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JOURNAL OF
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853RD ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING,

HELD IN COMMITTEE ROOM B, THE CENTRAL HALL,
WESTMINSTER, ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 11TH, 1916,
AT 4.30 P.M.

THE REV. PREBENDARY H. E. FOX, M.A., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the Meeting held on July 11th were read and confirmed, and the SECRETARY announced the Election of Mrs. Annie Trotter, Mr. Alfred Holness, Mr. P. Traer Harris, the Rev. W. Shaw Caldecott, and Miss Edith Mayfield as Associates of the Institute, and of the Rev. Walter Robbins, the Rev. G. B. Durrant, and the Rev. G. Parker as Missionary Associates.

The SECRETARY drew the attention of the Meeting to the great loss which the Institute had suffered by the recent death of David Howard, Esq., D.L., F.C.S., Vice-President and Trustee, and read a Resolution of sympathy with Mr. Howard's wife and family which the Council had passed that afternoon, the Members and friends present standing during the reading in token of respect.

*THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY UPON OTHER
RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS.* By the Rev. W. ST. CLAIR
TISDALL, M.A., D.D.

INTRODUCTION.

WHEN any two religions are brought for any considerable length of time into close contact with one another, it is natural to expect them to exercise more or less of an influence, for good or evil, upon each other. An instance of this is afforded by comparing the immense change which has been produced upon the religion of the Indian Aryans by the corrupt polytheistic and animistic faiths of the Daśyus, or native inhabitants, whom they subdued. Other influences besides this doubtless operated to effect the enormous change which becomes evident when we compare the religion of the Rig-Veda with Modern Hindûism, but not a slight part of the degradation which we find in the latter is directly traceable to the influence of which we speak. In the same way, the Buddhism of China is very different from Buddha's original teaching, as learnt from the Tipitakas of Ceylon, and originally of Magadha. The religions of Japan, again, have powerfully affected, and been in turn affected by, the Mahâyâna system of Buddhism introduced from Korea and China.

It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that, wherever we find that any other religion, ancient or modern, has for a long course of years been in contact with Christianity in any form, the former has had an impress made upon it by Christian rites and ceremonies, and even by Christian doctrines. Sometimes one result of this has been to modify the non-Christian faith very considerably. In some cases the latter has adopted certain Christian doctrines, in whole or in part. Sometimes the influence is manifested by the introduction of practices which have been openly adopted from those of Christian Missions. At other times, certain incidents related in the Gospels have been taken into the religious books of the other religion in a more or less modified form. Occasionally, Christian sentiments, and even maxims, have been consciously or unconsciously borrowed. But in whatever form, and under whatever disguise, Christianity has always exercised an influence.

Strangely enough, the elements thus taken over from Christianity have at times been erroneously supposed by prejudiced observers to have been derived by Christianity from the other system. Hence, in modern times, men have boldly asserted that the doctrine of our Lord's Virgin Birth has been derived from Buddhism, in which religion in *none* of its many varieties does that dogma really find place. So, too, the doctrine of the Trinity has been, quite as erroneously, traced to the Hindû Trimûrti. In all such cases, careful examination of the actual facts has shown that, either there is no real connexion or resemblance at all, or that the borrowing has been on the other side. For instance, when we hear people comparing the so-called "Resurrection" of Osiris with our Lord's Resurrection, we find that the ancient Egyptians taught that Osiris' body still lay in its tomb, and had not come to life again on earth, though his spirit was supposed to reign in Amenti. In the Finnish Kalevala, again, the story of Marjatta* is merely a confused and corrupt form of the Gospel narrative of Christ's Nativity. Thus the passage, instead of proving what a hasty opponent fancies, is really an example of the influence which Christianity has exercised on another religion.

It is true that there is danger, on the other hand, of being too hasty in ascribing to borrowing from Christianity ideas and practices which do not spring from it at all. Thus, when we find in certain forms of Hindûism the doctrines of *Prasada* (Grace), and *Bhakti* (sometimes rendered *faith*), it would be

* Runo L. (Forsman's Finnish text and Finnish notes, name index).

wrong to assert that they are necessarily of Christian origin and borrowed from the New Testament. On the contrary, the doctrine of Prasâda "goes back as far as literature takes us" in the Bhâgavata religion. *Bhakti*, too, is found inculcated in the oldest part of the Bhagavad-Gîtâ, which may date from the second century B.C. But its resemblance to Christian "Faith" is not nearly so great as some have imagined.

Another instance of what we may call a fortuitous coincidence may be mentioned in order to emphasize the necessity of caution in this matter. In the Rig-Veda the dead is said to "go home," and the words *Astam ehi* are used in dismissing the spirit from the body when laid on the funeral pyre. Strangely enough, among the native inhabitants of Southern Bantuland, the same expression "to go home" is* used to denote the spirit's departure from the body. Yet it is hardly probable that the Bantu tribes ever studied the Rig-Veda, or were in close contact with the ancient Âryans in Vedic times.

Somewhat similarly, from certain casual resemblances between some of Seneca's sentiments and those in Saint Paul's Epistles, it has been supposed that the Roman Stoics had come under the Christian Apostle's influence; and to prove this a series of letters between them has been forged. But careful study has disproved the assumption. Again, an attempt has been made to show that Epictetus, if not actually at heart a Christian, at least had been powerfully impressed by what he is presumed to have learnt of Christian ethics, possibly directly or indirectly from St. Paul. The theory rests upon the fact that, in the *Encheiridion* and in Arrian's report of the philosopher's teaching, a very great resemblance in diction has been observed between Epictetus and the language of the New Testament. But our recently acquired knowledge of the common dialect of the Greek language used in ordinary correspondence and the literature of that time completely accounts for this resemblance, while there are in his writings and discourses many points in which his teaching is quite opposed to that of the New Testament. For example, he uses *ταπεινός* and its compounds with the old heathen sense of "mean-spirited," instead of with the Christian significance of "humble." Moreover, his polytheism and pantheism are thoroughly Stoic, and completely contrary to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. His *one* reference to the persecuted Christians of his time shows neither compassion, sympathy, nor admiration; for, he says, in reference to fearless-

* Macdonald in *J.A.I.*, vol. xx, pp. 120, 121.

ness in meeting death, *Εἶτα ὑπὸ μανίας μὲν δύναται τις οὕτω διατεθῆναι πρὸς ταῦτα, καὶ ὑπὸ ἔθους οἱ Γαλιλαῖοι.*

In any such enquiry as that in which we are now engaged, it is necessary, therefore, to guard most carefully against being misled by merely casual resemblances. For example, in Pâli Buddhistic works, Buddha is sometimes styled *Deva-Devo*, which has been rendered, "God of God," and compared with the title "God of God" given to our Lord in the Nicene Creed. But there are two fallacies in this comparison which completely vitiate it. One is, that the Buddhism of the Pâli Canon practically denies the existence of any Being worthy to be styled "God," for *Deva* to a genuine Buddhist denotes a being inferior to Buddha, and needing to believe in Buddha in order to obtain Nirvâṇa. The other is that the Greek expression in the Creed is *Θεὸς ἐκ Θεοῦ, God from God*, which bears no real likeness whatever to the Pâli phrase.

It will be convenient to divide our subject into two parts. Part I treats of Ancient Religions which are now extinct. Part II deals with those religions which whether ancient or modern, are still in existence as a vital force in some part of the world at the present day.

PART I.

INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON RELIGIONS WHICH ARE NOW EXTINCT.

A.—ON THE RELIGIONS AND PHILOSOPHIES OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

The rise of a new religion was by no means an unknown thing in the Roman Empire. Although in early days no foreign faith was permitted to spread among Roman citizens, yet the immense numbers of slaves brought from many different lands must have made the Romans aware that, besides their own gods (whether those of the State or of the family), many other deities were worshipped in their territory. In process of time the rites of Bacchus, of the Magna Mater (204 B.C.), of Isis, Serapis, Mithra, and other foreign gods and goddesses, found an entrance, openly or secretly, into Rome and the provinces. Each of these in turn exercised a greater or less degree of influence. Judaism had made itself something of a power (not altogether for good) in Rome long ere the preaching

of the Gospel there. The ancient Roman law* forbidding the introduction of extraneous religions was all but a dead letter in the first century of our era. Yet, as we know, Christianity was, almost or quite alone, exposed to terrible persecutions, beginning with that under Nero in A.D. 64 (for that in which the Jews under Claudius were expelled from the city affected Christians only accidentally, so to speak), and continuing at intervals until Constantine's Edict of Toleration in A.D. 313.

Though Christianity was not declared a *Religio Licita* until A.D. 261, yet its very persecutions show how great must have been its influence upon the community. Nero's persecution of a sect deemed "hostile to the human race" proved that its teachings were already felt to be exerting an influence opposite to that produced by other faiths, and hateful to those who were devoted to gladiatorial shows, sensual pleasures, and other evil things then popular. Another proof of its influence is afforded by the fact that certain of the Emperors admitted Christ into the number of the deities whom they worshipped. Lampridius says that Alexander Severus and Hadrian did this. Tertullian states the same, with less probability, of Tiberius. Severus, we are told, set up statues of Christ, Abraham, Orpheus, and Apollonius of Tyana, along with the Lares and Penates, in his private shrine.

The opposition offered to the progress of Christianity by learned men such as Celsus and Porphyry is yet one more indication of the extent of Christian influence. The same may be said of Lucian's scoffs at *Peregrinus* (St. Paul?) and of the attempt to create in Apollonius of Tyana a heathen rival to Christ. Apart from Tertullian's boast of the immense number of converts who in his time began to be found, even in the camp and the palace, and the evidence to the same effect borne by the failure of persecution to stamp out the new faith, and leaving aside the spread of Christianity from Syria to Britain and beyond the limits of the Empire to Armenia and the Goths, two facts must here be mentioned. One is the attempt made by Aurelian, in imitation of and in opposition to Christian Monotheism, to cause the Palmyrene Sun-god to be recognised as the Supreme God of the Empire (December 25th being entitled "*Natalis Invicti*"), and Diocletian's effort to make Mithra the Protector of the Roman world; or, again, Julian's exhortations to the heathen to imitate the Christians, whom he

* "*Separatim nemo habessit deos, neve novos; sed ne advenas nisi publice adscitos privatim colunto.*"

hated, in works of charity, and his endeavour to stir them up to devotion to Apollo and the other gods, that thus Christian progress might be stayed.

The second great fact, more important than all other evidence of the influence of Christian teaching on those who did not become Christians, is the gradual but steady process of the softening of cruel and brutal habits and customs, especially, perhaps, under the Antonines (A.D. 138–80). This softening influence was manifested in kindness to slaves and relaxation of the cruel laws relating to their treatment, in gentleness to children, in Trajan's monthly allowance to Roman and Italian children of impoverished families, in increased facilities for education, and in other social ameliorations. Some of this may be attributed to the effect of good philosophic maxims; but such theories had been in the air, if we may so say, long previously, without being carried into practice, until Christian example had made them effective. Gaston Boissier* points to Marcus Aurelius' tenderness towards his children, and contrasts it with Cicero's and Seneca's tone in speaking of the little ones.

The religious revival of the second century was no doubt largely influenced by Christianity, just as has been the case in our own time in India and Ceylon, where the progress of Christianity has produced many attempts to revive and purify Hindûism, Islâm and Buddhism. In the ancient world also Christian influence led to an endeavour to purify morality and to call attention to the evil effects of heathen mythology. No doubt Plato and Seneca, among others, had already denounced these evils; but their philosophy had failed to effect a cure; nor were these men themselves examples of moral conduct. In the second century we find in the heathen world a tendency towards belief in One God spreading in the Empire; but, apart from Christianity and Judaism, this always, even among philosophers, led to Pantheism—not to the recognition of the Living God. Even Epictetus, though he approaches nearer to true Monotheism than any other philosopher of his time, never attains to it, nor does he free himself from the Pantheism of his school. The *Octavius* of Minucius Felix shows how powerfully Christian Monotheism attracted a clever Roman heathen to accept Christianity; and how different it seemed to him from the vague philosophical ideas on the subject with which he was acquainted!

No doubt Quadratus' Apology, addressed to Hadrian, that of

* *La Religion Romaine*, vol. ii.

Aristides, and that written by Justin Martyr in Marcus Aurelius' time, all helped forward the progress of Christianity among the upper classes, and influenced those who did not actually accept the faith.

B.—ON TWO EXTINCT RELIGIONS OF PERSIAN ORIGIN, AND ON THE RELIGIONS OF THE KELTS, SCANDINAVIANS, AND FINNS.

The Persians have always been susceptible to foreign religions. Hence Mithraism, which in its day was Christianity's most dangerous rival, seems to have borrowed not a few of its rites from Christianity, or at least modified its own through Christian influence.*

Manichæism also, a compound of Mazdaism, Buddhism and Christianity,† endeavoured to attract adherents by borrowing largely from the latter. Mânî (Manes) recognized a Triad consisting of the Father of Light, the Son of Light, and the Pure Spirit (or White Dove). He spoke of "Buddha, Zoroaster and Jesus" as his predecessors in the contest between the Kingdom of Light and the Kingdom of Darkness, and himself claimed to be the Paraclete promised by Christ. He employed such Christian terms as "the old man" (by which he meant the carnal body), "the new man," etc. In imitation of our Lord he chose twelve Disciples, or "Masters." These in turn consecrated seventy-two "Episcopi," who then ordained "presbyteri." The Manichæan Baptism and Sacred Meal *may* also have been of Christian origin. Holy Scripture was boldly perverted in order to support Manichæan teaching.

Among the Kelts, Christian influence may be traced in the legends which in Brittany led the people to look for the return of Lemenik (in Wales styled Lleminawg) to put an end to discords and to give his people victory over their foes. The Arthurian cycle contains much the same prophecy regarding King Arthur's expected reappearance. The story of the Holy Graal contains some Christian elements.‡

The Norsemen saw in their tale of the death of "Balder the Beautiful"§ a great resemblance to the Gospel account of Christ's character and death when they came under Christian influence

* *Vide* Cumont's book, also Dr. Tisdall's "Mythic Christs and the True" and "Mithraism" (*Journ. Vict. Inst.*, vol. xliii).

† *Journal Asiatique*, November-December, 1911, and March-April, 1913.

‡ Villemarqué, *Myrdhin*.

§ *Gylfaginning*.

and learnt something of the Christian faith. It has indeed been thought that the whole story of Balder's death and the description of his character, so different from that of the other Scandinavian deities, is due to some acquaintance with the Gospel Message.

Among the Slavonians it is not easy to trace influence to any great extent. On the Finns, however, as we have pointed out in the Introduction, the Gospel narrative of our Lord's birth was not without effect, in that it left its trace on their ancient religion, as we learn from the legend of Marjatta.

PART II.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY OVER RELIGIONS THAT STILL SURVIVE.

In dealing with this very extensive department of our subject, perhaps it will be best to divide it into three sections. In the first we shall treat of the influence of Christianity on the still extant religions of the Farther East, comprising India, China, and Japan; in the second we shall have to consider how Christianity has affected the faiths of the Nearer East—that is to say, Arabia, Persia, and Africa; and in the third to inquire what its influence has been on two religions which fit into neither of these divisions—to wit, Neo-Judaism and Neo-Zoroastrianism. This arrangement is not intended to be exact, but it is convenient for several reasons. Among other things, the chief religions of the Farther East may be said to have arisen long before the Christian Era, while those of the Nearer East are of much more recent origin. It is true that in a certain sense no religion has ever died out completely, and that no absolutely new religion has ever been born. Doubtless certain Islâmic tenets and practices may be traced back to a time prior to the death of Abraham, and are quite as ancient as anything to be found in the Rîg-Veda of India: yet on the whole the fact remains that Islâm with its off-shoots originated as a system centuries after our Lord's time, while Hindûism in its oldest known form, found in the Vedas, existed as a religion in very early times.

A.—CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE ON THE RELIGIONS OF THE FARTHER EAST.

I.—HINDŪISM.

(1) *Bhāgavāntism in its Later Developments.*

Hindūism, as Sir Monier Monier-Williams* has well pointed out, has assimilated with itself some feature of each of the various religions with which in its long history it has come into contact. The amorphous mass, though yielding to every impact, has yet shown sufficient power of resistance to absorb a great deal from without, while remaining in its essential characteristics unaffected thereby, and retaining its own philosophy and even many of its ancient rites and practices. Krishna, the most popular god in India to-day, is not among the deities mentioned in the Rig-Veda. His worship in all probability was borrowed from the aborigines whom the Āryans conquered and absorbed into the lower strata of the population. Demon-worship, idolatry, and probably the doctrine of transmigration, came from the same source. These are but examples of the way in which Hindūism in the past showed itself tolerant of new ideas and welcomed fresh deities into the Pantheon—as it does still. This plasticity, so to speak, would render it easy for various forms of Christianity to begin to exercise more or less influence upon the chief Indian religions (Hindūism and Buddhism especially) as soon as it came in touch with them.

This must have occurred as early as the first century of our era. Tradition relates that St. Thomas preached the Gospel in Parthia and India,† though it is true that the term *India* was used in an extremely vague sense in antiquity. Yet the fact that the name of the “Indian” king Gundaphorus,‡ who is declared to have sent for and heard St. Thomas, is said to have been found in a Sanskrit form on an early coin, lends some support to the story that the Apostle visited the country. If so, it is very probable that Christianity has been known to some in India ever since that time. At any rate, the existence of the “Christians of St. Thomas” has been traced back to A.D. 522. Christian doctrines were certainly known in Northern India§ “in the seventh century, and possibly long before this.”

* *Hindūism*, p. 85.

† Eusebius, *Hist. Ecc.* III, i.

‡ *Acta Sancti Thomae, in iis*: *Abdiae Hist. Apost.*, IX, 2.

§ Hopkins, *Religions of India*, p. 567.

As far as morality is concerned, Christian influence upon the life of India and upon the teaching given by its poets and philosophers was certainly very slight in early days. In neither the Mahābhārata nor in any of the Purāṇas do we find anything resembling Christian, or even merely human, beneficence taught; but in matters of less import we discover traces of the influence of Christian theology, though very much misunderstood and corrupted. Such an authority as Dr. Grierson is of opinion that the Bhāgavata triad, consisting of Bhagavān, his various Incarnations, and his Śakti, may have originated, in part at least, from some confused knowledge of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, learned from the Syrian Church of Malabar, the Śakti (Lakshmi) being derived from the conception of the Virgin Mary, possibly confused with the Holy Spirit. He supposes that the influence of other branches of the Christian Church may also have made itself felt, even though it would be rash to attribute the doctrine of *Avatāras* entirely to this source; for in Vedic literature—dating long before the Christian era—the same idea is found in connexion with Brahmā, Indra, and Viṣṇu, though later it was held in reference to Viṣṇu only.*

The Avatāra doctrine, though bearing some resemblance to the Christian belief in an Incarnation, and doubtless powerfully influenced thereby, is distinguished from the latter by two important characteristics. Firstly, in an Avatāra Viṣṇu does not *really* become a man (or a fish, or a boar, or whatever else it may be), but only *assumes* that form for a time “in sport” (*līlā*); in fact, he acts a part for a special purpose, somewhat according to the Docetic theory. Secondly, the god in his Avatāras is never regarded as a model for man’s imitation, from the moral or from any other standpoint.† Even in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, which Grierson thinks very probably dates from the thirteenth century, and is certainly a late work, the Hindū conception of an Avatāra is what we have said, for we read: “The transgression of virtue and the daring acts which are witnessed in gods must not be charged as faults to these glorious persons. . . . Let no one other than a god ever, even in thought, practise them.”‡

Later still Tulasī-Dās, in the sixteenth century, though teaching that Rāmacandra should be worshipped as the *one* Incarna-

* *Encyc. of Religion and Ethics*, vol. ii, p. 542.

† Farquhar, *The Crown of Hindūism*, p. 431.

‡ Book X, cap. 33, śl. 30, 31.

tion of Vishṇu, still maintains something of the same view, for he says in his Hindī Rāmāyaṇa : “The fool who, in the pride of knowledge, presumes to copy them [the gods], saying, It is the same for a man as for a god, shall be cast into hell for as long as the world lasts.”*

So, too, Māṇikka Vācakar says of Śiva’s manifestation of himself in a somewhat similar manner, that all his appearances are illusion. Whether he seems to be a groom, a coolie, or something else, he is all the time the “Great Deceiver,” with nothing real in the appearances.

Perhaps one of the earliest dogmatic statements about the manner and object of Vishṇu’s various Avatâras is that contained in the Bhagavad-Gîtâ, where the god says :—†

“For whenever, O son of Bharata, there occurs a decrease
of religion,
An uprising of irreligion, then I produce myself :
For the preservation of the pious and for the destruction of
evil-doers,
For the establishment of religion, I am born from age to
age.”

Here again we see that there is a great and essential difference between the Hindû Avatâra and the Christian Incarnation doctrine. But there is sufficient resemblance to warrant the conclusion that, though the former is not derived directly from Christian teaching, yet its development has been steadily carried on in such a way as to approach nearer and nearer to the Christian doctrine, though without ever coinciding with it. Tulasî-Dâs’s near approach to monotheism in his devotion to Râma, whom he endeavours to depict as in part divine and in part human, shows at once how deeply the Indian mind feels the need of an Incarnation, and how completely the Avatâra theory fails to satisfy that natural human yearning for personal knowledge of, and communion with, the Living God.

In the legends about Kṛishṇa—at least in their late Purâṇic form—clear traces of Christian influence are evident. When Kṛishṇa first appears in Sanskrit literature, in the Āchandogya Upanishad,‡ there is nothing either divine or mysterious about him. In the later parts of the Bhagavad-Gîtâ he is depicted as an Avatâra of Vishṇu, but nothing is related of him which in

* Farquhar, pp. 394, 395.

† Book IV, śll. 7, 8.

‡ Book III, § 17, 6.

any way recalls to us the Gospel narrative. On the other hand, in the Sândilya Sûtras, which Cowell has shown to be quite modern in date, we find distinct, though grotesque, imitations of the Gospel account of such incidents as the Massacre of the Innocents, the Birth in a stable, and the visit of *three* Wise Men.* Even in the Purâṇas, which give marvellous tales about Kṛishṇa, these details are not found. They are therefore additions to the Hindû version of the story. Hopkins† is quite certain that these legends were introduced into India and attached to the Kṛishṇa-myth from Christian sources later than A.D. 600. He thinks they were probably brought to India at the time when (in A.D. 639) King Śīlāditya welcomed some Syrian Christians to his Court. Of still later introduction is the account of how Kṛishṇa restored to life a believing woman's son, which is recorded only in the quite modern Jaiminī-Bhârata.

The Purâṇas, which give accounts of the mythical life and deeds of Kṛishṇa, have exercised and still exercise an almost unbounded influence upon the minds of the masses in India. Hopkins thinks that there can be no doubt that the development of these legends owes a great deal to garbled accounts of certain incidents in the life of our Lord. "The outer Christianity reflected in the Purâṇic legends is as palpable as it is shocking."‡ As Kṛishṇa is represented as delighting in murder and adultery, it is no wonder that love is always identified with sensuality and power with cruelty. As Vishṇu merely plays a part and does not set a moral example for man's imitation, hence to the Indian mind there is nothing revolting in Kṛishṇa's sporting with the Gopīs or in his other deeds recorded in the Purâṇas. He is the Divine Actor, lightheartedly playing a part in the tragic comedy of human life. If we remember that these Sanskrit writers consider that history and fable are one and the same thing (*itihâsa*), we can understand that garbled, confused, forms of certain Gospel scenes may have been the original sources of these Kṛishṇa-legends.

Here it may be useful to enquire, by what criterion are we to decide whether these legends about Kṛishṇa have arisen from corruption of the Gospel narratives, or whether, on the other hand (as some modern opponents have asserted), the Gospel accounts have been derived from the Indian legends about

* Weber's *Kṛishṇa's Geburtsfest* (Kṛishṇajanmâshṭami).

† *Rel. of India*, pp. 430, 431, 503, note.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 429.

Krishna. The matter is of some importance because we find the same Antichristian argument starting up again and again, in slightly different forms, in reference to many Bible narratives, both in the New Testament and in the Old. The criteria are two. The first is that, other things being equal, the simpler and more unvarnished form of an account is more ancient than the highly elaborated, for "a story never loses in the telling." The second is that, if we have any knowledge of the dates at which the two accounts were composed, the older of the two cannot have been derived from the later. Thus these criteria would prove that the writer of the narratives of the Creation, the Fall, and the Flood, in Genesis, did not borrow his information from Milton's "Paradise Lost."

Other illustrations are easily given. For instance, in Sanskrit literature there are several accounts of the Deluge which is said to have occurred in Manu's time. One of these is found in the Śatapatha Brâhmaṇa* and another in the Mahâbhârata. Now if we compare these two narratives with one another, we perceive that the simpler form of the story is that given in the former: and this is also the earlier in date of composition. The story of Buddha's life and death in the Pâli canonical books of the Tipitaka is vastly simpler and less elaborated than that in the much later Sanskrit Lalita Vistara.

Just in the same way the earliest forms of the tales about King Arthur given in *Nennius* and in the *Lives of the Saints* are less poetical and far less romantic than those found in Malory, in the Welsh *Red Book of Hergest*, in Tennyson's "Idylls of the King," or even in Geoffrey of Monmouth. The recently discovered Sumerian tale of the Flood seems, as far as its fragments have been deciphered, less fanciful and less full of details than the Babylonian story of Šit-Napishtim which was found in Assurbanipal's library at Nineveh. Reasonable criticism would apply the same criteria to the solution of certain Old Testament problems. It would thus appear, for instance, that the Hebrew account of the Flood as given in Genesis is more ancient than the Babylonian, and cannot have been derived from it. In the same way, if there is any connexion between the Egyptian "Tale of the Two Brothers" and the history of Joseph in Genesis, the Hebrew narrative cannot have been taken from the Egyptian legend, though the converse process is quite possible.

* Eighth Adhyâya, 1st Brâhmaṇa (*Bibliotheca Indica*, vol. i, pp. 525 sqq.).

If we apply these two criteria to the Purânic legends of Krishna, it will be evident why we decide that they may contain corrupt accounts of certain events recorded in the Gospels, but that the contrary hypothesis is uncritical.

It is only right to say that the assertion that these Purânic legends speak of Krishna's Virgin Birth, his Crucifixion, and his Resurrection, is absolutely devoid of the slightest foundation.

But, beside these late legends about Krishna's supposed doings, the religion of his worshippers has another and far more important aspect, the doctrinal. Two of the most noteworthy doctrines are those relating to *Prasâda* and *Bhakti*. The doctrine of *Prasâda* in the Bhâgavata religion goes back to about the second century B.C.* Both the Vaishṇava and the Śalva Schools teach that the Deity is full of grace and pity (*karuṇa*). This conviction grows steadily stronger and stronger in mediæval times,—doubtless in large measure through Christian influence—but it cannot be said to owe its origin to historical Christianity. It is rather, in Tertullian's words, "the testimony of the human soul, naturally Christian." We welcome it as an example, one out of many, of the way in which "the light that lighteth every man coming into the world" has illuminated some hearts and poured into their darkness some of the dawning rays of the Sun of Righteousness. The light might have been quenched long since, had not the Gospel message, however feebly, sounded forth in the eager ears of a few of India's noblest sons, and enabled such men, and especially the comparatively modern vernacular poets, Tulasî-Dâs, Tukârâm, and Mânikka Vâçakar, to proclaim once more these great truths.

The doctrine entitled *Bhakti-mârگا* or the "Way of Devotion," that is salvation through devotion to Vishṇu or to one of his Avatâras, may be said to be peculiar to Vaishṇavism, and specially to Bhâgavantism. These Avatâras are all personal deities, such as Krishna and Râma. The human soul (*jîva*) is held to be an emanation from Bhagavân and to live for ever as an individual, instead of being absorbed again into the Deity, as some Hindû sects teach. The soul is subjected to transmigration after transmigration, until it becomes free (*mukta*) from all bonds through having gradually grown to perfect devotion (*bhakti*) to Bhagavân. Having in this process and by means of devotion become *like* the Deity, the conscious, personal soul

* Grierson, "Bhakti-mârگا," *Encyc. of Rel. and Ethics*, vol. ii.

remains for ever sitting in perfect happiness at His feet. Here again we trace the influence of Christian teaching, though it is strangely mixed with the Pantheistic Hindû idea of emanation and that of Metempsychosis, and uses terms which, like *Mukta*, are elsewhere employed to convey the contrary conception of absorption into the impersonal All.

Yet it must be admitted that, probably because the doctrine of *bhakti* in its fully developed form is not truly indigenous in India it has been much abused and misapplied. Even in some of the Upanishads salvation through *bhakti* has come to mean escape from the punishment of sin through the simple, even unconscious, repetition of such names as Râma, Nârâyana, or other Avatâras of Vishṇu. Thus we read in the Kârâyana Upanishad, v. 5, "He Who reveres the phrase *Om, Namô Nârâyana* (Amen, honour to Vishṇu), his portion shall be Vaikunṭha's Heaven." The robber Valmiki, when murdering Brâhmaṇs, used the word *mâr* (strike). As this word when spelled backwards becomes the sacred name Râm, he was not only saved by its repetition but became equal in dignity to Brahmâ himself.

Much later, too, absolute devotion of *tan, man, dhan* (body, mind, property) to the service of a man who, being descended from someone reputed to have been in some degree an incarnation of Kṛishṇa, is esteemed the proper recipient of divine honours, is declared to be necessary and sufficient to procure salvation for the devotee. Āitanya* (born about A.D. 1485) made this a distinctive feature of his system. This still leads in India to the most immoral conduct, and the total submission of the worshipper to the caprices of inhuman monsters, guilty of the most abominable wickedness.

We must add that in modern India a strenuous effort is being made to render Kṛishṇa the successful rival of Christ as the object of men's entire devotion. A book entitled, *The Imitation of Kṛishṇa*, appeared some years ago. The title speaks for itself, and displays this rivalry openly. But, beside this, the influence of Christianity is shown in the fact that *imitation* of Kṛishṇa implies that he should be taken as a *model*, though this is contrary to Hindû thought about the functions of an Avatâra. Just as in the last days of Classical heathenism the influence of Christianity was clearly manifested in the effort made by Julian the Apostate and others to revive the worship of Apollo and

* Moore, *Hist. of Religions*, vol. i, p. 339; Monier-Williams, *Hindûism*, p. 146.

other forms of the Sun-god in opposition to the claims of Christ, so it is in India at the present time in relation to Kṛishṇa.

An attempt has been made to prove the existence of Christian influence in the composition of the Bhagavad-Gītâ, and quite a number of passages have been culled* from it and compared with those in the New Testament, with which it has been thought that some similarity exists. But the more carefully the Bhagavad-Gītâ is studied, the less grounded does the comparison appear to be. Such comparisons are apt to be misleading, and the greatest care should be exercised before admitting them. An instance of this is afforded by the supposed quotation of the Golden Rule in the Mahâbhârata. This enormous Epic consists of some 220,000 lines. Some scholars suppose it to have been begun in the fourth or fifth century before Christ, and completed about the end of the sixth century of our era. Hence it would be quite possible for a passage from one of the Gospels to occur in it, yet there are good reasons for doubting the Christian origin of the sentiment referred to. It occurs more than once in the form

“Na tat parasya sandadyât pratikûlam yad âtmanas”:

“One should not inflict upon another what is unpleasant to oneself.”

The resemblance to the Golden Rule is clear. But this form of the precept differs from that in the Gospel by being purely *negative*, while that which our Lord gives in Matt. vii, 12, is *positive*. The difference here is enormous. Again, it should be noticed that the same negative form of the precept occurs in earlier *Buddhist* works. For example, in the *Dhammapada* we have:†

“Na hi verena verâni sammant’ idha kudâçananî,
Averena-ça sammanti, esa dhammo sanantano”:

“For not by hatred are hatreds ever caused to cease here (on earth): by absence of hatred they are caused to cease; this is the perpetual rule.”

As this book is pre-Christian, the sentiment cannot be due to Christian influence. It is, moreover, well known that Confucius uttered practically the same opinion, for he commended “Reciprocity,”‡ saying it meant, “Do not to others what you would not wish done to you.” From the Buddhists it was adopted by the Hindûs, and is repeated in various forms in the Hitopadâsa, the Pançatantra, and other Sanskrit works.

* e.g., in Monier-Williams’ *Hindûism*, pp. 212-217.

† Sl. 5, cf. śll. 133, 134, etc.

‡ Analects, Book XV, 23.

At least one passage in the Mahâbhârata may well be due to Christian influence—the account of the future Kali-Avatâra of Vishṇu. There it is stated that, at the end of the age, Vishṇu will appear as Kalki, mounted on a white horse, bearing in his hand a drawn sword, for the purpose of slaying the wicked.* This may be derived from Revelation vi, 8.

Some writers have been much impressed with the importance of the conception which they think is represented by the word *Trimûrti*, but the most opposite views have been expressed on the subject. Certain writers have thought that this “great Hindû doctrine of the Trinity” is borrowed from Christianity, and they mention it as a very potent argument in proof of the extent of early Christian influence in India. On the other hand, it has been asserted that this doctrine is very ancient in India, that it is one of the leading dogmas of Hindûism, that the Christian Church has here taken over into her theology a doctrine which is purely heathen, and that the proof of its Hindû origin is that in the Elephanta Cavern near Bombay a statue with three faces, representing the Trimûrti and “of immense antiquity,” still exists.

The whole argument well illustrates the danger of yielding to prejudice instead of calmly studying the facts of the case. These are † briefly as follows: (1) The figure in the Elephanta Cave is now admitted to represent not the Trimûrti, but only Śiva in his three aspects; (2) It is a sculpture of quite modern date, not more than some five or six centuries old; (3) the Hindû Trimûrti represents three distinct gods, Brahmâ, Vishṇu, and Śiva, not a tri-unity, but a Triad, such as is often found in many different religions (*cf.* the Capitoline Triad of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva); (4) The conception ‡ in India is not older than the Middle Ages, and hence may have been due to Christian influence; (5) especially because the word Trimûrti as an adjective meaning “three-formed” (*tri-formis*) is applied in Sanskrit literature to each of the three gods, Brahmâ, Vishṇu, and Śiva; (6) At any rate, the “doctrine of the Trimûrti” is not an essential part of Hindûism, indeed, it can hardly be called a Hindû doctrine at all, since it is of no importance whatever in comparison with Belief in the Transmigration of Souls, the necessity for preserving caste, the religious supremacy of the Brahmans, and not a few other matters of that kind.

* Book XII, śl. 12, 941, *sqq.*

† *Cf.* Moore, pp. 344, 345; Hopkins, p. 387.

‡ De Gubernatis, *Enciclopedia indica*, p. 363; De Harlez, *Védisme, Brahmanisme et Christianisme*, p. 112.

(2) *Mediæval Hindû Sects.*

Râmânûja, who flourished about the middle or end of the twelfth century of our era, was one of the chief founders of Hindû sects of the Middle Ages. His influence on those who came after him was immense, and it has by no means ceased in our own day. He, like many other leading Indian religious teachers, ventured to discard Sanskrit, and to use the living vernacular instead. In this matter there is a parallel between the Reformation in Europe and the attempts to reform Hindûism in India. A leading feature in the teaching of all these mediæval and modern Hindû religions is the great and growing emphasis which they one and all lay upon the necessity of *bhakti*. In no other way can salvation (*mukti*, *moksha*) be obtained than by this personal devotion to Vishṇu in one of his manifestations, usually as Râma or Krishṇa. As has already been pointed out, the *bhakti* thus inculcated is very different from that mentioned in the Bhagavad-Gîtâ. It is far nobler and more spiritual, and the development is distinctly due to Christian influence upon the minds of Râmânûja and his followers. There is in their teaching a near approach to belief in a Personal God, Who is full of grace and pity, and with Whom the devotee can attain to spiritual communion.

Râmânanda was one of Râmânûja's most distinguished followers. He chose for himself twelve disciples, taught the brotherhood of all believers, and declared that all castes were equal in the sight of the Deity. Christian influence is here very evident, although it is a well-known fact that from very early times all Indian *ascetics* have shaken off in their own persons the bonds of caste, in common with all other human ties and obligations.

Kabir taught about the end of the fourteenth century, and was another of Râmânûja's followers. The details of his life are uncertain and legendary, but it is evident that he was a sincere seeker after truth. He is claimed by both Muslims and Hindûs, and he undoubtedly was something of an eclectic. This no doubt caused him to feel more sympathy with Hindûism than with the cold and exclusive theology of Islâm. What we know of his teaching is fragmentary, and is contained in books written long after his death, especially the *Bijak* (about A.D. 1570), and part of the *Âdi Granth* of the Sikhs, *circa* 1590). Legends concerning him show clear traces of some knowledge of the Gospels among his followers, who mistakenly ascribed to their master things they had heard of Christ. Hence the legendary account

of Kabîr's life contains remarkable* parallels with certain incidents in the life of our Lord. There seem, for instance, to be some references to Virgin Birth. As a boy, Kabîr worsts a learned Pañdit in argument (*cf.* the *Lalita Vistara* and the *Apocryphal Gospels*). He was blamed for associating with outcasts, and he miraculously supplied food to the poor. The religious leaders of the day were excited to hostility against him. He is said to have raised a boy and a girl from the dead. Women devotees waited upon him. Sikander Lodî tried to put him to death, but failed. Some of the details of his trial before this sovereign seem to have been modelled on those related of Christ's trial before Pilate. Kabîr appears to have delivered his teaching orally and to have written nothing. Among the sayings recorded of him are several which recall certain passages of the New Testament. Such are the following:—

- “The things which are seen are transitory.”
- “What God desires is purity of heart.”
- “Men are saved by devotion (*bhakti*), and not by works.”
- “Perfect love casteth out fear.”
- “Whatever I have is not mine own : it is Thine. It is Thine own that I give Thee; what have I?”
- “Small is the door of devotion as the tenth part of a mustard-seed. The heart of men is swollen with pride to the size of an elephant (*cf.* Matthew xix, 24, and Qur'ân, Sûrah vii, 38), how can he pass within?”
- “Those who sought found.”

Kabîr's disciples exist to the present day. They are known as Kabîr-panthis, or “Walkers in Kabîr's path.” They are urged to fast on the last day of each lunar month and on Sundays. They celebrate a kind of sacrament, entitled “Jol-Prasâd (“Candle-flame and Grace,” the word *prasâd*—in Sanskrit *prasâda*, “Divine favour,”—having now come to denote the food consumed in this rite), in which a kind of wafer is eaten. The ceremony is supposed to confer eternal life, if worthily performed. It is clear that Kabîr was “not far from the Kingdom of God.” There must be many more such humble seekers in India to-day.

Guru Nânak, the founder of the religion of the Sikhs (Sanskrit *Śishya*, “disciple”), was born at Lahore in A.D. 1469. He inculcated the Christian doctrine of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of his own disciples. Nânak taught

* Wescott, *Kabîr and the Kabîr-Panth*, p. 36.

practical monotheism, but his followers persist in* worshipping him as an Incarnation, and then the Ādi-Granth, their sacred book, as containing the Divine teaching which he received and gave. But the Sikhs are steadily sinking back into a debased Hindūism, though retaining the name and the outward rites of their faith.

Āitanya was born about A.D. 1485. His leading doctrine was the need of devotion (*bhakti*) centred in a *man* in each generation, who would be an Incarnation of Kṛishṇa. The influence of the Bhagavad-Gītā is very strong in his system.†

Tulasī-Dās belonged to the Rāmānandī sect, and lived in the sixteenth century. His Braj Bhāshā "Rāmāyaṇa" (which must not be confounded with the Sanskrit epic of the same name) teaches the worship of Rāmaçandra as the *one* Incarnation of the god Viṣṇu. The book contains a very great deal of what we may almost call Christian teaching under the garb of Hindū names and expressions. This is specially the case with regard to his teaching on devotion and grace. Christians might well employ much of the language in which he speaks of these subjects, were it not that the object of his devotion is not the historic Lord Jesus Christ, but the legendary Rāmaçandra, supposed to be an Avatāra of the god Viṣṇu. It is because of their heathen associations that all Indian reformers have failed, and that their followers have sunk into Hindū sects, often polytheistic and immoral. Perhaps nothing in Tulasī-Dās and in Mānikka Vāçikar, who is often associated with him, is more distinctively Christian in origin than their doctrine of Vicarious Suffering. This seems to have brought much comfort to their own souls. And, as there is nothing of the kind in Hindūism, it is one of many indications of the influence which Christianity has exercised in moulding the religion which they taught.

(3) *Modern Hindū Sects.*

Our limits do not allow us to deal at all fully with the many sects of modern Hindūism, upon all of which Christian influences have been exerted to a greater or less degree. All we can do is to indicate how these influences have worked, and are even now working, in two of the chief of such Neo-Hindū forms of religion: (1) the Brahma-Samāj and its offshoots, and (2) the Ārya-Samāj.

* Lillingston, *The Brahma Samāj and Ārya Samāj*, p. 40; Moore, pp. 351, 352.

† Monier-Williams, *Hindūism*, p. 146; Lillingston, p. 35; Moore, pp. 134 *sqq.*, 339.

The founder of the Brahma-Samâj,* Râjâ Râm Mohan Rai, was educated under direct Christian influence, but for some reason did not openly and fully accept Christianity. He endeavoured to reform Hindûism from within by correcting its abuses and borrowing from Christianity what seemed to him most necessary for the moral and spiritual regeneration of his country. He was influential in helping to abolish the practice of widow-burning, even before he founded the new sect in 1830. He taught belief in a Personal and Holy God, and even in outward matters adopted Christian methods of worship and conduct. In the Brahma-Samâj he ordained the celebration of weekly united services, at which, in imitation of Christian worship, hymns were sung, a sermon delivered, and passages read from the Vedas. As he grew older, he felt that he had not succeeded in establishing a religion which would satisfy the heart of India. Yielding to no one in his admiration for Christ, he yet denied His Deity; but near the end of his life he admitted that India must finally accept the Christian faith.

His successor, Debendra-Nâth Tagore, was less inclined towards Christianity. But in endeavouring to arrest its progress he imitated Christian practice by training and sending out missionaries to preach the doctrines of the Brahma-Samâj and also by literature and educational work. To the ancient Hindû doctrines of *Yoga*, *Bhakti*, and *Jñâna*, Keshab Čandra Sen added the Christian conception of *Sevâ* (service of God). In 1881, when there took place a division in the Samâj, the Sâdhâran Brahma-Samâj separating from the main body, Keshab Čandra Sen's adherents called their sect "the Church of the New Dispensation" (*Nava Vidhâna*). He introduced Baptism and the Communion and then the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, identifying the Father, the Son, and the Blessed Spirit respectively with the Hindû Triad of attributes, Sat-Čit-Ānanda (Existence, Thought, Joy), which in the Upanishads constitutes one of the names of Brahmâ (*Saččidānanda*).

Brâhmaism, as the Brahma-Samâj movement has been called, has had a great influence upon India through its social reform work. It has accustomed many people to look upon that movement with more favour than if such reforms had come directly instead of indirectly from a Christian source. But its tenets, though preached by quite a number of highly educated and most able men, have appealed only to the upper classes of Hindûs, and among them only to those who have received a

* Lillingston, Moore, *Encyc. of Rel. and Ethics*, vol. ii.

Western education. Not having given Christ His proper place, Brâhmaism is only an enlightened philosophical Theism, not "the power of God unto salvation." Everything in it productive of good is due to direct Christian influence. It claims to be the Universal Religion, but has already failed, even in India itself.

It should, however, be noticed that all these various Samâjes have broken entirely with orthodox Hindûism in one great point. All the Six Orthodox Systems of Hindû philosophy adopt as an axiom the statement, "Nâvastuno vastusiddhih," which exactly corresponds to the Lucretian "Ex nihilo nihil fit." These modern movements admit instead that God can create, and has created, the Universe neither from Himself nor from some self-produced form of matter. Hence they avoid the Pantheism, with all its attendant confusion of evil and good, which is the very soul of Hindûism. This change is indicative of the immense effect which Christianity has produced on them.

The Ârya-Samâj, founded in 1875 by Dayânand Sarasvati, differs from the Brahmo-Samâj and its offshoots in being profoundly anti-Christian. It has become more of a political than of a religious movement, however. Its founder affirmed that not only all true religion, but all modern science, is contained in the Vedas. In worship the Ârya-Samâj retains the ancient Âryan fire-altar, burning *homa* (*soma*), or incense. Its creed is vague, and many of its members speak highly of Atheism, which doubtless they cherish in their hearts. It is more noted for bitter hatred of, and opposition to, Christianity than for anything else. Yet in worship and methods of work it has largely imitated Protestant Christianity. On Sunday morning there is worship, consisting of hymns, reading of the Vedas, and a lecture or sermon. Controversy, street-preaching, distribution of tracts, publication of newspapers, establishment of schools and orphanages, and the sending forth of missionaries, are among its methods of propagation.

We may sum up the influence of Christianity upon Hindûism in its various forms by making use of the following two quotations from the writings of men whose experience of India has been extensive. Our own study and personal knowledge of the subject lead to precisely the same conclusion.

"Christian dogma," says Hopkins, "was formally introduced into South India* in the sixth century; it was known in the

* *Religions of India*, p. 567.

North in the seventh, and possibly long before this; it was the topic of debate by educated Hindûs in the sixteenth and seventeenth. It has helped to mould the Hindûs' own most intellectual sects; and, either through the influence of Christian or native teaching, or that of both, have been created, not only the Northern Monotheistic Schools, but also the strict Unitarianism of the later southern sects, whose Scriptures, for at least some centuries, have inculcated the purest morality and simplest Monotheistic creed in language of the most elevated character." As an example he mentions the Sacred Kural of Tiruvalluvar Nârâyana.

Again, Sir Narayan Chandavarkar, a Justice of the High Court and Chancellor of the Bombay University, says: "The ideas which lie at the heart of the Gospel of Christ are slowly but surely permeating every part of Hindû society and modifying every phase of Hindû thought."*

II.—MAHĀYĀNA BUDDHISM IN CHINA AND JAPAN.

Though Buddhism originally rose in India, it has long since died out of India proper, surviving in its Hīnâyāna form only in Ceylon. Its later phase of Mahāyāna Buddhism, beginning in Northern India, reached China in early times, and thence spread through Korea to Japan. Mahāyānism, instead of being an Atheistic philosophy, as Buddhism originally was, has become a religion of many gods, with much ritual and not a few doctrines very different from those of the Tipiṭakas, though the original Buddhist philosophy still in great measure underlies it.

A recent writer† has asserted that Mahāyānism may be justly styled "New Testament Buddhism," and that, though it has not borrowed from Christianity, it yet holds so many of the same leading doctrines in common with the latter that it may be said to be "an Asiatic form of the same Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," having developed them independently. This view has been refuted in the *Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute*.‡ The fortuitous resemblances in a few outward matters are slight, and seem to owe little or nothing to the influence of even Nestorian Christianity, while in doctrine the differences are immense. Yet Mahāyānism in China has

* *C.M.S. Review*, December, 1914, p. 732.

† Dr. Timothy Richard, *The N.T. of Higher Buddhism*.

‡ Vol. xlvi, pp. 253 sqq.

borrowed from Taoism and from local heathen sects. Its preachers have adapted their teaching and practices to those around them in order to commend their religion to the Chinese.

It is therefore not *a priori* improbable that the Mahâyânists learned something from Christianity, even though Christians were somewhat few in China in early days. Yet, wherever we test the doctrines that some think have been adopted under Christian influence, the result is to disprove the theory. Examples of this are: the "Western Paradise"; the doctrine of Trikâya (*i.e.*, of the triple body of the Dharmakâya); the supposed Mahâyâna "Trinity," consisting of Amitâbha, Ta Shih Chih, and the goddess Kwan-yin; the identification of Kwan-yin with the Virgin Mary and also with the Holy Spirit; and the worship of Amitâbha Buddha, the Ruler of the "Western Paradise." But Amitâbha is such in the Saddharma Puṇḍarika, a Sanskrit Buddhist work dating from A.D. 250 or earlier, and containing much material that was accepted by Mahâyânists in India long before they met with Nestorian Christianity in China. If Christian elements were really incorporated into Chinese Mahâyânism under Nestorian influence, they have long since vanished.* Some assert that the Buddhists derived belief in the Virgin Birth of Buddha from the Gospels; but the Buddhists *held no such doctrine*; on the contrary, many passages in their books clearly state that his father was Śuddhodana.

In the Lalita Vistara and other romantic stories about Buddha, both in Sanskrit and in Chinese versions, many marvels are attributed to him. It is quite possible that, as in Kṛishṇa's case, some of these tales may have originally been distortions of accounts of our Lord's miracles, or imitations of them, and may have been associated with Buddha in India in comparatively early days. But it is difficult, if not impossible, to prove this, especially as some of them are found in a simpler form in the Tipiṭakas, and are more ancient than the introduction of Christianity into India.

In the books of the T'ai P'ing, or "Vegetarian," sect of Chinese Buddhists there occur phrases which have been "picked up, perhaps at second hand," from Christian sources. The leaven of Christianity is thus working, steadily but slowly, among Chinese Buddhists, but has not yet produced such plain proofs of its presence as in India.

* Moule, *The Chinese People*, p. 184.

In Japan, although all sects of Buddhists are Pantheists in theory, yet in the "Pure Land" sects there are many resemblances to Christian doctrine.* The belief that Salvation—*i.e.*, deliverance from transmigration, or, more properly, the chain of *karma*—may be obtained by devotion to and trust in Amitâbha (or, as he is usually called, Amida) Buddha is, no doubt, the old Hindû doctrine of *bhakti*, but it has developed in Japan as in India, under Christian influence. The Jō-dō sect recognise Amida as the only Saviour, yet they also worship Kwan-non (the Chinese goddess Kwan-yin) and various Buddhas. A reformed sect entitled *Shin Shu*, founded by Shinran, who died in A.D. 1262, make Amida their sole object of worship, and in this sense are Monotheists.

A recent writer† says that the Pure Land sects (*i.e.*, the Jō-dō and the Shin Shu) bear in many points of doctrine an obvious likeness to Christianity. "The virtual Monotheism, especially of the Shin Shu; the emphasis on man's inability to achieve salvation by his own powers; his dependence on the power of another; the infinite compassion of Amida, who before innumerable ages provided this way by which even the weakest and the most ignorant and the greatest sinners may be saved; faith in Amida's gracious purpose to save all as the essence of religion; gratitude as the spring at once of piety and morality—such are the salient points of comparison. To not a few students it has seemed that a teaching so widely at variance, not only with primitive Indian Buddhism, but with its later developments, and so closely akin to Christianity, not in certain isolated features, but in a whole complex of fundamental ideas, can only be explained by Christian influence."

But here we should remember that the worship, love and devotion are given to a being that never existed, instead of to our Lord Jesus Christ; that the salvation aimed at is deliverance not from sin, but from transmigration; and that we should guard against the danger of reading Christian meanings into Buddhist phraseology.

Christianity has recently exercised an immense influence upon Japanese life and customs in general, quite apart from its doctrinal effect upon Buddhism and Shintoism. Hence a great change has come over the scene since Professor Chamberlain wrote‡: "Not the loosest of European *viveurs*, not the lewdest

* Dr. Griffis, *Religions of Japan*.

† Moore, vol. i, pp. 135, 136.

‡ Quoted by Otis Cary, *Japan and its Regeneration*, p. 28.

grogshop-haunting English Jack-ashore, but would have blushed at the really unimaginable indecency which preceded our advent in this country. Why, until we—the Yokohama, Tokyo, and other foreign residents—came here, and had been here long enough for our influence to be generally felt, the very sweet-meats were indecent, the very toys of the children were indecent, the very temples of religion were indecent.” Christianity by its mere outward influence has already changed all this, and the effect on Japanese religion must be immense.

In Japan the progress of Christianity has produced opposition from the Buddhists: and, as in India and previously in the Roman Empire, this opposition has manifested itself in the adoption of Christian methods of working. “Where Christians established schools for young men the Buddhists built others under their own control; where the Christians had succeeded in arousing an interest in the education of girls, the Buddhists, unmindful of the low estimate they had always put on women, opened schools for girls; and they speedily imitated Young Men’s Christian Associations, women’s prayer meetings, orphanages, temperance societies, summer schools, and other institutions inaugurated by the Christians.”* Apart altogether, therefore, from the number of people who have become Christians in Japan, the leaven of Christianity is working far and wide among both Buddhists and Shintoists.

B.—INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY UPON THE RELIGIONS OF THE NEAR EAST.

Arabian Muḥammadanism as a religion has itself been declared to be rather a Christian heresy than an anti-Christian faith. This, however, is an error into which no real student of Islām can possibly fall. Islām may rather be described as a Jewish heresy than as a heretical form of Christianity. Muḥammad was successful in the end largely because he ultimately became very much the victorious Warrior-Prophet which the mass of the Jews (and somewhat similarly many Arabs) hoped their “King Messiah” would be when He came. The Qur’ān is the book of a distinctly Semitic religion, in which certain beliefs and practices of the heathen Arabs are brought into close alliance with many of the teachings of the Jewish Talmud. There are also in it ideas borrowed from Zoroastrianism and from the Apocryphal Gospels. The *هل الكتاب*

* Cory, p. 87.

(People of the Book) so frequently mentioned in the Qur'ân are the Jews rather than the Christians, though the term doubtless includes the latter. Yet it is beyond dispute that the influence which certain forms of Christianity exercised over Muḥammad and his book was considerable; and this influence must endure as long as the Qur'ân is revered.

Muḥammad never read the New Testament, nor even the Old, and never met with anyone who could put the Gospel message clearly and truly before him. Hence the Qur'ân gives a false view of Christianity in several respects. It is evident from the Qur'ân that Muḥammad fully thought that the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity was that the Virgin Mary and Christ were deities to be worshipped as well as God the Father—*i.e.*, that Christians believed in a triad of deities, of whom Muḥammad declared two to be merely creatures who might be destroyed at God's pleasure. This view was due to Muḥammad's observation of corrupt Christian worship. Again, Muḥammad supposed—perhaps through Docetic or Manichæan teaching—that the belief that our Lord had died upon the Cross was altogether false and dishonouring to Him. The Qur'ân states that Jesus was not slain,* was not crucified, but that “He was represented unto them (the Jews) by another,” who was put to death in His stead. But the Qur'ân admits that Christ was taken up into heaven alive. One passage represents God as saying to Christ that He would cause Him to die, and would bring Him to life again; and various explanations of the verse are given by commentators.†

All Muslims, to whatever sect they belong, believe that Christ will come again, though they fancy that He will then “break the Cross, kill the swine,”‡ and preach Islâm, compelling all men to accept it. He will remain on earth for a while, after which He will die and be buried in the tomb left vacant for Him between the graves of Muḥammad and Abu Bakr at Medina.

Belief in the coming of the Mahdî, or “Guide,” is widespread in Islâm, and is doubtless derived from the Christian doctrine of the Second Advent of our Lord. It has become very prominent in Persia (where it has helped to produce Bâbîism) and in Northern India and the Panjâb. In North Africa, the

* Sûrah IV, 155, 156.

† Sûrah III, 47; *cf.* Sûrah's XIX, 34, and V, 117.

‡ *Mishkât*, Arabic ed., pp. 464, 471.

Sahara, Nubia and Somaliland it has had grave political results in wars and massacres.

Mixed though it is with error and with fables drawn from the Apocryphal Gospels, yet the testimony borne by the Qur'ân to our Lord is extensive and remarkable. He is recognized as "a Spirit from Him" (رُوحٌ مِنْهُ)—i.e., from God—and is hence in tradition and still more frequently in ordinary conversation termed "the Spirit of God" (رُوحُ اللَّهِ). He is a Prophet and an Apostle. He raised the dead and healed the sick. Many miracles are ascribed to Him; His Virgin Birth is admitted; and to Him alone among the prophets mentioned in the Qur'ân no sin is attributed. This is not the case with Muḥammad himself. In fact, if we take all the Qur'ânic testimony to Christ together, Muslim controversialists fail to disprove the fact that higher titles are given to Him than even to Muḥammad. One tradition, it is true, represents Him, as well as all other prophets,* refusing in Muḥammad's favour to undertake the office of Intercessor with God Most High on behalf of sinners on the Day of Judgment; but no passage in the Qur'ân supports this.

The Qur'ân bears testimony to the Bible as "the Word of God," which the Qur'ân was "sent down" to attest.

A great deal is told us about Abraham, Joseph, David, Solomon, and other Old Testament characters, though in rather an incorrect manner. The Apostles (الْأَوْيُونَ) of our Lord are mentioned, though the distinctive word used to denote them is Æthiopic, and points to Christian influence from that country. A garbled account is given of the descent of the sheet in Peter's vision (Acts x, 9-16), in which it is mentioned as an actual occurrence and confused with the institution of the Lord's Supper. The prophets Ṣâliḥ and Hûd have been thought to represent two early Christian missionaries to the Arabs. Even the Christian legend of the "Seven Sleepers," as related by the Syrian Jacob of Sarḡ (died A.D. 521) is found in the Qur'ân,† where they are styled "The Companions of the Cave." Christian monks are also spoken of, not always with approval. In one passage Christians are declared to be the nearest of all people in kindness to Muslims,‡ though elsewhere they are condemned

* *Mishkât*, p. 480.

† *Sûrah XVIII*, 8-25.

‡ *Sûrah V*, 85.

to very harsh treatment indeed if they refuse to accept Islâm. Muḥammad admits that Christ is the Word of God (كلمة الله = ὁ Λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, John i, 1; Revelation, xix, 13), but fancied that he was himself predicted of in the New Testament as "The Paraclete," evidently confounding Παράκλητος with Περικλυτός, of the latter of which words the name Muḥammad might seem to be no very erroneous translation.

Volumes have been written regarding different aspects of the influence exerted by Christianity upon the Qur'ân and its author, but what we have said is a fair *résumé* of the subject.

The Qur'ân makes no attempt to depict Muḥammad as in any marked degree resembling our Lord, but later Muḥammadan tradition endeavours to represent him as rivalling and far excelling Christ in miracle-working. In this the Muḥammad of tradition becomes distinctly an Anti-Christ.* Since a star led the Magi to Christ's cradle and angels sang at His birth, later Muslim traditions tell how much greater marvels heralded the birth and conception of Muḥammad. In spite of the statement of Muḥammad himself in the Qur'ân that God had not gifted him with the power of working miracles, yet tradition ascribes miracle after miracle to him.† He compelled trees to follow him, he split the moon in two, he cast an evil spirit out of a child and made it depart in the form of a dog,‡ he caused water to flow from his own fingers in abundance to quench his followers' thirst in the desert, he ascended to the Seventh Heaven§ and passed into the very presence of God on his night journey from Mecca to Jerusalem and back.

The object of all these inventions is to show how much Muḥammad surpassed Christ in his miracles. Attempts have been made, not only by the Shī'ah sect and by the Sūfis but also to a less degree by the "Orthodox" or Sunnî sect, to attribute to Muḥammad a nature and position more than human though less than Divine. Some of the titles of Christ in St. Paul and St. John have been ascribed to Muḥammad. He is often called Nūru'llâh (نور الله), "God's Light," and is declared to have been formed out of the light of God, to have been the first thing God created. God is stated to have said, "O Muḥammad,

* Vide Dr. Koelle, *Mohammed and Mohammedanism*; also the *Rawdatul Aḥbâb, Qiṣaṣul Anbiyâ, 'Arâisut Tijân*, and *Mishkât*.

† *Mishkât*, pp. 522 sqq.

‡ *Mishkât*, p. 533.

§ Sūrah XVII, 1; *Mishkât*, pp. 521 sqq.

if it were not for thee, I should not have created the world." It is a Şûfî tradition that makes Muḥammad say, "He that hath seen me hath seen God" (an imitation of John xiv, 9). This does not represent the "Orthodox" view, but it is an extreme instance of the influence upon Islâm which rivalry of Christ's claim has produced. The fact is that, just as among thoughtful Jews it became felt that some link or "Mediator" between the Creator and creation was necessary, so learned Muslims found that they could not logically approach the Unknown God, *the One*, except through a Mediator of some kind. Hence it has become necessary to invest Muḥammad with more or less of this character in Sunnî theology, while 'Alî holds even a higher one among the Shîfites.

With reference to Muḥammad, the effect has been to apply to him many of the highest titles of Christ. This shows how completely many Muslim theologians have become convinced that reason requires the existence of someone possessed of these attributes. Refusing to admit Christ to be such, they have endeavoured to clothe Muḥammad with these titles of Christ, though without seeing how completely contrary all this is to his low personal character. It has been pointed out that any learned Sunnî would agree* that St. Paul's words† about our Lord, "who is the firstborn of all creation; for in him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things have been created through him and unto him, and in him all things consist; and he is the head of the body, the Church (of Islâm), who is the beginning, the Firstborn, that in all things (Muḥammad) might have the pre-eminence," with these few requisite changes, apply to Muḥammad. All such statements can be matched, for instance, in the Arabic "Poem of the Mantle," where it is said, "All glory and praise be to Muḥammad, the glory of history, the firstborn of all creatures." But all this shews what an immense influence Christianity has had upon the present form of the theology of Orthodox Islâm. Some of the Muslim unorthodox sects have borrowed much more than this.

The Druses, for example, go so far as to declare the tyrant Hâkim an Incarnation of God, and worship him as such. The sect of the 'Alî-ilâhîs take their name from the fact that they

* Zwemer, *Muhammad or Christ*, pp. 130, 131; Nicholson, *Mystics of Islâm*, pp. 82, 83.

† Col. i, 15-18.

assert the same of 'Alî. The Shî'ites in their doctrine of the Imâms and Bâbs have paid Christianity the compliment of imitation to some degree. The Bâbî-Bahâî doctrine teaches that Christ has become incarnate again in the Bâb, and the Father in Bahâ'u'llâh, who is sometimes too denoted by the title *Kalîmatu'llâh*. All these sects are in reality deeply opposed to our Lord's claims, but their opposition is manifested in denying to Him His proper rank and assigning it to others instead. Doubtless other external influences are partly the source of many of these errors, but that of Christianity perverted is unmistakable.*

The Bâbî-Bahâî faith has made extensive use of the New Testament. In some of their books it is quoted almost more frequently than the Qur'ân. There are a vast number of New Testament terms borrowed and used quite freely, but in an unnatural sense, thus teaching false doctrine. It would take far too long to treat at all fully of these matters. For example, "Resurrection" is used to denote conversion to belief in the Bâb, or now in Bahâ'u'llâh: the second Advent of Christ is said to mean His reincarnation in Bahâ, etc. The claim to be the Universal Religion, the Religion of Peace, and of Universal Brotherhood, the preaching of God's Fatherhood, etc., etc., are all from Christianity. Bahâism is an insidious heresy, largely Pantheistic, and in essence bitterly opposed to Christianity as well as to Islâm.

It is upon Şûfîism, however, that Christian doctrine has particularly left its mark. That strange and composite system has been powerfully affected by many other influences too, among which Vedântism and other Hindû forms of belief and practice may be specially mentioned. But the very word Şûfî itself is derived from *şûf*, "wool"† because the earlier Şûfîs adopted a woollen garment from the Christian ascetics who were their models of conduct; though here again Indian influence is indirectly noticeable, for asceticism and monasticism are not originally Christian but Buddhistic. Many Şûfî rules and opinions are derived from those of the Christian ascetics. This is the more remarkable because Orthodox Islâm, as taught in the Qur'ân, is quite opposed to celibacy and asceticism. The earliest Şûfîs were possessed with the Qur'anic *fear* of God; but ultimately, under Christian influence, love to God became one of the leading features of this philosophy, though expressed

* *İqân: Bâyan*, etc.

† Abû Nasr 'Abdullâh, *Kitâbu'l Luma' fî'l Tasawwuf*, pp. 22-30.

in unsuitable language and often using "erotic and bacchanalian symbolism."* Şûfî writers trace back to Christ this inculcation of love to God, and Jalâlu'ddîn and Bâyezîd both assert, in accordance with the New Testament, that man's love to God is the result of God's love to man (*cf.* 1 John iv, 19). We find many passages in Şûfî books which evidently owe their origin to certain New Testament verses. For example:—

Muhammadian tradition says that God said to David:

كُنْتُ كَنْزًا مَخْفِيًا فَأَحْبَبْتُ أَنْ أَكْشَفَ وَخَلَقْتُ الْجَلْنَ لِكَيْ أَكْشَفَ

"I was a hidden treasure, therefore I desired that I should be discovered, and I created the creation (mankind) in order that I might be discovered." (*Cf.* Matt. xiii, 44.)

Suhrawardî quotes the words: "Except a man be born again" (John iii, 3, 5).

Even the celebrated old Greek saying, *γνώθι σαυτόν*, became known to the Şûfîs through Christian writers, and in the form *مَنْ عَرَفَ نَفْسَهُ فَقَدْ عَرَفَ رَبَّهُ* is ascribed to 'Alî. Şûfîs represent Muḥammad as saying, "He that hath seen me hath seen God" (*cf.* John xiv, 9). This is hardly exceeded in audacity by the sentence to which Husain ibn Manşûru 'l Hallâj owed his death at Baghdâd in A.D. 922, *أنا الحق*: "I am the Truth (God)." To Hallâj is ascribed the saying: "If thou seest me, thou seest Him; and if thou seest Him thou seest us both." Another Şûfî, Hallâl, said:

"Thy will be done, O my Lord and Master;
Thy will be done, O my purpose and meaning."

The Maşnavî of the famous Şûfî poet Jalâlu'ddîn Rûmî is full of Christian sentiments, though the Pantheism which underlies Şûfîism pervades the whole book. In spite of this, much more reverence is shown to our Lord than to Muḥammad or even to 'Alî. In fact, in even those passages in which honour is ostensibly paid to either of the latter, careful study of the spirit of the poem displays something very different in the writer's mind. A very large number of passages contain open or implied references to the New Testament. A few of these may be given here.

* Nicholson, pp. 4, 5.

رحم خواهی رحم کن بر اشکبار
رحم خواهی بر ضعيفان رحمت آر

“If thou desirest mercy, shew mercy to the tearful:
If thou desirest mercy, be merciful to the feeble.” (Cf.
Matthew v, 7.)

هرکه را هست از هوسها جان پاک
زود بسیند حضرت ایوان پاک

“Whosoever has a soul pure from lusts,
Soon seeth he the Majesty of the Pure Hall” (i.e., God).
(Matthew v, 8.)

هر جمادیرا کند از فضلش — عاقلانرا کرده قهر او ضریر

“By His grace He rendereth each senseless thing intelli-
gent :
His wrath hath rendered the wise blind.” (Luke x, 21.)

هیچ برکی بر نیفتد از درخت — بی قضا و حکم آن سلطان تخت

“No leaf falleth from a tree
Without the decree and bidding of that Ruler of the
Throne.” (Luke xii, 7.)

چون قول حق بود آن مرد راست
دست او در کارها دست خداست

“Since that Righteous Man is the Word of Truth (i.e., God),
(John i, 1),
His hand in doings is the Hand of God.”

کر هزاران دام باشد در قدم — چون تو با مائی نباشد هیچ غم

“If there be thousands of snares in a step,
When Thou art with us there is no grief.” (Romans viii, 31.)

عالمیرا یک سخن ویران کند — روبهان مرده را شیران کند

“One word lays waste a world ;
It makes dead foxes lions.” (James iii, 5, 6.)

These are but a very few passages, selected almost at random,
out of a large number which occur in the *Masnavi*. Sometimes

the resemblance is great, especially in sentences modelled on those in the Sermon on the Mount. In other passages there is much less verbal likeness, but the spirit is largely that of the New Testament, with which, unlike Muḥammad, Jalālu'ddīn was well acquainted.

Not a few other Persian writers shew some knowledge of the New Testament. It will be enough, however, to refer very briefly to the poet Sa'dī. At the beginning of the *Bustān* he thus writes :—

ادیم زمین سفرهٔ عام اوست
چه دشمن بر این خوان یغما چه دوست

“The surface of the earth is His universal table (cloth),
Whether foe or friend come to that princely banquet.”
(Cf. Matthew v, 45.)

In the same book Sa'dī tells in strange form the Parable of the Prodigal Son. The following sentence reminds us of James i, 27 :

طریقت .^۱ ز خدمت خلق نیست
به تسبیح و سجاده و دلق نیست

“The Religious Life is nought but the service of mankind :
It consists not in the rosary and the prayer-carpet and
beggar's bowl.”

In the Qur'ān itself the Bible is spoken of under the title of the Taurat (Law, Pentateuch), the Zabūr (Psalms), and the Injīl (Gospel). A passage from each of the three is quoted, viz., Exodus xxi, 23–25, in Sûrah v, 49; Psalms xxxvii, 29; in Sûrah xxi, 105; and Matthew xix, 24; in Sûrah vii, 38. Moreover, Tradition represents Muḥammad* as quoting I Corinthians ii, 9, in the following form : “God Most High said : ‘I have prepared for My servants the righteous what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it occurred to the heart of mankind.’” Al Ghazālī refers to this passage as being found in the Qur'ān, but it is not.

The doctrine of the Light of Muḥammad, and of its existence before the world was,† and that all things were created from portions of that light, is no doubt borrowed from the Gospel references to Christ as the Light of the World, and to the light

* *Mishkāt*, p. 487.

† *Qiṣaṣul Anbiyā*, pp. 2 and 282.

in Him being the Light of men (John i, 4, 5 ; xii, 41), though perhaps affected also by old Persian traditions of the Royal Glory which beamed on the brows of Jamshîd and his successors.

Neo-Muhammadan sects are numerous; among these the Ahmadîs, or followers of Sayyid Ahmad, and the Qâdiyânîs are specially well known in India. But, apart from any such, there exists in India, Egypt and Turkey especially, a large and increasing body of men who have in great measure broken with Islâm, though still retaining the name of Muslims. They claim for Islâm a great deal of Christian morality, denouncing polygamy, concubinage, divorce, the veil and slavery as contrary to Islâm when rightly understood, and as tolerated by Muhammad only for a season. Some of these men strongly advocate the education and freedom of women. They throw overboard the *Hadîth* and the Orthodox ancient Commentators on the Qur'ân, and endeavour to make the latter the foundation of their faith. Even the Qur'ân itself is "liberally" interpreted,—so liberally, in fact, that they attempt to prove that Muhammad was in no true sense a polygamist.

Efforts are even made to whitewash their Prophet's moral character, and to show that Islâm was not propagated by the sword. They assert that true Islâm is consistent with modern thought, civilization, and enlightenment. Their leaders, however, are in general fanatically opposed to Christ's claims and to Christianity, reading the Bible only to disprove it, and welcoming as an ally every attack on the Christian Faith. Yet they adopt Christian Missionary methods, such as schools, colleges, and the use of the Press for controversial and educational literature. They even send out Missionaries to oppose ours. The influence of Christianity is seen in all this, though Western anti-Christian influence is united with it to revive and defend Islâm. Yet the New Islâm is further removed from the Old than from Christian ethics at least. The movement to translate the Qur'ân into other languages is also due to imitation of Christian work. Neo-Islâm already shows signs of having only the choice between turning into Atheism and yielding to Christianity.

C.—CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE ON NEO-JUDAISM AND
NEO-ZOROASTRIANISM.

I.—ON NEO-JUDAISM.

It would be a mistake to derive the Targumic doctrine of the *Memrá* (מִיְרָא) or *Dibbárá** (דִּבְרָא) from Christianity, for it is doubtless taken from Philo, and through him from Plato. In fact, St. John used the word "Logos" of Christ in order to direct the thoughts of men to recognize that, instead of being a philosophical abstraction, there really does exist a Logos, and that He has been manifested in Jesus Christ, God's Son. But even in early post-Christian Jewish works, though hatred towards our Lord is painfully and blasphemously expressed, we find the doctrine of Mediation taught. The Mediator is called *Metatrôn* (מִטְטְרוֹן) *Mitatrôn* (מִיטְטְרוֹן), and sometimes *Mitator* (מִיטטור), a word derived from the Latin *Metator*, or from *μετατύραννος* or *μετάθρονος*. He is identified with the Voice of God which "measured" the waters to divide them, and which "measured" out to Moses the boundaries of the Promised Land.† "Metatrôn" is said to be Enoch's name in Heaven after his ascension,‡ and he is called the "Great Writer." He sits in a golden chamber to write down the good deeds of Israel.§ His name is the same as his Lord's,|| he holds rank next to God (referring to Exodus xxiii, 21), and is seated in the innermost room nearest God, whereas all the angels are bidden to wait behind the Veil.¶ He is even styled "the Prince of Eternity," (שַׁר הָעוֹלָם). This seems in a great degree due to Christian theology.

The *Zôhar* is now known to be a forgery of the thirteenth century; yet in it there are so many points of accord with Christian teaching that, believing the book to be very ancient, some distinguished Jews in the Middle Ages are said to have been led by the book to profess Christianity. The very fact that it was composed by a Jew, and largely accepted by Jews, shows how strong Christian influences had even then become among their learned men.

* In *Targum of Jonathan* on Numb. VII, 89, e.g., *Dibbárá* is distinctly
a Person

† Genesis Rabbá, § 5.

‡ Jerusalem Targ. on Gen. v, 24.

§ Chagigah 15, a.

|| Sanhedrin, 38, b, referring to Ex. xxiv, 1.

¶ Cf. Chagigah, 16, a.

In more modern times a great change is taking place among enlightened Jews in reference to our Lord. In their modern editions of some of their older literature, all abuse of Him and slanders about him and His birth are suppressed. This, in itself, is a great proof of Christian influence. The New Testament is widely read, especially in Hebrew and Yiddish. In fact, it is not too much to say that many Jews feel that for them there is no choice between accepting Christianity or becoming Atheists. Many who still profess Orthodox Judaism show great respect for our Lord; some even admit that He was the Messiah, though they deny His Deity. Reformed Judaism has even gone so far as to recognize Sunday, instead of Saturday, as their Sabbath, and to worship in the vernacular.

II.—ON NEO-ZOROASTRIANISM.

One sect of the Pársis in Bombay accept as inspired a volume entitled "*Dasâtir-i Âsmâni*," which professes to contain messages divinely given to fifteen prophets of ancient times. It is supposed to be "in the language of Heaven," but is written in the Arabic character, and seems to be a bad attempt to transliterate the original Pahlavî. It is accompanied by a translation into the Darî form of Persian, and this is said to have been made by the "Fifth Sâsân." Possibly the book was composed considerably after Sâsânian* times in Persia. It teaches transmigration and other doctrines very different from those of the Avesta, and its theology bears decided traces of Muslim influence. Many of the titles given to God are those used by Muslims, but even these come originally from Jewish and Christian sources. God is One, Merciful, Just, Loving, "the Giver, the Forgiver," etc. But direct Christian influence is seen, for instance, in the statement that the Archangel Bahman (*Vohumanô*) came into existence by God's command, and is styled "the Word of God," and Reason is "the medium between God and His creatures."†

An earlier Pahlavî revelation, dating from early in the sixth century, is the "*Artâ Virâf Nânak*." The story told in this book of how Artâ Virâf ascended in spirit into Heaven and brought back an account of what he saw there, confirming Mazdæan teaching, may have been an imitation of the "Visio

* The Pársis say the Darî translation dates from Khusrau Parviz time (A.D. 590-595).

† Original note to II, 70.

Pauli," which is a legend founded upon II Corinthians xii, 2-4. This, however, it would be hard to prove with absolute certainty.

The "Zarâtûsht Nâmah," a Persian poem of the thirteenth century,* though it shows traces of Christian influence, need not detain us long. Near the beginning we read: "Know thou the truth that God is One; He hath none like Him, no Rival. Since thou wishest to hold the True Religion, first believe in the Being of the Creator." Again later we have it said of God: "He is the King, and we are slaves." These are but two instances to show how much Islâm has affected the book. Though Christian influence is very slight in comparison (for we can hardly hold that the *Darûn* ceremony, being the Avestic *draonô*, is taken from the Lord's Supper, in spite of some resemblance between them), yet we find the Golden Rule in a negative form given by Zoroaster:—

[دهم گفت] هرچیه نخواهی بخویش
مخواد ایچ کسرا که آید بپیش

"Whatever thou wishest not for thyself, wish not that it befall anyone."†

But there is one "prophecy" in the book which is distinctly due, in form at least, to Christian influence. It is the prophecy of the Pârsî Messianic King, Bahram Hamâvand. He will spring from the royal Kayânian family. At the time of his birth "stars shall rain down from Heaven" (*cf.* Matthew xxiv, 29). At the age of twenty-one years he will gather a numerous army from all parts of the world, and "will take from his enemies the desire of his heart."‡

There are only a few thousand Zoroastrians or Mazdayasnyans (Mazda-worshippers) now left in Persia; the great mass of them, amounting to about 100,000, are in Bombay. These have little knowledge of their own religion, but very many of them have been educated in Christian schools and colleges. As a consequence, they know the Bible fairly well. They have nearly all ceased to worship the sun, and they profess to be Monotheists. Through Christian influence they have become noted for philanthropy, and they have learned to value education for

* v.D. 1278.

† Verse 1256.

‡ Verses 1480 *sqq.*

women as well as for men. They maintain schools and hospitals; their women are given almost as much liberty as is enjoyed by Europeans, and though apparently careless about religious matters, except perhaps regarding funerals and other ceremonies, they are otherwise the most progressive people in India.

CONCLUSION.

We have now briefly studied the influence exerted by Christianity upon other religions, whether extinct or still existent. Quite apart from that influence which has resulted in the conversion of multitudes, in ancient and in modern times, from such religions to full faith in Christ, it is evident that the effect of the preaching of the Gospel upon those who have not accepted it as "the power of God unto salvation" has already been immense, and is still growing. Even many of the bitterest opponents of our faith have borrowed much from its teachings, have admired (as the Emperor Julian the Apostate did) its fruits, and have paid it the compliment of imitating its methods of working. Yet no weapon forged against Christianity has prospered. Truly the words of our Divine Lord are in process of fulfilment: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened."

Motto:—

न चान्यदुःखे सति मेऽस्ति सौख्यं ॥

"Na çânyaduḥkhe sati me'sti saukhyaṃ."

(Jâtaka-Mâlâ I, 23.)

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Meeting had listened with great interest to the extracts which Dr. Tisdall had read from this most important paper. The subject was a very large one, and Dr. Tisdall had confined himself to a few of the principal religions. Many new religions had arisen in the Christian Era: some in our own time, and most of them had borrowed to a greater or less extent from Christianity, but had left out its great essential fact. One example of the influence which Christianity had had upon the world was

furnished by the epoch from which we dated our chronology ; this year is " 1916 Anno Domini," the " Year of our Lord," and that era is adopted even by heathens and unbelievers. So Christianity had an effect upon the social conventions of the world as well as on its religions.

The Rev. J. J. B. COLES, M.A., expressed his great indebtedness to Dr. Tisdall, and desired to ask whether, in reading the sacred books of the many religions with which he had dealt, he had ever come across any statement as to the deity of the Person of Christ, or as to the Atonement which He made. Referring to the section of Dr. Tisdall's paper on Neo-Judaism (p. 50), the Targumic doctrine of the *Memrâ* was there derived from Philo, and through him from Plato. Dr. Inge, in his history of the Doctrine of the Logos, traced it further back, namely, to Heraclitus, the Ionian philosopher of Ephesus, who flourished about 500 B.C. Professor Margoliouth, on the other hand, gave it an earlier source : he claimed that the " Wisdom of Solomon," now placed in the Apocrypha, was really due to Solomon, and was his commentary upon Holy Scripture as it existed in his day. The doctrine of the Logos, if this were so, was traced back a thousand years before Christ, for it was clearly set forth in the 8th chapter of the Book of Proverbs. Dean Inge, in the book referred to, expressed surprise that St. Paul did not use the word "logos"; might not the explanation be that St. John, in the opening of his Gospel, was referring to the introduction of the Divine action into this world, but St. Paul's philosophy took a wider range and embraced all the works of God ?

Professor H. LANGHORNE ORCHARD, M.A., B.Sc., desired to move a hearty vote of thanks to the Author for a paper that was comprehensive, critical, impartial, and fair. He had pointed out that where Christianity and a false religion both possessed a common truth, it did not necessarily follow that one was derived from the other; both might be derived from the primal revelation. The Author's criticisms upon the theories of *Avatâra*, *Trimûrti*, and *Krishna* were of great value. He wished that Dr. Tisdall had not omitted to define "Christianity"; in some passages he had spoken of it as "the Gospel," in others as "Christian teaching." These terms were not always synonymous. He concurred most heartily in the concluding words of the Essay : "No weapon forged against Christianity had prospered."

Mr. M. L. ROUSE, B.A., B.L. : Might not the idea of The Logos

equally well be traced to Zoroaster as to Plato and Heraclitus? There is a Divine person known in the Zendavesta as Truth, distinct from Ahuramazda, the All Wise; and it counsels its readers, for holiness and salvation, to come to know and to please both these heavenly beings; while representations of a Divine Trinity are found upon Persian monuments. Yet why need we go to such sources when we find the Old Testament narrative illustrates so well the statement in John i, 18, concerning The Logos, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who has gone into the bosom of the Father, He set Him forth"; for whereas Moses was told by Jehovah, "No man can see my face and live," Moses and Aaron and the twenty-four elders "saw God and did eat and drink"; and when Jacob had first wrestled with an angel, or heavenly messenger, and then, when conquered, had held on until he was blessed, he exclaimed, "I have seen God face to face, and my life is spared"; and afterwards in blessing his grandchildren, evidently looking back at the event, he said, "The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God who hath fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel who hath redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads" . . . And such instances could be multiplied.

Rev. JOHN TUCKWELL, M.R.A.S.: We are all of one mind with Professor Orchard, I am sure, in our high appreciation of the valuable Essay our Lecturer has produced as the Gunning Prize. In discussing a question of this nature, involving the comparison of the Christian religion with other religious faiths, it is important for us to keep in mind the distinction between what is essential and what is adventitious in all these religions. Some men are better, and others are worse, than the faiths they profess. But in them all, and in all men, there is one fundamental element, sometimes described as the religious instinct, and which M. Bergson attributes to the *elan vital*, which is present wherever there is life. Be it so, but it is indispensable that the religious instinct should have an appropriate environment in which it can live and develop. What we see in most of the religions of the world is the religious instinct blindly trying to make an environment for itself. But if God has implanted in man a religious instinct, it seems incredible that He should not have provided also an environment of Truth suited to its exercise and development, otherwise the instinct would have been as useless as the fins of a fish with no water in which it could swim, or the wings of

a bird with no atmosphere in which it could fly. It needs, therefore, the revealed religion of Scripture to tell us what this environment is. No wonder, therefore, that other religions should now and then borrow truth from Christianity, for they cannot with all their efforts provide of themselves a fit environment for the religious life. The true environment of the religious life is Christ; the new-born soul is in Christ, we live in Christ. No other religion could possibly provide this environment, and there are other truths distinctive of the Christian faith which no other religion could possibly provide or possess. The mind of man could never have conceived the Divine way of salvation—that the Son of God should become incarnate, take upon Himself our nature, die upon a cross, rise again from the dead, and on condition of faith grant forgiveness and life eternal to every believer in Christ, sustaining the life of the soul by the gift of the Holy Spirit. These truths provide an environment for the religious life which is peculiar to the Christian Faith.

LECTURER'S REPLY.

The LECTURER, in acknowledging the vote of thanks, pointed out that the *Logos* was not the subject of his paper. The two Hebrew, or, more correctly, Aramaic, expressions, which he had mentioned on p. 50, were translations of a Greek word—*Logos*—which was used in writings earlier than the Targums. St. John, in using the term *Logos*, therefore, was using a term that was already recognized and in current philosophical employment, and he taught that the true *Logos* was Christ. He, the Lecturer, might have traced the term back to Heraclitus, or even to ancient Egypt, as some German writers had done, but he thought this very doubtful, and, at any rate, it was apart from his subject.

Nor did he think that we could find either the *Logos* or the Trinity in Zoroastrianism. He had gone carefully into what Zoroaster taught as to monotheism. Did Zoroaster teach that Ahuramazda was one deity with six attendant spirits, or was the principal amongst seven spirits of equal rank? He thought the latter was the case. One did not find a pure monotheism in early Zoroastrianism. All that could be said was that there was a nearer approach to monotheism than anywhere else, except in Judaism and Christianity. The modern Pârsî, when he asserted his belief in One

God, was not looking back to Zoroaster. But earlier still the one primeval faith taught belief in One God.

The Meeting adjourned at 6.10 p.m.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION.

Mr. E. WALTER MAUNDER, F.R.A.S.: In studying Dr. Tisdall's paper, the reader cannot fail to be impressed, not only with the breadth of his learning and his mastery of his subject, but also with the fidelity with which he has carried out the purpose of the Council in their choice of the subject for the Gunning Prize competition.

There is a school at the present day, commanding a very wide sub-conscious influence beyond its avowed adherents, which regards Christianity, not as a living organism, but as a more or less happy collection of fragments from a large number of earlier religions, and "the debt which Christianity owes to other Faiths" is a constant theme with it. The Council wished the reverse side of the problem to be examined, for assuredly other religions have come under the influence of Christianity, and have imitated it or borrowed from it, or have modified their own creeds in opposition to it. Dr. Tisdall's paper has presented to us some striking examples of the influence of Christianity in modifying alien creeds in a direction towards itself. Might I suggest that there is a very remarkable case in which another religion has been fundamentally modified away from it?

When the Jewish nation, having put to death its Messiah, determined upon the rejection of the Apostles whom He had appointed to build up His Church, the teachers of the nation were necessarily driven to organize a theology which should be definitely anti-Christian. Thus, Dr. Schechter, in "Some Aspects of Rabbinic Theology," points out that though we have no Rabbinic literature of the same date as the books of the New Testament, the Mishna, or Law of the Lip, is evidence of the existence of Rabbinic work during that period, and he considers it probable that "the teaching of the Apostle Paul, the antinomian consequences of which became so manifest during the second century, brought about a growing prejudice against all allegorical explanations of the Scriptures" . . . "A curious alternative is always haunting our exegesis of the Epistles. Either the theology of the Rabbis must be wrong, its conception of God debasing, its leading motives materialistic and coarse,

and its teachers lacking in enthusiasm and spirituality, or the Apostle to the Gentiles is quite unintelligible.”

The inevitable result of the refusal of salvation in that Name whereby alone men can be saved, was the exaltation of the letter of the Law, in opposition to its intention and spirit, resulting in the endless mazes of casuistry in which the Rabbis delighted.

SUBJECT AND PURPOSE OF THE ESSAY.

Before the reading of the paper, the SECRETARY read the following order of the Council defining the subject and purpose of the Gunning Essay this year :—

“THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY UPON OTHER RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS.”

“*Note.*—The design of the paper is to exhibit—not the success of Christianity in winning converts from other faiths, but—the manner and extent to which other religions, while still remaining distinct systems, have yet modified their doctrines (including their eschatology), their customs and social and ethical standards, in consequence of Christian teaching.

“It is desired that the essays should be precise in thought and language, that, where possible, authorities for statements should be given, and that generalities and declamation should be avoided.”