

Browning). Sir Oliver Lodge says: "Everything sufficiently valuable, be it beauty, artistic achievement, knowledge, unselfish affection, may be thought of as enduring henceforth and for ever . . . as part of the eternal Being of God."

"And all that is at all,
Lasts ever, past recall;
Earth changes, but thy soul and God stand sure" (*Robert Browning*).

5

EVOLUTION OF OUR SENSE OF GOD

"Every human institution, therefore, religion itself, so far as man can affect it—is exposed to inevitable decay. Accordingly, a religion which is not 10 waiting for a revival is waiting only till it be swept away. Christianity has always reformed itself, and will to the end of time continue to reform itself, by going back to the words and to the life of Christ" (*Chips from a German Workshop*, Max Müller).

When mortal so-called man was a mere brute beast he had no God; 15 he did not even understand what good was, and probably ate his children if he could get at them. This stage of ignorance is alluded to in the second verse of the first chapter of Genesis as "darkness."

This first chapter can be looked upon as a symbolic description of the real or spiritual world, referred to by John in chapter one verse three 20 of his Gospel, when he said, "All things were made by him." The second chapter of Genesis, commencing at the sixth verse, gives a symbolic description of how the material world started. The first chapter may also be taken as a description of the false belief in the evolution of the material, or so-called man from materiality or absolute ignorance and bestiality, up to the 25 true knowledge of God, and dematerialisation. By this term is meant the entire disappearance both of the material body and so-called mind, spoken of by Paul as the carnal body and the carnal mind, which constitute what is called the material man, and is "enmity against God," or good. The former, the material body, was dematerialised by the great Way-shower, 30 the man Christ Jesus, in the silent precincts of the tomb, and the latter was dematerialised at what is called his ascension, this being the disappearance of the material form of the man Jesus of Nazareth to the limited human senses of those who failed to be able to perceive his more perfect form. The spiritual body, his real self, the son of God, imperceptible to the five 35 limited senses, always existed in the real, spiritual world, heaven, which, in fact, is here around us, only we see it falsely. Sooner or later, we all have to get rid of our so-called human mind and body. "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23). 40

The experience of Jesus the Master-metaphysician understood, will bring a repetition of his attainments, including all his miracles, but without the accompanying crucifixion or tomb, which were the incidental outcome of general ignorant and malicious opposition.

The deep significance of the Master's life, of his words, and of his 45 works, is only just beginning to dawn upon a world waiting in expectation for its release from the overwhelming burdens, which to so many make

life now the hell that we were falsely taught we might find to be awaiting us only in the future.

"I have laboriously and freshly examined every single passage in the New Testament bearing upon the subject of God's Will, and I have also
5 examined freshly every single passage in the New Testament bearing upon suffering and affliction. I fail to find one which warrants the belief that sickness and death are the will of God, sent directly by His hand upon us. If sickness and suffering are according to the will of God, then every physician is a law-breaker, every trained nurse is defying the will of God,
10 every hospital is a house of rebellion instead of a house of mercy. All the conditions which increase suffering and breed sickness are therefore fulfilments of the will of God, and sanitation is blasphemy. This tradition quickly reasons itself out into impossibility" (*Does God Send Trouble?* Rev. Charles Cuthbert Hall).

15 **The Religion of One God.**—"Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3).

When the primeval savage prayed to one of his gods, for instance to his club lying over the exit from his dwelling-house, he got on better than the man next door who did not, because it was his best idea of God,
20 and he had greater confidence when fighting, thinking that he was helped by some other power than himself. It has been truly said: "Man makes God in his own image." Xenophanes said that if horses, lions, etc., could paint, they certainly would make gods in their own image.

The idea of God gradually evolved, until we come to the "jealous
25 God" of the Hebrews.¹ This race, strong-thinking, strong-headed, and determined, looked upon Jehovah as a supernatural being, who not only told them to slay their enemies, but actually slew them himself, and required sacrifices of innocent animals—such sacrifices, taken literally, being very little better than human sacrifices to the heathen's idea of God,
30 called Moloch, Baal, etc.

"The Lord said unto Moses, Take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the Lord against the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel. . . . And the Lord spake unto
35 Moses, saying, Vex the Midianites and smite them: For they vex you with their wiles" (Num. 25:4, 16, 17, 18). "The Lord met him [Moses], and sought to kill him" (Ex. 4:24). "Saul . . . enquired not of the Lord: therefore he slew him" (I Chron. 10:13, 14). "Er, the firstborn of Judah, was evil in the sight of the Lord; and he slew him" (I Chron. 2:3).

The idea of God gradually evolved until we see in Psalm fifty-one, verse
40 seventeen, that God required, not the sacrifice of innocent animals, but the sacrifice of "a broken and a contrite heart." A still higher concept is

¹ The Hebrew names descriptive of God have been called "lenses through which to see the character of God." They are El, Eloah, Elah, Elohim, Jehovah-Elohim, Gelyon, El Shaddai, Jehovah-Jireh, Jehovah-Nissi, Jehovah-Raphai (The Lord our
45 Healer), Jehovah-Shammah, Jehovah-Shalom, Jehovah-Rohi, Adon, Adonai, Yah, and Yahveh or Jehovah. The Hebrew language had many words of various meanings which, when the Scriptures were first translated into Greek, about 300 B.C.—the Septuagint—were translated "theos," which means either the true God or a false god, and "kurios," which means either heavenly or earthly lord or master.

the later prophets' idea of God, exemplified in the following words: "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hosea 6:6).

Later on we reach a widely held orthodox view of God impossible for any logical person to understand who has thought deeply on the subject. Conscious matter must imply Pantheism, and it is the false conception of God that makes men Christians only in name, spiritual only in empty theory, whilst material in daily practice. A merciless god, who allowed a majority to be eternally punished, who permitted the inhuman torture of his beloved Son, who created beings capable of sin, who permitted cruelties inconceivable, was the necessary outcome of an ignorance that was as extraordinary (when we really think logically) as it was universal. Believing man to be the victim of his Maker, eternally punished "for the sins of a few tired years," no wonder God was more feared than loved. No wonder so-called Christians made their religious beliefs a source of fiendish cruelties towards those who differed from their conception of such a devilish god. In the light of the teachings of Jesus, the true understanding of which is now spreading all over the world, we find that this idea of God is little better than that of a magnified human conception of man, and that not even of a noble man. "After nineteen centuries of propagandism, Christianity is now compelled to apologise for Christendom" (Prof. R. D. Hitchcock).

The Definition of God.—"Let not him who seeks . . . cease until he finds, and when he finds he shall be astonished; astonished he shall reach the kingdom, and having reached the kingdom he shall rest" (*New Sayings of Jesus*, from *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*).

As people's idea of God has become more spiritual, so has their sense of Deity become better. The ideas of primitive Christianity are again elevating mankind. We learn the essence of all goodness, and reach the true, because scientific, concept of this that Jesus demonstrated—the God who is All-in-all, the God who is good and infinite, leaving no room for anything else; not a personal tyrant, but Love itself, Life itself, Truth itself, one infinite Mind. This Mind is the cause of all love, all life, and all truth, and is "reflected in the intelligent, compound idea," man, made in the image or likeness of God, "showing forth the infinite divine Principle" of good, Life, Truth, and Love, called God.¹ Synonymous terms for Mind as God are: Spirit, the essence of all holiness; Soul, the foundation of all wisdom and knowledge; all substance (real and permanent substance, not our false sense of substance); intelligence, the Principle of all Science, and, consequently, the first and only cause, and the only reality. "The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God" (Isa. 10:21). This great turning-point of the recognition of the omnipotence and omnipresence of good has now been reached.

"For I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:22). God, being All-in-all, is not a separate person, He is the only Person. Archdeacon Wilberforce in *Mystic Immanence* writes: "Beautiful and consoling as is Isaiah's conception of God as Universal Mother [As one whom his

¹ See *Miscellany*, p. 269, Mary Baker Eddy.

mother comforteth, so will I comfort you'], it is still Deistic, it still leaves the Infinite Intelligence as a Person, which He is not." God is the only Person, the one and only Ego.

If our mind models become less spiritual we deteriorate morally, physically, and what is wrongly termed mentally. We must therefore drop our sense of a finite, personal, changeful God, and get a better conception of the quality and quantity of universal, infinite good.¹ This more perfect idea held to constantly, in our thoughts of things and people, must alter, not only our churches, but our physique, both of which depend upon our ideals. Of man it has truly been said: "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7).

"Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and spirit with spirit can meet,
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet" (*Tennyson*).

The Trinity.—Theology has long tried to obtain some simple and logical explanation of the Trinity. Life, Truth, and Love constitute the Trinity of God, Mind, Soul, Spirit; namely, God the Father; Christ, the spiritual idea of sonship, the manifestation of God; and the Holy Ghost or Comforter, Divine Science, the action of God on man—the ideal man, the reflection of God—that makes man what he is, namely, the knowledge or consciousness of God, by means of which God acts and works.² Of the Logos Archdeacon Wilberforce, in *Mystic Immanence*, writes: "The Logos is the quality of Originating Mind that forms, upholds, sustains all that is. 'Without the Logos was not anything made that was made.'"

Instead of the many gods that weak mortals now have, we must have only one God, and that triune God must be good and All-in-all. It is not possible that two opposite concepts of God can both be true. If we break the First Commandment and have more than one god, evil must punish us for this sin and keep on punishing us until we return to the Father, whom Paul describes as the "Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. 4:6). Haeckel writes: "To this triune Divine Ideal shall the coming twentieth century build its altars. I conclude my monistic Confession of Faith with the words: May God, the Spirit of Good, the Beautiful, and the True, be with us."

I doubt whether even infidels have no god. Their god they probably call cause or nature. Is their god far removed from the god who used sickness to punish the beings he had so badly created that they were capable

¹ The Greek words "*epignosis tou theou*," translated in the epistles both of Peter and Paul as "knowledge of God," should be translated "full or exact knowledge of God," as opposed to the word "*gnosis*," meaning "ordinary knowledge." "*Epignosis*" is also used in Rom. 10:2, and Col. 1:9.

² See *Science and Health*, pp. 331, 332, Mary Baker Eddy. The word Trinity was first introduced in the apologetic work of Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, in Syria, who wrote between A.D. 168 and 183. All the ancient nations had their trinity of gods, and the Jews carefully kept free from this heresy. In India there were Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva—Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer. Vishnu is said to have had nine incarnations, with the object of helping the human race; the tenth is said to be about to come at the end of this age. Some Jews have taught that God has descended nine times to the Earth, and that the forthcoming tenth appearance as the Messiah would be final. In Persia the Trinity was Oromasdes, Mithra, and Arimanius; in Babylon, Anu, Bel, and Hea; in Egypt, Osiris, Isis, and Horus. This idea was introduced into Christianity by the Gnostics.

of sin and its punishment, sickness? The more purified the human nature, as a rule, the higher the idea of God. That extraordinary character, Napoleon, said: "Since ever the history of Christianity was written, the loftiest intellects have had a practical faith in God."

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul" (*Pope*).

5

Origin of Good.—"Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever" (Eccles. 3:14). "He is the Rock, his work is perfect" (Deut. 32:4).

All the good that we ever received or ever shall receive, must come from the action of this ever-active Principle, the Principle of good. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above [above any limited human conception], and cometh down from the Father of lights [absolute infinite good], with whom is no variableness" (James 1:17). Good is permanent, evil is illusionary.

When dining together, a well-known and religious medical man and a leading clergyman were discussing the great wave of spirituality now flooding the world, and its inevitable results. The medical man turned to the clergyman and, referring to a mutual friend of theirs, said: "It is a curious thing that this is not so much affecting men like you and me, but scientific men like —, who has been brought up all his life as a practical and scientific man, yet what is your knowledge of God and my knowledge of God as compared with his?" This he said because their friend had been able to prove his knowledge of God by the instantaneous healing of sin and the sickness resulting therefrom.

In Hebrews 8, verse 11, it is foretold that in the latter days mankind will not need to be taught the knowledge of God, "for all shall know me [God], from the least to the greatest." St. Augustine says: "God is present everywhere in His entirety, and yet is nowhere. He dwells in the depths of my being, more inward than my innermost self, and higher than my highest." The scholastic mystics say that God has His centre everywhere, His circumference nowhere. Such teaching deals only in spiritual abstractions. We have now a practical knowledge of God and man, something that will help us over every difficulty that can possibly present itself, an understanding of both as co-existent and co-eternal, spiritual and perfect.

The Religion of Many Gods.—"God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods" (Josh. 24:16).

Simultaneously, side by side with the evolution of the idea of one God, was what might almost be called an evolution of a religion of many gods. This began with the worship of the constellations and multitudinous natural objects. It developed into the worship of relics, images, etc., the deification of human beings, alive and dead, and now ends with the attempt to make each man a god for himself. This is evidenced by the false "mental science" now being taught by those who, unfortunately for themselves and their followers, know no better, and suffer bitterly for their fatal and needless ignorance. This so-called "mental science" rests entirely upon a false material basis, and is only the modern and final development of the so-called black art, which has been recognised, but not understood, from the earliest ages.