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THE

BIBLIOTHECA SACRA.

ARTICLE I.

THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF THE RELIGION OF THE BIBLE;

OR,

HOW A LAYMAN THOUGHT OUT HIS EVIDENCES.

BY THE HON. JAMES MONROE, LL.D.

WHEN still a student in Oberlin College, I read, for the first time and with enthusiasm, Lord Macaulay's brilliant and instructive essay upon John Dryden. I was specially impressed with one thought—a thought then new to me and probably much less familiar to readers generally than it now is. I quote several sentences which, though not wholly consecutive, furnish a fairly clear presentation of his theory. In speaking of those who have made notable contributions to the progress of society, the distinguished writer says:—

"Those who have read history with discrimination know the fallacy of those panegyrics and invectives which represent individuals as effecting great moral and intellectual revolutions, subverting established systems and imprinting a new character on their age. The difference between one man and another is by no means so great as the superstitious crowd supposes. . . . For, in fact, it is the age that forms the man, not the man that forms the age. Great minds do indeed react upon the society which has made them what they are, but

they only pay with interest what they have received. . . . It was long disputed whether the honor of inventing the method of Fluxions belonged to Newton or to Leibnitz. It is now generally allowed that these great men made the same discovery at the same time. Mathematical science, indeed, had then reached such a point that, if neither of them had ever existed, the principle must inevitably have occurred to some one within a few years. . . . We are inclined to think that, with respect to every great addition which has been made to the stock of human knowledge, the case has been similar; that, without Copernicus, we should have been Copernicans; that, without Columbus, America would have been discovered; that, without Locke, we should have possessed a just theory of human ideas. Society has indeed its great men and its little men, as the earth has its mountains and its valleys. But the inequalities of intellect, like the inequalities of the surface of our globe, bear so small a proportion to the mass, that, in calculating its great revolutions, they may be safely neglected. The sun illuminates the hills while it is still below the horizon; and truth is discovered by the highest minds a little before it becomes manifest to the multitude. This is the extent of their superiority. They are the first to catch and reflect a light which, without their assistance, must, in a short time, be visible to those who now lie far beneath them."

I.

So far Lord Macaulay. Putting now his thought into a form which is better suited to my present purpose, I would say that every production of the human intellect is a natural outgrowth of that age in which it is given to the world. I would not include in this proposition self-evident truths—the axioms of mathematics, the postulates of ethics, and the intuitions of psychology. These are the property of the human mind as such; they belong alike to every age, and are accepted by every human being as soon as they are understood.

I refer rather to every thing which is the result of a process of reasoning—to all intellectual and moral systems—to every thing which may be said to have been thought out or elaborated by the human mind. Great moral and intellectual revolutions, great discoveries in science, great inventions, have been achieved not because some one man has lived, but because the whole advanced thought of the age was close upon and was soon to reach these stages of progress. This doctrine in regard to the productions of the intellect is in itself so reasonable, and is so entirely in harmony with the teachings of history, that I am not without hope that my readers are already disposed to accept it. But it may add to the satisfaction with which they will follow my argument, if the doctrine should be somewhat further expanded, and be more fully illustrated.

It is safe to assert that the child does not more obviously exhibit the lineaments of the parent than does every effort of the intellect the marks of its own age. The most original discoveries in science, the profoundest speculations in philosophy, are no exceptions to this rule. A thorough acquaintance with the history of these, even, will reveal the workings of antecedent influences to which they stand in the relation of effect to cause. There is nothing mysterious, nothing anomalous in such productions. Given, a perfect acquaintance with all the tendencies of an age, and the characteristics of the most original work of that age are readily accounted for. You see why, in accordance with the known laws of mind, that very result should be reached, and no other. It is the natural expression of the cultivated heart and intellect of its time. In accounting for the fact that a great reform in religion or philosophy was begun in a certain century, it does not help us much to be told that a man by the name of Luther or Bacon lived in that century. The presence of such a man will doubtless somewhat hasten, but his absence cannot long retard the fulfillment of the age's mission. Nature has

too many children to be thwarted in her plans by the loss of one or many of them. If the queen bee die, the labors of the hive may be, for a short time, delayed, but her place is soon filled by another. The forest of coral would continue to rise from the bottom of the sea, though the bulkiest zoophyte whose secretions might be added to the pile, should be struck from existence. We sometimes speak of original men as being centuries in advance of their age; but this is a scarcely pardonable hyperbole. The most original man is only a little in advance of the cultivated and far-seeing minds of his age. He is only the interpreter of the signs of the times. He only gives men a name for the work which they themselves have commenced, but which they do not as yet fully comprehend. His highest boast must be that he stands a little in advance of the onward march of his generation. He may be in the vanguard of the great army which is moving on to take possession of some promised land. He may occupy a point of observation higher than that of ordinary minds, where his eye can sweep a wider horizon than theirs. From the top of Pisgah, as Macaulay, quoting the poet Cowley, has said of Bacon, he may already behold goodly mountains waving with cedars, and lands flowing with milk and honey. But even this point will soon be left far in the rear by the multitudes which are now behind him; and should he perish by the way, the eager host will soon sweep over his grave, without a pause, under the conduct of some other leader, to enter upon their expected rest. It is true, as we have already been told, that not only does the age act upon original men, but original men react upon their age. But here action and reaction are not equal. The very power with which a great man moulds his age is a power for which he is indebted to the age. Nor is this anything more than what we might reasonably expect. The most original man is himself a product of the age in which he lives. He is the son of parents belonging to that age, and from that age has received

his moral and intellectual training. It is the age which produces the workman—it is the age which furnishes the materials. Is it then surprising that the fabric also, when reared, should afford manifest indications of belonging to the age?

Attention is now invited to further illustrations of this principle. Let us begin with the acknowledged prince of modern philosophy. Among the great men of the earth, perhaps not one has more generally received, or more really merited, the praise of originality than Lord Bacon. He did a grand work, and has secured a deathless fame. And yet we have only to read what is said of him by Lord Macaulay, in his essay upon that philosopher, to which I am indebted for several of the following historical points, and by other admirers of his genius, to discover that his work was only the natural outgrowth of his time. The task which Bacon proposed to himself was a complete revolution in the methods and ends of scientific inquiry. To accomplish this two things were necessary: first, to subvert the authority of Aristotle and the schoolmen; and second, to substitute something better in its place—to supplant the useless dialectics of the schools with a philosophy whose end should be the improvement of the condition of the human race. For the overthrow of the influence of Aristotle, the way had long been preparing. As early as the fifteenth century, the Platonists of Florence, under the patronage of the Medici, had convinced the learned world that a man might denounce Aristotle without being struck by lightning or swallowed up by an earthquake. But to the religious discussions of the succeeding age, are we mainly indebted for the emancipation of the human intellect. The torch which has thrown so broad and clear a light upon the fields of modern inquiry was kindled at the fire of the Reformation. At the outset, Luther saw the Peripatetic philosophy confronting him, with threatening aspect, in the very pathway of reform. But he was not the man to be daunted by such a foe. No sooner did he discover his antagonist than

his strong Saxon arm was gathered up for a blow. It would be difficult to say which Luther loved best, the Pope or the Stagirite. He boldly avowed that no follower of Aristotle could be a Christian. He pronounced the frivolous refinements of the schoolmen to be alike ludicrous and wicked. These sentiments were echoed by all the other leading reformers. The opposition to Aristotle became more and more deeply rooted. In France during the turbulent reign of Charles IX., the learned Ramus combated the old philosophy with a courage and earnestness that cost him his life. Even in the Roman church, where he had been strongly intrenched, Aristotle was falling into disrepute. Under these circumstances, it could not have been very difficult in the sixteenth century, for a Protestant, an Englishman, and a man of genius and extensive learning, to emancipate his own mind and the minds of many others from the last remains of a dying superstition.

But Bacon did more than this. He not only destroyed an old empire, but he founded a new. If, like Moses, he broke in pieces the idol of the people, like Moses, he gave them, in place of it, the revelations of a better divinity. But here also we shall see that he was the representative of his age. In the very act of bringing into discredit the school of Aristotle and the barren speculations of the cloister, which were associated with it, he had made no small progress towards the establishment of the true philosophy—of what has been called the philosophy of "utility and progress." Before the works of Bacon were published, the civilized world were beginning to be filled with a restless spirit of philosophic inquiry. They were tired of the old philosophy because it yielded no "fruit," and from various parts of Europe were heard voices of discontent. Thinking men were anxiously inquiring who would show them any good. The human mind, that for ages had been grinding in the prison-house of bondage, was becoming conscious of its rights and its powers. The chains that had bound it had rusted off in the lapse of time, and it was al-

ready knocking loud at the trembling door of its prison for some friendly hand to admit it to the light of heaven. Far-sighted men were beginning to get a clue to the true method of scientific inquiry, and it must soon have been discovered. The great revolution of the seventeenth century came, not because Bacon lived in that century, but because the human mind was ripe for it. Had Bacon delayed the composition of his work for twenty years, he might have been known to us only as the corrupt Chancellor, and had he died before a word of the "Novum Organum" was written, we should to-day have been enjoying the benefits of a sound philosophy. New discoveries in science and improvements in art would have made comfortable and adorned our lives. We should have had a true theory of astronomy and a true theory of geology. We should have seen the masses educated and the world filled with books. We should have had discussions about evolution and the survival of the fittest. We should have had normal training classes and Summer Schools of Sociology. We should have had Mr. George advocating the "single tax," Mr. Bellamy "Looking Backward," and Mr. Howells as a "Traveler from Altruria." We should have had the "lightning calculator" and the "spelling reform." There is no reason to think we should have lost "Faith Cure" or "Christian Science." We should have had telescopes like those of Rosse, and the Lick Observatory, and cities like Manchester, Birmingham, Lowell, and Chicago. We should have had Cunard steamships on the water—railroads on the land—balloons to navigate the air. We should have had ocean cables, telegraphs, telephones, telautographs, electric lights, electric railways, lightning to run upon errands—the most powerful and dangerous elements the servants of the soul. We should have had improved systems of sewage and water works, and municipal ownership, more or less. We should have had the Suez Canal, the Eiffel tower, and the Chicago Fair. We should have had Abraham Lincoln, and the Proc-

lamation of Emancipation, Civil Service Reform, and the McKinley Act. In a word, we should have had just about such a world as we have now, except that we should not have got at it quite so soon. So much must be conceded to the efforts of a great thinker.

But if the works of Bacon, even, one of the grandest of those strong souls whom, to use a phrase of Carlyle, "God has let loose upon our planet,"—a man who read the signs of his times with a sagacity and proclaimed them with an eloquence which have made his fame imperishable—if even the works of such a man are nothing more than a natural growth of the age in which they were produced, we surely shall not be disappointed to find the same thing true in the case of other minds.

Turning now from the field of philosophy to that which, in a stricter sense, may be called the field of science, we find the same law prevailing here. So true is it that the greatest minds are only a little in advance of their generation, that probably no man ever arrived at a new truth in science which one or several other minds, by a wholly independent investigation, either did not discover or were not about to discover at the same time. How often do we find a passage of history like the following: Smith makes an important discovery in science. He puts it in writing and lays it away in a drawer to cool. He calls together his friends to rejoice with him, and is already intoxicated with the prospect of immortality. But alas, alas! By the next steamer comes the painful intelligence that Brown has announced in some *Sermo de Artium Studiis*, some *Algemeine Literaturzeitung* on the other side of the globe, that he will soon astonish mankind by the disclosure of a great truth, discovered only after years of patient inquiry, which, from certain dark hints, it is feared will encroach terribly upon the reputation of the paper in the drawer. Now comes the bitterness of disappointed ambition, and the months are passed in an angry contest for

the honor of priority, until the combatants are forced into an unwilling peace by a vigorous attack from some third man, the literary executor of a famous savant who has found among the posthumous documents of his deceased friend evidence that the discovery in dispute had been accidentally blundered upon by him, while performing some simple philosophical experiment, a year before it was known to either of the rivals. Truly, he whose bosom is heaving with a new thought must make haste to reveal it. A delay of a week may destroy the fairest prospects of immortality.

You will expect that these propositions should be supported by additional facts of history. A number of such facts will now be presented, for all of which you need look no further than our common cyclopædias.

Who invented gunpowder? The English will tell you it was Roger Bacon; the people of Baden, that it was Schwarz; and the Prussians, that it was Autlitz. Perhaps they are all right; nor is our great epic poet without some show of reason, who finds the original inventor in a genius of much greater antiquity and wider celebrity than either of those mentioned. The invention of the magnetized needle has been attributed to Flavio Gioja of Amalfi, in the early part of the fourteenth century; but some years previous Marco Polo had brought it into Italy from China, and there is evidence that, earlier still, it had been used in France, Syria, and Norway. The honor for the invention of an art which so nearly concerns us as that of printing by movable types has always been claimed by the Dutch for Laurens Coster, and in 1823 the four hundredth anniversary of his invention was celebrated in Haarlem with much pomp, and a monument was erected to his memory. German writers claim the honor for Gutenberg,—an honor, however, which he must share in some measure with Faust and Schöffer. To whom belongs the credit of inventing the telescope? The Dutch divide it equally between Lippersheim and Adriansz; but claims have been put

forth for Jansen and Galileo. In regard to the microscope the list of competitors is still longer. Galileo and Torricelli discovered the elasticity and gravity of the air, probably without being aware that Bacon, by his experiments with a kind of pneumatic machine which he had constructed, had been led to suspect the same facts. When, in 1613, Galileo discovered the spots upon the sun's surface, and thereby its rotation upon its axis, he found that two Germans, Fabricius and Schreiner, had, independently of himself and probably of each other, succeeded in establishing the same facts. To show how much of this competition one great man may have to meet, I add that when, in 1610, Galileo discovered the satellites of Jupiter with a telescope of his own making, it is recorded that "several persons claimed a prior discovery." Newton had much to bear in the same way. Macaulay gave us one example of this. I add two or three others. When Newton, in 1685, announced to the Royal Society the discovery of the law of gravitation, Hooke raised a violent outcry against his claim to priority, declaring that, as early as 1666, he had reached the same result. Some time before Newton discovered the binomial theorem, Wallis and Pascal had applied its principles to integral positive exponents, and had been led to suspect that the same thing might be done to negative and fractional exponents. When Newton first got a clue to the laws of the planetary system, he found that the way had been prepared for him by the sublime guesses of Kepler. The invention of the pendulum clock is ascribed by the English to Hooke, while on the Continent it is generally attributed to Huygens. Oxygen was discovered, almost at the same time, by Priestley, Scheele, and Lavoisier. The identity of lightning with electricity had occurred to other philosophers before Franklin established it by his interesting experiments. Fulton was only a little earlier than Colonel John Stevens in applying steam to the propelling of vessels, and the Scotch contend that they had both been anticipated

in this great enterprise by the engineer Symington. Similar facts abound in the history of the invention of the electric telegraph. In America, Professor Morse filed a caveat in the Patent Office for the protection of his invention in October, 1837. In the previous June, the English government granted the first patent ever issued for an electric telegraph to Cooke and Wheatstone. Cooke was indebted for the idea to an experiment performed by Professor Möncke which he witnessed when a student at Heidelberg. Morse had been much aided by the labors of Professor Henry; and, for both Morse and Cooke, the way had been prepared by a long list of thinkers and experimenters. There have been lively contests as to the merits of different inventors in connection with the telephone, and doubtless there will be more in the future. Professor Elisha Gray is thought by many to have suffered some injustice as the result of litigation in regard to the telephone with Alexander Bell. Indeed, the records of our Patent Office, and the litigation of our courts in which patent cases are tried, furnish a great mass of evidence that the whole advanced intellect of each generation is close upon all its inventions and discoveries. Contests for the honor of priority in discovery have been numerous in the department of astronomy. I have been interested to notice how many scientific men are entitled to about equal credit for the discovery of Neptune. As early as 1821, Bouvart detected the anomalies of Uranus, and suggested the existence of an undiscovered planet as the probable cause. In 1845, Adams indicated the direction of Neptune with sufficient exactness "to place it in the finder of an ordinary sweeping telescope." September 10, 1846, Sir John Herschel says: "We see the new planet as Columbus saw America from the shores of Spain. Its movements have been felt trembling along the far-reaching line of our analysis with a certainty hardly inferior to that of ocular demonstration." September 18, the distinguished astronomer Leverrier, after much laborious and careful calculation, wrote to

Dr. Galle of the Berlin Observatory, pointing out almost the precise position of Neptune, and inviting him to search for it with his telescope. September 23, this letter was received, the Berlin equatorial was set in the direction indicated, and the new planet was actually discovered. These men seem to have carried on their investigations, for the most part, independently of each other; and it is probable that, if neither of them had existed, the discovery of Neptune would not have been long delayed. You are prepared to hear that the friends of the Englishman, Adams, claimed for him the honor of priority as against Leverrier. The fact now appears to be that they made the discovery at about the same time, but that Leverrier acted more promptly in giving the conclusions he had reached to the public. A writer upon the progress of medical science says, in a recent number of the New York *Independent*, "Jackson, Long, Wells, Morton, and others are all claimants for the honor of having been the first to operate under ether anæsthesia. Different cities have erected monuments in honor of these respective men. As is the case with nearly all great historical questions, the matter is still in dispute. The champions of each of the above-named have waged and are still waging a conflict more fierce than that of Michael and the Devil contending for the body of Moses, and the end is not yet."

But why multiply facts? It would be easy to show by an induction as wide as the history of the human mind, that whenever a man arrives at a great truth in science, or to a great application of such a truth, or to a great fact in nature, there are always other minds traveling in the same direction —minds which, in common with himself, are indebted for the impulse they have received to the general spirit and tendency of the age.

The law which has been traced thus far in the fields of philosophy and of science is equally applicable in the domain of religion. Here, also, every human production is a natural

outgrowth of its own age. There is no good reason to expect that men would be less dependent upon their time in arriving at new discoveries in morals and religion than in reaching new scientific and philosophical discoveries. This also might be abundantly illustrated. I will confine myself to a single example.

Among all the human founders of new religions, no one perhaps appears more respectable than Mohammed. He was a man of strong native powers of mind, great force of will, and remarkable tenacity of purpose. For myself, I also cheerfully accord to him the virtue of sincerity in his work. If we should be asked whether the ripened Mohammedan of to-day, as he is found in the Turk who slaughters Armenians, or the Arab slave-trader in Africa, is any improvement upon the idolator of China or Japan, we might hesitate to give an affirmative answer. And yet I cannot doubt that Mohammed did a great service to mankind in abolishing idolatrous practices in so many nations of the world. But what important truth did he proclaim which was not borrowed from some other system, and what lower passion of our nature is there to which he did not appeal? He courted the favor of the Jews by requiring circumcision, fasting, and frequent ablutions; by enrolling Noah, Abraham, and Moses among the prophets; and by pronouncing Jerusalem a holy city. He propitiated Christians by the veneration which he manifested for Jesus, and by borrowing from some of their sects the doctrine of predestination. He endeavored to render himself acceptable to both, by abolishing idolatry and preaching the unity of God and the immortality and accountability of the soul. He retained the sympathy of many idolators by sanctifying Mecca with its Kaába as a holy place, and by enlisting their predatory hordes in robberies more profitable than any in which they had ever engaged. All the selfish passions of our nature he bound to himself in strong alliance. To the covetous he offered plunder; to the sensual, the gratifications

of lust; to the proud and high-spirited, the rewards of ambition. The doctrines of the Koran he continually enlarged, modified, or expunged, as new circumstances seemed to require. Thus we see the Koran growing naturally out of the moral heart of the century. There was nothing mysterious in the production of such a work. Given, an age in which lived Christians, Jews, and idolators, a people superstitious but fickle and fond of new enterprises, and a man of great natural force, who is subject to strange dreams and fits of epilepsy, and the Koran is at once accounted for. The principle which is so strikingly illustrated in the faith of Islam might be further fortified, did time permit, by an examination of other systems of religion which have been produced by human reason.

May we not then flatter ourselves that we have arrived at an invariable mark by which every production of the unassisted human mind may at once be recognized—namely, the fact that every such production grows naturally out of the heart and intellect of its own age? As a rule, no human system, however original, is perfected at once. The way must be previously prepared, and the human mind gradually educated up to the necessary point. A spirit of inquiry must be excited, laborious processes of investigation must be entered upon, gross blunders must be perpetrated, furiously defended, finally abandoned, and many mixtures of truth and error must be received with approval, before a new system can be given to the world. But when the conditions are all fulfilled, the system springs as naturally from its own age as the fruit springs from the tree on which it grows.

II.

We have now reached my second general proposition, which is, that the religion of the Bible lacks this mark of a human origin—that, in its great doctrines and principles, it is not the natural outgrowth of those ages in which it was

given to the world. This field is boundless, but I think the issue can be frankly met, and the ground fairly covered within reasonable limits, by taking Moses as the representative man of the Old Testament and Jesus as the representative man of the New. Beginning with Moses, I ask, Whence came his splendid conception of the being and attributes of God which was the basis of his whole system? Did such truths result naturally from the spirit of inquiry which prevailed in his generation? Had mankind during the preceding age been gradually but earnestly groping their way towards this clearer light? Were there other thinkers besides Moses, who had so nearly arrived at the same results, that, had he published his views a little later, he would have lost the credit of originality? Were there other thinkers who were disposed to contest his claim to priority of discovery? To use the phrase of our Patent Office, which is so often applied in case of human productions, were there plausible attempts to "infringe upon his patent"? If his theology was the natural result of tendencies existing in his own time, those tendencies must have been found either among the Jews, his own people, or among the Egyptians—the only two races with whom he had any acquaintance. I am not aware that any one claims that he could have been indebted for his exalted tone of thought to the Jews. For three hundred years they had lived under a most oppressive bondage, and almost universally they had fallen into the practice of a very debasing form of idolatry. One has only to read the constant struggle which Moses had with his people in the wilderness, to preserve them from idolatrous practices, to see how impossible it is that he could have been indebted to them for the sublime truth which he proclaimed. It has been urged, however, and this is the more plausible alternative, that Moses obtained the views of God which he taught from the Egyptians. It is claimed with much appearance of truth, that while the masses of Egyptians were sunk in a gross idolatry, the priests had a secret cult of their

own which taught the doctrine of monotheism,—the worship of one Infinite God, the Creator of all things. I cheerfully admit that there is much about this in the ancient writings and inscriptions of this ingenious people; and it is fully reported in the standard works upon the subject. Indeed, in the hymns of their worshipers we sometimes find sentence after sentence which sounds very much like the morning prayer of a Congregational minister. Now it is said that, as "Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," he had been initiated into this monotheism, and had afterwards made use of it in the instruction and guidance of Israel. To reach the truth upon this point, let us first notice some differences between the system of Moses and that of the Egyptian priests.

First. Not only, as we have seen, were the whole people of Egypt the victims of a most degrading idolatry, but these monotheistic priests both encouraged and led them in their superstitious practices. Aaron, the High Priest of Israel, imitated this method once, when his brother was absent in the mountain; but when Moses returned, doubtless thought himself fortunate in escaping with his life.

Second. Although we learn from the ancient records which were made by, or under the supervision of, the priests, that the orthodox worshiper addressed his god in words much like those with which we approach the Infinite Being, such as the "Supreme Power,"—"the only true living God,"—"the One who exists from the beginning,"—"who has made all things, but has not himself been made"; yet I have discovered that when the devotee turned from this god to some other one of the scores of divinities in his pantheon he continued to employ, in his petitions to him, the same language of reverence and adoration which he had used in the former case. Rawlinson, a great authority, says that any god "might be worshiped with all the highest titles of honor." This is true even of the Nile-God, who, in one of the hymns, is addressed as the Supreme God, as invisible, incapable of out-

ward representation, and having a name so secret and sacred that it is not known even in Heaven. It would appear that any one of the gods might be worshiped as the one Self-existent and Supreme Being. Indeed there is some appearance of a pious effort on the part of the worshipers to avoid all such invidious distinctions in the ascriptions of power and glory to their divinities, in their prayers, as might make any of them jealous. This practice, though creditable to their impartial liberality of feeling toward their gods, certainly does not give us monotheism. They not only had one Supreme God, but they had perhaps fifty supreme gods. Bettany tells us in his "World's Religions," that "It is evident that the belief in one God and in many gods was held by the same men without the thought of inconsistency." The writer of the article on Egypt in the Encyclopædia Britannica says: "Though it cannot reasonably be doubted that the Egyptians had a distinct idea of monotheism, this idea was mixed up with the basest polytheism." What kind of religion is an "idea of monotheism" "mixed up with the basest polytheism"? It certainly is not the religion of Moses.

Third. There is much evidence to show that, so far as the monotheistic idea existed in Egypt—if it existed at all—it was pantheistic in character. While I have met no standard writer that directly opposes this proposition, there are several who frankly avow it. There are many passages in the Egyptian Ritual which satisfy a just religious feeling; but, in the midst of these, you come upon others which imply that the whole was a system of nature worship. Dr. James Freeman Clarke in his "Ten Great Religions," in speaking of the monotheism of India and that of Egypt, says: "This Monotheism resembles a Polytheism struggling with a Pantheism." Wilkinson, in discussing the relations of the religion of the Egyptians to the principle of evil, says: "Perhaps their views varied at different times, inclining, during the earlier ages, to the pantheistic doctrine; in the later, to the Persian tenet of

Two Principles." The author of the article "Egypt," in Chambers' Encyclopædia, says: "The Egyptian religion was a philosophical pantheism." Now we none of us need to be reminded how exactly the opposite of pantheism is the religion of the Pentateuch. There is nothing in it anywhere which could suggest that God is a mere general law or principle or influence in nature not distinguishable from it. He is everywhere a living and burning presence, the Author of nature, independent of it, and acting upon it. Erman, in his "Life in Ancient Egypt," while referring to the fact that Amenhotep IV. introduced a system of monotheistic sun-worship, which seems to have been a form of pantheism, and that it was soon abolished, gives up the whole subject of the religion of Egypt as unintelligible. He describes it as an "unparalleled confusion." He adds that, after the eighteenth dynasty, it "became, if possible, more confused and more lifeless than ever." In his unique and interesting work, "The Egyptian Book of the Dead," Dr. Davis strongly advocates the monotheistic character of the Egyptian religion; but accompanies his plea with the remark that it was a "union of a pantheistic system of religion of high spiritual character with a grossly sensuous beast-worship characteristic of the lowest tribes of Africa." He seems to use the terms monotheism and pantheism as if they were nearly interchangeable. In a note at the foot of page 44 he says: "The sacred text repeatedly calls God the 'One,' the 'Only One.' The pantheistic teaching of the mysteries is most clearly expressed in those texts which are found in almost all the kings' tombs at Thebes and on the walls of the entrance halls. . . . These texts and the pantheism in the esoteric teaching of the Egyptians are excellently and comprehensively treated by E. Naville in 'La Litanie du Soleil.'"

Fourth. Of course such a system as I have shown that of Egypt to be did not furnish, and could not furnish, to the soul of man, that which is its greatest need—the idea of a God

who is a father—who is the compassionate, sympathizing friend of every one of his creatures, even the humblest, and is ever ready to deliver them from trial and temptation and lead them by the hand up to a higher life. There is little in the Egyptian writings to show that God is the helpful, personal friend of his people. Their god is wanting in love, and the impulse to worship which their religion supplied came from fear rather than the affections. But through Moses, there was revealed to the Israelites a God the central and controlling principle of whose character is love, and who offers himself as the loving helper of all who will put their trust in him.

The religion of Egypt is a sad religion, and as you read the accounts of it you become sensible of a certain oppressive burden resting on the feelings. You seem to go through the country hungry for the presence of a Father, and in response only a dark, thin, cold phantom settles down upon the land.

In sharp contrast with the dismal mixture of polytheism and pantheism which darkened the valley of the Nile, let us turn for a moment to the conceptions of God that glow on every page of the Pentateuch:—

"And God said unto Moses, I am that I am. Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I am hath sent me unto you. Hear, O Israel! Jehovah is God; Jehovah is one. There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. The Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward. He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Ye shall be holy, for I am holy. And the Lord passed by before him

and proclaimed: The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty. He is the Rock; his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent. Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."

We instinctively feel that these grand views of the being and attributes of a loving, personal God could not have sprung from the religion of Egypt, and we previously saw that they could not have been derived from the Hebrew people. I have already mentioned that the Egyptians and the Hebrews were the only peoples with whom Moses was acquainted; and had he known others, they could have made no valuable contribution to his theology. The whole world at the time was a world of gross idolators. We are driven, then, to the conclusion that his religion was not the natural outgrowth of the age when it was produced. It has none of the marks of such a parentage. Indeed Moses might have been the instructor of ages of much greater refinement and a much later time than his own. Notice these facts. Eleven hundred years before the greatest teacher of the most cultivated city of classical antiquity said to a friend on his death-bed, "Krito, we owe a cock to Æsculapius, discharge the debt, and by no means omit it," Moses had said to his people, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Eleven hundred years before Socrates defended himself against the charge that he had attacked the religion of Athens, which was a system of

idolatry, Moses had organized a nation in which a pure monotheism was first publicly recognized as the religion of the state. The light which blazed from Sinai broke upon the darkness of the surrounding world like the effulgence of a tropical noonday upon the midnight of a Lapland winter. According to any ordinary law that governs the activities of men, the system of Moses is unaccountable. It is a grand anomaly. There it stands amid the grim and grotesque structures of the past, rising to heaven in unaffected majesty, an edifice beautiful and everlasting, bearing upon its harmonious proportions the traces of no earthly architecture.

The permanency of the influence of the teachings of Moses bears upon it the impress of their supernatural character. When our Lord and his apostles commenced their work, fifteen hundred years after the time of Moses, the religion of the Jews was thoroughly grounded in the monotheism which Moses had taught them, and which they maintained with even fanatical earnestness. It was the solid foundation upon which the gospel was built by our Lord and his disciples. Nowhere had they any need to preach against idolatry to Jews. From the time of Moses to that of Constantine—a period of eighteen hundred years—the Jews were the only nation or race that publicly acknowledged one supreme and infinite God. From the time of Moses to that of the apostles, the Jewish was the only community in which monotheism was taught to the whole people by prophets, priests, and doctors of the law. Nearly sixteen hundred years after Moses, a man who had been thoroughly instructed in the doctrines of the Pentateuch —a Hebrew of the Hebrews—went as a missionary from Jerusalem to Athens, and, standing on Mars Hill, in the midst of philosophers, judges, and lawgivers who were still idolators, proclaimed that elevated monotheism which so many centuries before had been thundered from the top of Sinai.

There is another consideration which to me is more conclusive than anything thus far presented, as showing that

Moses could not have been indebted for his views of God to the Egyptians, and still less to the Jews or any other people. That consideration is found in the character and the work of Moses. Whence came his matchless character and his unique work? Let us try to understand what was the work which he had to perform. Admitting that the priests of Egypt believed in some form of monotheism, it was always guarded as a secret to be imparted only to the initiated. There was no attempt to give to the masses of the people the benefit of this better light. We still read in the ancient inscriptions where pupils are reminded that the higher truths were intended only for themselves and their teachers, and were not to be communicated to any others. They perhaps reasoned that the great body of Egyptians were incapable of making good use of pure doctrine, and were fitted only for a coarse idolatry; or, as they were a rich and powerful class, they may have thought it suitable to keep all that was best for themselves, in philosophy and religion as well as in worldly advantages; or, and this is the most probable, they may have found the ignorance and degradation of idolatry a convenient means of keeping the people in subordination to their interests. Whatever may have been the motive, the fact is, that they not only countenanced idolatry, but imposed its burdensome and debasing rites as a duty upon the great body of the inhabitants. I do not suppose there ever was such a thing as an Egyptian priest who attempted to lift up his countrymen to a higher plane of religious thought and feeling.

In the midst of all this cowardly self-seeking, Moses was trained. It was a part of the wisdom of the Egyptians which he had learned. But when he came to feel the solemnity and weight of the problems of life, it led him to loathe and reject the policy of the priests of the Pharaohs. It was not enough for him that he had clear views of God as a righteous Ruler and a Heavenly Father when his brethren were sunk in idolatry. The language of his heart was "Woe is me if I save

not my people." He must make the doctrine of one infinite God practical. He must bring all Israelites under its power and make them all, from the highest to the lowest, true worshipers. Through forty long years of wandering and peril, by night and by day, in summer and in winter, on the mountain and in the desert, with a love so intense that it made nothing of self except as a means to the great end, with earnestness so deep that it was often terrible, in face often of bitter and threatening opposition, he continued, with all his might, to hold the millions of his people to the worship of Jehovah, until he brought them to the borders of their future home. They must not be without something of the grand spiritual outlook which God had given him. There is no parallel for the meekness, the patience, the self-abnegation and, at the same time, the tremendous energy with which he wrought. He besought the Lord to blot him out of his book, if Israel could not be forgiven. His one cherished worldly hope of entering the promised land he cheerfully surrendered on condition that God would raise up some other leader for the people, "that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep that have no shepherd." His isolation was something awful. In this world he had scarcely one sympathizing friend. Not one of his brethren could look very far across the horizon swept by his vision. The only friend he really had—and was not that friend enough for him?—was alone with him at the bush—alone with him in the mount—alone with him at his death and burial. The Israelites had a tendency to idolatry, acquired in Egypt, which seemed to be incurable. But this was the one thing which Moses felt must be reformed. Without a pure worship, his people could not be a nation in any sense which would answer the divine purpose in keeping alive the true religion in the world. There was no other man in Israel who could impose any restraint upon this tendency to idolatrous practices. There were no ten men who could do it. His brother Aaron was no more than a feather

in the current of Niagara. But when Moses returned to the camp, after one disgraceful outbreak of this kind, the mob at once recognized its master. The noisy leaders slunk away to their tents, and the two or three millions of people who had been, directly or indirectly, responsible for the riotous excesses remained quiet while Moses destroyed their idol and executed, after swift court-martial, three thousand of the leaders in the mutiny, and then returned to their ordinary habit of submission and obedience in their daily routine. Now this character and this work of Moses, and the broad, statesman-like plans which were a part of that work, were so entirely individual and so perfectly isolated from all the rest of the world, that it is absurd to say that they were in any degree an outgrowth of his age.

Whence did they come? and whence came the sublime doctrines in regard to God which he taught? We have reached the conclusion that they are not human productions because they do not follow the law of such productions in being an outgrowth of their time. There is but one other alternative. The explanation of Moses himself is the easiest of all. He tells us that the revelation of his grand doctrines, the inspiration of his character, the power that strengthened him in his work and guided him in his plans—all came from Jehovah.

In showing that the religion of the Bible in its great doctrines and principles was not the natural outgrowth of those ages in which it was given to the world, I have already spoken of Moses as the representative man of the Old Testament, and am now to speak briefly of Jesus as the representative man of the New Testament. If the teaching, the character, the work, the life of Moses was not the natural product of his time, much more must this be true of the teaching, the character, the work, the life of Jesus. Here, in all essential things, we shall find a new order of being, a perfectly original teaching, and a unique work. Fortunately for me and for my reader, this subject has already been so much and so ably written

upon, that little remains for me to say. As we study the life of Jesus we find it to be something interposed from a foreign region into the midst of the age rather than something growing out of it. The burden of so many prophets, the desire of so many pious hearts in the past, is now realized. That great teacher of whom Moses was the type, and towards whom he toiled and struggled, has come. The human intellect, after wrestling with the subject for more than eighteen centuries, and after having received many promptings from malice and unbelief, has rendered a substantially unanimous verdict that the character and life of Jesus are perfect. It is absurd to contend that such a life was the natural product of the cold, dark, corrupt heart of the age of Tiberius, Caligula, and Nero. Indeed, I suppose that there are at the present day few persons who are both thoughtful and candid, that would defend the proposition that Jesus was a natural growth of his time. It was not until after the day of Pentecost that anybody of his time clearly understood him. With what a bewildered look Scribes, Pharisees, Roman centurions, and even his own disciples listened to the outpourings of his earnest heart. "These are hard sayings, who can hear them," was the honest exclamation of those even who had been most carefully instructed in the objects of his mission.

If we consider such a body of teaching as is found in the Sermon on the Mount, or in those four marvelous chapters in the Gospel of John—the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth—and such a conversation as that with the woman at the well; and such parables as those of the Sower, the Prodigal Son, the Good Samaritan, the Pharisee and the Publican, the Ten Virgins, and the Lost Sheep; and such texts as "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit," which perhaps contains the profoundest single thought in the literature of the world; and again that passage which teachest so profound and beautiful a lesson of trust, "Consider

the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these"; and that noble summary of obligation on which all the law and the prophets are said to hang; and that Jesus announces that he has come into the world to redeem men, to reconcile them to God, and to give them strength to embody his teaching in their lives; when we consider all this and much more, we shall see how utterly unconnected the higher doctrines of Jesus were with all the systems and institutions of the world into which he came. His teaching then was not a growth of his age, and hence was not of human origin.

We have arrived at one mark, then, by which the religion of the Bible is forever separated from all human productions. Every human system is the natural result of tendencies existing in its own time. The religion of the Bible as revealed to us through its two great representatives—one of the Old Testament and the other of the New—is not the result of tendencies of its time, but of tendencies directly opposed to these. The religion of the Bible, then, is not a human production.

(To be Concluded.)