

in theology. He holds that it is as true in theology as in life that few things are really necessary; and when many things are sought after, when our creed is composed of many particulars, the effect is both distracting and disastrous.

What then are the few things that it is necessary for us to believe? Alas! Dr. Cheyne does not tell us. He seems to say that the time has not yet come to tell us. 'Long and careful discussion would have to precede any such attempt.' But he mentions one thing. 'It is not a doctrine of Inspiration. It is not a definition of Incarnation. It has nothing to do with Priesthood or with Sacramental Grace. It is this, that faith in the highest sense has for its objects neither books nor doctrines, but persons.'

The remark is not new, and Dr. Cheyne knows it. The question is, Who are the persons? Dr. Cheyne quotes the text, 'Believe in God, believe also in Me,' and the text, 'Ye search the Scriptures, for ye think that in them ye have eternal life . . . and ye will not come to Me that ye may have life.' He quotes these texts though they are found in the Fourth Gospel. For, 'though partly coloured by the doctrines of the Evangelist,' they 'convey one of the most fundamental ideas of Jesus, who knew Himself to be the Saviour of men.' The 'persons,' then, appear to be God the Father and Jesus the Saviour of men, and since even the

capitals to the pronouns are Dr. Cheyne's own, all seems well.

And all is well when Dr. Cheyne goes on to add that 'the centre of gravity in theology can never be shifted from the person of Christ.' But then comes this sentence: 'The Jesus whom we call Master is at once the historical Jesus of Nazareth, and that ideal form which becomes more and more glorious as man's moral capacity increases.' So the persons in whom we are to trust are God and the historical-ideal Jesus Christ. The historical Jesus we know, but who is the ideal Christ? Canon Cheyne says that without the historical Christ the ideal Christ could never have beamed upon us. It is, therefore, he says, 'our highest object as biblical critics to revive, however faintly, the outlines of the historical picture of Jesus, and to recover the first principles of His teaching.' But what then? Then he says it is our business 'to comprehend better those great ideas and those wonderful experiences of the New Testament writers which are the afterglow of that morally gorgeous sunset when Jesus of Nazareth finished the work which had been given Him to do.'

'The afterglow of that morally gorgeous sunset.' Then there was no sunrise that followed? 'It behoved the Christ to suffer'—that was the 'sunset when Jesus of Nazareth finished the work which had been given Him to do'; and all the rest was 'afterglow.'

Science and Faith.

BY THE REV. G. FERRIES, D.D., CLUNY, ABERDEENSHIRE.

A SKETCH of the origin and growth of Science shows that its roots lie in religious belief, and that during the greater part by far of its history, it continues to be closely related to religion. At length the independence of science is recognized, with the results that, on the one hand, there are

conflicts with traditional faith, and for many persons a definite and whole-hearted assent to religion becomes a very difficult matter; and, on the other hand, if one has attained to faith, and is also in sympathy with modern thought, the advance of science proves to be in a high degree stimulating

and quickening to his highest aims. Religion itself leaps into new life; it is infected by a stronger love of truth; the freshness of the newly opened up fields that lie all around is contracted by it in turn.

I.

HISTORICAL CONNECTION BETWEEN THE BIBLE
AND SCIENCE.

Before Science could achieve its independence, human thought had to pass through many preparatory stages. Vast as the difference is, alike as regards methods and results, between the intellectual activity of primitive peoples and that of the present age, there has been a continuous course of development from the earliest times till now. The men of the O.T. brought God into direct connexion with all that happened, and had no eye for the intricate network and the constancy of natural causation. According to their conviction it is God that makes the grass to grow for the cattle and herb for the service of man; He makes the winds to blow, and the thunder is His voice; and so on. In our age, on the other hand, the material world is interpreted by investigating the forces which are found to be inherent in itself, no supramundane spiritual power being recognized as a factor in any case under examination. The difference appears to be complete. And yet through certain ideas as intermediaries, especially the idea of *law*, and certain practices, especially the organization of human conduct, which is in the last resort the leading aim alike of religion and science, there is a community established between the ages; and as regards the differences, history bridges the separating gulf. Men of faith promulgated the first beginnings of science. Seeing that among the ancients life as a whole was rested on a religious foundation, its institutions and customs being referred to the will of the gods and drawing their sanction from it, worship was a matter of the first importance and had to be carefully regulated. So it was especially in Old Israel. In the rules of worship, which were both exact and comprehensive, we have already an adumbration of the precision and exhaustiveness of later science. And morality, which is now admitted by most thinkers to have relative independence, was subsumed under religion as cognate with the duty of worshipping God, or as one manifestation of obedience to Him.

Rules of life were prescribed for the Israelites with punctilious minuteness, extending to their private and social concerns, dictating what they were to do both in the house and in the field, applying indeed to every sphere of worldly activity. Religion, experimental knowledge, such as it was, and daily practice in the world were closely interwoven. Life in general and in detail was viewed and moulded in the light of lofty thought.

The same people were led by the motive of faith to record their nation's *history*. Inasmuch as God was acknowledged as the governing power in their midst, there was a felt obligation, while it was also a high privilege and pure pleasure, to recall the great things He had done for them and their fathers. The past was investigated with that devoted care which sincere faith is calculated to ensure. Laws of history too were brought to light; reason, it was found, went to the making of it. It was shown by many examples that religion and righteousness exalted the nation, whereas rebellion and wickedness had involved disaster. The same laws, according to the prophets, would operate in time to come, and that too not in Israel only but also among all the Gentiles (Is 61¹¹). Thus the idea and the germ of a philosophy of history may be said to have been implanted in Jewish thought.

As it was the vocation of the Jews to be the bearers of the true religion to the world, and as the discipline which they endured served for that precise purpose, they were not stimulated like the Greeks to develop the purely intellectual side of their being by the assiduous cultivation of earthly arts. Their attainments in the secular sphere were meagre, and their thought moved in the plane of popular ideas (see, *e.g.*, arts. in Hastings' *D.B.* on 'Astronomy,' 'Genesis,' 'Medicine,' 'Natural History'). Whereas recent science operates by means of analysis, and the specialized study of the minutest parts of things, the minds of the Jews habitually reverted to the whole of existence, to the presence and working of the sovereign Creator in the occurrences of the world. But the result is that they bring home the truth to men in every age, and it is one of the principal lessons to be derived from them, that the profoundest thoughts regarding God and His moral law and universal rule may be fused together with an elementary knowledge of material nature, that the highest wisdom may be acquired by those who are comparatively untutored in the worldly sense. Thus instead of

anxiously endeavouring to reconcile the items of early Jewish thought relating to nature with the results of modern discovery, we should observe that the very want on the part of the writers of Scripture of thoroughgoing scientific knowledge in any of the special branches is instructive from the point of view of religion. At the same time, far from any antagonism being manifested by those writers towards the aims of science, we rather discover adumbrations of it, connecting links between it and the faith of Scripture, a rational ground and stimulus for the pursuit of it over unlimited fields. For the Jewish religion presents large ideas regarding God and the world which were destined to be suggestive and fruitful in later research. As 'the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof' (Ps 24¹); as He is its Creator, and as 'Wisdom was by Him' when He made and established the heavens and earth and sea (Pr 8), the conviction was gained, and it has never been lost, that the world is orderly and intelligible throughout—a cosmos, not a chaos. The idea of the *unity* of God, which was permanently established through Jewish Monotheism, suggested and warranted the bent of science towards unity of knowledge. And again the *eternity* of God implied the inviolability of the principle of order. Above all, the conception of *law*, which in its moral aspect pervades the Books of Scripture, was destined to play an important part in the elucidation of the visible realm, and to this day it remains the most influential conception employed by the man of science. When the Creator and Preserver of all things was habitually viewed as a God of law, the belief that the observed sequences of nature are also an expression of law was readily awakened and confirmed. 'It was the notion of divine laws,' says Zeller, 'that first led to that of laws of nature.'

Passing to the N.T. we find that Jesus, completing the thought of the O.T., represents the world as pervaded by the power of God, who knows all that happens in it, and with a Father's care provides for all the needs of His creatures. It is implied that all the operations of the universe are guided by intelligence as well as love. Jesus, however, came to reveal the spiritual God and to bring men to eternal salvation, and so He is concerned to exhibit the world in the light of eternity, and its processes in their aspect as parables illustrative of spiritual and everlasting truth. Further, while revealing the highest truth, and calling Him-

self 'the truth,' He embodies it in concrete form in a Life: the *rationale* of the spiritual facts has yet to be set forth. It is St. Paul who takes up the task of theology. This apostle gives a reason for the faith, labours to show that while there cannot be salvation by obedience to the law, there is a way to the desired end which is at once older and newer, namely, the righteousness of faith, a way known to Abraham, but opened up in perfection once and for ever by the death of Christ. The intellectual work of theology has advanced from this basis through the Christian centuries till now; but the O.T. had previously entered on the pursuit, when Ezekiel pointed out that salvation is of grace, and that thus alone Israel could be truly sanctified. On the other hand, worldly knowledge or art was held to be of little account by the apostles and first Christians generally, for the one sufficient reason that they regarded the end of the world as at hand.

The old Greeks, as has been indicated, have been the world's masters in the field of pure thought. We have to turn to Greece to see 'where grew the arts of war and peace.' Aristotle, according to Dante, was 'the master of those who know.' The science of Aristotle was encyclopædic. But though he was for many generations an outstanding authority among the mediæval theologians, it was the Stoic philosophy that the Christian Church came in contact with in the first centuries. This was for the time the living form of ancient thought, a form which exhibited certain important ideas that were closely akin to those of Christianity itself. The world, according to the Stoics, was founded in reason, and to them the law of nature was accordingly a basal thought. The law which was impressed on the world was derived indeed from God, but it could also be regarded as the law of nature, the God of Stoicism not being so much a transcendent Deity as the immanent reason of the universe. The idea of nature as a realm of inherent order began to be disengaged. We appear to have advanced half-way from the biblical thought, which represented God as personally and directly active in all the world, to the modern scientific conception of nature as a self-centred unity, which has its own laws, and is understood and mastered so far as man ascertains these and puts them in application. For since, according to Stoicism, Divine Reason is embodied in the world, the contemplation of

nature should serve to acquaint one with God's law. However, God was still brought into connexion with the world by these philosophers in a manner that science does not recognize in research or when utilizing material forces, and which involved a confusion of the sphere of religion with that of nature as now understood in the stricter sense. Moreover, when the early Christian theologians adopted the idea of laws of nature from this philosophy, there was no advance towards that precision of thought regarding the domain of nature which has largely characterized recent science, and at which it has constantly and persistently aimed; nor was there progress in this respect for many centuries. On the contrary, down to the close of the Middle Ages, conformably to the great doctrine of Christianity that God is an exalted Spirit, whose will in Providence is everywhere active and supreme, the tendency among the Christians was to approximate in their use of the phrase, 'laws of nature,' to the earlier biblical conception of the facts. It was held not only that the laws were ordinances of the Deity but that they continued to manifest simply His personal purposes and constant habits of working. Thus the thought of nature was again practically merged by the Christian divines in the thought of God. There was a vagueness of conception with reference to the two spheres of action; the relative independence of the physical processes was not yet admitted. And one main and sufficient reason for this was that those processes themselves were as yet so little known. In the Dark Ages men were ignorant of the concrete facts of the material world, of the wealth of facts and their mutual relations, and could have no adequate conviction regarding the law that pervades them.

A great step in advance was taken with the rise of science proper. The term 'science' now acquires the common meaning which it still for the most part retains. (A higher sense will be referred to presently.) It comes to signify the exact knowledge which is attained by applying the methods of research enforced by Francis Bacon (1561-1626), namely, observation and experiment. The aim is to interpret nature by the simple investigation of her own inherent powers, and as far as may be to control her by means of the knowledge so acquired. Such inquiry may be carried on to an indefinite extent, being directed

on the one hand towards the remote regions of the heavens, and on the other, by the analysis of substances, towards the atoms of Chemical theory. The results which lie before the eyes of all are an unanswerable proof of the soundness of the methods employed. It is acknowledged, even by Christian thinkers, that there is a legitimate and fruitful mode of research which for special purposes abstracts from the intervention of a higher spiritual power in nature. The apparent sequences of events, which might readily strike an undisciplined observer as a direct expression of the Divine Will, and as beyond the control of man, are proved to be merely superficial and phenomenal. They are resolved into groups of causes, and these again into prior causes, till at length forces have been reached which, so far as is yet known, are elementary. By a careful inspection of the elements, of their powers and properties, and by a studied combination of them, man can produce at will many of the commonly observed phenomena, and can make nature in very many instances his willing servant; and he is confident that by a continued application of the methods which have been so well attested, a multitude of successes will be registered in days to come—that no limit indeed can be fixed for progress in science.

While the power of God is not necessarily supposed to be withdrawn from nature by the *savant* who pursues the proper methods of science, yet, as might be expected, the habit of looking almost exclusively to material causes and treating them as independent tells on one's religious beliefs, till at length the Deity appears to many to be superfluous and unreal. Thus in the eighteenth century mechanical theories of the universe, resting on a materialistic philosophy, were embraced by many thinkers; it is often spoken of as the sceptical century, the French Encyclopædists being the typical representatives of it in this respect. And while, as we shall see, there has since been a great revival of faith, there has been a further and most brilliant development of science, the nineteenth century being the century of science *par excellence*. Moreover, science has now been popularized. All are familiar with many of its achievements; all share in the benefits it confers; and in consideration of its past victories people in civilized lands may be said to be breathlessly expectant. Modern science seems to be all-

conquering; the temptation is felt by many to regard it as all-sufficient for man.

In the nineteenth century there has been a parallel development, also of great magnitude, in the higher mental sphere, yielding science in the

larger sense (mental science, spiritual philosophy); but the mass of people are more impressed by the marvellous triumphs of physical science, and we look next to some of the disturbing effects on faith which are traceable to the latter.

The New Evangelical School of Paris.¹

BY THE REV. J. DICK FLEMING, M.A., B.D., TRANENT.

WHEN the present writer took part in the debates of the little theological club connected with the 'Faculté de Théologie Protestante' of Paris, and presided over by the professors M. Sabatier and M. Ménégos, he little thought that a new school of theology was in formation, which was to receive the terrific title of 'Symbolo-Fidéisme.' Yet such apparently was the case. The Reformed Church theologian, M. Sabatier, whose deep religious interest is combined with a keenly philosophic bent of mind, was already imbuing his pupils with those conceptions of religious symbolism, which have played so large a part in his recent book on the *Philosophy of Religion*. And the gentle M. Ménégos, bringing from his Lutheran upbringing a pronounced evangelical spirit, and yet a mind keenly alive to the scientific demands of the age, had already written his first treatises on salvation, sin, and redemption, and thus prepared for the new school its religious basis. The combination of this evangelical element with the doctrine of religious symbolism, has given rise to new modes of thought, which are exercising to-day a considerable influence in France. The new school has had to encounter opposition from Montauban and many of the religious journals; but the opposition has served principally to awaken the school to the consciousness of its unity, and to the need for the revision of doctrine which it has attempted.

The formal or philosophic principle that characterises the school goes by the name of Critical Symbolism. It is the theory that religious thought, dealing as it does with what is invisible, spiritual, and eternal, but having no adequate categories to express them, is obliged to clothe what is transcendent in sensible, material, phenomenal forms.

¹ Vide *Publications diverses sur le Fidéisme*. By Eugène Ménégos, Professor in the University of Paris. 1900.

The religious sentiment or idea incarnates itself in a local, contingent, concrete form, which varies under the influence of prevailing scientific or philosophic ideas.

There is nothing new in such a conception; it lies at the root of all science of religion, and every theologian who admits the idea of development in religious thought has adopted it. What is peculiar to the school is the thoroughgoing and conscious application of the principle to what might be supposed to lie beyond the sphere of development and change. They frankly recognize that everywhere in religious thought—not only in the creeds of the early Councils of the Church, but even in the teaching of Jesus Christ and His inspired apostles—there are elements that are transitory and local mingled with the eternally valuable; and that everywhere the theologian has the difficult task of separating the essential truth from the old-fashioned garb in which past ages have clothed it, and of presenting it anew in forms suitable to the character and intellectual needs of his age. The orthodox theologian is willing to apply the principle of evolution to other religions, and generally to the history of the Christian Church; but he draws a magic line round the New Testament and the doctrinal decisions of the Fathers, and challenges any that would touch that bedrock of the faith! Even the old Ritschlian tried hard to rescue the New Testament at least from the invasion of this principle; and almost succeeded, though not without straining the exegesis! The new school goes more thoroughly to work. Like the new Ritschlian, the symbolo-fidéist applies his principle all through, and has no hesitation in carrying everywhere his distinction between the eternal verity and its inadequate, changing, historical form. M. Ménégos declares that in so