CHRISTIANITY AS THE PLEROMA.

BY THE EDITOR.

[CONCLUDED.]

THE PAGANISM OF ANCIENT ISRAEL.

We have so far spoken of Judaism as a known quantity and have used the terms "Jews" and "Gentiles" in their traditional meaning to express a contrast which was well established at the beginning of the Christian era; but Judaism has a history. For the sake of understanding how the new faith, though it had to be Gentile in character, could profit by becoming affiliated with the Jews, we must first acquaint ourselves with the nature of this remarkable people.

Judaism is a unique phenomenon in history. It is the product of contradictory tendencies which have been hardened in the furnace of national misfortune. The religion of the Jews combines the universalism of a monotheistic faith with the narrowness of a nationalism which localizes God and regards the Jews as the elect, the chosen people. Judaism is therefore characterized by a certain precocious maturity. At a time when monotheism was an esoteric doctrine in countries such as Egypt and Babylonia, a kind of philosophy of the educated classes, the Jews had adopted it as their national religion. Yet the revelations of this one and sole God, of the creator and ruler of the universe, were thought to have taken place in a very human way, and bloody sacrifices were still offered in the old pagan fashion at the altar of Jerusalem, which alone was declared to be the legitimate spot to approach God. Some antiquated and barbarous institutions such as circumcision and other requirements of the so-called Mosaic law were enforced, and the purity of Jewish blood, to the exclusion of the Gentiles as impure, was vigorously insisted on.
The history of Judaism is a long story which is of great importance for the development of Christianity.

We have reason to believe that the religion of ancient Israel was quite similar in belief and moral principles to the religions of the surrounding Gentiles. Yahveh (or as the name is now erroneously pronounced, Jehovah) was worshiped by other nations before the Israelites began to pray to him; it was Moses who adopted the Yahveh cult not from his own ancestors, not from Abraham or Jacob, the patriarchs of Israel, but from Jethro his Gentile father-in-law, a Kenite priest in the district of Mount Horeb in the Sinai peninsula.

Israel's God Yahveh was not very different from other gods. He demanded human sacrifices as they did and was originally the protector of his own people, a tribal deity. According to the Bible the Children of Israel despoiled the Egyptians at the express command of Yahveh and slaughtered the inhabitants of conquered cities in his honor just as did the Moabites in honor of their god Khemosh. According to the word (i.e., the command) of Yahveh did Hiel lay the foundations of Jericho in Abiram his firstborn and set up the gates thereof in Segub, his youngest son (1 Kings xvi. 34), while Jephthah sacrificed his daughter because he believed that Yahveh, the God of Israel, demanded it.

We know also that the patriarchs had idols, or teraphim, for we learn incidentally that Rachel stole the images of her father (Gen. xxxi. 34). Even David, the hero of Israel, had such statues in his own house, for we read that when Saul sent messengers to slay David, his wife Michal helped him to escape by placing the figure of their house god in his bed to mislead the King's messengers (1 Sam. xix. 12-17). The prophet Hosea (iii. 4) mentions the use of these idols, the teraphim, together with the Urim and Thummim, the Ephod and the Stone Pillar, as an indispensable part of the religion of Israel.

Ancient Israel was not monotheistic. Yahveh was originally one god among other gods but the patriotic Israelite was required to worship him alone. When the Israelites were saved from the

1 The definite article is used לְעִנֵּי הַשָּׁרוֹן, which proves that it was a definite piece of furniture in their house, not an idol that by accident happened to be there.
power of Egypt, Moses glorified Yahveh in a hymn in which he exclaimed: "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?"

There are many passages in the historical books which imply that it is deemed quite proper for Gentiles to worship their gods, but the Israelite is expected to worship Yahveh alone, the national god of the people.

Yahveh was worshiped in Israel under the form of a bull even in the days of the prophet Elijah. The subject is incidentally mentioned in Professor Cornill's *History of the People of Israel*, p. 127, where he says: "In this connection the fact is highly noteworthy, and yet is not generally given a clear explanation, that we do not hear a single word of rebuke on this subject from the prophet Elijah. When he denounces Baal in Samaria and Israel, he is simply advocating the 'calves of Dan and Bethel,' the only customary form of worship in the kingdom of Israel, and he himself did not attack it. The view that this whole species of worship was pure heathenism and the worship of God in an image folly and absurdity, is first found in the prophet Hosea and is an outgrowth of prophetic literature."

The temple of Solomon was built according to the plan of the Phoenician temples by Hiram, a Phoenician architect, and no objection was raised because a pagan built the temple of the God of Israel. This fact indicates that in the times of Solomon the Phoenicians were not regarded as idolaters by the Israelites. Even in the days of Manasseh in the seventh century B.C. the temple of Jerusalem was still in possession of all the paraphernalia of solar worship (2 Kings xxiii. 11).

In pre-Exilic times no objection was ever raised to intermarriage with foreigners. Moses married first the daughter of a Kenite and then even an Ethiopian woman, which is commonly interpreted to mean a negress. Solomon was the son of a Hittite woman, and yet he became king of Israel. Schrader points out that even David, now considered the national hero of Israel, was not an Israelite but a Gentile. It is a fact commonly agreed on by Old Testament scholars, and Professor Sayce calls attention to David's appearance described in Samuel (xvi. 12 and again in xvii. 42) as red-haired and of a fair complexion. Schrader thinks that he belonged to the tribes of the Cherithites and Pelethites of whom his body-guard was

4 The authorized version translates Sam. xvii. 42 "ruddy and of a fair countenance." But the Hebrew word שֹׁפֶן which is also used of Esau (as already stated by Gesenius) can not designate a ruddy complexion but means "red-haired."
composed. The etymology of Cherethites\(^5\) has been brought into connection with the name of the Cretans and it seems probable that they together with their kinsmen, the Aryan Philistines, must have come from the Greek islands in the Ægean Sea. This would prove David to be an Aryan instead of a Semite. The hostility between Saul and David was not purely personal and it is noteworthy that when David fled before Saul he sought refuge at the court of a Philistine king. The historical truth which Old Testament scholars discover in the contradictory stories of David's life, points to the fact that he was the founder of the tribe of Judah which is mainly a conglomeration of southern clans of Edom, among them Kaleb, Peresh and Zerakh. Schrader (Keiünschr. u. d. A. T., p. 228) says: "That there was no tribe of Judah belonging to Israel before David, can be safely concluded from Biblical sources alone. Further it follows that in prehistoric times Judah did not stand in any relation to the other tribes." David was first chieftain of Kaleb, his capital being Hebron. After a conflict with the kingdom of Saul, David conquered part of the territory of Benjamin incorporating the tribes Peresh and Zerakh. They were formerly regarded as belonging to Benjamin but later were treated as Judeans.

It was natural that later redactors with their tendency to represent David as a Judean and the national hero of Israel, tried to conceal his conflict with Benjamin. Schrader says (ibid., p. 210):

"If the development of the monotheistic doctrine which was proclaimed in Judah-Israel in the name of Yahveh must be assumed to have had its roots in the center of civilization of Hither Asia, then the purpose of the patriarchal legend,—if it pursues at all an historical purpose besides the general one of instruction,—can have been only to lay bare the threads which could be traced back to them from Judah. It is not the ethnological genesis of a small pure-blooded nation which is to be described, but the growth of its religion and its world-conception. To be the representative of this world conception Judah ought to regard as her ideal calling;—although as a matter of fact she neither did nor could so regard it."

**THE TEMPLE REFORM AND JUDAISM.**

Monotheistic tendencies had manifested themselves both in Egypt and in Babylon, but they had remained limited to the educated classes and had not affected the polytheistic service in the temples. In Egypt at the time when the Tel Amarna Tablets were written, \(^5\)2. Sam. xv. 18.
the monotheistic reform had tried to influence the religion of the people but had failed utterly. Conditions were more favorable in Persia; there it was a success.

We can not say how much Israel was influenced by these movements, but we know that a purer and deeper conception of God as a god of justice had been prepared through the prophets who denounced social wrongs as well as the abuses of religion in opposition to the established priesthood and aristocracy. The movement spread among those who were zealous for a purification of the official worship of the country and at last exerted a strong hold on the more intelligent priesthood of the capital. The result was the famous temple reform of the year 621 B. C. which may be regarded as the date of the birth of Judaism.

The temple reform was a compromise between the prophetic party and the Jerusalemite priests. The prophetic party denounced worship on the heights, but they looked up to the holy place on Mt. Zion as the national sanctuary and the favorite place of Yahveh, and the priests of Jerusalem were naturally pleased with this view, for it procured for them a religious monopoly.

The prophetic party was greatly respected in Jerusalem on account of a successful prophecy made by Isaiah about a quarter of a century before the temple reform. In the days of King Hezekiah he had glorified Mount Zion as the holy place of Yahveh, and when the Assyrians in their campaign of 702-701 threatened Jerusalem he declared "that the Lord had founded Zion and the poor of his people shall trust in it" (Is. xiv. 32; compare also 2 Kings xix. 31 ff.). Isaiah’s confidence was justified by subsequent events for it is reported that "the angel of the Lord smote an hundred four-score and five thousand," and Sennacherib raised the siege and went home.

It is true that Jerusalem was spared the horrors of pillage and it is possible that the appearance of a sudden epidemic caused the king to lead the army home, but the event was not quite so glorious as it is described in the Bible and as it appeared in later times to the imagination of the Jews, for King Hezekiah remained a vassal of Assyria and Sennacherib had carried into captivity two hundred thousand inhabitants of Judea. It was merely the salvation of a remnant at which the prophet rejoiced, and Hezekiah was thankful that he did not suffer the terrible fate of Samaria.

Sennacherib’s account of this same expedition is also preserved in a cuneiform text on a clay cylinder and the passage referring to Judea reads in an English translation thus:

6 2 Kings xix. 35; comp. Is. xxxvii. 36.
“Six and forty of the fenced cities, and the fortresses, and the villages round about them, belonging to Hezekiah the Jew, who had not submitted to my rule, I besieged and stormed and captured. I carried away from them two hundred thousand and one hundred and fifty souls, great and small, male and female, and horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen and sheep without number. In his house, in Jerusalem I shut up Hezekiah like a bird in a cage. I threw up mounds round about the city from which to attack it, and I blockaded his gates. The cities which I had captured from him I took away from his kingdom and I gave them to Mitinti, king of Ashdod.”

The preservation of Jerusalem is commonly spoken of by orthodox Christians as a mysterious event and a wonderful occurrence, but the main thing is that it was believed to be a miracle by the Jews. This belief had fatal consequences. It made the Jews overconfident in their faith so that they clung to their cause even when there was no hope of success; but while they ruined thereby their national existence, they sunk their nationality in their religion and developed in this way into an international people.

The confidence that the walls of Jerusalem were impregnable because Yahveh would not suffer Zion to fall into the hands of the Gentiles, made the Jews stubborn, so as to render the eventual downfall of Judea an inevitable necessity. The immediate result of the fulfilment of this prophecy was an increase of power for the prophetic party in Jerusalem and thereby they were enabled to carry into effect their momentous plan of a temple reform.

The story of the temple reform is told in 2 Kings xvii-xviii, and we will recapitulate the events leading to it in Professor Cornill’s words where, on page 81 of his Prophets of Israel, he says:

“The prophetic party, which had apparently not been persecuted for some time, must have kept up secretly a continuous and successful agitation. The priests in the temple of Jerusalem must have been won over to it, or at least influenced by it, and especially must its aspirations have found access to the heart of the young king, who, from all we know of him, was a thoroughly good and noble character.

“The time now appeared ripe for a bold stroke.

“When, in the eighteenth year of Josiah, 621 B. C., Shaphan the scribe paid an official visit to the temple of Jerusalem, the priest Hilkiah handed to him a book of laws which had been found there. Shaphan took the book and immediately brought it to the King, before whom he read it.”

The book was declared to be genuine and on the basis of it the
religion of Judea was newly regulated. Professor Cornill continues:

"Our first question must be: What is this book of laws of Josiah, which was discovered in the year 621? The youthful De Wette, in his thesis for a professorship at Jena in the year 1805, clearly proved that this book of laws was essentially the fifth book of Moses, known as Deuteronomy. The book is clearly and distinctly marked off from the rest of the Pentateuch and its legislation, whilst the reforms of worship introduced by Josiah correspond exactly to what it called for. The proofs adduced by De Wette have been generally accepted, and his view has become a common possession of Old Testament research."

The priests in the country who opposed the temple reform were treated with great cruelty (See 2 Kings xiii. 20) and the wizards and witches of the land were also exterminated, as we read in 2 Kings xxiii. 24:

"Moreover the workers with familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the images, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might perform the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the Lord."

THE BABYLONIAN EXILE.

The temple reform established the supremacy of the priestly party, but the priests were poor statesmen. Believing that Yahweh would not suffer the temple to fall into the hands of his enemies, they pursued a short-sighted policy siding always with the wrong party, and this ended in a most deplorable defeat. Jerusalem was taken, and the aristocracy of the people together with all their leaders, the educated classes, the scribes and even the smiths who could work in iron were deported into Babylon.\(^7\)

This fate was sufficient to destroy any nation, but it did not ruin the Jews. Having gained the conviction by the temple reform that they were the chosen people of God, the exile only served to harden them in the furnace of tribulation, and so Judaism was prepared for the part which it was going to play in the further development of religious ideas.

When we bear in mind that the deported Jews belonged to the upper and more highly educated classes, we can easily understand that their ideas of monotheism, which in those days constituted an advanced stage of free thinking, soon became with them a mono-

\(^7\) See 2 Kings xxiv, 14-16.
mania. They may have become acquainted with Babylonian mono-
theists, and whenever they had an opportunity to discuss religion
may have claimed that their God was the only true God and that
he had manifested himself in their literature. One thing is sure,
they now interpreted the treasures of their literature in the spirit of
this conviction, and their priests prepared new redactions of their
old books in the light of the new faith.

While the Jewish conception of religion was rigorously mono-
theistic, for Yahveh was regarded as the only true God of the uni-
verse, the creator of heaven and earth, it was at the same time
narrowed down to a most egotistical nationalism, and this national-
ism was made the quintessence of their religion.

Every nation passes through a phase in which it regards itself
as the favored people of the earth, looking with contempt or pity
on all others. The Greeks called the non-Greeks barbarians, the
Germanic tribes called the non-Germanic races Welsh, the Egyptians
looked upon all foreigners as unclean, and the Chinese are possessed
of similar notions up to this day. Among the Jews this idea was
incorporated into the fabric of their faith, and thus we may say that
while Judaism marked a progress in the history of religion it must
at the same time be regarded as a contraction of the religious sen-
timent; instead of broadening the people, it restricted and limited
their horizon. While liberating themselves from some of the gross-
est superstitions of paganism, the Jews cherished a mistaken and
most fatal belief in their own preeminence over the Gentiles.

Their adherence to this notion made the Jews so intolerable to
others that they bore the cause of their calamity with them wherever
they went, however innocent the individuals may have been since
they imbibed their ideas from childhood.

Whatever wrongs the Gentiles did, the Jews gave the first
provocation, and the very way in which they are banded together
against the rest of the world made them naturally the "odium" of
the human race, as Tacitus calls them.

It is easy for us to see that the exclusiveness of the Jews was
a fault, that their progressiveness was lamentably cramped by the
reactionary spirit of a most Chauvinistic tribal patriotism, but this
very fault rendered them fit to become the vessel that was wanted
to hold the monotheistic belief. Without their superstition of the
holiness of their tribal existence, they would never have persisted
as Jews, they would have disappeared among the nations. In order
to become the torch-bearers of the light of monotheism, their faith
had to be hardened into a nationalistic religion and their very short-
coming rendered them fit to serve a higher purpose in the history of mankind.

We must grant one thing, that while the temple reform and the subsequent exile hardened the national character of the Jews to such an extent that the Jews remained Jews wherever they went, the persistence of the Jewish race ensured ultimately the success of Christianity as a world-religion.

THE DISPERSION.

One of the most remarkable phenomena in the history of mankind, and in its way quite unique, is the Dispersion of the Jews. The Jews are the only people of antiquity which exists still and has preserved its type, but the Jewish people differ from all other nations of the world in this one particular point that they are a people without a country. Ancient Judea is no longer Jewish, the Jews live among the other nations; they are scattered and wherever we go we find Jews. This Dispersion (or, as it was called in Greek, Diaspora) has been an object of awe and wonder; and though it gives the Jews a decided advantage in the struggle for existence, it has been regarded as a curse which rests upon this race of "rovers."

We are so accustomed to the dispersion of the Jews that it scarcely rouses our curiosity any longer, and I can not discover the slightest scientific attempt to explain the phenomenon. The best authorities, both Christian and Jewish, accept the facts in the traditional interpretation as a kind of mysterious doom. So for instance Professor Sayce, when discussing the peculiarities of the Jewish people speaks of the Babylonian exile and the world exile of the Jews as the two great national calamities of the race. He says:

"The Jews flourish everywhere except in the country of which they held possession for so long a time. The few Jewish colonies which exist there are mere exotics, influencing the surrounding population as little as the German colonies that have been founded beside them. That population is Canaanite. In physical features, in mental and moral characteristics, even in its folklore, it is the descendant of the population which the Israelitish invaders vainly attempted to extirpate. It has survived, while they have perished or wandered elsewhere. The Roman succeeded in driving the Jew from the soil which his fathers had won; the Jew never succeeded in driving from it its original possessor. When the Jew departed from it, whether for exile in Babylonia, or for the longer exile in the world of a later day, the older population sprang up again in all its
vigor and freshness, thus asserting its right to be indeed the child of the soil.”

Professor Graetz, the best Jewish authority on Jewish history, expresses himself thus (Geschichte der Juden, I, 619-620):

“At the cradle of the Jewish nation was sung the song of ceaseless wandering and dispersion such as no other nation has ever known, and this dread lullaby came to fulfilment with terrible literalness. There was hardly a corner in either of the two dominant empires, the Roman and the Parthian, where Jews were not to be found, where they had not formed a religious community. The border of the great Mediterranean basin and the estuaries of all the main rivers of the old world, the Nile, the Euphrates, the Tigris, and the Danube were peopled with Jews. As by an inexorable fate the sons of Israel were driven farther and farther away from their center. But this dispersion was likewise a blessing and an act of providence. It sowed abroad the seeds which were destined to bear to all directions a nobler God-conception and a purer civilization.”

Even Karl Vollers, the most recent liberal writer on the history of religion, says in Die Weltreligionen, that “the dispersion (Diaspora, Gola) which had started centuries before [the breakdown of the Jewish theocracy] now becomes general, and down to our own days forms the signature of the history of the Jews.”

Convinced of the enormous significance which the fact of the dispersion of the Jews possesses in the history of Christianity, I have given the problem some thought and I have come to the following conclusion.

The name Diaspora or Dispersion is misleading because it suggests that some mysterious cause scatters the Jews among the Gentiles. The truth is that the Jews scatter no more and no less than any other nationality, but while all other nationalities become acclimatized to their new homes, Jews remain Jews wherever they go. The problem therefore is not how did the Jews scatter, but how did they preserve their own type, and the answer is not far to seek.

Judaism is a prematurely acquired belief in monotheism, which means that the Jews had adopted monotheism before they were able to grasp its significance.

The Jews of the Exile believed that there was but one God, the creator of heaven and earth and ruler of the universe, and that this only true God was their own God Yahveh; they identified him in their own history with the God-conceptions which their different

8 Published at Eugen Dietrichs Verlag, Jena, 1907.
tribes had held at different times. He was the Shaddai of Abraham, the Elohim of the patriarchs, the Zebaoth of Ephraim, and above all he was Yahveh, the God of David and of Moses. All these names became designations of the same deity.

If the Jews had been ripe for monotheism, they would have abolished the barbarous and pagan institutions of which their religion was still possessed, as for instance the practice of offering bloody sacrifices to God, repeatedly denounced by the prophets. Had the Jews been sufficiently matured to understand the moral applications of a belief in one God, they would have seen that before God there is no difference between Jew and Gentile and that the chosen people are those who actualize the divine will in their lives. This inconsistency of the Jewish faith which combined a universalistic breadth with an outspoken and almost unparalleled narrowness pampered by national vanity, rendered it possible for them to cling to some old-fashioned institutions, called the Law, or the Law of Moses, which was kept with a remarkably punctilious piety that would have been worthy of a better cause. But circumcision, abstinence from pork, certain rules of butchering, a rigorous observance of the Sabbath, etc., would in themselves have been harmless, had not their religion at the same time become a belief in the Jewish nationality which established a line of demarcation between the Jews and the rest of the world. Here lies the root of the tenacity of Judaism which has produced that most remarkable historical phenomenon of the preservation of the Jews in the midst of the other nations, a phenomenon known as the Dispersion.

All the nations scatter. The great capitals of the world contain representatives of any race that is suffered admittance, but within the second or third generation these strangers are being absorbed. The Jew alone resists absorption. He remains a Jew. The newcomer finds his coreligionist, and associates with him. The circle grows and a synagogue is built.

How many nations have sent their sons into Germany! Think of the innumerable French Huguenots, Italians such as the Cottas, the Brentanos. From Scotland came Kant’s father, and Keith, the famous general of Frederick the Great. Who now thinks of their foreign ancestry? They have all become Germans.

The same is true of the Germans who settle in other countries, France, Italy, Spain, etc. The traveler comes across them here and there, but their children scarcely know whence their father or grandfather came.

The truth is that the children of every nation are scattered
among the other nations. Everywhere there are people who go abroad to seek their fortunes. There is everywhere a constant tendency to migrations of small fractions of the population to distant countries where they are attracted in the hope of improving their condition. That the Jews are not assimilated as the others, is due to their religion, the main import of which, as we have seen, is the preservation of the Jewish nationality.

Every man has the inborn tendency of being a Hebrew, i.e., "a royer." All human life radiates. The Jew is not an exception. He simply follows the general rule, but he at the same time preserves his own kind. We find Jews everywhere, and this gives the impression that they are scattered all over the world. Not having a country of their own, the idea naturally originated that the Jews have become scattered because they no longer possess a country of their own, but the dispersion of the Jews antedates the destruction of Jerusalem and would be the same even if Jerusalem had never been destroyed.

The Jewish dispersion is frequently regarded as a mysterious curse that has befallen the race because they have rejected the Saviour and crucified Christ; and this romantic conception has found a poetic expression in the gruesome legend of Ahasuerus, the "Wandering Jew," the man who can not die. This occult interpretation of the phenomenon casts a glamour of mystery upon the Jews and makes them an object of interest; not indeed of love, but of awe. We need not add that this view is more poetical than true, for the Jewish dispersion existed before the crucifixion. Horace quotes a proverb, Credat Judaeus Apella, viz.: "Try to make the Jew Apella believe it."—which implies that the Jews lived among the Romans and were known to them as sharp fellows who would not be taken in easily. They existed not only in Rome but all over the Greece-Roman empire, and wherever Paul went on his missionary journeys he found Jewish congregations,—in fact he himself was born in the Dispersion.

The Jews were known to the Gentiles as representatives of a rigorous monotheism; their claim that they were the worshipers of the only true God was reiterated, and their literature, written with mysterious characters in a strange tongue, was commonly accepted as a verification. The ancient pagan gods had lost the last semblance of authority and so the Jewish protestation that they were idols, nonentities, vain conceits of an idle imagination, was willingly believed.

Taken all in all, the Jew was surrounded with a mystery which
made it very plausible that some secret truth was hidden in Judaism. The striking characteristics which distinguish the Jew, called for an explanation and made it desirable for a universal religion, which like Judaism was monotheistic, to explain their existence and assign them a part in the development of truth.

This work was done by St. Paul, and his explanation was the more willingly accepted by the Gentiles as it explained also the odium in which the Jews were held. According to St. Paul the Jews had been the chosen people of God, who, however, were now rejected on account of their stubborn attitude toward the Gospel which he preached.

There existed for some time a few Jewish colonies which were not dominated by the spirit of the post-Exilic reform. We name the one in Elephantine (or J eb) in Upper Egypt and the other one in Tahpanhes, in Lower Egypt, both flourishing communities where of late interesting monuments have been discovered; but it is noteworthy that none of them survived. Not being so narrow-minded as to condemn any approach to the life and habits of, and inter-marriage with, the Gentiles, they disappeared in the long run. They lacked that preservative talisman without which the Jew would not essentially differ from other human beings.

JEW AND GENTILE.

Now let us ask what were the objections of the Jews to paganism?

We know that in all pagan religions a belief in the immortality of the soul was dearest to the pious, and judging from an ancient Babylonian poem, "Ishtar's Descent to Hell," and from other indications, we must assume that the Babylonians and other Gentiles tried to communicate with the dead in some way after the fashion of spiritualist seances by professional conjurors.

These mediums of ancient times are called in the Bible "wizards and witches," and their controls "familiar spirits." Against this class of people the ire of the exiled Jews seems to have blazed up most furiously, for they are condemned in the strongest terms in Deuteronomy and the Deuteronomic insertions of the priestly redactors. We are told again and again that they were expelled from Israel and the penalty of death by stoning was imposed upon them. And yet they must have existed in ancient times, for we have a graphic account of the witch of Endor whom Saul visited. Those verses which mention the expulsion of the wizards and witches by
Saul (I Sam. xxviii. 9-10) are perhaps a later insertion of the priestly redactor in order to explain how Saul could consult a witch, if witches were not tolerated in Israel. The account itself seems to be complete without these lines, and it would then appear that the king made no secret of his intention to seek an interview with the ghost of Samuel. At any rate this custom of citing ghosts was a great abomination to the Exilic and post-Exilic Jew, and it almost seems as if the leaders of the exiled Jews who gave a definite shape to Judaism by impressing their views upon the rest of the Jewish people, omitted on account of their aversion to a ghost-conception of the dead, all references to a future life from their sacred literature and so gave the impression that they did not believe in immortality. It is difficult to say what the Israelites thought of the soul in the times of Saul, but it is probable that then they shared the views of their neighbors, while in post-Exilic times the Jews were opposed to the immortality-conception of the Gentiles.

Now we know at the same time that the Gentile belief in immortality is closely connected with their legends of the God-man who is born on earth, becomes a hero and a saviour, struggles for the cause of mankind, and is slain to rise again from the tomb. All this was as much of an abomination to the Jew as was the worship of the Queen of Heaven. To the Jew, God was God and not a man, neither was he a woman. The idea of a mother of God, a Goddess mother, or even a Goddess bride was to them so senseless that the Hebrew language avoided the formation of the female form of God.

We do not mean to defend the ancient paganism and its superstitions, but in fairness to truth we must say that many accusations of the Jews against the Gentile conception of gods, is erroneous,—so especially the proposition that the Gentiles worshiped the very statues of their gods. The Psalmist says:

"The idols of the heathen are silver and gold,
The work of men's hands.
"They have mouths, but they speak not;
Eyes have they, but they see not;
"They have ears, but they hear not;
Neither is there any breath in their mouths.
"They that make them are like unto them:
So is every one that trusteth in them."

When we read the religious hymns of ancient Babylon and Egypt, many of which are full of noble inspiration, we receive quite
another impression of the pagan polytheistic faith. The statues of the gods in the temples were not deemed to be the gods themselves, but only their representative images, and we can see no difference between pagan idolatry so called and the use of icons in Christian churches. But this is a side issue; the main point is that the Jews were opposed to the worship of idols including the making of statues and images in any form; they were further opposed to the idea of a God-man, and to the belief in immortality such as was held by all the Gentiles. These ideas, however, reasserted themselves in the Apocrypha and thus prepared the way for the foundation of gnostic views resembling Christianity, among such Jews as Philo, Apollos and finally St. Paul, the Apostle.

The contrast between Jew and Gentile is fundamentally based upon a temperamental difference. The Jew wants religion pure and simple; he takes monotheism seriously and brooks no mediation of intercessors, no mysticism, no allegorizing, no profound and abstruse symbols. The Gentile sees the divine everywhere. His monotheism is no rigid Unitarianism. He is a dualist whose conception of the duality of things is explained by a higher union and thus he formulates his belief in God as trinitarianism. He loves art and myth, and this makes him appear in the eye of the Jew as an idolator, a worshiper of images. He seeks God not only above the clouds but also in the living examples of heroes, of ideal men, of the great representatives of God on earth.

This same contrast of the two attitudes gave rise to the rigorously monotheistic Islam, but as there are Unitarians among the Christians, so there are among the Moslems, especially among the Sheites, those who believe in a second advent of Mohammed, of a Mahdi, or a saviour of some kind; and Behaism, the new religion that originated in Persia, proves that the idea of a divine Mediator is still alive in Mohammedan countries.

THE JUDAISM OF JESUS.

St. Paul speaks of Christ as the Son of David according to the flesh and follows in this the rabbinical tradition which was commonly established at the time of Jesus. David was the great hero in the history of Israel whose rule marks the period of the nation's greatest glory. In the times of their oppression they longed for a hero who would reestablish the kingdom of David and so it was but natural that the expected Messiah was called the son of David. But though the Messiah was so called there is no reason why he should ac-
tually belong to the house of David. The house of David had died out with Zerubbabel, and if there were any of his family left they would have been able to trace their genealogy only indirectly to the royal house.

The genealogies of Joseph preserved in the New Testament are positively impossible and obviously of a late date. Even if they were tenable they would prove nothing of the descent of Jesus on the orthodox assumption because Joseph was not deemed his father. We ought to have had a genealogy of Mary.

We must assume that in the days of Jesus the claim of his disciples that he was the expected Messiah was met with the objection that nothing good could come from Nazareth and that the Messiah must be of the house of David. If Jesus could by any genealogy have established the claim of his descent from David it would certainly have been recorded, but we have in the New Testament a passage repeated in the three synoptic Gospels which proves the very opposite, viz., that Jesus in the presence of a large number of people assembled in the court of the temple disproves the idea current among the scribes and Pharisees that the Messiah must be a son of David. This incident is repeated in Mark xii. 35-37; Matt. xxv. 41-46; and Luke xx. 41-44.

We quote the shortest report according to the Gospel of St. Mark as follows:

"And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David?"

"For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said to my lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

"David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly."

In reading these verses we must bear in mind that Psalm cx to which Jesus refers, was in his days commonly ascribed to David and the expression "My Lord" was interpreted to be addressed to the Anointed One, the Messiah. In claiming the dignity of Messiah, Jesus refutes the popular notion of a Messiahship which was constituted merely by descent, the aristocracy of blood.

The question here is not whether the Psalm was really written by David nor whether the point which Christ makes is unanswerable. We have simply to note that by this argument he silenced the claim of the scribes and Pharisees which they must have made; for if this is an answer to a point raised by his enemies it can only have been the proposition that no one else but a descendant of David ought
to be the Messiah. The answer presupposes that Jesus was not of the family of David but that while he did not claim to be a descendant of the royal house, he yet held to the claim of Messiahship. If he was after all called the son of David by his adherents and by the sick who sought his help, it was only because in popular parlance the terms Messiah and Son of David had been identified.

For these reasons we must assume that Jesus was born a Galilean, a child of the people, and the story of his royal descent was an afterthought. It was attributed to him in the same way as five hundred years before him it was claimed that Buddha was the son of a king.

While Jesus was probably a Galilean, and as such, though not of purely Aryan yet of Gentile blood, he was certainly a Jew by religion. He sent out his disciples to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel,” and adds the special injunction not to go to the Samaritans nor to the Gentiles (Matt. x. 5-6). How little tenable it is to interpret this as a temporary measure to be superseded afterwards by a world mission, appears from verse 23 where Christ declares, “Verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel till the son of man be come,” which can only mean the second advent of Christ in all his glory, for in any other possible sense the first advent has taken place, since the son of man had come and was speaking to them.

According to Matt. xv. 22 ff. and Mark vii. 25 ff. Jesus refuses his help to a Gentile woman. She is called a Canaanite in the former account and a Greek of Syro-Phoenician nationality in the other. Jesus says to her that “it is not meet to take the children’s bread and cast it to the dogs.” She takes his harsh answer in full recognition of the superiority of the Jews, and taking up the same mode of expression which Jesus uses she answers, “Yet the dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their master’s table.” Only on account of her great faith Jesus yields and heals her daughter. Luke, who is a Gentile himself, omits the story.

We must remember that the Jews called the Gentiles “dogs” and “swine” and we may very well interpret Christ’s saying (Matt. vii. 6), that that which is “holy” should not be given to the dogs, and that pearls should not be cast before the swine, in this same sense, that the blessings of his Gospel do not belong to the Gentiles.

The most important passage in which Jesus stands up for Judaism is contained in the Sermon on the Mount, where we read:

“For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”
The Greek words “jot” and “tittle” denote the diacritical points used in the Hebrew text, and so this saying of Jesus does not only insist on the law in the letter but includes the most unessential parts of the letter also. One could not express himself more severely as insisting on the significance of a literal presentation of the law than is done here in a word ascribed to Jesus, and this word stands in strong contradiction to the spirit which permeates the religion of Jesus as it is commonly understood, especially to the principles in which the Sermon on the Mount is written. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus insists that the spirit is the main thing, and according to other passages he would abolish the letter in order to preserve and insist on the spirit which constitutes the purpose of the law. But if this passage means what it says, the fulfilment of the law must go down into the most minute details which is insisted on so vigorously that the law in its very letter is more stable than heaven and earth. Heaven and earth shall pass away before we can expect a relaxation of the Mosaic law. The parallel passage of this sentence is found in Luke xvi. 17, which reads as follows:

“And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.”

It is obvious that this doctrine is contrary to the interpretation which had been established in the Gentile churches, and we know that it was vigorously opposed by St. Paul. He claimed that the law had been fulfilled, and that the pagans need not be held to observe the details of the Mosaic law, such as circumcision, abstinence from pork, etc., and yet the passage is unequivocal. This seems to be the best proof of its genuineness.

Texts have often been altered to conform to new doctrines, and so we are justified in assuming that verses which incorporate an older but rejected view represent the original text and are traces of a belief that is no longer countenanced. Only by some inad- vertence were they suffered to remain and after the text became too sacred for alterations, proved a stumbling block to exegetics. Our passage is to all appearance such a relic, the character of which still bears witness to an older tradition. The severity with which the preservation of the Mosaic law is insisted upon is modified however by the words “Till all be fulfilled.”

It is not impossible that this second clause in the sentence “till all be fulfilled” is an addition made by a Gentile Christian scribe, with the intention of softening the meaning of this sentence. Paul claimed that the law was fulfilled in Christ, and for this reason it need no longer be observed by the Gentiles. Paul’s arguments ap-
pealed to the Gentiles and they no longer felt bound to obey the Mosaic law, so the scribe by adding the clause "till all be fulfilled" reminds his readers of the Pauline doctrine that in spite of the acknowledged divinity of the Mosaic law it was no longer in force since it had been fulfilled in Christ; but in inserting this clause, "till all be fulfilled," he forgot to cancel the other statement which it was intended to replace, "till heaven and earth shall pass away;" and so we have here a double condition, one which reflects the original meaning, the other the new interpretation put on it.

Since it is not probable that these passages which indicate the Jewish spirit of Jesus were later inventions because the Gentile Church would not have invented these sayings and would not have superadded them to the sacred text, the opposite must be assumed to be nearer the truth, viz., that the original Jesus was and actually remained a Jew in his religion but that later traditions tended more and more to obliterate his Jewish conviction and superadded to the traditional text sayings of a more cosmopolitan character. It is noticeable for instance that the only important passage in which Jesus shows the intention of founding a universal religion is an utterance attributed to him after his death and before his ascension, when he says (Mark xvi. 15), "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

The personality of Jesus must have been unusually attractive and sympathetic especially to the poor, the lowly, the oppressed; but he was a Jew in his convictions, and had he not been a Jew he would have been out of harmony with his surroundings for cosmopolitan ideas would scarcely have appealed to the poor Galilean fisher folk.

We do not accept the theory that the life of Jesus was a myth. We believe that he was a real person and that ultimately the Gospel accounts are based upon fact. Nevertheless the Gospel story is not history, it is strongly colored by the Christology of the Church, and the modifications which the original story underwent are the communal work of successive generations, until the Gospel assumed a shape that was generally acceptable to the majority of Christians. New Testament scholars are fairly well agreed that Mark represents the oldest account of the historical Jesus. It presupposes an earlier Gospel, the so-called Proto-Mark, which served as a source for the three synoptic Gospels and is, in its turn, based upon still older documents, the Logia and other personal reminiscences of Jesus. Matthew is a Judaizing redaction and incorporates additional material, while Luke, being compiled from other sources, was adapted for the use
of Gentiles. The fourth Gospel, however, though it may incidentally have incorporated some new reliable information, is upon the whole the least historical, but it ranges highest in its philosophical conception. It represents the final stage on which Jesus, the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Man, has at last become the Christ, the Logos, the Saviour.

There is a faction of Christianity to-day, as there always has been, who would discard the Christological additions and go back to the historical Jesus, but their procedure seems to me to be based upon an error. Religion can never be founded upon historical facts or single occurrences, nor upon individual characters, but must always rest upon eternal truths. It is not the life of Jesus that will be helpful, but what we make of it; mankind needs a Christ and thus each successive Christian generation has interpreted the story of Jesus in the spirit of its highest conception of Christ.

Scholarly investigations into the Gospel documents to determine the facts of the life of Jesus as to his actuality, his views, his race, his character, etc., may be of archeological interest, or may even possess historical value, but they are absolutely useless for religious purposes. It is quite indifferent whether Jesus was a Jew, or Galilean, whether a Semite or an Aryan, and it is also of very little consequence what view he held. Whether rightly or wrongly, the fact which we have to deal with is this, that to Christians Jesus has become the Christ. The personality of Jesus is a mere thread upon which Christians string the pearls of their religious interpretations of ideals of manhood, of the God-man, of the deity that has become flesh.

Historical investigations of the story of Jesus are apt to disclose conditions which would not please us, for it seems that what to a modern man is most repugnant, his claims of being able to drive out devils, is historically the most assured fact of his life. But what of it? Religion lets the dead past bury its dead. Jesus is gone, but Christ remains, and the living presence counts. The religion of the Christians has for good reasons been called, not Jesuism after the name of Jesus, but Christianity after Christ, the ideal of humanity, which is not an individual being but a superpersonal presence, not a man who lived and died at a certain time, but like the Platonic ideas, an eternal type, the prototype of the highest ideal of manhood. And the Christian doctrine of the preexistence of Christ conveys a great truth, for this prototype is eternal with God; it is the Logos uncreate

That Luke quotes Buddhist texts as "Scriptures" has been proved by Mr. Albert J. Edmunds in his Buddhist and Christian Gospels.
and without end; it is, to use the mystic and profound symbolism of dogmatic Christianity, God the Son begotten in all eternity by God the Father.

CONCLUSION.

Christianity may be compared to a composite portrait as made by Galton who photographed a number of faces belonging to a certain class in such a way as to bring out their general type, taking only short exposures of every individual. They must be so posed that the noses and the eyes coincide upon the sensitive plate. In the composite picture which results therefrom the individual differences disappear while the common features come out strongly and produce a new portrait which is the ideal type of all its component factors.

The relation of Christianity to the ancient pagan religions is quite similar to that which obtains between the composite photograph and the several exposures which produce it. Every faith of antique paganism left an impression more or less dim and every one was repudiated with its individual traits. Nevertheless the underlying principles of all the several religions which were mostly the same, remained in the minds of the people, and they produced a new type which was impressed upon the dualistic world-conception then prevalent. This picture, a composite of all the previous religions, looked quite unlike each single one of the originals that had contributed its share to the formation of the whole, and yet it was the sum total of their fusion.

The alliance between Christianity and Judaism was as close as childhood by adoption can be. Christianity entered upon the inheritance and claimed the history and traditions of Israel as its own, but for all that its inmost constitution remained different from Judaism. The nature of an adopted child will not be that of its foster father but will keep true to the blood of its own parents. The spirit of Christianity was Gentile from the start and has remained so in spite of the great influence of the Old Testament Scriptures upon its further development.

It is difficult to appreciate how closely the fate of rivals is always interlinked. Judaism gave to Christianity its finishing touches and Christianity incorporated into itself much of Judaism, yet the two have most fanatically anathematized each other in the past. In one sense Christianity supersedes the ancient paganism and in another sense the ancient paganism reappears in a new form in Christian doctrines. Yet the Church Fathers can not speak of the pagans
without maligning them bitterly and unjustly. It may be literally true that the bitterer the hostility between two rivals, the more similar are they in spirit; the more marked the contrast is, the greater must be their kinship. This statement almost appears like a corroboration of the pantheistic idea of the identity of Brahma in all things, which makes the red slayer the same as his victim, the one he slays.

When we speak of the pagan character of Christianity, we mean neither to disparage Christianity nor to deny the fact that its appearance represents a new era in the history of the world. We use the term only to bring out forcibly the truth that (in spite of the important part played by Judaism) Christianity is in all its essential doctrines the legitimate result of the religious development of mankind,—not of Judaism, but of the whole world, Jews and Gentiles, but mainly of the Gentiles, i. e., the nations. Instead of belittling Christianity, we must raise our estimate of and our respect for paganism, which was neither so thoughtlessly idolatrous, nor so immoral as it has been commonly represented.

The Jewish contribution to the development of religion is more negative than positive, it is like the salt that gives the flavor, but the meat was furnished by the Gentiles.

Christianity is like a big river which drains an enormous territory. It has not one source but innumerable sources, and the character of its waters together with its course depends upon the geography of the whole country, not upon what is commonly called its source. Yet people will insist on calling one spring of the whole system the source of the river as if that alone had caused its existence and none of the others need be taken into consideration.

Sometimes it happens (as for instance in the Mississippi-Missouri system) that the largest stream which supplies most of the water and has the longest course does not bear the name of the main river, and the same is true in the history of Christianity. The largest supply of its substance and also the most essential ingredients so far as quality is concerned, viz., that portion which determines the nature of its doctrines, is not furnished by Judaism to which its origin is commonly traced, but by paganism; and when we pass in review the teachings of Jesus himself, as recorded in the synoptic gospels, we can discover nothing that is typically Christian.

There is a joke told by Austrians on a Magyar who is said to have traveled to the source of the Danube where he stopped the water so that for a little while it would not flow, and with a mischievous twinkle in his eye he exclaimed: "What a surprise it will
be to the people in Vienna when the Danube suddenly runs dry!" This view of the origin of rivers is not unlike the current interpretation of the history of Christianity which is supposed to have received all its momentum either from the Sermon on the Mount, or the death of Jesus on the cross.

The spread of the Gospel of Jesus which we trace in its continuity in ecclesiastic history, is to be complemented by a consideration of innumerable other lines of thought which like tributaries of a stream have become merged into the Christian doctrines and have considerably modified them.

We shall never be able to understand the nature of the records of the life of Jesus that have come down to us, unless we bear in mind how they were altered and interpreted from the standpoint of these later additions, how they were redacted to remove what had become obsolete, and generally how they were again and again adapted to the new requirements.

Christianity is not the work of one man, but the product of ages. When the inhabitants of the countries that surround the Mediterranean Sea were for the first time in history united into one great empire, they became conscious of the solidarity of the human race and felt the need of a universal religion. In response to that need answers were given by thinkers, moral teachers, and religious leaders, whose doctrines were more or less echoed in the sentiment of the large masses. These large masses were after all the ultimate court of appeal which would render a final decision.

Several religions originated but Christianity alone survived, because it contained in a definite form what vaguely and indefinitely was slumbering in the subconscious sentiment of public opinion. Christianity had gathered up in itself the quintessence of the past, and presented solutions to the problems of religion which were most compatible with the new conditions. The generations of the first three centuries molded and remolded the Christian documents until they acquired a shape that would be in accord with the prevalent view of the times.

The subconscious ideal which in dim outlines animated multitudes, consisted of the traditional religious views inherited from the hoary past. It was fashioned by the old religions and contained the ideas of a saviour, of the God-man, and of his martyr death, of his victory over all ill and of his return to life, of forgiveness of sins, of the restitution of the world, of a golden age, a millennium and the foundation of a kingdom of God on earth. Such was the
demand of the age, and Virgil's fourth eclogue is one instance only in which this sentiment finds a poetical expression.

At the same time all the fables of mythology were discredited. The tales of Heracles, and of Adonis, of Æsculapius, and of Osiris, of all the several ancient saviours, were no longer believed: they appeared now fantastical and had become untrue and unsatisfactory. A real saviour of historical actuality was demanded. It is natural that some people expected him to appear on the throne as the restorer of peace and many greeted Augustus as a divine incarnation, the representative of God on earth. But his successors did not come up to the expectations of the people and Nero's example alone was sufficient to overthrow the belief in the divinity of the Emperor. The saviour could not be of this world, he had to be a man, and yet a God, not of secular power, but king of a spiritual empire, a king of truth, and so the personality of Jesus became more and more acceptable as the true saviour.

The ideal which constituted the demand was of Gentile manufacture, and Christianity, its fulfilment, is in this respect Gentile too, it was un-Jewish, or pagan. But being such, pagan means human: it denotes what is typical of mankind. The pagan world offered some positive solutions of the old world-problem and Judaism criticised them. Judaism represents the spirit of negation—albeit a much needed and wholesome negation.

We grant that paganism contains many objectionable features and so the Jewish attitude of negation is justified. Paganism was weighed and found wanting. Christianity then renewed the old issues but made them pass through the furnace of the Jewish condemnation of pagan mythology. The result was that the same old beliefs were so thoroughly transfigured as to render them something quite new.

Christianity accepts the old pagan world-conception and yet it is not a mere repetition of the old paganism. If we call it "paganism redivivus" we do not mean to say that it remains on the same level of primitive superstitions. It is the old paganism, broadened into universalism and purified by a severe monotheism. The old religion was thereby liberated of its most obvious faults, of narrowness, of crude literalism, of naive naturalism, and other childish notions.

The God of evolution works by laws and the marvels of his dispensation can be traced in the natural development of affairs. Just as the snowflake exhibits a design of unfailing regularity and great beauty, so the dénouement of historical events takes place according to an intrinsic necessity which gives it a definite direc-
tion, and when at the seasonable time definite aims are attained—
aims which have been prepared by preceding events—the result
appears like the work of a predetermined purpose. It is an im-
manent teleology which dominates the world. The old legends
naturally appear like prophecies which in Jesus Christ have found
their fulfilment, and so we can truly speak of Christianity as the
pleroma.