are quiet and lovable, living an admirable family life, mainly due to Chinese tradition, and having an excellent ethic, mainly due to Buddhism. The divinisation of Confucius was slow and artificial: his system of practical behaviour has been very useful in its sphere. Neo-Confucianism is irreconcilable with everything that most Europeans value. The tragedy of China has been neither its people, nor Confucius, nor even its Emperors, but its closed caste of *litterati*.

JAPAN

THE original religion of Japan was colourless. It had no name till, Buddhism having been introduced from China by Korea in 522, the Chinese word "Shinto" (Way of

the Gŏds) was used to designate the traditional forms, Butsudo, the Buddhist system. The two systems are now inextricably intertwined. The (eighth century ?) scriptures, Kojiki and Nihongi, relate that the first divine couple, Izanagi and Izanami, peopled the earth with divine offspring, of whom the most important was Amaterasu, sun-goddess. She was the grandmother of the first Mikado. With vague nature-worship went ritual traditions of purification and some ancestor worship. There was no clear distinction between gods and men, nor other-world sanctions for behaviour. After death, souls, from their "world of darkness," can bring comfort or annoyance to their survivors, and so are propitiated. Buddhism brought colour and variety into worship: a combination of the two systems, Ryobu-Shinto) was devised. Shinto gods were called reincarnations of the Buddha, who climbed to the highest rank at the side of Amaterasu's son. Not until nearly A.D. 1700 was a badly needed reformation made. Mabuchi, Motoori, and Hirata (died 1769, 1801, 1841 respectively), devoted their lives to dethroning Buddha, "Confucius" (*i.e.*, Neo-Confucianism), and Taoism: all dogmas, moral laws, and foreign ritual were to be eliminated: little save the Mikado, and the duty to follow instinct, was left. The extreme poverty of this residuum was approved on the grounds that the innate perfection of the Japansese nature needed neither saint nor sage to help it. Shinto gods are called "Kami": they are nature-gods, and god-men, deified scholars, warriors, and ancestors, who encroach on the court of Amaterasu, composed of nature-deities. The gods have no ethical qualities. The very simple Shinto temples contain no image, but only symbols, like a mirror, symbolic of the shining of the sun-goddess: worship is practically the *entertainment* of the deities by means of food and theatrical performances. Most purification-ceremonies are concerned with physical or ritual impurities: but the "Prayer of Great Purification" alludes to the expiation of various crimes, such as profanation of corpses, homicide, disturbance of the rice-

harvest, or incest. Shinto has waned with the waning of the divine Mikado.

Buddhism, however, brought the full civilisation and art of China to Japan, along with the personality of Shaka (Sakyamuni) and the Mahayana literature (p. 25). Nirvana (in Japanese "Nehan") was a definite Paradise-heaven, obtained by victories over six successive worlds. Combined with this, Confucius ("Koshi" in Japanese) lessoned Japan in ethics, especially in family respect and loyalty to the Mikado, a notion most acceptable to the soldier-Samurai, who still powerfully affect minds owing to their terrific ideal of self-control. It is impossible to relate the gods and goddesses that peopled the Japanese Buddhist heaven. Amaterasu herself became a Buddha (Japanese Buddhas have female faces); Kwannon, "the Gracious Goddess of a Thousand Hands," is very popular, as special granter of prayers, whether said or written. Amida-Buddha (Amitabha, p. 22) is highest among gods. Japanese Buddhism soon split into many schools of thought and practice. They fall into two main categories, Shodo-mon (Holy Way), and Jodo-mon (Land of Purity). The former teaches self-reliance if you would reach Nirvana, and the practice of the "three wisdoms": thus its Hosso sect is a sort of subjective idealism in practice, but is to-day unimportant. The Kegon sect, likewise unimportant, teaches a pantheist realism. The Tendai sect, Chinese in origin, is a sort of monism in which the nature of Buddha is the One: meditation is to teach you to realise this identity of all that is "you" with Buddha. All nature can in the long run become him who indeed it already is. Shingon tends by asceticism and repetitions to achieve Buddhahood even in this life and thus re-enter the Absolute. Zen rejects reading almost wholly, and relies on meditation to teach you that in your heart is "the true heart of Buddha": there is then for you no more good nor evil, but perfect quiet. The sects, Jodo, Shin, and Nichiren, are, however, of pure Japanese origin, unlike these Indian or Chinese ones. Jodo transferred everything to faith in Amida, who

put off his own Buddhahood out of compassion for men, and taught them to reach the Land of Purity, which he created for them. Their life is therefore to be spent in repeating, "I put my trust in Amida-Buddha," on a sort of rosary. Shin, though gorgeously ritualist, rejects all "works," even prayer. You simply trust in the saving promise of Amida, with whom you can be united even here. Prayer is but a cry of gratitude, an expression of faith from the redeemed. Asceticism is abolished: the priesthood is but a lay-ministry of teaching. Nichiren, the other most popular sect, teaches the exact opposite. It claims to pay unique homage to the Book of the original revelation of Buddha. It repeats for hours at a time: "Worship be to the Sutra of the marvellous Law of the Lotus." It declares that worshippers of Amida will go to hell, and that the disciples of Zen are devils. Personal effort is everything, and even stones can make it. Unfortunately, the level of these sects is low. The Tripitaka has not even been translated out of Chinese. If you twirl the sacred bookcases, you gain the same merit as if you read the 6,711 books therein contained.

PERSIA

In view of the enormous importance of the Persian Empire in history, its religion is of vast importance, too. But, as that most impartial scholar, the late Dr. Casartelli confessed, there is yet no way of properly correlating the view of it obtained from the Inscriptions of the kings of the Achaemenid dynasty (549-330 B.C.) and that offered by the sacred books called the Avesta. The former is a contemporary record in Old Persian: the latter in a later form of the language in its earlier parts, in Pahlavi in its later; its general date is fiercely disputed even now. The Avesta sets forth the Zarathustrian reform—Zarathustra or Zoroaster was a philosopher-prophet to be dated probably between 650 and 580 B.C. However, the only part of the Avesta safely to be attributed even to the time of Zarathustra is the set of hymns, etc., called the

Gāthā (below, p. 31). Even so, while the Avesta never mentions the great Achaemenid kings, it speaks of many other dynasties and lands of ancient "Iran"; the inscriptions do not once mention Zarathustra, as though Asoka (p. 22), should never mention the Buddha; nor do they hint at the essential dualism of the Avesta, as though Asoka were found ignorant of deliverance from the wheel of existences in Nirvana. Is, then, the royal religion a simplification of an ancient Avestan one? Is the Avestan system an elaboration of a previous system? Is one proper to the north, one to the south? Impossible to answer. At least, *both* "religions" are close akin to the old Vedic religion of India (p. 15). Possibly Zarathustrian religion was introduced, with simplifications, by Darius (522-485) into Persia proper: nature-worship certainly lay at the back even of the simple royal cult. Possibly the domination of Assyrians and Medes had corrupted Persian worship and creed, and the kings cut away original elements, thinking them to be accretions. It is best to offer first a view of the simpler royal system; then, of the Avestic religion.

The religion of the Great Kings testifies to belief in one supreme God, the great God, Auramazda (in the Avesta the parts of the name are always separate—Ahura Mazda, and even inverted, or separated by other words): He is all-powerful: by His grace, kings are allowed to reign, receive their power, govern or defeat the nations. "Everything that I have done, I have done without exception by the will of Auramazda." He is, too, omniscient. Along with him are "other gods"—those of subject clans: they are anonymous. But also, Mithra, originally a god of light, and Anāhata, a goddess of water, are associated with the supreme god, significantly in view of the profound respect given by the Persians to fire and to rivers. Auramazda is Creator of heavens, earth, man, and man's happiness: men pray to, worship, and intercede with him. The existence of temples is uncertain: the sculptured frames of the inscriptions, however, seem to show fire-altars: perhaps

Assyria originated art-forms like their winged half-men, or winged discs; Herodotus says that Persians admitted no images of the gods into their worship.* The moral life sprang from the command of Auramazda: incomparably the worst sin was a lie.

Avestic religion itself falls into two parts, that expressed in the Gāthās, and the rest. The Avesta is a tiny fragment of an immense literature called Avistak va Zand: Avesta and its Commentary. Anquetil-Duperron (p. 9) thought that the last word was the language in which it was written: hence "Zend" to-day is misused in that sense. We isolate, first, those "metrical sermons" called the Gāthās, older than the rest, and professing to be Zarathustra's own. We hold that Zarathustra was a real person, living about 600 B.C., that these older portions of the Avesta go back to him in substance at least, that the entire Avesta did *not* perish in the times of Alexander, and that the Sassanid king Ardashir, aided by his high-priest, did *not* rewrite the entire Avesta from memories of traditions. We conceive, in fact, of the old Indo-Persian religion, so to call it, as a simple nature-religion, developing quite differently in India and in Persia owing to the quite different temperaments of the peoples, meditative and practical respectively. We conceive, then, of a "school" rather than reform shaping itself among a group of Magi of whom Zarathustra may well have been a leader, acting so as to elaborate popular notions even while it purified them: it can be called "philosophical" provided this be not conceived as rationalising in the Greek sense (p. 52). Possibly Darius attempted a parallel reform, of a much more practical and thoroughgoing sort. After a period of chaos, due to Alexander's invasions and his desire to Hellenise his conquests, the Zarathustrian reforms, persisting among

* On this part, see especially: King and Thompson, *The Sculptures and Inscription of Darius the Great on the Rock of Behistun* (published by the British Museum trustees, 1904).

the educated Magi, may have rejoined popular religion and thus formed the Avestic amalgam. The royal reform will have lapsed. We consider, then, the Gāthās as the oldest stratum available.

The Gāthās clearly are attacking some hostile system: interestingly, they eliminate both Mithra and Anāhata, and disesteem the *haôma* sacrifice. But they definitely teach Dualism. Twin spirits of Good and Evil create the Universe, itself divided into the world of Asha, good, and Drug, evil. The latter includes Angro-Mainyav, the evil spirit, with his court of dævas, devils, and all wicked men, who ceaselessly persecute and seduce the good. The former includes Ahura Mazda, surrounded by many semi-personal beings—divine Attributes, we may almost say—*Asha,* Moral Law: *Vohu-Manah,* Good Will; *Khshathra,* Royalty; and several others, six of whom later made a pre-eminent group. Through these God communicates with man, and man with God. The reward in the next world is promised usually in terms of riches or material well-being. It depends, however, definitely on the state of a man's mind or soul. Man's spirit must, in fact, be that of Ahura Mazda. Thus animated, a man must resist Ignorance and Falsehood, their spirits, and their works; must conform himself to the spirit of knowledge and of good; live as a peaceable agriculturist, respecting especially the ox, and thus tread the path to the Kingdom whose recompense begins to be possessed in this life, being perfected after a Judgment in the next.

The remaining mass of literature (itself but the relics of many books destroyed) contains all manner of prayers, ritual regulations, etc. In it, the two creative principles, good and evil, are seen so definitely opposed (though the latter is to be totally abolished in the end) that theories were worked out to reduce their Origin to a Unity—Limitless Time, *Zrvan akarana,* progenitor of both, was one solution. Ahura Mazda, with six Attributes now fully personified, forms a group of seven Ameshas-Spentas, Immortal Holy Ones. Vohu-Manah is the Good Mind, or Thought, yet is special protector of domestic

animals. Asha is the Moral Law, yet guardian of fire. Khshathra Vairya is the Good Reign (personification of Mazda's kindly power), and patron of metals, and so forth. Beneath these are the Yazatas, apparently ancient gods reduced to the rank of "angels": one is Atar, Fire, son of Mazda, showing itself especially in the hvarenah, or the glory that enhaloed kings. Anahita is now goddess or genius of waters. Mithra is all but personification of Contracts, of military honour—hence of soldiers (p. 62); the sun is his eye—he sees all. He, with Sraosha and Rashnu, Justice and Obedience, presides at the judgment of souls. Under these were the Fravashis, almost "guardian angels" or the genius of each man and his benefactor: even, there is the Soul of the Ox—the primeval ox that lived with the first man and symbolised all good things of the earth. Opposed in all points to these is Angro-Mainyav and his devils, of whom six are pre-eminent. During the first 3,000 years of creation, Ahura Mazda made only a spiritual world: but Angro-Mainyav awoke, and declared war (though Ahura offered him peace) for 9,000 years. Mazda then stuns him with an omnipotent prayer. During the next 3,000 years material things, whose spiritual prototypes had been existing, are made. The world is the scene of conflict till the last 3,000 years open with the revelation to Zarathustra, whom a series of prophets follows, ending with a supreme prophet, the general resurrection, and the triumph of Mazda over his foe; then a new period of Unlimited Time begins. Man has to fight his own battle by venerating fire, by honesty and truth, scrupulous purity, charity, hospitality. The loftiest virtues are, however confused by puerile details—also, by the unfortunate permission of brother-and-sister marriage (*cf.*, p. 34). Severe penances were enjoined on sin—sins against nature and burning a corpse were unforgivable. Worship centred round the cult of fire, the purest and divinest thing imaginable. Hence a corpse must defile neither earth by being buried nor fire by being burnt. Impure birds devour it on the Tower of Silence. After three

days the soul is judged: if its good and bad actions balance, it is in "equilibrium": else it crosses a bridge to Paradise, or is thrust from it into an appalling hell. The final cataclysm shall destroy the world, and though its rain of molten lead shall hurt the wicked souls indescribably, yet apparently they emerge purified and the new cycle begins. Note, a singular absence of myth, and an overwhelming insistence on moral virtues in this "revelation," as it professed to be—in this definite "doctrine," as it certainly was. It was cruel to Christianity; the Arabs were crueller still to it. Alone Parsis in India—said to be 70,000 at most—are its true survivors. In the names of demonology alone did Jewish literature accept somewhat from it: Asmodeus in *Tobit* is the Aeshma dæva of the Avesta. The Jewish notions of the Kingdom, and of the Resurrection, developed independently. Indeed, it is likely the exiled Jews affected Mazdeism at least as a stimulus to develop itself, though Persia need not have borrowed anything from them directly.

EGYPT

THE religion of the Egyptians was simple and complex —simple, because it reflected the divine power perceived in sky and land and river: complex, because its forms were very localised, and subsisted in combination even when the land was unified. The sky provided above all its incomparable Sun: the earth meant the land as fertilised by the Nile. Presumably, after the unification (shall we say, about 4000 B.C.?), the tribes, each with its own worship, so amalgamated as to retain their own names for gods recognised as identical beneath the many titles, or at least, offspring of one supreme deity best recognised in the Sun. It may be that Egypt was a totemist land, and that each tribe had its sacred animal, which it used as "crest" and symbol of its god, and later represented its special god, or presentation of god, hawk-headed, ibis-headed, and so forth. Marriages of

kings with their sisters aimed at preserving the divine blood inherited from the ancestral deity.

Heliopolis in the north remained the religious and intellectual centre of the land. It taught that from primeval chaos or dark, Nû, emerged as from his own substance and like a sun (Râ) the first God, Atûm. (He is hawk-, human-, or scarab-headed according to his rôle: the scarab was, apparently, self-generated, or at least indestructible.) From himself Atûm-Râ generates pairs of gods and goddesses; the latter are sometimes colourless figures existing more for parallelism than for practical purposes. Thus a pale Tafnut stands beside Shû, the air, who, insinuated between Qeb (earth) and Nût (sky)—the second pair—lives in the heaven high above the earth. A third pair are Osiris and Isis, enormously important later on, though at first secondary. They are Nile and Land: united, they produce all the fertility of Egypt. Set (with the vague Nephthys) would be the arid desert, enemy of these powers. Early hymns to Atûm-Râ are of exalted beauty. At Memphis, the supreme god was the mysterious Ptah, or at least the power or spirit of that god—his creative force, operative even in the "Hidden Land" of the "dead." His spirit resided in the Bull Apis and passed from one such bull into another. At Hermopolis in Middle Egypt, Tahuti had been creator-god: but this ibis-headed figure sank into myth, and became secretary of the gods and assimilated or transmitted many of the duties of the Greek Hermes. He was god, too, of crafts, writing, and invention generally. At Thebes in Upper Egypt, Amon, or Amon-Râ, held the rank of Atûm-Râ, but associated with himself Mut, the mother-goddess, and Khons, their child. Regarded as a unity, this group attached to itself the eight Atûm-born gods of Heliopolis, and inaugurated thus the groups of nine into which the Egyptian gods kept fitting themselves. Amon-Râ, owing to the triumph, maybe, of Thebes, became by far the most important divine figure in matured Egypt. Of other gods we may quote Har (Horus), a solar god: Hat-Hor, not dissimilar to Nût,

owning the cow, and goddess of women especially. Neith, especially at Saïs, was regarded as the first mother. The Egyptians, instinctive and not rationalist philosophers, never issued declarations as to the precise nature of their supreme God: but he was unique: to him the others owed their existence: the only co-eternal along with him is Chaos (*cf.* pp. 39, 49).

In the realm of myth, Osiris and Isis had an incomparable success. Osiris, who married his sister Isis, reigned on earth as king after Râ. His brother Set attacked, slew, and dismembered him. Isis, after long search, re-formed the scattered limbs and embalmed them. Thereupon Osiris became king among the dead, and his son Horus (conceived before either Isis or Osiris was born, and himself born after his father's death) ultimately ousted Set and became king. The ritual opportunities provided by this myth were enormous: so, too, the possibility of allegorising it. Also, the desperate importance attached by the Egyptians to their well-being after death, rendered Osiris as Judge and King in Hades all but supremely important, too. Finally, when Greek philosophy laid hands upon it, along with the syncretist theologians (see pp. 5, 66), the myth became sublime and beautiful. No doubt the figure of Isis, with its human pathos, was the more popular: Apuleius, in his strange book, the *Metamorphoses,* shows what could be made of it, even by an author who was plagiarist, superstitious, frivolous, and obscene. He is thrilled to the soul by the thoughts inspired by the goddess.

The after-world was clearly recognised from very early times as, first, most certainly existing; and as depending for its conditions wholly on the moral behaviour of the man while still on earth. He was body, and also soul (as for the puzzling Kâ, of Genius, p. 56). It was a sort of spiritual replica attending on the man. Almost, the subsistent *idea* of the man). On bodily death the soul was tried by Osiris: the Heart was weighed against Truth. Here the "Negative Confession" was made, a singularly exacting one, in which simple and practical misdoings

have to be disavowed (such as cutting off Nile-water from a channel), but also what the loftiest codes of ethics everywhere recognise as wrong. Each action incurred its sanction in the other world. The absolutely evil man was condemned to torture, or perhaps reincarnation as a hog; the righteous, after anxious wanderings and purifications (to pass through which with success rendered the possession and knowledge of the Book of the Dead so important), entered Paradise, conceived either as a happy reproduction of earthly life, in other worldly states, or, as a mystical union with Osiris, so that the blessed soul was actually called Osiris.

The brief attempt to impose a cult of the Solar Disc, quasi-monotheist and philosophical, by Akhn Aton (about 1300), has been made familiar by recent research. It did not succeed, and need not delay us. Nor need the progressive degeneration of the Egyptian religion, in Græco-Roman days. Its solitary popular contribution was the god Serapis, whose vogue was due more to royal patronage than to genuine interest in this originally local worship (he came from Sinope in Asia Minor). Superstition connected with animals became quite mad: magical practices, especially connected with the after-life, increased, such as the putting into graves of those little earthenware figures symbolically "responding" to the dead man's name when he should be called upon to work in the next world or otherwise have a less agreeable sojourn there. We hold that earlier Egyptian religion was purer and nobler than it is sometimes allowed to have been; but we do not admit that it exerted that vast influence, nor contained that sublime philosophy, with which modern romance credits it.

BABYLON AND ASSYRIA

Since 1842 an enormous amount of material concerning the religion of these empires has been excavated. Not nearly all of it has been translated. Much of what has been translated remains doubtful. Hence here, as else-

where, tentative results, for the most part, can alone be set down. Moreover, without entering into vexed questions such as the relation of Semitic elements to "Sumerian" in the mass of evidence before us, we face the fact that each little city-state under its "patesi" or ruler had its "religion," even though certain shrines rose into general repute; and the "god" of each such state was pictured as the patesi "writ large," and had his divine court and, indeed, bureaucracy according to the earthly model. However, the importance of a city or its king led to a proportionate importance of its god: gods, moreover, could be fused, if sufficiently like one another; hierarchies could be fashioned. On the whole, Anu, sky-god, stands naturally at the head of the worship of dwellers in those enormous plains: En-Lil is god of Earth; Ea, of Ocean. Neither the Euphrates nor the Tigris playing so definite a rôle as the Nile, no god of theirs rose to the importance of, say, Osiris in Egypt. However, the Great Lady, Ishtar, specially worshipped at Uruk, rose to be a fourth along with these three great gods: she was the goddess of fecundity, and absorbed other such goddesses, but also a militant deity, and, again, a goddess of love, or, rather, passion. The moon-god was Sin, especially famous at Ur and at Haran; Shamash was sun-god; Ninib, war-god; Adad (Assyrian Rammân, *cf.* p. 41), storm-god. Nabu, god of Borsippa, yet sank in the scale, like Tahuti (p. 35), and became scribe-god, and "son" of Marduk, when under Hammurabi (about 2000 B.C.) Babylon rose to a central position, and with it its god ascended to the apex of worship. Dumuzi (Tammuz: *cf.* p. 64), a quite secondary god of vegetation, yet, like Osiris (p. 36), achieved, owing to the human element in his myth, no little importance even internationally. He is the Adonis of Phœnicia and even the Attis of Asia—he is slain yearly by the fierce sun, and Ishtar, his paramour, goes into the lower world to rescue him. This is the subject of the famous poem, "The Descent of Ishtar." To the end of its 3,000 years of evolution a "monarchical polytheism" obtained in Baby-

lonia: floating tendencies to see a varied action of one god in the different spheres of existence may be discerned: but the idea of "God" does not seem to have properly dawned: divine names like "Ilu-abi" are considered to mean not "God," but "a god is my father." The attractive theory that the name Yahweh has been discovered in ancient Babylonian records seems unsupported.

Babylonian cosmogony is interesting chiefly because of the problems it sets regarding the book of Genesis. The aboriginal Ocean, Apsu, and Tiâmât, the watery abyss or chaos, mingle and produce the gods. These disturb Apsu, who with Tiâmât resolves to destroy them. She produces therefor dragons and other monsters and attacks the gods. Anu, sent to fight her, flies at her aspect; Marduk offers to fight her if he may be exalted among the gods. The gods feast, get drunk, and promise Marduk what he asks. He arms himself, and, when Tiâmât opens her mouth against him, hurls a wind between her jaws, divides her body, heaves half of it aloft over the heaven, and in this sets sun, moon, and stars. He forms man out of blood (his own?), and is finally glorified. The poem seems to date from the rise of Babylon to pre-eminence, and aims at the exaltation of Marduk. Ea, in other creation-myths, formed the universe. The Babylonian story of the Flood offers other interesting points, but does not enter into "religion" save as exhibiting the popular notions concerning the gods, who are afraid of the flood, fly to heaven, hide there like dogs with drooping ears, and then descend like flies over the sweet-scented sacrifice. Alongside of worship was magic. The Babylonian world was full of witchcraft, which drew down disasters, especially sickness. The all but omnipotence of wizards, and especially witches, originated a mass of counter-spells, nor is it easy to overstate the influence of this upon ordinary Babylonian life. Alongside of exorcist-priests stood the diviner-priests, and very many records of astrological consultations of a most elaborate sort survive. A quaint Ishtar-oracle shows how, if the first oracle was

displeasing to the king, a second could be sought which should satisfy him.

The religion which (as personal and temple names reveal) simply drenched popular life showed, above all, the sentiments of helplessness, distress, and penitence. If, however, sin is repented, it seems because it has brought disaster, and this disaster is material, and nearly always illness. A long incantation exists, intended to discover what sin has provoked the evil. What in the Egyptian Negative Confession (p. 36) is denied here appears in the form of questions. "I am not one who cuts short the field's measure," is here: "Has he traced false boundaries?" It has been definitely stated that "forgiveness of sins" *means,* for the Babylonian, liberation from disease. Exalted moral sentiments are also to be found: but never, it is said, genuine love for one's neighbour. Moreover, the punishments allotted in the code of Hammurabi, not only cruel but sometimes severe for most trivial matters and relatively light for grave ones, and the approbation of immoral practices—*e.g.,* ritual prostitution—show a very imperfectly developed moral sense.

The doctrine of the "Vast Land," or after-death world, is far less developed than the Egyptian one, and appears extremely gloomy. The shades lie in darkness, and eat dust and mire. There is a hint that kings at least may join the gods. Despite the magnificence of the Mesopotamian empires, the lot of the people seems to have been appalling, and their outlook melancholy.

SYRIA

We have to use this name very roughly, for the land and the peoples lying between the Mediterranean and the Euphrates, and the Taurus range and the Sinaitic peninsula. We exclude temporarily the Hebrew immigrants. Babylon, Egypt, the Hittites, Persia, Greece, Rome, poured into and out of the land and confused worship and traditions. However, the general worship went to "Lords," or Owners, Masters—Ba'alim, in Hebrew. So

vague was this name that the Hebrews themselves could use it without offence till quite late. These Ba'als were lords of field, of water, of tree: also, of sun and heavens. They had also regularly the title Melek, king: the more familiar word "Molech" is due to the Hebrews inserting the vowels of the word *bosheth,* a thing of shame. Adoni, the same as the Hebrew Adonai, my Lord, was no less regular as a title, and, accumulating qualities proper to Tammuz (p. 38), and perhaps to the Egyptian Osiris (p. 36), ended as the Adonis who, Hellenized, became famous later on, and, as vegetation-deity, died yearly and was restored to life. Dagon, a fish-formed deity, adopted specially by the Philistines, was a god of fertility like most of the others. At his side was a fish-goddess, Atargatis, a name compounded of the Babylonian Ishtar and the Syrian Hati. But while Ishtar certainly superimposed herself on the anonymous female Ba'als, or Belith, bringing with her the general characteristic of fertile nature, and adding to herself the horns of the Egyptian Isis, and being taken consequently for a moon-goddess, she, too, was felt to be goddess of various places and unspecified on the whole in any other way, and the Hebrews, again adding the vowels of *bosheth* to her Syrian name Ashtart (Greek, Astartê), obtained the familiar word Ashtoreth. Most of these names or titles could be hyphened, either as representing a pair of deities, male and female, or equivalent deities. Thus, Hadad-Rimmon (Syrian sun-god Hadad, and Assyrian thunderer Rammânu: Ashtar-Chemosh—*i.e.,* Syrian Ashtart and Moabite Kemosh). The constant symbol of divine presence, or interposition, was a stone pillar, with or at first without an altar, and indeed itself acting as a libation-altar: along with these, a wooden pole received homage, called the *asherah;* it seems likely that the pillar represented the Ba'al; the pole, his female counterpart; nor is there serious ground for regarding the former as *phallic* in origin. Later on, shaped images became common, the Baals often aureoled with sun-rays; the goddess of fecundity pressing her hands to her breasts or carrying a dove. (This profoundly

coloured the Greek notion of Aphrodite, p. 50.) The worship of Syria and of her colonies (Carthage) was violent in the extreme. It became, indeed, just the cult of sensation. Ferocious ecstasy, including self-mutilation, and canonised profligacy, including unnatural vice, none of which we have the slightest right to allegorise or sublimate, became quite normal, and the sacrifice of children in the fire was quite common. The future life was conceived vaguely—a place of ghosts is mentioned; and the world, as time went on, was thought to have been begotten of Chaos and of Spirit. While, then, it is hopeless to try to disentangle all the interwoven threads in the Syrian religious web, we can at least say that Syrian religion began with nature-worship, and expressed itself in the most degenerate forms of cultus to be found among people claiming to be civilised.

CELTIC RELIGION

We assume that Celtic civilisation spread from the middle of Europe, rich in forests and iron. The Celts went north and eastwards, and south over the Alps, and gradually all over Gaul and most of Spain. In 390 B.C. they actually took Rome, and a century later overran the Balkan peninsula and established themselves even in Asia Minor (the Galatians). It may have been the conquests of Julius Cæsar that checked their migrations. But these migrations, together with trade which from remote ages had existed between the Continent, Britain and Ireland, had much confused traditions, especially where men of Celtic stock submitted to the forceful influence of Rome. In Gaul, Roman names for the gods prevailed, even when the original one was as it were hyphened to them. It is easiest to observe Celtic religion in Ireland, though even there you see it through the eyes of Christian writers, who, while they enjoyed telling the traditional stories, modified them, lest they should appear to believe them. In any case, we find clear traces of polytheism, but not of image or temple; perhaps the

priest was the father of each family—sacrifice was not rarely human. Natural phenomena (springs, trees) not only had their divine inhabitants, but could be directly worshipped, like the Winds. The gods were regarded as "ancestors rather than creators," and if elsewhere kings were thought to have become gods, here the gods have been effectively reduced to kings, or at least the fathers of kings. Every man, medieval genealogists assure us, who is outstanding in beauty, strength, or art, is a descendant from the Tuatha De Danann—"the people of the goddess Dana"; and the Gaulish god whom the Romans described as Dis Pater, is thought to be the Irish Dagde (Davos-devos, the good god), who is also Oll-athair, "universal father." When the gods did not become kings, they became sprites or fairies. Sidhi, the hill-dwellers, an ancient Irish name for "gods," are now Sidheoga, a diminutive, "fairies." Lugh-chorpan, "leprechaun" or "luprachan," a word re-familiarised to us by W. B. Yeats and other moderns, "little Lugh-body," a fairy craftsman, is the relic of the fire and crafts god Lugh, whence Lyons, Lugdunum, is said to get its name.

The gods dwelt in "the Land of the Young, of the Living Heart, of Heart's Delight," in the "Land beneath the Wave," which was held to be, if not interwoven with, at least superimposed upon our earth-world. Our air is to the dwellers there not unlike the sea, so that the celestial boatmen in the story of the Ship of Bluain "drown" in it. A mortal could enter this world, while still alive, yet so that should his foot again touch earth (which he could visit without treading it), time, which had had no effect upon him "yonder," now took its full toll: he became aged on the spot, or even fell to dust. The home of the dead has no similar mythology: it existed, however, probably in or beyond the northern sea, the place of the Fomorians, enemies of the gods and of the living. Feasts and games, the origin of fairs, were used for solemnly commemorating the dead in their great fields of tumuli. The ethics of the Celts had little if any

association with their religion. They were sound, and the ancient laws are said to be based on the customs of the free agricultural population, the Feni. Writers, however, insist on the efficacy of "geis" (plural gesa), which Prof. J. McNeill tells us is "a law of conduct which required an individual or a class of persons to do or to refrain from doing some action or class of actions." Hence it is by no means the same as "taboo," even though disaster follow on its violation, prosperity on observance. Nor is it the same as karma (p. 20) even though men are born with it, or clans have their hereditary gesa; for one man may "put" a geis upon another, though whence he derives the power to do so, none knows. Conaire Mor, for example, was subject to a group of gesa, and precisely in pursuance of his will to do right, he is led to break his gesa one by one and end in ruin. The persistence of this notion of "luck," good or bad, and of the power of curses, along with and in spite of its modification by Christianity, is interestingly visible in the Ireland even of to-day. Ancient authority assigned the origin of gesa to the pre-Celt Picts. Already in what we have said traces of possible survivals from older days, either really, or by contrast, gloomier than the Celtic contribution, may be surmised. Druidism, too, has been assigned to this earlier source, though quite probably it is a very late development.

Druidism has not been properly studied yet, for it continued in Ireland long after it died out elsewhere, and much tradition is still uncollated. It is convincingly argued that it reached the coast of Britain from Ireland, and crossing the Channel established its Continental headquarters near Chartres, and thence spread even across the Alps. "Druid" is a word meaning, possibly, one who "knows well." Druidism was an order of instructed men who taught. On this intellectual aspect of the Druids, Greek records insist: on their political influence, the Roman. Their prominence in worship was simply part of the "lead" they took in everything. They were the universal experts. No wonder, then, that they

acted as "magicians," nor that this "sorcerer" aspect of them is what revived as the lands became Christianised. It may well be that they started as "medicine-men" in the magic sense, used this embryonic "science" to such good effect as really to become leaders even in thought, and then, when monks themselves began to philosophise, reverted in esteem to their earlier character. It is partly because magic does not stand high in traditional Irish tales, that the origin of Druids is held by some to be Pictish. Since they taught "immortality," and probably explained the ancient belief that some souls at least "transmigrated," even into animals, we cannot but be reminded by the Druids of Indian conceptions and even practice (education of a chela, disciple). When Diogenes Laertius says they delivered their philosophy "enigmatically," and when an early Irish Druidic poet makes the "first Druid" sing: "I am the wind over the ocean—the wave of the sea against the land—the sound of the sea: I am the hawk on the cliff—the salmon in the pool—the lake on the plain—I am the spear—I am the god that forms fire in the head . . ." we cannot but recall the pantheistic philosophy of India. Prof. McNeill rejects this, and says the poet identifies himself with all this because he "knows" it: indeed the comparison may be one of those that strike only the amateur. It remains that while the Druids have been foolishly enhaloed with romance, no romance can be more poignant than that of the ancient traditions of the Celts.

TEUTONIC PEOPLES

THESE are at least the "Germans," Danes, English, Norwegian, Swedish, and Icelandic peoples. But pre-Christian evidence is practically nil: indeed, only Iceland offers much, and then Norway, because of their Sagas and the older Edda literature, of which the first MSS. are thirteenth century. The older stories are constantly so Christianised as to be hard of interpretation. It is clear,

however, that there were certain "Pan-Teutonic" gods: Odin (Wotan), god of the dead and of wind, who evicted Thor (Donner) from the primacy in Norway and Iceland; Ziu-Tyr, war-god, and Frigg, wife of Odin. The interrelation of all these is obscure: they survive in some of the names of our week-days. Frey was the special god of the fertile plains of Sweden. Thence, from Upsala, he went northwards: his name simply means Lord (*cf.* Ba'al, p. 40). With him went Freya, goddess of fecundity. There are many other names that can be cited, but they gave rise to tumultuous myth rather than to "theology." The double system of gods, Asas and Vans, marks the gradual victory of Wotan. We can here add but Balder, son of Odin, a Norse god of light, who, slain by the mistletoe, was avenged by a brother born for that purpose. Loki was definitely treated as a god, of "Satanic" disposition—that is, trickily resisting the others; but his character was "elfish" rather than divine; and the rôle played by Giants, Dwarfs, and Elves must have been quite as important for these peoples as that of the gods. Many intermediate beings existed—*e.g.*, the Valkyries, who transport to Valhalla men slain in battle. Most of these secondary beings appear to rank as personifications of natural forces, usually violent like the storm, or are ex-gods. It seems certain that kings were deified, and even inanimate objects like swords and, of course, trees and waters were treated with divine homage. But we must, as ever, avoid attributing clean-cut notions to these Northerners on such subjects, then, and perhaps now. Save in England, priests do not seem to have been a class, but to have combined sacerdotal functions with civil ones. Feasts occurred principally at the crises of the year, and Yule and the midsummer festival leave their traces in country customs even now. There were certainly temples and images; and groves or trees were specially attended to: near each house, apparently, grew a "protector-tree," usually over a well. Possibly the world-ash Yggdrasil developed from the tree of the royal enclosure, or was reflected even into

the world of the gods: the worlds of Hades, of the Giants, and of the gods were involved in its roots, and on it Odin hung for nine days, offering himself to himself, in which we can see a combination of ancient tree-offerings with Christian themes. After a cycle of time the gods were to perish by fire, the earth in the sea, and a new better era was to begin.

GREECE

THE last two generations have proved that the history of the "Greek" peninsula, far from going back, hesitatingly, to some mere 700 years B.C., can be traced securely to quite double that distance. Here, however, we cannot enter into details concerning those peoples or that race, which preceded the Greeks in the peninsula and the islands. Enough to say that in the enormous palaces discovered in Crete especially, at Troy, and at Tiryns or Mycenæ, or at least within that civilisation, a goddess at whose sides lions ramped, a power figured by a double-headed axe, and a pillar tapering towards its base (a wooden pillar, that is, somewhat whittled away for fixing it in earth or stone), were venerated. The dead were reverently buried and surrounded by gift or sacrifice. Into the civilisation of the conquering groups ancient influences crept. Stones, perhaps aerolites, had a cult, and stood for the first representation of this divinity or that—thus the exquisite Aphrodite was, at Paphos, just a conical stone: animals, too, became attached to certain gods, whence some manner of earlier cult may be guessed—thus, Athene's owl; Aphrodite's dove; Zeus's eagle. Perhaps the habits of snakes, living in cave or tomb, connected them without more ado with buried heroes or with the pre-Greek cults associated with Earth or driven literally under earth by the invaders. Clearly, too, the cult of trees was prehistoric. On vase-paintings you can see, *e.g.*, the worship of the tree; of the tree human-headed and clothed; and of the full-formed god. The Dead, too, had their cult, but chiefly as Undesir-

ables, to be got rid of. The ancient Anthesteria feast presupposes periodical marauding excursions of the ghosts: they could be kept in order during the year if, on one day, food was set for them at the house-door: they came no further, and finally could be told to leave (*cf.* p. 57). As for the gods and their origin, they are best treated in their developed form: enough to say that as time went on it was less the official gods than the kindly local "hero" who filled imagination and evoked affection.

In Homer's poems (to which, in common, we think, with most modern students, we attribute far more unity, antiquity, and authenticity than was once the fashion, and in which we see substantial tradition with but accidental modernisations, and which can be thought of as belonging in the mass to about 1000 B.C.) religion is so complex already as to be degenerate. The ancient nature-worship is sometimes evident, sometimes already "anthropomorphised." Let us say, once and for all, that the moment the Greeks could express a "force" or phenomenon in human form, they did so, just as the Romans did not (*cf.* p. 55). The tales about the gods have that artistic ribaldry which comes at the end of a period: no doubt in their present shape these are relatively late: but the tales took time to form. Olympus, the home of the gods, is at least connected with the actual mountain; there the gods live under Zeus their monarch; thence they descend to indulge in every kind of intrigue and even crime. But most of what can be said about them has an historical interest rather than a religious one, save in what concerns Zeus himself and Fate. Homer's humans have so perfect a humanity as to be more god-like than his gods. What goes to the root of things is this: the Greeks saw well that there was and must be a supreme God: this was Zeus (Sanskrit, Dyaus: *cf.* p. 15). Also, they were possessed from the outset by that sense of "limit" which is visible in their art, as in their philosophy. The back of the Greek mind was fatalist and pessimist. Reconciliation between Fate and the

Almighty was never achieved by them. Homer is on the rack of this mystery. In Homer, the Dead exist in a shadowy way in the Unseen: the "man himself" lies on the battlefield: his ghost, "a phantom merely," has no sense and no wit, nor will till it has drunk human blood. Vague anticipations of Elysian fields and Tartarus exist, at least for favoured or specially sinful souls. Between 800 and 700, Hesiod, in Bœotia and no more, like Homer, in Asia Minor or the islands, fixes a genealogy of gods. Again the Greek instinct for order reveals itself: but in the dull lists of names at least the inclusion at the outset (along with Chaos, Earth, and Tartaros) of Eros, Love, is striking. The notion of Force, Attraction, is deep in Greek surmise. The battles between dynasties or sets of gods are important, and the recognition that Zeus was by no means the first comer to the now Greek-peopled lands.

Greece then went forward, not with a doctrine of God, but with stories about the gods. Provided ancestral rites were performed, little enough conservatism was needed. Immemorial feasts—things "done" rather than things offered and not at all things "taught"—testified, not necessarily, we hold, to pre-Greek customs, but to immemorial preoccupations of mankind—field and home. Seed-time and harvest; flowering-time and (at last) vintage—these had their feasts, prefaced by these logical primitives by fasting and eating purgative herbs —thus evil was expelled—and then by carrying in procession symbols of that fertility which was desired, or eating in specimen, as it were, those fruits or grains that were hoped for. Sometimes a maiden would be enclosed in a vault, and thence reappear; the whole myth of Demeter (Earth-Mother) and Kore, the maiden (nameless at first), was evolved. Ravished by the god of Death, she was sought and found by her sorrowing mother, and restored to life for a space of each year. Even the fruit-god Dionysos (*cf.* p. 56) died yearly, and women, waving cradles, called him back to life. Connected with these notions are the Mysteries (*infra*, p. 64). Above this

the great gods were enthroned, yet even they were susceptible of as many myths as their minimum of original character admitted.

Zeus, god of heaven, father of gods and men, master of the sky and its marvels, patron of family and guesthood and of the helpless, lord of oracle, president of homes and towns and people, came by violence to his lofty seat. He slew his Father; the earth-born Titans assailed him and were conquered. Heré, his wife, goddess of marriage, may possibly be pre-Greek, though the ritual of her "sacred marriage" need not by any means be a symbol of a mating of two cults. Sufficient to see in it the magical representation of the prototype of marriage, which should ensure success to human bridals. Artemis, on the other hand, did derive many of her features from a distance. At first the Greek divinities were very vague—perhaps nameless. The sense of vigorous life in wild birds, beasts, and even fish; struck forth from Greek minds the figure of a goddess who befriended or inhabited them. Wherever such a goddess was found—especially the great Nature-Goddesses of Asia — the Greeks recognised Artemis, and incorporated all they could of the foreign elements. Thus "Artemis of the Ephesians" is but the immemorial Asiatic goddess equipped with a Greek name. Aphrodité, too, is profoundly affected by oriental cults; indeed, the Aphrodités of Cyprus and Cythera were but Semitic Astartes. Quite possibly the sensual eastern goddesses supplied the whole figure of the goddess of soft love, to be set beside the chaster northern Artemis. Ares was the savage god of warfare; Hermes, a guide for the dead; Poseidon, certainly, we hold, pre-Greek, was associated with the bulls and horses of the Thessalian plain, and (we think from sheer events like local earthquakes, floods, and such phenomena) became god both of earth and its catastrophes, and of tumultuous sea. But with Zeus, Athené and Apollo are the most interesting gods. Athené was but the Maiden *of* Athenai, the local name for the ancient female deity found all over Greece.

Warrior in so far as she is patroness of a city ever at war, she is primarily a civic power: things of craftsmanship and politics are hers, and her colossal statue on the Acropolis dominated the seas as she herself controlled the imagination of her citizens. Apollo began, one would think, as a wolf-god: by a sheer mistake in the meaning of a cult-title he became connected with the sun. He, too, accumulated almost every quality with which a grateful people could endow him: above all, the cave of Delphi, whence his cult had ousted an earlier earth-worship, became the source of an influence that really did give some actual unity to the chaos of little "states" that made up Hellas. There were many other oracles, but Delphi stands alone. Mephitic vapours rising from a cleft in the rocks reduced the woman elected to be the vehicle of his behests to a state of ecstasy; she gave forth cries which the staff of the temple put into verses that contained the god's advice. Without any doubt, this international shrine was well-informed, and had definite policies, which for centuries it could impose on statesman and general, as well as on private inquirer.

That Apollo put the cries of the "pythoness" into verse, was symptomatic. The old generalisation is not false, that he and his cult were "orderly." But the Greeks were at times restive under their limits and their fate. Human nature always needs a percentage of mystery and ecstasy. Dionysos gave these to them. Invading the peninsula from the north, recognised at first as god of "moist" fruits rather than of grain, and then definitely of the vine, he ended by sharing the very cave of Delphi with Apollo, and invaded the ancient rites of Eleusis. In that town the worship of Demeter and Koré was immemorial. We cannot describe it here (*cf.* p. 64). Enough to say that candidates for "initiation" were, after fasting and other purifications, taken to Eleusis, given to eat from sacred grain- and vegetable-foods, made to participate in a symbolical miracle-play showing the history of the two goddesses and perhaps of Dionysos, and, at first, ensured thus prosperity for their

fields, families and town during this life, and, later on, owing to admixtures of Oriental ideas, gained safety from other-world perils after death. The "enthusiastic" cult of Dionysos, and the doctrines of the mystical schools of Orpheus and Pythagoras—the former taught a kind of heaven, hell, and purgatory; the latter, reincarnation; and both provided magical means of avoiding disaster and accelerating salvation therein—did not officially enter into the Eleusinian rites, but provided easy ways of allegorising and sublimating them. Yet the ecstatic element was antagonistic to Greek instinct.

Reason, or rather rationalism, or both, had always worked in the awakened "Greek" mind. We put inverted commas; for we cannot constantly remind readers that "Greece" was very much of a geographical expression, save in so far as Greek-speakers felt the rest of the world to be alien—barbarian. "Greece" was as truly the coast of Asia Minor as the European peninsula; and within that peninsula, the tiny state of Attica and, indeed, a minority in its capital, Athens, are too often spoken of as "Greece," a most illegitimate generalisation, particularly when philosophy is being spoken of. Alongside of mythology and cult, men tried to find one explanation of, one formula for the development of, the universe. This began in Ionia, the Asiatic coastland, 500 years before Christ. Usually the "gods" were treated with sufficient reverence to permit of their names being retained provided their notion was allegorised or interpreted in terms of natural forces: quite early, however, the idea of God as the ultimate one source of things went not unperceived. But this chapter cannot deal properly with philosophy, nor should religion ever be identified with it. Philosophy can be the map of religion, but is not the land itself. Therefore an orthodox Greek like Aristophanes, nothing of a philosopher, could yet mock at the stories about the gods: a profoundly religious man like Æschylus could eliminate a few discreditable myths; serene souls like Sophocles could contemplate the eternal Laws, God's action in the world,

and use the myths poetically; a tortured spirit like Euripides could rail with deep bitterness against the popular immoral notions, as he felt them, of the gods. But the "Sophists" of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. in Athens were the often quite sincere purveyors of general knowledge, able to argue "for and against" and to teach others to do so. The dissipating effect of this upon the minds of younger men in Athens can be imagined. Religion had nothing at all save traditional rites and myths, both often absurd enough, if not disgraceful, to support itself upon. Hence the Sophists grew into worse favour, among the conservative, than they often deserved. Into this society came the extraordinary personality of Socrates (b. 468 B.C.), who, while loathing the Sophists for their disregard of Truth and prostitution of knowledge involved (he held) in their taking fees for teaching it, was quite as solvent in his method as they were. True, his aim was to find a basis for the moral, practical life; he had the deepest reverence for divine things and no intention even of disregarding traditional behaviour: none the less, his disciples, at least, by their constant airy criticism of established notions or formulas, drove their elders to desperation, and Socrates was executed. Plato, his adoring junior, a puritan-poet-mystic, who, however much he might have repudiated any one of the three names, rejected almost passionately the religious myth-world of his contemporaries, yet not only strained his own philosophy to the utmost in order to reach an idea of God that should not actually dislocate his metaphysics, but tended frankly, when he left Athens in disgust, towards the Pythagorean doctrines and, indeed, accepted transmigration. Perhaps he never achieved his ideal, which (to speak with extreme crudity; for who could crush Plato into a line or two?) was to identify the Super-Idea, "God," with the Good—Good in itself and *our* good. We move towards the Immutable God, by loving ever more purely the Beautiful, Good, True, and Real. As for Aristotle (384-322), my personal opinion has always been that there is a break in his mental pro-

cess. Thus he certainly establishes to his satisfaction the existence of God, First Cause, Unchangeable, Infinite Intelligence, infinitely happy in its Self-Contemplation. And this Unchanging God does change us, because we can love it and thereby "move" towards it, though it love us not in return. (And of course this aristocrat of the intelligence, and therefore in all other departments of life, admits that the "lesser breeds" should have their gods, their worship, and indeed insists on reverent dealing with all such religious elements.) But suddenly, in the Nichomachean Ethics, he seems to me to pass into the notion of an individual immortality of happiness with God and in his contemplation, destined for man's soul. This, however, I cannot work out here. Nor is it possible to describe the degeneration of Greek religious life. It was the result of the conflict between a sceptical philosophy, the invincible rush of the human soul towards the worship of a God that can be loved, and superstitions. All this operated on a physique rapidly deteriorating, and a brain no more apt to sustain a creative intelligence. Neurotic activity alternated with inertia. The vision of beauty became complacency in national good taste. Oriental cults began to have their way: astrology ran riot: king-worship degraded human independence even of thought. Already we have overlapped the Roman period. Enough to add that a Neo-Pythagoreanism and a Neo-Platonism, gathering up all the manifold experience and even erudition that had become accessible since Plato's day, all the knowledge of religions throughout the new world, attempted a synthesis and also an ascesis—even as philosophy transcended the life of the senses, so direct intuition of God was to outsweep philosophy, and could be gained by souls detached enough from earth and its impurities. It was this synthesis that might be set over against third-century Christianity.

ROMAN RELIGION

I

THE earliest evidence concerning the Italian peninsula, as we know it, shows that its inhabitants had awe for the phenomena and forces of nature, an awe fastening itself on to tree or stone or sky, nor can you find the time when the ancient Aryan god of the bright sky, Dyauspiter, Jupiter, was not worshipped. But the unimaginative Roman, at any rate, surrounded his gods with neither art nor myth: his personifications were of the vaguest (*cf.* p. 48). He attended to "powers," *numina:* they were so dim as to be sexless, even nameless save for those adjectival names that expressed their *action,* an action concerned chiefly with scenes of ancient human interest—nursery, house, field. Statana was invoked to make a baby stand: Levana, to lift it: Carna saw to your digestion: Cloacina to the drains. Innumerable such Powers attended to every stage in the growth of crops: the Semones were a collectivity of powers that saw to sowing; Fauni were the voices of which the countryside was full. Circumstances created feasts—domestic, pastoral, agricultural, social, civic, as the Roman life developed. These names, too, are vague (*cf.* p. 48), neuter plurals—Robigalia, the day when you went in procession to invoke Divus Robigus against red crop-rust (robigo); Fordicidia (April 15—April, from *aperire,* to open, was the second month of the ancient Roman year, which began in March. Notice that September, October, and November still recall the times when in the calendar they were seventh, eighth, and ninth months) was kept by sacrificing unborn calves, "sympathetic magic" to provoke the growth of grain still in the womb of earth: Cerealia, April 19, a ceremony in honour of the Creative Power Ceres or Cerus (the sex was uncertain), derived from the root of *creare,* to create. April 23 was the Vinalia, to obtain a good wine-year: the Ambarvalia was a procession round the fields on three successive days to invoke

fertility for them. The year had actually opened with the quaint ceremony of the dancing priests of Mars: his priests, leaping and beating shield with spear, scared away evil and (according to a most ancient notion) by their blows incited the earth to activity. There was also the rite of expelling the Old Mars, the decayed vegetation of the previous year (*cf.* p. 49). The Christian Church preserved the processions of the Robigalia (April 25) and of the Ambarvalia: the latter became fixed to the "Rogation days" before the Feast of the Ascension. But in a house the important points are the Door (*Ianua*) and the Hearth (Greek, *Hestia;* Latin, *Vesta*). The former, as the god Ianus, Opener and Shutter, had a very special cult: he was the god of all beginnings, and his month, January, became the first of the year. Now, in a primitive community fire is precious. It must never go out. The ancient Roman kings kept the communal fire: their daughters kept its spark ever glowing: hence the Vestal Virgins and their undying flame. Even when the very name "king" had come to be hated, the Pontifex Maximus, or religious head of the State who had at first been also the political one, was still called "rex sacrorum," "king of divine worship," and his house, the Regia. Even tiny domestic details were stereotyped in cult: the Vestals had their great feast from June 7-15: Roman matrons came in procession to the State hearth: millers' and bakers' donkeys were decorated: and, when the rubbish had been solemnly carried down from the Vestals' convent to the Tiber, "the festival," say the Calendars, "is over." The special gods of each house, Lares and Penates, had careful worship; but the Lares were village-spirits too, and State-spirits. Add to these the strange Roman conception of the "Genius," originally man's power, apparently, of begetting his like: as it were his vital reality, his spiritual equivalent (not that the Romans had abstract notions like this). The Genius of an individual, of a place, of the People, of the City Rome, finally of the Emperor were evolved. Feasts like the Paganalia (village-community feasts), of the Fornacalia

(the common district-ovens) show the spirit of this very early worship. A feast in April on the Alban Mount, when milk was offered as in sacrifices of pre-wine days, and a heifer was sacrificed and eaten among all the participants, who were, in fact, representatives of the Latin communities, typified and intensified the social bond uniting them. The Lupercalia, February 15, set young men running round the city-walls, striking them, and women, with goat-hide thongs. Here, too, the blows communicated vigour and fertility. The thongs were called *februa,* purificatory-things, and this whole month of February was full of such purifications. The Dead were treated both with alarm, as when on May 9, 11, and 13 they came out of their graves and had to be kept off by a meal of beans (*cf.* p. 48), and with affection, February 13-21, the All Souls week of Rome. They were then felt not only as still members of a family (and as such they were feasted on their anniversaries), but also of the State. Everyone trooped out to the City of the Dead —Necropolis, as it came to be called—and placed milk, honey and oil, roses and violets upon the tombs: on the 22nd, the Cara Cognatio—feast of our dear Kinsfolk, or Caristia, of our Dear Ones, the whole family met at home; feuds were laid aside; places were set for the dead at a meal over which the household gods presided; during the week no secular business could be transacted.

Save Jupiter, the great official gods are less interesting. Jupiter was the bright-sky god, with titles from lightning, rain, thunder: all lightning-stricken spots are sacred to him, all full-moon days. Above all, he became the State's god: we find Jupiter of the Latins, of the Capitol, Giver of Victory, Stayer of Rout: he was god of Oaths. Juno, the women's supreme Genius, followed a parallel course. Mars, originally god of vegetation as much as or more than of war, became definitely "martial" as the spirit of the people changed. Jupiter, Mars, and Quirinus, god of the Colline-Hill community, made a triad till Juno and the Etruscan Minerva, who became assimilated to the Greek Athene, eclipsed the last

two. The worship of these gods was held to have been regulated by the ancient king Numa. Its spirit was the extension of family life to the gods. You showed them *due* reverence—*pietas*—from which affection was not excluded, though awe predominated. To do more than this, especially if you had a "contract" with the god, was *super-stitio,* stepping beyond the mark. The father of a family was priest for his household; magistrates for the State. Ritual was a thing to be accurately performed: all was as concrete and became as legalistic as possible.

When Greek culture reached Rome, the conservative, stereotyping habit was not checked, yet a strain of frivolity and scepticism appeared. Ritual became gorgeous; images, elaborate; myths were written; old Roman gods were remodelled on Greek types. Traditional Latin notions, as of genial benefaction, poured into the mould of the Greek Herakles (Hercules); and abstractions were canonised—Good Faith, Honour, Awe. This continued till and after 200 B.C. However, religion decayed. The very altars were cobwebbed; central temples unroofed and deserted. One reason was that religious rites were performed by magistrates, and these for long had been nobles only: when "democratic" laws were proposed, these patricians found religious motives for opposing them: when the "middle classes" gained entry to the priesthoods, they were men of no tradition. Greek drama and philosophy sapped the intellectual basis (such as it was) and the emotional approaches of religion. The department of auguries and auspices (signs given by lightning, etc., and by birds), founded on the notion that the will of God must at all costs be discovered before any important enterprise, became a matter for ridicule and a mere weapon for obstruction. About 140 B.C. a most academic effort to revive religion was made by politicians anxious to keep the people in control, and by scholars like Varro who tried by antiquarian lore to stimulate interest in dead rites. Cicero, with whom Republican Rome really ends, shows that in the law-courts he kept to traditional formulas: when philosophising, he

tried to acclimatise Greek ideas in Latin dress; in his letters he is seen to be just sceptical. Alone the cult of the Dead retained vitality. Anyhow, the old family life and country life were weakening: it had been the sober, honourable, dignified ordering of these that the old religion provided. Once the Roman heard of new ideas or practices or even peoples and modified *himself*, his ancient worship became useless: where it had supported, now it cramped; where it had met with scruple, it now found indifference.

II

The old Roman world ended in appalling civil wars, popular superstition, and educated scepticism. Octavianus, adopted son of Julius Cæsar, saw that the chaos must be reformed—the old name should be kept, but in fact it must be can empire, and he, untitled emperor. Religion is the most powerful of all cohesive, unifying forces: therefore it must be revived. One title he did forthwith take: "Augustus," which means Consecrated: Sacred. He not only rebuilt temples—in Rome alone, in one year, 82—but caused nobles to repair their family chapels, and revived many feasts and honoured religious confraternities of priests, and the Vestals, sometimes changing the character of feasts from sombre to brilliant. He popularised cults that threw glory on his own family, and soon himself became an object of religious awe. He was made every sort of priest and president, and Pontifex Maximus in 13 B.C. Gradually every event in the Emperors' lives becomes "sacred" and matter for a feast. Emperor-worship has a strange background. We have seen divine kings in China, Japan, Egypt (pp. 22, 27, 34). Alexander the Great introduced the notion into the Greek world after his conquest of Egypt. The Greeks were at least accustomed to heroes who shared altars with gods. After his death the worship became quite open: and a successor of his, Demetrius, son of Antigonus, when in 307 he conquered Greece, received blatantly divine honours as an oracle and god. "Saviour" (from disaster)

was a favourite title of such gods. In Egypt, the reigning Ptolemy and his sister (whom according to Egyptian tradition he would marry, *cf.* p. 34) became even in their lifetimes "brethren-gods." Arsinoë, sister of Ptolemy II. Philadelphus, deified by him along with himself, was "identified" in cult with Aphrodite and also with Isis (pp. 50, 36) and became associate goddess in all the Egyptian temples, with good financial results, since she now could appropriate the tax of one-sixth on vines and wine hitherto given to those temples. When in 168 B.C. Antiochus IV. Epiphanes took Jerusalem, he set up the "abomination of desolation" in the Temple, a statue (we regard it as certain) of the Roman Jupiter under the features of Antiochus, identified, too, with the Hebrew Jahweh. This was definitely in accord with his wish to unite his possessions and perhaps the world in one civilisation, which involved one Lord and one God, and, best of all, the two combined in one. At Hierapolis, he actually claimed the temple-treasures, sacred to "Juno," as his, he being Jove, and Juno, therefore, his wife. It would be idle to catalogue this insane yet calculated cultus, which triumphed in the East nearly two centuries before Christ. The East, so far as Rome was concerned, began by worshipping Rome herself, and her magistrates in the provinces: Julius Cæsar, hysterical (it seems to us) before the end, was accepting, then refusing, and again welcoming divine honours. Augustus maintained these, but admitted them very slowly in his own case. The fifth and sixth months became July and August: the Virtues, or qualities of the Augustus, and his Genius were worshipped even in Rome. Little by little the temples to the Divine Augustus crept from the provinces into Italy: the army swore by his divinity; a middle class began to exist and be powerful, and new religious posts and functions were invented for it, all involving Emperor-worship. But when provinces, trade, and army are penetrated with, convinced of, held together by, one notion and practice, that notion and practice have conquered. In this case it was the Divine Destiny of Rome, displayed in the Empire,

concentrated in the City, incarnate in the Emperor. Yet, as has been well indicated, the tendency led to the scornful alienation of the Northerners, the loathing of the Jews, the segregation to martyrdom-point of the Christians. Both Emperor-worship and persecution reached their climax under Diocletian, even while he sought to model much that was pagan upon Christian types, concerned especially with priesthood. Constantine, at his conversion, was far from totally dispensing with this tradition, secularised to a great extent as the imperial ceremonies were. Still, the instinct that had created the God-Emperor operated enduringly at Constantinople.* I have dwelt on this phenomenon because of its vast and lasting importance. The real crisis came when the Absolute State was pitted against Conscience, Cæsar against Jahweh, and against Christ.

This calculated revival of religion coincided with new spiritual stirrings in the human heart: literature helped the practical measures with its emotion: the Empire itself brought soldiers, slaves, merchants, magistrates home from the East where they had absorbed much experience. The centre of religious gravity found itself shifted from earthly prosperity and ethics to an other-world happiness obtained by purity of conscience and, indeed, by purification lasting well into the "next" life. To such notions a special class of men—religious priests—ministered: of such ideals religious philosophers made themselves the patrons. Mysticism for the Educated, and for the Average Man, domiciled itself within the unpromising Roman world. Rome had disliked Oriental cults: now they poured into her. The rich and adaptable cult of Isis from Egypt: the black-robed priests of a Cappadocian goddess, Ma—they careered through the streets with drums and

* We have suggested above that hero-worship made up more, almost, of popular religion than that of the official gods. The bridge from hero-worship to other cults of men, pagan and Christian, is obvious. No less obvious is the difference between hero-cultus and saint-cultus.

trumpets, gashing their limbs with knives and drinking their blood and sprinkling therewith the passer-by: the Syrian Goddess, with her companion Adonis: the Phrygian Sabazius with his fictitious connection with Yahweh Sabaoth, the Most High: the Asiatic Cybele, along with Attis, and her mutilated flagellant priests, and orgies where sin was confessed and done penance for; and the allied rite of the Taurobolium, when blood of slaughtered bulls rained on devotees till they emerged "reborn for eternity." It is worth pausing a moment on the cult of the Persian god Mithra, if only because it had recently a notoriety that we hold exaggerated, despite its intrinsic interest.

Mitra, a light-god, appears in the Veda (p. 15); appears, too, as Mithra in the Avesta (p. 33) as god of heavenly light: he becomes god of truth and oaths; champion of Ahura Mazda against Dark, and friend of man. His cult developed independently of the Zarathustrian reform, and from 550-330 he is especially the god of the Kings. Having been carried to Mesopotamia, the cult was overlaid with astrological elements, and, after the conquests of Alexander, it took on its final shape and colour in Asia Minor, under pressure of Greek art and philosophy. The adaptable god went with slaves, armies and commerce to the very outposts of the Empire: by A.D. 100 his inscriptions begin to be found. We recall that there is hardly any written evidence: opinion must be formed from sculptured symbolic slabs, from shreds of allusion, from comparison with other cults based on an assumption that by now they all involved much the same notions. Matured Mazdeism evolved the idea of Infinite Time, parent of Good and Ill. This *may* be represented by the lion-headed figure found in some Mithraic centres, but anyhow stands outside the cult proper, and can here be neglected. Mithra, god of "diffused light," halfway between heaven and earth, was an "intermediate" god, but acquired many qualities of the sun-god, and eclipsed Ahura in imagination. The sun's birth over mountains or in the vault of the sky, suggested Mithra's birth from a

rock, a birth later on placed on December 25, the winter solstice, when the *Natalis Solis Invicti* was feasted and when, in the West, Christmas was to be kept. The central episode of Mithra's career is the slaying of a bull, from whose tail wheat-ears sprout, while serpent and scorpion seek to poison his vitality. Among various sculptured incidents, too problematical to need allusion here, one represents the upward flight of Mithra along with the Sun, and his place beside Ahura (?) over the slaughtered bull. At the end of time, Mithra was to reappear, sacrifice another bull, give its fat mixed with haôma-juice to men who now left their tombs; and, fire devouring earth and all evil, blissful eternity begins. Worshippers were initiated through seven grades called Crow, Veiled, Soldier, Lion, Persian, Sun-Runner, Father. The first three grades contained "Servants"; the rest, "Participants." Admission to the Servants (children could be these) was called *Acceptio;* to the rest, *Traditio.* Women were quite excluded. The Patres directed worship, headed by a Pater Patrum with life-office. The ritual involved a purificatory bath; the taking of a sword and rejection of a garland by the Soldier; the placing of honey (an Egyptian preservative) on hands and tongue of Lion and Persian; and a sacred feast of bread and water, unless wine replaced the original Persian intoxicant, haôma. The worship occurred in crypts, with raised masonry platforms down the two sides for worshippers to lie on, and a sanctuary at the end, with its altar and sculptured slab. The confraternities (rather than congregations) were rigidly organised: slaves and free were on equal footing. The extreme difficulty of knowing for certain anything special about Mithraism causes us to include it among those "mystery cults" of which we will speak collectively in a moment. Enough to say that the ideas proper to the Avesta in its later form (p. 32) cannot safely be read into it. We have no knowledge of any ethic proper to it; its association with neurotic Oriental cults like Cybele's, and its connection with the army, argue against any special purity in it. Possibly the sturdy

virtues of ancient Persia survived under the layers of Babylonian, Asiatic, and Hellenist material, but none can be sure. Its association with much nature-worship, again like that of Attis, assimilated it fatally to obscene and cruel cults; its affinity with solar worship caused it easily to be absorbed in the general pantheist sun-cult and philosophy in which the Empire ended (*infra*, p. 66, and *cf.* p. 5).

The mystery-religions form a group of cults without doubt Oriental in character and alien to Greek feeling, which was objective and naturalistic in its expression. They aimed at a social union with, rather than service of, the god concerned. A philosophy, quite possibly Indian in remote origin, elevated this union into sheer absorption into the divinity. Yet the mysteries, too, were nature-cult in origin. In various lands the god of vegetation, or earth-life generally, was felt to die, and to reappear next year. Often this was dramatically represented, and then a myth explained the drama. Such gods were Tammuz in Babylonia, Osiris in Egypt, Attis in Asia Minor, Adon in Syria, Koré (the "Maiden") at Eleusis in Greece, etc. The death was shown as violent; the return to life was no less violently celebrated. But besides this, the ancient rite of a feeding on what represented or was sacred to or was inhabited by the god, was "socially" observed. A union was thus formed between worshippers and god and one another. Thus the tribe or clan was consolidated and revivified. Into this came the idea that after death the soul was saved from the many dangers of the unexplored other-world: its purification was hastened or un-needed. Thus two disparate ideas were combined—social prosperity in this life, the earlier one, and well-being in the next. The method of the mysteries was to create an impression on the imagination, indeed, the nerves, by dramatic shocks administered to the initiate: their system was also magical—the result was due wholly to the proper performance of a ritual and, indeed, pronunciation of formulas: as such they taught neither philosophy nor ethic; indeed, their sexual element needed

vigorous allegorisation quite inaccessible to the average mind. The Roman, at last excitable and a-hunt for religious thrills, began to indulge in them, but even Neoplatonist ideals failed to make them last. A generation ago the theory was broached that St. Paul introduced their notions into Christianity. I hold firmly that neither his personal history and psychology, nor his diction, nor his doctrine support this; indeed, they contradict it. Moreover, the theory is losing caste. Enough to say that the mysteries testified to the most exalted and the most degraded tendencies of contemporary religious souls.

Together with this invasion of emotional religion came a Romanised version of Greek philosophy, especially Stoic. Only principles of Pleasure or of Renunciation suited the appalling conditions in which men had to live under a Caligula, a Nero, or a Domitian. Philosophy then ceased primarily to speculate and became a school of life: in the last resort, it was pessimist and fatalist: superficially it was emotional too, religious, and charitable. As a matter of fact, it branched into chill scepticism or superstition. Yet there was a popular apostolate, unlike Seneca's, for example, who was a "society" philosopher. An Apollonius of Tyana was a "revivalist," as we say, and worked miracles and preached from temple steps: a Musonius discoursed on chastity and on peace, to soldiers engaged in civil war at the gates of Rome: Dion Chrysostom, in beggar's dress, denounced wealth and vice in his genuine horror of the misery of nearly all mankind. Troops of sheer charlatans went about, like caricatures of mendicant friars, especially the Cynics, though some, like Demonax, were noble and beloved. Aristides (born 117), an Asiatic, became the protagonist of miracle-working shrines: Artemidorus of Daldis (died about 200) wrote five astounding books on dreams and their interpretation. This Freud-before-his-time differs from our contemporary chiefly in this: the worst things that the psycho-analyst takes our dreams to symbolise were then, apparently, along with the usual absurdities, the undisguised material of dreams. What, then, were

men's waking thoughts? The clever ventriloquist Alexander of Abonoteichos had an army of spies throughout Europe, and confounded the Empire. A senator married his daughter "by the Moon." Country places remained conservative: and under the Antonines the Court grew pious, if not virtuous; but from 194-235 the Severi ruled and Syrian gods triumphed. It was now that the Sun and the Emperor, alike "Un-Conquered," filled men's eyes, givers of life, each Absolute. All the gods melted into this golden haze: the Ultimate *One* shone vaguely upon the world dedicated "To Eternity," under whose social surface crawled the obscene witches who cut the throats of babies to make their love-charms.

THE RELIGION OF THE HEBREWS

THE Hebrews, Semite in origin, emigrated first from Babylonian Ur, then from Haran in Aram, led by Abram and his family group. They settled on both sides of the Jordan, about 2000 B.C. (he is most probably contemporary with Hammurabi, p. 40). Famine drove his descendants to settle on the east of the Egyptian delta; they left when (probably) reaction against Akhn-Aton (p. 37) left no tolerance for foreigners. They may have departed under Mer-n-Ptah, successor of Rameses II., by way of the Sinaitic peninsula. Moses, who led this exodus, welded the tribal groups into a true "people" by means of a Law imposed on them under divine sanction. After long fighting they established themselves in Canaan, and after a period of group-governors (Judges) they became one kingdom under Saul, David, Solomon (about 1000 B.C.). The kingdom then split into two, and a series of disasters, including wholesale deportations, befell them, under Babylonian, Persian, Græco-Asiatic attacks upon this folk which was placed astride the great communication line between north and south. Finally Jerusalem and its temple were destroyed, and the people dispersed, under Hadrian, A.D. 70.

The religious history of the Hebrews is one of con-

stant upward development against psychological tendencies and environmental pressures such as is nowhere else diagnosed. On the theological considerations involved in this, a descriptive book neither need, nor must, nor can dwell. Hebrew tradition insists that the forefathers of Abram were idolatrous: that is, polytheist, and lacking none of the magical or fetishist tendencies of their stock. Even after the Exodus we see Joshua offering the people the choice between the religions of Canaan to which they had come, of Egypt which they had left, or of their historical leaders, to which he and his family meant to adhere. The Hebrews in fact constantly hark back to Egyptian elements (the golden calf in the desert, imaging Yahweh, *cf.* p. 35); " go whoring after " the gods of their neighbours, Ba'alim and the Asherah (p. 41) with their accompaniments of human sacrifice and ritual prostitution; even quite late the Temple is profaned by cults like that of Tammuz (p. 41). None the less, their literature makes it critically clear that the people, proverbially difficult to persuade, were consistently led to recognise in God, worshipped under the name Yahweh, not only the one whom they were to adore, but the only one who was adorable and as possessing not only a monarchy above gods, but as so *one* that the other gods were " nothingness," and again, so spiritual that no image of any sort must be made of Him. He was, moreover, seen not only as Creator of absolutely all things, including the heavenly bodies, and of man in a quite special way, so that man with one part of himself was affine to the rest of creation, and with another, was affine to God, and His " son," possessed by His " Spirit," but, as Lord of the whole world and destined to achieve therein His total and lasting triumph. This triumph was, too, conceived always, yet ever more clearly, in terms of righteousness: the contents of this term became more and more spiritually thought of, but, the moral life was always under a divine sanction, and " evil " held always the notion of " sin " behind or within it. Hence the ideas of the Nation, and of the World, do not

exclude one another. However much Yahweh be seen as universal in His reach, yet the nation remains specially His Chosen: however much the Nation was His "son," the "Day of the Gentiles" was ever foreseen, whether interpreted as their destruction, subjugation, or conversion. Thus the Hebrews, never metaphysicians, achieved none the less a notion of God, as it were, in practical terms, wholly disentangled from nature-myth and from dualism, and still more from polytheism and its affinities. More slowly was He conceived as the God of the individual and more slowly still as God of tender love, though never was this notion lacking. Yet towards the end of Jewish history a certain ossification of the religion was taking place.

The sources of human authority among the Hebrews were Lawgivers, Kings, Priests and Prophets. These were often in conflict among themselves: constantly the prophet had to resist the king, and often the priest. The king, by marriages or personal taste, would tolerate pagan infiltrations; the priest might become a time-server or a legalist. Slowly an adjustment between the ancient Law and its representatives, and the soaring spirit of individuals, would be found, lost, and refound. This expressed itself not least in cult. Along with their Semite relatives, the Hebrews loved sacrifice. Sacrifice was not invented, but regulated and purified in meaning by Moses and his followers. The tendency always was to see that Yahweh took more "pleasure" in interior dispositions of the soul than in the external gift, and to look forward to the arrival of an "Anointed" who should offer the perfectly acceptable sacrifice to God. Thus the Hebrew always looked forward, and did so under stress of a conviction of Vocation, based on "promises" made by Yahweh. The indestructibility of the race, under unparalleled disasters, never dissipated the forward vision, while it constantly purified it at least among a few. Thus a race whose antiquity shone with no triumphs in science or philosophy or art or politics or sociology is none the less to-day still setting the gravest problems to the world.

Most slowly of all, ideas concerning survival developed. The Hebrew Sheol was apparently a place of gloom like the Vast Land of the Assyrian: reward belonged to this world—prosperity, or grateful memory. Towards the end, it was clear that the just, at any rate, survived, and should rise again to share in the triumph of the Messiah, whose figure had entered into a unique relationship with Yahweh, apparently pre-existing his earthly career, and certainly outlasting it. The final generations of Jewish history show an element of Alexandrian-Greek influence, and a new birth of eschatological apocalypsis: the history of the race, and of the world, were seen to interpenetrate, and the disasters of the people and its triumph became all but symbols of the cosmic cycle. At the birth of Christ, the elements most worth noticing are this apocalyptic, ecstatic one; the Hellenising one (Sadducees); the reactionary one (Pharisees); and the obscure, devout element, quiet and hopeful, called "the poor in heart."

CHRISTIANITY

During the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate in Judea, Jesus from Nazareth preached, enraging the Pharisees especially against his doctrine, which they considered blasphemous, inasmuch as He called Himself Son of God and Messiah, and injurious to their position as sole true observers of the Law. Causing Him to be regarded as defying the Roman rule, they obtained His condemnation from the procurator and He was crucified. After a short space, His followers began to proclaim Him not only Messiah, but as sealed so by God, who had raised Him from the dead. The Sadducees, disdaining this doctrine of resurrection, sought to have them suppressed; but not until they publicly insisted that the promises of God were for the world, nor only for the Jews, and, indeed, that the Jews had been notoriously unfaithful to them, did persecution break out and Stephen, a Greek-named convert, was killed. A leader in the subsequent persecu-

tion was Saul from Tarsus, a genius of mingled Hebrew, Greek, and Asiatic education and experience, and a Roman citizen. At the height of the persecution, he was himself converted. Already the Christians, as they were soon nicknamed, had spread beyond Jerusalem; now persecution, and the amazing energy and organising power of Paul, scattered them afar, or created distant groups throughout the Empire. The Christians were from the outset a "society," governed by the twelve apostles and their delegates; their faith was, too, a Doctrine, homogeneously taught by men of very varied mentalities. It can, taking the teaching of Peter, Paul, and John as a whole, which is legitimate, for they were conscious that there was no contradiction among them, be summarised as follows:

God created all that is, destining mankind to immortal happiness. He endowed man with a supernatural gift, Grace, freely re-destining him to supernatural vision of, love for, union with, and happiness in Himself. In the person of the first man, the race which was incorporate with him was deprived of this Grace owing to sin, and, supernaturally speaking, died. By incorporation with a second Adam, or head of the human race, man could regain this gift. God took up human nature, so uniting it with His own as to appear among men truly God, and truly man. Born of a virgin, Mary, He lived and taught and was crucified. In His person, therefore, and in His life culminating in life's last act, which is to die, He offered to God a worship truly human, since He was man, and adequate, since He was God. With Him, men are progressively incorporated, forming thus His Body which is the Church. This incorporation takes place by means of Baptism, and is nourished by the Eucharist, wherein at the Christian altar men receive His body and blood—that is, Himself really present there. Those who die thus incorporate with Christ, are destined to eternal bliss; those who die "out of" Christ are lost. But in God exists not only the Father, who thus sent His Son into the world, but the Spirit of God, who is neither

Son nor Father. Yet there is but one God. There were subsidiary doctrines, but these suffice. I add, that unless the radical one of Grace be understood, nothing in early or later Christianity will be understood. Enough then to recall that the first age of Christianity was dogmatic, hierarchic, and sacramental.

It developed partly by Christian thought playing on its own data; partly under pressure from without. As a doctrine, it found itself confronted with philosophies; and again, with Gnostic illuminism: as a society, with the Empire. Without delay, through Justin and Irenæus to Origen, and again through the Latin thinkers from Tertullian, the Christian religion elucidated itself. Greek writers utilised and adapted the category of Logos especially, to explain their doctrine of Christ to Stoicised thinkers: Latin ones, the notions of Law and of Army. In consequence, the Church, as containing a doctrine that could be thought, and a discipline that should be imposed, and a structure that must be preserved, became manifest. So much so, that the Empire saw it as an independent Society, a super-people, refusing to assimilate or to be assimilated. Hence the persecutions culminating in Diocletian's. But the second phase of the Church's development occurred after its liberation by Constantine. Then began that era of the "Fathers" or Doctors which endured (speaking roughly) till Augustine. Greek-trained intelligence mused, naturally, on the "mysteries" of the Trinity and the Incarnation by preference: Latin minds dealt more willingly with those of Sin, Will, Grace, and hierarchic government. Briefly, we must say that without the intellectual work now done, Alexandrian (Athanasius: Cyril) and Asiatic (the two Gregorys: Basil), neither clearness of thought nor accuracy of language would have survived, nor would Europe have so been trained as to enable her to resist Islam. As for Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, they gave that Latin to the northern invaders, which also formed their minds and shaped their societies when else they would have brought but chaos. Thus by the time of the

sack of Rome, "freezing intellect, fiery emotion, and melting mysticism"—rationalist Arians, tumultuous Montanists, ecstatic Neoplatonists, and their followers—had alike to be coped with by the historically Catholic Church. The removal of Constantine from Italy to the East caused seeds of future schism to flow together. In the dispute between East and West, theology counted for but little, political ambition and the ancient reciprocal contempt of effeminate Greek and boorish Roman, for almost everything—add, the difficulty of translating Greek terms into Latin. Yet from Clement through Victor to the Popes who dominated those great Councils that set firm boundaries for Christian thought, the unique place and function of the Bishop of Rome affirmed itself, and it was long before the definite break came.

In the chaos of barbarian invasions, social and intellectual centres were the Benedictine monasteries, the cathedral schools, and the See of Rome. Benedict in the West, Basil in the East, had organised the monastic tendency according to temperaments: no firmer bond of unity, no more stabilising force could be imagined. So soon as possible, from these centres rose the Latin Renaissance, long anticipating the Greek one. It was so powerful that despite the appalling social conflicts of those centuries which we quite refuse to call "dark," the best of the old kept filtering into and vivifying the new. By Abælard, in fact, intellectual energy had become rationalist, and the sacramental theology of the period almost ran riot into fantastic symbolism. But the thirteenth century dawned, and with it the most astounding explosion of creative religious genius, operating in all fields without, we think, exception: social (guilds, etc.: hospitals; asylums); intellectual (universities and Aristotelianism "baptised"; art of all sorts); applied science (surgery); pure religion (Francis of Assisi and Dominic); philosophy and theology (Bonaventure and Aquinas). The theory, however, of the "dual control," Pope and Emperor, could not withstand developed nationalisms.

When upon this came Greek Renaissance (*cf.* p. 7) and Reformation German and French (the English political one contributed nothing original), the world fell into Catholic and Protestant, and since separate books are to be written upon this, we need go no further. Enough to say here that Christianity is seen to collect and co-ordinate the elements of other historical religions which made for their endurance: in its universal sweep it includes all possibilities. It proclaims that monotheism which by its invasions, or approximations, alone, in history, sent religions on an upward grade; while its doctrine of the absolute spirituality, eternity, immutability, infinity of God, of His all-perfection, save it from all illegitimate anthropomorphism whatsoever. Its doctrine of the Incarnation brings God so close as possible to man without sullying His purity; and it deliberately turns the full force of reason upon these doctrines as upon all the rest of its gifts. It thus, moreover, does away with all dualistic notion of matter as evil, albeit its assertion of the freedom of will admits the possibility, even as its observation and experience admit the fact, of sin. Its doctrine of the Atonement, by way of incorporation with Christ, living, dying, risen, mates Justice with that Love which none else so fully recognises in God Himself. Its social and sacramental systems cater fully for humanity, which is not mere soul, nor individualist: its authoritative element responds no less to needs proper to humanity, emphatically not self-sufficient, materially or intellectually or morally; its very ritual recognises that man creates ritual, in his life, when he does not find it. Even, since humanity has thriven on books, it provides a Book, or collection of writings, albeit these are not its source. Above all, its doctrine of supernatural Grace, without an understanding of which no part of historical Christianity even begins to be intelligible, and its transcendent mysteries, taught to an intellect always tending to assert that it is ultimate in the line of "knowing," carry a man from the never-denied bodily and mental level, not only to the perfection of these accord-

ing to their nature, but still higher towards supernatural bliss in God, yet without danger of monisms, pantheist, or other. Hence, disciplined asceticism: hence, governed mysticism. Christianity therefore reckons with art, emotion, science, philosophy, social life, theology, mysticism, and co-ordinates these, and, historically, is alone among religions in so doing. Personally, we dare not omit to recall that even so, the focus of the Christian is Christ.

ISLAM

THE background of Mohammedanism is complicated but easily analysed. In Arabia pagan belief and cult expressed itself in innumerable local divinities worshipped "in" or at blocks of stone, or stumps of wood, near a tree (for votive offerings) and a spring (for ritual purposes). Around these was an enclosure full of sacred animals. Worship included sacrifice and processions going (usually seven times) round the sanctuary, but, above all, the feast held at (probably) the autumn equinox near Mecca. Three months' religious peace was observed, during which fairs were also held—at these marketing took place, proclamations, recitations; wars were prepared; and, since Mecca thus became a religious centre for all Arabia, belief in a common god, in fact, monotheism, was suggested. Every kind of demonology coexisted with worship of the gods. But in the south religion was higher, and monotheism is certain for the end of the fourth century. Prayer, a sense and confession of sin, and fasting prevailed there; temples and images existed, and a clearer notion of survival. Jewish colonies were powerful, especially in Medina and not far from Mecca: in 520 a Jew was king of Saba, in the south. Byzantium and Persia, northwards and eastwards; Syrian merchants, and hermits even in Central Arabia; and convert Abyssinians in the south, had infused many Christian notions of varying worth: and Hanifs from Mecca, Medina, and Taif, seeking for "the pure religion of Abraham," accepted Jewish and Christian notions, were rigid monotheists, believers in a future life with eternal sanctions, ascetics,

and total abstainers from alcohol. With at least two of these Mohammed was in close contact.

Mohammed, born about 520 in Mecca, rescued from orphaned poverty by his uncle, the head of the clan, learnt much in his work as caravan-servant, going thus to Syria and South Arabia. Marriage with a rich widow gave him time for meditation, and at about forty he had his first revelation, that God was one, and that Mohammed was His prophet. He believed, too, in a future life and in the duties of alms and prayer. Denouncing his idolatrous fellow-townsmen, he and his followers were fiercely persecuted and evicted from their clans, an excommunication of fatal import for an Arabian. They expatriated themselves (615) to Abyssinia, returned, and preached their faith at the Mecca pilgrimage. The Medina pilgrims easily assimilated the new preaching (which, in fact, contained nothing new save the personal position of Mohammed), and invited the prophet and his companions to Medina, whither they went in 622, the "second Hegira" or emigration, whence the Mohammedan calendar is reckoned. At Medina he learned more from Christian and Jewish sources, set one party against another so as better to unite them under himself, and finally created a religious brotherhood that transcended tribal unity. Revelation informed him that the heathen temple at Mecca was the first temple ever built to God, founded by Abraham and Ishmael, ancestors of the Arab race. This, then, he made his centre, uniting what lacked and was so disparate, foreseeing Arabia wholly beneath his religious and civil sway, and preaching thenceforward the Holy War. Wars, in fact, followed to such effect that by 632, when he died at Medina, Arabia was practically his, though amid his plans for subduing Greeks and Persians he made no arrangements for the future of his movement.

The religion of Islam (resignation) is drawn from the Al-Koran—now the collection of Mohammed's revelations made posthumously, and the Hadith, containing the sayings of Mohammed himself—(the Koran is *God's* word), and the Sunna, or traditions of customs, partly

Jewish or Christian, partly invented as need required. By the ninth century they had to be much expurgated. Orthodox Mohammedans call themselves, hence, *Sunni*. Islam is based on four "pillars"—Faith ("There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is His Prophet"—this profession of faith has to be made publicly by each Mohammedan at least once: it binds to the whole law: apostasy means death): Prayer (each Mahommedan must pray five times daily: he is "called" to prayer; prefaces it with ablution—in the desert, sand is symbolically used for water; turns towards Mecca—when Mohammed broke with the Jews and the Christians, Mecca was substituted for Jerusalem; takes various ritual postures and recites, at least mentally, due formulas. Mosques must have a minaret [for the Call to be given], a mihrab or Mecca-wards niche, and a pulpit for the Friday sermon); Alms (the word for this means "purification," which shows that the duty was not at first purely social, though inspired partly by the prevalent injustices at Mecca. Later, alms were to be private and official—the latter being sheer taxes assessed according to property, and applied to the community and especially war): Fasting (first, one day only a year, apparently derived from the Jewish Day of Atonement; then for a whole month, Ramadan, derived from the Eastern Lent, when Christians fasted for thirty-six days till after sunset. During that month, from before dawn to sunset, neither food nor drink nor perfume nor tobacco may be taken—the very saliva must not be swallowed deliberately): and Pilgrimage. Each Moslem who can, must make the Hajj, or Mecca-pilgrimage, once. It would be impossible here to give the details of the great festival, with its pelting of the devil, its slaughter of victims, its sevenfold procession round the Kaaba, or Holy House, with its black aerolite embedded in the eastern corner; the drinking of the bitter Zamzam well, the race between two hills, once sanctuaries. Mohammedan-Hebrew legends give reasons for each ceremony. Mohammedans can also be ordered by legitimate authority to take part in war. At Medina they were commanded to "slay the unbeliever wherever they found him," and

to "make neighbouring nations feel their strength." It must be firmly asserted that not religious zeal for conversion, but will to propagate empire, originated these wars. Indeed, it fostered hate, and turned cruelty into a virtue, and implied no martyrdom, since if faced by the option of death or apostasy, the Mohammedan was advised by the Koran to deny with the lips but to believe in heart. Details like abstinence from alcohol, swine's flesh, pictures of the human form, and so forth, need not detain us: as to women, the limitation of the number of legal wives to four improved their position, though divorce was easy (on the husband's side: the wife had no such rights, and could be starved to death for infidelity attested by four witnesses), and while female slaves were at the disposal of their masters, their children could be given a regular status. Mohammed by special revelation was dispensed from thus limiting the number of his wives and from marrying outside fixed kinship degrees alone.

Mohammed changed considerably within his own dogmas. At first, God, Almighty and *therefore* One, was "limited" by the "Throne," which created the world, and the "Book," according to which He acts (Talmudic notions). Later, God is thought of as more merciful, yet as creating many men and spirits entirely for hell—those, *e.g.*, whom Mohammed found intractable. Also, He becomes more spiritual: the Book becomes His Will: His Throne is heaven and earth: the "Trinity," practically admitted at first, is rejected and the Holy Spirit defined as the angel Gabriel. Mohammed's fiery angels (Mazdean in origin, p. 32) are good, and immortal. One, Iblis (diabolus), refused homage to Adam, was evicted from Paradise, and spends his time till the Judgment trying to pervert mankind. Heathen deities and Arabic Jinn (malicious spirits of whom, however, Mohammed found some to be good and to accept the Koran) form the companions of Iblis. They seek to scale heaven, and are pelted down with stars by sentinel angels. Hence meteors: the explanation was useful as discrediting divination: the identification of heathen gods with the satel-

lites of Satan discredited them in their turn. Man, tending to evil, cannot work out his salvation alone. Hence divine messengers. Among these were Hebrew patriarchs and kings, but first among them was Jesus, born of an immaculate virgin, and worthy of every attribute save godhead. Another man was substituted for him at the crucifixion, and he is throned in heaven on attesting that he never did claim divine prerogatives. Anything to conflict with this in the Scriptures (often praised by Mohammed as descendants of the Divine archetypal Book) is due to misinterpretation by Jews or Christians, and must be corrected by the Koran. After death, souls sleep till an appalling Judgment Day awakes them; then the wicked go to a hell, and the good to a heaven, described by Mohammed in terms of extreme sensuality which he never hints is to be taken allegorically. Indeed, he insists that the celestial wine gives no headaches; that souls are dressed in green satin; and he dwells on the physical charms of both youths and maidens who feed the blessed on dates, grapes, or bananas, as they please.

After Mohammed's death an orthodox party maintained that whoever won the approbation of the Islamic world was rightful ruler of Islam. Hence the Sultan. Another party accepted only the pious and freely elected governor. The Shiahs, or sectaries, decided wholly for the descendants of Mohammed's daughter Fatima and her husband Ali. One of these, the Imam Mahdi, was to appear at the end of time: whence all manner of claimants and sects. Mohammed's disconnected dogmas and the intrinsic contradictions of the Koran demanded rationalistic treatment. The Motazelites (seceders) inaugurated this about 750, but not till the eleventh century did Al-Ghazali establish the full Mohammedan Aquinas-like synthesis. In spite of Mohammed's own confession, he had to admit the popular view of the prophet's sinlessness and infallibility from birth onwards: he had, till reaction triumphed, to deny the Motazelite attack on the uncreated nature of the Koran. An absolute worship of the very letters of the Koran was thus re-established,

though it afterwards faded. Al-Ghazali restored the popular predestinationism, so that Fate, as we say, anyhow that antecedent absolute will of God that provokes the cry of "Kismet," came to rule Mohammedan imagination and caused much inertia in the faithful. Three doctrines, not in the Koran, won universal acceptance in varying degrees. Mohammedan saints and their tombs obtained a cultus, though an eighteenth-century sect of "Puritans"—the Wahhabis—inaugurated a violent and destructive reform. The coming of a Messiah was felt more and more to be certain; even divinity was held to be incarnate in the descendants of Ali, though this view was unorthodox. Above all, Sufism—*sufa* is a rough cloak—had a profound influence. The Sufis were the monks and ascetics of Islam, though Mohammed had said that war was to be its monasticism. Sufism became penetrated with Neoplatonism (p. 54) and Indian Pantheism, Vedic or Buddhist (p. 19), and led, on the one hand, to a mystical endeavour after union with God, and, on the other, to dervish excesses. At its best it has produced some of the world's sublimest poetry. Since the downfall of the Sultan it seems to an onlooker that Islam is tending to "modernism," where its adherents are not abandoning it for positivism or rationalism; its war-cry serves well for political purposes: it may be asked how far its many converts absorb that passion for prayer, based on an incredibly vivid perception of the one God, interpreted by one man, which was its enormous strength.

CONCLUSION

None, then, need be surprised that students are ceasing to lay down laws for the evolution of religions, or assign the origins of religions, let alone religion, and are timorous of adding even one more to the rubbish-heap of theories, or of exhibiting the old irresponsible readiness to succumb to fascinating visions, pulling evidence into shapes that suit them, as artists adapt a landscape till it "makes a picture," or librettists a novel till it fits the cinema. Theisms, animisms, magic, these and much more

coexist, cannot be put into a time-series, need not genera one another. The mind moves in astonishing spirals, c in no direct advance. Little more can be said than all men experience the need to recognise some Ultin and confess an obligation towards it, the power to ente into some relation to it, and the tendency to express th outwardly in "prayer" and in gifts. Man seems able do this almost at once, by a pure and rapid jet of h intelligent, sensitive nature. What further he doe depends on many things: as to the validity of his reasonings, decisions as to true and false, right and wrong, these concern philosophy, and not this book nor its topic.

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