

Man's Concept of God

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THE author of **Man's Concept of God**, who devoted his life to the healing, teaching and preaching work of Right Thinking True Prayer, founded The Society for Spreading the Knowledge of True Prayer and its weekly magazine *Active Service* with the object of establishing an impersonal means of carrying forward the work. This the Society is doing by means of its publications and other modes of carrying on the healing and teaching activities involved in the necessity for the practice of the standpoint as outlined on pages 16-18 of this book.

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Man's Concept of God

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delivered by

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MAN'S VIEWS OF GOD

The belief in some miraculous or semi-miraculous power external to man, to which was given the name God, seems always to have existed more or less in the mind of human beings, and to be inherent in the human race. Each man appears to form his idea of God in accordance with his development, and a nation's strength depends upon its idea of God. In the warrior races God was a mighty potentate; the Romans worshipped Mars, and later Venus; amongst the sensuous Greeks the

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idea of God was even degraded into a Bacchus. The greater the evolution of man the higher his idea of God. Each man has to gradually evolve his idea of God, starting from his highest ideal and working upwards.

When we come to consider what God is, the only thing about which all may be said to agree may be put in the words of Herbert Spencer : " Amid the mysteries which become more mysterious the more they are thought about, there will ever remain the one absolute certainty, that man is ever in the presence of an infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed."

Speaking most reverently, I may say that the difficulties in the understanding of what God is are well instanced when we are told to have only one God in the Bible and yet told in the Prayer Book that " the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. And yet there are not three Gods, but one God."

The only knowledge worth having is a true knowledge of God, as by gaining this all troubles, all sin, disease, worries and limitations gradually disappear.

THE MYSTERY OF GOD FINISHED

In Revelation 10 : 7, we are told that " in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the

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prophets." This Paul speaks of as "the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations" (Colossians 1 : 26), "the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God" (Ephesians 3 : 9), and the knowledge of this mystery of God and His manifestation brings us "the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you" (Colossians 1 : 27). This is the second coming of Christ, or the truth about God and man which is now coming all over the world.

It is only quite recently that the nature of God, and man's close connection with God is beginning to be at all generally recognized, and the first commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20: 3), is only now beginning to be obeyed. The truth that sets us free is the truth about God, the Principle of good, and man's relationship to Him. Jesus the Christ put this great truth into these words, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8 : 32).

The evolution of the idea of God in the past has steadily proceeded, sometimes uplifting humanity, sometimes causing untold misery. More crimes have been carried out in the name of God than under any other excuse for the innate cruelty of the undeveloped savage, or so-called man, who as Jesus said, is "of your father the devil . . . he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8 : 44).

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Man's ideas of God have varied in the past as much as the religious ideas of the one hundred and forty different Christian religions of to-day. There is only one true aim in religion, that of helping our fellowman, and the different religions are aids to enable us to do this better. The basis of the difference in these many religions is their different views of God. The only proof of man's knowledge of God is if he can, by dwelling in thought on God, heal sin and disease. If he can do this instantaneously, then he has a good practical working knowledge of God.

THE EVOLUTION OF MAN'S KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

In the records of the past, thousands of years ago, it may be seen that the wonderful civilizations then extant were equally advanced in their views of God. King Unas, who lived 3300 B.C., in a papyrus of 1300 B.C., is stated to have said, "My soul is God, my soul is eternity." It evidently was not his human or carnal mind, called in the Bible the soul, of which he was speaking.

The Older Philosophers

Coming to later days, the first idea of the philosophers was that the universe existed on account of the conflicting will of various gods. Thales, one of the earliest philosophers, said that matter in the form of water was the Cause of everything ; he

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was nearly right as regards material things, because all matter was originally aqueous vapour.

Anaximander said that there was a Substratum (apeiron) that underlay water, air, and fire, which was the Cause of all. Anaximenes thought that air was the essential Cause, always moving, Diogenes Apollonates, his pupil, according to Montaigne said that "'tis age." Pythagoras added earth and fire to air and water, and stated that Number was the Cause of the mental state, even of God himself. Number may be said to be the cause of the material world, as the lines of force of which the ether is composed are vibration. Zeno, his pupil, called by Aristotle "The Father of Logic," believed in the teaching of the Eleatic School that "All is one," and proved his logical gifts by maintaining that not only the substance and movement of things, but the movement and change, had no real existence of their own, as motion was merely an illusion of the senses. Anaxagoras the First said that Cause was an infinite spirit; Alamæon that the sun, moon and stars and the human soul were God. Xenophanes spoke of God as the One or Eternal Unity. Parmenides said that there was one eternal unchanging Being, the only Reality, and, as Dr. Beattie Crozier puts it in his *History of Intellectual Development*, said: "The material world, which was indissolubly bound up with it, was degraded to a mere succession of fleeting ephemeral existences, coming into being and passing away as in a dream,

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or, like the images in a mirror, shadowy and illusory appearances, without reality or independent existence of their own." Heraclitus, his philosophical opponent, spoke of a fundamental Mind or Law of Nature, which he called Zeus, and said that the only reality was the perpetual changing of the material. Anaxagoras the Second stated that Intelligence was the first Cause.

Empedocles said, "He is all pure mind, holy and infinite, darting with swift thought through the universe from end to end"; but mixed the spiritual and material together, and even said that the five elements were gods. Protagoras was banished for saying, "I am unable to know whether they exist or do not exist." Democritus said that the gods had no influence. Diagoras, his disciple, like Theodoras, who was called the Atheist, denied that there were any gods at all, and was formally accused of impiety.

As time went on the knowledge of God improved. Socrates taught that man was of divine nature, and before drinking his cup of hemlock developed the grounds of his immovable conviction of the immortality of the soul. He conceived of a free creative and constructive Intelligence, supreme Principle, universal Cause, around which all thoughts centred, a power that worked for moral ends. Xenophon said that Socrates varied in his ideas and that he also stated that there were many gods. In any case Socrates laid the foundation

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of the knowledge of the fact that all we see around is merely heaven falsely seen, seen materially, by teaching that what we are materially conscious of is the "counterpart in nature of the moral ends which existed in the mind of the Creator creating them."

Plato, with his wonderful logical mind, not only grasped the main facts, but pointed out clearly the difficulties there were in harmonizing what appeared to be, with what logically must be true. He saw that the Reality consisted of Ideas, invisible, incorporeal Entities, existing, not in space, but in the realm of thought, eternal, self-subsistent, unchangeable, and numerically plural and distinct, without being successive in time, as are the thoughts that daily come to the material man. He recognized the real or spiritual world and classified it under supreme Good and Ideas ; in the *Timæus* he depicts the material world as essentially vile ; he is unable to think of the pure and holy Deity as manifested in it, and accordingly separates the Creator from His creation (so-called) by the whole breadth of infinity. He recognized man's apparent dual character, and said : " I am trying to find out whether I am more complicated and wicked than the serpent Typhon, or if I am of a simple nature, participating in divinity." Speusippus, his nephew, made God a power with a soul, governing all things. Heraclides Ponticus, Plato's pupil, varied in his ideas and finally said that God was heaven and earth ; Strabo

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looked upon God as Nature. Plotinus, the founder of Neo-Platonism, said that the absolute unity of God was above the ideas, and could only be apprehended by man exercising a kind of intuition that transcended knowledge.

Aristotle, though at one time he looked upon God as the world advanced in thought, ultimately taught that there was a supreme Intelligence, an immaterial, immovable, and invisible Essence with its Ideas, incapable of change, and therefore an actuality in which there was no evil, this being only in the material world. In one of his flashes of inspirational genius he not only said that matter was purely negative, but that the "source of all motion was itself unmoved, and the way in which it acts can only be expressed by saying that it 'moves as an object of love.' It is pure Mind, with no object but itself; it is thought, with thought as its object—pure self-consciousness, with nothing beyond. It is God." Theophrastus, his favourite pupil, was irresolute, and was consequently impeached for impiety although acquitted. Epicurus looked upon the gods as shining, transparent, and of human form.

Euclides, founder of the Megarian School, and, under the name of Euclid, a terror to illogical schoolboys, rightly added goodness and wisdom to the other attributes of the Deity and taught the revolutionary truth that evil is only an illusion of our sensuous reason and has no real existence.

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The Stoics spoke of the Soul of the universe, which they described as Cause, Spirit, Reason, Nature, Fate, Necessity, Law, and God. Zeno of Cittium, the founder, said that Soul was the law of nature prohibiting evil. Perseus, his disciple, said that man had given the title of Gods to those who had aided humanity. Aristo, another pupil, thought the form of God to be incomprehensible, and Cleanthes, a favourite pupil, supposed God to be reason, and the soul of nature. Chrysippus, his disciple, reckoned as gods the men that had been deified.

The later Stoics, such as Seneca, preferred the use of the name God, and they taught that this God was identical with the good of the community. Cicero said, "It is difficult to attain and dangerous to publish the knowledge of the true God"; Melita wrote to Antonius Cæsar about A.D. 150 as follows: "Now the sin of which I speak is this, when a man abandons that which really exists, and serves that which does not really exist, there is (still) that which really exists, and it is called God."

What a wonderful knowledge of truth many had in the past! Yet they stumbled about, never finding the straight and narrow path that leads out of the labyrinth of illogical and cruel man-made doctrines to the haven of the peace of God that passeth all understanding.

The ideas of God to-day are almost as diverse as the ideas of the old philosophers I have cited.

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Swinburne in *The Altar of Righteousness* writes as follows :

“ God by god flits past in thunder, till his glories
turn to shades :

God to god bears wondering witness how his
gospel flames and fades.

More was each of these, while yet they were,
than man their servant seemed :

Dead are all of these, and man survives who
made them while he dreamed.”

As time rolled on the views of God became more Godlike and the idea that man was not at all what he appeared to be, began to dawn upon what is called the human race.

Later Philosophic Views

Leibnitz stated that Spirit was the only reality, and that God was Universal Harmony. He truly thought that the knowledge of the material world was knowledge of the spiritual world “ *seen confusedly and under disguise.*”

The great Immanuel Kant, who revolutionized modern philosophy, wrote to the effect that : “ This world's life is only an appearance, a sensuous image of the pure spiritual life, and the whole world of sense only a picture swimming before our present knowing faculty like a dream, and *having no reality in itself.* For if we should see things and ourselves as they are, we should see ourselves in a world of

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spiritual natures with which our entire real relation neither begins at birth nor ends with the body's death."

John Fiske, the well-known historian, Professor of Philosophy at Harvard and St. Louis, wrote : "It was long ago shown that all the qualities of matter are what the mind makes them, and have no existence as such apart from the mind." It was demonstrated a century ago that the group of phenomena constituting the table *has no real existence whatever* in the philosophic sense. "The presence of God is the one all-pervading fact of life, from which there is no escape."

Hegel mixed up the Mind that is God, and the human mind. He said, "Of the greatness and power of Mind we cannot think too highly."

Balzac, in his *Louis Lambert*, says that "specialism (seeing all) consists in *seeing the things of the material world as those of the spiritual world* in their rational and consequential ramification," and says that it "opens to man his true career and the infinite dawns upon him and he gets a glimpse of his destiny."

Huxley said that the path which leads to the truth was "that idealism which declares the ultimate fact of all knowledge to be consciousness, or, in other words, mental phenomena, and therefore affirms the highest of all certainties, indeed the only certainty, to be the existence of Mind." He also said, "the more completely the materialistic

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position is admitted, the easier it is to show that *the idealistic position is unassailable*, if the idealist confines himself within the realm of positive knowledge." And he adds in conclusion : " And, therefore, if I were obliged to choose between absolute materialism and absolute idealism, I should feel compelled to accept the latter alternative."

This latter now is found to be the truth, and the only certainty to be the existence of Mind and its ideas, alias God and heaven.

Notwithstanding the above glimpses of truth through the mist of materialism that clouded many of our best thinkers, most of our theological leaders still cling to a material view of a jealous, indeed in some cases of a vindictive God. They believe that God has to be asked, nay implored, to do what He always does if man will only think rightly, that is, in the way that Jesus the Christ taught and demonstrated.

Fortunately, as Carlyle has said, " There is a force that eternally makes for right," and thinkers began to rebel from the false view of a God that was little removed from an experimenting manufacturer of aimless puppets.

Benson wrote : " The essence of God's omnipotence is that both law and matter are His and originate from Him ; so that if a single fibre of what we know to be evil can be found in the world, either God is responsible for that, or He is dealing with something He did not originate and cannot

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overcome. Nothing can extricate us from this dilemma, except that what we think evil is not really evil at all, but hidden good."

It is the false idea of God that made Robert Blatchford write : "It is His world, remember. He made it, and He is omnipotent . . . why did not He make it better ? If it is wayward and intractable, it can be no more than He expected, or ought to have expected. Wherein consists His right to punish us for our transgressions ? Suppose we challenge it ; what will He say in defence ? "

It is such beliefs that made unforeseen evils be spoken of in legal contracts as "acts of God," and Baxter, the religious writer, goes so far as to say that God himself will take infinite pleasure in the eternal torments of the damned.

Fiske, who at first was an agnostic, but whose last work was written to prove that science led irresistibly to the doctrine of immortality, wrote : "In every part of the animal world we find implements of torture surpassing in devilish ingenuity anything that was ever seen in the dungeons of the Inquisition. We are introduced to a scene of incessant and universal strife, of which it is not apparent on the surface that the outcome is the good or happiness of anything that is sentient.

"If the Creator of such a world is omnipotent, He cannot be actuated solely by a desire for the welfare of His creatures, but must have other ends in view, to which this is in some measure subordinate.

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Or if He is absolutely benevolent, then He cannot be omnipotent, but there is something in the nature of things which sets limits to His creative power."

Surely every thinker must now see that an organic world so imperfect and full of sorrow as exists on this earth He could not possibly have contrived. God is not only everlasting Life, omnipotent Truth, and inexhaustible Love, but He is the nearest and dearest friend and guide that a man can have, a very present help in every kind of trouble. What an awful penalty poor, deluded humanity has paid for its ignorance of God. How fatally it has been imposed upon. How grateful we must be for the glorious truth now breaking in upon us.

Haeckel truly writes, "If the one God is really the absolutely good perfect Being they proclaim, then the world which He has created must also be perfect."

The Truth About God

If we turn to the Bible, the evolution of man's idea of God is clearly shown. The early idea of God was a jealous, man-like, limited God. When Adam hid in Paradise, God had to say to him, "Where art thou?" Later, Adam having, as God said, "become as one of us," "he drove the man" out of Eden lest he should "take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" (Genesis 3: 22). According to the story in Genesis

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He made man, and presumably the rest of His creation, so badly that, in chapter six, verse seven, we read : "The Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created . . . both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air ; for it repenteth me that I have made them." In Exodus 4 : 24, we read, "The Lord met him [Moses], and sought to kill him," and 1 Chronicles 10 : 14, tells us that "Saul . . . inquired not of the Lord : therefore he slew him."

The idea of God steadily evolves, as the Bible record continues, until we see in Psalm 51 that God required, not the sacrifice of innocent animals, but the sacrifice of "a broken and contrite heart." A still higher concept of God is that of the later prophets, exemplified in the following words : "I desired mercy, and not sacrifice ; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hosea 6 : 6).

Later we come to the idea of God that we thought Jesus taught, namely, that God was Life, Truth and Love. Now we have found what he really did teach, the God that is All-in-all.

A large number of people are now daily rejoicing in a practical, demonstrable understanding of God, gained from a better knowledge of the teachings of the Bible. These people find that this knowledge of God is an ever-present help in trouble, not only capable of relieving them and others of all worries and troubles, but lifting a tired world out of a

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hitherto endless sea of apparently boundless misery and limitation.

The truth about God, the second coming of the Christ, is now coming all over the world, and startling an expectant humanity. "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west ; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24: 27). This knowledge is "the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things" (John 14: 26). He is now teaching all who will listen.

THE WORLD OF REALITY

God is All-in-all. In other words, there is nothing but God and His manifestation.

The main synonyms of God may be divided into ten different headings.

The Definition of God

The first aspect of God may be taken as divine Principle, the Principle of all law and order, the Principle of good. For "Principle and its idea," the Christ, "is one . . . omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Being, and His reflection is man and the universe," man being "the compound idea of God, including all right ideas," "the full representation of Mind," God's "perfect expression."*

God is Truth, unfolding His own immortal ideas

* Mary Baker Eddy in *Science and Health*.

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revealed in Science, and Christ is the truth about God, the divine manifestation of God, which destroys evil of every kind and description.

The next three important synonyms are, I think :

1. Incorporeal, everlasting Life ;
2. Ever-present, omnipotent Truth ; and
3. Inexhaustible, perfect Love.

These are the triune Person called God.

The three next which develop out of these and are of almost equal importance are :

4. Self-existent, unfathomable Mind, the source of the real man's marvellous mental activities ;
5. Divine and sinless Soul ; the only truth-giver, the central substance, life and intelligence of man, round which circle harmoniously all things in the systems of Mind, and which produces the infinite wisdom and knowledge of man ;
6. Supreme, infinite Spirit, the only substance, the life-giving quality of Mind, which gives all goodness and holiness to man.

Then we come to the three final aspects, that are perhaps of lesser importance :

7. The one primal universal cause, on account of which everything exists ;
8. The unerring and only intelligence which is omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence, the eternal quality of infinite Mind ; and lastly,

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9. Divine substance, which gives all permanence.

The whole are included in the expression the great I AM, the only Ego, incorporeal, limitless, divine, Supreme Being, or Elohim, the divine "US."

There is not much disagreement amongst modern leading thinkers with regard to God. Practically all thinkers agree that there must be one infinite first cause that has always existed. This cause must be good as the nature of evil is self-destructive, and if cause were evil, in an infinite past it must have ceased to exist, however slow its operation. There could not be two causes, as if cause is infinite there could be no room for any second cause. Cause, it is universally agreed, can only be known by its manifestation, and its manifestation must be of the same nature as the cause. Hence the only thing that theoretically can exist is a perfect cause, and its perfect manifestation. This cause and its manifestation is spoken of by the religious world as God and heaven. The metaphysician speaks of it as Mind and its ideas.

The Material World a World of Unreality

If there is only one cause and its manifestation, both of which are good, whence this terrible evil that appears so very real to us? What is the cause, if any, of all this hideous misery around us? It is when we come to explain what the man in the street calls the material world, that we get such

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varied views and such endless disputes. This is because having no cause there is no law to sustain matter, and therefore there is nothing definite or sequential about it ; it has no entity, or permanence.

The scientific man speaks of the ether, the religious man speaks of the devil, the modern metaphysician of mortal mind, the philosopher speaks of phenomena, and the up-to-date psychologist speaks of the unconscious or subconscious mind, the subliminal self, etc.—he has a dozen names. It is also called the cosmic consciousness and the universal consciousness. All these are different names for the same thing.

People are not even agreed as to what is evil, because some people, taking no heed of what Jesus told us, namely, that “ there is none good but one, that is God ” (Matthew 19, 17), say that what we call evil is good ; because, although we cannot see any gain in it, there must be a good reason for it, and therefore it must be good.

If you postulate that evil is a reality, then you find yourself faced with the following :

1. As God and His manifestation must be All-in-all—for nothing can exist outside cause and its manifestation—then it must follow that if evil is real, it must be part of or in God, and He is responsible for it ; otherwise He is not omnipresent.

2. If evil is real and not made by God, it is made by some other power than that of God. If there is another power, then God is not omnipotent.

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He is not our Almighty God, neither is He omnipresent.

3. If God made the material man he made him defective in his very essence, because He made him capable of sinning. If God is omniscient, He must know past, present, and future, and must have known that man would sin eventually, in fact that the material man must sin ; He is, therefore, responsible for man's sinning.

4. If evil is real and God omniscient, then He knows of the evil, and if He cannot at once eradicate it He is not omnipotent.

5. If God made the material man in His image and likeness, then God also must be capable of sinning.

God Apparently Not Omnipotent

All great logical thinkers have felt the difficulty arising out of the supposed reality of sin and matter. Believing them real it drove John Stuart Mill to say that God could not be omnipotent. He wrote : " The only admissible moral theory of creation is that the Principle of good cannot at once and altogether subdue the powers of evil. We must save God's goodness at the expense of His omnipotence."

God Apparently Not Infinite

If God is infinite then God is All-in-all ; if evil is real then there must be evil in God or else evil

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exists outside what is infinite. Both are evident impossibilities.

Professor James was compelled to say, " I believe that the only God worthy of the name must be finite " ;* Benjamin Jowett even wrote, " God is greater by being finite than being infinite " and it reduced Dr. Warschauer to try and prove that God was not All-in-all.†

The Alternative, Evil Not a Reality

God is Truth. It follows that evil cannot be part of Truth, or true. It therefore must be untrue. What is untrue must be unreal. God cannot have created, nor can He even know what is unreal, as it does not exist. Habakkuk recognized this when he wrote, " O mighty God . . . Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity " (Chapter 1, verse 13).

Dr. Inge, who was Margaret Professor of Divinity at Cambridge and Dean of St. Paul's, referring in the " Paddock Lectures " to the religious problem of evil, spoke as follows : " That problem has been stated once for all in the words of Augustine, ' Either God is unwilling to abolish evil, or He is unable ; if He is not willing, He is not good ; if He is unable, He is not omnipotent ! ' No Christian can consent to impale himself on either horn of this dilemma. If God is not perfectly good and also

* *A Pluralistic Universe.*

† *Predestination and Freewill.*

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perfectly powerful, He is not God. . . . The only other alternative, if we refuse St. Augustine's dilemma, is to deny, to some degree, the absolute existence of evil. . . . And, in spite of the powerful objections which have been brought against this view, in spite of the real risk of seeming to attenuate, in theory, the malignant potency of sin, I believe that this is the theory which presents the fewest difficulties."

We cannot "deny to some degree the absolute existence of evil." It either exists or it does not exist. The fact that it is not real does not diminish its objectionable features, but it diminishes its power over you, as its only power is the power that you give it by entertaining it in thought. Know that it has no power, as it has no reality, and it goes as a nightmare does when you wake up.

THE TRUTH ABOUT MATTER THE BASIS OF EVIL

In considering phenomena, or the material world, there is only one thing that we can say that is true, namely, that it has no reality. This means that it has no permanent existence, it is not made by God. Good could not make evil. This being so, if we begin to try and explain it, either its nature, or how it started, we get into insurmountable difficulties, the realm of fallacious argument.

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From a Natural Science Point of View

Natural science now explains that the ether, electricity, matter, energy, and vibration are one and the same thing. From a natural science point of view you can speak of thoughts as high tension currents, and therefore material things, and you can speak of cells in the subconscious mind vibrating with these thoughts. Matter, being formed, by the interaction of the lines of force of which the ether is composed, at their point of junction, can be correctly spoken of as materialized thought.

If matter is electricity you can short-circuit matter, and it then destroys itself, thus proving the non-reality of it. This is the nature of evil. It is self-destructive. If thoughts are electric currents you can short-circuit them and in this way prevent their deleterious action.

From a Metaphysical Point of View

From a metaphysical point of view evil is a false sense of the reality, heaven. If you change the false sense the evil disappears, and something better appears.

From a Religious Point of View

The Bible is full of sayings teaching the non-reality of matter. Many of them are mistranslated or else they would not agree with the beliefs of the translators.

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Jeremiah said, "Out of the mouth of the Most High proceedeth not evil and good?" (Lamentations 3 : 38), and as John said, "All things were made by him" (John 1 : 3), it is clear that evil is not a thing ; that is, nothing.

Origen, about the year A.D. 125, wrote : "Seeing evil nowhere exists, for God is all things, and to him no evil is near. Its mind and hostile will, which came not from God, but from itself, are to be destroyed."

Its thinker also must be false, a non-reality. Paul writes, "For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself" (Galatians 6 : 3). Isaiah says, "Behold, ye are of nothing, and your work of nought" (Isaiah 41 : 24).

The following quotations will help you to understand the Bible view :

In Isaiah 34 : 12, we read : "All her princes shall be nothing." 1 Corinthians 2 : 6, says what the princes are. They are "the princes of this world, that come to nought."

"As for the other people, which also come of Adam, thou hast said that they are nothing" (2 Esdras 6 : 56). "All nations before him are as nothing : and they are counted to him less than nothing" (Isaiah 40 : 17). Nebuchadnezzar saw this, and said, "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing" (Daniel 4 : 35).

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The root meaning of the Hebrew word "avon," translated in the Bible "sin," is "nothing."

Again, the word "naughty" means "of the nature of naught," like nothing. In Lancashire the word "nowt" means either "nothing" or "naughty" the two being indistinguishable in speech; "wicked" only means "bewitched." We have all been bewitched, alias hypnotized, into a belief in evil. As Amos says, we "rejoice in a thing of nought" (Amos 6: 13).

In the British Museum are some writings in Latin recording conversations between Jesus and John, believed to be the ancient records of the African Church, and authentic. In one conversation John asks Jesus if there is a material body. Jesus answers "No." John then asks Jesus if there is a material earth, creation. Jesus again replies "No."

Buddha said, "Ye that are slaves of the I, that toil in the service of self from morn to night, that live in constant fear of birth, old age, sickness, death, receive the good tidings that your cruel master exists not."

SO-CALLED LAWS OF NATURAL SCIENCE ALL WRONG

Science has now shown that the old so-called laws of the material world are all more or less wrong.

We used to think the law of gravity was correct, but we find that there is no such law. It is approximately correct for the masses such as the planets.

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Even the inertia of matter, hitherto considered one of the great constants of the universe, turns out to be nothing of the sort.

Dr. Le Bon, one of the leading scientific authorities in Europe, and a reliable and trustworthy man writes : " Contradictions and impossibilities, hardly perceptible at first, have become striking. The disillusion was so rapid that, in a short space of time, the question arose whether the principles which seemingly constituted the most certain foundations of our knowledge in physics were not simply fragile hypotheses which wrapped profound ignorance in a delusive veil. Then that befell scientific dogmas which formerly happened to religious dogmas, as soon as anyone dared discuss them. The hour of criticism was quickly followed by the hour of decadence, and then by that of disappearance and oblivion. Gods, ideas, dogmas, and creeds vanish one after the other. Before new edifices capable of sheltering our thoughts can be built, many ruins will have crumbled into dust."

M. Lucien Poincaré writes : " There hardly now exist any of those great theories once universally admitted, to which, by common consent, all searchers subscribed. A certain anarchy reigns in the domain of the natural sciences, all presumptions are allowed, and no law appears rigidly necessary. . . . We are witnessing, at this moment, rather a demolition than a definite work of construction. . . . The ideas which to our predecessors seemed strongly

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established are now controverted. . . . The very principles of mechanics are contested, and recent facts unsettle our belief in the absolute value of laws hitherto considered fundamental."

The mathematician Emile Picard has shown in one of his publications how "incoherent" are the present principles of another almost fundamental science—mechanics. He writes: "Everyone who has had to teach the first steps of mechanics, and who has troubled to think for himself, has experienced how incoherent are the more or less traditional explanations of its principles."

Professor Mach in his *History of Mechanics* writes: "The principles of mechanics, which are apparently most simple, are of a very complicated nature. They are based on unrealized, and even on unrealizable experiments. In no way can they be considered in themselves as demonstrated mathematical truths."

Edward Carpenter speaks of "The dismal insufficiency of the Darwin theory of the survival of the fittest; the collapse in late times of one of the fundamental theories of Astronomy, namely, that of the stability of the lunar and planetary orbits; the cataclysms and convulsions which Geology seems just now to be undergoing; the appalling and indeed insurmountable difficulties which attach to the Undulatory theory of Light; the final wreck and abandonment of the Value theory, the foundation theory of Political Economy."*

* *Civilization, its Cause and Cure.*

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Sir Oliver Lodge, in his Presidential Address to the British Association in 1913, dealt fully with the collapse of our old so-called laws, stating that "Kepler's laws are not accurately true. . . . So it is also with Boyle's law and the other simple laws in physical chemistry. Even Van der Waal's generalization of Boyle's law is only a further approximation. . . . No ultimate explanation is ever attained by science."*

The position was accurately expressed by one of our leading chemists, who said to me, "We do not know whether we are standing on our heads or on our heels." Another, one of the principal consulting research chemists, said, "It is an extraordinary thing that every science is coming to a head. This position has been reached before in different sciences, but it is the first time in the known history of the world that all the sciences have come to the same conclusion together, namely, that their old ideas are absolutely wrong."

This does not mean that the so-called laws have not been of value in the past. They are approximately correct, but they are only working hypotheses, gigantic systems of *memoria technica* whereby we can answer thousands of questions, the answers to which it would be perfectly impossible to recollect.

* *Times* Report, September 11th, 1913.

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True Law

The only laws are the laws of God which are permanent, inviolate.

God is the Principle of all law and order. Therefore the miracles of Jesus must obey absolute laws. God could not work against Himself. When Hume defined the word miracle as a violation of a law of nature Huxley retorted by the axiom that a violated law never has been and never could be a law.

THE ORIGIN OF EVIL

The question, What is the origin of evil, what is the cause of all the sin, disease, and suffering, has puzzled everyone. To those who say that evil, or matter, is a non-reality this question presents no difficulty. If it is not real no one ever made it—it never had any origin.

The conclusion I have come to absolutely and definitely is that there is only one true thing that you can say about matter and the material world, namely, that it is not real; namely, it has no permanent existence, it was not made by God, but is merely a false mental impression and illusion, in the nature of a dream. Directly you tell me anything else about the material world it can be proved that it is not true. It may be correct or accurate, that is to say, true, as far as the material world goes, but not really, absolutely true.

This at once solves the question of the origin of

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evil, which has always puzzled thinkers. No one has ever been able to put forward a logical solution of it. The fact is that it never did start, no one ever made it, because it is not real. At one time, the earth was thought to be flat, and that if you went far enough you would fall over the edge. Now who created the flat earth? No one ever did. It was a lie about the round earth. So, no one created this material world, it is a lie about God, a lie about heaven.

USEFUL MEMORIA TECHNICA OF THE MATERIAL WORLD

Whilst the so-called laws of natural science are not laws but are very useful systems of memoria technica, there are various theories with regard to the material world which while not true, namely, absolutely correct, are of value as systems of memoria technica to enable us better to understand how to work so as to enable us to bring about what are called miracles; that is, to gain a better sense of God by getting rid of some of the terrible evil around us that is unfortunately only too manifest to our senses.

One of the difficulties in solving the cause, if any, of all this hideous misery around us is that each of the three great classes of thought, the religious, metaphysical and scientific, working along their own lines of thought, have their own nomenclature and method of looking at life. All, working

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along their own lines of thought, have found certain results which they attribute to something to which they give a different name ; whereas these results are due to the same thing. Chiefly from this have arisen the disagreements that have been so prejudicial to the human race. The religious man speaks of God and heaven on the one hand and the devil on the other. The scientific man speaks of cause and its manifestation, and on the other hand infers a suppositional ether as a basis for his calculations. The ordinary metaphysician, like Plato, says, both of you are wrong, there is nothing but mind, or good, and its ideas ; although he has not yet recognized, as the advanced metaphysician has, the difference between the Mind that is God, Life, and the mortal or carnal mind, " For to be carnally minded is death. . . . Because the carnal mind is enmity against God " (Romans 8 : 6, 7).

These three schools, through years of earnest research, have found certain results and come to certain conclusions. It is only now, however, that they are beginning to recognize that God, cause, and Mind are simply different words for the same great Principle—the Principle of good, eternal Life, ever-present Truth, and infinite Love ; and that the devil, the ether, mortal or carnal mind, the cosmic consciousness or universal consciousness, what the up-to-date psychologist speaks of as the unconscious or subconscious mind, or the subliminal self, etc.—he has a dozen names—are words likewise used for

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expressing the belief in the opposite, known by philosophers as the phenomena of the material world. This is the false sense of a personal self-hood.

From the Scientific Point of View

The best way of expressing the material world from a scientific point of view, is that thought is a high tension current right above the Marconi wave, and thought after thought sweeps across the human mind at the rate of about twenty miles an hour, ringing out sweet tones or jangling its discordant notes. Every sin and every disease has what may be called its own cell in the subconscious mind. If the anger cell is clean a million people could not hypnotize you to be angry. If on the contrary there are small electrical particles on the cell, these will damp down the cell as pitch does a tuning fork, so that when the angry thought passes over the man's mind it will vibrate with the lower vibration of anger and the man will be angry whether he wishes it or not.

The human mind may be looked upon as an electrical transmitter, receiving passing vibrations, bad thoughts as low vibrations, so-called good thoughts as high vibrations.

The practical value of this system of memoria technica is this. If you see an angry man and think him angry, you are making him worse, increasing the anger vibrations. To free him, Jesus pointed

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out we had to "know the truth"; that is we have to turn in thought to heaven, and realize that there is no anger in heaven. Directly you have stopped thinking of the angry man and the material world, instantly he stops being angry. You have opened your human mind and the action of God has destroyed the angry thoughts. This, however, is only temporary relief. The next time an angry thought passes over him he will be angry again, unless you use what is called in the Bible "the two-edged sword of truth," and think of the opposite qualities to anger. I think of God as Love, and man as absolutely loving. As you think this, so the action of God is purifying the anger cell in the subconscious mind, short-circuiting the particles on his anger cell and your anger cell. If you get your thought clear enough, neither that man nor you will, or indeed ever can, be angry again. This denial of evil and affirmation of good is called in the Bible, the "lesser light" and the "greater light," the "rod" and the "staff," the "angel Michael" and the "angel Gabriel." In Revelation it is spoken of as "rebuke" and "chasten."*

When you turn in thought to heaven you open your human mind, and then God destroys the evil by means of your real self. I will give you an illustration. Supposing the blind down and a room thereby darkened. The blind is like the human

* Rebuke is from reboucher "to cast out of the mouth," and to chasten from castigare "to make pure" (*Chambers' Dict.*). The affirmation is the purification of the human mind.

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mind of the material man. When he turns in thought to God, it is like cutting a slit ; and as he tries his best to realize God, it is like forcing open the slit to let in the light. When wide enough, in comes the light and away goes the darkness. God is represented by the sun, and the ray of light represents your spiritual self, by means of which God destroys the evil.

Continually in the Bible we are told to “ watch and pray,” and “ pray without ceasing.” This means that we have to watch our thoughts and think rightly. When you see somebody crying you have to turn in thought to heaven, and realize that there is no misery, and then think of the absolute joy in heaven. If somebody tells you about being out of work, you must turn to heaven and clearly realize that the heavenly man is never out of work, he has perfect work ; instantly the material man has work. Then somebody tells you that his child is always telling lies ; turn to heaven and realize clearly that man never lies, for God is Truth, and man is made in the image and likeness of God, absolutely truthful, and the child will never lie again. So every wrong thought of every kind has to be reversed.

Fortunately this watching of the thoughts and reversing of them is the only thing you have to trouble about. Never mind about questions of dogmas or creeds or as to which of the one hundred and one details of the many religions are correct.

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If you will work in this way, you will know the truth. If every time you think, "I wish I knew whether that was true or not," you turn in thought to heaven and realize that there is no want of knowledge, God is Truth and man (the spiritual man) knows Truth, you know better what Truth is, and later you will be able to prove your knowledge of Truth.

From the Metaphysical Point of View

From the metaphysical point of view, you can speak of evil as being a false sense. If you change this false sense the thing changes and the evil disappears, when something better appears, until ultimately all evil has disappeared.

In other words, from a metaphysical point of view, things are just as we think. The practical value of this system of memoria technica is that we must think good thoughts instead of evil thoughts. This is the covenant between God and man stated by Moses in such emphatic terms, if you think good—if you have only one God, good—you will get good. So, if you think evil you will get evil. If you have one hundred and one gods you will have one hundred and one evils. But when you want to bring about so-called good you must not think lies, and when ill try to think that you are well. You must not even think of the so-called good seen around us, as there is no real good in the material world. All the good is part of heaven,

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and matter merely hides it from us. Jesus himself said, "Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God" (Matthew 19:17). You have to think of absolute good. You have to think of an ideal, perfect world, the highest good that you can possibly imagine, namely, to think of what has been called God and heaven. This is a mental world, the world of reality, in which all is perfect because governed by a perfect God. The Apostle John speaks of knowing *ἡ αλεθεια*, which means "the absolute truth" of God and man, as opposed to *αλεθεια* "the relative truth" or "so-called truth" of the material world, none of which is really true.

From the Religious Point of View

Looked at from a religious point of view it may be said that we are tempted into all our troubles not by a person, but by impersonal evil, alias the evil thoughts that unfortunately are always more or less attacking us, until we learn how to pray rightly and so protect ourselves. You can look upon evil as something brought about by wrong thinking, and you can look upon the action of God as destroying evil when man prays. The religious world looks upon evil as real. If it were real it could not be destroyed by God, because if it be real it was made by God, and God cannot destroy anything that He made, as God "created all things, that they might have their being" (Wisdom of

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Solomon, 1: 14). The only devil or evil are the evil thoughts, and the only hell the mental state and experiences resulting therefrom.

If God made disease, or uses it as a method of punishing us, thereby bringing us as it is called nearer to Him, we have no right to take drugs to get well. The more diseased we are the better. The ordinary religious man not only tries hard to prevent God punishing him but says that a good man at death reaches heaven. Nevertheless, nearly all good men do their very best to try and prevent God taking them into heaven, preferring to remain in this hell of a material world. How full of illogical nonsense we are !

Hypnotized Into Our Troubles

We are hypnotized into our troubles by the evil thoughts that sway us. I once saw Kennedy hypnotize twenty or thirty people to believe that they were in a forest with wild beasts around. Their fear was something terrific. They jumped on to the chairs and tables, hid behind doors and showed every symptom of extreme fear, staring intensely at empty spots, where evidently they appeared to see the beasts.

On another occasion he said to twenty or thirty people, "When I clap my hands, you will all think that you have a red-hot coal in your boots ; when I clap my hands again, you will know you have not." He clapped his hands, and the variety of ways

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shown in which a man can express pain was extraordinary. They tore off their boots, one went whizzing over my head at the rate of about thirty miles an hour. Some flung themselves down, some hopped about ; they screamed and yelled ; tears poured down the faces of some, while others sat silent with a look of terrible pain on their faces. He then clapped his hands and there was dead silence. In a moment they began to laugh as they looked about for their shoes and stockings, which they had thrown away all over the place.

The value of this point of view is that when next you see two men fighting, it will be much easier to stop them when you recognize that there are no more two men fighting than there were the wild beasts in that room. With the wild beasts, however, instead of all seeing them, only a certain number were hypnotized, and it appeared as if a man, Kennedy, was necessary, whereas Kennedy was just as much hypnotized as the others. In the same way, the next time you are in pain, it is much easier to get rid of it when you know that the pain is no more real than the pain which those men had from the imaginary red-hot coals. It is equally a mental illusion.

The Material World a Dream

One method of looking upon phenomena or the material world is that it is simply a dream ; for, as we know, there is nothing to distinguish between

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what we are conscious of when we are what is called awake and what we appear to be conscious of when we are what is called dreaming. If we dreamt a continuous dream day after day for twenty-three hours and were awake for one hour, we would call the dream world the real world and the waking state we should call the dream.

The difficulty in all the above presentations is : Who or what is thinking these false thoughts? Who is it that has the false sense or is the dreamer? The real spiritual man made in the image and likeness of God could not have such terrible dreams, or even dream, being perfect. The thinker, therefore, must be false and a non-reality, a dream person, just as much a part of the dream as the things that appear to be dreamt. The material world, therefore, must be "a dream without a dreamer." Buddha said "Self is an error and illusion, a dream. Open your eyes and awake. See things as they are and you will be comforted." In the Second Edition of *Life Understood*, Note E, page 563, I give many statements of Buddha which show that he fully understood that the material world was "a mirage, a shadow, a dream," and that a knowledge of the truth alone sets us free. "There is no saviour in the world except the truth."

The Most Accurate View

I will now put before you what to me is the most practical working hypothesis, and one that, although

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not true, may be spoken of as accurate, in that it implies no life, power, or reality to matter.

Shortly the position is this. Heaven is no far off, unknown place which we reach by death, but is a perfect state of divine consciousness. Mathematically it is a world of four dimensions, of which we see only three, and therefore see it all wrongly. The fourth dimension is infinity, which absorbs the other three. In heaven there are no limitations. All the love, life, truth, wisdom, joy, knowledge and beauty that we see around us is real, part of heaven. We have been humbugged, fooled and hypnotised into believing ourselves to be material beings in a material world, liable to sin, disease, troubles, limitations, and finally death. There is not a word of truth in it. Man is now, always was, and always will be, a perfect being, in a perfect world, governed by a perfect God. Paul and John speak of being "in Christ." This does not mean in the man Jesus, but it means that we—our real spiritual selves—are in heaven, and were and always will be part of the highest portion of God, part of God's consciousness, by means of which God thinks, and works, and acts.

This explains the statements in Genesis that man was made in the image and likeness of God, and the constant reiteration throughout the Bible that we are the sons of God. Hosea, speaking of the present time, said, "It shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God" (Hosea 1: 10).

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John said " Beloved, now are we the sons of God " (I John 3 : 2). Jesus quoted the Psalmist's words " Ye are gods," and drove it home by adding " and the scripture cannot be broken." Yet He said, " Ye are of your father the devil." He " abode not in the truth, because there is no truth [reality*] in him. When he speaketh a [of the*] lie, he speaketh of his own : for he is a liar, and the father of it " (John 8: 44). This is because all the matter and its attendants, sin, disease, worry, troubles and limitations, that tempt the mortal to believe in a power other than that of God, are of the devil, namely devilish. They can be best described as a series of cinematographic pictures that flash by at the rate of about twenty miles an hour, and veil the glorious reality, which is a perfect state of consciousness in which we, our real selves, now exist.

Time a Limitation of the Human Mind

A million years ago the whole material world, past, present, and future, existed as far as it ever can be said to exist, in the form of these cinematographic pictures. What is called time is merely due to the finite capacity of the material man, whereby he only sees one of these cinematographic pictures at a time, one following after another. The so-called evolution of the material world is

* These are more accurate translations.

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only the successive appearance of these different cinematographic pictures.

The reason why I think this is a better way of looking upon what is called the material world is that it is nearer to the fact that the material world has no reality, as in this view of the cinematographic pictures as a working hypothesis, the only movement is that of the pictures appearing to pass. The figures do not move. As a rule even the original from which an ordinary cinema film is taken is not true, but merely made up, a fake.

The Material World Only a Series of Cinematographic Pictures

This view of the material world as a series of cinematographic pictures is easy to understand, if you look upon the pictures as an immense film, laid out before you. Far away on the left, in the immensity of so-called time, there is nothing but the lines of force, at right angles, of which the ether is composed ("suppositional evil"); nearer to you are the pictures containing the lines of force with the electrons, hitherto considered the smallest particles of matter, forming at certain places where these lines of force cross—not everywhere; nearer still you see these electrons massing together as aqueous vapour, of which the whole of the material world—infinite in terms of so-called space—at one time consisted. Then, there is an appearance of revolution and a breaking away of masses of this

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aqueous vapour from the main bodies, and a subsequent breaking away of smaller masses from the detached portions. Later come the pictures of each of these masses of aqueous vapour commencing to revolve and slowly, over æons of time, gradually consolidating into more solid matter in the form of the various constellations.

The general impression is that the earth was formed out of fiery vapour. This is not so. A few years ago I had to introduce Sir Robert Ball when he gave his lecture on comets at the Queen's Hall. We had half an hour's talk together before the lecture, at the end of which he said, "I know of nothing that goes to show that your theory is wrong."

Ultimately, we see on the film what is called the earth, one of an infinite number of so-called material worlds, a great watery mass ("elementary latent error"); then this begins to contract, mineral life begins to form, and ultimately in places we see solid matter ("visible error") appearing above the water. Then over multitudinous ages you look along the cinematographic pictures with the different forms of mineral life appearing, gradually getting higher and more complicated in structure until, no one knowing where one ends and the other begins, we come to the lowest form of vegetable life. And so we pass along the countless pictures where this vegetable life may be seen as gradually improving until again we come to the imaginary

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dividing line—as actually there is none—where the plant life merges into the animal and the commencement of the evolution of animals is said to start. In time, through innumerable ages of cinematographic pictures, we come to the antediluvian periods of which there is so little record. The evolution of man from the lowest form of animals, through the amœba, worm, reptile, mammal, and Catarrhine ape, as accepted by men such as Darwin, Wallace, and other intellectual giants, there is no necessity for setting out.

Ultimately, on these cinematographic pictures appear the lowest known men. According to the investigations now being carried on by those capable of what is called reading the Acachic Records, or thoughts of the past, which is but seeing these cinematographic pictures, the lowest known men are those of the now submerged continent of Lemuria, which is said to have extended from Madagascar on the one side to Ceylon on the other. Here those who have been investigating and reading these cinematographic pictures of the past state that men were gigantic in size, some ten to twelve feet in height, and were practically mere wild beasts, inter-marrying with animals. I can find but little trace of these semi-animals, unless one goes to the old Irish records, where the inhabitants are spoken of as practically wild beasts, a race of demons or giants, and are described as monsters in size and hideous in shape, many being footless and handless,

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whilst others had the heads of animals. These were called Formoracs.

In the above explanation we have been looking upon these pictures as on one long film, but in *Life Understood** I have explained in detail that the material world consists of a succession of groups of these cinematographic pictures. These groups correspond to successive periods, each consisting of a series of pictures, and each group extending over a gradually diminishing amount of time.

SUCCESSIVE PERIODS OF HISTORY

These cinematographic pictures are the "mist" that "went up from the earth" (Genesis 2: 6), and they hide the beauties of heaven from us. As time goes on these pictures pass in review before us, each group of pictures being a repetition of the same events, false views of the real world, seen as what is called successive periods of history, and recognized as such by students of the past. Whilst these periods are more or less different, they coincide in their main features, a steady improvement for the better in the cinematographic pictures taking place as time goes on, and more and more the mist of

* *Life Understood*. Deals with our responsibility as citizens of a thinking world to understand the bearing of Christian metaphysics on thought. It explains from a natural science standpoint the non-reality of matter with its accompanying sin, sickness, disease and death, and shows the way in which these may be overcome and the world of reality—God's world—brought to light in practical demonstration.

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matter is destroyed, so that we see heaven more as it really is.

Each period steadily reduces in length of time. For instance, let us take, merely arbitrarily, the first period as extending from the apparent first start of the lines of force until the time they begin to roll up into electrons. This period probably extended over millions of millions of years. Then let us take the second period, as lasting from the end of the first period until the electrons commenced to mass together and form aqueous vapour, say, hundreds of thousands of millions of years. The third period might be taken from the formation of this aqueous vapour up to the time when it began to revolve and to break off into separate portions, ultimately contracting and forming the separate worlds. This may be said to last for tens of thousands of millions of years. The fourth period might extend until the production of the lowest form of mineral life, say, thousands of millions of years ; and the fifth from the lowest form of mineral life, on the one hand, to the highest form of mineral and lowest form of vegetable life on the other, say, hundreds of millions of years. As quoted by Professor Winchell,* Reade estimates 500,† and Lyell 240 million years since sedimentation started in Europe. Houghton puts the sedimentary age at

* *World Life*, p. 179.

† Address, Liverpool Geological Society, 1876.

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11,700,000, Professor Winchell at 37,000,000 years.* Men differ almost incredibly about the length of the different periods. For instance, Belt estimates that 20,000 years have elapsed since the glacial period, Hume 80,000, and Croll 240,000. Yet men have existed in more southern regions, Professor Winchell says, "in times remotely pre-glacial."

The sixth period let us take, say, as extending from the commencement of vegetable life until animal life became apparent, say, millions of years. The seventh, the evolution of animal life up to the lowest form of distinct human life, say, hundreds of thousands of years. The eighth, from that time until now, say, many tens of thousands of years. Anthropology gives man fully 100,000 years.

Now, in the same manner, let us assume as the last period but two, the forty-four years from A.D. 1866, the date indicated in the Bible as that of the second coming of Christ, say, to December 3rd, 1910, the date taken as showing the loosing of the devil; then, say, the last period but one, from that date to December 3rd, 1917, as the final seven years of evil; and then for the final period, the forty-five hours from December 3rd, 1917, thus working the idea out to a logical conclusion.

The above periods are purely arbitrary, but give an idea of how they keep on steadily reducing in length, as so-called time continues.

* *World Life*, p. 367.

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Most people have seen the transformation scene at a pantomime. At first all is darkness and gloom on the stage. This corresponds to the period when the lines of force alone were apparent, the nearest of the veils hiding heaven from us. Then one by one the intervening gauze curtains are lifted, and gradually the light from the stage behind pierces through, until we can even see dimly the appearance of something moving behind, corresponding, let us say, to the appearance of animals. Then even the colours appear, corresponding to the appearance of man ; and, finally, when the last veil has lifted, we see the full beauty of the transformation scene.

THE SO-CALLED EVOLUTION OF THE MATERIAL WORLD

Let us imagine that many millions of years ago we were standing looking at heaven, and in front of us were these numerous veils—these material cinematographic films of gradually shortening lengths, each one behind the other—hiding the perfect world from us. The nearest to us would be the first period I have mentioned, and this, consisting solely of lines of force, would extend out a tremendous distance right and left, corresponding to vast periods of time. The second, which would not extend quite so far, would contain the electrons, the third only aqueous vapour and so on. As these films receded from us their length would gradually reduce,

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corresponding to the reducing periods of time, until the last one of all would be of a length representing only the final forty-five hours.

Intellectual Meaning of the First Chapter of Genesis

Every passage from the Bible has three meanings—the spiritual, the material, and the intellectual. The spiritual meaning of the 1st chapter of Genesis is an inadequate description of reality, called heaven. The material rendering is a description of how the material world was formed. The third, or intellectual meaning, is a detailed and accurate description of the gradual lifting of these veils—namely, the evolution of the world from the darkness that “was upon the face of the deep” (Genesis 1 : 2), ending with the completion of the action of God in destroying all evil when “He rested on the seventh day from all his work” (Genesis 2 : 2).

Whilst at first we were looking at heaven through all these many different veils, each one being down, heaven to us would be what is spoken of in the 2nd verse of Genesis as “without form and void,” as it would only appear as lines of force, one impossible to distinguish from the other.

As time went on, the film containing only the lines of force may be said to be lifted up, and we could then see heaven as something a little more defined—namely, as electrons, “the darkness.” Then the length of film would go on lifting, or we may call it rolling up from the side ; the aqueous

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vapour then visible could be spoken of by the words that follow : " was upon the face of the deep." Later, we would see something definite—namely, the mineral life ; then we would see slight movements in the form of the lowest vegetable life, and later on the highest vegetable life or earliest animal life, as they are practically the same. Later, during the mammoth age, instead of seeing the spiritual beings in heaven, in a glorious spiritual universe, we would see them as gigantic, terrible animals and horrible flying reptiles—the origin of dragons—walking about, preying upon each other in a dreary, swamp-like world. Later, man seems to have been seen as half human being and half animal, about twelve feet in height, one preying on another. Hence, no doubt, the many tales of Satyrs, Centaurs, etc., which abound in ancient literature. Then film after film would pass, and we would see everything more and more like the reality, until we came to the 3rd, 4th and 5th verses in Genesis—namely, conscience evolved in man, and he recognized the difference between the good, called " light," and the evil, called " night." Then, as the rolling up of the films continued, the human beings appear to have more wisdom, more activity, greater love. In time, the meaning of the 6th verse became evident, and " the firmament divided the waters "—namely, man began to obtain spiritual understanding. As he gained the understanding of the firmament, called heaven, mentioned in the 8th

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verse, he began to understand what prayer was, and the 11th and 12th verses show how he began to obtain the results of prayer. So the view of heaven steadily improved, or, rather, ceased to be quite so bad, not so hidden, until we came to the portion of the film that represented the eighteenth century. In front of us, hiding heaven, a few hundred years ago, appeared the pictures of ordinary human beings, but cruel, delighting in bear-baiting, cock-fighting, etc.

Ultimately, as shown in verse 16, man gained a knowledge of the "two great lights; the greater light to rule the day"—namely, the affirmation, or realization of the perfection of God and heaven, which purifies and improves the human mind, so bringing more light to us; "and the lesser light to rule the night," the denial, or denial of the existence of evil in heaven, which destroys the night—namely, the darkness or evil. Verse 17 shows these were set "in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth"—namely, to improve our spiritual understanding, and to enable us, as shown in verse 18, "to divide the light from the darkness," the real good of heaven from the evil and so-called good of the material world. Then came the winged fowl, as mentioned in verse 21—namely, the uplifted thoughts, "holy thoughts winged with Love" (Mary Baker Eddy).

As the films continue to disappear, everything seen would steadily improve, until comparatively

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few films veiled heaven ; as at present, when we see human beings, not as a whole cruel, for the majority are unselfish towards their fellow-men, if they can be so without prejudicing themselves. No longer is there only slimy vegetation, rank grass, and stagnant pools, but luxuriant trees, beautiful grasses, and lovely flowers give us happiness ; even the animal life is seen more varied, more graceful, more docile and useful to humanity. This is typified in verses 24 and 25 where " God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and God saw that it was good."

In verses 26 to 28 we read the description of man in the image and likeness of God, who had " dominion over . . . every living thing that moveth upon the earth." This period is now coming all over the world ; man is beginning to recognize that he is divine, " the wisdom and power of God," with infinite power to destroy evil of every kind.

The Coming Great World Change

Finally, the last of all the veils, the one representing the forty-five hour period, will pass away amidst rejoicing, and, freed from the mist of materiality, the mist that " went up . . . from the earth," we will see heaven with all its beauties, glorious ideas of God, from the least to the greatest, the greatest being man, God's consciousness. In

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verse 31 we read, "God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good"; and in chapter 2, verses 2 and 3, "on the seventh day God ended his work. . . . And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work." This means that the work of destroying evil, these cinematographic pictures, is ended. The veils are all lifted, and heaven, as it really is, appears to open to the human consciousness, with the disappearance for ever of all matter, and its inevitable accompaniments—sin, disease, worries, troubles and limitations. Then all men will seem to wake up and find themselves perfect beings in a perfect world, governed by a perfect God. As Paul and John show us, man will be found to be "in Christ." This does not mean in the man Jesus, but having the Christ consciousness, God's consciousness, being the highest manifestation of God, by means of which God thinks and works and acts.

HOW TO CHECK THE ACCURACY OF PROPHECIES

As each of these separate portions of the cinematographic film represent the same thing—namely, heaven—seen a little differently, the portion of each film through which we are looking at any one given time should have a similarity. It will be found that this is so. If you look along the films at the commencement of the different periods, you find them all more or less showing the same sort of thing in a

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gradually improving condition as the veils are lifted. Looking along the ends of the film you see that each of the ends also shows the same kind of event. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done" (Isaiah 46, 10), we can gain accurate knowledge of the future, or check it when gained by what is called thought-reading—namely, seeing in advance the cinematographic pictures—or by reading Bible or other prophecies.

Confirmatory Evidence

Pythagoras, in the fifth century B.C., one of the most wonderful men of ancient times, is said to have taught that the same events recur again and again in regular cycles.

The German geologist, Edward Suess, in *Das Antlitz der Erde*, speaks of "a great and yet unknown rhythm in the evolution of living beings—a rhythm dependent on periodic changes in the inorganic environment." Another instance is offered us by M. Lichtenberger in his study of Nietzsche. "One of the famous German philosopher's most famous theories, the one that he thought must paralyse the world, was the theory of the eternal return. . . . Briefly, it is that everything which happens must have happened in exactly the same way any number of times before, and, he thought, will go on happening at intervals for ever."

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The theosophists, in reading the Acachic Records, as they call these cinematographic pictures of the past, have found that over and over again a somewhat similar chain of events occurs. Mrs. Besant speaks of these successive periods as "recurrent cycles in history," and states that reincarnation "affords the only sufficient explanation." Now we understand what they really are, and why reincarnation is as incorrect as the theory that at death we go either to heaven or to hell.

A striking lesson is the interpolation of chapters 36-39 into Isaiah, when future events are being prophesied. These chapters being repeated from 2 Kings simply tell us in so many words that "history repeats itself."

Gradually Improving Human Presentations

Not only do the beginnings and the ends of the films show the same kind of event, but, looking at any portion of the cinematographic pictures, you see right through on each successive film also the same sort of thing. This is why we find in the Bible one man after another seen as successive dream pictures—types of someone else to follow. Abraham, Joseph, Joshua, Jeremiah, and others, have been pointed out by Bible commentators as earlier types of the spiritual, perfect being that was later materially seen as Jesus of Nazareth, the highest human conception of a spiritual being possible; but, not having the necessary key, they were unable to

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follow the idea to its logical conclusion. Looking back, we find that the characters and groupings of events that stand out in the past successive ages of history, prefigure in an extraordinary way the characters and groupings of the succeeding ages.

The earliest end of a film that I can form any idea of is the destruction of the continent of Lemuria, of which but little is known ; but no doubt there were people saved from Lemuria in the way in which Noah, I believe, was saved from the final destruction of Atlantis, when he crossed the water in his vessel and landed on what is to-day the main continent. This is the earliest of the commencement of the films of which there seems to be any definite knowledge.

The Commencement of Each Period an Escape from Evil

Some half a dozen men have been now working for some time at the Acachic Records—these cinematographic pictures. They tell us that there were two previous submergences of great portions of the continent of Atlantis, the northern portion of which reached right up to the coast of Ireland, and was the first to be submerged. It is interesting, if it turns out to be the case, that Cessair, who the early monkish analysts said was the grand-daughter of Noah, and lived in Ireland, arrived at the time of the final submergence of Atlantis.

Genesis 10: 5, gives details of the grandsons of Noah, and says, "By these were the isles of the

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Gentiles divided in their lands." Smith's Bible Dictionary shows that the phrase "the isles of the Gentiles" would be more correctly spoken of as the "far distant western isles." It would be interesting, but not surprising, if it turned out that the British Isles were divided, as stated, among the grandchildren of Noah. This would explain why Ireland seems to have been so advanced in religious thought in early days, and was, I believe, the first nation to embrace Christianity. It would also clear up some of the difficult references in ancient Irish history.

Now, if you look along the commencement of these cinematographic films, you will recognize many known events in history, where, as in the case of Noah, members of the human race have left behind difficulties and destruction, and have crossed the water to make a fresh start. After Noah, there was the destruction of Babel, when the children of men were scattered abroad. Later came the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Then Abraham left Haran, crossing the river into Canaan. Later, Dan left Egypt, and crossed the water into Greece, founding, I believe, the race of Grecian heroes. Again, we get Jacob fleeing back to Haran to Laban, Rebekah's brother. A little later what we see on the film is more striking still, as we see the Israelites leaving Egypt and crossing the Red Sea. Further on we see the ten tribes of Israel fleeing out of Media from the destruction of

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Nineveh, when "the most High then shewed signs for them, and held still the flood, till they were passed over." This reference is to the upper waters of the river Euphrates, which we are told in 2 Esdras 13: 44, divided to let them pass into Southern Russia.

Then, again, we see the flight of Joseph and Mary with Jesus into Egypt, and later the flight of the Benjamites from the destruction of Jerusalem, crossing the Danube. Not long after we see three of the Tribes of Israel, known then as the Ostrogoths, crossing the Danube and commencing their invasion of Roman territory, and ultimately capturing Rome. We see the other seven tribes, under the name of the "Angles," having been previously led north by Odin when known as the Goths, crossing the North Sea and arriving in England, dividing it into seven portions, one for each tribe, and founding the Angleish, or English race. If you look in the Bible at the prophecies about the twelve tribes, you will find that the blessings on the seven tribes referred to are descriptions of the seven portions into which England was then divided. These seven tribes, you will find are joined later by the three tribes, whose name had become changed from Ostrogoths, first to Northmen and then to Normans, again crossing water, in the form of the English Channel, and entering the promised land.

Once more in the present days will this be repeated and the waters of death will be dried up until

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advancing man appears to awaken and find himself already in the holy land—God's world, "the new* heaven and the new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea" (Revelation 21: 1).

Experiences of a Lifetime Crowded into Forty-five Hours

In the final forty-five hours the film will be again repeated from the start to the finish, the start being the general change of thought from a material to a spiritual basis, and the finish being the final destruction of all matter, and therefore of all evil, everything that hides heaven, when "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21: 4).

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind . . . and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard" (Isaiah 65: 17-19).

* "New" is a doublet for "now" and it is "the now heaven and the now earth" that we apparently find.

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