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EVOLUTION ^{AND} CHRISTIANITY

A STUDY

BY

Jesse Charles Fremont

J. C. F. GRUMBINE

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PREFACE

THE attempt has been made in this book to examine the relation of Christianity to Evolution—not simply to re-direct the thought of man to the origin, growth and progress of natural religion, but more especially to show that “nature is the sum of the manifestations of the will of God,” and that from time immemorial there has been a steady and natural unfolding of the moral sentiment, seen in all species of morals and religion. I have purposely evaded all questions which may involve metaphysical subtlety and sophistry, and endeavored to touch upon only those relative points which force themselves upon me by their importance. I have aimed to know not what God could or would do, but rather what He has done

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and is doing. It must be confessed that the gauntlet is thrown down to all forms of supernaturalism which trespass upon the uniformity of the order of natural law and causation. Christianity is found to be the most exact contribution to the unfolding of natural religion.

The hope is expressed that the book, which aims to be suggestive rather than exhaustive or conclusive, will satisfy all those who seek after truth.

J. C. F. GRUMBINE.

Syracuse, N. Y.

EVOLUTION

THERE is no subject which has so agitated the world in these latter years as that of evolution. From the time Charles Darwin's celebrated works "The Origin of Species" and "The Descent of Man" were published, philosophy, science and religion have been quite revolutionized. Every department of knowledge has received light, and, by the information which geology gives of the history of organic and inorganic nature, we learn the more accurate account of the origin, development and civilization of man. The rational unfolding of the history of life will give us a key to the economic providences of God, and show that in the great sweep of universal existence, taking in all matter and time, there has been no interruption of the facts and laws of causation and that what has been considered the mar-

vellous and the supernatural is but the more intricate yet natural working of a great power, at present, perhaps, inexplicable.

Evolution in its broad application is a fact of positive science and an admitted process of the unfolding of life. It is derived from the Latin words meaning to "roll out", to "develop", to "make something new". It teaches that there is at work in nature a power by virtue of which the imperfect and simple is ever unfolding into the perfect and complex, and that the succession of universal phenomena is but the workshop in which old and new life, in all its variety of form, is organized and developed. Evolution reveals the thought that nature begins, perfects but never ends her creations. It proves that the hills which are covered with petrefactions or fossils are the first fields into which came the lowest forms of life and in which were enacted the first tragedies of species or conflict for existence; and that the strata which have been so wisely classified by Dana and other naturalists, mark eras

of terrestrial and animal history, revealing the slow yet upward march of life, the genesis of the present world, the simple processes of natural forces and the successive periods of the formation of the mineral, the vegetable and the animal kingdoms. It shows that God, very much as a merchant, started out with an aim, and worked along certain lines of activity, making years of toil add something to the end in view. As a faithful woman at a loom works the material stuff in such a way, that when the last thread is used, the fabric will embody the aim which she had in mind, so the Almighty, at the great loom of Life, weaves the threads of purpose into the warp and woof of created matter and force, and the whole garment displays order, beauty and usefulness.

Moses, as the representative name of the men who composed the Pentateuch, gives in the Bible a theory of the origin of creation which, when compared with the facts of life, seems to be highly improbable. Ecclesiasticism has defended this tradition in all ages

and with all possible vigor. The Hebrew nation, with every other nation of the globe, originated some theory which might explain the beginning of things. The biblical student observes in his literary studies of the Old Testament, especially the Pentateuch, that there is evidence of two accounts of things woven together so as to form a whole; and that the use of the words *Elohim* and *Jehovim* has led scholars to suppose that the author or compiler had in mind two current traditions from which he composed the generally established biblical account. Owing to the uncertainty of the Mosaic origin of the first five books of the Bible, and the peculiar flexibility of the Hebrew language, (which allows a day to be stretched into an age and every minor detail to contain a hidden meaning quite philosophical), Huxley adopts the Miltonic account of the creation, and, with good sense, examines that, because English is a language he well understands. But out of profound friendship for Professor Huxley may we not say that *pru-*

dential criticism is indirect, and opens a way for escape. The best authorities admit that the English version of Genesis is in thought identical with the Hebrew. We may examine therefore the biblical theory without trespassing on the meaning and use of Hebrew literature. All who have made a profound study of the Old Testament admit that the author is not God. It is a fact amply sustained and generally allowed by the wisest biblical students, a fact but recently accepted by the church, that the bible is not authoritative as a book of science. Therefore all scientific theories which are hinted in the biblical record have no especial value because contained in the Bible. The idea of the creation elaborately set forth in Genesis will gain weight only as it is true. Now it is alleged in the Bible that on the first day light burst upon the chaotic universe. On the second the land was separated from the water. On the third the land and water were fixed and the vegetable life was called forth. On the

fourth day the stars were made, also the sun and the moon. On the fifth day the waters were filled with life, the land and air with winged creatures. On the sixth day the beasts of the field were made and on the same day man was made in God's image. This is substantially the biblical theory of the origin of creation.

It is not the object here to go over, item by item, the propositions of the argument of evolution, but simply to touch upon those settled views which furnish us the correct history of all life—especially human life. Science, by an exact study of nature, makes these assertions:

1. The world was not made in six days.
2. The theory of teleology is at fault.
3. Man was not made perfect.
4. The law of evolution is the only law which will rightly explain all phenomena in the world.

1. It was a theory of the church long since abandoned that the world, as we see and know it, was made in six days. It was

so generally believed that the boys and girls of hardly fifty years ago were taught it in the schools. It was this theory which formed one of the greatest barriers to the growth and progress of the science of geology, and which drove Voltaire in the eighteenth century to ridicule, with such unbridled contempt, the ignorance of the monastic orders. It was a bone of contention in many councils, and a stumbling block whenever men made an attempt to unmask superstition or explain the Bible on the ground of probability and science. It withstood until recently every attack of knowledge, being vigorously endorsed by the Romish and many Protestant churches. Yet natural history modestly brought forth facts which gave a new direction to human thought. The six day theory of creation was abandoned as man plunged into the mysteries of life and found that, although the forces of nature have forever played upon the universe with undiminished and uninterrupted continuity, allowing of no mirac-

ulous deluges, terrestrial or celestial antics, the great procession of cause and effect has marched onward, multiplying the simple and varying the complex, until we have the natural world to-day, teeming with so much startling reality of universal life and material wealth. There has never been a time when creation was completed. We could take the geological record and show with Prof. Huxley, Romanes and Darwin that the biblical record is sadly at fault. We could point out great blunders in the estimate of time and in the order of the vegetable and animal kingdoms but such proof would be uncalled for perhaps impertinent.

2. We shall find yet more startling evidence as we examine briefly the theory of teleology. This theory, which for years was the prevailing view of the schools, was found to be untenable when it was discovered that every species or genus bears a close and almost perceptible relation to all other species or genera, and that the present life is linked with the past by an unbroken, al-

though as yet incomplete chain of causation. The eternity of present existencies, a doctrine of some theologians, growing out of the theory of teleology which maintained that special design pervades the universe from a star to a sponge, and that everything which is grew up or appeared at once and like Aphrodite, fresh and perfect from the sea foam, falls to the ground. That there are final causes in the universe of life toward which all creation hesitatingly points, there can be no doubt, but that existence as we have it came instantly from chaos by one fiat of God nature most forcibly denies. Earthquakes and geysers, volcanoes and cyclones, all have modified the structure of the earth, producing those atmospheric conditions which generate and foster disease, yet the pages of nature, although torn and weather-beaten, enable us to read the certain history of the globe. We find that through an unbroken plan of work God has wrought the wonders of terrestrial life, and that although heat and water as agencies have

obliterated many links in the chain of phenomena and destroyed perhaps the evidences of an absolute evolution, yet the recent discoveries of science have added new truths to the already grand array of facts. What the plan of God is we can hardly understand, even though we take a perfect retrospective view of the historic and unhistoric past, the record of nature or the biblical account of eschatology or the last things. We may anticipate that beneath every disguise and seeming fate there is a divine event toward which the whole creation moves, and, with the poet Tennyson sing,

“Yet I doubt not through the ages one increasing purpose
runs;”

but how our rash hopes seem to give way to new developments of undiscovered deity. So far as our knowledge of the meaning of creation is concerned we may forever grapple with shadows. It seems that, presume as we shall, boast as we may, God has inscribed above the very portal of life what Dante in

his *Divina Commedia* saw above the gates of Hell, "Abandon hope all ye who enter here." Yet curiosity, undiminished in the ages by disappointment, seems to urge man to study and wonder until he may know all. Our little systems, however, have their day and cease to be. Mighty words which, by their declarations, compelled audience and stood for revelations, seem unsatisfactory. History itself but gives us a touch of the garment of nature, while the thought of man, dazzled and bewildered as it burns in lofty aim and profound research, lives only as fossils live to point us to the inevitable. We may specialize the several streams of life, and by observing what is and what happens, direct our being along certain lines of duty and law. But to know the absolute end of creation may never be possible.

3. It is a matter of little concern whether man was placed in a garden of Eden, full blown as to his intellectual and spiritual powers, or whether he was the object of the many providences which brought him up to

the high and pre-eminent civilization in which he exists to-day, if either theory be proven by the very facts of history and the evidence of nature. The Bible gives us the story of our first parents, and how like a story it is! When we examine the tedious historical and natural development of man from barbarism and ignorance into the sublime character of Jesus, the great intellect of an Aristotle, a Goethe and an Emerson, when we realize what an evolution man passed through from stubborn material civilization to one which happily contributed to the intellectual and moral life of mankind, when we essay to note the steps he took in slowly climbing the summit of being, we may then condemn, if we will, the so-called doubtful and ridiculous evolution of man from the mere animal, which as yet is more or less plunged in mystery. If as far back as we can go we see man, not in an increasing state of perfection, but on the contrary, in one of degeneracy, if we observe him incapable of correct articulation and speech,

and unable to write, if we find him dealing with pictures as a child deals with blocks, if we find man, as Dr. Draper allows, a prey to the circumstances and conditions of life, prostituted by a seeming tyranny of nature over which his knowledge had no control, what can we say of a theory which made man once perfect, an angel of heaven—yet physically, intellectually and morally undeveloped and imperfect. It must be confessed that geology may never bridge the so-called hiatus of man's history. Granted that he did not make his appearance in the world until the Quaternary age—and this, according to the story in Genesis, occurred about 4,000 years B. C.—we are forced to ask whence came the savages whose low condition of life surprised so calm a mind as that of Charles Darwin, savages who lived in a wild and almost naked state amid the jungles of Africa as far back perhaps as 10,000 B. C.

4. The law of evolution is then the only one which will rightly explain (so far as results are concerned) all phenomena in the

world. In briefly summarizing the results of a long discussion, which to make plain, requires perhaps the introduction of more details than the reader would care to examine, we may make these observations. Evolution proves, as Professor Romanes asserts, that since the first dawn of life in the occurrence of the simplest organisms, until the meridian splendor of life as we now see it, gradual advance from the general to the special, from the low to the high, from the few and simple to the many and complex, has been the law of organic nature. And although the theory of teleology is rapidly yielding to the great facts of natural selection, the Creator is not in the least belittled but indeed magnified. We can trace, as is actually done by Charles Darwin, the complex variety of life which exists to-day to one birth-place, and reduce the many genera into one or a few organic forms, and know, that by migration, geological and atmospheric changes, and natural selection, animals have acquired such diversity; when by

the study of the geographical distribution of life, we observe that animals found on any specified stratum resemble or differ from animals found in any other stratum of the globe as the stratum is connected or disconnected, and that the argument from geology verifies the presumption that the earliest forms of life are the simplest, showing no highly developed organisms; when we can trace the history of life through the ages and make the rock, mineral, fossil and petrefaction yield an evidence which cannot be gainsaid, we have some knowledge of the world which will give us a correct philosophy and a positive religion. Said Charles Darwin in his "Origin of Species:" "There is a grandeur in this view of life with its several powers having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms, or into one; and that, while the planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful have been and are evolved." Evolution further proves that

man is progressive and is, so far as we know, the finishing touch of the panorama of existence. We see the error of the Bible in supposing that "the earth and all that is therein" were made in six days, and we discern the true order of the progress and operations of nature. It elevates the being of God, who was vainly supposed to be an insipid deity, forever changing his plans, and damning man first in order afterward to bless him, creating, recreating and destroying, unable as was inferred to carry out his own plans; it elevates the being of God to the proper height of greatness, by making him the author of a universe in which there has never been the slightest deviation from the laws of natural causation, in the operation of which there has unceasingly appeared a uniform and exact expression of the will of God.

CHRISTIANITY

Carlyle, in the introduction of his "Sartor Resartus," calls our attention to the fact that "to many a Royal Society the creation of the world is little more mysterious than the cooking of a dumpling; concerning which latter process, indeed, there have been minds to whom the question, 'How the apples were got in,' presented some difficulties." For over 1,700 years the question of revelation has agitated the world, and although some flippantly disregarded the subject, although many made science compare her truths to the supposed infallible and biblical test of all knowledge, although church barriers were built to defend every doctrine which was assumed to have had its origin and sanction in the Bible, although the cross, gibbet and stake were erected and the ax bared whenever a dissenter arose

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who tried to tear Jesus down from the pedestal upon which an idolatrous and superstitious Christendom had placed him, although modern research, historical and literary criticism, declared that Christianity, in its beginning and constitution, represented a principle of righteousness, yet the question of an authoritative revelation, the question of "how the apples were got in" will never be settled until all prejudice and egotism are removed and every fact which can be proven to have existed or to exist is accepted by mankind. The question of Christianity has been resolved into the question of what is revelation. It seems to be the pivotal point of all religion. We shall try to show how far revelation can go without trespass upon the laws of causation or the dignity of human nature.

In the narrow and contracted sense it refers to the reception of truth miraculously from God. It is said that the law was revealed to Moses and that the Hebrew canon was received by the Jews as the receptacle

of the word spoken by Jehovah. In the New Testament it is the word made flesh or manifest in the flesh—the veritable God made man or the Son made human who lived for a brief time among the people of Palestine as a record of the truth, as the example of men, or to descend logically, as the means whereby man would become reconciled to God, his imputed and original sin which he received from the first parents washed away, his character redeemed and purified, and the soul made secure for the next world. This is not the Bible account of itself but man's account of the Bible. It is an effort of the church to explain the Bible.

In the larger or literary sense, and what may be conceded the biblical sense, revelation is but another name for evolution. Could we believe that God commanded Moses to appear on Mount Sinai and there, wrapping himself up into a concrete personality, carved with his own hand upon marble the commandments which have formed

the substantial beginning of the Jewish theocracy and of Christianity, or could we suppose that by some power God gathered up the sunbeams and made them spell out on the very mountain the ethical code of the Jewish race, or could we fancy that, in an ecstatic vision, while alone on the mountain, in the quiet of the morning hour while the sun was gilding the surrounding mountain peaks, the great laws of conduct flashed upon the mind of Moses, could we believe these, we should misrepresent the truth and violate not only every principle of historical criticism but also every law of intelligence. It is admitted by biblical students that the books of the Old Testament before and at the time of Jesus were received by the Jews as authoritative. The Pentateuch and other books of the Old Testament were not questioned until the second and third centuries, when Celsus the Epicurean opposed the Mosaic authorship, and the Neo-Platonist Porphyry contended that the book of Daniel was not genuine. De Wette and Ewald, both

scholars of eminence, argue that the Pentateuch in its present form is not the work of Moses, but was compiled by men in different periods of history. Ewald and Delitzsch almost agree with J. H. Kurtz, who maintained that Moses did not compose the entire Pentateuch, but is the author of isolated passages. Some say that it was written during the age of Moses and Joshua, and others that it is the product of later years. With this variable difference among our best scholars as to the authority of the books in which is contained the revealed moral law of the Hebrew race, with the knowledge possessed of the genuineness and authenticity of the canonical writings, we are justified in considering the revelation, as formulated in the Old Testament, to be the result of spiritual insight into the higher or psychic conditions of life. Much of the Jewish law which in different periods of its history received the sanction of the people as the revelation of God was abandoned by Jesus.

Revelation has stood for supersentient knowledge, that which may have no explanation in experience. But it has been found that what protests so strongly against the natural cannot become supernatural. Hence the miraculous, when seen to violate natural law and the conditions growing out of it, borders on and is defined by the word charlatanism. Revelation as something unrelated to brain or thought or man, having no origin, growth or development in consciousness, claiming authority, *prima facie* is a species of imposition. The very history contained in the Old and the New Testament, when stripped of all literary accretions, foreign intellectual brag and gossip and imported moral exaggerations, will be found to hint at and even express the law of evolution. It will not be necessary to go into detail, for all who are acquainted with the Bible record, and who know anything about its authenticity and genuineness can follow a palpable evolution through the myth building and idol worship ages, ages

of polytheism, theism and law. We discover that the intellect which, in all ages of Hebrew history, blossomed forth into glowing prophecies, stern denunciation of wrong and hopeful encouragement of well doing, although mistaken for revelation are but the expressions of a man keenly awakened to the realities of truth and conscious of the God who works in the laws of human life. The ages through which Hebrew civilization passed were unripe for the truth which blossomed forth in the life and thought of Jesus—a truth which was buried out of sight in the early, middle and after ages and reasserted in the victories and triumphs of modern science and philosophy. Among every people God was dimly portrayed and ignorantly outlined, and even among the savages there are hints, rare and exceptional it is true, of occasions when eternity looked in upon time, when a good deed, or a kind word even, foretold the absolute freedom of man, his emancipation from barbarism into a perfect civilization.

It has been asserted that revelation closed with the Bible. But moral evolution asserts that other bibles may be written with an authority that may not be denied, founded upon the unflinching realities and laws of life, containing if not the autograph of God, at least a way to deity built upon the laws of omnipotent justice, goodness and truth. It has been unwisely maintained that God has revealed himself to us perfectly in the Bible and that all other evidences of his character are mean, untrustworthy and false. History shows that every nation is not without a witness of God and that his will is being unfolded as each age rolls into oblivion. A period was never put to his purposes. Step by step we are solving the problem of life, and each generation lays the foundation for the growth of man. As Pythagoras, Aristotle, Zeno and Ptolomy paved the way for Galileo, Copernicus and Newton, so the great men of every age prepare the path for subsequent genius. What John the Baptist asserted of himself society emphasizes as the

means whereby all progress is made. Some one must go before to make plain the path.

It will be affirmed by those who oppose this view that the age in which Jesus appeared was incoherently related to him and the religion he organized. Yet when we examine the conditions of the age and recall the history of the relative years, when we penetrate the knowledge of the men of that day and compare it rationally with the knowledge of Jesus, when we remember that the Essenes and Greeks had developed a practical religion, we are more than ever confirmed in the belief that his philosophy of morality and idea of religion were suited, if not related, to the apparently dark panorama of historic facts which were then exhibited to the world. As a meteor, which flashes suddenly across the horizon and brilliantly lightens up a segment of the sky, is traceable to a planet or star which still revolves about some sun in the universe, so Jesus, although apparently isolated from everything which was then extant, can yet

be shown to have sprung out of the very circumstances over which he asserted an imperial yet natural power. Hence this difference, which was emphasized as a serious objection to a moral evolution, including in its domain even Jesus, is of no account when made to embrace all the facts in the case. We argue that Jesus of the first century and Christ of the nineteenth century are different, inasmuch as the latter stands for Jesus idealized, but both may ever be the measuring line of character. The beautiful life of Jesus is of little value to men if it is the product of supernaturalism, but his whole history becomes at once wonderful and transcendental when it is known that he, like all men, wrestled with the facts of life and built for himself a monument whose towering summit kissed the stars. He certified by his character the opportunity man has to build upon the powers and activities of his life a kingdom in which love and justice wield the scepter of power. He proved that humanity can attain a preemi-

nent growth if it ascends by lofty activity the moral heights of life. His religion was rational. He adopted no prudential doctrine about God or man. He came as one having authority, yet his authority was based upon the realities of spirit. He spoke and lived the truth as he knew and felt it. His teaching was plain morality touched with pathos, made authoritative by his apprehension of the being of God in moral as well as physical law, his illustrations parable gathered from nature. His large sympathy, his patient endurance, his ready forgetfulness of wrong, his mercy, kindness, benevolence, justice and love, these have made him the Christ of the world. It would be well to consider the subject of Christian evidences to see whether Christianity is linked with the natural process of character building and the moral evolution of mankind. Is Christianity a departure from natural religion? Has it no confirmatory history in experience? Is it a miracle? A desire to penetrate the mysteries of Christianity, to

know what the New Testament really is and what it contains, how much in it is reality and how much is untruth, whether it was written and compiled by men or whether it is the autograph of God, whether it bears any relation to the people among whom it originated or is an isolated phenomenon thrust into the very heart of Hebrew civilization (a question which we have already touched upon), whether we are to look upon the gospels as a book in which as in the prophecies of the Sibyl is contained the destiny of man, whether we are obliged to accept every doctrine of Christianity as a genuine fact of religion, whether we are called upon to overlook errors in the Bible or make it the test of science, experience and knowledge will, when rightly answered, break up the storm which has menaced the world for over 1800 years. Men of learning declare that so far as the Old Testament is concerned the traditions and written memorials are quite human. It is regarded as a history of the Jews—showing especial pro-

gress in spiritual things as the Jew willed to think and live rightly. Facts can be multiplied to show that Paul, Peter, John and all the evangelists, although men endowed with fine religious consciousness and spiritual insight, were open to mistakes. The first five or six centuries of the church were most disastrous periods in the history of Christianity. It was during the early years, when it was taking on a positive form, that the Apostolic creed and other professions of doctrines were said to have been organized, and yet Mosheim in his "Institutes of Ecclesiastical History," endorsed by similar opinions from Isaac Barrow, Buddens and Hagenbach, affirms that the opinion so long held about the Apostolic Creed as being genuine is a mistake, having no foundation, as all who have any knowledge of antiquity unanimously confess. And Lamson in his work on the "First Three Centuries of the Church" admits that the doctrine of the trinity, and Waite, that even miracles, the immaculate conception of Jesus and the

doctrine of his divinity, were not known until the year 200 or 300 A. D. In these early centuries—say the first six—we have a record of at least sixty-five councils, among the most threatening and important being those of Nicæa, Constantinople and Ephesus. During these years when the fate of Christianity as a doctrine was to be determined by councils, when the very history of Jesus was to be composed by a tyrannical and dominant church, when the facts of Christianity were to be so perverted and distorted as to express the bigotry and partialism of the church factions, when all effort on the part of good and wise men, even men who stood as prominently forth as Origen in the schools along the Mediteranean sea, to tell the truth was met with brutal antagonism, when the history of every skeptic and martyr was blotted out of existence with his life, when thousands fell victims to the cruelty, persecution and massacre of the church or emperors, when a general stagnation of intellect and heart brooded over the

civilization of lower Europe, when Greece had tottered and her genius of literature and philosophy took up its abode among the nations farther west, when Rome, filched of the splendor which the poets Virgil and Horace declared had come from Venus and the gods, lay prostrate like a beast, foaming and struggling under a weight of paganism, licentiousness and brutality, when the star of science was eclipsed at its dawn and reason was buried in oblivion, is it a wonder that Jesus was caricatured and his gospel filled with exaggeration? And it was not until printing was invented and more frequent commercial intercourse between nations was indulged in that the Romish church was deprived of her imperialism.

Take for instance the first two centuries of Christianity. In those years when enthusiasm was hot, when perhaps many traditions, reliable and false accounts of the life of Jesus, existed, when fanaticism stalked the land which was made famous by the life and death of the Nazarene,

when fancy was awakened, when magicians and even forgers worked upon the world certain miracles and spurious gospels which further increased the zeal and excitement of the early Christians, a great deal of highly colored material would no doubt be accepted as the genuine work of Christ. Then again the destruction of the Alexandrine library, which occurred under the Saracens during the years extending beyond 640 A. D., was a most fatal and seemingly unpardonable calamity. With it were destroyed many literary monuments and much religious information which would have thrown light upon the codices which the world to-day possesses, and perhaps settled all doubts about the life of Jesus.

It is usually supposed that the gospels were written by evangelists who were eye witnesses of the events of Christianity, and that the original documents were preserved inviolate. Norton maintains that although they were known to exist in the latter part of the first century there is still much doubt

as to whether they were actually written by eye witnesses. The peculiar character of many of the early fathers whose testimony of Jesus has been invariably accepted as reliable goes to depreciate as much as to strengthen all evidence based upon their writings. We are greatly indebted for much knowledge of the life of Jesus to Papias, Origen, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clement, Tertullian, yet the material which these fathers furnish is sometimes untrustworthy and very unsatisfactory. Schleiermacher advances what is conceded to be the reasonable and correct explanation of the origin of the gospels. He argues with much force that the four gospels were compiled from manifold and fragmentary documents and oral traditions, and hence exaggerations, accretions, notes and views of the writers colored the real facts. All tendency to make Jesus cosmopolitan or ideal will meet with failure, but an effort to discover how much to accept as genuine and how to deal with the Christian narrative so that the mind

will not be bewildered as it seeks a true history of the origin of Christianity and the life of Jesus will certainly meet with favor. With the facts before us we learn that Jesus was not a God—a supposition which is almost blasphemy to imagine. So far Christian evidences assert the uniformity of the chain of causation, and prove by the facts we have carefully quoted that God never took exception to any law which has operated from time immemorial. Christianity, therefore, instead of being a miracle or the product of supernaturalism, we may safely conclude to be the result of man's complete mastery of the laws and facts of being. It is an estimate of the height to which man whose incipient life has not been spoiled by hereditary disease, degenerating tendencies and voluntary sin may ascend.

Christianity opens the way for the moral evolution of the nation and the individual. The one is linked with the other and both are interdependent. Civilization is in the line

of intellectual and moral activity. As every drop of rain enlarges the volume of the rivers, and these in turn regulate the level of the oceans, so every individual conditions the character of a civilization. History strikingly shows that man improves in individual and nation, taking on variation as a plant or animal, a fauna or species, being subject to the higher power of being. With the increase of intelligence in organic nature, we find animals asserting a superior authority over phenomena. In man we find intelligence making him characteristic, exerting, by specialized functions and devices, an authority over all life. Every animal has qualifications suiting his environments and necessary for his conditions. God has epitomized in man his law, and as man lives in harmony with the mind of God as manifest in the laws of causation, as he apprehends the relation he bears to creation, he no longer is subject to the law of mere necessity, but discerns that he is a king over his kingdom, as a lion, in one

sense, realizes that by superior strength he is conqueror over the conquered. Man is differently qualified from the brute because he is differently made, endowed, and directed. Yet he is subject to all the laws to which the flower and the animal generally are subject. Having a superior intelligence and moral nature, possessions which the brute creation have in embryo, he grows upward while the brute creation seem fixed by an inexorable fate. And it is a fact well worth noticing that God has opened for man a future which all the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms may condition, in which he will and can blossom into a perfect being. This Jesus foretold in his life and made emphatic by his teachings. It is not exceptional that organized man under certain periods of civilization should have towered by virtue of his genius or life so far above the masses as to appear like a god, when we remember that such action as the natural impulse of the soul is consistent with law. But should we see a savage with a Platonic mind or life

truly moral, we could justly be surprised at the anomaly, should we know that not only his associations and surroundings but also the hereditary genius and intelligence of of the tribe to which he belongs, contradict every possible development such as he exemplifies. It is most possible for a wise man to be a good man. Ignorance is the cause not only of error but of sin, To know the office of appetite, thirst, passion, natural affection, all desires, is an insight into the nature of being. Where such a knowledge is not, or where the powers of being have been abnormally developed or perverted, there we shall find disease, moral leprosy, social corruption, premature death. The growth, therefore, from savagery to civilization is no uncertain and misguided leap, but a progress tediously slow and painfully characterized by general relapses and degenerations which attend the revolutions which blossom forth with the intellectual and moral growth of man. The work of moral evolution, although easily read in the actions

or history of nations and man, is practically one of the individual. Men are born with all the functions necessary to sustain the physical life. In intellect and moral nature man reaps the harvest of physical disease. The brain is distorted, the moral nature dwarfed and man is chained down to the earth from which he ought to arise and soar toward his maker. The physical storm, whose fury and force is aggravated and accelerated by every abuse of natural law, sweeps desolately and with driving energy into the unsuspecting lives of the innocent, and families are buried ignominiously that otherwise might have eclipsed the glory of the stars. Yet this law of heredity, asserting the onnipresence of the God principle in life, is clearing the way for subsequent physical triumphs and moral victories such as the world has never known. It shows how man is free so long as he obeys natural law, but a captive as long as he steals one apple from the tree whose forbidden fruit should never be tasted. It points out a

royal path for men—a path leading to an Eden in which the spiritual thirst will be slaked by the nectar of the Almighty and the restless life drown its sorrows in the lethe of infinite love. Gradually will men awaken to the import of God and see that they can by perseverance develop themselves until they will be above temptation—beyond the dominion of sin.

CHRISTIANITY AND EVOLUTION COMPARED

What is commonly called Darwinism is the first palpable proof of evolution. The principle of evolution becomes at once of great importance when we discover that so great a mind as Ralph Waldo Emerson elevates it to the realm of spirit and sees, not only that every individual man is the fruit which all the foregoing ages have formed and ripened, but also that the history of the genesis or the old mythology repeats itself in the experience of every child, and that to transcend the despotism of the senses, to awaken to the supreme realities of life, to open to men the continent of hope which reveals itself in the higher attainments of the mind, to work gladly in the line of duty, making every detail of toil bend toward harmony and beauty in character, is to

bring about the higher evolution of mankind.

Does evolution do away with the existence of spirit?

Spirit has usually been defined as the characteristic possession of man, the power he has to think of God and act morally. It is not an independent possession as a dollar or a piece of furniture. It may be called personality and personality is intelligent consciousness. That the lower animals have a personality, but dimly awakened and altogether limited, few will deny. Yet when it is applied to man it is said to include that which the lower animals possess and do not possess. To use an illustration as an explanation,—a German philosopher said that he saw a dog once that followed and looked upon his master as if he was a god, yet we have no data to prove that the brute creation are religious. Darwin, however, declared that animals have a conscience—or a good substitute, and many experiences could be cited in which moral discriminations in the

brute creation were noticed. Still there is a marked and colossal difference between man and the lower animal. The celebrated naturalist instances a case as showing that a dog has a dim notion of a higher power—a power out of his reach and for which he could not perhaps account. “I once noticed my dog, a full grown and sensible animal, lying on the lawn during a hot and still day. At a little distance a slight breeze occasionally moved an open parasol, which would have been wholly disregarded by the dog had any one stood near it. As it was, every time that the parasol slightly moved the dog growled fiercely and barked. He must, I think, have reasoned to himself in a rapid and unconscious manner that movement without any apparent cause indicated the presence of some strange living agent, and that no stranger had a right to be on his territory.” Among animals most relative to man we find a suggestion, in the physical outline as well as in the general mental character, of the human prototype. It is

impossible to say at what point or when man became man, nor would such a hair-splitting nicety be at all necessary. Although the difficulty arises when we remember that nothing can be evolved which was not first involved, nothing can be in the effect which was not first in the cause, it is most certainly removed when we observe that although natural selection cannot account for many isolated existences, yet we can justly infer that the foundation which the Almighty carefully laid in the ages in the animal kingdom was a sufficient basis for the advent, development and perfection of man, and that, out of this great repository of living functions and breathing individualities, by evolution, God fashioned or made this masterpiece we call man. It is not for us to decide how quickly or how perfectly God could make any type of life, nor whether he would or could violate the very laws which condition the regularity, order and stability of the universe. But, observing carefully the phenomena and laws in nature, our duty

seems to be to seek for the principle of their organism, growth, variety and endowment. We might expand here the idea of God, and show by actual fact that the exalted notion we have of deity is linked with this conception of spiritual agencies which forms so large a part of the early savage worship, and which constituted the primary religious notion out of which grew the polytheism and monotheism of eastern and western nations. It is a trite argument, by no means exploded, that the existence of God is an intuition of the soul, and yet there is every reason to believe that the development of the idea was associated with certain intellectual states of civilization, and that it grew into unique and special prominence as man understood more of himself and his environment. Hence, J. S. Mill accounts for it by the law of association. It was asserted by theology that the intuitive possession of this idea characterized us from the lower animal, yet we shall find that it was not inserted into human consciousness as an in-

tuition necessarily, or an exceptional endowment, having no bearing in the circumference of cause and effect, but it came as all thought comes, as all ideas come. Naturalists recite instances where savages have not the least conception of God, where intelligence had not developed sufficiently to reason out of self into the circumstance of being and creation. Wonderful as it may seem, doubtful as it may appear, stupendous as it may become, the thought is tenable that the idea of God,—if we can lay claim to the existence of the idea at all very much—as the desire for sex, is part and parcel of the mysterious yet valuable inheritance which man received as a legacy from animal ancestry; yet which revealed itself in such wide and crude forms, as doctrines of spiritual agencies, fetichism, polytheism and theism, that philosophers have supposed that either man was originally made perfect, unrelated to other creations, or that his horizon was lit by no star of hope, that he was compelled to grapple

with a fate as cruel as the hot sun which prostrated him with a fever, or the wild beast that ravished his offspring, until he developed sufficient courage to master the circumstances which held him down to barbarism and absolute cannibalism; that God left him alone with nature to work out his higher civilization, never so much as disturbing the sky by his awful and infinite presence, never appearing to him in a burning bush, never confounding his language, never following or leading him in an exceptional or miraculous way, never thundering his contempt at him for his crime, or flashing his indignation for his disobedience, but giving him material enough by which he might grow—marvellous as it may appear—into the sublimest character that ever graced the earth. It is a fact worthy of notice that there was a condition of the human race when savage men did not even think of marriage, when polygamy and monogamy as moral ideas were undreamed of, and when a rank inter-mingling of men and women,

growing out of a license which was the result of ignorance about nature and the moral law, fostered a low state of civilization and foreshadowed, even in its corruption, the necessity of a milder treatment of human life, and of a coercion which would, by social and then civil and then moral legislation, adjust the principle of cohabitation to a law of justice. It is said that among such a people there was no development of the idea of God. We find the idea assuming an abstract and concrete form whenever the savage took upon himself a form of characteristic intelligence and civilization. Inherent in man was the power to apprehend God, yet naturally we find man far down in the scale of being, seemingly incapable of a destiny higher than that which was unfolded in the life of his progenitors, and only developing himself by social intercourse and the exercise of his intellectual and moral powers into a civilized being.

The idea of God, even though it can be shown to have undergone so many develop-

ments, cannot in the least be made to prove that, as an original endowment of man, it makes intelligence in the brute mean something less than intelligence in man. With new organic functions come new powers, or larger and finer developed powers, and, while in the horse and dog and monkey we find much intellect and a crude outline of the moral nature, in man, with his higher organized body as a whole, we see the intellect and moral nature full fledged and perfectly equipped for the destiny which lies before him. If we allow that man is divine and the brute is mere materialism, we shall be made to confront the problem of life and explain whether life is the finer thread of matter or the spasmodic breath of a cruel fate.

The question of spirit is rid of its perplexity when it is remembered that every variety of life, from a plant which is incapable of choice and protoplasm which developed the lowest form of volition, to the most perfect organized being, has a form of

intelligence. Evolution shows that God has somehow insinuated his mind into life, manifesting itself most visibly and potently in man. We come to believe that every living thing is an individuality. Wherever there is life there is spirit—there is God. I can see how at this point one could easily drift into pantheism, yet there is an alternative which is more rational and probable. I do not say that organic nature is an emanation from God, nor do I affirm that it is a part of God. Each organism is a thought of God projected in time and space. Yet it is a thought of God premeditated in the first creation out of which came universal existence.

It would be well to consider the subject of an immortality and see whether this postulate, which Christianity so ardently and essentially sets forth, is discarded by evolution. Science has shown that life or spirit must be accounted for as well as mere mechanical force or lifeless matter. We shall not indulge in extravagant metaphors.

It is a generous and oceanic theme well calculated to arouse the imagination and excite the deepest affections of the heart. It has furnished solace for those who have burned at the stake. It gives hope to many who despair, and as a ministering angel it sits by the bedside of the dying, breathing a strange yet a beautiful song of triumph into the life drifting slowly out into that "sea which rolls round all the world." In the midst of the storms of life, when the heart feels a lingering weakness, and we would gladly hail one gleam of sunshine bursting through the darkness and the clouds which envelop our path, or hearken to the whisper of the infinite, if we could but distinguish it from the thunder which roars remorsefully into our lonely life, immortality chides us for our infidelity and bids us await with patience the time when the former things will pass away and God may dry all tears from our eyes. As a belief it sustains three-fourths of humanity in the midst of care, sorrow and disappointment, and we may wisely examine

its relation to evolution, which denies, as many ignorantly imagine, its probability or existence.

Will man be buried as the fossil, decay as a tree, leaving hardly a visible trace of existence behind? Will he become as extinct as many missing links in the realm of organic life? We must account for all life or grant a peculiar constituent to life in the form of man, or there will be a sad break in the chain of facts, the column of existence will stand mouldering in incompleteness, the whole scheme of organic life will prove a snare and a delusion, the evidences of animal history will point us to mysteries yet more marvellous and perplexing, the security of all morality will fall as "the baseless fabric of a vision." Christianity will have no interpretation, meaning and authority in consciousness, and will prove to be but a Will of the Wisp of the mind, mocking us at death, throwing us remorselessly back upon a naked and powerless nature, and the uni-

verse itself, as Byron described it, will, indeed, become,

“The pall of a past world.”

It was theology that once affirmed that immortality was a gift of God to the righteous, and yet this very doctrine, exclusive and unscientific as it was, failed to explain, with any degree of satisfaction, the problem of continued existence. It was a doctrine as narrow as the church which formulated it, permeating the mind of a people lost to reason and absorbed in gross superstition, witchcraft, alchemy and all manner of error. With the rise of modern philosophy bold yet possible notions of immortality came into prominence, and Comte advanced what seemed to be not only a novel, but an attractive, yet impersonal view of the idea. The philosophy of John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer gave an impetus to unbridled and speculative reasoning, and the tendency of utilitarianism and synthetic philosophy has been toward a disorganization of morality and an abandonment of the idea

of immortality. We have reason to believe that life in every organized form may have two bearings—one in material, the other in immaterial existence. As we view the subject in this light what a tremendous scope it gives to life and how the possibilities of man widen as one reaches down and up the great perpendicular of growth and civilization. We hesitate to affirm whether the vegetable or animal kingdoms will be deprived of a future life—for though there is much truth, or at least probability, in the assertion that man seems to be the only one destined to be immortal, yet we declare that spirit, in every variety of personality and organism, may yet subserve in the beyond a higher purpose for disembodied man—a purpose which was prudently suggested in the plant and the animal in this world. I see no reason for supposing that man alone, without his concomitant animal and vegetable environment, will continue to live, while the horse or dog or flower will disorganize into the elements,

leaving no trace of the life which made them characteristic. On the contrary the theory that all spirit must be accounted for is supported by the facts of biology. I realize what a stretch of the imagination it requires to conceive of so marvelous a thing, yet where will we begin to discriminate if we discriminate at all. Man should not appear so important as to make all other life lose its value. We are driven to this conclusion by the very nature of things, and we seek repose in the belief because it slights no form of life.

We have not theorized on the condition or state of man in the next world. It is not within the province of this work to discuss the results of sin and its effect upon man, nor to engage in the futile controversy about rewards and punishments in the hereafter, but only to show, as I hope we have shown, the relation which evolution sustains to Christianity as postulating the idea of immortality.

The facts of Christianity, as advocated by

Jesus and not as taught by the church, are perfectly harmonized to this law of evolution when we remember that they show that Jesus developed his lofty character, not by a violation of any law of life, but on the contrary, by an adjustment to the conditions and laws which operate to make men live righteously. It will be readily seen that I give to man the power to evolve out of himself what may indeed so far as we know prove to be the end for which he was created. We have noticed how forms in the lower ranks of created life were linked with still lower and lower forms. We have observed how the path of intelligence or of personality in the animal kingdom was environed and circumscribed by a law of necessity. Yet there are evidences to prove that animals developed certain powers by use and gained new characteristics by change of food, water or climate. Man had a wider control over his activities, becoming more completely the master of life, as he apprehended most perfectly the conditions for

the safety of being and made himself capable of overcoming all opposition. God seems to have woven into the very vitality or type-producing function of nature, a thread of association by which every living organism which fulfills or fails to fulfill its mission or carry out the embryonic aim, always contributes a steady supply of material for the unfolding of an original plan. Now if Christianity as taught by Jesus means anything, and I assert it means more than we sometimes allow, it certifies that specifically there is a moral evolution by no means clashing with the physical or the merely intellectual, nor violating any law of natural causation. And it appears that the aim of human life is not simply to receive, possess and forever retain happiness, but to acquire wisdom and virtue, to unfold or train all our powers, acquiring, as a sequence but not as an end, happiness. Human life seems to be a discipline—a hard and uncompromising conclusion to arrive at, yet a discipline not without its exhilarations, trials, defeats, vic-

tories, pains and pleasures. Jesus apprehended three conditions of life to which if we properly adjust ourselves we shall be perfect. We understand these conditions to be the physical, intellectual and spiritual or moral. The meaning of his teaching was to adjust life to the inevitable. We can no more live righteously by thwarting the will of God as expressed in these conditions than the lily can thrive in the snows of the Alps. "Consider the lilies of the field," he said, "they toil not, neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." He here meant that a lily perfectly adapted to the soil and environment is an illustration which, by inference, should teach man that God would have us live as we ought, choosing the proper conditions for the blossoming forth of our life. Christianity, in its simplicity, rid of all interpolation and exaggeration, emphasized the law of consequences. We find Jesus making himself at home in nature, selecting his lessons from the com-

mon scenes and facts of nature. Morally he felt the significance of the law of compensation or justice, yet he noticed how love could harmonize the "I am" with God. Blessedness is the state of the righteous. To be good he declared was the end of human life—to do the will of God the *summum bouum*. Now as gravity permeates the realm of physical being, so justice operates in the moral province of our nature. Justice demands that we pay dollar for dollar, not with a view to be cruel but to show that God is immutable. Hence all sin—wilful violation of the moral law can—only be deprived of its sting after just reparation is made. Consequences in the moral as in the physical world cannot be separated from causes. Remorse as surely follows unrighteousness as the thunder follows the lightning. Nor is this fact without evidence. No eyes see the thief as readily as his own. No dagger pierces the murderer's heart so painfully as the one which the moral law uses to compensate her victims. No cage is so confin-

ing as the world in which the felon tries to find safety and peace. The truth is that God is a law in the moral as well as in the physical life of mankind. Take the beatitudes and many of the parables, and how they harmonize with the working of the moral law.

Nor did he overlook or slight the fact that a healthy body is a condition for a perfect moral character. The work of Jesus was sanitary as well as ethical. The small brains inbedded in hard and stubborn skulls, large intellects in badly constructed or cared for physical constitutions, nervous temperaments in frail organisms, are the conditions of disease. Feeble limbs, palsied hands, the uncertain pulsations of the heart, the rheumatism, the gout, blood diseases, and the multitude "of ills which flesh is heir to," come about chiefly by abuse. He urged man to regard the use of all his powers, knowing that abuse would precipitate life in all manner of trouble, disaster and prostitution. He would have man act with special view to

moral ends. What difference would it make? said the idler and sensualist to Jesus. He showed them a palpable difference by reciting to them a parable. "Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, that built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not, shall be likened to a foolish man that built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it." He patiently labored to show man how necessary it was to live righteously would he live happily. The pessimism of Schopenhauer receives a rebuke when we realize that the aim of law is not to tyrannize over man but to direct his activities for his good.

Jesus never took exception to natural law.

He likened God to a father, but he would not have us idolize him—make a mental image of him. The anthropomorphic conception of deity is a travesty of God, yet it adapted itself readily to the oriental and occidental mind, because man is a slave to the external, the pictorial, the concrete. What license Jesus gave to the name we can only know by his teaching. Yet when we remember that his teaching and life are not miracles, we have a right to affirm that he gave us a conception of God which will prove to be natural, rational and consistent with law. He taught that God is mindful of us. He not only watches the fall of a sparrow, allegorically speaking, but numbers every hair of our head. His law is one for the firm beach and one for the ever-tossing wave, one for the rolling orb, the falling star and the constellation, one for all animal and one for vegetable life, one indeed for all creation. This respect he had for law is seen when we examine the idea of prayer. It will be ob-

served that he was a servant to the will of God.

Take the subject of prayer and notice how Jesus used it.

The irreverent and irrational use of prayer, the contradictions which form the essential characteristics of prayer, the disregard of men for the laws of natural causation and the desire that their prayers should be answered at the risk of universal order, have awakened many to the fact that doubtless the world prays too much or does it thoughtlessly, with little knowledge of how far a prayer will go. The misapprehensions which grow out of falsely interpreted language of the Bible have had the effect to degrade the office of prayer. It has undergone such degradation that we find men praying for fair or rainy weather and for all manner of material things. Is God open to rebuke or criticism? Emerson thought that there could be no supernaturalism which could jar the natural. Prayer does not with Jesus presuppose a miracle. It is not selfish. It is

not given for cheap ends. It is not an effort to make man gigantic even though deity be thwarted. It does not drag God from the throne of immutable, imperial and loving law. Said Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, when justice was warring with disinterested love and goodness in his heart, when if at any time, he needed most the immediate presence of God as protector at his side to rebuke with omnipotent rage his slandering and brutal enemies,—said he in this hour of agony and self-renunciation—"Thy will, not mine, O God, be done." It was a spiritual desire that God or law should not be undervalued or sacrificed, but that all severity, cruelty, all travail of the soul could and would be endured that universal good might be advanced, that the will of God might be unbroken. He did not feel that God could although he would not help him; he did not suppose that he disregarded the cry of humanity as the wind heeds not the pitiful wail of an abandoned babe in the street, he did not question the everlasting love of the

Infinite, but he knew, as we have tried to show, that we are the architects of our fortune or misfortune, that to live for a truth in an age of political imperialism, intellectual and moral degeneracy, meant, awful as it may seem, isolation, brutal treatment, even death on a cross. And so he lifted himself serenely above the general weaknesses and timidities into which ignorant humanity relapses in hours of severe trial and agony, and, as Socrates drank the poisoned hemlock fearlessly, so Jesus nobly suffered martyrdom, and with a life anchored in the goodness of God triumphantly said, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit." This is the regard he had for God, and he never allowed himself to be cheated out of the truth that the world in which he lived was a good world—a world in which there are laws which if obeyed will bless life.

CONCLUSION

SUCH a multitude of questions suggest themselves as I attempt to end a controversy which, to make brief and simple, required the omission of much detail, that I feel almost persuaded not to drop the pen. But I have simply made a study and I leave the reader to draw his inferences, expand the suggestions and carry out the argument into its many ramifications. I have tried to be impartial and truthful; yet it may be that I have plunged the subject into more obscurity. I have sought to prove or at least hint that the law of evolution pervades every department of life, rising in importance in the realm of the human spirit where the moral law and the moral nature reveal themselves in no disguise, and showing that man, although restrained by physical conditions, is qualified by natural endowment

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to evolve out of himself a being perfectly adapted to the will of God. I have tried to make due allowance for hereditary tendencies. Nor have I overlooked the artificial conditions which surround human life. The idea of materialism is the off-shoot of a wrong conception of evolution candidly acknowledged by the advocates of Darwinism. Christianity has been seen to be the natural result of an obedience to the will of God as expressed in the laws of causation and life. Jesus fulfilled the idea that every child born into the world may be a Messiah. He demonstrated that we come into existence with god-like capabilities, with noble possibilities which can be developed into great realities of genius and commodity, with activities which, if properly directed, although polluted by results of sin, will lead man grandly forward toward perfection. Our hope in God and man grows stronger as we contemplate life as the result of an evolution, ever upward, ever natural, ever harmonious with law. We find that evolu-

tion instead of dragging "the white throne of deity into the mire of atheism" reveals the truth that there is a God. It does not slap us on the face saying, "Go to, you are dust." It does not unblushingly tear up the flowers and toss them at the sun, saying, "These are but mockeries." It takes us up to the highest being that exists and shows from the very beginning that the thesis of natural history is a beautiful production, having aim, order and intelligence. It masses together the facts to express God. It arrays arguments to defend God. In the realm of religion it shows that man is moral, drinking in the glory of infinite love, and it seeks to explain and thereby to exalt religion, by showing that God was never provoked at man or so incensed as to drive him out of the very paradise into which he came. It aims a blow at every form of theology which perverts truth and strikes the rock and brings forth the fossil, saying these things antedate every creed. Christianity as a name for the highest development and

realization of the moral sentiment and not as a series of dogmas, or a revelation incoherently related to truth and at war with reason, as a principle elevating man and making him obedient to the laws of life, is not only one with natural religion but is also its probable fulfillment. A religion which has not morals for its fundamental basis is conditioned to annihilation. It will decay as rapidly as it grew and flourished, because, like certain plants, it cannot thrive in a soil unnaturally qualified for its existence. We are not, therefore, without the assurance that the efficacy of Christianity will be seen, if it is not seen already, in the joyful yielding of man to the will of God, and that the evolution of man along the line of civilization will be hastened or retarded just as humanity makes up its mind to live obedient to the laws of life. Granted that we cannot explain every phenomenon of life or verify every claim of evolution; granted that we cannot absolutely fathom the "Unknowable;" we shall yet do a mighty work

for man, if we build up a civilization which, although free of all trace of superstition, yet will be the result of doing what is right even because it is expedient, and fulfilling the injunctions of morality by living, if not as we ought, at least as we must, remembering that "virtue is its own reward." It matters not how we think, the thought of God has anticipated our wantonness, and the conditions for our physical health, intellectual growth, moral life were issued at our birth. The world will do well if it never forgets that Jesus is the friend of all those who covet truth, love, virtue, and try to make their life mean the most for God.