

We are not here claiming for these Resurrection stories absolute accuracy, or even assuming that their historicity is unquestionable. We are simply asking that the general effect of the stories should be compared with the same general effect produced after reading accounts of hallucinations. Whatever may be said as to the reality of the Resurrection of which they give account, one thing may be safely predicated about them, namely, that they are wanting in some of the most characteristic features of hallucinations. This is doubtless very far from proving the reality of the Resurrection, but it goes a very long way towards showing that the subjective hypothesis receives no support from the general character of the stories. The moment these are set aside as untrustworthy, others have to be substituted, and the substitutes are all in the direction of the ghostly and the apparitional. If these substitutes are the originals, how can we account for the remarkable transformation they have undergone? The process of transformation is not from the simple to the more complex and elaborate apparition, but from the unnatural and the uncanny apparition to the natural, even though extraordinary, appearance. It is, of course, conceivable that later hands, under the conception of a physical resurrection, have modified them in the direction indicated. Such a hypothesis, however, implies that the resurrection-idea had

already established itself. This hypothesis we have already shown is inconsistent with the theory that the phenomena were nothing more than hallucinations. The resurrection-idea must be first accounted for, before it can be used to account for the transformation of the stories.

There is one other matter connected with the Gospel stories which needs to be noted. In all the accounts the empty grave, and not the visions, is the starting-point of the disciples' experiences. On the subjective hypothesis this is the opposite of the fact. According to the hallucination theory the visions must have come first and the empty grave second. If we are dealing with expectations on the part of the disciples, it may reasonably be asked which is more likely to have been the true order? Is it more likely that the empty grave suggested the visions, or the visions suggested the empty grave? If the appearances suggested the empty grave, there must have been something in their character which differentiated them from all other hallucinations, for no such suggestion of the emptiness of the grave is found outside the stories of the appearances of Jesus. They cannot, therefore, be regarded as pure hallucinations explainable on a strictly subjective hypothesis.

It may be suggested that the expectation on the part of the disciples was not merely an expectation that Jesus was alive, but that He would rise from the grave. In that case, however, the conception

of the empty grave would be primary and the visions would be secondary. Moreover, the flight into Galilee, and the origination of the vision there is hardly consistent with such an expectation. If the disciples really expected a Resurrection from the grave, it is hardly likely that they would go away to Galilee while their Master was expected to come out of His tomb in Jerusalem. The Gospel stories make the empty grave primary and the appearances secondary, and there can be little doubt in the mind of an impartial critic that, to account for the birth of the resurrection-idea this is the only possible order.

If we are to seek an explanation of that something which must have happened between the death of Jesus and the birth of historic Christianity, we are forced to postulate some action which carries us beyond the mere thoughts and expectations of the disciples. So long as we remain within the area of the working of the disciples' minds we have no true explanation of the rise of the resurrection-idea. We may substitute visions which are only hallucinations, and we may rewrite the stories on the basis of what we may call a strict psychology, with the result that we have a more or less satisfactory explanation of the phenomena. We have, however, not written history, the history of those few weeks which separate the Passover when Jesus was crucified, from the Feast of Weeks following it, when the Christian Church replaced the

Congregation of Israel, in the work of the world's religious development. In abolishing the Resurrection as unhistorical, we fail utterly to account for the rise of the resurrection-idea, which is absolutely historical; and we leave the subsequent evolution of historic Christian doctrine—the development of the ideas involved in the conception of the Risen Christ—totally unconnected with Jesus of Nazareth. The history of Christianity would have to be rewritten if Jesus of Nazareth is not the same personality as the exalted Christ of the Epistles. This, however, is what is necessarily involved in the supposition that the Resurrection of Jesus is unhistorical. The Christianity which the subjective hypothesis accounts for is a Christianity which has two distinct personalities in it totally unrelated, but such a Christianity is not historic. The rewriting of the Gospel stories by the help of such a hypothesis does undoubtedly account for a transition from an historic Jesus to an Ideal Christ, but unfortunately for the hypothesis such a transition is unhistoric also. If we are to rewrite history we must at least give an intelligible account of events which we know really happened. The one event which is absolutely certain, and which it is possible for us in the twentieth century to make intelligible, is *not the Resurrection*, but the birth of the resurrection-idea, and that idea indissolubly associated with Jesus of Nazareth. The twentieth-century critic is probably more

competent than the first-century writer to estimate the importance of this great event, but he cannot account for that belief by inventing hypotheses which, however much they keep within the bounds of the ordinary and the normal, fail entirely to account for the rise of the belief. The subjective hypothesis is precisely of such a character. It renders the phenomena connected with the Resurrection intelligible and plausible by bringing them all within the area of the possible and ordinary. In doing so, however, it entirely fails to account for that historic event of which we are absolutely assured, the rise of the resurrection-idea. This failure is vital and reduces its success as a theory. to explain the phenomena to a triumph which is valueless. It is quite true that, if we abandon the subjective hypothesis, we are forced to an explanation of the phenomena which carries us beyond the range of the ordinary and involves us in a belief in the extraordinary. Such an explanation, however, enables us to account for the one unquestionable historic event, the birth of the resurrection-idea, with all its implications for religion. In other words it accounts for Christianity.

CHAPTER XI

THE JESUS OF HISTORY AND THE CHRIST OF THEOLOGY

THE great problem which engaged the attention of the first century of the Christian era was the identification of Jesus of Nazareth with the Christ of national hope and prophetic vision. The problem of the present century is the identification of the Christ of religious faith and experience with the Jesus of history. The first century had to recognise in the Jesus Whom it had known, the ideal Christ in Whom it believed. The present century has to recognise in the exalted Christ Whom it knows by religious experience, the historic Jesus in Whom it believes. The consciousness of the first-century Christian, that is, had to reach out to an ideal which would adequately express the result of his impression of the Jesus of history. The consciousness of the present century Christian has to go back from his experience of the Christ of religious faith, to the historic Jesus Who is its foundation. Each century has to do

with its own experience. To the first century the subject-matter of its experience was the historic Jesus, while to this century the subject-matter is the exalted Christ. The two problems are the same, but they are reversed. Between the Christ of religious faith and the historic Jesus of fact, there is an apparently impassable gulf. To the twentieth-century mind the two seem to be so absolutely distinct that an identification seems impossible. We need to remember, however, that it is indubitable fact that the first-century mind crossed the gulf and did identify them. The modern mind feels the difficulty of crossing over from the exalted Christ of theology to the Jesus of history, but it sometimes seems to forget that the passage from the Jesus of the Synoptists to the exalted Christ of the Pauline Epistles is an historic crossing, and that it must have presented its own difficulties to those who made it. Paul, for instance, could not have found it an easy task to pass over from the conception of a Jesus Who as "a servant had humbled Himself and become obedient unto death even the death of the Cross," Who had indeed been his own contemporary and Whom he had at first regarded as an impostor, to the exalted Christ of his religious faith. We ought not to magnify the twentieth-century difficulty and at the same time minimise the first-century one. The exalted Christ with Whom the twentieth century is concerned is the risen

and glorified Christ of the Pauline letters, and that glorified Christ is indissolubly connected with the historic Jesus. The connection and identification of the two are historic, and the evidence confronts us in the pages of the New Testament.

The true problem which confronts us at the present time is not the relation between an ideal Christ of twentieth-century thought and the historic Jesus; it is the relation between the Christ of historic Christian thought and religious experience, and the historic Jesus of the Synoptists. True historical criticism can make both these figures clear and definite to us. It is the relation between these two figures which constitutes the modern problem. If the exalted Christ of historic Christianity were a mere ideal standing for a religious conception, then its connection with the historic Jesus would not be merely unimportant; it would be non-essential. Such a religious ideal would possess some kind of religious value of its own, apart altogether from any connection with an historic personality. The question raised by a recent writer in the *Hibbert Journal* on "Jesus or Christ" seems to be based upon the assumption that the exalted Christ of Christianity is just such a religious conception independent altogether of any relation to Jesus of Nazareth, if indeed such a person ever really existed. The writer of the article complained, that orthodox theologians identified a purely religious ideal with an alleged

historic personality, and as the result applied terms and conceptions to Jesus which were only applicable to Christ. It never seemed to occur to the writer to ask whether his ideal Christ was capable of being identified with the exalted Christ of historic Christianity? If he had done so he would have found that any true representation of this exalted Christ is based on an historic personality and cannot be separated from it.

It is necessary to emphasise the fact that an ideal of religious thought, to which the name Christ is given, is neither the exalted Christ of the New Testament nor of historic Christianity. Such a religious ideal may have its own value, but it is not the value which belongs to the exalted Christ of the historic Christian faith. The supreme difference lies in the fact that the first is merely an ideal of the human mind, which, however high and noble a conception it may be, possesses no guarantee of reality. The second, on the other hand, is the realisation of an ideal which carries us back to the mind of God Himself, and has that validity which belongs to every other manifestation of the thought of God to be met with in the Universe of fact. The first is the creation of the human imagination and may be as beautiful as any other product of the imagination, but it is imaginary only. The other is the expression of the Divine mind, and possesses that reality belonging to every other expression of the

mind of God. The Christ of historic Christianity is not a human conception surpassing every expression of the mind of God to be met with in the history of humanity; it is the perception by humanity of a thought of God which found expression in an historic personality, and of a thought which transcends the highest thought ever conceived by humanity. Man's aspiration has not exceeded God's realisation, but on the contrary God's realisation has surpassed Man's highest anticipation. The Christ of Christian faith is not simply the Messiah of Jewish hope, nor the Ideal Man of Greek thought; He transcends both, but He does so because the historic Jesus manifested in His actual life an ideal of human life which surpassed that expressed either in Jewish religious aspiration or in Greek speculative thought. The moment you remove from the conception of the Christ every element connected with an historic personality, what you have left is a mere ideal which bears no resemblance to the Christ of historic Christianity. It may be contended, as was recently done by another writer in the *Hibbert Journal*, that Christianity started with such an ideal merely, and that the connection with the historic Jesus is purely fictitious. All that need be said is that the whole of the New Testament writings, the whole of the history of Christian Doctrine, and the whole history of Christianity as a religious factor

in the world's progress, negative such a hypothesis. It will probably suffice if we mention only a few of the principal characteristics of the exalted Christ of Paul and the other New Testament writers which such a hypothesis would eliminate.

In the first place the whole conception of the manifestation of the Divine in an historic personality, involved in the conception of the Christ as an incarnation of God, — a conception which is fundamental to every New Testament writer, — has entirely disappeared, for no such manifestation in an historic personality has ever been made. Again the realisation of the moral ideal involved in the conception of the Christ Whose life and death have abolished the Law, has also disappeared, for no such life is recorded in the annals of history. Further the whole conception of an at-one-ment between Man and God, involved in the conception of the Christ in Whom "God was reconciling the world unto Himself through the death of His Son," must also be removed, for the cross of Christ is not the historic Cross of Jesus at all. Remove all these conceptions, not to mention others, with all that follows from them, from the exalted Christ of the New Testament, and what sort of an exalted Christ would be left? One thing may be said without the slightest hesitation, namely, that such an ideal Christ involves an entire rewriting of the New Testament; it makes the subsequent development of Christian doctrine

utterly unintelligible, and, we may add, it renders the rise and progress of Christianity inexplicable. Such a Christ, totally unconnected with Jesus of Nazareth, is not the Christ of Paul, nor of John, nor of any of the New Testament writers. It is not the Christ for Whom the martyrs of the first three centuries laid down their lives, nor the Christ about Whom the Nicene Fathers contended with such fierce passion. In a word it is a Christ of the twentieth century, Whose validity for religious life and faith has yet to be proved. It is the basis of a Christianity which has yet to be made historic. Such a Christ has not only nothing to do with the historic Jesus, but equally nothing to do with the Christ of historic Christianity.

If the connection between the exalted Christ and the historic Jesus is thus so essential, that to destroy the connection is to dissipate the ideal Christ into a shadow, then we must seek to follow the steps by which the first-century disciples of Jesus came to regard Him as the exalted Christ. It is indisputable that within a remarkably short period of His death, those who had known Jesus as Teacher and Friend, came to regard Him as the exalted Christ, out of which conception has been subsequently evolved the whole doctrine of the Person of Christ. Whatever opinion we may ourselves form as to the personality of Jesus, it must be admitted that the transition of thought from that of the well-known and well-loved friend

to that of the Lord of Glory sitting on the right hand of the majesty of God, is one without parallel in the history of the world. It is not, of course, implied that the full conception of the exalted Christ was attained at a bound, and has received no subsequent development; but it is certain that such a transition had passed over the thought of the disciples about their Master within a few years of His death, that later additions are nothing more than a development of the conception they formed, and involve no radical alteration in the fundamental idea expressed in the exalted Christ of their religious faith and experience.

The discussion of the resurrection-idea in the previous chapter sufficiently emphasises the fact that their starting-point was the consciousness that Jesus was not dead but alive. We cannot advance a single step along the path they travelled, except we recognise that this consciousness of a living Jesus involved the idea of a risen Jesus, and not merely the idea of a Jesus Who was an inhabitant of the unseen world. It is the resurrection-idea and not the survival-idea which is operative in their thought. Associated with the first there is the realisation that Jesus is possessed of a power and authority which would be entirely lacking in the second. It is this realisation of what was involved in the Resurrection which is emphasised by the experiences of the day of Pentecost in the

endowment of the gifts of the Spirit, which are so distinct a feature of the early Church. The sudden influx of spiritual life of which they became conscious was invariably attributed to the Risen Jesus, and the mighty works which they performed were ascribed to the power of His name.

The extraordinary and abnormal features of the day of Pentecost have attracted far more attention than they deserve, with the result that its true place in what may be called the psychological history of the movement has been largely overlooked. A connection between the Ascension and the day of Pentecost is clearly indicated in the narrative, and the connection is psychologically a necessity. Whatever explanation we may give of the very literal and graphical description of the Ascension described in the first chapter of the Acts, there is no doubt that it marks a recognition on the part of the disciples that the appearances of the Risen Jesus, whether regarded as physical or psychical, were essentially of a temporary character and had consequently ceased. Moreover, the words of the angels in the eleventh verse clearly indicate the beginning of that anticipation of the second coming of Jesus which formed so important a part in the belief of the early Church. Leaving on one side all literal interpretation of the Ascension, it is clear that the event marks a transition in the belief of the disciples as to the course of events in which

they were called to take their part. The essential feature in that transition is that the Master's part and their part were henceforth to be on different planes. His was to be with the Father, or as they expressed it, at the right hand of God, while theirs was to be on earth, as His witnesses. They were, however, not to be left alone, but to expect the coming of the Holy Spirit which He had promised to send them. This coming would result in an influx of power which would enable them to do the work which fell to their lot in the preparation for the establishment of the Kingdom. This is clearly what is indicated in the account in the Acts. Looking at the matter from the point of view of the actual sequence of events, the appearances of the Risen Jesus did cease ; the cessation was followed by an activity on the part of the disciples in the proclamation of the Messiahship of Jesus which resulted in the establishment of the Church of Christ, whose numerical strength was greatly increased by large accessions from amongst Jews and Jewish proselytes. This activity was signalised by the extraordinary spiritual movement inaugurated on the Day of Pentecost.

It is evident that we have here the beginning of the conception of Jesus as the exalted Christ. The appearances of Jesus had assured the disciples that He was not dead but alive ; not inactive in the grave but active upon earth ; not a mere denizen of the unseen world cut off from all communication

with them, but one who could come into their midst and hold communion with them. These appearances, however, were only temporary, and before long they ceased. They were followed, however, by a sudden and remarkable inrush of spiritual power and exaltation, which transformed the disciples who had forsaken their Master in the hour of His need into His apostles and witnesses, boldly proclaiming before the very men who had put their Master to death that He was the Messiah of national hope and prophetic vision. The connection between these two events, the cessation of the appearances and the sudden influx of spiritual life, is obvious. Jesus is no longer seen, but from His seat at the right hand of God He is still manifesting His activity, as is evident by the signs and wonders of the day of Pentecost. This is the contention of Peter in his address, and the conclusion he draws is the deduction which the logic of actual events necessitates, "Therefore let the whole House of Israel know without doubt that God has made Him both Lord and Christ,—this Jesus Whom ye crucified."

The reality of the Resurrection and the subsequent endowment with power which they experienced enabled the disciples to realise that Jesus was not merely alive, in the sense that He had survived death, but that He was alive for evermore. He had conquered death; death had no more dominion over Him; He was for ever beyond its

reach. He had suffered all that the opposition of men could inflict, and He had triumphed. The grave had not been able to hold Him. This surely differentiated Him from all other men, and caused Peter in his address to the multitude after the cure of the lame man to describe Him not merely as Christ and Lord, but as the Prince of Life.

The moment, however, the disciples began preaching their faith, they found that the death of Jesus was the prominent feature in the minds of their Jewish listeners. Impressed themselves with the greater fact of His triumph over the grave and of the crime of their rulers in rejecting and crucifying the Messiah, they soon found that their audience completely reversed this order, and put the crucifixion in the forefront, with the result that Jesus and not the rulers occupied the position of the criminal. The disciples might bear witness to Resurrection, but the ugly fact confronting the listener was that Jesus had been executed as a common criminal who had been condemned by the highest religious tribunal of the nation. In Peter's address above referred to there is an interesting reference which indicates the early working of the mind of the disciples on this problem. Peter says that it was doubtless in ignorance that the rulers had put Jesus to death, and this is doubtless the first thought which would arise in their minds when they began to think of the problem. He

goes on to add, however, that it was through this ignorance on the part of the rulers that God had fulfilled the declarations made to the prophets that His Christ should suffer. This is a slight advance on the thought previously expressed on the day of Pentecost,—that Jesus had been delivered up according to the purpose and foreknowledge of God,—inasmuch as the idea of a suffering Messiah is introduced.

The first thought is the very natural one that the rulers had made a mistake, but the Jewish mind, with its conception of the control exercised by Jehovah over the nation's destiny, could not fail to recognise that the mistake had been foreseen and worked into the purpose of God. To seek, therefore, for some explanation of this purpose by indications in the prophets was the next step, and hence arose that distinctively Christian interpretation of those passages in which the sufferings of Israel as the servant of Jehovah are applied to Jesus. Peter had already indicated his own conception of what the effect of a realisation of their mistake ought to have on the minds of the rulers of the nation, in his appeal to them to repent so that they might participate in the salvation which Jesus was to effect. It needed, however, one who had himself actually participated, at least in will, if not in act, in that crime, to develop the thought thus suggested, and in Paul we have exactly the man who was needed. It is to him, beyond all the

others that we owe the transformation of the Cross of shame into the Cross of glory, and it was in the interpretation of his own religious experience that Paul accomplished the task, and thus laid the foundation for that further development of the idea of the exalted Christ as the Saviour and Redeemer of the world.

If the above is in any sense a true sketch of the history of the development of the idea of the exalted Christ in its initial stages, it will be noticed that the underlying motive was not mere speculation, but the interpretation of a very real spiritual experience. The Theology of the New Testament is not mere philosophical speculation working on lines suggested by either Rabbinical theology or Greek philosophy ; it is essentially the interpretation of religious experience, and a religious experience which is the result of intercourse with Jesus, both before and after His death. In seeking to interpret their experience Jewish theology and Greek thought both offered terms and ideas which were eagerly seized upon and used, but the dominating influence was neither the one nor the other ; that was found in their own unique religious experience. In examining the conception of the exalted Christ of the New Testament a number of points of contact with Jewish and Greek thought confront us, but the distinctively Christian conception of the Christ is unintelligible either as a development of the Jewish conception of a Messiah, or of the Logos of Philo,

or as a synthesis of both. It is indebted for its language and its terms to both; but for the substance of its thought it is dependent upon the personality of Jesus Whose history does not stop at Calvary, but includes the Easter phenomena.

In the subsequent development of the conception of the exalted Christ a basis of religious experience is also discernible. It was inevitable that the minds of the disciples should return to their experience of the earthly life of their Master and reflect upon its meaning in the light of subsequent events. In that reflection the outstanding feature which impressed them was the moral grandeur of His character, which still impresses, and ever must impress, those who reflect upon it. As early as the history of the cure of the lame man, Peter speaks of Jesus as the Holy and Just One. Stephen, in his address to the Sanhedrin, speaks of Him as the Righteous One. This feature is prominent throughout the whole of the New Testament, not merely in the direct references but, still more in the religious conceptions based upon the personality of Jesus which gather around the conception of the Christ. These reflections were stimulated by their own experience of the regenerating influence in themselves and in their converts, which was the outcome of that inflow of Divine life of which they were conscious.² Moral weakness and failure were replaced by a strength of character and a growth in Christlike-

ness which it was impossible to mistake. If Jesus was no longer present with them in bodily form, His spirit of holiness and love manifested itself in their own and their brethren's lives with a force which constantly brought back to their remembrance Him Who had dwelt amongst them full of grace and truth. At the same time their own failures, when they were overtaken in a fault, emphasised the contrast that He had done no sin, neither was any guile found in His mouth. When we remember the ethical character of God which the Jewish faith so strongly emphasised, coupled with the recognition of human depravity, the contrast presented to their minds by this reflection on the character of Jesus, enables us to see how their thoughts of the exalted Christ of necessity began to connect Jesus more with the Divine than with the human. Here again, however, it was not mere speculation on religious ideas which was the formative influence, but the character of the earthly Jesus connected in their religious experience with the Risen and exalted Jesus.

Religious experience, however, needs forms of thought in which to express itself, and such forms of thought are found in those already existing before new ones are coined. In Judaism the vague and indefinite Messianic terms which they had inherited provided a suitable religious terminology for the expression of the new religious consciousness. To the disciples Jesus was the

fulfilment of this distinctly Jewish conception of a Messiah—human yet Divine, Divine yet not God. There was much speculation in Jewish apocalyptic literature which offered a rich terminology in which to express the results of Christian thought and reflection. Empty thought-forms received contents; vague conceptions were made definite; yearnings and expectations were seen to have been fulfilled in wonderful and unexpected ways, when looked at in the light of their religious experience both of the earthly and of the Risen Jesus. In the same way the contact of Jewish and Greek thought had already provided a rich vocabulary which was readily seized upon by those who had come under the spell of this new religious experience.

Christian theology, however, was in the process of manufacture, and those who embraced the new faith brought with them ideals and conceptions which had come from many lands and from different religions. Nothing, however, is clearer than that the dominating factor in the formation of a Christian theology was the personality of Jesus, as that personality had been manifested in His earthly life and as it was still impressing itself through His continued influence upon their hearts and lives. The terminology which was available no doubt considerably influenced the form which the doctrine of the exalted Christ took, but it had absolutely nothing to do with deciding the question as to whether there should

be a doctrine of the exalted Christ? That was settled by the religious experience of the influence of Jesus. The design of a bridge is largely determined by the nature of the materials which are available for its construction, but the question of the erection of a particular bridge has nothing to do with the supply of stone and iron to be found in the neighbourhood. To read some accounts of Christian origins one would imagine that bridges are always erected wherever and whenever a plentiful supply of materials for their construction can be found. The bridge which connects the historic Jesus with the exalted Christ was constructed because religious experience demanded it, not because there were a number of conceptions and ideas lying about and mutely appealing to be made into a bridge. In the religious experience of the disciples, the Jesus with Whom they had companied during His earthly ministry was indissolubly connected with the risen Jesus with Whom they were still in contact, and the mind was compelled to trace the path which the soul had already taken. The doctrine of the exalted Christ was the bridge which the mind constructed in order that its twofold experience of the personality of Jesus might be related together.

It is, however, essential to remember that the theology of the New Testament is neither systematic, nor based upon a systematic theology. It is merely the attempt to interpret and make

intelligible its own religious experience. Too frequently it is read as though it were Post-Nicene literature, and its expressions are judged in the light of the decisions of Councils three or four centuries later. It is sometimes forgotten that all the New Testament writers are Monotheists of the strictest kind, upon whose horizon a metaphysical doctrine of a Trinity has not even dawned. A Divinity is undoubtedly predicated of the exalted Christ, but it has nothing to do with any formulated conception of a second Person in a Trinity. It had to grow up under the dominating belief in the unity of God, which was characteristic of Jewish monotheism. There is not the slightest trace in the pages of the New Testament of the suspicion that the place assigned to the Christ was in any sense inconsistent with the strictest monotheism, or even that it involved a modification of that strict monotheism. With the possible exception of Romans ix. 5 it would be difficult to find any place in Paul's letters in which Christ is ever identified with God. On the other hand, there are numerous passages in which He is definitely distinguished from God and subordinate to God. We are not here concerned with the question of the validity of those later views of the Person of Christ founded upon the phraseology of the New Testament, but with the conceptions in the New Testament itself. These are not, and ought not to be interpreted as

expressions of a systematic theology, but as attempts to set forth an interpretation of the personality of the Risen Jesus, which would do justice to the experience which contact with that personality produced. They called Jesus Lord, not because the word, Lord, was the name used for the sacred and not-to-be-pronounced Jehovah, but because their inmost soul bowed in lowliest reverence before His moral purity and was recreated by His mighty power. In their religious experience they had drawn nigh to God and God had drawn nigh to them, and, therefore, He was the mediator between God and Man. A new and living way of approach to God had been opened up to their experience, and all the rich spiritual life of which they were conscious had come to them through Him. They had seen what they felt to be the very glory of God in the face of Jesus, and, therefore, the highest Name was the only suitable one in which to express their conception of His personality.

All through the New Testament, however, it is what we may call a relative Divinity which is the prevailing thought of the writers. Metaphysical conceptions of God had nothing to do with moulding the conception of the Person of Christ, as that found expression in their theology. It is God in relation to humanity, and not God as He may be conceived in Himself, which regulates their conception of Divinity when they are

speaking of Jesus. In that relation between Man and God they felt that Jesus occupied a unique position. The transcendent God of Judaism, Whom no man had seen at any time, Who dwelt in unapproachable light, had revealed Himself in Jesus the Christ. He had made those thoughts about God which they had inherited from the past clear and definite; He had manifested in Himself, and was manifesting in themselves, qualities which belonged to God. The God in Whom they had been taught to believe was made visible in the Jesus with Whom they had accompanied during His earthly career, and He was still communing with them from His heavenly seat of exaltation.

It was the religious significance of Jesus which constituted the problem of early Christian thought. The disciples felt that Jesus had fulfilled in a remarkable and unexpected way the religious aspirations of their race, and in fulfilling them had introduced ideas which altered the old religious outlook. The conception of God which characterised Jewish thought was that of a transcendent God Whose holiness separated God and Man by a gulf which was impassable. The personality of Jesus rendered such a belief no longer possible. It emphasised the immanence of God which Jewish thought had more or less ignored, but which the Jewish religious nature had recognised and craved for. It had done so in the only way which was

possible—by the manifestation of a holiness and purity which had hitherto been regarded as the prerogative of God. Such a manifestation, emphasised, as it was, by the sanctifying influence which still issued from the Risen Lord, lifted His personality above that of ordinary humanity and suggested a relation to God which the writers of the New Testament seek to express in their doctrine of the exalted Christ. It is the personality of Jesus, however, and not the conception of God, with which they are concerned. Their interpretation of that personality involved a radical alteration in the dominant Jewish conception of God, but of this the writers themselves are unconscious. The time for systematising Christian thought, had not yet come; it was the time for classifying and arranging the new religious factors which the personality of Jesus had introduced.

In the sub-apostolic age began that systematising of Christian thought which has continued to the present day. The contribution which Christianity had to offer to the religious thought of the Western world was the religious significance of Jesus. In the New Testament His personality had been defined on the basis of His influence upon the religious life. Christian theology* had to explain that experience with the modifications in the conception of God which it involved. Whatever view may be taken of the personality

of Jesus, it is a matter of history that it has brought into human thought a manifestation of God. To Jewish thought it made the Holy God an immanent God, and to Greek thought it made the immanent God a Holy God. The absolute separation of God and Man which the conception of holiness involved to Jewish thought was negatived by the appearance of Jesus. The unmoral character of the immanent God of Greek thought was similarly negatived by the moral character of Jesus.

The question which concerns modern thought is precisely the same as that which confronted Jewish and Greek thought, namely, the interpretation of the personality of Jesus. The modern conception of God is radically different from that under which the personality of Jesus was explained by the Greek and Latin Fathers. The interpretation, therefore, which suited them is not the interpretation which is suitable for us. The personality of Jesus remains, but it has to be interpreted so as to fit in with our altered conceptions. The Jewish and Greek mind each contributed to that interpretation of Jesus which the age demanded, but, just in proportion as they solved their own problem, they left our problem untouched. They worked on the basis of the religious experience which came from the influence of the personality of Jesus. That experience is recorded in the pages of the New Testament, and

together with our own experience forms the basis upon which we have to give our interpretation. Just as the Jewish and Greek mind made use of the religious ideas of their age in setting forth their views of the Person of Christ, so the modern mind must bring under contribution the newer and larger terms which our age provides. We cannot possibly be bound by a terminology of the first and second century, even though it be hallowed by the usage of the apostles themselves. It is the historic Jesus Whose personality introduced a new factor in the religious thought of the world, Who is the fact which remains unchanged ; the interpretation of that fact must of necessity vary from age to age.

In considering, therefore, the interpretation which the first century gave of this fact, and which meets us in the conception of the exalted Christ, the important question is its validity for first-century thought rather than its validity for us. We must get behind the mere terms used to the thought which was trying to find expression. A doctrine of the Person of Christ may be based upon the exact phraseology of the New Testament, and yet be entirely foreign to the theology of the New Testament. The validity of the New Testament conception of the Christ depends upon the fact that it gave an interpretation of the personality of Jesus which fitted in with the mental and spiritual outlook of the age, and agreed with the

religious experience upon which it was based. The New Testament writers, in interpreting the religious significance of Jesus, were not conscious of the modification in the Jewish conception of God which it involved, nor were they hampered by the question as to whether the place they assigned to Him was consistent with that conception. It was left for the following centuries to attempt that reconciliation with monotheism which the Divinity assigned to Jesus appeared to contradict. The reconciliation which was effected was determined by a modified conception of God, the result of both Jewish and Greek thought.

If we are to be true to the spirit of the movement thus indicated, we must depart from the mere letter, and, in the light of our altered conceptions of the nature of God and of His relation to the Universe, recast our interpretation and reconcile it with those altered conceptions. The world is a larger place than the first century dreamed of; religion and the religious life of humanity is more varied than the first century realised, and the cosmic process is a vaster and lengthier one than the first-century mind was in a position to realise. We have been brought into contact with the religious thought and life of an East which was unknown, or practically unknown, to the first century, while scientific investigation has opened to our gaze the story of that process of the ages which has replaced the six days' work

of creation which dominated the thoughts of the New Testament writers.

The true object of the criticism which has been expended on the records in the New Testament is to take us back to that historic manifestation of God in the personality of Jesus upon which the writers based their Christian theology. Its present results are many and varied, but it is becoming increasingly evident that the real personality of Jesus is emerging into greater distinctness, and, in proportion as a clearer vision is obtained, the personality is calling for a fresh interpretation. The modern mind no less than the Jewish and Greek mind will have to find room for that personality, which the modern, no less than the ancient mind, recognises as Divine. We must as boldly and as readily give new meanings to the old titles, and gladly welcome new ones, in our interpretation. It is not the interpretations of the personality of Jesus, but the personality itself which remains the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, because it is, not an ideal Christ but, the historic Jesus Who is the foundation of the Christian faith.

What has just been said with regard to the altered mental attitude of the West, applies with greater force to the East. Throughout the ages India has been evolving a conception of God which is as distinct as the Jewish, and as vital as the Greek conceptions, with which Christian

thought had to relate its interpretation of the personality of Jesus. When we reach India we enter an entirely different mental hemisphere with a verbal flora of its own, bearing but slight resemblance to that to be found in the West. The real religious problem in India to-day, little though it may at present be perceived by Hindus themselves, is the interpretation of the personality of Jesus, and its relation to Hindu religious thought. That religious thought can never be the same as it was before it was brought into contact with Christianity. The great law of evolution is as operative in the religious as in every other sphere. Christianity has entered into India, and it is bound to produce variations in the religious thought of India and to receive variation in turn. Already Hinduism is being Christianised to an extent to which the Christianisation of Hindus bears no relation. It is not merely that specifically Christian ideas have been discovered in Hinduism, but that a religious attitude and a religious atmosphere have been introduced, which are distinctively Christian. It is not implied that the discovery of Christian ideas in Hinduism is purely imaginary. Many of them are undoubtedly there and can be recognised by a sympathetic student. It is the presence of Christianity and acquaintance with Christian thought, however, which have led to the discovery.

The true importance of the historicity of Jesus has not yet been realised by the Hindu. The conception of history as the record of the gradual unfolding of the meaning of the great cosmic process is practically unknown to Hindu thought. The separation between the noumenal Brahma, the only reality, and the phenomenal Brahma is absolute, and, therefore, the Hindu mind has not looked, or thought of looking, for any real manifestation of a Divine purpose in the sphere of the phenomenal. For its religious thought, therefore, the mythological and the historical are of equal value. Both are but a clothing of ideas, and the idea set forth in the myth has as much validity as the idea expressed in history. In the *Bhagavadgita*, for instance, it makes absolutely no difference to Hindu religious thought whether Krishna's presence on the great battle-field of Kurukshetra and his discourse with Arjuna are historic or not. The ideas expressed do not depend upon the historicity of the incidents at all; the ideas are alone important.

The importance of the historic basis of Christianity—the revelation of the Divine character through the medium of the personality of Jesus—as this is likely to affect Indian thought can hardly be exaggerated. The Hindu mind has been occupied with ideals of its own conception throughout the ages, and the mere addition of another religious ideal under the name of The

Christ, would mean very little, if anything, to the religious life of India. What that religious life supremely needs is a realised ideal, an ideal realised, not in the domain of mythology but, in the sphere of actual historic fact. The Hindu mind needs to occupy itself, not with fanciful representations of what a god masquerading as a man might be supposed to do but, with that presentation of what God through the personality of Jesus actually did. The Puranas show us what the Hindu mind is capable of in the way of religious fiction, but India has had a surfeit of that kind of literature. Greek mythology was far more elevated than Hindu mythology, but it did nothing to regenerate the Western world. That which revived the West was the plain history, not of a God, called Christos, but of the Man Christ Jesus, Whose life and death were, not an allegorical representation of some imaginary deity but, the actual presentation within the limits of human life of the mind and heart of God.

In the *Gita* we have an elevated and exalted view of the religious life as it may be theoretically conceived from the standpoint of the Divine mind. Krishna unfolds a high and lofty conception of man's duty which he urges Arjuna to carry out. All along, however, he speaks, not as man to man but, as God to man. He sketches an ideal, but in no sense does he present a realisation of the ideal. It is what Arjuna must himself realise, not what

Krishna has realised. In the Puranas, on the other hand, we have a representation of what purports to be the life of Krishna himself under the conditions of human existence; and we turn away from it in utter loathing and disgust. The two Krishnas are utterly irreconcilable with one another. The Krishna of the *Gita* could not have lived as the Krishna of the Puranas; and the Krishna of the Puranas could not have discoursed as the Krishna of the *Gita*. This, however, is what we get when the Hindu mind seeks to represent its own ideas of an incarnation of a god. The actual life of Buddha is infinitely nobler and loftier than anything which the Hindu mind has conceived when it has set itself to represent an incarnation. Is it not significant, that the pure and noble life of the man, Buddha, secured for him in later ages a place in the Hindu pantheon as an incarnation, and yet when the Hindu mind sets itself to represent God in the flesh, it is the carnal and not the Divine which dominates the whole conception? History is greater and nobler than fiction. That which God presented to the Hindu religious nature in the actual life of Buddha infinitely surpasses anything which the Hindu mind can represent as its own ideal of God as Man.

Modern India is learning the real meaning of history and is becoming more and more conscious of the value of facts which have been definitely

expressed in the past as distinct from the mere fancies which have been imposed upon the past. Scientific training is having an immense influence in modifying that conception of the phenomenal which is such an integral part of Hindu religious thinking. The phenomenal has never been regarded as in any true sense a manifestation of the noumenal. It will probably be found that the introduction of the study of History and Science has done more to revolutionise the East than anything else. That study has been a revelation to the Hindu mind of the superiority of fact over fiction. The study of History has played a very large part in the birth of the national idea, with its new conception for India of a goal towards which she is being led rather than a destiny which she is working out.

Under these circumstances the historic fact of Jesus upon which Christianity is based is one of incalculable importance for Hindu religious thinking. It introduces an entirely new element into Hindu thought, the moment the significance of its claim is recognised. That element is the true manifestation within the phenomenal of the Divine reality. Such a conception is no doubt inconsistent with the typical Hindu conception of God, but it is the fulfilment of Hindu religious aspiration. It is not the noumenal Brahma of Hindu philosophic thought who has ministered to the religious life of India; it is the phenomenal

Brahma, as set forth in the incarnations. Hindu thought, in spite of its ceaseless and untiring efforts, has never reconciled the essential duality of its noumenal and phenomenal Brahma. The thinker has accepted the noumenal Brahma and neglected the phenomenal; the saint has accepted the phenomenal Brahma and ignored the noumenal.

Modern conditions which have sprung up from contact with Western ideals of life have already produced a revolution in the relative conceptions of the noumenal and the phenomenal, which cannot fail to have far-reaching effects on the religious thought and life of India. The vital interest in modern India is not Indian religion, but Indian politics; the absorbing pursuit is not spiritual, but material gain. The India which is alive, which is throbbing with new vigour, is an India in which the phenomenal and not the noumenal occupies the chief place. Such an India, however, is not the India of the Upanishads and the Puranas. It is this shifting of the centre of gravity in Hindu thought which is significant. It has started the pendulum of intellectual life swinging again in the political, social and religious spheres, and whatever may be the outcome, one thing is certain—the resting-point of this New India will not and cannot be the old resting-point. The mind of India will have to adjust itself to the recognition of the phenomenal as the true and real medium for the manifestation of the Divine mind and purpose.

The problem to which the religious thought of India will have to address itself, when once it has perceived the significance of the personality of Jesus, is precisely the same problem which confronts us in the West, and the same problem which confronted Jewish and Greek thought in the first three centuries. It matters not whether the personality of Jesus is explained from the standpoint of its relation to the Divine or to the human; in both cases it is bound to modify our conceptions both of God and of Man. As a manifestation either of God or of Man or of both, Jesus introduces new conceptions which have to be related to the religious thought of the race. Religious thought in the East will have to find a place for Him just as religious thought in the West has had to do. It is His personality which is the compelling fact. He is a manifestation of personality, whether human or Divine, Who demands an explanation which all our systems are bound to give. An ideal Christ, however beautiful and sublime, would present no problem to Indian religious thought. Such an ideal would find plenty of room in the Hindu pantheon. It is the historic Jesus, the religious significance of His personality, which presents the problem. He modifies every conception under which we try to bring Him, or to which we try to relate Him. If we regard Him as purely human, then we have to enlarge and deepen our conception of the human in order to

embrace Him. If we regard Him as the incarnation of God, then we have to alter the conception of incarnation and the conception of God in order to explain Him. His personality has introduced into the world a new standard which modifies the conception of personality both human and Divine. This has been the history of religious thought in the West, and it will be the same in the East. The conceptions of the Divine and the human which are characteristic of Hindu thought are as inadequate, in the light of the personality of Jesus, as those of the West. His appearance on the horizon of Indian religious thought foreshadows the rise of a New Vedanta in which the old dualism of a noumenal and a phenomenal Brahma is resolved.

India, however, must be left to give her own interpretation of the personality of Jesus, and to relate His religious significance to her own religious thought. The West cannot, and ought not to attempt to impose upon India its own distinctively Western interpretation. On the contrary it should anticipate an enrichment of its own religious thought when once the Indian mind has perceived the religious value of His personality and interpreted it in terms of Indian thought. Theology, like every other science, is the attempt of the mind to explain the facts which confront us in the religious experience of the race. Of all these facts the personality of Jesus, under any interpretation

which is at all adequate, is the supreme fact in the religious life of the world. At the lowest estimate which may be formed of Him, He is the highest and best expression of humanity, and, therefore, the fullest revelation of Divinity the world has seen. It is this which constitutes His religious significance, and it is this which makes that significance universal. The gods and goddesses of the West succumbed to the Man Christ Jesus, because the Divinity He revealed in His own personality was greater and higher and mightier than the conceptions of the Divine which they embodied. The religious thought of the West found in His personality a revelation which carried it beyond the heights to which it had soared in its efforts to find God and to understand the relations between God and Man. Christian theology was constituted out of the thought-forms which the Jewish and Greek mind had produced, but it transcended the religious thought of both because it was concerned with the greatest factor in the religious experience of humanity,—the personality of Jesus. It may be freely admitted that Indian religious thought has soared to even a higher height than that attained by Greek thought, though its ethical thought has been singularly deficient when compared with Jewish thought. The Indian mind, however, has also to face the fact of the personality of Jesus, if its religious thought is to be of universal significance. Religions vary, but Religion is one. Christianity,

viewed as a system of doctrines, is rightly classified as one of many religions. Viewed, however, as the interpretation of the Universal Christ revealed in the personality of Jesus, it is not a religion, but Religion itself. The interpretation can be enriched by contributions from every land, but the supreme revelation which religious thought interprets is the revelation of God in the person of Jesus. This abides the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, the supreme revelation both of God and Man.

In bringing Christianity to India, the West is presenting to the East that which she has first received from the East. She presents it with the conviction, born of centuries of strenuous religious life and thought, that it will prove to India what it has proved to the West, the inspiration of all that is highest and best in true living and deep thinking. It is, however, the fact of the personality of Jesus, with the religious significance involved in it, and not the interpretation of the fact by the Western mind, which India is urged to look at and interpret according to her own mind. The rich contribution which India has made to the religious thought of the world justifies the anticipation that this fact of religious experience which has been so fruitful in the West will be even more fruitful in the East. India's religious thinking has been stagnant for centuries; her speculative faculty seems to have exhausted

itself through the very richness of its production. The mind of India needs, not a stimulus for more speculative thought but, some great fact of religious experience, in the light of which, and in conformity with which, it may reduce the vast mass of its speculative thought to coherence and consistency. The West found such a fact in the personality of Jesus and for nineteen centuries the interpretation of the significance of that fact has occupied the attention of its best and noblest minds. The greatness and importance of the fact may be realised when we bear in mind that all through the centuries, and at the present time no less than in all past crises in the religious thinking of the West, the reinterpretation, and not the rejection of this fact, is *the result which invariably follows* those periodical unsettlements which mark the growth and development of the intellectual and religious life. Christianity is not a new religion ; it is Religion itself, based upon the interpretation of the greatest fact in the religious experience of the world. Rightly understood, its mission is to reveal the essential oneness of all religions by pointing to a unique religious experience, which by its freedom from all racial and partial peculiarities presents a common centre towards which every religious movement is seen to converge. That common centre is the Universal Christ as manifested in the personality of Jesus.

The Church of Christ is not, and never really

has been, a Church with a particular creed fixed and unchangeable, though the churches have all along tried to make it so. It is a body composed of many members differing from each other as pronouncedly in organization and in function as the limbs of the human body, and yet united through sharing a common life. That common life is the same Divine life revealed in the personality of Jesus. The one and only distinctive mark which it bears is the mark of the Christ-spirit. It can admit all creeds provided the creeds do not dominate the Christ-spirit, but are dominated by it ; it will welcome all castes, provided caste does not usurp the place of the Christ-spirit, but is subject to it ; it will accept all colours provided each colour is pervaded by the Christ-spirit and recognises the brotherhood of the Christ. The real Church, therefore, is nothing less than the whole human family conscious of their relation to one another and to God, through the possession of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. India has her place in this universal Church of the Christ, and into it she can bring the riches of her own past and the wealth of her own religious life and thought. The Christ came into the world not to destroy any religion but, to fulfil all, not to impoverish any religious life but, to give fuller and more abounding life to all. It is because the West has found that her own religious life has been quickened, her own soul has been, as it

were, raised from the dead, that she bids India behold the Christ of God and the Saviour of the World.

Yea thro' life, death, thro' sorrow and thro' sinning,
He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed :
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ.

CHAPTER XII

FAITH AND DUTY

To the Western, India is a land full of the most perplexing contradictions. At one time he is inclined to think that there is no country in the world in which belief has such little influence on conduct as in India. At another time he feels that there is no country in which belief exercises a greater tyranny over a man's freedom than in India. Both opinions are equally correct, contradictory though they may seem. The explanation is probably to be found in the fact that, while the connection between belief and conduct has been fully recognised, no allowance has been made for the growth of the Hindu's belief. The caste system of India is founded upon a recognition of the necessary connection between belief and conduct, and in no country in the world is the tyranny of custom so oppressive. India looks for authority in the matter of belief to the past and not to the present, to the voice which spake in old times, not to the voice which is speaking

to-day. Religious belief, therefore, is recognised as fixed for all time, and conduct has accordingly been determined for all time by the code of rules and regulations known as the caste system. Within a certain prescribed area there has been plenty of room in India for intellectual activity, and, so long as that prescribed area is not transgressed, faith and duty do not come into conflict. The moment, however, the mind passes beyond the boundary prescribed by Hindu belief, that moment it discovers that caste is a slavery from which there is no escape, save by actual or metaphorical death. Just as leaving the shores of India and crossing the ocean are regarded as involving of necessity a breach of caste, so to depart from the shores of Hindu religious belief, and embark upon the ocean of a wider intellectual and religious life is to be guilty of the one unpardonable fault which cuts the man off for ever from his fellows and his nation. To leave religious India is like the leaving of geographical India,—a sin for which there is no forgiveness until the man has returned and made atonement. The only way to avoid the difficulty is to give a metaphorical interpretation to the ocean you are forbidden to cross, and to regard the whole world as India. In the same way the intellectual difficulty can be got over by regarding the whole domain of truth as of necessity included in what is called Hinduism, and denying that there can be any truth which is not to be found

in Hinduism. Both these fictions are very prevalent in India at the present time, and are producing anything but salutary results in Hindu character.

In the truly modern India, however, the adoption of such fictions has been abandoned as both childish and unworthy. There is an increasing number of honest souls who will have nothing to do with the subterfuge of an allegorical ocean which they must not cross, nor with the equally dishonest confession of a sin which they do not feel. They frankly declare that there are other lands beside India to which an Indian can go without ceasing to be an Indian, and they repudiate the social custom which would restrict their legitimate freedom. Unfortunately this only applies at present to those journeys to foreign lands and residence therein for the sake of intellectual and material prosperity. The religious soul, whatever may be his desire for a larger and richer spiritual life, must on no account leave the shores of Hinduism and cross the ocean in search of spiritual truth. Let him attempt to do so and he will be the subject of the bitterest persecution, in which those of his fellows who have profited most by foreign education will probably be the most active agents. The time, however, is undoubtedly coming when liberty will be granted, not merely for the sake of intellectual and material gain but, for spiritual profit. The time will come when the Hindu will recognise that a man may

go outside religious India without thereby ceasing to be a Hindu, and they will accord as warm a welcome to the spiritual pilgrim who has come back with a richer life as they do to the returned traveller who has come back with a bigger purse.

The narrow limits within which India's intellectual life has been hitherto confined are being broken through in all directions, with the result that the fetters of the caste system are becoming more and more galling day by day. The caste system was intended to secure a due relation between belief and conduct. In modern India it is resulting in a divorce between the two which is fatal to healthy living. The necessity for some measure of modification in the system is widely acknowledged, and various attempts at reform are being more or less earnestly made. The need for reform is recognised as the result of two distinct influences, the intellectual and the social. There are, on the one hand, those who feel that they have passed the limits of that restricted area of Hindu thought under which the rules of the caste system were framed, and that consequently many matters which, according to caste custom, are of supreme and vital importance have sunk into matters of complete indifference or have become actually inimical to the larger life into which they have entered. On the other hand, there are those who, while quite at home and content within the area of Hindu thought, are conscious of a restricted

social life which is inconsistent with the wider social instincts to which life under modern conditions has given birth. The first is really a revolt against the system itself, while the second is merely a demand for a reform in the system. The one is a demand for real freedom; the other is a request for more liberty. Between these two extremes there are doubtless a great number who have sympathies with both, but cannot ally themselves with either. Outside all these, entrenched in the apparently impregnable fortress of Divine sanction, sits orthodoxy hurling her maledictions on all alike.

It is only those whose intellectual life has passed beyond the bounds prescribed for it by Hindu thought who are confronted with the real problem of the relation between faith and conduct. To these, however, the problem is one of the most perplexing with which they have to deal, and they have a claim on the sympathy of the West which unfortunately is not always given. The battle of freedom of thought which the West has fought and won took place under very different conditions from those which obtain in India to-day. The West had no caste system to contend with. Freedom to act according to one's conviction was recognised as involved in the question of freedom to think for oneself. In India, on the other hand, a certain measure of freedom to think has always been accorded, and the caste system never interfered

with that freedom so long as the limits of a very wide Hindu orthodoxy were not transgressed. Moreover, in Hindu philosophy the supreme place has been assigned to knowledge, and to knowledge of a purely intellectual kind. That compulsion which the Western feels to make his conduct square with his convictions has hardly been felt in India at all. Good actions are felt to be better than bad actions, but inaction is best of all. The law of *Karma* deals out impartially the fit reward of all conduct, but to escape from its influence altogether by the path of knowledge is the only true salvation for man. These ideas are the very web and woof of Hindu thought, and their influence on Hindu character accounts for much of what the Western cannot but regard as weakness of moral fibre. You cannot really believe that knowledge is superior to virtue without making virtue of less account than knowledge. It is because these ideas are fundamental in Hindu philosophy, that inconsistencies between belief and conduct are not looked upon in the same light by the Hindu as they are by his Western brother. To him, thinking belongs to the real world, while doing belongs to the relatively unreal world, and, therefore, correct thinking is of far more importance than right doing.

The first question which the modern Hindu who finds himself in revolt against the tyranny of caste has to settle is the supremacy of the

imperative of the moral consciousness. Once deny the reality of the feeling of oughtness, and you cut the tap-root of all virtue. Once question the validity of this fundamental datum of self-consciousness, and you open the gate wide to an absolute scepticism from which there is no escape. If we cannot trust this voice, which speaks in the inner shrine of the soul with an authority from which there is no appeal, we can trust no voice at all. If we allow a contradiction here, we have no criterion of certainty anywhere. If the witness of the moral consciousness is untrustworthy, we have no assurance that in following the guidance of consciousness in the domain of the pure reason we are being led aright. The goal to which it leads, and which it assures us is the supreme reality, may turn out to be as illusory as the whole of that which in contradistinction it declares to be unreal. Consciousness cannot in the same breath both deny and affirm its trustworthiness. If the voice which whispers "You ought" is a deluding voice, then we must refuse to believe it when it utters its seductive promise, "You shall know."

The absolute supremacy of conscience being admitted, we are brought into agreement with the highest thought and the noblest action of humanity. If there is one thing which a careful study of History reveals, it is the tendency everywhere manifested, for that which is eternally right

to triumph over that which is merely expedient. The driving force which has pushed humanity upward has not been the mere desire to know, but the desire to do. If we are to judge humanity by the records it has left behind it through the ages, the conclusion is forced upon us that the goal towards which it has ever been advancing is, not merely the triumph of knowledge over ignorance but, the triumph of right over wrong. The triumph of knowledge over ignorance has been the goal of the few; the triumph of right over wrong has been the goal of humanity as a whole. They have often mistaken the direction in which the goal lay, but they have consistently pressed on towards it. The attainment of knowledge is never the final goal; it is only a stage on the road. That which the mind sees, the soul desires to realise. Man desires to know in order that he may do or become that which his knowledge shows him to be right or true. Perfect satisfaction is never attained until the final goal of realisation has been reached. It is to this feeling of oughtness that humanity owes all that is noblest and best in its history. Into the unknown in the realm of thought, and into the unrealised in the realm of action, men, under the all-compelling influence of the sense of ought have gone forth as the heroes of the race, to discover the true and to realise the good. They have felt that no sacrifice was too great and no hardship too severe, so long as it

was incurred in the service of the Highest Whose voice speaks the command which it is treason to disobey.

It is in the domain of religious knowledge that the revolt against the caste system is most pronounced. Religious faith is the perception of the relation in which we stand both to God and to our fellows. Our conduct resulting from this relation is that course of life which we feel we ought to realise. To separate faith from conduct, therefore, is to bring discord and not harmony, unrest and not rest to our souls. When religious faith has once turned its searchlight upon our relations to God and our fellowmen, revealing to us that our actual is not the ideal, there is no rest for us save in the effort to turn the actual into the ideal. However difficult the task may be, and however much it may demand from us, the doing of it brings a joy and satisfaction with which nothing else can be compared.

The question as to the best means for replacing the actual by the ideal is one of extreme difficulty. There are two distinct paths, both of which lead to the same goal. One is the steep and rugged path of self-sacrifice; the other is the smoother and easier path of personal influence. Perfectly sincere souls are to be found in both these paths. There is the man who feels that, whatever others may or may not do, he at least must, so far as lies within his power, replace the actual by the ideal,

at any rate so far as his own life and conduct are concerned. There is the other man who feels that his true task is concerned not merely, and not chiefly, with his own individual life, but with the life of the society of which he is a member, and that the actual can only be truly replaced by the ideal in proportion as the society and not merely the individual essays the task. The two paths thus indicated are both sincere attempts to change the actual into the ideal. The one is by the self-sacrifice of the individual, while the other is by the exercise of his personal influence on the community.

There is undoubtedly a legitimate sphere for each method, and it rests with the individual soul to settle which is the path he is called upon to tread. There are times and circumstances when the rugged path of sacrifice is the only one which a true and honest soul can take. There are others when the smoother path of quiet influence is the one which is clearly marked out for us. Some men can accomplish more by their life than by their death, while others can accomplish more by sacrifice and death than by life and service. In the life of Jesus we see both paths taken with absolute consistency. At the commencement of His ministry He sought to influence both the people and their religious leaders; He made use of the recognised methods of religious influence; and He even conformed to customs sanctioned

by usage so long as they did not conflict with the voice of God in the soul. He carefully avoided conflict wherever and whenever no principle was at stake. It was not until the marked and pronounced hostility of the religious leaders closed the path of quiet teaching and influence against Him that He chose the rugged path which ended at the Cross of Calvary. He avoided a contest so long as no sacrifice of the truth was involved. He endured the Cross, despising its shame, when its avoidance meant saving Himself by the sacrifice of the truth. It was His meat and drink to do the will of the Father, and He earnestly prayed that if it were possible the cup of suffering and death might pass from Him. When, however, He found that obedience to the Father's will involved the drinking of the cup, He passed out unflinching from the Gethsemane garden to Golgotha, the place of a skull.

The true principle upon which decision turns is here clearly indicated. The transformation of the actual into the ideal is that work which the Father has given to all His children to do. If it can be accomplished by our earnest teaching and quiet influence, that is clearly the path marked out for our feet, and we ought to avoid an open rupture so long as we can do so without sacrificing the ideal to the actual. If, however, we are prevented from doing this, and the opposition of those whose interests are bound up with the maintenance of the

actual forces a conflict upon us, our loyalty to truth and to the ideal leaves us no alternative but to take the steep and rugged path which leads to Calvary. The work which God has given us to do must ever take the supreme place, and we ourselves the subordinate place. We may freely sacrifice our own ease and comfort for the sake of the work, never the work for the sake of our own ease and comfort. Not every martyr puts the work first and himself second, even when he sacrifices his life for the cause. There are some who will more readily sacrifice their lives than themselves. While it is true that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church," it by no means follows that every martyrdom helps on the coming of the Kingdom of God. The truth is that both methods are needed and, that where the self is subordinate and the cause supreme, there is never much difficulty in deciding which path ought to be taken. One distinction, however, is of paramount importance, the distinction between absolute fidelity to the ideal and a compromise with the actual. If the smoother path, as is so frequently the case, involves the compromise between right and wrong, it involves a sacrifice of the ideal, a sacrifice to which the soul which has once seen the ideal can never consent. In the ethical realm a compromise between the true and the false is high treason. No argument is here admissible; no sophistry must be allowed to silence the oracle of the soul.

Lowell strikes the true note to which every sincere soul responds when he says :

We see dimly in the Present what is small and what is great,
Slow of faith, how weak an arm can turn the iron helm of
Fate :

But the soul is still oracular ; amid the market's din,
List the ominous stern whisper from the Delphic cave
within,—

“They enslave their children's children who make compromise with sin.”

The cause of Right is never really advanced by entering into an alliance with Wrong. On the contrary we rivet the chains of slavery and suffering on the race to the second and third generation after us. So long as we are free to work for the realisation of the ideal ; so long as we are free to labour for the emancipation of our children, we may consent to endure the fetters with which we ourselves are bound. We must, however, never falter in our loyalty to the ideal by compromising with the actual, lest we consign to slavery our children's children. It is this supremacy of the conscience which has been the very salt of the earth in the history of humanity. All honour to those heroic souls whose fidelity never wavered, who denying themselves, took up the Cross, and followed the gleam of the ideal they had seen, even though a Gethsemane of agony and a Calvary of suffering lay before them. Scorning all offers of compromise with wrong ; exhibiting unswerving devotion to the truth, they chose the path of

suffering that they might free their children from the chains with which they themselves were bound, and conferred upon them those rights and privileges which they saw only as ideals. The progress of humanity upward has rarely been a gentle gradient along which it could be borne with little effort. Deep chasms have had to be filled and huge boulders have had to be blasted ere the gentle ascent along which the main body is carried so smoothly was rendered possible. The chasm over which we pass to-day is filled with the bodies of those heroes of the race who laid down their lives that we might pass over. The boulders which have been blasted have exacted their toll of noble lives who sacrificed themselves that we might mount upward.

Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes—they were souls that
stood alone,

While the men they agonised for hurled the contumelious stone,
Stood serene, and down the future saw the golden beam
incline

To the side of perfect justice, mastered by their faith divine,
By one man's plain truth to manhood and to God's supreme
design.

By the light of burning heretics Christ's bleeding feet I track,
Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the Cross that turns not
back,

And these mounts of anguish number how each generation
learned

One new word of that grand *Credo* which in prophet-hearts
hath burned

Since the first man stood God-conquered with his face to
heaven upturned.

The cause of social and religious reform in India to-day is loudly calling for heroic and loyal souls who will be prepared to tread both the paths here indicated. In spite of the claims which are made by some of the tolerance of Hinduism, no one who whole-heartedly consecrates himself to the cause of either social or religious reform will be in doubt as to the opposition and persecution which await him the moment he steps outside the limited area which orthodoxy has prescribed. Many a Hindu has been called upon in loyalty to what he conceived to be the truth, whether in social or religious matters, to take his place by the side of the Christ in the garden of Gethsemane, and share His agony and bloody sweat, praying that if possible the bitter cup of sacrifice might pass from him, and has had grace to add, "Nevertheless not my will but Thine be done." From his Gethsemane he has had to pass on to his Calvary, there to endure the Cross of the outcaste, despising the shame attached to it, and has found in the moment of his supreme agony that like Christ he has had to look upon the heart-broken face of his mother who has stood by his Cross weeping. A Peter may be inclined to say out of real sympathy, "This be far from thee," but the feeling of the friend must not be allowed to delude us into accepting what may be the very devil of cowardice, to which there is no other reply from an honest soul than, "Get thee behind me, Satan." When

the voice of God is 'speaking in the soul, to listen to any other voice is to be guilty of treachery. The Cross must never be courted, but always avoided if it be possible. It is never possible, however, when the price demanded means the sacrifice of the ideal. The thorns and the nails, which are the price of loyalty, may blanch the cheek, but the twenty pieces of silver, which are the reward of treachery, will most assuredly blast the soul that accepts them.

This is the great lesson also of the *Bhagavadgita*. Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra shrinks, as every noble soul shrinks, from inflicting pain and anguish on those who are bound to him by the sacred ties of relationship. He finds himself called upon to contend in fierce hostility with those who ought to be recipients of his love and service. No personal gain can possibly compensate for the loss of love, while he clearly foresees the vast evils which such a conflict is bound to produce.

In such a massacre are lost
Antique traditions of the clan ;
These noble customs gone, the clan
Entire is whelmed in anarchy.

Krishna's answer, the recurring burden of the whole *Gita*, is that the duty of one's caste overrides every other consideration, and that to fail in that is to fail irretrievably.

Better one's thankless duty far,
Than alien task though well-performed.
Better to die at one's own post ;
Another's is a fearsome risk.

The position thus given to the duty of one's caste is only true when caste is interpreted, not in the sense of the fictitious position assigned to each by the caste system, but as the true position into which each man is born and for which he has been specially endowed by God. It is that conviction in the soul that the position we occupy is the God-appointed one, and that the responsibilities it entails are the special burden which we are called upon to take up. As Jesus said, standing before the Roman tribunal which condemned Him to death ; "For this cause was I born, and for this purpose came I unto this hour." So understood, the great message of the *Gita* is an eternal message of truth. Every man has his Kurukshetra when he is brought face to face with his Divinely-appointed task, and finds that to accomplish it he has to fight even with those whom he loves, and discovers, as Jesus said, that a man's foes are those of his own household. In the religious and social regeneration of India Kurukshetras have still to be fought and Arjunas are still needed.

To shrink would be disloyalty, to falter would be sin.

This principle of the absolute supremacy of conscience is one which is readily admitted by

every right-feeling Hindu. He may not be able to see that in a given case such a principle is involved, but the principle he will freely admit. The difficulty, however, which the majority feel is concerned with the complete break with the past and the absolute isolation from the present which a definite stand for social and religious freedom involves. Why, for instance, should a man's faith in the larger social gospel or in the religious message of Christianity compel him to separate himself from the ties which bind him to the family in which he was born and the bonds of the particular social organism of which he is a member? His own belief and his own feelings are no doubt of vital importance to him, but is he to be wholly unmindful of the feelings of others, who are so intimately connected with him in family and social life, and take a step which, while it may bring satisfaction to his own mind, brings pain and anguish to all those connected with him? Is he not after all setting his own satisfaction in the supreme place and the happiness and peace of mind of those near and dear to him in a secondary place? This is probably a fair representation of the position of a great number of Hindus who are deeply interested in the larger social gospel or have a deep appreciation of the value of Christianity. They are by no means bigoted opponents of either social or religious reform, but sincere sympathisers. It is a position deserving

of every respect and demanding every consideration which it is possible to show to it.

1) From the true reformer's point of view, which is also the missionary's standpoint, it should be frankly admitted that the position above indicated is deserving of so much respect that everything which is possible should be done before a rupture with social and family life is either encouraged or sanctioned. There is absolutely no virtue in the mere breaking of caste, and there is no necessary connection between acceptance of Christianity and an absolute break with a man's religious and social past. A Hindu may be a true follower of Jesus Christ without being either baptised or breaking his caste. By this is not meant a secret disciple, who conceals his loyalty, but one who openly acknowledges that he has come under the influence of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. From the true Christian standpoint both baptism and the breaking of caste are matters of quite secondary importance. On the other hand, the sanctities of family life are of paramount importance, to be guarded at all cost except that of the sacrifice of a man's most sacred possession, his conscience.

In view of such a declaration it may reasonably be asked whether it does not follow that in practical mission work missionaries ought to relegate baptism to this secondary position and ignore those caste distinctions which are so necessary a feature of Hindu social life? This is

a plain issue which ought not to be shirked, for it is one of supreme importance both to the missionary and to the Hindu. So far as the question of baptism is concerned there need be little difficulty in the answer. Baptism should be regarded as the sign of admission into the Christian community of those who through their acceptance of Christianity have either definitely left or been excluded from the Hindu community of which they were members. So long as the Hindu community is prepared to allow the Hindu who accepts Christianity to remain as a free man in its midst, there is no necessity for him to leave it. • If baptism would involve an excommunication from the Hindu community, then such a man should not be baptised. The same applies to the woman as well as to the man, though in the case of the woman the remaining is even more imperative. Christianity is not meant to destroy but to fulfil ; not to break up homes by introducing hate and bitterness but, to establish them by enriching the moral and spiritual life of those who constitute the home. The missionary's supreme concern is with the richness of the religious life of the Hindu, and not by any means with the mere enrolling of a number of names as converts. Through the influence of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus he has a spiritual experience of priceless value which he wishes to share with his Hindu brother. If his Hindu brother does share in that

religious experience, it ought to be a matter of pure indifference to the missionary whether the Hindu receives baptism at his hand or at the hand of any one else, or even whether he receives it at all. Far from urging the Hindu to break with his past, leave his family, and cut himself off from his community, he should counsel him to stay amongst them and share with them any spiritual blessing he has received through the Christianity he has accepted.

Most Hindus would doubtless find little to object to in the position above described, and would be ready to say that if missionary practice agreed with such a theory there would be no trouble. The position, however, needs to be looked at, not merely from the missionary standpoint but, from that of the Hindu community as well. Suppose a Hindu who is in full sympathy with the above sentiments finds that the Christian ideal of the religious life attracts him, and that under the influence of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, his own spiritual life is strengthened and enriched. He is sincerely anxious to avoid breaking his caste by being baptised and leaving the Hindu community of which he is a member. He accordingly resolves to try to live the true Christian life in his own home and among his own people. For this purpose he is willing to forego many of the privileges of Christian fellowship and Christian liberty in order that he may

not cut himself off from fellowship with his own people. In all matters of purely social custom he is quite prepared to conform to the rules of his community. Suppose, however, that the Hindu community insists that instead of worshipping with Christians he shall worship with Hindus, and participate in practices which to him are, not only meaningless and devoid of spiritual helpfulness but, idolatrous. Suppose, further, that it also demands that he shall disavow any sympathy with Christianity, and in public pass for an orthodox Hindu, which he knows and feels he is not. Suppose also that he finds his religious liberty refused, and discovers that attempts are being made to compel him to rule his life and conduct, not by that which he feels to be right but, by that which his friends and relatives consider to be right. What should the missionary who occupies the position above described advise in such a case? There is but one answer which is consistent with such a position. He should advise such a man to leave a social organisation which refuses to allow him to carry out the supreme duty of every man,—to obey the dictates of his own conscience,—and he should offer him every facility for so doing. In such a case the break with the past, even though it entails anguish and suffering on the part of those nearest and dearest to him, is perfectly justified. The responsibility for such sorrow is not his, but the

community's which makes conditions such as no true and honest soul can submit to. So long as it is a question between their wishes and his own inclination he is justified in putting their wishes first. The moment they convert it into a question between their wishes and the will of God revealed in his own soul, they must take the second place.

Whoso hath felt the Spirit of the Highest
Cannot confound nor doubt Him nor deny :
Yea with one voice, o world, tho' thou deniest,
Stand thou on that side, for on this am I.

It will doubtless be urged that after all this is the issue which sooner or later is forced upon every Hindu who accepts Christianity, and that it is inevitable so long as Hinduism is Hinduism and caste is caste. It may be admitted that in the majority of cases this is so, as things are at present. It is not, however, universally so, and it is by no means necessarily so. The true difficulty is not a religious one at all; it is essentially a social difficulty. Within what is recognised as orthodox Hinduism there is probably more diversity of thought and belief than there is between Christianity and Hinduism. There need be no difficulty, therefore, from the religious standpoint in a Hindu holding Christian views. It is said, however, that caste is essentially a religious institution, and that being so, the social difficulty is after all a religious one. It cannot

be denied that this has been so, and that it is still largely so, but it may be confidently asserted that it will be less and less so as the years pass. There are many indications that Hindus themselves are repudiating the tyranny of caste, even when they are far from repudiating either Hinduism or caste restrictions. The tyranny is entirely due to a purely fictitious connection between religion and caste. In the minds of thousands of true Hindus to-day caste is no longer regarded as a religious institution at all; it is recognised as a purely social institution. They may consider it advantageous or the reverse, but they have ceased to regard it as having a Divine sanction. Amongst the educated classes this is the attitude of by far the greater number, whether they believe in Hinduism, or whether unfortunately they believe in nothing. Amongst the masses in a good part of India, while caste is still regarded as religious, the emphasis is every day passing over from the religious to the purely social side. That which really puts a man out of caste is, not a departure from the religious beliefs and practices of his fathers but, a departure from the social habits and customs of his caste brethren. If it were the former and not the latter, three-fourths of the educated Hindus would have to be excommunicated, and a very large percentage of the masses. If neglect of Hindu worship and renunciation of idolatry were regarded as a breach

of caste rules, there would probably be more outcastes than caste people.

The recognition of caste as a purely social institution would place the religious question on an entirely different footing. In the first place, it would restore to the individual that liberty of thought which is his by Divine right, a right which is prior as regards time and superior as regards authority to his duty to society. This right is conferred upon him by God, and to God alone he is responsible for its use. In the second place, it would restore caste to its true place as an institution which society has created to control the rights of the individual as against the equal rights of his fellows. So long as the individual remains a member, his own wishes and his own inclinations have to be subordinated to those of the society to which he belongs. The position and privileges which are his as a member of the community are conferred upon him by the community, and can only be retained so long as he is willing to subordinate himself to the community. These two principles of the right of the individual as against the community in the region of conscience, and the right of the community as against the individual in the region of social manners, furnish the ground for a mutual understanding between missionaries and social reformers on the one hand, and orthodox Hindus on the other. For the individual perfect religious liberty

and freedom to worship God as the conscience dictates must be granted, and the right of caste to interfere in the slightest degree with this freedom must be repudiated. Let that be granted and the Hindu who accepts Christianity has no need to leave his family or break his caste. There may be a few cases in which a man's conscience may force him to such a step, but they would be the exception rather than the rule.

It will probably be said by some that, in taking such a position support is being given to that very caste spirit which is utterly opposed to the spirit of Christ. It should be remembered, however, that caste distinctions are one thing and the caste spirit is another and very different thing. There are caste distinctions which are without doubt prejudicial and harmful to the spirit of brotherhood which should be diffused throughout the whole community. The same, however, is equally true of the class distinctions to be found in the West. We do not, however, refuse the name Christian to the Western who observes them, and there is still less reason for refusing it to the Hindu who also observes them. In the case which is here under discussion, the Hindu Christian's attitude may be the result of a perfectly sincere desire to cause no offence to relatives and friends to whom he is bound by the most tender and sacred ties. The attitude of the Western, on the other hand, may be the result of an unadulterated

snobbishness, utterly regardless of those very claims of friendship and kindred for which the Hindu Christian remains in caste. The position here taken, therefore, in regard to a Hindu remaining in caste gives no support whatever to the caste spirit, which, whether it be found in the East or in the West, is irreconcilably opposed to the spirit of Christ. So long as the distinction between caste as a social, and caste as a religious institution is recognised, and caste distinctions resolve themselves into matters which are chiefly concerned with inter-dining and inter-marrying, a Hindu Christian may observe the rules of his caste in such matters without thereby ceasing to be a true Christian. If by remaining in caste the social or the religious reformer can use his position for the furtherance of the cause, he is not only justified, but called upon to remain in that sphere in which he can best do the will of God. It must, however, be understood that the determining factor is, not personal feeling but, the possibility of personal influence.

In the past missionaries have undoubtedly been more in favour of encouraging a Hindu to sever his connection with the caste community and join the Christian community. This, however, has been largely due to their experience of the hostility of the Hindu community to any acceptance on the part of its members of the Christian religion. A change, however, is coming over the

Hindu community in this respect, which demands a corresponding change on the part of missionaries. Christianity is not one religion which must be regarded as hostile to every other, though it has often been so represented. It is Religion itself, the fulfilment of all religions. To be so, however, it must receive as well as give. The Hindu who finds in it a satisfaction of his religious nature which he has not found in Hinduism, must also find that, instead of cutting him off from the religious development of his race, it brings to full fruition that special type of religious thought and life which the Divine Spirit has evolved in the Hindu nature. Christian theology has yet to be enriched by that contribution to its full development for which the Hindu mind has been specially prepared in the providence of God. These considerations make it necessary that the Christian attitude towards the religious thought and life of India should be one of genuine sympathy and friendly recognition. So long as the conception of different religions prevails, our attitude is more or less hostile and our creeds are divisive. The moment we realise that religion is one and universal, hostility changes to friendliness, and our different creeds become a means of revealing the unity underlying the variety. If this is so in the domain of thought, it is much more so in the domain of feeling. Hindu and Christian may differ in the expression of their

religious thought, but in the matter of religious feeling they are brothers whose relations with one another ought above all else to be brotherly.

There are doubtless some missionaries who would dissent entirely from the position here taken up, and would consider that true loyalty demands a complete severance from Hinduism, whether regarded as social or religious. They occupy a position so entirely different from that here set forth that any agreement is impossible. The author can but ask that they should credit him with the same loyalty to what he conceives to be the spirit of Christ which he is quite prepared to believe actuates them. There are others, however, whose standpoint is not so very different from that of the author, but who at the same time cannot acquiesce in what looks like a compromise with the caste spirit, and who may very reasonably fear its influence in the Christian Church. For such it is necessary, therefore, to point out that the course which has been advocated above does not apply, and is not intended to apply, to those who have definitely associated themselves with the Christian rather than with the Hindu community. It is distinctly a concession for the sake of relatives and friends, and is demanded so long as, and only so long as, the Hindu Christian remains among his own people. The moment he finds that loyalty to truth and the cause of social and religious reform demand his severance from the Hindu

community and union with fellow-sympathisers, then caste rules are for ever abolished, and he joins a social organism in which there is neither caste nor outcaste, bond nor free, but all are one, brotherhood. To introduce caste distinctions into the Christian community in India is high treason against Christ, which the Christian Church must repudiate at all costs.

To those who question the rightness of making such a concession the attitude of the great missionary apostle, Paul, in a matter which has a strong resemblance to the one under discussion, may be of value. Paul never had to do with caste, it is true, but he had to do with a question which seemed to involve a very similar disloyalty to truth as the one we are here considering. In dealing with the question of food offered to idols, Paul laid down a great principle which is in true agreement with the position above indicated. He admitted that the strong-minded Christians who claimed the right to partake of such food, on the ground that its connection with idolatry was purely fictitious, were perfectly correct in their contention, and that the weaker brethren who condemned them were wrong. At the same time he urged the strong to give way in the interests of the weak, and to submit to restrictions out of regard to the frailty of their brethren. He did so on the ground that the law of love and unselfishness is supreme. "If your brother," he says, "is pained

by your action in partaking of the food, your conduct in thus causing him pain is no longer controlled by love. Take care, therefore, lest by your action you lead to ruin a brother for whom the Christ laid down His life." And then he adds the great principle, "The kingdom of God does not consist in eating and drinking, but in right conduct, peace and joy through the Holy Spirit."

It may be freely admitted that the question here discussed is quite different from that upon which Paul gave his advice, and that he was dealing with the relation of Christians to one another. It is the principle which Paul lays down as the one governing Christian conduct which is important. The fellow casteman to whom the question of eating and drinking is of vital importance bears such a striking resemblance to the weak brother that we can hardly be wrong in applying the law of love to his case. To the Hindu Christian, caste restrictions have absolutely no religious significance whatever, and so far as he personally is concerned he is ready to eat with any one. His relatives and fellow castemen, however, regard such a course with abhorrence, and his conduct, therefore, would cause them the deepest offence. They are pained, not so much with the food he eats but, with his action in eating it with those outside his own caste. If he persists in so doing, his conduct, as regards them, is no longer con-

trolled by love. He may be putting himself before his brethren, and in so doing he may be inflicting an injury on those for whom the Christ, Whom he wishes to serve, laid down His life. In the case of the weak brethren for whose sake the apostle wrote, it was tradition and old associations which caused the weakness for which Paul asks the consideration of the strong. These causes produce the weakness in the matter of eating on the part of the caste-bound man. The law of love, than which there is no higher, demands a similar consideration on the part of the strong for the weak. The law of love, however, which sanctions the observance of caste rules for the sake of caste brethren, demands when once the caste community has been left, the observance of that love of the brethren in which there is neither caste nor creed nor colour.

In the main the position above indicated applies equally to both men and women, though it is far more binding on the woman that she should, if at all possible, remain in her family and caste. A Hindu woman should never leave the Hindu community except as a last resort, and only when the opposition is of such a character, as to threaten her moral or physical well-being. Whatever opinion may be held as to the absolute equality of the sexes, the fact remains that in India the conditions of society are such that the woman's responsibilities connected with home and family

are more complicated than the man's, and any change in those relations leaves her far more exposed and helpless. The true principle which should guide the decision in all cases in which the cause of social or religious reform may involve a separation is, that the responsibility for the separation should rest upon the one who remains in caste and not upon the one who leaves. Husband and wife are both bound to remain within the social organism in which the marriage relation was established, so long as that social organisation does not interfere with full liberty of conscience. Where such liberty is refused to either, the choice between loyalty to the society and loyalty to the marriage relation is forced upon them by the society to which they both belong. The one who elects to remain within such a society thereby places the obligations of the society above that of the marriage relation, and is, therefore, responsible for the separation which the other party may feel to be thereby necessitated. If the Hindu partner is willing, that is, to regard the marriage relation as supreme, it is the duty of the Christian partner to make every sacrifice, save that of conscience, to fulfil the obligations which were incurred when they were both Hindus. The sanctity of the Hindu marriage bond must be recognised by the Christian community, on the one hand, and the sanctity of religious liberty must be recognised by the Hindu community, on the other hand.

As regards the question of young people who are still under the charge of parents and guardians responsible for their welfare, it may be laid down as a general rule that the wishes of the parents and guardians must be recognised as supreme. An exception may here and there be met with, and in every case in which a girl is threatened with a life of sanctioned immorality as in dedication to a temple, the exception is *ipso facto* established. With such few exceptions, however, young people who are under guardianship should take no step which separates them from family and caste without the full consent of those in charge of them. The duty of the child to its parents is so sacred that its obligations take precedence over all others. Paul's injunction, "Children obey your parents in all things," stands rightly as absolute, with no exception suggested. It admits, indeed, of no exception in any matter of conflict between the child's conception of its own welfare and the parent's conception. The question of the length of time during which this absolute right of the parent over the child extends, is legally settled, but the mere age is not the sole determining factor. The law fixes the minimum, not the maximum. To keep within the letter of the law is not necessarily to keep within the spirit of the law. In the case of all scholars attending Mission schools the parents have a right to expect that no attempt shall be made even to induce the child to

leave either home or caste. Christian instruction to Hindu children should never take the form of proselytism. The true object of missionary education is not to make proselytes ; it is to make high-souled and pure-minded men and women, who as the coming fathers and mothers of India shall enrich and ennoble the homes they establish, and elevate the tone of the society in which they move. To have a share in moulding the character of those in whose charge will be the future of the coming race, is sufficient reason for the educational work of missionaries and needs no other justification. To make use of education as a means for proselytising is a prostitution of a high and sacred calling, and a violation of the confidence of Hindu parents and guardians. The tone and atmosphere of a Mission school ought to be distinctly Christian in character, or it ceases to be a Mission school. The moment, however, the breath of proselytism enters it, the atmosphere is vitiated and the influence is prejudicial to healthy life. True education and pure proselytism are incompatible with one another. The true educationist cannot proselytise, and the pure proselytist cannot educate. The child cannot be forced to undertake the task of the adult without in some way injuring its constitution. The mature thought needed for such a step as conversion ; the independent judgment needed for the task of deciding upon a separation from past heritage and present environment, are the

characteristics of the adult and not of the child. The action, therefore, which is only justified by the exercise of these faculties must wait on, and not anticipate, their development.

While the Hindu community may rightly ask for a more considerate treatment on the part of the missionary in the matter of missionary propaganda, they must also be willing to accord a more generous treatment of those of their number who feel drawn towards the Christian religion. The toleration which it is claimed Hinduism extends to every form of faith must be freed from the intolerance with which it regards any departure from its fold. Whatever of truth there is in Hinduism will not be lost to the world through the influence of Christ on the soul of India. On the contrary it is through the medium of Christianity, interpreted through the Indian mind, that India will come to her own as one of the greatest religious teachers of the world. The time has surely come for the calling of a real truce of God between the warring sects, and a free and frank discussion of those various aspects of the Truth which each great nation has perceived. Western Christianity must be prepared to receive as well as to give, and the Indian religious mind must be prepared to accept as well as to contribute. There is a real place reserved for India's contribution to the religious thought of the world, but that place is dependent, not merely, and not chiefly,

on the treasures she has received from the past in the development of her own special type of religious thought but, on the capacity for fresh religious thinking which is lying dormant within her. It was Christianity which awoke the West from the sleep which followed the mighty activity of the Greek mind, and set her feet in the path of true progress. It is Christianity which has stirred India from her still longer sleep, and it will be Christianity which will offer to her the material for a spiritual life and thought which will bring untold blessing to the world. Before she can teach the world, however, she must learn that the world's religious needs are vaster and more varied than those to which she has hitherto ministered, and that the revelation which God has made to the world includes more than that which is found within her own scriptures. Above all she must realise that in the life and death of Jesus the Christ there is a manifestation of the character of God which is of vital importance for her own religious life, and to whose interpretation India has a contribution to make for which the world still waits.

The divorce which has hitherto separated the Indian Christian from the religious life and thought of his countrymen is neither good for his nationality nor for his Christianity. It is doubtless more or less inevitable in the past, but it is neither necessary nor desirable now. Wider views of Christianity, and a more generous appreciation of Hindu

religious life and thought, ought to result in an entirely changed attitude on the part of Indian Christians. They are called upon to take a large share in moulding the future of their land, and if they are to discharge this responsibility aright they must see to it that they are national in the deepest sense and Christian in the widest sense. There is a growing disposition on the part of the younger generation to recognise the claims of country as well as the claims of Christ. The interest in mere politics, however, good and right though that is, is by no means the point which is here urged. Their patriotism to be of real value to India must be infused with the spirit of Christ, and their Christianity to be of any service to their country must be infused with the spirit of India. The patriotism of the Indian Christian is above suspicion, because he is convinced that the true advance of India is bound up with the position of India as an integral part of the British Empire. He believes that separation would result in ruin and disintegration. His Christianity must equally be above suspicion, because he must believe that the future religious welfare of India is bound up with the world-wide Empire of Christ. It must, however, be equally evident that he recognises that Indian religious thought and life have a distinct and glorious place within that Empire. His true position must be one which can be described as neither extreme nor moderate, but national in the

best and highest sense. He must wed the spirit of Christ to the spirit of India, so that from that happy union a true Christian nationalism and a true national Christianity may spring, which shall help to raise India to a foremost place in the service of God and of humanity. His two watch-words, therefore, must be "India for Christ," and "Christ for India."

THE END