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1902.

ORDINARY MEETING.*

DAVID HOWARD, ESQ., D.L., F.C.S., IN THE CHAIR.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed, and the following election took place :—

ASSOCIATE :—Rev. W. C. Penn, M.A., Noble College, Masulipatam.

The following paper was read by the author :—

MODIFICATIONS IN THE IDEA OF GOD, PRODUCED BY MODERN THOUGHT AND SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY. By Rev. Chancellor LIAS, M.A.

IT is more than a quarter of a century ago since I first was honoured by a request to read a paper before this Institute, and in about a week it will be a quarter of a century since I read it. I am thankful to be honoured once more with such a request. The current of thought changes swiftly in our time, and it is pleasing to be able to note a great change for the better since I first addressed this assembly. *Then* we constantly heard of the opposition between religion and science. *Now* it cannot fairly be said that there is any opposition at all between religion and science. Such misunderstandings as still remain are rather of the nature of the ground swell which witnesses to a storm that is past, than evidences that the storm is still raging. *Then* the tendency was to a blank materialism, such as was openly expressed by Tyndall in his celebrated Belfast address. In these days a great many men of science—perhaps I might say the majority of men of science—are beginning to realize that for causes we must go behind the material universe and its laws and processes—that there are

* Monday, January 6th, 1902.

forces and laws at work in phenomena, of which science is at present unable to take account. Whether it will ever be able to take account of them is a question. For my own part, I am convinced that though recent scientific research has done a vast deal to explain to us *how* things are, it has not approached even infinitesimally nearer to the discovery of the reasons *why* they are. It has formulated the laws of many forces. But it can tell us no more of the nature or origin of force itself than it could tell us centuries ago. A vast number of scientific men are now ready to confess the difference between observations of the laws of nature and determination of the causes which have produced those laws.

Some years ago I read a paper before the Institute on the agnosticism which was at that time prevalent. There were two points which, in that paper, I set myself to prove. The first was, that God is not an abstract metaphysical idea, but a living Being—the very opposite of an abstraction—the source of all existence, and the cause of all causation. The second object I had in view was to establish the truth that even if the idea of God was ultimately unthinkable, the same fact might be predicated of everything else; and that as the fact that everything in nature ultimately runs up into a mystery does not prevent us from thinking about and from knowing a great deal about each individual fact in nature, so in like manner it does not prevent us either from thinking, or even knowing, a great deal about God.

Later still I wrote a paper in which I pointed out how an examination of the facts of the universe led us to the conclusion that mere mechanical or material facts were the lowest in the order of things, that above them towered, in an ascending scale, mental, moral, and finally spiritual facts, and that, so far as I could see, the ultimate fact of all was Love. I deduced the conclusion that material forces, which include all those with which science undertakes to deal, were dominated by mental, moral, and spiritual forces; and that the ultimate cause of all, eternal love, made it reasonable to postulate a Being to whom prayer for “everything”* may not improperly be addressed, One whose main object—perhaps I might say whose *only* object—is the welfare of the sentient beings to whom He has imparted a share in His existence.

* Phil. iv, 6.

On being asked to read a third paper on this subject, it seemed to me that I could not do better than endeavour to estimate the bearing at once of modern scientific research and of modern religious thought on our earlier conceptions of God. But I would ask my hearers to bear in mind that while, in compiling my former papers, I had excellent libraries close at hand, I am now far from them, and that the exigencies of a somewhat large, scattered, and populous rural parish, as well as other circumstances only too well known to those who study Church problems at the present time, prevent me from going to consult them. Illness, too, of a disabling kind came on while I was preparing these observations. I must therefore, in my present paper, substitute the light of nature for study and research. Perhaps this, however, may not be in every way a defect. It has occurred to me not infrequently of late that the stress and strain, the hurry and bustle in which we live, are unfavourable to reflection, and that now, more than ever, "much study is a weariness of the flesh." If one attempts to read all that is written on the latest theory which has attracted attention, one attempts the impossible. One also finds that what is written post haste to catch the public ear does not always repay the trouble of perusal, and that if the literary activity of the hour could only find time for a few "brilliant flashes of silence," the world would be none the poorer for it.

My paper on the "Unknown and Unknowable of Modern Thought" has recently been criticized by my friend Professor Caldecott in his learned and most interesting book on *The Philosophy of Religion*. He quotes me as saying that "abstract principles are fatal to the progress of thought." I cannot find the passage. Perhaps I have overlooked it. But what I *have* said is that, in my belief, "abstract ideas have no real existence" *; that they are "simply convenient formulæ of classification" †; that "philosophy has failed to form satisfactory abstract conceptions of God" ‡; and that "the Bible offers us no metaphysical abstractions in its doctrine concerning God, but practical facts." § I will honestly confess, however, that my reverence for abstract ideas does not grow with my growth. Just as, in my former paper, I insisted on a definition of the words "infinite," "absolute," "unconditioned," and

* *Journal*, 1883-4, p. 110.

† p. 105.

† *Ibid.*

§ p. 109.

showed not only that the same writer used them in contradictory senses, but that different writers seem to have used them as meaning pretty much what they pleased, so now I must ask those who talk about abstract ideas to explain what they mean by them. "Abstract" means "that which takes or is taken away." Now what idea can you form of anything if you have first stripped it of everything which has any correspondence with the world of fact? An idea of anything which has been carefully deprived of all correspondence with the reality is either an idea contrary to the fact or it is no idea at all. The concrete must come in somewhere, in order to discriminate one thinkable thing from another. Otherwise we have entered a world where "naught is everything, and everything is naught." It is all very well to talk, as metaphysicians do, very freely, of the "*Ding an sich*." But what is the "*Ding an sich*"? How can we conceive of anything, unless through its relation to or contrast with other existing things or facts? There is nothing whatever of which existence can be predicated which is not intimately connected with all kinds of other things in the universal Cosmos. How, then, can you conceive of it accurately if you persist in tearing it from its necessary environment? I am inclined, therefore, to think that abstract ideas, not when regarded as convenient formulæ of generalization, in which capacity they are not merely useful, but absolutely necessary, but when regarded as metaphysical terms dissociated from the results of observation, and supposed from that very dissociation to become sound foundations on which to build conclusions, have been very "fatal" indeed to the progress of thought. I am inclined more and more to regard experience as the true foundation of all knowledge, except that of the Divine Being—an exception to which I shall presently return—and to regard the progress of our knowledge as due, not to abstract speculation, but solely to additions to our stores of experience and to our successive generalizations from them. That man has a capacity for drawing conclusions from experience, and that these conclusions form the ideas on which he acts there can be no doubt. But it is a capacity for receiving impressions from facts, not a capacity for forming ideas apart from facts.* The more I

* This does not amount to a declaration that our characters and habits of thought are simply the result of circumstances. Character may be

think over the matter, the less I can believe that ideas can exist in our minds antecedent to experience. Tennyson's view that experience alone can enable us even to grasp the primary fact of our own identity, and that thus, by experience alone, can we "round to a separate mind from which dear memory can begin,"* seems to me a satisfactory explanation of the fact that even consciousness of one's own existence, the primary condition of all active life and profitable thought, can only exist after our experience has reached a certain stage in its development. Nor shall I be alarmed if this assertion should be shown by some objector to involve a contradiction. Mr. Herbert Spencer has shown that all ultimate ideas land us in contradictions; but we accept obvious facts nevertheless. I will therefore venture to assert that, like the idea of self, the idea of God, as formed by man, is, primarily at least, the product of experience.

The capacity for drawing conclusions from facts is, no doubt, innate in us. And there is, doubtless, in the case of ideas of God, another ultimate source than mere experience—that is, if the Christian idea be true. For that idea involves a revelation. And this revelation does not simply consist in imparting information to the mind about God; it consists in the impartation to the soul or spirit of man, of the very nature of the Divine Being Himself.† But in the first instance we form our conceptions of God from observation. Observation itself may, no doubt, be quickened by the teaching of those from whom our first ideas are derived. But even that very teaching itself is a form of experience. And our experience confirms, modifies, corrects those ideas, when imparted.

The very variety of the conceptions formed by mankind of the Divine Being tend to support this view. The fundamental principle, in every case, is that of a Being above and beyond ourselves, and above and beyond what we see around us. But that principle assumes various forms among various races. Yet only the most degraded or

the result of inheritance, or of the Will of the Creator, in the same way in which a machine is contrived by the inventor or formed by the maker to fulfil a certain purpose. This original draught, so to speak, of the machine will condition its action when brought into contact with facts. But there can be no action on its part until it does come in contact with

* *In Memoriam.*

† 2 Pet. i, 4.

the most disputatious of mankind have ever failed to arrive at this conclusion. Its lowest form is fetichism. A step above this is the worship of ancestors. Yet a higher form of it is the deification of the various powers of nature, which was the religion of Greece and Rome. A still higher form is the original Hindoo religion, which, while it deified the powers of nature, regarded the primal deity as inter-fused with and underlying them all. Yet another form is Buddhism, which seems to have arisen as a protest against Hindoo pantheism, and to have regarded God, with the Gnostic Basilides, as outside all existence—the Absolute of modern philosophy—that is to say, something, or someone, entirely unconnected with the limitation involved in being. This, however, cannot be described as a higher form than pantheism. For it not only dissociates God from the universe, but it persuades man to seek the same end, encouraging him to aim at detachment from everything around him—a creed which, as competent observers tell us, results in idleness, stagnation, and degradation. Observation and reflection, then, are the ordinary sources of the idea of God.

The Hebrew idea of God appears to have been altogether on a higher plane than that of any of the systems I have mentioned. Here, perhaps, I may be permitted to explain why I find myself unable to make use of the recent researches in Hebrew history, which, we are informed on high authority, may be regarded as having established certain conclusions. The reason is because, in endeavouring to use them, I can only find that as far as the course of Hebrew religious development is concerned they have unsettled everything and settled nothing. The only certain results which are said to be established are these:—First, that what have been supposed to be the earlier Israelite books are not the earliest, but contain materials originally published between the ninth century B.C. and the fourth; next, that the Book of Deuteronomy was written between the reigns of Ahaz and Josiah; and next, that the prophets did not follow, but precede, the Law, which the Hebrew Scriptures, as handed down to us, ascribe to Moses. I will not attempt to dispute these conclusions. I only say that they do not help me at all in my endeavour to follow out the development of the idea of God in the minds of the Hebrew people. Moses—let it be granted—has vanished at the touch of scientific criticism. But as yet nothing has taken his place. We do not know in the

least whether the original Hebrew religion was Egyptian or Semitic in its genius. That some of its traditions come from Babylonian sources seems clear. But it seems equally clear that the Israelite religion was not originally of the Babylonian type, presented to us by modern investigation. It has indeed been suggested that, from Moses to the later kings, the Israelite people were engaged in the task of evolving a religion from fetichism, through polytheism, into an ethic monotheism. But even if this were the accepted conclusion, we are still without evidence as to the steps of the process. It is not yet settled at what period fetichism was abandoned for polytheism, and when and how polytheism refined itself into the religion which the Hebrew records tell us prevailed from Moses to Malachi. And even if it did tell us all this, it would be met by Professor Caldecott, who, working on other lines of scientific research, tells us that "after generations during which belief in the supernatural has been regarded as derivative from animism, nature worship, and the like, the direction is reversed and these are being regarded as derivative from it."*

I must therefore, until criticism has produced some more certain positive results, be content with what the Hebrew Scriptures themselves tell us. It can hardly be wholly unscientific to accept the statement of a nation in regard to its beliefs, contained in documents handed down with an unusually jealous and scrupulous care. And as long as the course of Hebrew religious history, as ascertained by criticism, remains so undefined, no other course is open to me.

We are told that the original Hebrew idea of God was expressed by the words El and Elohim, and it has generally been admitted that the root idea in that word was Power, or, to use a word preferred in recent scientific researches, *Force*. It would seem, then, that the early object of worship among the Hebrews was the Being which produced, controlled, and kept in being the phenomena they saw around them. Whether this was a revelation or not we cannot tell; Hebrew history gives us no information on the point. The fact that a monotheistic king is introduced to us in the history of Abraham as the priest of the Most High God (El 'Eljon †) rather points to the opposite view. Monotheistic

* *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 86.

† Gen. xiv. There is no etymological connection between El and 'Eljon. The latter signifies *height*; it seems to imply the existence of deities inferior to the Highest One. If I speak of Melchizedek as a

views may not unreasonably be supposed to have preceded polytheistic, and many high authorities have believed this to have been the case. Of the moral qualities of this Being, conceived of as illimitable Might, we have, again, no information. The account the history gives us of Abraham's mental struggles on this point represent him as having no definitely formed convictions as to the moral character of the God whom he worshipped. Whether he regarded Him as the Force which governed men's actions as well as the Force behind material nature we do not know. Neither do we know—save in the reference to the serpent in Gen. iii—to what cause moral aberrations were ascribed, and we cannot say whether the idea of an adversary or tempter was present to the mind of Abraham, or whether it reached the author of Genesis through a different channel.

The original conception—for if we follow the Hebrew narratives, and not the theories of modern critics, it was the original conception—of God among the Semitic races was thus an extremely rudimentary conception. But rudimentary though it was, it pointed in the right direction. It soared far above the fetichism, animism, deification of the powers of nature, pantheism, abstraction, of which I have spoken. There was present in these elementary conceptions of deity the idea of a Personal Being, a living Force or Energy, that is to say a Being possessed of mind and will, and capable of moral relations with His creatures, which exerted itself for the guidance and protection at least of those who sought its favour. It is this germ which, through the various stages which the Hebrew Scriptures have not failed to point out, has developed into the Christian idea of God.

Side by side with this elementary conception of God among the monotheistic Semites stands another conception in close relation to it. This is embodied in the word *Shaddai*, a word frequently found at crucial points of the early history of Israel. The word *Shaddai* is supposed, like *Elohim*,* to be a *pluralis excellentiæ* derived from the Hebrew root *shad*, signifying *destruction*. This conception of God, though in one

monotheist, it is because it seems probable that he conceived of a difference in kind, as well as in degree, between the Most High and inferior beings.

*Some have endeavoured to prove that *Elohim* should be translated "gods." But this view would throw the entire religious teaching of the Hebrew Scriptures into confusion.

sense kindred to the former, brings in the aspect of terror side by side with that of origination or protection. God is here conceived of as a God of wrath, capable of avenging Himself against His enemies, as well as of guiding and protecting His votaries. It is a conception which every one who is familiar with the Old Testament writings sees to have been embodied in what, until lately, have unanimously been accepted as the later Hebrew delineations of the character of God. The word disappears in the later literature, but the ideas it represented are preserved. The use of the word Shaddai in the Hebrew Scriptures is very characteristic and significant. It is confined almost entirely to the Pentateuch, the Book of Ruth and the Book of Job. It occurs only three or four times in the Prophets, and only once, I believe, in the Psalms. In the Pentateuch and the Book of Ruth it is placed in the mouths of the patriarchs on solemn occasions,* in the mouth of Balaam, and in the mouth of Naomi when she returns from her sojourn in the land of Moab. By far the greater number of cases in which the word occurs are found in the Book of Job. In Balaam's utterances the title Shaddai is the parallel to the title El 'Eljon, the Deity whose priest Melchizedek is represented as being. I shall not take up your time by discussing the question of the authorship of the Book of Job. But I think it cannot be regarded as unfair if I venture to represent it as the most cosmopolitan of the books of the Old Testament—the one which, of all others, displays the most familiarity with Semitic monotheistic thought outside the Jewish race. Thus, then, our authorities with remarkable unanimity represent the early Semites, and, we may add, the monotheistic Semites of a later date outside the borders of Israel, as believing in one God, a God of vengeance as well as a God of might, one who would punish His enemies as well as reward those who were faithful to Him—in fact, precisely the conception of God which is embodied in the Second Commandment. The moral aspects of this Being were as yet undeveloped. He appears before us as Power, not as Righteousness—power to avenge as well as to reward, but without any definite ethical characteristics attached to His use of the power which is in His hands.

We come next to a remarkable step in the development of

* It is noteworthy that the word is found in *both* the narratives into which modern criticism has divided the first four "Books of Moses."

the idea of God. Modern criticism does not permit us any longer to assume the historical or chronological accuracy of the Hebrew narratives. But until it has substituted a clear and incontrovertible account of the growth of Hebrew religious ideas for the statements of the Hebrew authorities themselves it cannot forbid us to make use of their contents. They represent to us an Israelite, brought up in the Egyptian court, and enjoying the best possible opportunities of becoming familiarized with contemporary Egyptian civilization and thought. Driven from the land of his birth by palace intrigues, he takes refuge in the Sinaitic peninsula and becomes a shepherd. We may be sure that this highly educated and cultured man—a man who, as the narratives also do not fail to point out, possessed high and conspicuous ability—must have pondered long and earnestly upon religious and political problems. One day he beholds a marvel in the desert. The Deity, we are told, appears to him by a sign, and reveals Himself as the Eternal—the Ever-existing. I am aware that the view that Jehovah, or more properly Jahveh, is simply the third person singular of the imperfect* tense of the Hebrew verb signifying “to be” has been and is contested. But when critics differ one may be allowed to introduce other considerations beside mere criticism. One may, for instance, be justified in contending that the founder of a famous religion and a famous polity may not improbably have been a great man, and that, from whatever source his ideas were derived, he may reasonably be supposed to have imprinted some grand religious ideas indelibly upon the heart and conscience of the race from which he arose and to which he was sent. What more important idea could he have imparted to the people which have been destined to exercise so vast an influence upon the other peoples of the earth than this: that the Being they had worshipped as Might—Might to produce and save, and Might to destroy—was the Eternal Existence Itself, and therefore the Fount of all Being, in other words, as He was afterwards represented, the living God—living for ever in Himself and the Source of life in others? † We are

* *I.e.*, the tense which represents *unfinished* action or condition, past, present, or future. The notion, however, that this tense is really the *present* tense, though not, I believe, in favour with Hebrew scholars at the present moment, seems not unworthy of consideration.

† He is being, *i.e.*, He continues to be; He has never had beginning nor end.

not now permitted to cite the so-called "Five Books of Moses" as embodying Mosaic teaching. But the so-called "Book of the Covenant"* is generally allowed to be almost if not quite, Mosaic in its date. And it distinctly tells us that God, as represented by Moses, was a Being who presented Himself in a moral aspect, and did not require obedience only, but righteousness from His votaries. If we may accept the first chapter of Genesis as the work of the founder of Judaism, the idea of creation was inseparably united with the conception of this Eternal Being. And it appears to me, I must confess, that the grand originality of this and the following chapters fits in better with the idea of their being the work of the founder of a religion than the afterthought of an unknown writer or editor some ten centuries after him.† The elementary conception of God as Righteousness as well as Power was gradually filled in by the prophets. The severer attributes involved in the title Shaddai were incorporated into the national ideas of Jahveh and Elohim by their writings, and they did not fail to point to disasters in Israelite history as a consequence of their neglect of Him and His laws. It must be confessed that, on the whole, the idea of God contained in the Hebrew Scriptures, though sterner than that which is presented in the New Testament, is nevertheless a truly high and noble one, involving qualities of exquisite gentleness and tenderness side by side with its unbending righteousness and its rigid inflexibility towards those who fail to fulfil its requirements.

Upon such a foundation as this the Christian idea of God was based. We proceed to ask what special modifications of previous conceptions were introduced by the Christian revelation. We may first remark that it aims not at the negation but at the fulfilment, or rather the filling in, of the conceptions entertained by the Jews. God is still the Force which brought the universe into being; He is still the Eternal, the Unchangeable, the Ever-existing; He is still the

* Exod. xx-xxiii.

† I do not wish to deny that this unique religious teacher may have made use of traditions handed down from remote ages among his people. But he would naturally cast them into the form which seemed best adapted to his purpose. The idea that portions of inconsistent narratives were unintelligently pieced together seems to me hardly reconcilable with the high position of Mosaism among the religions of the earth for thousands of years.

Living God, the source of all life; He still appears to us as unbendingly just, as well as indescribably tender. But only the teaching and the life of Jesus Christ can explain to us the apparent contradiction involved in such a conception, and resolve the mystery how a righteous Being can place forgiveness of sin in the forefront of His dealings with sinful man.

I do not propose to enter into the theological questions involved in the solution of this mystery. Suffice it to say that of late they have entered into a new phase, and that this phase is largely conditioned by a belief in the Divine immanence, a fact which is strongly insisted upon by our Lord as reported by the Evangelist St. John, and which assumes an importance for a long time unsuspected in the writings of St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. James. This doctrine reposes upon a declaration on the part of our Blessed Lord which may be looked upon as the starting-point of His revelation—*Πνεῦμα ὁ θεός*, God is Spirit, or rather *Breath*.* This declaration, it appears to me, has been much misapprehended, and the misapprehension has rested on a confusion of thought as to the meaning of the word spirit. Spirit has usually been represented as that which is opposed to matter. It may be observed that though philosophy presupposes such an opposition, neither Christianity or Judaism even so much as hint at it. In Greek and Hebrew, and perhaps in Latin, spirit means *that which is breathed*, but when applied to God it also involves the idea of Him who breathes it. Thus to the mind of the early Christian God appeared as the subtle, impalpable, penetrating Essence which lies beneath all that is; not identified, as the pantheist would have it, with Its own creations, not “fusing all the skirts of self” in the Divine Being, but inspiring and controlling Its own creations, and impelling them towards the fulfilment of Its own ultimate purpose. This indwelling Deity is obviously the God brought before us by the Evangelist St. John. The idea is scarcely absent from a single page of his Gospel or his Epistle.† It is the province of theology to show how the

* This idea, it may be observed, is Hebrew in its origin. The Ruach Elohim is placed in the forefront in the work of creation (Gen. i, 1). And in the account of the creation of man (Gen. ii, 7), though a different word is used, the same idea is preserved.

† It is the starting-point of both. The *λόγος ἦν* (was existing, the same idea as is contained in the word Jehovah) *πρὸς τὸν θεόν*. In Him life is, (*ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἐστίν*). The *λόγος* is described as “leading forth” (*ἐξηγούμενος*) the Father or Source of life. That is to say, He is the *manifestation* of

Divine indwelling is connected in the Christian scheme with the person, the work, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Into such questions it is not, therefore, my purpose to enter. I confine myself to the fact, which no careful reader of the sacred records will dispute, that beneath and around all the facts of the Christian scheme lies the great fact that God is Breath, and that the subtle pervading influence emanating from Him is the ultimate source of our salvation from the evil influences which surround us.

The Greek philosophic divines discerned this truth, albeit not too clearly. As has just been said, they were misled by importing the ideas of Greek philosophy into the Christian scheme. The leading principle of that philosophy was the antagonism of spirit or mind to matter. Another misapprehension of theirs was the confusion of mind with spirit. In Greek philosophy these two things are identical. In Judaism and Christianity they are altogether distinct. The one is a direct emanation from on high, altogether moral and elevating in its character; the other is the organ of the soul which draws conclusions from premisses, and by analogies and logical processes endeavours to arrive at the truth. Thus Origen, in his *De Principiis*, misses the true drift of Scripture teaching by endeavouring to show that Spirit is independent of body. He describes it as "*simplex intellectualis natura*" (it is a sad pity that we have here the less definite Latin in the place of the original Greek). He says that the Holy Spirit is "intellectual existence" (*subsistentia*), and speaks of the Divine nature as "*natura illa simplex et tota mens*."* Yet in his *Commentary on St. John* he takes a more scriptural view of the facts, and speaks of God as being Spirit because He breathes into us the breath of a Divine life, higher than we have by nature.† His instructor, Clement of Alexandria, has a noble passage which looks the same way. "The bare volition of God," he says, "was the creation of the universe. His mere willing was followed by the springing into being of that which He willed."‡ In another passage he refuses to regard God as a

the Divine Being, or the Divine Being in the act of self-manifestation "From His pleroma" (our word "fulness" hardly conveys any idea to the mind) "we all have received." In other words each of us has a share of the infinitude of the Divine perfections.

* *De Principiis*, I, i, 3-6.

† *Commentary on St. John*, iv, 24.

‡ *Ehortation to the Heathen*, ch. iv.

theological abstraction. He denies that He is either "the One, or the Good, or Mind, or Being in itself, or Father, or God, or Creator, or Lord." None of these terms by itself will describe His perfections. The world-ruler is, in fact, the sum of them all.* Elsewhere he speaks of God as the Source of all existence.† And he points out that the conceptions of God entertained by the Greek philosophers were unsatisfactory.‡

I do not propose to take up your time with a history of the idea of God in the early Greek Fathers. It must, I think, be confessed to have oscillated between the teaching of Scripture and that of the philosophers. I have found here no more evidence of the systematization of vague impressions on points of Christian doctrine than on other theological questions, the Person of the Son alone excepted. Very often God is looked upon as a transcendent Being, outside things created. But there is a magnificent passage in Athanasius§ which speaks of God as the Force behind all created things, and recalls the equally majestic language of St. Paul, where he speaks of the Son as the image of the invisible God, the Creator of all things, whose all-pervading influence holds them all together.|| In other words, God was looked upon as both transcendent and immanent; as dwelling in the visible universe and yet extending beyond it. Thus two tendencies of thought which have been regarded as incompatible were wisely and reverently combined.

It has been a misfortune for Western thought that it has been so largely dependant on the Vulgate—a very inadequate vehicle, as most of us are aware, for the expression of Greek or Hebrew ideas. Another drawback has been the inheritance by Western theologians of the Roman idea of God as a Potentate—a just and beneficent Potentate, no doubt, but still a Potentate, and little more. In the earliest Latin Fathers the Greek idea of immanence struggled with that of a just and wise Ruler who dwelt outside phenomena and governed them according to the counsel of His will. These two opposite tendencies are very strongly marked in the writings of Augustine. Unfortunately for us in the West, the Latin tendencies of that epoch-making Father ultimately prevailed among races brought under the influence of Latin

* *Strom.*, v, 12.

† *Ibid.*, vii, 1.

‡ *Ibid.*, vi.

§ *Contra Gentes*, 41-44. The whole passage is most striking.

|| *Col.* i, 17.

thought over the more Scriptural aspects of his teaching, and it has not been until lately, when the renewed study of the Greek Testament and of the Greek Fathers has revived the idea of the Divine immanence in man, which had been largely lost sight of, that this idea of God as a Sovereign has been combined with other Scriptural attributes. I need do no more than call your attention to the remarkable work of Professor Allen, of Harvard University, on the *Continuity of Religious Thought*, in which he points out how the supposed antagonism between religion and science would have been reduced to a *minimum*, had not the idea, partly accepted by Greek theology, of the indwelling of God in man, and the consequent restoration and ultimate perfection of the latter, been suffered almost to disappear from the popular mind. The Latins lost sight of these ideas through their ignorance of the language in which the Greek Testament was written. The Greeks lost them at last on account of the growing corruption of their Church, and of the consequent tendency to substitute interminable refinements of speculation, endless discussions, passionate conflicts of opinion, for the gradual growth and development of the Christian idea, as revealed in Holy Scripture.* There is hope now that by means of free inquiry and full discussion, coupled with a fairer and more critical study of our authorities, the ancient antagonisms between religion and science may altogether disappear, and the Book of Nature and the Books of Scripture be looked upon, as they ought to be looked upon, as the two complementary sides of the revelation of Himself by God.

That hope is not by any means damped when we turn to the history and results of modern scientific discovery. It is, on the contrary, very much heightened by a reference to them. Scientific men, it has appeared to me, took up at first a needlessly aggressive attitude towards revelation. It is true that the teachers of religion had for the most part committed themselves to theories which brought the Divine interferences in the order of nature into far too great prominence, and had represented that order rather as a series of jerks than as a continuous development. As scientific research progressed, fact after fact was rescued from the region of the miraculous and reduced under the dominion of

* Since these words were written, Bishop Westcott's *Lessons from Work* has come into my hands. Very similar thoughts to those in the text will be found in pp. 8-11.

ordinary natural law. But though this might have been an excellent reason for calling on religious teachers to modify their language, it did not justify scientific discoverers in proclaiming a blank materialism. If order and law had been proved to reign in the material world to an extent which men in past ages had never suspected, it did not follow that order and law were to be enthroned in the place of Him from whom they proceed. Yet a very considerable number of men of science, some fifty years ago, ignored a first cause altogether, and confined themselves entirely to the observation of secondary causes, while some very positively and defiantly declared that in matter all the causes of phenomena might be found. Divines, on the contrary, in their hostility to this sweeping conclusion, endeavoured to discredit scientific theories altogether, and the antagonism between religion and science thus became acute. But by degrees both parties began to reconsider their position. Divines lost their suspicion of scientific research, and scientists (I fear I cannot avoid the word) began to see that there must be some force behind matter.* Many of those who at first were loud in their defence of materialism subsided into silence on this point, and while admitting that their adversaries had a better case than they at first supposed, preferred to suspend their judgment on questions so tremendous as the origin of all things. Others, again, after many painful and agonizing struggles, found themselves at last able to accept the Christian faith.† They did this with the less difficulty, because it became clear that, in the simple and true sense of the word, evolution was not in the least incompatible with Christianity. By evolution I do not of course mean the doctrines of Mr. Darwin. It is not my intention to discuss the Darwinian theory of evolution. I believe that it is now disputed on many grounds. The hold it obtained for a time was due to the craving of human nature for certainty, and the tendency, in a restless, busy, and impatient age, such as this is, to imagine that certainty is to be obtained by being content *jurare in verba magistri*. It also rested largely on the

* "In our endeavours to understand the wonders of nature, we have ever brought before us the fact that there are innumerable mysteries which can never be accounted for by the operations with which science makes us familiar, but which demand the intervention of some Higher Power than anything that man's intellect can comprehend." Sir R. S. Ball, *Trans. Vict. Inst.* vol. xxxiii, p. 19.—Ed.

† The case of Dr. Romanes will occur to every one.

respect which was due to Mr. Darwin's amazing knowledge, untiring industry, and insatiable thirst for truth.

The tendency towards premature acceptance of results is to be found in various departments of thought to a greater extent, I fancy, than has ever been the case before. It was so in the case of Mr. Darwin. He was not only, as has just been said, a man of character, of principle, of remarkable acuteness, and of the most extraordinary industry, but he had been unjustly attacked. Consequently the theories of Evolution by natural selection, the struggle for existence, and the survival of the fittest, were enthusiastically hailed as the final results of science by a host of scientific investigators. I cannot pretend to speak as an expert in this matter. But my experience tells me that in the early stages of scientific investigation the opinion of an impartial outsider is not to be despised. I will not say that I am an impartial outsider. But I may at least be allowed to express my conviction that the evolutionists of the last century were in too great a hurry to announce the settlement of a great question. The most careful and industrious investigator might have hesitated to proclaim any results of his generalizations from the mighty host of facts which stared him in the face. He might have been pretty sure, one might think, that he had omitted one or two factors—possibly a good many more—which were of infinite importance in solving the problem of the universe. I never, when I try to study the demonstrations of scientific hypotheses, can resist the impression that there is too frequently a tendency to jump to conclusions unwarranted by the premisses, and that to establish conclusions from those premisses is a far more difficult task than many of those who have attempted it imagine. It will be a long time yet before we know all the causes which contribute to the evolution of species. Impatience is the parent of error. We must be content to wait, it may be for ages, before we have collected, marshalled, and generalized correctly from, all the vast store of materials before us.

Meanwhile evolution, in the sense of a power working from within, as distinguished from interferences from without, is confessed on all hands. We cannot deny that it is by forces working within, not by interferences from without, that the material universe, as well as plant, animal, human life, is produced. Evolution is plainly a law of the universe at the present moment. There is, therefore, no

reason why it should not have been a law of the universe from the beginning. So the Hebrew Scriptures seem to tell us. The Breath of God brooded over the surface of the waters, and the result of His action was the production of form in the formless and life in the lifeless. Where the mistake comes in is in the notion, found alike on each side of the question, that the fact of evolution is incompatible with the working of a Divine mind. It is nothing of the sort. The creative energy can unfold from within as well as interfere from without. It can graft new forms on old ones by a new impulse from within as easily as we can graft a rose bush or an apple tree. And the influence of the Divine mind is as necessary to the true theory of evolution as it was to the old notion of perpetual interferences. No other cause than that influence can, I think, be assigned for the production of new species, especially when the laws which regulate life seem to be directed towards the preservation of existing distinctions and towards the prevention, under ordinary circumstances, of the development of one species into another. Thus the comparatively modern idea of the benevolent despot, governing by successive exertions of an arbitrary will, is replaced by the old Hebrew doctrine of a Divine force, governed by self-imposed laws, and working for the good of sentient beings. The only modifications which are required are those which are introduced first by the revelation of God in Christ, which taught us to look upon God, not only as Power, Mind, Will, or even Life, but as primarily and above all Love, thus enthroning, as surely should be the case, the moral aspect of His Being above all others, and next by the discoveries of science in later years, which have shown, from the facts of the Divine working that greater limitations have been placed on the exercise of the Divine will by the principles of order and law, than had been conceived possible before this wide extension of our knowledge.*

In truth, then, scientific research has simply brought the old idea of immanence, hinted at in the Hebrew Scriptures,† fitfully discerned by Greek and almost entirely obscured in Latin Christianity, once more into prominence. The despot theory—and in mediæval and even to a certain extent in modern theology the despot was not always benevolent—

* I may be permitted once more to refer to *Lessons from Work*, pp. 30-32.

† *E.g.*, Psalm cxxxix, 15 ; Isaiah xxvi, 12.

gives place to that of a mighty energy operating by its laws of evolution, steadily, tirelessly, unintermittently, onward and upward. From the formless void to the universal cosmos, from the ascidian to man, from the psychical body to the spiritual body, from the psychical man to the spiritual man, from the Fall to the day when even the Head of humanity Himself shall yield up His Empire "to Him that did put all things under Him that God may be all in all," there has been a triumphal forward march of the Divine order from one conquest to another, from one achievement to another, up to the restoration of all things, when there shall "be no more anything accursed; when the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in the heavenly city where He dwells, and where His servants do Him service; where there shall be night no more" because the Eternal Light is ever shining; and where His servants "shall reign for ever and ever in the light which He is giving."

Here, perhaps, I might well stop. But as it is by no means probable that I shall again address the Institute upon this great and fundamental topic, I may ask permission to offer some cautions which my meditations on this matter have suggested to me. In the first place I would remark that, as Mr. Balfour has told us in his *Foundations of Belief*, theological propositions require a new "setting," if they are to meet with a ready reception in the present age. And in no point is this fresh setting more urgently required than in our conceptions of the Divine Being Himself. The old "potentate" theory need not, it is true, be abandoned. But it needs to be qualified according to the "analogy of the faith."* It needs to be subordinated to ideas yet more primitive and fundamental. That offences against the great Ruler of the universe are matters of grave import, and that they need adequate punishment and call for adequate atonement, need not be disputed. But above and beyond these propositions, we must also look upon God as the great Force working through and in nature and man, for the evolution of a great moral purpose, the perfection of rational beings. In the second place I would suggest that it has been a serious mistake on the part of some thinkers to imagine that the idea of God is a simple one. As God is at the root of everything that is, as He touches us at every

* Rom. xii, 6.

point of our complex being, material, mental, moral, one would imagine that the idea of Him must be one of infinite complexity. My friend Professor Caldecott, in his kindly notice of my paper read before the Institute in February, 1883, and of my addendum to it in my little book on the Nicene Creed, remarks that I "let down a very wide net for the 'strengthening,' and—we may suppose—the filling in, of the conception intuitively given at the outset." * Holding the views I do, it would be strange indeed did I not do so. I would let down "a very wide net," an infinitely wide net, for the strengthening and filling in of our rudimentary conceptions of a Being "of infinite power, wisdom, and Goodness." † We have already had a warning from Clement of Alexandria against one-sided conceptions of the Divine nature. In fact, as I remarked in my former paper, ‡ I believe the best way of treating the question of the Being of God to be the scientific one. In other words, I contend that our theories of the Divine Being, as of other truths, should be founded on the principle of inductions from observed facts; and that thus, by successive approximations, we should arrive, not at a complete knowledge of the Divine nature, but at as close a correspondence with the truth as should be necessary as a guide to action. I do not altogether deny that among the factors which contribute to our knowledge on the subject intuitive impressions are to be reckoned. But I confess that, on reconsidering the subject, I should be inclined to restrict the area of our intuitions. I would not extend them to the intellectual; I would confine them to the moral region. In the intellectual direction I should be inclined to deny the existence of intuitive conceptions of God and confine myself to maintaining that each of us has a capacity for receiving impressions of the Divine nature from external sources. But the workings of conscience I should ascribe to the direct influence of the Divine power upon the heart of man, though restrained in its operation by the imperfection of the moral organs through which it works. Such an influence I believe to have been at work from the very first. But far more is this the case since the revelation of God in Christ. If, by virtue of our faith and of the atonement wrought out for us by our

* *The Philosophy of Belief*, p. 342.

† Art. I of the Church of England.

‡ Also in my little book on the Nicene Creed.

Lord Jesus Christ, God dwells in us, and we in Him, surely there must be a revelation of Himself to the heart in which He thus dwells—a revelation proportionate to the degree in which our wills have become identified with His. This is what He Himself tells us: “If a man wills to do His will, he shall know about my teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of Myself.”* I do not say that the intellectual side of the question is to be neglected altogether. *All* error, moral or intellectual, tends to lead us astray. We need that each factor in our complex organization should contribute its proper share to the process of investigation. But inasmuch as the highest relations of God to His creatures are moral and spiritual, not merely intellectual or material, it is to the correspondence of the moral and spiritual part of our being to His that we must turn for the highest revelations of His nature.

The truth is that we have been too much accustomed to separate speculation from revelation, instead of basing the former upon the latter. And we have been inclined to suppose that the being of God was rather a purely intellectual than a practical question. We have attached too much importance to abstract ideas, whereas it is impossible to conceive of God apart from the universe, He has brought into being—an universe which soars above the region of the material to an extent which is not “dreamed of” in most of our “philosophy.” Even the Greek conceptions of the best age of Greek theology seem based rather on the ideas of Plato than on those of the Old and New Testaments, *Accedamus ad fontes*. We must go back to the days of the old conceptions of God as a living force manifested in the world which He has brought into being, and as an eternal, self-existent Ruler of that world for the highest good of beings who live, think, and feel. We must conceive of the acting and working Elohim, the Moral Avenger Shaddai, the unchangeable and imperishable Jahveh or Jehovah. And we are bidden to think of Him as dwelling in as well as extending beyond phenomena. Modern science has confirmed this view, which is the Bible view from the beginning. It has shown us, more clearly than we ever saw before, the evolution of the Divine purpose through the Indwelling Power. It has proved more clearly than ever before that that evolution of purpose,

* St. John vii, 17.

that manifestation of power, proceeds in accordance with the direction of an Infinite Mind. If we are to give up the million-fold evidence of design in consequence of certain *a priori* objections of philosophers, we must be prepared to abandon the laws of evidence altogether.* It has taught us, once more, to recognize the onward and upward sweep of that purpose as a continuous flow of the Divine energy, not as a series of interruptions or interferences from without. If modern science has failed in its theories of God, it has been because it has too severely confined itself to the material universe. If metaphysics has also failed to give us workable ideas of God, it has been because it has too closely confined itself to the intellectual side of the question. We need a wider range of thought if we are to attain to satisfactory conceptions of the Primal Force beneath phenomena. We must grasp the idea of the loving will of a Personal Being, capable of entering into moral relations with His creatures, and directing all the forces He has called into existence towards the realization of a moral purpose. We must study the working of the religious idea among all peoples, and recognize in it an influence which has been implanted by the Creator for beneficent ends, and which, in spite of the manifold perversions to which it has been liable, has not, on the whole, failed to attain those ends. Above all, we must not fail to discern in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ the last step in the Divine evolution of humanity, grafting upon, or bringing out of, the "old Adam" a new and more perfect type of human life, and through the Eternal Spirit energizing for ever among the sons of men to produce in them the conformity to the image of God, which the Eternal Son displayed among us, and has now exalted to the right hand of God. When, therefore, I say, "I believe in God," I may venture to expand my creed as follows:—"I believe in a great and living Intelligence and Energy, eternal, all-wise, all-holy, all-embracing, in Whose never-ceasing action the material is subordinated to the mental, the mental to the moral, the moral to the spiritual, Who in bringing the material universe into being has done so for the welfare of sentient beings, and

* In my book on the Nicene Creed I have pointed out that Kant has given up the argument from design on such *a priori* grounds, and I have commented with some severity on what appears to me somewhat like a slovenly treatment of so great a question on the part of the renowned philosopher.

Who seeks to produce in each of them the highest development of which their nature is capable. I believe that the fullest knowledge of His being is to be attained, not by logical demonstration, but by observation of, and reflection on, His works in the realms of matter, of mind, of soul, and of spirit," and by the close communion with Him which comes from faith in His Word, and obedience to His Commandments. "And thus," as Bishop Pearson would say, "I believe in God, the Father, the World-Ruler, the Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible."

DISCUSSION.

The CHAIRMAN.—I am sure we have heard with the deepest interest this most valuable paper, and I shall now welcome remarks that any who are present may desire to make upon it.

Rev. Canon GIRDLESTONE, M.A.—I think this is a most stimulating and suggestive paper, and we are all, I am sure, under a great obligation to Mr. Lias for having prepared it and read it to us.

There are only a few points that I desire to call attention to, if I may do so, in the way of criticism.

There are two sources of the idea of God given by the author, viz., observation and reflection. I think perhaps it is an oversight that conscience is left out. It seems to me that with the mass of mankind reason and conscience always go hand in hand as concerning the things of God.

Then farther on I find what can hardly be an oversight, viz., that in the patriarchal age the thought of God was one of "illimitable Might." He says, "Of the moral qualities of this Being, conceived of as illimitable Might, we have, again, no information." That is wholly opposed to my own conception of what the thought of God was in the patriarchal age. I will only give one sentence of Abraham's—one of the grandest and one that sticks to us all—"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" It is a magnificent sentence, and it does not stand alone. The whole idea is included in the idea of the fall, the idea of Cain and Abel and onward, and it seems to be moral teaching concerning character and, consequently, concerning God.

Then, again, there is a reference to the term Shaddai for God. I do not think it has anything to do with the Hebrew root, Shad, in the sense of destruction, but with another Hebrew root, and has to do with the cherished idea of the Jews which is consistent with God being all-sufficient rather than an Almighty Being, and in all the passages in Genesis that I can find it has to do with God's promise of seed—the numerous seed of Abraham and his son and grandson. The impression conveyed by the usage of the word is that it refers to the richness and bounty of God.*

There is another passage that I would call attention to. It is a difficult subject, but very important. It has to do with the suggested declaration in the New Testament that God is *Breath*. Long before our Lord's time the Hebrew scriptures had abounded in the use of the word *Ruach*, and it is impossible to conceive that the passages referred to *breath* in the ordinary sense of the word. The truth is that divine things are largely known by analogy, and there are two analogies which we naturally look to—one is the wind, which suggests an unseen force, and the other is breath, which suggests life and deep feeling. Life, Feeling and Force are the three words which analogy gives us concerning the thought of God. This matter was threshed out in the Old Testament and we find it much earlier than is suggested here, and although the word *Matter* is never used in the Bible in its philosophical sense, the word *Flesh* is used in the Old and New Testaments in contradistinction to *Spirit*.

I well remember a sermon, as some of you no doubt do, preached by the celebrated Baptist, Robert Hall, on the spirituality of God, for which he took one of these Old Testament texts as his guide, the one in which the Egyptian horses are referred to as *Flesh* and not *Spirit* (see Isaiah xxxi, 3), and really, when I think on that passage, the word *Flesh* answers almost to the philosophical idea of *Matter*, though it is not used for strict philosophical purposes.

I am thankful that Mr. Lias has raised the question concerning the meaning of the words "God is a Spirit," or, as some persons prefer it, "God is Spirit," *i.e.*, by nature spiritual. But before I can discuss the Divine Spirit, I must have an idea of the

* See my discussion on it in *Old Testament Synonyms*, 2nd ed., p. 32.

human spirit. How can I tell what the nature of God is unless I have an idea of my own nature? If you have a low opinion of the nature of man you will have a low idea of God.

If we could get to know more of—I will not say psychology, but—pneumatology, we could discover what we mean by spirituality, and a great deal of good would be done not only in connection with this subject, but also with regard to various other discussions. But I think you will find that *spiritual* in the Bible always includes *moral*, and also the thought that there is a Being higher than ourselves that works within us. So that it is far more than a matter of feeling or sentiment, but rather a question of force and righteous attraction, and that force cannot be dissociated from the idea of personality. Thus you have in the Old Testament and the New Testament the thought of personality, plus thought, plus feeling. While you have the two analogies of the wind and breath, you feel that they are not more than illustrations and you must look beyond the illustration for the grand truth, and when we get that truth with regard to man, I think it is possible to build up our thoughts with regard to the Divine Being also (see *Old Testament Synonyms, s.v. Spirit*).

REV. JOHN TUCKWELL, M.R.A.S.—Like the last speaker I do not wish any remarks that I make should be regarded as wholly depreciatory of the paper, but it seems to me that perhaps there is a little too much conceded to the idea of evolution in the paper in connection with Christianity. Evolution, as applied to nature, may be regarded as a useful theory up to a point, but I think it must be admitted that a great deal more information is required on the subject before we can finally accept it. If we go back, as far as we know, to the origin of things—take, for instance, the nebular hypothesis from which all creation is supposed to have started. Supposing you grant that there was a mass of nebulous matter somewhere in space, that nebulous matter somehow got started with motion of a particular kind, and according to the law of the correlation of forces, the amount of force that starts the whole process must be equivalent to all subsequent results. Then comes the question, Whence did that force originate which started the whole nebulous mass in such a way as to produce the results of sidereal motion? Did that force originate in the nebulous mass itself? I think it must be admitted that no such hypothesis is proved, but that the force must have originated from something

outside and beyond the nebulous force itself. So I think you will find that in Christianity there has been an external force which has been at work from the beginning. In Scripture where did the whole idea of the creation of the world originate? If you read that first chapter of Genesis what cause was behind, according to scientific thought, the millions of years before the creation of man? Man could not have discovered those facts.

Then the lecturer tells us that evolution is going on now. I have failed to ascertain that there is any proof of that fact. It seems to me that there is not any evolution going on now. There does not seem to be a springing into being of any new species. It would seem therefore as though the Almighty Spirit originally impregnated matter, so to speak, with vitality and that that has ceased and that there is no evolution going on now, as previously. Again, applying that to Christ, from whence came the knowledge or idea, of the Trinity—the Almighty God becoming incarnate and living a life of humility, dying on the cross, rising again from death, ascending into glory, interceding for man and sending forth His Spirit for the regeneration and salvation of man? Where did that idea come from? Did that come from a process of evolution out of the human understanding? If we regard Christ as incarnate it is impossible to apply evolution. He came from the Father. He came into the cosmos and He says, “I leave the cosmós and go unto the Father.” It seems to me, therefore, that we cannot apply the evolution theory to our Christianity and try to work it out on those lines.

I am obliged to take a little exception to the idea of Divine immanence which the writer of the paper laid so much stress on. No doubt the universe is the dress, so to speak, of the Almighty; but you cannot apply that idea to our humanity entirely. Will any dare to say that if God tells you there are certain persons who are living in the world without God, that the likeness of His Divine image is to be applied to those persons so living without God? Is God working in those that are living without Him? If so we must make the Almighty the author of much that is repulsive to His Divine nature.

While there is so much that is excellent in the paper, we must be on our guard against letting our ideas proceed on lines that are not in accordance with Scripture, and it is necessary in that view to carefully filter them.

Rev. Prebendary WACE, D.D.—At this late hour I should not be justified in troubling the meeting with many observations; I only wish to thank Mr. Lias very much for his paper.

I think the gentleman who spoke last need not be afraid to let the ideas expressed in the paper pass into his mind, provided, as he says, that he will “filter” them. I think their substantial truth will be apparent to almost everyone. But the principal thing that I would venture to say anything upon, in supporting the paper, is the great stress that Chancellor Lias has placed on the idea of God being formed from induction and not from *a priori* reasoning. We have a great advantage on this subject in the present day. We have two great sources of our knowledge of God, viz., the word of God and the operations of Nature; and, if I may be allowed to say so, the only danger that has arisen is from the attempt of one of those sources to act without the other. As Chancellor Lias says, the assistance that has been given by science in forming our ideas of God is, practically, incalculable. I will mention one point; and that is the demonstration given of the unity of God. There was nothing unnatural in the Greek conception of a number of different deities; but when science has demonstrated that all the forces in nature are working in absolute unity you have scientifically established that fundamental part of the Christian creed. But you have to take into account the fact of revelation as a necessary part of the whole subject. It is perfectly absurd, on purely scientific grounds, for anyone to talk of the idea of God without taking scripture and our Lord’s life into consideration. They are most momentous. You have got to explain them, and when you bring those two things together, the phenomena of Scripture and the phenomena of the Universe, you get the first step towards an approximation to the idea of God.

There is one phrase in Chancellor Lias’s paper that I would take exception to, and that is the one in which he speaks of “that approximation to the idea of God” is a hope that is held out to human nature through infinite ages. The idea of the being of God is so vast that our minds now fall short of it in the result; but the blessed hope is held out to us that we may progress more and more to something like an approximation to an idea of His infinite perfections.

Rev. Chancellor LIAS.—As I understand Dr. Wace I think I am thoroughly in agreement with him.

Professor LANGHORNE ORCHARD, B.Sc.—Chancellor Lias has given us a thoughtful and suggestive paper, as any paper from him invariably is. I cannot, however, feel myself to be in agreement with him in regard to some of the statements he has made in the paper. For instance, he ventures to assert “that, like the idea of self, the idea of God, as formed by man, is, primarily at least, the product of experience.”

That strikes one as being, perhaps, a little contradictory of what he has said in a previous page, where the idea of God is said to be an exception to this—“I am inclined more and more to regard experience as the true foundation of all knowledge, except that of the Divine Being.” Mr. Lias strikes me, therefore, as being slightly contradictory here. But can we really suppose that our idea of God is obtained from experience? You must have a notion of a thing to precede its experience; and as to the idea of God, it is not easy to see how the idea of the infinite can be given by experience. Experience does not supply the idea of the infinite at all. Take the notion of space, time, or duration. The notion of infinite space or duration is only intelligible as a notion of an infinite attribute; but the notion of an infinite attribute requires the notion of an Infinite Being to whom the attribute belongs. It appears to me, therefore, that you cannot trace the original notion of self and of God to experience. But undoubtedly our knowledge of self and our knowledge of God are very much increased by experience; but that is not the original notion, but rather a *development* of it.*

I am inclined to agree with what fell from Canon Girdlestone with regard to Abraham. The patriarch must surely have had a definitely formed conviction as to the moral character of the God he worshipped when he so trusted Him that he forsook his country and home and knew not whither he went, and was even prepared to sacrifice his own son! Would that be possible, unless he had the most complete faith and confidence in God and His goodness?

* Is there not some confusion of phrase, or words, in speaking of the “idea of God,” or “knowledge of God”? Do we really not mean (as Dr. Wace points out) ideas or knowledge of His attributes and perfections?—Ed.

The learned author gives rather an extraordinary definition of evolution, and he says, "Meanwhile evolution, in the sense of a power working within, as distinguished from interferences from without, is confessed on all hands." It may be "confessed on all hands" that there is a power working within nature, working according to what we call "laws"; but that is not evolution. Any belief in a Divine working in nature is certainly not confined to evolutionists, or confined to them principally. Farther on he appears to regard evolution, as generally defined by evolutionists, as a process by which one species is transmuted into another. "Evolution is plainly a law of the universe." It is not a law of the universe, and there is no proof of it. It is an *a priori* hypothesis.

On p. 59 I find a curious argument: "The creative energy can unfold from within as well as interfere from without. It can graft new forms on old ones by a new impulse from within as easily as we can graft a rose bush or an apple tree." Undoubtedly it can. Who can doubt that God could work by the curious and grotesque method of evolution, or otherwise, if He so pleased? The question is, *does* He do so? not whether He *can* do so; and if no new species can be found to be produced from previously existing species, it is not credible to say that evolution is a law or a fact. The evidence is all the other way. You must produce your new species and not quietly assume that they *are* produced and argue from that. Variety is produced, no doubt, but not species.

It was Huxley, who is a pretty good authority for not accepting evolution, who said in a letter to Faraday, "We cannot prove that a single new species has been produced." The learned Chancellor proceeds, "No other cause than that influence can, I think, be assigned for the production of new species, especially when the laws that regulate life seem to be directed towards the prevention, under ordinary circumstances, of the development of one species into another." That was ably pointed out by Lyall's experiments* and those of Dr. Dallanger with monads, when it was found that you could not produce new species from previously existing ones.

At p. 61 of the paper the learned Chancellor expresses his belief that we have no intellectual intuitions of God. Why not?

* Lyall was a great reasoner, but not experimentalist; the reference is probably to some other authority.—Ed.

We have a notion of infinity. Can that notion be explained except by reference to an Infinite Being? And that Infinite Being is God.

Passing on to p. 63, I am sorry to see a sentence against which, as a believer in Christ, I protest with all the indignation and all the energy of which I am capable. That passage reads, "Above all, we must not fail to discern in the incarnation of Jesus Christ the last step in the evolution of humanity." I entirely deny the truth of that. I am exceedingly sorry, and it is a matter of astonishment and regret to me, that the learned Chancellor should have permitted himself to write that sentence. The incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, according to the Christian doctrine, was not the result of any natural law working in humanity. It was a stupendous miracle. I remember, years ago, hearing Chancellor Lias in this room speak of miracles and how I admired his able arguments in defence of their reality, and I can hardly believe that this is the same gentleman who so boldly championed Christian miracles. The incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ was a miracle.

The CHAIRMAN.—I do not think the author's words can be said to be capable of the construction put upon them by Professor Orchard.

Rev. Chancellor LIAS.—It is Divine evolution, of course, of which I spoke (page 63).

Professor ORCHARD.—Then you admit that Divine evolution includes miracles.

Rev. Chancellor LIAS.—Yes, I believe evolution is a Divine process; I said so all the way through.

Professor ORCHARD.—And includes miracles?

Rev. Chancellor LIAS.—Yes.

Professor ORCHARD.—I was afraid the author did not mean that. I am obliged to Chancellor Lias for stating what he has just now stated.

Rev. Chancellor LIAS.—I thought that possibly it would be better to make my reply more full when the proceedings are published, and I will try to make a written reply; but I would make one or two observations. And first, as to what Canon Girdlestone said about conscience being left out in the paper. Though there is no special reference to it, I imagined it would be seen where it came in.

Then with regard to my reference to Hebrew history, I may

say I am in shackles by the fact that a very influential section of the clergy of the Church of England, including persons in high places, do not allow me to talk on the Pentateuch as history at all, and therefore I have to get it where I can find it. Then as to the expression, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" that seems to me to prove the contrary of what he contended for, for it seems to me that Abraham was in great difficulty and was not quite sure that "the Judge of all the earth" would do right.*

With regard to *Shaddai* and God as *Breath*, Canon Girdlestone and I have simply given an opinion, and therefore that does not come much into argument. When he says that *Flesh*, in the Old Testament, represents *Matter*, I am not with him there, and I do not think he has taken a very accurate view of Old Testament teaching on that point. I do not think he apprehended what I meant by evolution. I meant what Dr. Gladstone spoke of, viz., development. He says himself that he believes in evolution up to a certain point. So do I, and I do not think I go beyond that.

As to the doctrine of Divine immanence, if I read my Greek Testament aright, immanence is merely a Latin form of abiding which we read of in the Gospel and Epistles of St. John; but I can express myself more fully on that when I reply in writing to the paper.

J. H. GLADSTONE, Esq., D.Sc., F.R.S.—At this late hour it would not be desirable to detain you with many words. I may, however, be permitted to express the great pleasure I have had in listening to a paper with which I think all, whether theologians or thoughtful scientific men, will substantially agree.

An interesting point is the comparison between the historical development of natural science on the one side, and the historical development of the knowledge of God as made known to us in the Holy Scriptures on the other. It appears to me that there is a very striking parallelism between the two. We have just been shown that nature affords conclusive evidence of one supreme mind, and the unity of God is of course affirmed in the Bible; in both instances the conviction of this unity has become more and more evident as knowledge has increased.

* The author here seems to take a mistaken view of Abraham's meaning. The interrogatory form of the expression is the strongest evidence that the Patriarch was certain that God would do right.—ED.

Again, there was an early conception that God was like a greatly magnified man, but in both departments of human thought it has become more and more evident that "His ways are not as our ways." The early conceptions of God have frequently represented Him as—shall I say?—capricious; but the gradual widening of the scope of revelation has made known to us more and more His divine purposes and plan, just as the Chaos of the ancient natural philosophers has given way to our present belief in a Cosmos and a Reign of Law.

This idea of development in both departments has long been familiar to me. I gave a series of lessons to my Bible class "On the Harmony of Successive Revelations" in 1850, nine years before the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, and ten years before the notable contest between the Bishop of Oxford and Professor Huxley, at which I was present, and had a talk with Huxley as we left the hall. This controversy has almost ceased to exist, or to arouse interest. It seems now to be pretty generally acknowledged that the way in which God has revealed Himself as disclosed in Scripture is in accordance with what may be deduced from a study of nature.

The CHAIRMAN.—There are one or two very valuable comments which the Secretary has received and which will be printed with the discussion.

May I return our thanks to Chancellor Lias and add my own thanks to him for the admirable way in which he has brought forward certain points that I have been feeling after, but not very successfully, until I read his paper? I believe this doctrine of Divine immanence, or belief that God upholds all things by the "word of His power," whatever the mysterious word *logos* means, is, as Chancellor Lias says, the link between the mistaken conceptions of science and Eternal Truth, and I thank him most heartily and ask you to do so. (Applause.)

The Meeting then adjourned.

THE FOLLOWING COMMUNICATIONS WERE RECEIVED:—

From Rev. Professor CALDECOTT.—The discussion on this paper turned upon some of its main features, but there were also some other points in the paper which merit attention at this time—points belonging to another region of "science," the field of psychology.

This region is being slowly admitted to share in the honourable name of science, but only slowly. Even Mr. Lias, while making good use of psychological results, seems to have only the physical region in view, when he writes the word "science," though in reality he is thinking of much more.

First. Mr. Lias has himself either made good use of psychological science, or else has by his own interpretative faculty succeeded in setting himself in the main stream along which modern psychology is flowing on a most important point. The rank of intellect among the forces which produce our living beliefs is not rated by modern psychology anything like so high as it was in the eighteenth century and most of the nineteenth. A change has come, and the function of intellect seems now rather to be regarded as that of a servant of high character than that of master of the house. This Mr. Lias sees, and expresses by referring to abstract ideas—the contribution of intellect at its highest—as simply "convenient formulæ of generalization" and terms of similar purport. Whether this is correct or not I am not here attempting to decide; what I am concerned to do is to point out that Mr. Lias has found his way to the same general attitude as that which now prevails in Britain, America, and Germany. Whether he has heard of it from philosophical quarters or has discovered it for himself, he has accomplished the change, just as of philosophy in Germany it is written, "*Sie wendet sich von der intellektualistischen zu einer voluntaristischen Auffassung.*"

Second. Mr. Lias's position on this is at the same time congenial to the prevailing mood in theology, both general theology and Christian. The position was claimed by Luther as against many of his fellow-workers in the Reformation, who were scholastics of the Intellectualist type at heart with a change of the seat of authority from tradition to the canonical scriptures. Luther always depreciated intellect, as a source of conviction, in favour of moral and spiritual influences; and Protestant theology at least is returning to his side. Indeed, in the hands of the Ritschlians there is a danger of intellect being mistreated as having no *locus standi* in the tribunal where religious judgments are delivered. Mr. Lias does not go this length, but he agrees in regarding correspondence with *truth* as valued according to its power as "a guide to action." Here, again, I am only pointing out that Mr. Lias is with the stream.

I may indicate, however, that where defenders of a higher rank for intellect would join issue is upon the amount of credit to be allowed to it as a *creative* power. They would say that what Mr. Lias allows is insufficient. Where he deals with intellectual operation they would say that he has before him only a passive and receptive function, that he is, in short, too close to Locke and Mill and Spencer—not sufficiently Kantian or Hegelian. He has a right to be so, but perhaps he may hardly relish these congeners, and he probably prefers still the company of Mansel in his conceptualism, as he did when he wrote his previous paper some years ago.

Third. In the reference to science few will be found to disagree with Mr. Lias when he maintains that materialism is out of date. I think that it reached its high-water mark in Britain in Tyndall's famous pæan at Belfast. That blast woke the echoes over Britain, but no peal like it has been heard since that time. The fact was that Tyndall was a student and expounder of the physical sciences; in them he buried himself, and for other fields of observation and induction he had neither opportunity nor special talent. But what has gone on since Tyndall's time? Not least impressive of changes has been the widening of the term "science" to include study of human nature as well as of the external world. We do not now look for explanations of the varieties of men's personal character in the recesses of physiology, nor for explanations of national character in the geographical and climatic circumstances which one nation deals with in one way, and another nation in another. The British Association has widened its range to include the study of the sciences of mental life: first economics was admitted; then anthropology; latest education; and now psychology and ethics may almost be heard clamouring at the gate.

As an honorary member of the Institute I have pleasure in emphasizing, on these points, the fact that Mr. Lias's position in this paper is in accordance with the general trend of recent advances on the side of the mental and moral sciences, and also of theology, as I read the signs of the times.

Rev. W. F. KIMM, M.A.—The meanings of the names El, Shaddai, etc., are discussed, and it is inferred that the moral attributes of God were unknown to Abraham. But we have much more than these names to guide us; we have the *history* of the patriarch and of preceding times, and Chancellor Lias gives us sufficient reason

for accepting this history, where mention is made of "sin," "wickedness," the "evil imaginations of men's hearts," the "very grievous sin" of Sodom, and of the Divine displeasure against sin. Abraham is sure that the Lord will not slay the righteous with the wicked, or that the righteous should be as the wicked "that be far from Thee. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Abraham "commands his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment."

Regarding the name Jehovah, the context in the passage quoted suggests that the name was used to teach the people that God, who was come to deliver them, was the God of their fathers who had promised deliverance (Exod. iii, 15, 16, 17), and thus their faith was linked on to the faith of their fathers.

It does not appear that the Decalogue was given as a higher standard of duty than had been known to men before, but rather that it was a call to the people to return to the faith and practice of their fathers. The Mosaic institutions would, however, serve to deepen a sense of sin in men's minds, and so would prepare them for the revelation that was to follow, as the paper has shown.

Professor J. LOGAN LOBLEY, F.G.S.—As a lover of science from my youth up, I am rejoiced to find that it has at last been recognized as a factor in the evolution of theology, and consequently as possessing a religious character. This, it seems to me, should give it a place in the curriculum of students of theology, and so I regard this paper as being in support of what I have long advocated, the making of elementary science obligatory for the pass degree at Oxford and Cambridge, both of which universities are already splendidly equipped for its teaching.

The Rev. G. F. WHIDBORNE, F.G.S.—In one other way, at least, the idea of God has been modified by scientific discovery. Every year now with its crowding discoveries is revealing new vistas of originative power. The fact of God must be either acknowledged or denied; acknowledge it, and every fresh natural law recognized, and every new scientific truth discerned, magnifies the known meaning of that fact, and intensifies the presumption of the utter immeasurability of that part of it which remains beyond our knowledge. And this process is not completed; it is still going on. Scientific discovery is imperfect; it has not yet reached its goal. That is to say, future generations will gain yet further

insight into the idea of God ; and after all they will only know in part, even as we.

And may it not be that, even as scientific discovery is imperfect, so is modern thought imperfect. May it not be that there is a limitation in its ideas of God that shall melt away in the light of fuller knowledge ? May it not be that the supposed antagonism between " a power working from within " and " interferences from without " shall prove unreal ? " Did not He that made that which is without make that which is within also ? " If by " evolution " be suggested any limiting of the ways of God, may not such limits to the limitless break down ? Modern thought is our little atmosphere ; its atmospheric effects are often most beautiful, sometimes delusive. But there is a vast ether above it, and the ways of God are there. Unexplored by human knowledge, unscanned by the eagle eye of science, those higher walks of wisdom are the paths of God alone. So what is supernatural with man is natural with God. " The Breath breatheth where It listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth. " *

Rev. L. G. BOMFORD.—With regard to the immanence of God, which the learned author seems to consider the great lesson which theologians have learned from modern thought and science, it may be pointed out that theologians have long been well acquainted with the words of St. Paul in Acts xvii, 28—words quoted so often by Christian evolutionists, quoted sometimes as though they were the only words known to us of the great apostle, in their apologies for their Christian faith—" for in Him we live, we move, and we exist. " Meyer in his commentary, published, I think, in 1839, says : " Paul views *God* under the point of view of His immanence as the *element* in which we live, etc. ; and *man* in such intimate connection with God, that he is constantly surrounded by the Godhead and embraced in its essential influence, but apart from the Godhead could neither live, nor move, nor exist. " Meyer, however, points out that these words of St. Paul are said " solely

* In substituting " The Breath breatheth " for " The Wind bloweth, " does not Mr. Whidborne rather spoil the beautiful imagery of Our Lord in his conversation with Nicodemus (John iii, 1), illustrating the unseen influence of the Spirit of God on the heart of man ?—Ed.

of *man*, and that indeed in so far as they stand in essential connection with God by *divine descent*," which is evident from the following words, "for we are also His offspring." The theory of the immanence of God as brought forward by modern theologians, and notably by the able writers of some of the *Lux Mundi* essays, goes, if this view of St. Paul's words be true, much farther. It seems to me in some hands, at least, to postulate the presence of God in every grain of sand, in order that there may be in every such grain the potentiality of evolution, and that an evolution which shall reach again as far as God. This theory has apparently been made to fit the extreme evolution theory. If man has been developed from sand, then man must have been in the sand, and as man is divine, sand must be divine, this seems to be the argument. The theory has well been named, if I remember right, by one of its advocates "Higher Pantheism," everything in God, as distinguished from ordinary pantheism, God in everything, and like some other theories it remains to be proved. If the miraculous element in God's manifestations was formerly too much insisted on, and was used to explain almost everything, there is a danger now that it be lost sight of. Without miracle we can have no Incarnation, in the Trinitarian sense at least, and that a miracle is not necessarily a "jerk" may, I think, be shown by the history of the Incarnation. There is at all events yet room for miracle; growth and evolution have not yet explained everything, not even everything physical, still less everything moral and spiritual.

If I may venture further to criticize, I might remark that we are apt to be somewhat too severe on the theologians of fifty years ago. Certainly thirty years ago, if not fifty, theologians with few exceptions were quite conscious that there could be no opposition between religion and *true science*. What they were afraid of was not scientific investigation, but the hasty deductions and generalizations which scientific men were making, and which were being somewhat eagerly swallowed in an undigested state by a credulous and unthinking public. It must be remembered that the attitude of Darwin and the rapid reception of his conclusions were somewhat alarming, for although Darwin concluded his *Origin of Species* with a reference to the Creator, he afterwards wrote, "I have long regretted that I truckled to public opinion and used the pentateuchal term of creation, by which I really meant 'appeared' by some wholly unknown process."

What the theologians of 1871 feared—Darwin's *Descent of Man* was published in that year—was not science but speculation, and that their fear was not groundless may be learned from Darwin's own words in his life, p. 271: "I must try not to fall into my common error of being too speculative. But a drunkard might as well say he would drink a little and not too much." As Illingworth has pointed out in *Lux Mundi*, the danger of Darwinism was that it attacked final causes. The presence of final causes or design in the universe has always been one of the strongest supports for natural religion, "it is contained in the very notion of a . . . creation by an Eternal Reason. And this was supposed to be directly negatived by the doctrine of the survival of the fittest through natural selection." If theologians have ceased to quarrel with science, it is not so much that theologians have changed their view of God, as that "scientists" have, in many cases unconsciously, abandoned Darwin and returned to the idea of design.

At the same time the last thirty years have undoubtedly seen a change in the theologian's view of God and of the working of God. The operation of God by His bare "fiat" has been seen to be only one view or only a partial view of His operation; it has been seen that "Let there be light, and there was light," may be compatible with a very gradual dawn, a very gradual increase of light; and that much which was at one time accounted for by the mere exercise of will on the part of the Creator is due also to His self-limitation; that not only the possession of free-will by man and the existence of evil, but also the very existence of the universe, and above all the Incarnation, is due to this power of self-limitation. In other words it has been more plainly seen that the Latin "omnipotens" and the English "almighty" do not accurately represent the Greek παντοκρατωρ, and this acknowledgment has led to a more easy rapprochement of modern theology and modern science.

In alluding to the necessarily complex nature of God our author gives, I think, only one of the three definitions of God found in the writings of St. John:—

"God is Spirit," the force which lies behind all manifestations of force, whether physical, moral, or spiritual, in other words the "Father";

“God is Light,” and therefore can be comprehended little by little, can be seen, can be revealed, in other words the “Word,” the “Son”;

“God is Love,” and therefore can be loved, can impart Himself, can embrace His willing creatures, in other words the “Holy Spirit.”

The first gives us design, the second gives us revelation, the third makes religion possible. Science seems willing now to grant us the first; let us hope that it may see its way presently to grant the second and the third.

THE AUTHOR'S REPLY.

I will reply as briefly as I can to my critics.

Canon Girdlestone remarks that in one part I have made no mention of conscience. He has overlooked the fact that I was there speaking of the *original* sources of the idea of God, antecedent to revelation. He will find that I have taken account of conscience in other passages. This is also my answer to Professor Orchard on this point.

Canon Girdlestone's next objection, which is also made by other speakers, does not take sufficient account of the limitations imposed upon me by the fact that recent critics who have maintained their position within the Christian Church have disputed the accuracy of the Hebrew records. I cannot, therefore, use them as undisputed witnesses to facts. My critics bring forward the reflections of the historian as authoritative. They forget that in a purely historical inquiry we should certainly not be permitted to use the *obiter dicta* of Herodotus or Thucydides, Livy or Tacitus, Macaulay or Froude, as evidence of facts which occurred long before their time, or as decisive as to the opinions of the historical personages they bring before us in their narratives. I can, under present circumstances, only use the facts which the Hebrew historians relate; I cannot insist on their explanations of them, however much I should be personally willing to do so. On the one fact alleged by Canon Girdlestone I am, I regret to say, altogether in conflict with him. I can only interpret Abraham's words, “Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” when coupled with the anxiety he evidently feels on the subject of his prayers, as an evidence that he was not by any means sure

that the "Judge of all the earth" would "do right."* His prolonged and fervid pleading for the doomed city seems to me to differ very considerably indeed from the calm confidence with which the Christian "makes his requests known unto God." Nor do I think that the Old Testament can be fairly and rationally explained, except on the ground on which the writers of the New Testament, and especially the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, insist, namely, that the revelation of God has been a *progressive* revelation.

With regard to the derivation of the word Shaddai, Canon Girdlestone simply expresses a different opinion from mine. He gives no evidence for it. He will therefore forgive me if I adhere to my view, especially since, as I have pointed out, the conception of God as an Avenging Deity is introduced in the Second Commandment. But if any other view of Shaddai be preferred to my own, it can be substituted for that which I have adopted without materially affecting the argument in the paper. I may say almost the same thing in reference to Canon Girdlestone's view of *πνεῦμα*. I did not base my argument on the Hebrew scriptures, but on the declaration of our Lord in St. John's Gospel. The Hebrew word for spirit, I think, is nevertheless connected with the idea of breathing. And *σῶπξ* in Greek is more frequently contrasted with the word *πνεῦμα* than in the corresponding words in Hebrew. But *σῶπξ* never signifies *matter*, so far as I am aware, but the evil tendencies of the body degraded by the fall.

In regard to evolution, some of my critics seem to have been possessed by a preconception that whenever that word is used it must be used in the sense in which it was employed by Mr. Darwin. This seems to me to be the case especially in Professor Orchard's remarks. I had hoped that I had sufficiently explained the sense in which I employ the word in pp. 57, 58. But it appears that I have not done so. I certainly did not mean by it the "evolution of new species." In the first place I see in it a *Divine* working, not a working apart from God. And next, I apprehend that it can no longer be denied that God is working *in* phenomena, not simply outside them. That is also what I mean by immanence. But that it does not, in my mind, exclude transcendence is clear from p. 60. If any one questions the

* See notes pp. 72 and 77.

Divine immanence in man, I would simply ask him to note the way in which the word *μένω* is used in St. John's writings. I may add that on p. 63 I have introduced the word "Divine" in my paper to meet Professor Orchard's other objection.

I can only, in conclusion, express my thankfulness for the way in which the paper has been received from the scientific side, and I hope I may regard it as a proof that the controversy between theologians and men of science has been finally closed.

POSTSCRIPT.—When writing my reply, I had not the *written* criticisms before me. I thank Professor Caldecott for his kind words. I have had no opportunity of studying recent investigations in psychology. What I have said in accordance with them has been instinctive. But I am glad to have my conclusions and general method confirmed by independent evidence.

I acknowledge the justice of Mr. Bomford's criticism, that beside the doctrine that God is Spirit, I should have added that St. John also describes God as Light and Love. My explanation is that I did not wish to add to the length of my paper, and that the latter part of it, as I stated at the outset, was written under great difficulties in consequence of illness. Mr. Bomford will, however, find statements exactly in accordance with his in my *Doctrinal System of St. John*, p. 27, and in my *Nicene Creed*, pp. 85, 86. I have there stated distinctly that God is described in the Bible as Light and Love, as well as Spirit, but I have added that He is also represented as Life—the source of all life, animal, moral, spiritual.