

THE CHURCH OF THIBET

AND THE

HISTORICAL ANALOGIES OF BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY

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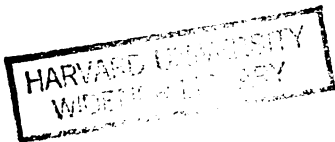
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Fratelli, a un tempo stesso, Amore e Morte
Ingenero la sorte.
Cose quaggiu si belle
Altre il mondo non ha, non han le stelle.
Nasce dall' uno il bene,
Nasce il piacer maggiore
Che per lo mar dell' essere si trova;
L'altra ogni gran dolore
Ogni gran male annulla,

Poesie di Leopardi,



ADVERTISEMENT

THE materials for this lecture were derived, as stated in the text, from sources which are accessible to everybody. My chief obligations are due to Burnouf, Lassen, and Keoppen, more particularly the last, without whose aid my lecture could certainly never have been written. I can well believe that I have fallen into some errors in my exposition of Buddhist theology, as matters of this kind are open to much dispute, and probably there have been recent additions to our knowledge of this subject with which I am unacquainted. For the purpose, however, which I had in view, minute accuracy was unessential. In the comparative study of religious phenomena the most obvious and general facts are the most important.

I cannot guess whether any of my Brahmanic friends and hearers were displeased with the freedom of my references to the Brahmanic gods, and the system of caste. Probably they have become so familiar with depreciatory criticism, from missionary and liberal quarters alike, of their institutions and creed, that now they rather like it, or at least never think of resenting it. Some of my Christian hearers were, I fear, not quite so tolerant of the frequent references to the close analogies between Buddhist and Christian supernaturalism. Many persons who hold on the dogmas of their inherited belief is of the lightest kind, still object strongly to hear them questioned in India, or classed with native beliefs. Their pride of race is wounded by whatever seems to put them on a level with the Indian races. With this feeling I have no share, for I hold strongly that if England has much to impart to India, she has also something to learn from her. There are moral elements surviving in Indian civilization,* which once flourished in Europe under the Catholic

* Cf. Burke's Speeches in the impeachment of Warren Hastings (vol. I. p. 48)

discipline, but which are now either lost or in abeyance there. I have often been impressed with this fact in reading those attractive but too partial pictures of the moral life of our own fathers which Mr. Kenelm Digby has given in his *Ages of Faith*. It is not, therefore, perhaps chimerical to hope that a closer moral sympathy between India and England than exists at present may help to revive among Englishmen the memory of some of those moral aims and types which our industrial civilization, absorbed in material ends, has undervalued or forgotten. Most persons who desire to bridge over the deep chasm between Hindoos and Englishmen hold, I know, that Christian supernaturalism affords the only basis on which connecting sympathies can be established: and Christian missionaries have done more towards creating such sympathies, I sincerely believe, than the advocates of any other opinion. Those who, like myself, have found it impossible, without intellectual suicide, to accept their basis, have no eager wish to thwart the efforts of Christian missionaries in this country, when we state temperately, but decisively, our belief that their work, at least among Aryan Hindoos and Mussulmen, is foredoomed to failure; or when we try, in our own way, to strengthen the moral ties between the East and West in the harmonizing medium of positive knowledge. Missionaries should bear in mind that their work among the civilized Indian races cannot be carried on without employing largely that negative criticism which they resent so sharply when it is applied to their own constructions. They must destroy before they can build. They cannot therefore, be surprised that some people should claim and exercise the same freedom of criticism in respect to their own systems which they apply, often with such remarkable ability, to the venerable creeds of India.

There is another consideration bearing on this topic which is often, I think, overlooked by the zealous advocates of Christian supernaturalism in this country. They are found of taxing natives with their subservience to social prejudices, and their moral cowardice in conforming to a creed in which they no longer believe. They forget that natives are not ignorant that English society is open to the same charge. Educated natives

who read our reviews and journals know well that English society is "honeycombed" with unbelief, and that many constant church-goers go only from habit, or for the sake of example, and admit freely in conversation that the dogmas of all the churches are irretrievably sapped. It cannot, therefore, be thought surprising that they are not very much impressed with the exhortations which are addressed to them with so much naive confidence. They are instinctively too polite to urge this retort, when they might do so with considerable effect. And yet Christian apologists, who are quite aware, or ought to be, of this state of things, this conventional reticence of polite society, seem on the whole to prefer it to open dissent. They imagine, I suppose, that there is no danger in thought, but great danger in speech. When I ventured to express an opinion last autumn that Christian supernaturalism was divided against itself, and slowly dying out wherever thought was most active in Europe, a great outcry was raised both here and in other parts of India. The opinion was hotly disputed on grounds which may probably be considered convincing in Jesuit seminaries (though the Jesuits, with their wide experience of mankind and their admirable dogmatic training, have generally a far keener appreciation of the perils of the situation than the Evangelical enthusiasts of the priests of the Anglo-Catholic and ritual revival), but which failed altogether to convince me. My chief offence, I cannot help thinking; was the shock which utterances of that kind give to the fiction, long zealously fostered in this country, of the practical unanimity of the ruling race in religious belief. It seems admitted that in Europe a few foolish or arrogant persons dispute the assumptions and deductions of the churches, but it is also gently insinuated that all good and reasonable persons are agreed in condemning their wicked and ignorant cavils, which indeed were all refuted long before they were born, by Butler and Paley. It is quite certain that statements of this kind are often put forward in good faith by zealous persons, and yet nothing is also more certain than the utter inefficacy of this prophylactic for the purposes for which it is employed. Intellectual natives are rather repelled than impressed by it, and perhaps suspect--though I am sure, without reason--the sincerity

of those who have resort to it. I have, therefore made it a rule in conversing with natives on religion, or in lectures addressed principally to them, to express my own opinions with the same candour and unreserve which I expect from them. There are many missionaries, I am sure, who will not resent this openness, and who will agree with me that English society would be none the worse for a little more sincerity and simplicity in the sphere of religious convictions.

THE CHURCH OF THIBET

GENTLEMEN,

In the fourth volume of Lassen's *Indische Alterthum-skunde* (pp. 713, 730) you will find a brief but tolerably full outline of Thibetan history, and its relations to Indian Buddhism. The plan of Lassen's book does not allow a complete exposition of theological doctrines, but readers who are not wholly unprepared will collect from those sections of his work which record the external fortunes of Buddhism a sufficiently clear idea of its theological content. Those who desire further information on this subject will do well to consult the *Introduction to the History of Indian Buddhism* by Burnouf, as well as the recently republished essays of Mr. B. H. Hodgson, formerly British Resident in Nepal, a man in whom all the Indian services feel a just pride. To his extraordinary diligence during his solitary residence in Nepal, and his munificent donations of manuscripts to the libraries of Oxford* and Paris, we are indebted for almost all our knowledge of northern Buddhism. Of the two works by Carl Friedrich Koeppen, to which Lassen directs his readers,

* An Oxford man can hardly read without a blush Mr. Hodgson's reference to the widely different fate which his munificent donations experienced in Paris and Oxford. In the former city they excited the curiosity and attention of a Burnouf, and in the latter they remained and still remain unnoticed. Such neglect seems at first sight incomprehensible in a place which is supposed to be dedicated to the advancement of learning. But, as Mr. Pattison has shown in his interesting life of Casaubon, Greek had pretty nearly the same fate in the 17th century. Its connection with ecclesiastical literature and controversy alone saved it from total neglect. In the high-tide of the "Catholic" reaction in Oxford there was, of course, no room or leisure for any interest in the religion of perhaps a third of the inhabitants of our

I am only acquainted with the latter, the *Lamaische Hierarchie and Kirche*, and I am indebted to it for most of the historical information and many of the views contained in this lecture. The more popular work of Barthelemy St. Hilaire, *Le Buddha et sa Religion*, I first read many years ago in the caves of Ajanta, in Khandeish, in presence of the most impressive memorials of Buddhist art and worship, and I have never forgotten the delightful impressions which I received from it. My companions in that visit to the famous Buddhist sanctuary were Sir A. Grant, my distinguished predecessor in the position which I have now the honour to hold, and the lamented Dr. Bhau Daji, who was long connected, if I am not mistaken, with your Association. His great knowledge of Indian archaeology and the religious history of his countrymen made his companionship on that occasion most valuable.

I have followed Koeppen's example in speaking of the Church of Thibet, and indeed if the name Church may be rightly applied to every society of men united by the possession of common religious beliefs, and aiming at including all men in their society, it can hardly be denied that the spiritual communities which venerate Cakjamuni as their founder have as just a claim to the title as any of the Christian communities in the Old or New Worlds. The practical advantages, moreover, of extending the name to the former communities must be obvious to everyone who has frankly accepted the modern scientific principle of treating all religions according to the same method, and simply disregarding the assumptions which any one of the number may put forward as grounds for being placed in a separate category. The term Church is thus raised from an individual to a generic name, and serves to mark out a particular class of historical phenomena, among the most interesting, if not always the most encouraging, which time has spared for our meditations. It is in this spirit that I have attempted to review in the following pages

planet. And yet what light might not the history and dogma of Buddhism have thrown on that "theory of religious developments" which the great leader had already in his mind, and which carried him, in the end, into such strange latitudes! His successors wisely eschew all theory, and cultivate no history but that of church furniture and clerical apparel.

the origin of Buddhism in India and its diffusion in Thibet; a history which presents some instructive analogies with events in Western history, and affords, I think, a more complete illustration than can be found elsewhere of the sort of civilization which supernatural beliefs, when they have the field to themselves, tend to produce. An Englishman who gazes on the dim, strange panorama, and follows the movements of the fantastic shapes which flit across it, may see as in a magic mirror a vision of what his own Europe might have become if the spirit to which we owe the Athanasian symbol had maintained its ascendancy, or the liberating streams of Hellenic thought had been dried up or arrested. From such a picture he learns to understand his own creed better, or at least the nature and limits of its social action.

Primitive Buddhism, like Primitive Christianity (if we look only at the golden kernel of the Galilean teaching), was a rule of life, a philosophy of conduct, before it expanded into a ritual and a creed. Its spirit was nevertheless that inmost spirit of all religious emotion, a sense of the instability of earthly things, and a thirst for what is infinite and enduring. Its founder, as is well known, conceived this Infinite under a form which has been rather starting to European imaginations,—so startling that some have refused to believe that he could really have meant what scholars assure us that he did. Instead of that One Personal God with whom the European imagination has so long been familiar, who stands outside the Universe which he has called into existence, and in which he reveals himself by occasional interferences with that fixed order which his own wisdom is supposed to have established; or that infinite spiritual substance, which according to Brahmanic theories alone constitutes true Being, and with which every mode of apparently independent existence is finally reunited; he conceived the Infinite as a state of final emancipation from all limitations and properties of Being, as the cessation not simply of separate existence, but of all existence. The sentiment which furnished the material for this conception can scarcely be understood without a vivid insight into that ancient belief in the origin and transmigration of souls which holds its ground so tenaciously in India against

all importations from the West. That predominant Western imagination which supposes that an immortal spiritual substance is called into existence for the first time, out of antecedent nothingness, in the moment of physical conception, is as unfamiliar and repellent, I suppose, now to Hindu minds as it was in the days of Cakjamuni. To him, as to all his contemporaries, it was a fundamental axiom that "birth was but a sleep and a forgetting," and that the soul, in accordance with inexorable law, was again and again born into the world, and subject, till its hour of final release, to conditions of existence, such as pain, old age, and death, from which it constantly aspired to be released. To minds under the expire of these depressing anticipations there was no deliverance in the thought of a Heavenly City, or an eternity spent in adoring prostrations and Te Deums. The one escape open from this appalling slavery of recurrent life, to those whose minds had become alive to the hollowness of the deliverance which the priesthood offered, seemed to lie in the extinction of passion; and the gospel of Cakjamuni, the "good law," the law of grace for all, was designed to teach men this new road of liberation. The famous word Nirvana,* to mean literally "blowing out," or extinction, denoted in Cakjamuni's system the final goal of all effort, the state in which existence itself was exhausted, and that ancient pasture-ground of pain and death destroyed.

The originality of this system lay in its daring confidence in man's unaided power to achieve his own emancipation,** in its direct appeals to all men to undertake this work, and its

* The Thibetan translators of the Buddhist scriptures have translated this word by one which, in their idiom, signifies "exemption from pain," thus dropping the formal notion of "extinction," which E. Burnouf, in opposition to Colebrooke, contended to be the true meaning of the term. It is admitted, however, that later Buddhist schools have often leaned to the former meaning, and regarded the Nirvana rather as a complete apathy than a final cessation of separate existence.—See Burnouf's essay in the Appendix to the *Introd. à l'Hist. du Buddh. Indien*.

** *θεός ἐστὶ τῶν χρηστικῶν αἰῶν*
'o vobis.—*Menandri Fragmenta*

consequent disregard of all existing distinctions between man and man, and of all deliverance by the aid of a privileged priesthood. There is certainly a sublimity in these conceptions, and it is easy to understand the attraction which they may have possessed for those who were dissatisfied, on whatever grounds, with traditional teaching, or who shrank from the moral perversions and the moral superficiality which are the standing marks of ceremonial religions. It is not even difficult to imagine that this religion, under more favourable historic conditions, might have been transformed, not less easily than others which have had a more brilliant history, into a creed fitted to stimulate and guide the moral evolution of humanity. The measure of success which it did in fact attain was not, however, inconsiderable, and the surviving pictures of its hours of early life and hope possess an imperishable charm. The royal youth who left his ancestral palace to preach everywhere, for nearly fifty years, the truths which had filled his own soul with measureless content and awe, and who produced so powerful an effect in a deeply corrupted society, must have possessed in rare fulness those great gifts which when used for disinterested ends are an eternal title to honour. Such inspired men soon gather round them a circle of believers, the elements of a school or a church, and to these the teacher (as the oldest Sutras represent the Buddha) unfolds his inmost doctrine, the soul of his own soul, and stamps it, in hourly personal converse, in imperishable letters on the conscience. Men are readily attracted everywhere to doctrines which have the gift of kindling this intense personal conviction among a gifted few, and which satisfy the general craving for moral and intellectual guidance. The good law of Cakjamuni did both these things in an eminent degree. It explained the universe in a manner which was not inconsistent with what men knew or surmised at that time, and its moral ideal rose higher than the standard which they were commonly accustomed to have held up to them. The moral code which Cakjamuni associated with his path of liberation is very nearly identical with that which early Hebrew legislators, from more robust and practical motives, had long before associated with Israel's worship of his tribal god, the wonder-working Jahveh,

who had broken the might of the Egyptian taskmaster, and over-thrown his horsemen in the sea.

The road of liberation, the road to the Nirvana, was renunciation, or, more intelligibly, asceticism. The Buddha, like the Christ, called upon all who would really follow him to resign their earthly possessions, to abandon father and mother, wife and child, that they might gain true peace both now and hereafter. The method of the two great Teachers was thus not so very widely different, but the goal or ideal end of the course of life which they recommended, as much by example as precept, was strangely dissimilar, and indeed could hardly have been otherwise when we consider how widely unlike were their historical antecedents and social environment. The conception of the Messianic kingdom was partly framed from national expectations, and the moral and patriotic passion of the divine singers of Israel, mixed with some later and baser additions, and partly from an ethical tradition which had its roots far back in Israel's history, which was never wholly lost, and which in the century before Jesus had been reinforced by the authority of that younger ethical tradition which was born in Greece. To these elements we have to add the shape and colour which the personality of Jesus stamped upon them; a task which the imperfections of the surviving biographies make more difficult than seems commonly to be supposed, and which leaves the door open to the most contradictory representations. If we can find certainty anywhere, we surely find it, among other things, in the universal belief of the early Church, founded on the express declarations of Jesus, that the Christ was to return to earth to judge the world before the generation which had put him to death had passed away, and introduce a new social, and, as some held, a new physical order,* in which the poor, and all who had suffered in this life, should receive a recompense, and the rich be tormented. This passion for the weak things of this world, this scorn of the callous rich who think they have done their utmost duty when they allow the poor to feed on the crumbs which fall from their table, have been very insufficiently noticed

* As in the traditions preserved by Irenæus.

by most of those writers who have tried in our day to reconstruct the biography of Jesus. The Hebrew Messiah, with his patriotic inspirations and dreams of moral and social regeneration, disappears in their hands almost as completely as the does in those of the professed theologians. They have clearly proved, however, that the conception of the Messianic kingdom was as certainly a product of past Hebrew thought and contemporary circumstances, as the Nirvana was of Indian thought and the social circumstances in which Cakjamuni found himself. Both conceptions have their roots in imagination and feeling, and if the one was strengthened by philosophical reflection, the other was fed by moral and patriotic passion and noble poetry. Both, too, have illustrated, at certain periods of their history, that human nature is inevitably, sooner or later, maimed and perverted when imaginations which have no real grounds in experience are allowed to determine direction and scope of its activities. The original Christian imagination was indeed transformed, after its passage into the Greek world, into a shape which allowed it to be more serviceable to human improvement than it could have been in its earlier and more imaginative Judaic form. The conception of Buddha had not the same good fortune, and many will perhaps think that it did not deserve it. The Nirvana, it will be said, is the blank negation of individually, and has none of that tender social idealism which still brings the vision of the kingdom of Heaven so near to our hearts. This may be so; but it is still a wiser thing to try to discover and follow up the harmonies of spiritual movements, than to busy one's self with exaggerating the merits of any one of them. These great births of Time, it must be remembered, are in all their chief features the children of earlier deeds and minds which made "straight their way before them." The Hebrew and the Indian beliefs have both also, in their measure, furnished motives for moral effort, and quickened the passion for improving the world, when considerations of a more rational character had no influence, except over a few austere and lonely souls.

I do not intend to say more than a few words about the legendary history of the Buddha. The great part which the

imagination plays in religious constructions, especially in their earlier stages, is now well understood. It is one of the tasks of psychological criticism to analyze the general laws of the activity of this faculty, and to trace its varying relations to the religious and other emotions. Historical criticism investigates the conditions under which the imagination has actually worked in particular times and places. In the religious history of Greece this task has been effectually performed, and no one now seriously impugns the results. The history of the Jews and the history of Christianity are still commonly treated on very different principles, and the assumption of the supernatural origin of the Hebrew and early Christian literature is supposed to guarantee the truth of all they contain. But there is nothing in the legends and miracles of these literatures which requires us to postulate any other causes than those known causes which are judged sufficient in similar cases.* The historical conditions under which the primitive Christian imagination worked have been investigated in our century with extraordinary diligence and skill, and the only fault which can be attributed to the critics is a tendency to push their explanations too far, and imagine that phenomena so fantastic and lawless as miracles can be brought under a single formula. The Semitic imagination was always far removed from the boundless license of Indian phantasy. It approximates to the Greek type in its sobriety and self-restraint. The Christian gospels, at least the four canonical ones, were probably all originally composed in Greek, and designed for persons to whom no other language was familiar. The facility with which this amalgamation of Judaic and Greek elements was effected seems to prove a certain elective affinity between Christianity and Hellenism; and indeed there are few elements of Christianity, or even of Catholicism,—which is realized Christianity,—of which foreshadowings or anticipations may not be detected in Plato. the legend of Cakjamuni—need I say?—is indeed far removed from any Hellenic type. It presents some curious analogies, it is true, with the Christian legend, but

* Das Wunder ist des Glaubens liebstes Kind.—Goethe.

these are all immeasurably magnified and transformed. St. Hilaire, who borrows from Burnouf an analysis of the *Lotus of the Good Law*, speaks of it with uncontrolled impatience and disgust; but imaginations which had been nourished on the Ramayana and Mahabharata would, I think, find it impressive.

The monastic life seemed a necessary consequent of Buddha's teaching, and the brotherhoods which were formed, from all classes and castes of men, in conformity to his counsels, constituted a visible army which took up a position, as on a field of battle, in opposition to the Brahmanic caste, that remained closed to all men who were not born in it. But, though all men were invited, all were not expected to join these communities; and for these the institution of lay brotherhoods and sisterhoods, corresponding to the tertiary orders of SS. Francis and Dominic, was designed. The members of these orders pledged themselves to obey the five great moral precepts: (1) to kill no living thing; (2) not to steal; (3) not to be guilty of any unchaste action; (4) to tell no falsehood; and (5) to drink no intoxicating drink, and to try, by a life of virtue and meditation, to earn the privilege of being called in their next birth to wear the yellow robe of the monk. There was no place for a priesthood or a ritual in this religion. It was wholly, like Stoicism, a moral discipline, with a theory of the universe which could be brought forward, when necessary, to justify and explain it. The complete ascetic was called Bhixu, that is literally, beggar, for he lived by alms. For him the Vedas and entire ceremonial system of the Brahmans had ceased to have any significance; and if he did not explicitly deny the existence of the Brahmanic gods, he felt no call to worship them, for were not *they* also, like men, subject to the limitations which Being imposes, and without the power to deliver other? The chief duties of the monk were meditation and purity of heart, and he was expected to distinguish himself from other men by greater inwardness, humility, and patience.

It is well known how great was the success which this religion at first met with in India. Its hostility to caste is a feature which has distinguished many other religious revivals in that country, and, perhaps, counted for less in its earlier

successes than is generally supposed.* The emancipation which it promised from the burdensome round of sacrifice, and the oppressions of a priesthood whose selfish aims were only thinly disguised by professions of sanctity and detachment from mundane interests, must have been welcome to thousands. The political revolutions which followed the Macedonian invasion were favourable to a new form of religion, the more so as the supreme power over a large part of India now passed into the hands of a dynasty of Cudras, men of the servile caste, who naturally looked with complacency on a form of faith which disregarded all distinctions of caste, and so threw a veil over the humility of their own origin. Historians have often compared the motives and conduct of the first convert, King Dharmacoka, with those of Constantine; and, in fact, under him the "good law" was almost elevated to the status of an established religion. He founded numerous sanctuaries and monasteries, and by his example and devotion gave the new faith whatever advantages the favours of political power can confer on a religion.

This religion, as may be supposed, had not, in the mean time, been stationary. No religion which is really a living force, and which agitates and transforms the masses, can itself escape transformation. It has to place itself in relation to minds which have already a certain body of convictions and anticipations, and it can only really influence them by finding room in its own theory for some of these, and putting them, so to say, in a new setting. During this process its own idea is insensibly modified. Powerful minds have meanwhile adopted it, have sounded its capacities, exhibited its contrasts or coincidences with other systems, and impressed on its still plastic matter the stamp of their own personality. Political currents carry it far and wide, and associate it with novel and sometimes heterogeneous elements. Devotion and Art urge their own irresistible claims; and that all-powerful but unconscious artist the popular imagination is hourly retouching the picture according to his

* Cf. Lassen, *Indische Alterth.* iv. pp. 610, 611. The teaching of Cakjamuni was in formal hostility to Brahmanic pretensions, but not necessarily to the system of caste considered as a form of social organization

own capricious ideals, here deepening the shadows, and there imparting a more animated glow to the colouring. In India, above all other lands, it seems impossible for a religion to remain long stationary. The heat and fermentation of Indian religious feeling, the tameless activity of the Indian imagination, are perilous conditions for any form of faith. That of Cakjamuni had now to stand the test. The presence, moreover, of a powerful priestly caste which had no intention of laying down its arms before this new foe, was certain to exert an influence of some kind both on its theory and practice. The devotional passion, the invariable pioneer of theological system, developed first of all the adoration of the memory and reliques of Cakjamuni, and later that of the memories and reliques of his earliest and most distinguished disciples or patrons; and, at a still later date, the adoration of the persons and images of famous saints, and a group of almost divine personalities, the pure creations of theology. These were supposed to have passed in some former period through the "world of desire," that is, the world of living men, into the "world of forms," and the "formless world," the three great stages of the Buddhistic kosmos. They were expected to manifest themselves hereafter as redeemers on earth, and to be capable meanwhile of assisting the earthly pilgrim by spiritual graces and inspirations. Hence, in place of the gods of the Brahmanic Pantheon (to whom a very subordinate place was assigned) emerged a hierarchy of glorified saints and celestial beings, the guides and patrons of men; and from these beliefs a ritual and form of worship, in which all the members of the society could realize their union with one another, and with the unseen world, and satisfy, at the same time, their devotional passion. The Bhixu, or professed brotherhood, collected in monasteries under the rule of an abbot, had naturally their own fixed hours of meeting, when the monastic rule was recited, and probably also the sayings and mighty deeds of the founder of their faith recalled.

So much for devotion. Theology, meantime, as may be believed, had not been idle, but was busy clothing the dreams of popular devotion in the stiff armour of scholastic pedantry. Already theologians had met in council, not only to enact

disciplinary rules, but to fix the standards of belief. Under the Buddhist Constantine a great council, the third, met at Patalipatra, the modern Patna. It was here that the Buddhist Church undertook the collection and revision of the *Λογία* of the founder, which had hitherto been handed down by tradition, or recorded in fugitive and probably partly inconsistent documents. The Church, in its earliest stage, cannot well dispense with a Bible, for without this central rallying-point tradition is apt to lose itself, or run wild in unpruned luxuriance.

But this important work did not alone occupy the council. Here, too, for the first time the formal resolution was adopted of carrying the good news of Cakjamuni into foreign lands, and the actual conversion of Ceylon, where the faith still survives, seems to have occurred not long after. Probably, too, at this same date the missionaries penetrated into Maharashtra, and made their first converts among a people who were, in later ages, to be the fiercest champions of orthodox Hinduism. The Buddhist missionaries of this or the next generation penetrated also into Kaschmir, Nepal, and Afghanistan; and though in India itself, about fifty years after Acoka's death, their religion was exposed for some time to violent persecutions, its progress was hardly checked, for it was still at that stage of growth in which persecution only invigorates a creed. Under King Karuscha, a contemporary of Augustus, it enjoyed a second brilliant sunshine of political support, and in a fourth council definitely closed its canon of sacred writings, and entered upon a new and important period of theological growth. The decrees of this fourth council are apparently unknown to the Southern Churches; and from this period may be dated the separate and independent position of Northern Buddhism, whose increasing mystical and hierarchal tendencies found their final expression in the Lamaism of Thibet.

This mystical tendency had a wide field for its activity in the upper and lower stories of the Buddhistic kosmos. The representation of this kosmos under the form of a tower is common to all Buddhistic nations. In the lowest story are the abodes of demons, and the place of chastisement for the guilty. The middle story is occupied by the visible human world, above

which is the "world of forms," and higher still the "formless world," whose pinnacle must be conceived as soaring up into the "intense inane" of the Nirvana. Here was, indeed, an ample space for fancy to people with powers friendly or hostile to man. In the first rank of the former class stands one who may fitly be termed the Buddhist Messiah, the fifth redeeming Buddha, whose manifestation on earth is to take place five thousand years after that of the fourth Buddha, Cakjamuni himself, and under whose dispensation the triumph of the Church, and a universal reign of peace and virtue, are anticipated. Maitraya, "the compassionate one," also described as the "invincible one," for he is the destined destroyer of all sin and error, is adored, both in the South and North, with reverence hardly less than that offered to Cakjamuni, who, though vanished into the Nirvana, survives ideally in his Good Law. The conception of this future redeemer must be very ancient, for it is anterior to the actual, though not formal, separation of Buddhism into two great churches--the Southern and Northern, in which latter (as in the Latin West) the theological development was continued long after it had come to an end in the South. To the North alone belong Mandshucris and Avalokitecvras, who have both also their parallels in Western theology. For the former, the apotheosis of the later Buddhist speculation, is the wisdom or Logos of the Alexandrian theosophy in an Indian dress. His office and being--the latter, of course, not released from the fundamental limitations under which divine natures are conceived in India--closely correspond to those which Philo assigns to his Demiourgos, and which, in the doubtful epistles attributed to Paul, in the writings of Justin, and perhaps, later still, in the fourth Gospel* (which unquestionably exhibits the doctrine in a more advanced form), are boldly assigned to the historical Jesus.

* I say "perhaps," because a certain precipitancy in negative demonstration has perhaps partly compromised the effect which so able a book as "Supernatural Religion" was fitted to produce. Learned strategists, like Canon Lightfoot, are only too delighted to quit the open plain and draw the foe after them into the thorny thickets of the "Ignatian Controversy," where the battle may be protracted till nightfall

To Avalokitecvara, "the downward-looking Lord," the shepherd and protector of the actual Church, and of the doctrine of Cakjamuni, is assigned an office analogous to that which the Holy Ghost holds in Christian theology. A third great Buddhist hypostasis is Vadschradhara, the sceptreholder, who forms, with the two preceding ones, a Trias, in which Mandshucris represents primeval world-creating wisdom, Avalokitecvara sustaining love, and Vadschradhara strength. They are not a consubstantial Trinity; but the influence of Brahmanic ideas is clearly traced in some of their functions, and in the division of their powers. In Thibet, at a later date, a formal Trinity was developed out of elements furnished by later devotional feelings. This amazing luxuriance of theological growth marks the second stage of the internal history of Buddhism; the Mahayana, or "great vessel," in distinction to the Honayana, or "little vessel." The latter, with its exclusively ascetical and moral tendency, was now regarded as something unworthy of the attention of the finer spirits, and as fitted only for the illiterate believer. The follower of the Mahayana aimed at the highest transcendent wisdom, and that consummate virtue which not only accomplished the personal salvation of the ascetic, but enabled him, as a perfect Buddha, to promote, in another stage of existence, the redemption of others. This theology seems to have reached its highest point of development in the first century of our era.

without any very serious hurt to either party. Mr. Arnold, whose critical methods seem framed on the pattern of those of M. Rénan, has favoured us with a demonstration of the "authenticity" of the fourth Gospel; and protests warmly against the abuse of that "system of vigour and rigour" which he associates with the name of Christian Baur. That system has doubtless some sins to answer for, but certainly the brilliant critic and poet has in general conceded too much to the ways of the light and easy school. It certainly strikes a plain reader as a grave critical impropriety when he employs the charming stories of the "patriarchs" in Genesis as trustworthy evidence for the religious conceptions of the fathers of the Hebrew race. The sentiments which Livy attributes to the founder of the Roman Common wealth can hardly be used as evidence for the political ideas of the Romans five centuries before Livy's own time.

A third and final stage of these modifications or transformations of primitive Buddhism, the stage which it had reached when it was first carried by Indian missionaries into Thibet, is the Jögatschara, or the Tantra system. This is a stage of more fully developed mysticism. In it the primitive doctrine was further deeply corrupted by doctrines drawn from the pervading beliefs in magic and necromancy, and the now dominant Civa worship, the god of wrath and terror, who, apparently unknown in the Vedic age, had perhaps his origin among the non-Aryan populations of India, and was adopted, by a not uncommon compromise, into the orthodox Brahmanic Pantheon. In the Buddhist theology he has been assigned an office like the one exercised by Satan as King of Hell. The wild non-Aryan god has, however, a more moral function than his Aramaean kinsman, for his infernal kingdom is really a kind of purgatory, a reformatory in short, and not that desolate abyss of implacable vengeance which fiercer imaginations reserved with so little compunction for the great majority of their own race.

The determining characteristics of the Jögatschara or Tantra (magic) system are first the Dhyani-Buddhas, a singular extension of the doctrine of the Bodhisattvas, or Buddhas of the future, of which some elements have been mentioned above; and secondly, the introduction into the Buddhist ritual of magical rites and necromancy, both of which survive in the Lamaism of Thibet. Along with these impure additions came also a certain subordinate cult of Civa and his many-named consort, and other kindred deities, who exercised in the lower world a ministry of terror and chastisement, and thus cooperated indirectly in the work of redemption. The Dhyani-Buddhas are a reflection, a positive reduplication, in the world of forms, of the redeeming Buddhas who have manifested themselves on earth to point out the path of liberation to men, and have each a distinct name. To each one, therefore, of the four Buddhas who has appeared during the present system of the universe, is assigned a spiritual counterpart who, after his passage into the Nirvana, watches over his doctrine on earth. That of Cakjamuni (to name only one) is Amitabha, the "infinite light," for whom the later coarser mysticism provided a paradisaal home, whose glowing material

splendours recall the city of the Apocalyptic visions. This protecting function is not directly discharged by the Dhyani-Buddhas, but by emanations of themselves, produced for that purpose. These functions, in the present dispensation, are discharged by Avalokitaçvara, the emanation of Amitabha. There is much in these later doctrines which recalls the Gnostic systems, and it is possible that the revived activity of the ancient religion of Persia in the third century of our era may have had a certain influence on Indian speculation, as it is supposed to have had on that semi-Magian heresy which, under the name of Manichæism, spread about the same period so widely in the West.

The Civa worship was the great rival, and finally the destroyer, of the "good law," at least in its original home. Hostile religions, however, nearly always reciprocally influence one another, and effect a certain interchange of devotional practices. The asceticism of the meek followers of Çakjamuni was imitated, perhaps surpassed, by the wild naked devotees of Civa. The Civaite rock temples, with their more florid architecture and luxuriant pageantry of sculpture, threw the austerer homes of the Buddhist ascetics into the shade. On the other hand, as we have seen, the Civa worship deeply influenced the degenerate Buddhism of the Jögatsçara school. In India the two religions seem to have lived side by side, often for long periods, and apparently in peace. At other times their relations were hostile, and some of the persecutors of Buddhism seem to have passed for incarnations of Civa. The austere, abstract character of the primitive doctrine of Çakjamuni was ill fitted for the multitude. It offered insufficient pasture to the mythological passion; it disdained the servile fears of popular superstition. Hence the mythological developments of the Mahayana, and the beliefs in magic and necromancy which distinguish the Tantra system. Arya-samgha was the Aquinas of this latter school, as Nagardschuna was of the second. He is supposed to have lived in the fourth Christian century, but the exact date is of course uncertain.

We have now followed the transformations of the original doctrine of Çakjamuni to the period immediately preceding its

introduction into Thibet. Its decline in India had begun before that time, and can be partly followed, geographically at least, in those travels of the Chinese pilgrims which the diligence of French scholar has made accessible to European readers. It was the singular fortune of this religion, as of the one which it resembles in so many points--even the orthodox ecclesiastical historian Milman described it as the Christianity of father Asia--to be expelled, after a "brief dream of unremaining glory," from its primitive home, and to spread and multiply under alien skies. The faith of Jesus now meets with bare contemptuous toleration in the sacred city of his Passion; and in many districts of India which once the disciples of Cakjamuni visited with the most intense devotion his very name is now forgotten, and the surviving memorials of his worship are an enigma. Human nature, the parent of all that fantastic theology, is still essentially unchanged. The same bright sky from which were woven the earlier gods of a forgotten world, hangs still, a palace roof of azure lights, over the busy tribes of men, but meantime

"Their unremaining gods and they
Like a river roll away"

and the surface of the painted veil which men call life is dyed with different colours, and mocks them with the shadows of some newer phantasy. But in remote lands, and among men of other speech and blood, this eldest of universal Churches still thrives and spreads, and dreams still of some distant age of millennial glory. Among the rude tribes of snowy Thibet, whose wild demon-gods from their inaccessible homes in the forests, and on the peaks of the Himalaya, wrought woe to human life, the "good law" found a field like that which Germany and Scandinavia offered to the Christian Church, when from all quarters their armed bands were crossing the once inviolable frontier, and taking possession of the half-ruined inheritance of the Caesars. In that secluded land, with few and slight external interruptions, it has been permitted to exhaust its utmost capabilities, and to show once for all what a priesthood and

theology can accomplish unaided for the improvement of individual and social man.

II

A deep obscurity rests over the history of Thibet prior to its conversion to Buddhism. The name appears to have reached the West through the Arabs, whose conquests in the eighth century carried them near its borders. The people are of the Mongolian type, but their language is said to have closer affinities with the Nepalese and Birman languages than with the Mongolian. The land itself, as is well known, is a high table-land, bounded on the south and south-west by the Himalaya, and separated also by lofty though less imposing mountain ranges from Mongolia and China. In a land so secluded one may well believe, what all tradition asserts, that the people were on an extremely low stage of culture, and that their religion reflected only too faithfully their habitual barbarism. The Thibetans found no Tacitus to record and embellish whatever virtues they may have possessed.

The traditions of the natives as to their own origin have evidently undergone so much modification in passing through the hands of their Buddhist teachers as to have lost any value, probably only slight, which they ever had. In the imagination of the people, their first ancestors were the demon-gods and witches of their own mountains. The Buddhistic writers allowed or accepted this tradition, and gave it a different colour by introducing Mandshucris and Avalokiteśvara as promoting or suggesting the population of the dark uninhabited northern land by these means. Buddhism had long been established in the neighbouring lands before crossing the Himalayan barrier. Miracles and prophetic foreshadowings of its future fortunes necessarily accompanied it, and smoothed the way before it, as believers hold. Historically we may presume that it was by a process of gradual infiltration, augmented by the flight of believers from persecutions elsewhere, that it penetrated into Thibet. The chief royal dynasty in that land was derived, according to a habit of thought which has widely prevailed in Europe, from a prince of the house from which Cakjamuni

himself sprang, and the legend of this founder of the Thibetan state finds a close parallel in the legends of Moses, Romulus, and Cyrus, and other founders of famous dynasties and creeds. Exposed at his birth in a copper vessel on the Ganges, he is discovered and rescued by a virtuous and childless shepherd, and having reached manhood crosses the frowning barrier of the Himalaya, under miraculous suggestion and guidance, and founds a kingdom and dynasty in Thibet. This legend is not wholly without some support in collateral independent Indian legends, which represent certain scions of the race of Cakja as having been expelled from their thrones, and become founders of kingdoms beyond the mountains. Be this as it may, the darkness of mythology closes, with increasing intensity after this brief glimpse of possible daylight, round the history of Thibet. The kings who follow are mere inventions, with symbolical names, invented to fill up the blank between the presumed founder of the Thibetan state and the period of the introduction of Buddhism, when solid ground is at length reached, though the vapours of symbolizing fancy are very far from being dissolved.

In the year 617 of our era, when in remote Arabia the camel-driver of Mecca was brooding over those purposes by which the social state of Asia was to be so deeply influenced, the first Buddhist king of Thibet, Strongtsan Ganpo, was born. He has naturally furnished matter for legend, but at this point the independent testimony of Chinese chroniclers is partly available for the control of the native historians. From these sources we can confirm the statements which describe a great extension of the external power of Thibet, and the increased concentration of political authority in the hands of the chief. The same motives which led the kings of Kent, in the seventh Christian century, to promote the diffusion of Christianity in their territories,--the fact that it was the religion of races more highly-civilized than their own, and might also be favourable to the extension of their own power, combined with motives of a more directly moral and religious kind,--probably influenced Strongtsan Ganpo in assisting the labours of the Indian missionaries in his territories, and adopting their religion as his own. The new sanctions which this religion provided for the moral law, and its explicit

inculcation of that law on all mankind as a primary requisite for reaching that state of mind, the extinction of desire, which was accepted as a supreme ideal, must have been welcome to a sagacious ruler, who saw in the barbarism of his subjects the chief hindrance to the extension of his own power. With the new religion came also a philosophy, a literature, and other civilizing agencies. A coherent dogmatic religion coherent at any rate with its own assumptions, is generally attractive to minds which have become disgusted with the lawless fancies, the gross ritual, and crude inconsistencies of the nature-religions in their later stages. Strongtsan Ganpo took, therefore, a humanizing step when he adopted the "good law," even in its later perverted form, as the religion of Thibet. Buddhism is a religion of peace, and wherever it prevails the primeval delight of man in strife and battle has been slackened, in some cases practically extinguished. Changes of this kind are not, however, the work of a day, and the Thibetan character preserved for a long time many of its original qualities. But any check to the exclusive predominance of the military spirit must be set down as a gain, for this spirit is seldom consistent with any but very moderate advances in morality and knowledge. The supremacy of religious ideas and persons secures a starting point for these, but unfortunately holds out no guarantee that their growth should keep pace with each other, or even that they should grow at all. It is, however, something to have made a beginning, and to have an ideal of conduct which raises a barrier against that savage assertion of self which is the note of barbaric man. The Thibetan chiefs, like the rude Franks of Clovis, were moved by a divine legend of love and pity, and brought within the touch of gentler sympathies. The further advances towards political union made at this time were facilitated by the new glow of common enthusiasm for this unlooked-for revelation of supreme good, and the conditions for acquiring it. Lastly, the introduction of an alphabet, and with it the arts of reading and writing, essential where a religion rests on a written revelation, was a gift which the new religion brought with it--a precious gift, if we measure it by the consolations which it has brought within the reach of millions of minds, but by no means that security for

continual intellectual improvement which it is often supposed to be.*

The guide, philosopher, and friend of this Thibetan Charlemagne was Thumi Ssambhota, who spent many years in Hindustan with fourteen companions, engaged in the study of the "good law," and in the composition of a Thibetan alphabet. He passes in Thibet for an incarnation of Mandshucris, the Logos or world-creating reason of Buddhist theology. He translated into the Thibetan language some of the more important scriptures of the new faith, among them the Samatog and the Mani Kambum. The first of these works (the "vessel" or "little chest") is a compendium of moral laws, and served for a long time as a civil and criminal code. The Mani Kambum was a strictly dogmatic religious work, the revelations of Avalokitecvara, the guardian of Cakjamuni's doctrine on earth, and who had been specially pointed out by him, in prophecies which were naturally forthcoming when required, as the teacher and spiritual illuminator of the dark northern lands. The famous formula of Thibetan devotion, the six sacred syllables, repeated hourly to this day by millions of devout believers, "*Om mani padmê hûm*" ("Hail to the jewel in the lotus! hail!"), is found in this book, and is therefore contemporary with the first introduction of Buddhism into Thibet. A short formula of this

* Mr. Hodgson ("Essays on Nepal and Thibet," pp. 10, 11) has some interesting observations on the universal diffusion of the arts of printing and reading in Thibet. He remarks "that it is a subject of surprise that literature of any kind should be common in such a region: and more remarkably so, that it should be so widely diffused as to reach persons covered with filth, and destitute of every one of those thousand luxuries which (at least in our ideas) precede the luxury of books." He also notices the very familiar power and habit of writing possessed by the people at large; but he adds that it is employed on "nothing more useful than a note of business, or more informing than the dreams of blind mythology." There are persons even in Europe to whom a limitation of this kind would, perhaps, not appear undesirable, but they have let the golden opportunity slip by unused, and it is too late to recover it now. The friends of religious education must have managed their affairs in Thibet with no ordinary skill.

kind is a powerful help to the devotion of rude tribes unacquainted with books, whom long dogmatic expositions and catechisms would simply repel, though the taste for these things, as we know, can be engrafted by systematic culture on human nature. In this prayer, in Buddhist conceptions, there is a reference to Avalokitecvara, who is the especial guardian of Thibet, and who is symbolically represented as being born from the cup of the lotus-flower. The lotus is a familiar figure in Indian poetry, devotional or amatory. Keoppen believes that the origin of this famous devotional formula is Civaite, and that the jewel is simply one of the designations of the Lingam. If this be so, it had originally a widely different reference from that which it has received in Buddhism, and points to a primitive form of nature-worship, which, mixed with later mythological growths, is still one of the surviving faiths of India.

The analogies which this introduction of Buddhism into Thibet offers to corresponding events in our own history would be incomplete without the cooperation of devout princesses, and the presence of wonder-working reliques. Neither of these are wanting. The two wives of Strongtsan Ganpo, one a Chinese, the other a Nepalese princess, born and trained in the religion of Cakjamuni, had a great influence on the propagation of their faith in the country of their adoption. In the spirit of pious Christian princesses, they ransacked India and Ceylon for sacred memorials of the founder of their faith, to serve as aids to devotion, and also as a protection against the hostility of evil spirits. Two famous wonder-working images (Tsch'o) of the Buddha are recorded as having been introduced into Thibet by these princesses; and two temples, perhaps the first on Thibetan soil, were built at Lhasa to receive them, and were for centuries the most highly venerated of the national sanctuaries. Tradition associates many other works of a more directly social and civilizing character, such as the draining of marshes, the embankment of rivers, the establishment of schools, with these two princesses. From China, as well as from India, much was doubtless borrowed by the first Buddhist kings of Thibet, who thus brought their isolated and barbarous people under the influence of two of the great centres of the ancient Asiatic

culture. The moral laws of Cakjamuni were even enforced by the civil legislation, or rather no dividing line between the two was distinctly conceived. Strongtsan Ganpo and his two devout wives have naturally been canonized or apotheosized by later times, and are venerated to this day in Thibet as incarnations of celestial powers.

It would be contrary to all experience if a new and higher creed were to establish itself at once, and expel older beliefs and habits from their inherited ground. The historians who record the fortunes of the finally dominant faith refer the notions of their own times to an earlier period, and represent what really only came slowly into existence as having always existed, and opposition to innovation as an apostasy from ancient truth. It is only from their incidental admissions that we detect that historical fact really corresponded to what all historical analogy suggests. It was from the precious historical fragments preserved in the Pentateuch and books of Joshua and Judges that critics first collected the evidence required to impeach the ideal pictures which were produced in later times of Israel's early religious history. Similarly, from the admission of the pious scribes of Thibet, we surmise that the death of Strongtsan Ganpo was the signal for a vigorous re-assertion of the old demon-worship, and that the first success of the "good law" in Thibet must have depended, to great extent, on the king's personal influence. For two generations after Strongtsan's death it seems to have made no advances, though Thibet at this time was extending its territory east and west, and distinguishing itself as an aggressive military state. Such periods are not favourable to religious growth. Calamities and national perils and deliverances strengthen the religious sentiment, and afford openings for the activity of priestly or prophetic personages. So it was in Judah in the reign of Hezekiah; and so in Thibet in the second half of the eighth century. Under Thisrongdetsan, who reigned from 740 to 786, the "good law" had a second spring, and new apostles and doctors were called in from India to tend the growing plant. Padma Sambhava, surnamed the "great translator," assisted by other scholars, undertook and carried out, at this time, the complete translation of the sacred canonical books of the faith.

The Thibetan Bible (Kandschur, "translation of the word") is of vast extent, and such a task must have demanded no common measure of zeal and patience.

The reign of the grandson of this king was also a reign that realized the priestly ideal almost to its full extent: a reign in which the monastic system was first fully organized, and architects, sculptors, and workers in metal called in from India and China to decorate the homes and temples of the devotees. It was a reign in which scholastic divinity flourished, and clerical immunities from civil burdens were established or extended. All this, however, as was natural, led to a reaction, and apparently a fiercer and deeper one than any before it. The pious historians permit us to see that deep discontent, especially among the military chiefs, had been excited by this excessive partiality to the clerical order, and the heavy taxation required to provide for the material splendours of the royal faith. The discontented chiefs, supported by the adherents of the old faith, brought the reign and life of the pious king to an end, and place Tamo or Darma on his throne, the Julianus Apostata of the Thibetan Church.

"Like a lamp whose oil is spent, the prosperity of Thibet expired; like the colours of a rainbow, the royal majesty disappeared; like a desolating hurricane from the north, the religion and manners of the kingdom of darkness were spread over the land." In such words a Thibetan chronicler describes the gloomy period of Dharma's reign. It was a time of persecution and apostasy, and the language of historians would seem to imply that the "good law" was wholly overthrown and banished from Thibet. But this can hardly have been the case, for its rapid growth in the next century would in that case be inexplicable. The persecuting apostate fell by the hands of a monk, like the last of the Valois. His death marks the close of the first period of the history of Thibetan Buddhism, and also, unfortunately for us, the beginning of a period in which we lose for a long time all historical guidance. The ninety years which follow the assassination of the persecutor are almost an historical blank. We know only that it was a time of anarchy, --of a social state, superficially, not unlike that of Europe in the

tenth century, but seemingly without even that degree of coherence and organization which feudalism possessed. Historical light only begins again with the supremacy of the Mongolian Khans over Thibet. This is partly owing to the complete severance from China, which took place at this time, by the foundation of an independent kingdom between the two states on the upper Hoang-ho and the shores of the Blue Lake. At the same time Thibet itself appears to have been broken up into independent and mutually hostile states.

The religious restoration began in the first years of the eleventh century, and continued through it with ever-increasing strength. From Hindustan and westwards from Kaschmir the unwearied missionaries of the "good law" again penetrated into Thibet. Among these the most famous is the Pandit Atischa, the second founder of Buddhism in Thibet. His disciple, the Thibetan, Brom Bakschi, was also the founder of a famous school, the Kahdampa, which by its name seems to indicate that it aimed at an ascetic and moral revival, alien to the mystical, or rather magical, tendencies of the Tantra system. Many of the most famous among the existing monasteries of Thibet date from this period of religious fervour,—contemporary, by a strange coincidence, with a great religious revival in Europe, with the reform of Cluny, and the daring innovations or restorations of Hildebrand and the popes who preceded and followed him. The monasteries of Reseng, near Lhassa, of Satja (properly Ssass Kja), of Brigung, are the best known among these, and the abbots of the two last seem early to have been rival candidates for supremacy over the other. Of the rival theological schools of this time little is known, but the beginnings are already discernible of the two tendencies which issued in the existing divisions of the "red" and the "yellow" religion;—the former representing the Buddhism of the Tantra system, the form in which it first entered Thibet, mixed subsequently with many elements derived from the indigenous beliefs; the latter having its starting point in earlier Indian writings, and the reforms of the eleventh and later centuries. In the latter school a tendency to a stricter hierarchical organization early showed itself, which in a later age was to culminate in that double Papacy which is

the most remarkable feature of Lamaism. Already in the eleventh century we find the abbots of Ssass Kja in possession of a certain ecclesiastical supremacy, and receiving from the hands of the Chinese emperors, on whose support the spiritual chiefs of Thibet had already begun to lean, a golden seal and diploma as king of Thibet. Two-thirds of the old kingdom were already under monastic rule, the remaining third being in the hands of rival princely families. The star of the Hierarchy was plainly in the ascendant. This state of things appears to have continued till the rise of the Mongol power, an event which, directly or indirectly, affected the whole civilized world, and introduced Thibet into a new system of political relations.

This is not the place to relate the fortunes of that portentous phenomenon which forced itself at this time on the attention of the whole of Asia, and troubled the imaginations even of English monks with dark visions of impending judgment. As the wars and conquests of Napoleon in our own century, so the torrent of Mongolian invasion swept much away that deserved to perish, and prepared a soil for new political organizations. Thibet itself was not directly overrun by the hosts of Zinghis Khan; but when the neighbouring countries and its own external dependencies had fallen under the dominion of the Khans, the instincts of its monastic rules prompted them to disarm hostility by spontaneous submission.

That singular toleration of all diversities of religious opinion which distinguished the first Mongolian rulers, and which was proof against the eloquence and logic of the missionaries of all creeds, may also have recommended this course. We read of strange theological tournaments, in which Christians, Mahommedans, and Buddhists battle with one another in presence of the successor of Zinghis, and in which no one, it appears, could claim a decisive victory. While some branches of the house of Zinghis ended by adopting Mahommedanism, his most famous and favourite grandson Chubilai, who reigned over China and Mongolia, became a sincere but not altogether fanatical convert to Buddhism, and by this step probably acquired a peaceful supremacy over Thibet. His leading idea seems to have been to govern the country through its spiritual

chiefs; but under his weaker successors, and often again under the succeeding dynasties, the Thibetan hierarchy has struggled by intrigues and indirect wars to acquire a greater measure of independence. This analogy of relations between the spiritual and temporal powers in the furthest East and West, imparts a certain interest to the wars, intrigues, and catastrophes which occupy so large a space in the history of the relations between China and Thibet. But the attempt to follow these in detail would lead us into a thorny and tangled path, and perhaps weary even the most attentive hearer. The barbarous and unfamiliar names, and the obscurity of all but one or two of the chief actors, are also a serious hindrance to any attempt to give the picture in miniature without losing, at the same time, the true colour and proportions. I shall, therefore, in what remains to be said, still follow the theological clue rather than that of historical events, and keep principally in view that latest development of Buddhist supernaturalism, the double Lamaist Papacy, whose position and prerogatives, perhaps, possess an exceptional interest in our days, when the Catholic Church has at last had the courage to define in a General Council* the conditions under which its infallible teaching authority is exercised, and when even experienced English and German statesmen have judged it necessary, whether wisely or not, to enter into the lists against that great European Lama who, from his august cathedra in Rome, still influences so profoundly the beliefs and conduct of many millions of human beings.

* The great importance of the Vatican Council will be understood by the next generation; at present we are too near to it. Already its influence in France has been considerable in stimulating the dissolution of Protestantism, with its incoherent medley of submission and liberty. It has also helped men of science in all lands to realize, as they never did before, the full logical consequences of the idea of revelation, wherever that idea is distinctly conceived. And lastly, though this is a service of much slighter importance, it has placed in a very vivid light the fortunate nullity of the separated Episcopal churches as organs of supernatural authority. When the history of our century is contemplated as a whole, as it will be one day, the real significance of the work which Pius IX., or his advisers, has carried out with such unwavering consistency, will be appreciated as it deserves.

In the thirteenth century, which is also a memorable century in Catholicism,—the century of Dominic and Francis, of St. Thomas and Dante,—a great reform, in an ascetic, monastic, and hierarchical direction, was originated in the Lamaist Church; and this reform, unlike that of its Catholic counterpart, has not only maintained itself to this day (as, indeed, in a certain sense, the latter has done), but has also gained a substantial victory over all other dispositions and tendencies of men, and realized, to an extent that was fortunately never possible in Europe, the supernatural ideal, the complete subordination of all the interests of this visible world to those of the unseen. It was in the reign of Chubilai, a prince whose memory is still revered in China, though the sober Chinese understanding has never quite forgiven his devotion to Lamaism, that this reform, which in its beginnings was of a disciplinary rather than a doctrinal character, began. In the next century it was continued and consummated by a truly remarkable reformer, who has left so ineffaceable a stamp of his own mind and purposes on the Lamaist Church as, in a certain sense, to be rightly considered its founder, just as we may regard Hildebrand or Luther as founders of the Churches in which their opinions or policy have been perpetuated. As it was one of the aims of the Mongolian emperors to maintain their hold on Thibet through the help of the hierarchy, it seemed the most rational plan to favour the concentration of ecclesiastical authority in the hands of one supreme ruler. The abbots of the great cloister of Ssass Kja, in Southern Thibet, already exercised an undefined control over the others; and this authority was largely extended and legalized under Chubilai and his successors. The nephew of the ruling abbot in Chubilai's time was a prodigy of learning and devotion, and was selected by the great emperor as his instrument for carrying out the needful reforms in the Church, and smoothing the relations between it and the civil power. Mati Dhvadscha (the Standard of Wisdom) received from the emperor the title of "Supreme Head of Religion," "Teacher of the Emperor," and other imposing distinctions. During his lifetime the progress of the reform in all that relates to discipline was continued. The new revision of the Scriptures, undertaken and carried out under his

superintendence by a company of learned doctors, furnished a basis for the doctrinal and moral reforms of the following age. In Thibetan history the Reformer is more frequently mentioned by his official name, "Phagss pa," which the Thibetans are said to pronounce like the Latin Papa, than by his personal or cloister name. The former name has pretty much the same signification as Arya, i.e. noble or distinguished.

In considering this earliest phase of the reform we are struck by the sagacity which its promoters exhibited in this grasping the ends of the two threads of supernatural authority, the living Church and the Written Word, and using both for their purposes, almost as if they had anticipated the possibility of some collision between the two. In this way they left no opening for any Thibetan Luther to turn the batteries of one against the other. The close alliance, however, between the civil and religious powers seems to have tended, as it commonly does, to a certain corruption of both. The successors of Chubilai, abandoned to a slavish devotion, allowed the grossest abuses of clerical power, and left behind them in China a lively sentiment of the evils which attend a dynasty that neglects its proper duties for that of saving souls. On the other hand we have trustworthy contemporary accounts of the corruption and insolence of many of the monks of this period. Towards the middle of the fourteenth century the Mongolian dynasty in China was overthrown, and replaced by the Ming dynasty (1368), which from the first adopted a different policy in its dealings with the heads of the Thibetan Church. Contemporary with this political revolution was the more directly moral and devotional reform originated by Tsongkhōpa, whose position in modern Thibetan theology is hardly inferior to that of Cakjamuni himself. This revival of the purer morality and mysticism of the earlier, or perhaps more correctly of the second phase of Buddhism, whatever may have been the excellence of the motives of those who originated it, only led, like the great reforms of the Tridentine doctors, to a final suppression of whatever individuality and mental freedom Thibet possessed. Perhaps also it quickened the growth of some singular theological developments, which were at once the expression and instrument

of priestly authority in its most exorbitant form.

In the reform of the eleventh century, a moral and ascetic tendency in opposition to the conceptions of belief and practice founded on the Tantras, and in later times strengthened by a large adoption of indigenous superstitions, had disclosed itself. From the reformed cloisters in which the traditions of that school were preserved the new movement of the fourteenth century originated. Tsongkhōpa belonged to the still famous convent of the "hundred thousand images." From his hair, which was cut off when he renounced the world, sprang that miraculous tree whose leaves, as the dismayed and puzzled French missionaries* record, are stamped to this day with letters and words in the sacred language of the Thibetan Church. Here he grew up and became the founder of a new sect or school which bore the commendable title of the School of Virtue. His monks were distinguished from all others by their yellow cap, a symbol of return to the practices and beliefs of Cakjamuni and his companions, who bore that colour. Further, in his rule, and from his time, the discipline of celibacy was strictly enforced on all monks, as it undoubtedly was in the earliest brotherhoods in India. The discipline, so mighty a lever in the hands of the Catholic Reformers of the eleventh century, seems to have been equally efficacious in Thibet, and to have at once placed his monks on a vantage-ground which they have never lost. He revived or originated other devotional practices, such as the retreat for spiritual exercises, which in India had been called after the season in which it was observed, *varscha vasana*, the retreat during the season of rain, and that solemn assembly of chosen monks from all the cloisters observing his rule during the first fifteen days of the year for common prayer and religious exercises, which is still observed in Thibet. In ritual and doctrine his efforts, like those of his predecessors, were principally directed towards purifying both from the contaminations of Civaism and the popular necromancy and magic, and reviving as far as was possible the study of older Buddhist morality and dogma. We do not yet know enough of

* Huc and Gabet in their well-known Travels.

the history of Thibet, or of the different theological schools, to follow this movement in detail, or even to know exactly what was original and personal in Tsongkhōpa's reforms. At this period the Ming emperors acknowledged the authority of the heads of several communities, rather than of one only. To each of these abbots, thus opposed to each other, a large measure of temporal authority seems to have been confided. Thus an opening was left for the growth of a new religious movement, and the silent, spontaneous concentration of a deeper spiritual authority in the hands of the heads of the new and now dominant body of "yellow" monks. The gradual evolution of this religious authority we cannot, unfortunately, directly follow, but it seems unquestionable that it derived its strength from genuine religious inspirations, and had the support of popular sympathy. Tsongkhōpa himself died in the first years of the fifteenth century, or, as is related, ascended to Heaven in the presence of a great multitude of eye-witnesses from all parts of Thibet. He is believed to have been an incarnation of Amitābha, the Dhyani Buddha who is specially responsible, through the agency of his spiritual son or emanation, the Bodhisattva Avalokitecvara, for the maintenance and extension of the doctrines and Church of Cakjamuni on earth. There were two heads of the "yellow" community, for it seems probable that the reformer, like the founder, of Buddhism had two supreme disciples, to whom doctrine and discipline were respectively confided. From these elements the double Lamaist Papacy grew up in the course of the fifteenth century, and before the end of it the two Popes were recognized by the Chinese government as the formal, though not supreme, sovereigns of Thibet. The most important and the best known of the two is the Dalai Lama, who reigns at Lhasa, but his colleague in South-western Thibet, the Pan tschhen Lama, seems to rank higher in spiritual attributes. The former is regarded as an incarnation of Avalokitecvara, the latter of Amitābha, who, of course, stands theological on a higher spiritual level than his emanation. The temporal greatness of the Dalai Lama far exceeds, on the other hand, that of his colleague. This dogma of successive incarnation came gradually into shape, as all similar ones have done. It took its rise in the

exhaustless springs of religious feeling and imagination, and in later times was hardened into a scholastic formula like the Catholic dogma of Transubstantiation, in the interests of hiererchical authority.

The successive stages of this development may be here briefly given. the doctrine of transmigration of souls was a primitive Buddhist belief, as it was, and still is, of Brahmanism. The later Buddhist phantasy peopled the upper storeys of the Kosmos with saints and other supernatural beings, who had not yet passed into the Nirvāna, as Cākjamuni has done, and whence he can never return. These Buddhas of the future thus came to occupy the place of divine beings, and have become the objects of popular worship. At a later time, even the perfect Buddhas, whose career was finished, and who had passed for ever into the Nirvāna, were believed to have produced emanations of themselves to watch over and protect their doctrines on earth. This function, as we saw before, is not directly and personally discharged by these elevated beings, but by beings "proceeding" from them, as the Holy Ghost of the Nicene theology from the First Person of the Christian Trinity. It was only one step further to regard these semi-divine beings as revealing themselves by incarnation to human beings on earth, and this step was probably taken in India. Lastly, when the celibate hierarchy had to choose between different modes of continuing their succession, they eschewed election, as still practised in Rome, or hereditary succession, which is the rule at Constantinople, and adopting the popular belief in incarnation, worked it up into a system on which their claim to supernatural authority might securely rest. The two Lamaist Popes, regarded as incarnations of beings of a higher order than man, are now the direct objects of an almost slavish devotion, and, although in fact dependent tributaries of China, are also the visible temporal rulers of their devout and docile countrymen. Where no external criticism makes itself heard, and the *pictas fidei* can develop itself unchecked, it is not probable that any Thibetan theologian ever feels impelled to "minimize" or regulate what is universally received.

During the decline of the Ming dynasty the temporal power of the Lamas was largely increased. The reconversion of the Mongols, who had fallen away from the faith, or rather whose conversion in the thirteenth century had perhaps been merely nominal, was an event highly favourable to their plans. This event occurred in the middle of the sixteenth century, under the third Dalai Lama of Lhasa,—the Innocent the Third, according to Koeppen, among the Lamaist Popes. He appears to have acquired a practical independence in his relations with China, and to have made the devotion of his Mongolian allies his principal instrument in achieving this object. After his death, and under the minority of his two successors, the lay element in the State, represented by the Regent, the Vizier or Pashiva of the sovereigns, succeeded for a time in acquiring the direction of the government. A period of war and intestine disturbance followed, in which the fifth Dalai Lama was only saved from destruction by the valour and religious zeal of the West Mongolians, and by their aid established himself in the ancient palace of the Thibetan kings, with larger powers than any of his predecessors. The believing Mongols at this time played much the same part in Thibet as the Germans in Italy at the close of the tenth century, and effectually quelled any surviving opposition from the heads of old princely families, who seem sometimes to have found allies among the "red" monks. The conquest of China by the Mandschu Tartars in the seventeenth century appeared at first an event of favourable omen to the ambition of the Lamas, but the issue proved otherwise. In the reign of the enlightened Emperor Kang-hi, whose relations to the Jesuits, whom he valued for their astronomical and geographical knowledge, have made his name familiar to Europeans, the supremacy of China was definitely established. Since A.D. 1720, in spite of occasional struggles for independence, the Chinese emperors have maintained their hold on Thibet, and at present, without interfering to any great extent in the routine of administration, practically control the selection or incarnation of the Lamas, and their relations with other powers.

It would be an interesting task, if space permitted, to fill up this general sketch, so far as it might be possible, with appropriate details illustrating the character of the *régime* to which Thibet is still subject. The administration of the country, which is almost exclusively in the hands of the clerical order, has a close resemblance to that of the Roman States under the Sovereignty of the Popes. One branch of the ecclesiastical order appears to devote itself more particularly to the affairs of government. the other has a larger share of religious devotion and regard. The "incarnate" members of the clergy--for incarnation is by no means confined to the two Pontiffs--are naturally ill fitted for practical affairs, as from their infancy they are treated as beings of a semi-divine nature, and are thus excluded from learning any thing from experience. The non-incarnate monks, on the contrary, have an open chance of rising to high influence and office by their talents or acquisitions. The really influential rulers are thus often hid from sight, and, like the subtle powers who pull the strings which move the infallible teacher in Rome, are content with the substance without the show of power. The organization and discipline of the cloisters are of a very elaborate character, and the several grades and offices are classified and distributed with much of that sagacity which has distinguished the Jesuit and other Catholic orders. Their wealth in real estate is considerable, and they have a truly exhaustless fund in the devotion of the people. As a matter of course, there are sacramental offices in connection with all the chief events of life, for which fees or liberal gratuities are expected. Literature, education, the arts of healing and printing are all in monastic hands, and are all employed to increase the devotional temper of the people, and keep their attention steadily fixed on the supernatural end of life. Above all other lands Thibet is a land of prayer, of pilgrimages, of almost ceaseless worship. The very labourers in the field, the shepherd with his flocks, the girl on her way to draw water from the well, have leisure for prayer, and seem to find in this occupation their chief solace in the blank monotony of life. The various ingenious instruments which have been invented for the manufacture, as it were, of prayer, have often been described.

It is probable that the Catholic Church is indebted, with other things, to her elder sister for the rosary. It is difficult to speak with absolute certainty of the moral result of this extraordinary discipline. The consequences of keeping a whole people in a state of eternal childhood must of course vary considerably with other circumstances. Where they are few temptations, where the intellect remains almost wholly dormant, and the spirit of unquestioning faith has received no shocks from any collision with societies cast in a different type, it is possible that the results of a merely negative morality may offer some points of favourable comparison with the moral phenomena of more improved societies; though it is also probable that a closer examination would show that even this apparent superiority was delusive. If the only true end of man is to obtain deliverance from this body of death, and not rather to build up a social order on earth in which his highest moral conceptions may find a growing satisfaction, it may be conceded that the Thibetan Church has struck on the right path, and would do well to keep to it.

In the course of this review of Thibetan history occasions of illustration from corresponding facts and doctrines in European and Christian history have frequently presented themselves, and it would have been difficult, whatever point of view had been adopted, altogether to avoid them. It would, however, be an incorrect conclusion that in insisting on these analogies my object had been to wholly identify Buddhism with Christianity, or to maintain that, under similar circumstances, they must necessarily have led to similar consequences. The undeniable superiority of Christianity consists in its vivid sociability, in its touching sentiment of brotherhood, in its closer affinity with all those feelings which urge men to pursue plans of social improvement. This history of the Christian monastic orders, which has always seemed to me the history of the Christian idea, furnishes a magnificent illustration of this original superiority, and marks at the same time the point at which that idea must either transform itself, or fall into diseased conditions. In the history of Buddhism we discover everywhere the outcome of its original radical defect, its too complete alienation from the

world, from human life, from the hope or vision of realizing any enduring kingdom of God within the bounds of known existence. In the primitive Christian conception, born as it was among a people which from time to time came in contact with all the great nations of antiquity, with all creeds and all philosophies, which never ceased to look forward to the future temporal supremacy of Israel and Israel's righteous God, that absolute abstraction from human hopes and interests which was possible among Indian ascetics could never permanently establish itself, or finally determine the end of the Christian society.

When we compare, with this clue in our hands, the history of the two religions, we see in the one the element of sociability, the enthusiasm of humanity, as it has been called, continually re-asserting itself, and tempering the sternness of the ascetic ideal; in the other it seems to draw more and more into the background, and finally to lose itself in the cloudland of mythology. The later Hebrew Prophets, to whom the rise and fall of empires and nations was no unfamiliar spectacle, who stood in the centre of the world's theatre, might look forward to some sudden miraculous shifting of the curtain, and the manifestation, amid the clamour of celestial trumpets, of that Shepherd of Israel who held in his hands the threads of the world's destinies. But they never lost sight of the world,--

"Which is the world
Of all of us--the place where in the end
We find our happiness, or not at all,"

--they never sought that perfection which "houses itself in a dream, at distance from the king." The spirit of sociability and progress has never been wholly extinguished in Christianity, the child of Hebrew Prophecy, by the blinding light of supernatural imaginations. In Buddhism imagination and asceticism plainly have eaten away its sounder human elements.* The introduction, indeed, of this religion into Thibet was partly, as

* This remark applies more particularly to Northern Buddhism. It is much less applicable, I believe, to Ceylon or Burmah.

we saw, a secular work, or at least was favoured by royal authority, anxious to find a support for its plans of improvement in the religion of more advanced nations. These efforts were also attended with considerable success; and whatever elements of progressive civilization India, Nepal, Kaschmir, and China could supply were transplanted into Thibet. Against these advantages must be set the exorbitant encouragement given to religious ideas, and religious ideas of an exceptionally intense and unpliant character. It is one ordinary consequence of those creeds which shift the goal of human effort too nakedly and unreservedly from this world to the unseen, and encourage the special cultivation of those virtues which theologians call supernatural, to end by checking the activity of all impulses which make for human improvement, while, at the same time, they substitute some fixed traditionary moral standard for an experimental and progressive one. In the case of Christianity these disadvantages have been largely neutralized, not simply by the original superiority of its moral type, but by the fact that it was adopted by races among whom for centuries morality had been cultivated as a rational science, and, to a large extent, withdrawn--so far, at least, as the educated classes were concerned--from all sentiment of supernatural control. The pagan multitude, of course, in accepting Christianity, brought with them their inherited stock of superstitions, and combined these, as best they could, with the higher moral demands of their new faith and its legendary embellishments; but the superior minds which shaped its theology and ethics were the unconscious instruments of an older human tradition, from which they perhaps believed that they had definitely emancipated themselves.

Christian theology and ethics were thus, in part, a transformation or continuation of some of the later phases of ancient philosophy and faith, and still reflect some of their most characteristic features.* Since that alliance was consummated,

* I cannot resist the pleasure of quoting, in connection with this theme, an eloquent passage from an unpublished essay by a distinguished living Greek scholar. "This amalgamation was prepared by influences operating long before, and nowhere more distinctly pronounced than in

the Christian ideal, nominally stationary, has in fact slowly changed with the changing conditions of life, and thus fitted itself, in spite of the sullen resistance of those who still look for the golden age in the centuries behind them, to the ideals of a wider human experience. In the nations that received Buddhism, with the remarkable exception of China, there was, unfortunately, no such reserve fund of human thought and experience to draw upon. The supernatural ideal had the field to itself, and no foe but untamed human passions to reckon with. After a sharp struggle it brought these, more or less, into subjection, and thus got rid of that state of savage lawlessness and ignorance, in which it would have been impossible for it to have survived. Much farther it could not go. The inevitable results of its supremacy are seen in the social state of Thibet, as our own generation has seen them in Spain and in the States of the Roman Pontiff; exorbitant extension of the monastic life, and of monastic property; dense ignorance, among rulers and

the New Testament itself. Strange to say, even so early,—and how much earlier, if we choose to go back to Egypt and the further East,—the contrasted genius of Hellenism and of Hebraism had found common ground in a tale of God upon earth. Among the Greeks no fiction was more common, no symbolism more in favour, than stories of Gods or Titans sympathetic with man, of mortal mother born, dying or descending to Hades, institutors not only of civil manners, but of holy mysteries with emblems of immortality in corn and wine, comfortable in the present, and essential to a better hope in a future life. These numerous and equivalent fables, after a long and chequered history of antipathies, alliances, and reactions, cancelled each other's power, and all gave way to a new divinity, with a modern ideal of character, and uniting in sympathy the East and West. Christ dead upon the knees of his mother superseded Adonis mourned upon the lap of despairing Aphrodite; and the infant Jesus at the breast of the nursing Virgin took the place of Dionysus, nursling of nymphs; and even as in earlier days the intrusive worship and mythology of the wine-god had first assailed, and then been accepted into every sacred circle, however exclusive, even the Eleusinian; so now Demeter and Dionysus,—Ceres and Bacchus,—the sacred presidents of the mysteries of Eleusis, gave place to a milder celebration of thankfulness for God's good gifts and better promises, that was to come round at last to a moral abuse far exceeding in mischievousness any orgies.

people, of the social and political virtues, with no slight corruption of the domestic ones; intellectual stagnation or decay; the growth of material wealth impeded, and those who labour the hopeless bondservants of those who pray.

Gentlemen, the sum of what has been said amounts to this.-- Sacerdotal organizations like the Thibetan hierarchy, with their imposing array of supernatural motives, have often been excellent instruments of moral discipline. They have united and humanized tribes whom barbarism and wild superstitions had kept asunder. They have made the imagination, for a time, the ally or servant of the practical reason. They have opened a wide field to intellectual speculations, and invited the reason to cooperate with them, under certain restrictions, in their difficult task. In this way they have nobly served civilization; and yet civilization in the end has generally been hindered by them, or has come into collision with them, and has been forced to defend herself against them, to disarm them, or to break altogether with them. The explanation of this fact is no longer the secret of a few. In our day it is the secret of all the world. Civilization is founded on reason: and on reason has been thrown the onerous task of distinguishing firmly between the known and the unknowable, between the accessible and the inaccessible, the real and the fantastic. The foundations of rational progress are never really secure when this distinction is overlooked or disputed. But the basis of these great sacerdotal organizations, in the last analysis, is found to be emotion or

"The philosophies that were independent of, or inimical to mythus, secured a position in the new frame of associations quite as early. What more contrasted in style and manner than Paul with John, and both or either with Matthew, Mark, and Luke ? and yet the Epistles and the fourth Gospel are as thoroughly permeated with the best spirit of the three first Gospels, as with phrases and forms and associations that pertain to the very core of the Schools. When mythus new born in Judæa could thus coalesce with the primeval imaginations of the Greek, we need not wonder that philosophical theology from either side soon found itself a common ground. The Stoicism of Seneca repeats St. Paul in every other page, and the fourth Gospel is only becoming really legible in the light of Platonism of Alexandria."

phantasy, and hence arises an irreconcilable opposition both of methods and ends. The conflict is no merely theoretical one. It penetrates into daily life; it underlies the most anxious political problems of modern Europe; it can have no satisfactory solution so long as human nature is divided against itself; so long as inconsistent and contradictory methods are allowed in the most closely allied departments of our practice and knowledge.

There is one farther reflection, with which I conclude. No sincere human effort, we may hope, is wholly wasted. In some way or other,--so experience seems to suggest,--it is realized and turned to account for the service of man. In studying history we are often inclined to murmur that the prayers and tears of so many generations should have been so fruitlessly wasted; that men should have died, and, alas, also inflicted death on others, for such irrational causes; or perhaps we fear that all is at an end when the form is at an end,--that there is no hope for religions after death. Still, in spite of these misgivings, the best minds of our time believe that Religion is destined to transform itself, and will continue, under new conditions and limitations, to regulate, or at least accompany, the moral evolution of our race. The greatest poets of our own and the last generation have held this faith; and poets see the dawn of the new day on the mountain tops long before it is visible to others. Even the great poet of the Catholic Theology, in the sublime closing lines of the *Paradiso*,* seems to betray a prophetic apprehension of this change. When the "towering phantasy" on which he had so long gazed bewildered dissolves into air, like a vision of the night, he still feels his desire and will sustained and moved by the love which sustains and moves the universe:-

- * All' alta fantasia qui mancò possa:
 Ma già volgeva il mio disiro e il velle
 Sì come ruota che igualment è mossa
 L'amor che muove il sole e i'altre stelle.

Paradiso, canto xxxiii.

"Here vigour failed the towering phantasy,
But still the will rolled onward like a wheel
In even motion, by the love impelled
That moves the sun in heaven and all the stars."

