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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RELIGIOUS FACULTY IN MAN, APART FROM REVELATION. By the Rt. Rev. Bishop WELLDON, D.D.

THE object of my paper is to show how man was historically prepared, as it seems, for the reception of the spiritual truths committed to his reason, and his conscience by God. For however the nature of revelation may be conceived, it depends not only upon the will of God to reveal Himself to man, but upon man's capacity for accepting what is so revealed. But as this paper necessarily lies somewhat apart from the ordinary lines of Christian Apologetics and indeed of the relation between Christian faith and Scientific Discovery or Theory, I desire to preface it by two or three explanatory remarks.

1. Whatever be the way in which man came into the world, whether by an immediate act of the Creator or by evolution from a lower species, it is evident that there must have been a first man, in other words, there was at some point of the world's history a being who first deserved the name of man. It is perhaps a difficulty in the way of the modern doctrine of man's descent from some lower animal that the beings immediately next to him in the evolutionary scale should be either non-existent or far less numerous than such beings as are infinitely below him. But if there was, as there must have been, a first man, then the nature of man stands by itself; it is what it has been experimentally proved to be, and it must not be limited by any such standard as may be applicable to the nature of lower beings.

2. History proves the spiritual element in man. To deny it is wholly to misconceive human nature. It may be admitted that the spiritual part of man's nature, like other parts, has at times become distorted, that is, it has tended to such results

as were injurious to man himself. But it remains an essential factor of his being. Man is akin to God; he aspires to spiritual knowledge and felicity, and his religious history in all the ages is one long effort to attain the satisfaction of his spiritual nature.

3. There is no other means of satisfying man's spirituality than by revelation. All mere secular truth he may slowly but surely discover for himself. But the truths of God's being and character, of heaven and hell, of immortality, of eternal life, he can learn, if he learns them at all, only by direct communication from God. These truths and others like them, vitally important as they are to him, he cannot know unless God himself reveals them.

Assuming, then, the existence of a beneficent Deity, I perceive no intrinsic difficulty in revelation. Rather it seems to me to be such a communication as I should expect God to make to man for human good; and with all my heart I believe that God has "at sundry times and in divers manners" revealed Himself through chosen agents to humanity.

All that I propose to do in this paper is to enquire how man, by using his own natural powers, was disposed to apprehend and embrace the revelation which it was God's will to make.

When man began to think at all, he began by thinking about himself. He was chiefly concerned with himself, chiefly interested in himself; it was only natural that he should judge everybody and everything outside himself by his own nature. The old saying, *"Ἀνθρώπος μέτρον παντῶν"* contains a deep psychological truth. Man cannot escape from himself. Consciously or unconsciously he refers all phenomena to himself. Even his deities, as Aristotle* has observed, he creates in his own image.

But as soon as man reflected, in however a rudimentary manner, upon himself, he became conscious of a dualism in his own nature. To say that in early times he conceived himself, intelligently and scientifically, as a being composed of two distinct elements,

* ὡς περ καὶ τὰ ἔιδη ἑαυτοῖς ἀφομοιοῦν οἱ ἄνθρωποι, οὕτω καὶ τοὺς θεοὺς τῶν θεῶν, Polit, i, 2, 7.

his body and soul, would be to antedate what has been a subsequent result of self-introspection. But it must have occurred to him, almost in the birthday of human thought, that his nature was not single but composite. He realised, however faintly at first, that there was in his nature one part which issued commands and another part which obeyed them. He realised, too, that there was in his nature not only his material body, but something else that was different from the body, something immaterial, impalpable, invisible. For it was evident that he himself was not always the same, that there are times when his being seemed to live and act as a single whole, and other times when one part of his being seemed to be present, and the other part to be temporarily divorced from it.

Among the experiences which conferred upon his mind the essential dualism of his nature, it is probable that the contrast between waking and sleeping was powerful as it was natural. For the greater part of his life he is conscious, intelligent, active, energetic; he sees, he feels, he thinks, he converses and others converse with him; he is occupied in eating and drinking and in the regular avocations and pleasures of his nature; he exercises the power of will and enjoys the satisfaction of gratifying it, and suffers the pain of finding it disappointed and defeated. But for the lesser part he is as one living though without life; he is feeble as a babe; he lies at the mercy of circumstances; he is bereft of consciousness, character and judgment; he is little more than a dull brute, quite inert, insensible of all that passes before his closed eyes, and impotent to defend himself against the assault of man or beast.

This attitude of strenuousness and helplessness is man's personal daily experience; and it was inevitable that primitive man should reflect upon it. What account of it could he render to himself? He could scarcely, I think, avoid the inference that something, which existed and was active within him during his waking hours, passed out of him for a while, when he fell asleep—that something he called his soul or his spirit. But there was a further question that must have suggested itself to primitive man: If the spirit departs from the body during sleep, what becomes of it? The body remains,

although apparently helpless and lifeless; but where is the spirit? Upon this interesting problem the savage imagines that light is shed by the experience of dreams. In a dream the spirit appears to quit the body and to become independent of all corporeal limitation; to enter a new world, to participate in a new existence, to emancipate itself from the conditions of time and space, to hear strange voices, and to see unwonted sights such as are impossible to it and inconceivable in its waking hours; to consort freely with friends and kinsmen, with strangers and enemies, and not less freely with the dead than with the living; and to realize sensations of joy and sorrow, delight and disappointment, hope, fear, anticipation and failure, in which the body neither claims nor is capable of claiming any part. And the savage argues that, if this is so, then the spirit has actually been where it has seemed to be, and has actually done what it has seemed to do, has actually suffered what it has seemed to suffer; in other words, that it has lived for a time a life of its own, apart from the body.

Modern anthropologists have often insisted upon the vital part played by dreams in the origin of religion. "The ideas of religion," says Lord Avebury,* "among the lower races of man are intimately associated with, if they have not originated from, the condition of man during sleep, and especially from dreams."

Dreams have been commonly held, in the judgment of primitive peoples, to attest the reality of spiritual beings external to man; but they afford still stronger testimony, in that same judgment, to the reality of the life which the spirit lives independently of the body. For dreams would be no less impressive upon the minds of savages in the infancy of human experience than they are now upon the minds of children; it would be impossible to shake off the consciousness of their usual constant effect, and the imaginations of dreamland would constantly tend to become more and more the realities of the primitive world.

But sleep is not the only phenomenon which would suggest to

* *Origin of Civilization*, ch. 6, p. 225.

untutored minds the separate existence of the spirit. Sleep, it is true, occupies a unique place in human experience, owing to the regularity of its occurrence among all men; whatever evidence of the nature or action of the human spirit was derivable from sleep would be universally apprehended and understood. Nor would any man, in recounting the history of his dreams, fail of an actual or a probable response in the positive experience of his fellow men. But there are other phenomena which would equally demand an explanation, although they are not, like sleep, habitual and universal, and would equally find it in the dualism of human nature. It is probable that a state of trance or insensibility would happen to man more frequently in primitive than in civilised society. His ignorance of the laws of nature, his emotional excitability, his misuse of powerful intoxicating drugs would occasion it. But whether it was common or rare, the savage, who saw that a body, which a moment before had been sensitive and vigorous, was reduced to a condition of torpor, would jump to the inference that it had been deserted by the spirit which gave it life; he would immediately conclude that the spirit had gone out of it, and that, unless and until the spirit returned to it, it would not revive. Every swoon would become a witness to the spirit's existence as independent of the body. And as in a case of swooning no less than of sleep, the man would after a time recover consciousness, it would be assumed that his spirit had returned to him. The word "ecstasy," by its derivation, poetically suggests what would to savage minds appear as literal or actual fact. Two other cases, at least, there are in which the thought of the temporary or permanent divorce of the human spirit from the body would not unnaturally recommend itself to primitive minds.

One is that of illness. If the savage had advanced so far in speculation as to associate the loss of consciousness or energy with a severance, however it might be brought about, between spirit or body, how would he logically argue about the slow and sure fading of human strength under the pressure of disease? Would it not be to him a natural conception that, as the strength ceased, so the spirit or soul, in which the life resided,

was gradually ebbing away, until at last it wholly left the body at death.

The other case is that of lunacy. It is still the fashion to speak of a madman as being "beside himself," or "not himself," or "out of his mind," or "out of his senses," and these expressions are so many evidences of the conviction that he has lost something which ought to be his, and which is indeed himself, but has departed from him. This conviction accounts equally for the respect and the contempt shown in different lands and at different periods of history for lunatics or idiots.

It is probable, too, that the contemplation of bodily or mental disease, as implying the departure of the spirit which is in man, from its corporeal dwelling place, would suggest the possibility of the spirit quitting the body, if only for a brief space, under certain conditions without any visible loss of physical or mental power. Spiritual or, as they are now called, telepathic, appearances were not unknown to primitive man. His wild fancy would soon exaggerate and multiply them. And if such appearances took place and were held to be not infrequent, it would be agreeable to his rude fancy of the universe that they should be ascribed to the temporary emancipation of the soul from the body.

There remains death, the most striking and solemn of human phenomena.* It is not difficult to see how primitive man would regard death. The comparison of death to sleep is an old favourite poetical fancy. Homer's "Ἦπνος κασίγνητος θάνατος," Virgil's† "Consanguineus leti sopor," Shelley's‡ "Death and his brother sleep," are all familiar illustrations of this fancy. But a poetical metaphor is to primitive man a literal truth; and as in sleep, so too in death he would believe that the spirit, being set free from the body, entered upon a new and independent life. He would think of it as enjoying new experiences. He would anticipate its return, and when he discovered that the body, instead of being reanimated by the spirit, began to moulder away, he would conclude that the spirit had finally abandoned it.

* *Iliad*, xiv, p. 231.

† *Aeneid*, vi, p. 278.

‡ "Queen Mab," i.

But the departure of the spirit from the body could not, and would not be, in his eyes the death of the spirit; rather would it be emancipation of the spirit. It would set the spirit free from restrictions which had curbed and confined its activity. Primitive man then would let his imagination run riot upon the incorporeal life of the spirit. He would ascribe to it fresh powers, faculties, emotions, experiences; nor would it be a matter of surprise to him, especially if his view of spiritual existence were still more or less sensuous, that the spirit should at certain times and under certain conditions present itself objectively to human eyes in the hours of waking as well as of sleep. The belief in spirits is almost an axiom of primitive thought. "Materialism," it has been well said,* "is one of the latest products of the human mind; spiritualism one of the earliest."

So far, I have argued that religion, being the conscious expression of the relation existing between the human spirit, and a spiritual power or powers outside itself, striking its roots down in man's apprehension of the essential dualism which characterises his own nature. It is now time to inquire what is the witness of ethnography and anthropology to the theory that has been put forward as to the supposed absence of the spirit from the body under certain conditions of human life.

Let me begin with the phenomenon of sleep. "It is a common rule with primitive people," says Mr. Frazer,† "not to waken a sleeper, because his soul is away and might not have time to get back; so if the man was awakened without his soul, he would fall sick. If it is absolutely necessary to waken a sleeper, it must be done very gradually, to allow the soul time to return." He gives, as other anthropologists have given, much interesting evidence of this superstition.

The dread of being suddenly awakened, or of suddenly awakening anybody out of sleep, has been recorded as character-

* Lord Avebury, *Origin of Civilization*, ch. 2, p. 295.

† *Golden Bough*, vol. i, ch. 2, p. 127.

istic of the Fijians,* the Malayans,† the Burmese,‡ the natives of Luzon§ in the Philippine Islands, of the Indians of Manilla,|| and of the Timorese.¶

But in sleep there are other dangers which superstitious fancy discovers besides that of a sudden awakening. The following instructive passage relates to the supposed evil consequences of practical joking upon sleepers, according to a belief current on the Bombay Presidency. "It is a most reprehensible thing and equivalent to murder to play practical jokes on sleeping persons, so as to change their appearance, *i.e.*, to paint the face in fantastic colours or to give moustachios to a sleeping woman. The reason is this: Whenever anyone sleeps, the soul leaves the body and roams abroad, and returns at the awakening: if therefore the soul can't find its own proper body on its return, it remains away altogether, leaving the body a corpse."**

It may be noticed that in some countries, as in Burma†† or Persia,‡‡ the soul is imagined to issue from the body in the form of a butterfly.

Of the belief that the soul or spirit during its absence from the body in sleep, and especially in dreams, is subject to many curious actual experiences it is possible to draw evidence from several quarters.

Thus the Greenlanders§§ hold that the soul amuses itself at night in hunting, dancing and paying visits. The New Zealanders,||| or some at least of the aboriginal inhabitants of

* T. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, ch. 6, p. 138.

† Tylor, *Anthropology*, ch. 14, p. 344.

‡ Shway Yeo, *The Burman, his Life and Notions*, vol. ii, ch. 11, p. 103. He remarks that in consequence of this superstition "it is useless to tell a Burman servant to wake you at a certain hour."

§ Jagor on the "Natives of Naga in Luzon," *Journal of the Ethnological Society*, vol. ii, p. 175.

|| Bastian, *Der Mensch*, vol. ii, p. 319.

¶ Riedel, "Die Landschaft Dawan oder West-Timor," *Deutsche Geographische Blätter*, vol. x, p. 280.

** *Punjab Notes and Queries*, vol. iii, No. 530.

†† Shway Yeo, *The Burman, His Life and Notions*, vol. ii, ch. 11, p. 103.

‡‡ Ralston, *Songs of the Russian People*, p. 117.

§§ Cranz, *Grönland*, p. 257; *cf.* Bastian, *Der Mensch*, vol. ii, p. 318.

||| R. Taylor, *Te Ika a Maui*; or, *New Zealand and its Inhabitants*, ch. 5, p. 74; ch. 12, p. 160.

New Zealand, hold that a man's soul can travel in dreams beyond the limits of the earth to the regions of the dead, and can enter into conversation there with his departed kinsmen and friends.

The Fijians* hold that the spirit of a man, while he is still alive, can quit his body during sleep to inflict trouble or suffering upon his enemies. It is a reasonable supposition, as I have already urged, that, if primitive man looked upon the temporary departure of the spirit from the body as the theory naturally accounting for the phenomena of sleep and dreams, he would give the same account of such an event as a trance or a swoon. For unconsciousness is a feature of one case as of the other; and the reason of unconsciousness, as he supposes, is that the soul for the time being has left the body. And here the testimony of travellers and explorers confirms the supposition.

According to Schürmann,† for example, the word for "soul or spirit" in the Parukalla language is *wilya*. But the word for "unconscious" is *wilya marraba*, which means "without soul" or "without spirit." Keating‡ relates that in the belief of the Chippewa Indians, the soul, when it leaves the body, makes its way to a stream which it must cross on the back of a large snake. "Some souls come to the edge of the stream, but are prevented from passing by the snake that threatens to devour them; these are the souls of persons in a lethargy or trance." Williams§ is the authority for the extraordinary statement that in Fiji "when anyone faints or dies, their spirit, it is said, may sometimes be brought back by calling after it; and occasionally the ludicrous scene is witnessed of a stout man lying at full length and bawling out lustily for the return of his own soul." Not less ample is the evidence for the primitive view of physical or mental disease as caused by the temporary departure of the soul from the body.

* T. Williams, *Fiji and the Fijians*, vol. i, ch. 7, p. 204.

† *Vocabulary of the Parukalla Language*, pp. 72, 73. The Parukalla language is described as "spoken by the natives inhabiting the western shores of Spencer's Gulf in South Australia."

‡ *Expedition to the Sources of St. Peter's River*, vol. ii, ch. 3, p. 154.

§ *Fiji and the Fijians*, ch. 7, p. 204.

The Burmese, for example, imagine, when a person falls ill, either that his *leyp-bya* (*i.e.*, his soul in the form of a butterfly) has been scared by an evil spirit out of his body, or that after being so scared, it has hurried back with such precipitancy as to disorganise his constitution.* The Mongols explain bodily sickness in various ways, but the popular explanation among them seems to be that the soul has gone out of the body and is unable or unwilling to return to it. "To secure the return of the soul it is therefore necessary on the one hand to make its body as attractive as possible, and on the other hand to show it the way home. To make the body attractive all the sick man's best clothes and most valued possessions are placed beside him, he is washed, incensed, and made as comfortable as possible, and all his friends march thrice round the hut, calling out the sick man's name and coaxing his soul to return. To help the soul to find its way back a coloured cord is stretched from the patient's head to the door of the hut. The priest in his robes reads a list of the horrors of hell and the dangers incurred by souls which wilfully absent themselves from their bodies. Then turning to the assembled friends and the patient he asks, 'Is it come?' All answer, 'Yes,' and bowing to the returning soul throws seed over the sick man. The cord which guided the soul back is then rolled up and placed round the patient's neck, who must wear it for seven days without taking it off. None may frighten or hurt him, lest his soul, not yet familiar with its body, should again take flight."†

And as with physical so it was also with mental disease. That, too, was attributed to a severance between spirit and body. Thus it is recorded that the negroes of North Guinea habitually ascribed imbecility or lunacy to the premature flight of the soul from its bodily tenement.‡ Nor is the evidence less strong or striking as to the savage mode of looking upon death. Thus the Malays believe that the soul of a dying man escapes through his

* Shway Yeo, *The Burman, His Life and Notions*, vol. ii, p. 101.

† Frazer, *Golden Bough*, vol. i, ch. 2, p. 128. His description is based upon Bastian, *Die Seele und Ihre Erscheinung-wesen im der Ethnographie*, p. 36.

‡ J. L. Wilson, *West Africa*, p. 220.

nostrils. The Chinese make a hole in the roof of the house where a person lies dying to let out his soul. The custom of opening a door or a window for the departing soul when it quits the body is not yet wholly abandoned among the common people in France or Germany or England.* To quote the opinion of a careful observer†: "It is, or rather was, believed in nearly every part of the West of England that death is retarded, and the dying kept in a state of suffering, by having any lock closed, or any bolt shot in the dwelling of the dying person."

What became of the spirit after its severance from the body was in early times, as it has ever been, a matter of difference, if not of dispute. But it was natural to suppose that the disembodied spirit would linger, at least for a while, in the neighbourhood of the dead body which it had left. Accordingly, the Iroquois Indians were, or perhaps are, wont to bore holes in the coffin or to leave an opening in the grave that the spirit or soul might revisit the body. It is the same idea, half unconsciously entertained, which has at all times marked out churchyards as the natural lurking places of departed spirits or ghosts.

But not to multiply quotations or references, which are easily accessible, it seems that the first step which primitive man took or could well take towards the origination of an elementary religion, faith and practice, lay in the apprehension, however dim and faint it might be, of his own dualism. He realised that there were two constituent parts of his nature, body and spirit, and that the spirit could live and act without the body, whereas the body without the spirit was dead. He inferred therefore the superiority of the spirit to the body, and as he surveyed the face of Nature, he was prepared and inclined to discern everywhere traces of the same spiritual energy as he was conscious of in himself. Let me try to follow the process of his reasoning,

The spirit is the source of life in man. Theoretically it was localised by primitive thought in various parts of the

* Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. i, p. 454.

† Hart, *Popular Romances of the West of England*, p. 379.

human body—in the blood, or the heart, or the pupil of the eye, or, as seems most natural, in the breath. But whatever the assumed locality of the spirit might be, its presence meant life, and its departure meant death.

But life is not the attribute of man alone in Nature. There is life everywhere—motion, energy, force, vitality, not in the lower animals only, but in the wind, the sea, the flowing streams, the echoing waterfalls, the thunder, the lightning, the tremulous forest, the growing crops, the gathering dawn, the lengthening shadows of nightfall; and wherever there was life—so primitive man would argue—there was spirit.

What could be more natural than that he should imagine a spiritual force—a spiritual Being—as associated with, and actually resident in, the various objects of the natural world? Greek mythology itself recognised, almost instinctively, such deities as the Dryades, or spirits of the trees; the Naiades, or spirits of the waters, the Hyades, or spirits of the rain-clouds. It spoke not of the sky only but of Ouranos, nor of the ocean but of Poseidon, nor of the sun but of Apollo, nor of the fire but of Hephaistos, nor of the earth, but of Demeter.

It is perhaps in the instance of the thunder that the anthropomorphism of primitive theology reveals itself most clearly: for to savage minds the thunder could scarcely appear anything else than the voice of a living superhuman Person. Accordingly the thunder-god is a deity known to all or nearly all early mythologies.

The Iroquois believe in the god Heno, who rides through the heavens on the clouds, and splits the trees of the forest with the bolts which he hurls at his enemies. The Yorubas call the same god Shango; he it is who with his thunder-clap and lightning flash casts down upon the earth, according to their fancy, the rude stone celts which they dig up out of the soil and call his axes. Among the Araucanians of Chili, he is known as Dillar; and to him as the thunder-god they pray for victory, before forming battle, and render thanks when the victory is won.

This half-unconscious spiritualisation of natural phenomena is the germ of such worship as is frequently, but not correctly,

held to be idolatrous. It is not to the natural object but to the spirit residing within it, that the worship is paid. "In modern times," says Mr. Tylor,* "it is among the negroes of the New Guinea coast that the clearest idea of the sea-god is to be found when the native kings, praying him not to be boisterous, would have rice and cloth, and bottles of rum, and even slaves, cast into the sea as sacrifices." The modern Parsi worships not the sun but the Sun-god, as the ancient Egyptians worshipped Ra. Traces of such sun-worship are not wanting in the Old Testament;† it was one of the forces constantly threatening the pure monotheism of Israel.

From the sun and the ocean, from the thunder and the lightning, and such other powerful and impressive natural forces, the conception of spirits, innate and inherent in natural objects, came to be spread over the whole face of Nature. But it was always the spirit of the object and not the object which was worshipped. Thus Waitz‡ makes the following remark: "A negro who paid honour and offered food to a tree was told that the tree did not eat anything; he defended himself against the criticism by replying, 'Oh! it is not the tree which is fetish; the fetish is a spirit which is invisible, but he has incorporated himself in this tree. It is true that he cannot consume our material foods, but he enjoys the spiritual part of them, and leaves behind the material part which we see.'"

But the "omnipresent religions and personal interpretation of Nature," as Grote§ calls it, so natural to primitive man, soon went a step further. It attributed to natural objects not only life and force but volition. And this, too, was the result of judging Nature by the standard of humanity. Man was conscious of will in himself; he knew that he could do things or refrain from doing them at will. He knew, too, that his fellow men could do him either good or, more

* *Anthropology*, ch. 14, p. 360.

† Deut. iv, 19; xvii, 3. II Kings xxiii, 11.

‡ *Anthropologie der Naturvölker*, vol. ii, p. 188.

§ *History of Greece*, preface, p. viii.

frequently, evil, and did it intentionally. But if the act of an enemy in bringing down a club upon his head demonstrated ill-will, what was to be said when a branch of a tree fell upon his head? He argued at once that the tree, *i.e.*, the spirit of the tree, was angry with him and meant to do him harm; and he sought either to punish the tree or to propitiate it, as his mood inclined him.

A child to-day, if it receives a painful injury, although through its own fault, from a lifeless object, will almost certainly, if left to itself, set about beating the object which has injured it. But the instinctive action of the modern child is the settled habit of primitive man. Thus a native of Brazil would try to bite the stone over which he stumbled or the arrow by which he was wounded. It is even told how a modern king of Cochin China would put one of his ships, if it sailed badly, in the pillory like a human criminal.

Times have changed, civilisation has advanced, but the same disposition reappeared in the Athenian judicial procedure when a court of justice sat in the Prytaneum upon an axe or a stone which had caused the death of a human being; and again down to quite recent days, in the provision of the English law by which not only an animal which killed anybody, but a cart which ran over a person, or a tree which fell upon his head, became *ipso facto* devoted or elevated to the service of God's poor.

Primitive man then personifies Nature. He spiritualizes Nature. He invests natural objects not with life only but with will; and his religion, as expressing the relation which he conceives to exist between his own spirit and the spiritual force outside himself, naturally takes the form of an attempt to influence the unseen powers in which he instinctively believes.

This is the beginning of religion. It contains the germs of all the infinitely various creeds and cults which have elevated or desolated humanity.

For as man's intellectual faculties were strengthened by observation and reflection, it was almost inevitable that he should effect the speculative transition from so-called idolatry to polytheism, from the worship of many gods to the worship of

fewer gods, and in the end to monotheism. The spiritual powers resident in all natural objects converge into the one great spiritual power who is called God. And the gradual ennoblement of religion lies in the purging away of all the material imaginations which have gathered around the pure spirituality of God Himself. For when once the existence of spiritual beings, many or few, was apprehended, the belief in the one Supreme spiritual Being was a sure result of time and thought.

In this paper I have treated the origin of religion from the human side alone. I have inquired how man, being such as he is and living in such a world as he inhabits, developed his religious instincts and capacities. But there is a divine side as well to religion. For man is religious, because God has created in him a natural aptitude for religion. He owes his religious interpretation of the natural world to the constitution of his own nature. Also, however much he may reflect upon external nature, however eagerly he may seek to discover in it the counterpart of his own natural character, yet the sublime truths of the Christian religion are such as he cannot learn for himself, but must get to know, if at all, by direct spontaneous revelation of God. For revelation is in fact nothing else than the divine communication of vastly important spiritual truths which man is, and must ever be, impotent to discover apart from the inspiration of God.

RESOLUTION.

Moved by Professor J. W. SPENCER, D.Sc., and seconded by Colonel T. H. HENDLEY, C.I.E., and carried, "That the thanks of the Meeting are hereby accorded to the Right Rev. Bishop Welldon, D.D., for his able and interesting address."

The following Resolutions were also put to the Meeting by the PRESIDENT and carried :—

1. Moved by Colonel YATE, C.S.I., and seconded by Mr. W. E. THOMPSON SHARPE, that the Report be received, and the thanks of the Members and Associates be presented to the Council, Officers and Auditors, for their efficient conduct of the business of the Victoria Institute during the year.

Responded to by the SECRETARY.

2. Moved by General HALLIDAY, and seconded by Mr. M. L. ROUSE, B.L., that the thanks of the Meeting be presented to the President for his conduct in the Chair.

Responded to by the PRESIDENT.

3. Moved by the SECRETARY and carried :—That the thanks of the Meeting be accorded to the Council of the Geological Society for permission to hold the Annual Meeting in the rooms of the Society.

The meeting then adjourned.