Leaders of Early Christian Thought

Sydney Herbert Mellone

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LEADERS OF EARLY CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

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TO MY FORMER STUDENTS

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PREFACE

THIS book is offered, in the first instance, to thoughtful persons who, whether or not they contemplate a systematic study of Christian theology, are interested in the history of the subject, but who are often, at the outset, bewildered by the massively detailed expositions in the larger works on the History of Christian Doctrine.

I have, I hope, been helped to avoid a mere 'sketch' of the main aspects of the subject by approaching it in the light of certain principles of fundamental importance.

(i) As a matter of fact, there has been a 'main stream' in the history of Christian Thought, in which doctrines and beliefs which have been historically vital to Christianity have survived through periods sometimes of embittered controversy and confusion. But it has not been a mere 'survival'. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments have been, and are, its primary source. But the authority of the Scriptures and their interpretation inevitably gave rise to questions which could not be directly decided by quotations from the Scriptures themselves, and which, therefore, necessarily led to a development of Christian doctrine.

(ii) The very idea of development, in reference to the history of Christian doctrine, brings us to face the conclusion powerfully argued by the greatest Christian scholar of the last century. Adolf Harnack, with a vast knowledge of the relevant facts, brought to his interpretation of the facts a guiding idea of which there is no proof adequate to the radical conclusion which he derived from it, and which is defended, though in a less extreme form, by some recent theologians. The question is therefore one of contemporary importance. Harnack saw in the history of Christian doctrines (which he always described as 'dogmas'), and in the history of the Church at large, an alien philosophical method and an illegitimate growth of ecclesiastical authority.

The Gospel of Jesus was changed from its original form, by the acceptance of Jewish 'eschatological' hopes, by the intrusion of Greek and Roman theories about God and the Soul, and above all by the *Logos* doctrine, resulting in a philosophy unfit for the expression of the Gospel. Christianity continued more and more to lose its original character, becoming an authoritative Church, prescribing belief, ritual, and practical duties. This, then, is held to have been an overlapping of the teachings of the Founder by dogmatic, ecclesiastical, and ritual excrescences which have nothing to do with the authentic message of Jesus himself. It is true that the series of changes, historically inevitable as they were, did involve a spiritual danger, because, as time went on, more stress was laid on the *stated content* of faith than on faith as an inner disposition of the soul. For purposes of unity and fellowship, it was easier to deal with characteristics which were comparatively external; and this was accompanied by a similar movement of thought and practice in the history of the Church. But Harnack's estimate of the history is not only condemnatory to a degree but is profoundly pessimistic. The endowments of man's nature include a mind and a reasoning faculty. Christianity became theological because man is rational. As for the 'intrusion' of philosophical ideas, it did not go far enough. Some embittered and confused controversies would have died a 'natural death' much sooner than they did, if more, not less, had been learnt from Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics. It has been said that some of these controversies were about nothing but words. Those who think so have not realised what the issues really meant to those who contended so strenuously about them. We do not need to go far beneath the surface to discern their vital relation to some of the controversies which trouble our minds today.

(iii) It is widely recognised, at the present time, that history must be related not only in terms of events but in terms of the persons who make the events. Above all, in the case of Christianity, the influence of dominant personalities is a standing refutation of the 'impersonal' view of history. I have therefore endeavoured to gather the essentially important material—from the later apostolic age to the age of Augustine—round the personality and work of men who may, in the full meaning of the words, be described as creative leaders of Christian thought. Each of them, directly or indirectly, gave a vital impulse to the movement of the great Christian doctrines—the value of Tradition, the Being of God and the Creative Word, the nature of Man, the Person and Work of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Trinity, the Church and the Sacraments. In each case, it seemed possible to state the essential meaning of that 'vital impulse' without dwelling at length on questions which (though they may have a historical interest of their own) are none the less 'side-issues'. This involves a distinction between the essential and the unessential, and a special emphasis on what is essential.

The references at the end of the book will reveal the extent of my indebtedness to others. The works referred to which have been published in English will provide guidance for students desiring further systematic study but who do not read in any language but their own. It is a pleasure to acknowledge permission given by Messrs. James Nisbet, Ltd., to quote from Professor C. H. Dodd's book *According to the Scriptures*, and to the Student Christian Movement Press, Ltd., to quote from Professor S. L. Greenslade's book *Schism in the Early Church*.

I may add a short statement on my own behalf. Nothing that is said, here or in the following pages, about the Arian movement in the fourth century, implies any pre-judgment on the 'Arianism' maintained, twelve centuries later, by some able theologians in this country. The revival of a doctrine is an entirely different question from that of its first origin. But I believe that the victory of Arianism in the fourth century would have resulted in the destruction of everything that is rationally and spiritually valuable in Christianity. The result of the conflict was a conviction which it was impossible for the Arians at that time to hold: that there is an essential relation of man's nature to the Nature of God. It was confined to Christ alone. The whole endeavour was at first concentrated on the explanation, in terms of thought and feeling, of the Personality of him who was at once Son of Man and Son of God. The life and work and teaching of Christ, in a word, his whole Personality, must be known to be real before the

idea and ideal of the essential relation of man to God could be carried further; but this, once known to be real, must inevitably determine the whole issue. 'The Incarnation is true, not of Christ exclusively, but of man universally, and of God everlastingly'. The Light which creates our higher life, our higher human life of thought and feeling, is 'of one substance' with the very being of God. Of this universal truth Christ became the Revealer, with a personal power destroying every illusion which would hide it.

INTRODUCTION

THE BACKGROUND: HISTORICAL OUTLINE

THE imperial constitution of Rome may be considered to have begun in the year 27 B.C., when the conqueror of Antony at Actium was summoned, by a world worn out by twenty years of war and anarchy, to the task of establishing a government which, without destroying the traditions of the republic, would provide for the centralisation of authority which experience had shown to be necessary for the stability and integrity of the empire. Octavian was well fitted for the task. Cool-headed, far-sighted, opportunist, tactful, for over forty years he governed, organised, conquered, and left behind him a coherent and well-administered empire. In recognition of his achievements the Senate conferred on him the title 'Augustus'—a title which he was very willing to accept. His successor, Tiberius, began by ruling in the spirit of Augustus, but ended by creating a reign of terror when no prominent man in Rome felt that his life was safe. During the next thirty years we see on the imperial throne Caius Cæsar ('Caligula'), vain, cruel, half-insane; Claudius, personally of weak health and with a stammering tongue, but a skilful organiser and empire-builder, whose fate was to be murdered (by poison) in the year A.D. 54, thus leaving room for the army to secure the accession of Nero, whose memory was abhorred even by the corrupt Roman society, who suffered from his cruelties, and by respectable Romans everywhere, whose convictions and prejudices he had outraged. The death of Nero (A.D. 68) was followed by a year of anarchy, during which the army passed completely 'out of hand', and three emperors in succession—Galba, Otho, and Vitellius—met with violent deaths. Vespasian, then known as a powerful military leader, had been appointed to suppress the Jewish rebellion which broke out in the year 66. His victorious progress through Galilee and Samaria was regarded as redeeming

the 'majesty' of the empire, and when he heard of the death of Nero, he gave the command of the Jewish war to his son Titus, and set out for Rome. A disastrous civil war broke out between the legions who had supported Vitellius and those who were determined to secure the accession of Vespasian, but it ended in the decisive victory of the latter, and the triumphal entry of Vespasian and Titus into Rome (A.D. 70).

Vespasian perceived that the empire was in actual danger of breaking up, and that his greatest task was one of reform, and above all to place the authority of the emperor on the broader and firmer basis of the goodwill of the provinces. In the eyes of the Roman Government, one of the least important events appeared to be the constitution of Judæa as a subordinate Roman province, to be administered by 'Procurators', but under the military protection of the province of Syria: with an interval A.D. 41–44, when Claudius appointed Herod Agrippa as 'King'. This is the Herod referred to in the thirteenth chapter of the Book of Acts. The 'Agrippa' named in the twenty-fifth chapter appears to have been in charge of the region of the city in which the Temple stood, the contemporary Procurator being 'Festus'. One of the greatest students of Roman imperialism, Theodor Mommsen, observed that it was the extreme of political folly not to place a governor of high rank, with legionary troops, in Judæa. The Procurators were in effect minor officials; and if Pontius Pilate (Procurator from A.D. 26 to 37) is an example, they were incapable of understanding or controlling the population of the province, and least of all the population of the capital city, the seat of the Temple.

The rebellion which had broken out in the year 66 spread over the whole country, and at first appeared to be successful. But after Vespasian had suppressed it in the north, and had appointed his elder son Titus to crush it finally, Jerusalem was besieged and captured, after a desperate resistance, in the course of which the Temple was destroyed and the greater part of the city reduced to ruins. Judæa was made a Roman province, independently of Syria. The Jews who had settled in parts of the empire, and who were spoken of as the Jews of 'the Dispersion', still nourished

thoughts of revenge; and even the generation who had not witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem were taught to hate the Romans among whom they dwelt. The absence of the Emperor Trajan in the east gave them the opportunity. In Egypt, Cyrene, Cyprus, they rose and massacred without mercy. Trajan sent one of his ablest generals to crush this outbreak; and we may well believe the Jewish writers who state that the Romans in their turn took a savage vengeance. A generation passed. The Jews of 'the Dispersion' had exhausted their strength. The Jews in Palestine remained on the whole quiet, until in A.D. 132 the Emperor Hadrian visited Jerusalem, and decided to have the city rebuilt for a Greek population, with the status of a Roman *colonia*, into which no Jew was to be allowed to enter. In all this, there was deliberate intention. The destruction of the city was not enough. Even in ruins, it could still appeal, powerfully, perhaps more powerfully, to the worshippers of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Therefore Roman state-worship was to be introduced. This roused the Palestinian Jews to fury. At first their resistance, carried on by skilful 'guerilla' methods, was successful; but the end was inevitable. Once more, Rome took her vengeance. Multitudes were sold into slavery. The city was rebuilt. No Jew was allowed to enter, though Palestinian Christians were given entry, and the Christian community in Jerusalem increased. The *original* Christian community in Jerusalem, or those of them who survived after A.D. 70, were scattered by Hadrian's edict.

The Roman Empire reached its greatest extent under Hadrian; and what has been called 'the Golden Age of the Antonines' followed. It is true that we see a period of increasingly successful achievements in the externals of civilisation, political administration, trade and communication, roads and transport, industry and handicrafts. On the inner side, deeper than all this, there are signs, beyond mistaking, of a deep despondency overtaking the mind of the empire. Thoughtful men were labouring to find a remedy for what looked like a mortal sickness; and with a true instinct, they turned to those problems which arise out of the primary human propensities—self-preservation and reproduction.

The old civilisation had been recklessly wasteful in both these respects, allowing very little value to human life, and permitting every kind of abuse in the indulgence of appetite.

It is also true that there were redeeming forces at work. Christianity did not come into a world entirely foreign to it. The monotheism of the greater Stoic thinkers, ideals of the soul's possible likeness to God, and of its destiny after death, were far from being so foreign to Christianity that Christian thinkers took no interest in them. In particular, the Socratic doctrine of the soul, whole-heartedly adopted by Plato, became one of the most decisive changes in the history of European thought, and did more than any other development in Greek thought to prepare the way for Christianity. Before the time of Socrates, the 'soul' was generally imagined as it had been in primitive 'animism', though even less personalised—a vaporous substance necessary for physical life, capable of surviving bodily life only as a shadowy ghost. For the Stoics, it was something far more important. It was a part of the divine fire which, though believed to be the seat of actual and ideal Reason, was not conceived as other than material. But Socrates and Plato had taught that the soul was the whole rational and moral *personality* and that the care of the soul was the most important thing in life.

The Christian Fathers denounced popular polytheism and popular superstitions, though they retained a firm belief in the agency of 'demons' as active *spirits of evil*. The warfare of believers was with these, and the pagan deities were believed to be manifestations of these evil beings. But notwithstanding all this, the early Fathers, with the conspicuous exceptions of Tertullian and Tatian, could appreciate what in contemporary thought was in harmony with Christian doctrines and ideals. A remarkable example is seen in a quotation made by Lactantius from Cicero. Lactantius introduces the quotation after he has set forth a conception of the divine Law, the Law which is immanent in the nature of things and universal: '*dei lex, illa sancta, illa coelestis, quam M. Tullius paene divina voce definit*'. The quotation from Cicero, accurately rendered, is as follows: 'There shall no longer be one law at Athens, another at Rome, one law today, another

tomorrow; but the same Law, everlasting and unchangeable, shall bind all nations at all times; and there shall be one common Master and Ruler of all, even God, the creator and arbitrator of this Law; and he who will not obey it shall be an exile from himself, and despising the nature of man, shall by that very act suffer the greatest of all penalties, even though he may have escaped from all other penalties that can be imagined.'

The type of Stoicism which Roman thinkers learnt was largely free from the rigidity and ethical paradoxes of the original Greek doctrine, but its *pantheism* was deliberately retained. The entire universe is a single unitary living whole, embodying a divine power which is in a condition of eternal activity. With this philosophy conceptions derived from the idealism of Plato were intermingled, so that the Stoicism with which the early Fathers were acquainted may be described as a 'Platonised Stoicism', which could rise to high ideals. But two questions of far-reaching significance remain. How far, if at all, could these systems act as a restraining force on the will of the average man? How far did they really set him free from his inherited superstitions? As regards the latter question, Stoicism left to 'the average man' all his gods. From the point of view of Stoic enlightenment, the greater gods were not independent or semi-personal beings, but various manifestations of the one supreme Deity embodied in the earth and heavens. Nevertheless, this complacent view of the gods of popular belief left ample room for the survival of superstition.

More serious is the question, what kind of inducement, or persuasion, did Stoicism offer to men's personal wills to devote themselves to righteousness? The answer is this. The restraint or inducement was essentially an intellectual process. The Stoic 'self-respect' was the necessary consequence of the individual's intellectual conception of his place in the universe. The Stoic 'freedom', which was an ideal rather than an actual quality of human nature, meant that man is capable *through knowledge* of bringing his will into conformity with the universal Reason. We find, in their doctrine, no conception of *development* in reference to society or to the individual life—only an eternal recurrence;

no message for women or children, or for human beings sunk in ignorance and vice: in a word, no gospel of *redemption*.

People who felt the need of an effective and moving *personal contact* with a saving power which was more than human, a contact which they could not find in the popular philosophies of the time or in the ceremonies maintained under the supervision of the State, found it in the so-called 'Mystery Religions'. These are better described as 'secret-society religions', because their participants were pledged not to reveal the ceremonies of initiation and other ritual carried on in them. They formed associations which banded men together without regard to their social standing: the citizen and the stranger, the free man and the slave, were here united in fellowship. Above all, a man became a member of such an association solely by a personal and individual act of adherence. The Neo-platonist Christian Bishop Synesius of Cyrene, writing early in the fifth century, attributes to Aristotle the striking observation that in the 'mystery religions': 'you have not to learn anything but to be given a certain feeling'. These associations created a clergy different from the *flamines* and *pontifices*, State officials who did certain things on certain days. These new priests were spiritual directors; they assumed a pastoral relation to their disciples. On both sides, parallels in faith and ritual between the Christian sacraments and the 'mysteries' were perceived; and the Fathers were convinced that Satan had inspired the 'mysteries' as spiritually poisonous imitations of Christian rites.

There was one secret-society religion which, as it spread over the West, appeared to be a serious rival to Christianity. This was 'Mithraism'. It was based on Persian Zoroastrianism, with an accumulation of ritual and myth which can be traced back to primitive nature-worship; but certain fundamental characteristics of its doctrine and ritual resembled corresponding teachings in Christianity. Like Christianity, it taught that this world is the arena of an unrelenting and unavoidable conflict of evil with good, in which the final victory will be with good, and that heaven is, literally, not metaphorically, 'above'. It formed communities or brotherhoods, with a sacred common meal. Its morality, so

far as can be traced, was one of abstinence and continence, bodily mortification and asceticism. Its deity, 'Mithras', was a mediator between this world and the next, who would return to earth, awaken the dead, and judge between the righteous and the wicked, granting immortality to the one, and annihilation to the other. What is most significant is the fact that while the secret-society religions from the Near East taught salvation and immortality, only Mithraism and Christianity fought a holy war against evil. Mithraic dualism produced action. And yet Mithraism disappeared from the public eye when imperial protection was withdrawn. We may say, with Cumont, that it would have disappeared in any case, 'not only because it was encumbered with the heritage of a superannuated past, but also because its liturgy and its theology had retained so much of Asiatic superstition'. Cumont adds that the survival of Mithraism would have perpetuated all the aberrations of pagan mysticism together with the fantastic astronomical and physical ideas on which its 'theology' rested.

The similarities which aroused the indignation of the Fathers may be explained, not by studying this or that detail of resemblance, but in certain broad facts of common need, and the ways in which these, long ignored or quiescent, assert themselves afresh at certain periods of history; and by recognising that at each period there is an atmosphere, a *milieu*, in which things loom large that were only vaguely perceived before. During a period of fusion and recasting in religion, we should look, not for conscious borrowing or mere conglomeration, but for traces of a natural process, seen in the region of abstract speculation and in the region of fervent popular faith. The word 'syncretism' has come into use to describe this process of fusion, and confusion, in which philosophical speculations and religious beliefs were intermingled. We are not here concerned with their origin and history in the East; but we have a fairly definite view of the 'complexes'—to use a modern psychological term—which their fusion created in the Græco-Roman world.

The result, when we point to what was most fundamental in it, was a *dualism* which affirmed—as a matter of experience and belief

—a sheer opposition between the natural world of the transient and perishable, the world of sense-perception, and a supersensuous world regarded as divine. This dualism proved to be the right expression for the inner discord which ran through the entire life of that ageing world. Harnack has pointed out that in the vast variety of forms assumed by the religious syncretism of the period there are certain features which can be stated as generalities when detached from their historical settings. They all arise from the radical dualism of which we have spoken. (i) The antithesis of the divine and the earthly created ideas of the entire transcendence of God, and a depreciation of the world. (ii) From this followed a sharp distinction between the soul or spirit and the body: the spirit, coming from some higher region, was more or less defiled by its connection with the body, and this connection must be broken, or at least its effects counteracted. (iii) Hence arose a dominant desire for redemption from the body: for this, knowledge, in the deeper sense of enlightenment, was believed to be an indispensable first step, but only a superhuman power can deliver the soul. The redeeming power was present in the world, sometimes in a personal form, as in the case of 'Mithras'. Harnack observes that 'the general result was the substitution of religious individualism and humanity for nationality'.[1]

We quoted above (p. 16) a strongly monotheistic statement of cosmopolitan idealism preserved by Lactantius from the *De Republica* of Cicero. Cicero's interest in all the greater Greek thinkers must be judged from the point of view of his purpose. This was, to awaken in his countrymen an inclination towards philosophical culture. But in one respect he expounded a great principle almost as a Gospel, chiefly in his *De Republica* and *De Legibus*, neither of which has come down to us in its complete form. The principle implies the idea and ideal of a universal Law, grounded at once on Nature and on Reason, abiding above all human designs and purposes and all historical changes in human life. It is the source of man's capacity to rise to the knowledge of God and of the basic ideas of morality, on which the right relations of human beings to one another depend: a human capacity which is *innate* in the sense that Nature, or the Deity, has implanted

it in every man along with his reason and his instinct of self-preservation. Cicero understood that the State, as it was, had not arisen from any voluntary arrangement made by individuals; it was a product of history. The eternal principles—in other words, the ever-valid principles—of the Law of Nature are mingled with the historical institutions of positive Law. Some of his statements imply that the ideal State is the Empire of Rome, not as it was, but as it ought to be and could be. Much of what has survived of the second Book of the *De Republica* is occupied with an elaboration of this idea. Virgil idealised it with poetic fervour. The supremacy of Rome, in his vision, assumed the aspect of an ordinance of Providence, to which all previous history had been leading up; it meant the establishment of an Empire to which no limits of time or place were set, and in which the human race would find ordered peace and settled government. The mission of Rome was not only *regere imperio populos*, not only to establish law and order among the peoples, but *pacis imponere morem*, to make peace the habit and custom of the world.[2]

The facts of contemporary social and political experience compelled a radical revision of the optimistic outlook of Cicero and Virgil. This appears, for example, plainly in the political writings of Seneca. It was assumed that there had been a time when men lived together in peace, in freedom and equality, having all things in common: coercive government was not needed, for the advice and guidance of the wiser men was sufficient. This was the age of the pure Law of Nature. Then followed long ages of degeneration. Not 'each for all' but 'each for himself' became the rule of life. The good things of the world were made into exclusive private possessions. The benevolent guidance of the wise gave way to the rule of kings and princes, sometimes tyrants. Laws became necessary to control rulers and subjects alike. Political organisation therefore was made necessary by the actual evils of human nature. It represents a secondary or imperfect Law of Nature, made necessary by divine ordinance. The State, or the organised political government, though it may be administered by unworthy or evil men, is a divine institution.

The classical conception, thus briefly outlined, was accepted by

the Church, and became a normal part of the mental furniture of Christendom, without becoming the subject of any considerable controversy; but of necessity it was brought into connection with the whole scheme of Christian doctrine, and in particular with the Biblical narrative of the Fall. A typical example of the way in which the idea of a Law of Nature was treated in that connection is given by Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons during the last quarter of the second century: 'Men had turned away from God, and had become so like wild animals as to look even on those of their own order as enemies. They were driven by passions of fear and greed. Therefore, since they had lost the fear of God, He set over them the fear of man, in order that being subject to human authority and restrained by man-made laws, they might achieve some degree of justice and mutual toleration. For this reason also the rulers themselves, when they execute the laws as the clothing (*indumentum*) of justice, shall not be called in question for their conduct nor be liable to any penalties. But when they subvert justice by illegal and tyrannous acts, they shall perish in their deeds, for the just judgment of God reaches to all alike and never fails. Earthly rule therefore has been appointed by God for the welfare of the nations.' The fundamental idea is indicated in the concluding sentence of this statement.[3]

The essential meaning of the doctrine, as it was understood in general by Christian thinkers, was stated by Ambrose of Milan, in more than one important passage. For example, after quoting the words of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans (ii. 14–15), Ambrose says: 'If men had been able to follow the Natural Law which God our Creator had planted in the heart of each one, there would have been no need for the Law that was inscribed on tables of stone. That divine Law is not written; it is inborn; it is not learnt by reading anything; it finds expression through a capacity native to our minds, rising as it were like a stream whose source is in the nature of every one of us.'[4]

It must be remembered that the conception of 'the universe' held by the Fathers was not based solely on the opening chapters of the Book of Genesis. The conviction that the earth is at rest in the centre of 'the universe' appeared to be warranted by the

plain evidence of the senses; and, though it had been questioned by some Greek mathematicians, it established itself as a scientifically verifiable truth. The Alexandrian mathematicians regarded any other supposition as absurd. The alternation of day and night was accounted for by assuming a revolution of the solar system round the earth. All that was known of the solar system was that it consisted of seven 'planets' all revolving round the earth: the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. But their movements were observed to be irregular; and the Alexandrian mathematicians, among whom the greatest name is that of Ptolemy (who died in Alexandria near the end of the second century), worked out a theory that the movements of each 'planet' were the result of combined circular motions. The scientific meaning of the theory was entirely mathematical; but Aristotle, by what has been described as 'one of the most retrograde steps ever taken in the history of science', had long previously decided that the motions of the 'planets' must be due to the rotation of celestial 'spheres' each bearing a 'planet' and revolving round the earth. This was accepted as scientific truth. When therefore the Fathers assimilated the theory of the 'spheres' to a series of 'heavens'—or when, for instance, Origen supposed that the heavenly Bodies were animated by immaterial rational beings—they believed that they were making use of the best knowledge of the time.[5]

CHAPTER I

TRADITION AND INTERPRETATION

THE part played by Tradition in the history of human communities and the development of social life is a subject which needs much more comprehensive investigation than has yet (so far as we are aware) been given to it by students of sociology and social psychology. Great as the influence of Tradition has been in the history of religions, it has none the less entered into every branch of communal life which has had a history that can be traced. Here we are concerned with it only as it has entered into the development of the Christian religion.

The English word itself needs brief notice. Its Latin original meant the act of handing over or delivering up, and was in use as a legal term. Later, it acquired the figurative meaning of a doctrine or method of instruction, not always with a favourable implication, as when Quintilian, writing near the end of the first century, referred to the *jejuna atque arida traditio* of the grammarians. Later still, by a further extension of meaning, it came to imply not only a doctrine or method of instruction but the 'handing on' or transmission of it. Hence the special use of the English word, in its religious reference, as implying a 'deposit', to be entrusted to 'depositaries', like trustees, to be preserved and handed on.

When we turn to the New Testament, we find that in expressing the idea of Tradition two of the terms used are specially significant. (i) The word which we transliterate as *parathêkê* implies something committed to our charge *as a trust*. This emphasis is rightly brought out in the Authorised Version: 'Keep that which is committed to thy trust' (I Tim. vi. 20, and II Tim. i. 12); 'The faith once for all delivered to the saints' (Jude, 3). (ii) The word which we transliterate as *paradosis*, usually rendered 'tradition' in the English versions, sometimes

bears the same emphasis: 'The traditions as I delivered them to you' (I Cor. vi. 2, and II Thess. ii. 15). But in several other passages the emphasis is directly on what had been handed down, and is false, as in Matt. xv and Mark vii, and occasionally in the Epistles, 'the traditions of men', definitely false traditions (Col. ii. 8 and Gal. i. 4, 'the traditions of my fathers', referring to the days of his Jewish faith).

The difference between the Tradition which is vital to Judaism *as a religion* and the nature of the Tradition which is vital to the Christian religion is fundamental. (i) The Tradition entering into and forming Judaism as a religion had its source in reverence for the *Torah*, the entire ethical, religious, and ceremonial content of the Books bearing the name of Moses—a reverence which tended to overflow and cover the gradually enlarging accumulation of explanatory comments and analytical deductions from the *Torah*. But the essential divine revelation was the *Torah* itself, and the growing stream of Tradition always had a direct or indirect reference to that idea, which was central in the religion of the Jews. (ii) The Christian Tradition had its source in a Person, and that Person was himself the divine revelation. Therein lies the deepest root of the difference between Judaism as a religion and Christianity: a difference which nothing can ever obliterate.

When we take the Gospel records as they stand and *as the Fathers read them*, the question at once arises: How far do they represent the position taken by Jesus in reference to the Jewish Tradition? It seems to move between two extremes. (i) In the words recorded in the Fourth Gospel (iv. 22–25): 'The true worshippers must worship the Father in spirit and in truth', 'neither in this mountain not yet in Jerusalem', but throughout the world. (ii) In the words recorded in Matt. v. 18: 'Till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a comma, will pass from the Law until it is all in force' (Moffatt's version). If we read the records with historical imagination (and not as if we were interpreting a legal document) it becomes possible to obtain a clear view.

We have referred to the gradual accumulation of explanatory comments and analytical deductions from the *Torah*. Much

of this was an elaboration of oral tradition, believed to have come down from the earliest days—' the Tradition of the Ancients '. As it increased in extent and importance, it required Rabbinical Schools to preserve and expound it. Jesus was certainly acquainted with the kind of work carried on in these schools. His opposition to them was not based on a denial of all value to the Jewish 'deposit'; neither was it based only on the unfitness of some of its guardians to be, for their fellow-countrymen of the Jewish faith, what they claimed to be. The question at issue was larger than this. The opposition of Jesus was to the basic assumption on which the exclusively *legal* interpretation of religion and morality rested. The case of the Sabbath Law is decisive: ' The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath '—thus laying down not a prescriptive law but a test-principle by which all human institutions are to be judged. And in answer to the question which was debated, with various answers, in the Rabbinical Schools, Christ took from the Jewish Scriptures words which are as little legal as it is possible for them to be. They do not prescribe or forbid any particular acts: they apply to the disposition which man is to have towards God and towards his ' neighbour '—not only to his fellow-Jew but to his fellow-man. To these Christ added, again not as a prescriptive law, but as a rule for practical guidance: ' Whatever you would that men should do to you, do you the same to them.'

This is decisive in reference to the position taken by Jesus Christ not only to the purely legal aspects of the Jewish tradition but also to the utterances of the prophets which express ethical and religious truths and their issues. To these, Christ gave an eternal value. He entered into the great ideas of the prophets and psalmists, and unfolded and enlarged their meaning—deliberately and with discrimination choosing them for that purpose. This was their true fulfilment. From this point of view, it is scarcely possible to exaggerate the significance of what is recorded, in reference to the early days of Christ's public ministry, of what occurred in the Synagogue at Nazareth (Luke iv. 17–21, compared with Isaiah lxi. 1–2). Here we may read the meaning of the words ' I am come not to destroy but to fulfil ': and also a warning as to the deeper meaning of the Greek verb rendered ' fulfil '—the same verb which is almost uniformly so rendered in the English versions of those passages which refer to the relation of the higher teaching of the Old Testament to Christianity. It is by no means always to be understood as a pious factual foretelling of what as a matter of fact occurred in and through the work of Christ. There are instances of this kind in the New Testament, but they are exceptional (for example, Matt. ii. 15, compared with Hosea xi. 1, the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt).

The personal power of the Master and his teaching moved with vital force in the minds of the greater theologians of the Apostolic Age—Paul, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the author of the Fourth Gospel. They appealed to the Scriptures for what in modern phraseology may be described as a ' philosophy of history ', essentially a religious philosophy, ' the determinate Counsel of God '. The people of Israel had failed to understand or to ' fulfil ' their destiny; but what was God-given in that destiny was ' fulfilled ' in the work of Christ, in his death *and his resurrection*; ' Men of Israel, listen to my words. Jesus the Nazarene, a man accredited to you through miracles, wonders, and signs, which God performed by him among you, as you yourselves know—this Jesus, betrayed in the predestined course of God's deliberate purpose, you got wicked men to nail to the Cross and murder: but God raised him by checking the pangs of death. Death could not hold him.' Then, quoting the sixteenth Psalm, the words of which express ' a prevision of the resurrection of the Christ ', the Apostle proceeds: ' This Jesus God raised, as we can all bear witness. Uplifted then by God's right hand, and receiving from the Father the long-promised Holy Spirit, he has poured on us what you now see and hear. . . . So let all the house of Israel understand beyond a doubt that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this very Jesus whom you have crucified ' (Acts ii. 22–24, 32, 33, 36: quoted from Moffatt's version).

The whole question of the range of meaning given to the Greek verb rendered ' fulfil ' needs examination. This has been done with marked thoroughness by Professor C. H. Dodd, whose essential conclusions are thus summarised: ' (1) The evidence

suggests that at a very early date a certain *method* of biblical study was established and became part of the equipment of Christian evangelists and teachers. This method was largely employed orally, and found literary expression only sporadically and incompletely, but it is presupposed in our earliest sources. (2) The method included, first of all, the *selection* of certain large sections of the Old Testament scriptures, especially from Isaiah, Jeremiah, and certain minor prophets, and from the Psalms. These sections were understood as *wholes*, and particular verses or sentences were quoted from them rather as pointers to the whole context than as constituting testimonies in and for themselves. At the same time, detached sentences from other parts of the Old Testament could be adduced to illustrate or elucidate the meaning of the main section under consideration. But in the fundamental passages it is the *total context* that is in view, and is the basis of the argument. (3) The relevant scriptures were understood and interpreted upon intelligible and consistent principles, as setting forth " the determinate Counsel of God " which was fulfilled in the gospel facts, and consequently as fixing the meaning of those facts.' [1]

In the vital question of the *authority* of Scripture (so far as this can be distinguished from its interpretation) early Christian belief was deeply affected by the Jewish tradition. According to the Jewish faith, the *Torah* had been set forth in a series of narratives, commandments, and messages from God Himself; and when the books containing the *Torah* were combined with the prophetical books and later writings, it was natural that the religious veneration felt for the *Torah* should extend to the whole collection, and the Scriptures afterwards called by Christians ' The Old Testament ' be placed in a unique position by themselves. This belief in the authority of the Old Testament was inherited by the Christian Church; but the Church, as we have seen, exercised the right and the duty of interpreting it in the light of the teaching and work of Christ and the Apostles. In short, the first Christian Bible was the Old Testament, read in the Greek version circulating among the Jews of ' the Dispersion '. This meant that Christians had the scrolls of the Old Testament as it were, ' ready for their use ', though not in the original language.

The case of the New Testament is very different. What is beyond dispute is that the *collection* of writings comprised in our New Testament was gradually formed, as a ' canonical ' collection, to be read in Churches, invested with an authority like that which was attributed to the Old Testament, and appealed to, over doctrinal difficulties and controversies special to Christianity. The procedure of Irenæus, whose work as Bishop of Lyons falls within the last quarter of the second century, is instructive. He does not entertain the idea of a New Testament canon authorised and finally fixed; but he quotes from every book of the canonical New Testament except the Epistle to Philemon. His use of the New Testament is the first clear example of the appeal to these writings as the standard of the doctrine of the Church which was characteristic of the whole patristic period.

The foregoing observations find an impressive illustration in the group of writers bearing the traditional title of ' The Apostolic Fathers ', and particularly in *The Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians*.[2] Clement, as Lightfoot points out in what is now the classical edition of the Apostolic Fathers, is speaking not merely in his own name, but in that of the Roman Church, of which he was Bishop. Internal evidence makes it very probable that the Epistle was written at the end of the persecution in Rome under Domitian, approximately in the year A.D. 95. Party strife had broken out in the Corinthian congregation: a faction had formed itself in opposition to the Presbyters, who, as others believed, had been appointed by men who were successors of the Apostles, and the Presbyters had been driven from office. Clement wrote to rebuke these proceedings and to restore harmony. His mind was pervaded by a sense of the importance of the Old Testament: there are in the Epistle more than a hundred quotations from it, in addition to allusions which are not quotations.

In the case of the New Testament, Clement appealed to the writings which were obviously helpful for his own purpose—Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians. In the case of the Gospels, he does not mention any of the Evangelists by name: his quotations are introduced as ' sayings of the Lord Jesus Christ '. The quotations, when compared with the Gospels as we now have them,

are not verbally exact; they consist of sayings from different parts of the records, fused (not confused) together. There are two references to passages in the Synoptic Gospels which we give in Lightfoot's translation. (i) In his thirteenth chapter Clement quotes as ' sayings of the Lord Jesus Christ ' the following words: ' Have mercy, that you may receive mercy: forgive, that you may be forgiven: as you do, so shall it be done to you: as you give, so shall it be given to you: as you show kindness, so shall kindness be shown to you.' It is evident that the record which Clement is quoting, and which he believes to have sufficient authority for the words of Christ, gives the essential meaning of the sayings standing in our Gospels in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew and the sixth of Luke. (ii) The same consideration applies to the quotations in Clement's forty-sixth chapter, combining words contained in the eighteenth and twenty-eighth chapters of Matthew, the ninth and fourteenth of Mark, and the seventeenth and twenty-second of Luke: ' Woe to that man: it were good for him that he had not been born, rather than that he should offend one of my chosen ones: it were better for him that a mill-stone should be hung about him and he be cast into the sea, rather than that he should pervert one of my chosen ones.'

It need not be said that we are not entering into the large question of the history of the Canon of the New Testament. The point which we desire to emphasise is psychological. Clement had before him records of the sayings of Jesus Christ which had come down to him from the previous generation as authentic, and which he accepted as authentic. The fact that a man of the character and ability revealed in this Epistle should have accepted these records as authentic, and as having an authority coming down from the Apostolic Age, is evidence of their acceptance during the Apostolic Age as going back to the first circle of disciples. The principle is this. In assessing the *external* evidence for the dates of the Gospels the reasonable course is to argue *from* the period when the evidence for their general use is clear *to* the earlier period when the evidence is more scanty: and not to use the fact that in the earlier period the evidence is scanty in order to throw doubt on

the trustworthiness of the later clear evidence. We repeat that this consideration relates to the external use of the Gospels—the references to them in early Christian writers. It is not invalidated by the analysis of the records (in their present form) into ' sources ' on internal grounds.

Clement is convinced that his belief in the authority of the scriptures was supported by Tradition: ' Let us conform to the ancient rule (*kanon*) which has come down to us ' (ch. vii). And in an important passage (ch. xlii) he states how he believed the Tradition to have been preserved: ' The Apostles received the Gospel from the Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus was sent from God. . . . Having therefore received a charge from him, and being convinced by his resurrection, and trusting in the Word of God through the assurance of the Holy Spirit, they went forth to proclaim the good news of the coming of the Reign of God. Preaching through town and country, they appointed their first converts to be Bishops and Deacons among the faithful.' Clement points out that this was no new thing: ' It is written, I will appoint their Bishops in righteousness and their Deacons in faith.' Here he is evidently quoting from memory the Greek version of Isaiah ix. 17, using the words (*diakonos*, *episcopos*) which afterwards became official titles. ' Therefore ', he proceeds, ' those who were appointed by the Apostles, or afterwards by men of just repute, with the consent of the whole assembly, ought not to be unjustly disowned ' (ch. xliv). The importance of Tradition as a *guide* is emphasised by other writers of this group, particularly by Polycarp, Hermas, and ' Barnabas ' (ch. xix), where the writer urges the faithful to guard what they have received, ' not adding to it, nor taking away from it '.

Our next outstanding landmark in the subject now before us (the doctrine of Tradition and Interpretation) is seen in the work of Justin Martyr, the most important of the group of writers known as ' The Apologists '. This title is applied to a succession of Christian writers in the second century who found it necessary to write on the defensive, partly against the Jews, but chiefly to make the truth about Christianity known to the contemporary Græco-Roman world. It is evident from statements in the New

Testament, and from Christian writers in the second century in particular, that fanatical Jews (claiming to be the exclusive heirs of the ancient promises and prerogatives) found opportunities of inciting the populace against the Christians. Not all Jews were fanatics of this type, and to these some of the ' apologetic ' writings were addressed. But far more serious was the need of defending the Christian religion before the contemporary world, to meet slanderous misrepresentations of Christian doctrine and worship, and to set forth the Christian faith in a way which would appeal to educated men who were acquainted with current thought. This purpose lent a special character to the writings of the Apologists. They were convinced that in the Christian religion the only sound and saving philosophy was to be found. They never questioned the plenary inspiration of the Old Testament; but the essential facts about it were, for the Apologists, first, the occurrence of miracles, and then, the fulfilment of prophecies, above all, in the life, work, and death of Christ.

Justin Martyr was born of Greek parents in Flavia Neapolis, the ancient Shechem in Samaria. In early manhood he had studied under a Stoic teacher, but the theology of Stoicism, as then taught, left him deeply dissatisfied. He found some relief from his doubts in Platonism; but, meeting an aged man, a Christian, he learnt of the existence of writings ' more ancient than those of the Greeks ', in which he found, through miracles wrought and prophecies fulfilled, grounds for faith in one God, Father and Creator, and in the Christ whom He had sent. After Justin removed to Rome, he was able to gather together a sufficient number of believers to carry on a School for the study of Christian theology. But he was put to death, with several of his friends, about A.D. 163. We have two undoubtedly authentic works of his: the *Apology* (the so-called *Second Apology* is an appendix to it), and the *Dialogue with Trypho*. The *Dialogue*, the most elaborate of the anti-Judaic Apologies, is a lengthy account of a discussion between Justin and an educated Jew named ' Trypho '. As written, it would have occupied several days; but it is almost certainly based on a controversial discussion, on the same lines, which actually took place. The *Apology* is addressed to the Emperor Antoninus, who

died in 161. During the previous generation, savage persecutions broke out in different parts of the empire, which the emperors did nothing to prevent.

Justin was outraged that men and women, whose lives were without reproach, should be singled out for bitter and utterly undeserved persecution. His words at the beginning of the *Apology* are not conciliatory: ' We have not come to flatter you by what we are now writing, nor to appeal to you as by an oration: but to demand that we be judged only after strict and impartial inquiry, so that you may not be induced to decide through mere prejudice, or through desire to please the superstitious populace, or through false reports sent to you against us. It is our belief that we can suffer harm from no one if we have done no evil. You may indeed put us to death but harm us you cannot.'

At this period, the persecutions which were liable to break out at any time were not organised in obedience to an imperial edict extending to the whole empire. Some of the most savage atrocities were committed during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, but there is no evidence that he personally organised them. It has been said that he ' let the Law take its course ' against the Christians. As a sufficient comment on this statement, we describe the most famous and drastic of the Christian Apologies, that of Tertullian, written some forty years after the death of Justin. Tertullian, a native of Carthage, devoted his early years to the study and practice of Roman Law, of which he acquired a considerable mastery. His defence may be summarised under the following heads.

(i) It is flagrantly unjust to punish Christians simply because they profess the Christian religion, and without any inquiry as to whether their beliefs are worthy of punishment and deserve to be suppressed. In the ' trials ' of Christians, all the established forms of Law, and the customs which are usually observed in the administration of justice, are set aside. They are not heard in their own defence. The only question is, Are you a Christian? and sentence is pronounced as soon as this is confessed, or torture is inflicted as if to compel the believer to renounce his faith.

(ii) The charge that Christians meet together by night to

abandon themselves to the most abominable excesses is utterly destitute of proof. Is it likely, Tertullian asks, that men who believe in the Judgment of God on their lives and conduct would be guilty of such deeds? And when the authorities cannot deny that there are men and women whose lives show that their faith had made them better subjects and better citizens, it makes no difference to their treatment: ' even virtue, in your opinion, ceases to be virtue when found in a Christian '.

(iii) In reply to ridiculous reports current about the nature and objects of Christian worship, as for example that Christians worshipped ' the head of an ass ', Tertullian states plainly the meaning of the monotheism which Christians believed through the teaching of the Hebrew prophets and of the Apostles; and he enlarges on the superior antiquity of the writings of Moses and the prophets. This prepared the way for the illusion that Greek thinkers ' borrowed from Moses '.

(iv) It is no disloyalty when Christians are found to refuse to make the formal sacrifices to the Emperor, or to take part in the public festivals associated with idolatry (ch. xxxv–xxxix): ' As our religion teaches us to think little of the honours and wealth of the world, we are not led astray by the passions of ambition which move others to disturb public order. If you would take the trouble to inform yourselves of what actually takes place in our assemblies, then, far from finding any reason for viewing them as dangerous to the State, you would see that their effects are to increase our benevolence towards man and our love to God, and to make us better men and better subjects.' Closely connected with that fundamental issue are charges which Tertullian easily shows to be false: that Christians had brought calamities upon the empire, and that they hindered and damaged trade.

(v) Tertullian makes mention of an old Law forbidding any worship of a new deity unless it was sanctioned by the Senate. The profession of Christian monotheism openly offended against this Law; and he seems to have thought that this was, at bottom, the reason for the decision of the Roman officials that Christianity was a *religio non licita*, in other words, a religion not to be tolerated. A more serious because a more publicly evident reason was the

abandonment of the Roman gods. Tertullian, of course, was aware of this (ch. x, xi, and elsewhere); and he insists that Christians are right in renouncing worship of the ' gods ', which were in reality no ' gods ' at all; and that the worship of them was the work of evil spirits.

Some modern historians agree that Gibbon was right in his view that the most fundamental of all the reasons why Christianity was the solitary exception to the system of general toleration guiding the policy of the Roman Government towards other religions, was that all contemporary religions known to the Roman officials were *national*, while Christianity, from its very nature, was a movement overpassing national boundaries. For example: individual Egyptians could and did come to Rome and endeavour to spread their religious beliefs, but the Egyptian priests themselves made no attempt to induce the inhabitants of other countries to ' nationalise ' the worship of Egyptian deities. Christianity, on the other hand, was, so to speak, a ' root-and-branch ' propagandist movement (we use the word ' propagandist ' without any implication of criticism or discredit). The convert not only learnt to abandon the local gods, but was given exclusive possession of the vital truth on which salvation depended. It appears that Tertullian overlooked the significance of this fact. When he denounced the inconsistency of tolerating Egyptian superstitions while persecuting a religion which taught the worship of one all-wise and all-powerful God, he failed to see that such an appeal on behalf of a religion which was not national, or even inter-national, but which was supra-national, could not be understood by the Roman Proconsuls. Marcus Aurelius himself declared that he was above all ' a Roman '. And the so-called ' emperor-worship ' was at bottom worship of the Roman State.

All that we have hitherto said refers to the second century, and in particular to the reign of Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 161–180) when Christians were in a position of great danger. All the efforts of the Apologists to show that Christians were loyal subjects were in vain. Persecution might break out anywhere. Justin and a number of leading members of the Christian community in Rome were put to death in 163.

When we examine the methods adopted by Justin in his defence of Christianity, we find that his use of the Greek Old Testament and his use of the writings which afterwards formed an essential part of the New Testament Canon raise different questions. About the Greek Old Testament there was no question: its authority was accepted by Jews and Christians everywhere. His method of interpreting the Old Testament may be described as 'typological': the whole historical, doctrinal, and biological content of the Greek Old Testament was searched for 'types' of Christ and his life and death. This sometimes leads Justin into absurd conclusions; but there are places where his references cannot be dismissed as fanciful, whatever we may think of them as questions of historical interpretation. Reading in the Book of Numbers (xxi. 9) in the Greek version, that the serpent was set up by Moses as a 'sign', he saw in the words a plain indication that it was a 'sign' of the Cross. He may have had before him the words of the Fourth Gospel (iii. 14–15): 'The Son of Man must be lifted up on high, even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.' In like manner, he saw in the 'Branch' and the 'Star', from the ancestry of Jesse, a prophecy of the coming of Christ. And above all, in the words of Isaiah (vii. 14), which he understood as foretelling a miraculous birth without a human father, he saw a direct reference to the birth of Christ as recorded in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. (There is no evidence that Justin had any knowledge of Hebrew.)

In the case of Justin's use of the Gospels, the considerations which we have desire to emphasise are *psychological*. He does not refer to any of the evangelists by name; the documents on which he relies he describes as 'The Memoirs of the Apostles'. His quotations from them in most cases differ verbally from the corresponding passages in the first three Gospels as we now possess them: he combines phrases or statements from two or three of the Gospels, or reports a saying or an act of Jesus without using the words as they now are found in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, or Luke. From this, the natural conclusion is that he is quoting 'from memory'. There is, however, more to be said. What

was his purpose? It appears that the term 'Gospels' was not, at that period, everywhere applied to the *writings* in which the Gospel, as a body of religious teaching, was set forth. In any case, it is certain that the name 'Gospel' applied to a *book* would have had no meaning for a Roman or a Jew. In one passage, Justin refers to the use of the name in this latter sense: 'the Memoirs of the Apostles, which are called Gospels' (*Apology*, ch. lxvi); but the descriptive name which he actually uses would have had a meaning for the persons whom he was addressing. Further, with regard to his method of quoting the documents that he was using: in the *Apology* he dwells both on the life and the teaching of Jesus, reviewing the former with the special aim of enforcing the argument from the fulfilment of prophecy. Under these conditions, he availed himself now of one, now of another of the Synoptic Gospels, and he often found it convenient to rely on memory. His manner of using them is just what we might expect from a man who had made himself so thoroughly familiar with them that their contents had become, so to speak, a 'second nature' in his thought and feeling. It is noteworthy that in five passages in the *Dialogue* he quotes words of Jesus exactly in the form in which we now read them in the Gospel of Matthew. There is no evidence of the existence, at that time, of *writings* which could have supplied Justin *with all* that he has to say about the life and teaching of Jesus, except the Synoptic Gospels in their present form; and it is known that they were in circulation in the second century, with such variations of reading as are found in the oldest existing manuscripts. Surely it is a defiance of all principles of sound criticism to assume that Justin preferred to rely on any of the 'apocryphal' Gospels existing at the time, of which in any case he made an extremely limited use.

It is possible to compare Justin's quotations from the Old Testament with the actual words of the Greek version, and it is found that in a large number of cases they are as free as his quotations from the Synoptic Gospels. He often departs from the words actually written, but he does not misrepresent the natural meaning of the words actually written. It must be repeated that the considerations which we are emphasising are psychological.

The consideration which we stated in connection with the *Epistle of Clement* applies here with ten-fold force. The fact that Justin used ' the Memoirs of the Apostles ' without the slightest question of their trustworthiness is evidence of his belief that they had come down to him from previous generations with the authority of Tradition behind them. That this belief was an illusion is, in the case of Justin, a psychological impossibility.

Among the many detailed references, in the writings of Justin, to the life and work of Christ, we find in several passages the outline of what was to be called ' the Rule of Faith '—a summary statement of the essentials received without question in the Churches with which Justin was acquainted.[3] The longest statement is given in his *Apology* (ch. xiii), where he is concerned to affirm that Christians ' are not atheists ': ' We worship the Creator of this universe, whom we praise as we are able with prayer and thanksgiving . . . for our creation, for all our means of health, for the qualities of things, for the changes of the seasons, and that we may have a good resurrection through our faith; and with sound reason we honour him who has taught us these things and was born for that purpose, Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, the Governor of Judæa in the time of Tiberius Cæsar; for we have learnt that he is the Son of the true God. Him we hold in the second rank, and the prophetic Spirit third in order.' Shorter statements in a number of other passages refer explicitly to the Resurrection and the Ascension. Thus: ' It was foretold in the books of the Prophets that Jesus our Christ would come to earth, would be born through the Virgin and be made man, would be crucified and die, and be raised again, and ascend into heaven ' (ch. xxxi). Immediately after the statement quoted above (ch. xiii) Justin proceeds to dwell on the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, in the words recorded in Matt. v and vi: emphasising in particular bodily purity, patience, and love, and adding a strong reference to civil obedience: ' We worship God alone, but we serve you willingly in other things, acknowledging you to be our rulers, and praying that you may be found to unite sound wisdom with your imperial power.'

Our next outstanding landmark on the subject now before us is found in the work of Irenæus and Tertullian. In their writings, we see Tradition becoming the basis of an organised ' Christian front ', doctrinal and ecclesiastical. The four Gospels are now universally received, and read in Churches, as trustworthy and indeed inspired authorities for the life and teaching of Christ. The assumption, put forward by some writers in the last century, that they were chosen, more or less arbitrarily, out of a number of competing ' Gospels ', seems to have been based mainly on a complete misunderstanding of the passage in which Irenæus dwells on the analogies, in the mundane and supra-mundane regions, for the number ' four '. Their acceptance in the time of Irenæus strengthens the psychological argument from the period in which the evidence is definite to the period in which it is less definite: in this case, from the use of the Gospels by Irenæus to their use by Justin.

Irenæus had lived in Asia Minor; he knew many of the Churches there, and had heard the aged Polycarp in Smyrna. Indications of his dates are inconclusive within a few years of each other. It seems reasonable to suppose that he became Bishop of Lugdunum (Lyons) about A.D. 175. Here his enormous diocese would be southern Gaul. His principal work, the title of which may be rendered " Refutation and Overthrow of Knowledge falsely so called ", was probably completed early in the last quarter of the second century. It is usually referred to as *Adversus Haereses*—' Against Heretical Sects '. Most of it has come down to us only in a Latin translation, which the translator appears to have made as literal as he could.

Both Irenæus and Tertullian utterly repudiate the assumption that Christ reserved a secret doctrine, communicated by him to his disciples, which continued to be reserved until it was discovered by the ' Gnostics '. It was against the ' Gnostic ' systems, and in particular against this appeal to a supposed secret doctrine, that Irenæus composed his principal work. An important part of his purpose was to explain and defend what he believed to be the genuine apostolic Tradition against the extravagances of ' Gnosticism '.

According to Irenæus, the Christian Gospel has been transmitted

in a two-fold manner: (i) through the Scriptures, and (ii) by means of teaching and preaching based on a Tradition going back to the Apostles themselves. Tradition is therefore a second source of faith and doctrine, from which believers can derive Christian truth which is contained in the Bible only by implication or not at all. But there has been no kind of secrecy about the apostolic Tradition: 'Any man who desires to discover the truth may find in every Church the apostolic Tradition manifest and clear. If the Apostles had a secret doctrine to be imparted to the so-called "perfect", surely they would have openly entrusted this teaching to the men in whose charge they left the Churches?' He proceeds to name a succession of Bishops, taking the case of Rome because, as he observes, it would take a long time to name the succession in all the other Churches—because Rome had a position of central importance in the empire—and because the Christian Church in Rome was for that reason an important source of influence.[4]

In defence of his view of the value of Tradition Irenæus states an extreme hypothetical case: 'If the Apostles had not left any Scriptures in writing, would it not be our duty to follow the order of the Tradition which they actually did deliver to the men in whose charge they left the Churches?' He points to the case of those who believe without appeal to writings, for the plain reason that they cannot read Greek: 'Many communities of barbarians who believe in Christ, with the means of their salvation written not with paper and ink but by the Spirit in their hearts, are faithful to the ancient Tradition. Many of those who hold the faith without any written words to support them may be barbarians as regards our language, but as regards their beliefs and way of life they are well pleasing to God, living as they do in righteousness and purity' (III. iv. 1).

The most definite statement of the Rule of Faith found in the writings of Irenæus is as follows: 'The Church, dispersed as she is throughout the known world, received from the Apostles and from their disciples one faith: that is, faith in one God the Father Almighty, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that is in them: and in one Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who

for our salvation became flesh: and in one Holy Spirit, who through the prophets foretold . . . the advent, the birth from a virgin, the sufferings, the resurrection from the dead, and the bodily reception into the heavens, of Jesus Christ our beloved Lord, and his coming again in the glory of the Father, in order that all things in the heavens and the earth may be gathered up in him [the reference is to Ephesians i. 10], and to raise all men from the dead for just judgment: the irreligious, the blasphemers, and the unrighteous among men, with the rebel angels, to everlasting fire, and the righteous, who have kept his commandments and persevered in his love, to eternal life and eternal glory' (*Adversus Haereses*, I. ch. 10).

In all essential principles Tertullian is at one with Irenæus on the question here before us; but special attention is needed to his short treatise *On the Prescription of Heretics*. His method is clearly stated by himself: 'We contest the ground on which our opponents (the "Christian" Gnostics) make their appeal. They make the Scriptures the ground of their appeal, and so they deceive many. We therefore take up our strongest position when we maintain that they have no right to the use of the Scriptures at all. If they make the Scriptures the ground of their appeal, then the question as to who are entitled to use the Scriptures must be gone into first.' The term *praescriptio* was a Roman legal term stating a question which must be decided first before any legal arguments over a given case could be dealt with. Tertullian's procedure is in effect to transfer the case into that of Tradition and its validity. His position is, that the authority of the Gospels (the written Gospels) rests on a trustworthy and public Tradition which the 'Gnostics' despise and reject, claiming an entirely secret Tradition coming from Christ and known only to themselves.

'Let us search, therefore, in our own, and from our own, and concerning our own, provided only that nothing is admitted which conflicts with the Rule of Faith.' Tertullian then proceeds to state the contents of the Rule of Faith: 'It affirms our belief that there is but one God, self-same with the Creator of the world, who produced, in the beginning, all things out of nothing through His Word (the *Logos*): that the Word is called His

Son, who under the name of God was seen in divers forms by the patriarchs, was heard in the prophets, and at length through the Spirit and Power of God became flesh and was born of the Virgin Mary and lived as Jesus Christ: that he proclaimed a new Law and a new promise of the Kingdom of Heaven, wrought miracles, was crucified, and on the third day rose again from the dead and ascended into the heavens: . . . that he sent the power of the Holy Spirit to guide believers: that he will come in glory to take the "saints" into the fulfilment of the heavenly promises in eternal life, and condemn the wicked to everlasting fire' (Tertullian's materialistic views of the soul naturally led him to equally materialistic views of the resurrection-body). He does not condemn inquiry within limits. Provided that the Form of the Rule is observed, 'Christians may seek and discuss as much as they please', and 'express their desire for inquiry, if any question seems undetermined through ambiguity or obscure through lack of clear statement'.[5]

The references to the Rule of Faith, in Irenæus and Tertullian, show that certain of its statements, in addition to their affirmative force, were intended to have a negative implication. This may be admitted without any concession to the theory that the Creed was developed mainly as a defensive 'barrier' against 'Gnosticism'. Each of the principal clauses excludes some speculation held by the 'Gnostics', who claimed to be 'Christian'. The unity of God, as Father and Creator of everything that exists, excludes the theory that the creator of this world was a separate being inferior to the supreme God; that Jesus Christ is His 'only Son' excludes the theory that when Christ appeared on earth he was one of a succession of supra-mundane beings; that the body of Jesus which suffered was a real human body excludes the theory that it was only the appearance of a human body. The body of Jesus which rose again was not a mere apparition; and, in the case of mankind, the body is not an evil prison from which the soul escapes, but is itself destined to be 'raised from the dead'.

Among the movements usually described as 'Gnostic', there was one with characteristics differentiating it from all other forms

of 'Gnosticism' of which anything is known. It was founded by Marcion of Pontus. Marcion first becomes historically conspicuous as a member of the Church in Rome about A.D. 145, but he broke off his connection with the Church, or more probably was expelled from it; and he then started an active propaganda of his own. His radical conviction was based on the contrast between the Deity revealed in the Old Testament and the Deity revealed in the New Testament. All the 'Gnostic' schools claiming to be Christian had emphasised this contrast; but Marcion gave it an entirely new interpretation. He had convinced himself that the combination of Law and Gospel in the accepted Christian tradition rested on a fatal misunderstanding, due to the fact that the original disciples, unable to cast off their Jewish presuppositions, had perverted the Gospel of Christ and given a distorted picture of his Person. Paul, opposing this tendency, and especially in opposition to Peter, was the first to set forth the Gospel of Christ in its complete independence and its revolutionary character; but his letters had been interpolated in the interest of Jewish Christianity. Hence Marcion felt called upon to restore the genuine Gospel of Paul, which was the Gospel of Christ. Marcion admitted no allegorical interpretation, and claimed no revelation imparted to himself. His purpose was to break up what he believed to be the unnatural combination of Law and Gospel, and to purify the New Testament of everything connecting it with Judaism. The result was the Marcionite 'Canon', consisting of the Gospel of Luke and ten Epistles of Paul: Romans, Corinthians (both), Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Thessalonians (both), and Philemon, in every case with certain 'expurgations'. All the other books of the New Testament, so far as he knew them, he rejected. His treatment of the New Testament has been described as purely 'subjective': it was, rather, the application of a fixed and definite theory. It is historically important because of its effects to be seen in the history of the Canon of New Testament writings adopted by the Church.

In addition to his 'Canon' Marcion composed a kind of textbook entitled *The Antitheses*, setting forth in detail the contrast

between the God of the Law and the God of the Gospel. Fragments of it have survived. At bottom, the ' Antitheses ' may be reduced to these: on the one side, the kingdom of nature, the material world in which bodily life is imprisoned—on the other side, the heavenly Kingdom, apprehended by all who are moved by the spirit of Christ; on the one side, a legal righteousness, ' thou shalt (do this), thou shalt not (do that) ', resting on sanctions of reward and punishment—on the other side, free redeeming Grace; on the one side, the victorious leadership of a privileged and ' chosen ' people—on the other side, salvation freely offered to all, heathen and sinners alike.

The real Saviour-Christ appeared suddenly in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius. His appearance was an entirely new event, with no roots in the past history of the Jewish people or of the human race. Everything depended on faith in Christ, trusting oneself absolutely to the mercy of God revealed in Christ, a God who had given no sign of his love or even of his existence save in the Person and Work of Christ. ' Apart from Christ, there is no salvation.' Faith in God is faith in a God who is a ' Stranger ' to the world, who yet intervened, as it were ' catastrophically ', in Christ, to proclaim a radically new religion of true salvation. So far as the conditions of human existence allowed, all the works of the creator God (the God of the Old Testament) were despised and rejected. The body was to be subjected to ascetic discipline. Marriage was forbidden to all who yielded themselves absolutely to faith in Christ. And yet Marcion held firmly to the conviction that the God revealed in Christ is not a Judge. A sufficient deterrent from sin was the horror of sin inspired by the vision of God's Love in Christ; ' a doctrine ' it has been said ' for the giants of faith, not for ordinary Christians '.[6]

The strongest attack on Marcion's version of Christianity which has come down to us is that of Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*. Tertullian's fervid ' African ' temperament often breaks out into violence of language; it is characteristic that he begins by abuse of Marcion and even of the region from which Marcion had come. But he soon proceeds to serious argument. We quote the most essential points from the first Book (ch. ix. ff.): ' How

absurd it is to believe that during the whole interval between creation and the coming of Christ the supreme God should have remained entirely unknown, while the lower deity, the " Demiurge ", received the undivided homage of mankind. . . . It would have been more reasonable to affirm the superiority of the being who had manifested his power in the work of creation than to affirm the superiority of One who had never even afforded any evidence of His existence. . . . In order to avoid the force of this argument, you (the Marcionites) profess to despise the world in which you live; and notwithstanding the innumerable ways of order and design to be seen in it, you say it is not worthy to be the work of the supreme God. . . . Yet Christ, who, you say, came into this world to deliver men from the power of the Demiurge, has given to men the use of the elements and products of this evil world for human purposes, and even in the Sacraments, which you celebrate as we do. . . . Again: though two hundred years have passed since the birth of Christ, this world, the work of the Demiurge, still exists, and has not been done away to be replaced by a new creation from the supreme God whom Christ came to reveal. . . . And how was the supreme God at length actually revealed? There are two ways of attaining to knowledge of God—from the apprehension and understanding of His works, or by direct revelation. Since the actual world was the work of the Demiurge, knowledge of the true God must have been by direct revelation, through the Saviour-Christ who came down from heaven two hundred years ago. . . . And yet full disclosure of the truth was reserved until Marcion began to urge Christians to believe that the God revealed by Christ was a superior Being to the creator.'

Tertullian argues at length that Marcion entirely failed in his main purpose—to reconcile the supremacy of a God of perfect goodness and love with the fact that a being inferior in goodness and love held the world in subjection. That Tertullian sheds light on this problem himself could hardly be maintained even by the most sympathetic expositor. But Tertullian takes the question down to the fundamental issue: the denial of any real relation between the supreme God and the created world except through

a wholly anti-natural intervention. It is not true that pure forgiving Love is the only attribute of God which is revealed to us: He is a God of Judgment as well as a God of Love; and it is not true that the Bible presents a clearly-marked antithesis between a 'just' God, that is a God requiring obedience and apportioning rewards and punishments and a God of Love and Mercy. The Old Testament witnesses to the Mercy of God as well as to His Judgments, and the New Testament to His Judgments as well as to His Mercy. The truth is that Marcion was the slave of dualistic presuppositions. He was incapable of perceiving that the more deeply we penetrate into human experience, the less possible it becomes to divide it into rigid classifications resting in every case on an 'Either–Or' of mutually exclusive terms. His interest was wholly in practical religion. He aimed at founding a Church, and to some extent he succeeded; statements by Irenæus and Tertullian show that Marcionite Churches existed in many parts of the empire; and the roll of martyrdom includes many members of these Churches.

Nevertheless, the fundamental dualism of the Marcionite theology, and the consequent assertion that the body of Jesus Christ was not a real human body but only the appearance of one, was to the Fathers an intolerable paradox. Take Origen as an example: 'We worship the God of the universe—the whole, of all that our senses reveal to us, and all that is beyond the power of our senses to discern' (*Contra Celsum*, bk. VIII. ch. xvi). Origen believed that though in the experience of created beings Justice and Love cannot be the same, in the infinite being of God they are One.

Among the Christian thinkers of Alexandria we find an unquestioned acceptance of the Rule of Faith, as it had come down from the Apostolic Age through Clement of Rome, Justin, Irenæus, and Tertullian; but their theory of the principle of that Tradition differed materially from all that we have hitherto considered. In what follows we refer in particular to Clement of Alexandria and Origen.

Very little is known with any certainty about the life of Clement of Alexandria. References in his writings show that he was an

Athenian by education if not by birth. For several years he travelled widely, and heard various teachers until he found in Alexandria 'the true master' for whom he had been seeking. This was Pantænus, then head of the famous 'Catechetical School'—the seat of the study of the Christian religion, its theology and its history. Only fragments of the work of Pantænus have survived. Clement succeeded him, and taught there for some twelve years, until A.D. 203, Origen being among his students. Clement was by temperament and inclination a student, averse to personal controversy and the harassing affairs of political and ecclesiastical life in Alexandria. His writings are a faithful mirror of his studies and thoughts. Three of them are decisive for his place in the history of early Christian doctrine. (i) A critical account of pagan mythologies and 'mysteries', leading up to an 'Appeal to the Greeks' to learn what the true religion is. This work is sometimes referred to by its Greek title, *Protreptikos*. (ii) An exposition of the work of the divine Word, guiding men to Christianity as a way of life as well as of faith: the 'Instructor' (*Paidagogos*). (iii) A work of his last years, the unsystematic but important 'Miscellanies' (*Stromata*).[7]

Clement's view of Tradition is really two views, which he does not succeed in finally reconciling. In the first place, we have in the New Testament the foundations of saving knowledge. But he passes beyond even this. Quoting Colossians (i. 26–27, Moffatt's rendering), with its emphatic reference to the 'open secret', that 'open secret which, though concealed from ages and generations of old, has been disclosed to the saints of God', he understands the words to mean that there were certain truths 'established before Creation', not revealed until the time of the Apostles, delivered by the Apostles as they received them from Christ, and handed down through a continuous line of Tradition from the earliest days of the Church. The validity of this Tradition carries with it a distinction between the ordinary Christian believer and the 'Christian Gnostic'—a title which Clement carefully distinguished from that of the heretical 'Gnosticism' attacked by the Fathers. He is absolutely opposed to the 'Gnostic' theory that there is a difference of *nature* between the two types of

Christian believers. All alike are saved by faith and by their power of free voluntary choice, aided by divine Grace; but there are, so to speak, ' grades ' or ' levels ' in Christian belief. ' Faith ' must come first—the indispensable truths of the Gospel, set forth in the ' Rule of Faith '; but the complete understanding of the content of the Faith (so far as this is possible for us) depends on the power of sustained rational reflection and insight: ' This is entrusted as a deposit to those who show themselves worthy of such instruction, and from this, Love shines forth with ever-increasing light: thus it was said, To him who has, shall be given —knowledge being added to faith, and love to knowledge, and to love the heavenly inheritance '. There are, then, two extremes: ' the children of faith, blessed indeed, but not yet having attained to maturity in their love of God '; and the ' Christian Gnostic ', who has faith, but with the fullest understanding of his faith. As a consequence of this distinction, Clement does not hesitate to advocate a *reservation of doctrine* in addressing those who are ' not ready ' or not prepared to understand it fully. Humanly speaking, this may sometimes be legitimate, or educationally necessary; but evidently it may be carried so far as to be fatal. Clement observes that the ' Christian Gnostic ' will express whatever is in his mind, ' but only to those who are worthy to hear '; he both thinks and speaks the truth, ' unless sometimes medicinally, as when a physician may still tell an untruth for the safety of the patient '.[8]

For the Christian theologians of Alexandria, the fundamental fact of divine revelation was the unity and harmony of all parts of the Bible, and they were convinced that this could be shown only by the method of *allegorical interpretation*. The so-called ' secret doctrine ' was based wholly on the Bible, and the questions which it raised related entirely to the legitimacy of the allegorical method. Allegorism had long been known among the Greeks, particularly in reference to the interpretation of Homer. It had also long been known among the Jews of Alexandria; but it was made into a system by Philo. Philo died at an advanced age soon after A.D. 40. He was before all else a devout orthodox Jew. For him, the books of the Old Testament were all divinely inspired; but the

books bearing the name of Moses were inspired in the highest degree, setting forth, as they did, the divine *Torah*. It is evident from his writings that Philo had read widely in Greek literature and philosophy. Whether he had an adequate understanding of it all is another question; but his studies had led him to a conception of the divine Nature which could not be reconciled with a number of statements in the Old Testament if these were understood in their literal sense. Philo therefore summoned to his aid, as a solvent of all difficulties, the method of allegorical interpretation. Everything anthropomorphic had to be translated into some philosophical or spiritual truth; whatever, superficially regarded, appeared to be trivial or even absurd, must for that very reason be the vehicle of some profound thought. He employed this method in all seriousness; he believed that he was faithfully following the meaning of the writers whose work he was expounding; and wherever there was nothing objectionable in the narratives or statements as given, he allowed the literal meaning to stand, though he introduced the familiar symbolism along with it. He protested against the assumption that the prescriptions of the ceremonial Law might be neglected because they were capable of a spiritual interpretation. There are numerous cases of resemblance and sometimes identity of expression between the exegetical writings of Philo and those of Clement; but it is psychologically impossible that Clement simply borrowed from Philo or simply imitated Philo. Philo was a philosophically minded and sincerely orthodox Jew; Clement was a philosophically minded and sincerely Christian theologian.

Of all Christian thinkers before the fourth century, Origen is the one with the greatest intellectual power, and the one who, with the possible exception of Irenæus, exercised the widest influence. Born in Alexandria of Christian parents, his abilities were developed in the Catechetical School under Clement. His student days ended suddenly with the persecution under Severus; but on the re-opening of the Catechetical School the Bishop appointed him to be head of the School in succession to Clement, who had retired. Here he laboured, as author and teacher, until serious differences with the Bishop led to his removal to Cæsarea

in Palestine. He suffered imprisonment and torture during the persecution under Decius (A.D. 250). Though he was released after the death of Decius in the following year, his health and constitution were broken as a result of his sufferings, following on a laborious and severely ascetic life. He died in the seventieth year of his age (253). His literary work was immense. He produced Commentaries on almost every book of the Old and New Testaments. These formed the greater part of his planned work as a Christian teacher; but part of his purpose was to construct a comprehensive Christian theology, at once Scriptural and philosophical. His work on *First Principles* is his contribution to that purpose.[9]

Origen's theory of Tradition is identical with his theory of Interpretation. Christ did give 'secret' teaching through the Apostles, but its content is to be found wholly in the Bible, when studied by those who are fitted to receive it—that is, when studied under the methods of interpretation prevalent in the Christian schools of Alexandria. In effect, this means that the 'average' Christian must leave the interpretation of Scripture to trained theologians.[10]

There is, however, more to be said. We may compare Clement and Origen in this reference. For Clement, the understanding of the deeper meanings of the biblical writings was the result of an inherited Tradition, on which both the authority and the content of the allegorical method rested. For Origen, the authority or sanction of the method rested on Tradition, but its legitimate use depended on a superior insight, which is not the exclusive privilege of certain persons. He is prepared to maintain that any Christian believer might attain to it. Thus, after quoting Proverbs v. 3 ('Drink waters out of your own well, running waters out of your own fountain'), he urges his hearers to realise that everyone has an inner fountain of his own: 'You also, as you study the Scriptures, may begin to derive wisdom from what is written; . . . for there is within each one of you a natural source of living waters, perennial springs of pure understanding, if only they are not choked by the dust and dirt of the world. . . . Clear away the dust and dirt of the world, for it is God who is the

Source of the living springs within you. . . . Like the woman who found her *drachma* not outside but within her home, after she had cleaned it and kindled her lamp.'

Nevertheless, a certain contrast remains. There are questions which are too difficult for the 'average' Christian believer. These are the fundamental questions of philosophical theology. He is convinced that 'for the sake of those unable to bear the burden of studying questions of such importance' it has been divinely ordained that the explanation of them in the Bible 'shall be enveloped in records dealing with the visible creation'. Origen may have entertained the idea of a progressive revelation, but he made no use of it in reference to the literature of the Bible. He was absorbed in elaborating the difference between the literal and the spiritual sense. He knew, and expressly says, that there is much in the Old Testament the power of which may be felt without any expert knowledge: 'He who with careful attention reads the words of the prophets will even from his reading experience a trace and vestige of the inspiration in himself, and this personal experience will convince him that these are no mere compilations of men. . . . And the light which was always there in the Mosaic Law, though covered with a veil, shone forth with the coming of Jesus, when the veil was taken away, and the good things came little by little into view—those good things whose shadow was seen in the letter of the writings.'[11]

Origen finds that the interpretation of the Bible on the principle of literalism leads to endless difficulties, and provides material for dualistic theories like those of Marcion. He finds also that 'the more simple-minded of those belonging to the Church while rightly believing that there is none greater than the Creator', do yet 'believe such things about Him as would not be believed about the most unjust and savage of men'. Difficulties of a more general character he finds, for example, in the narrative of the Garden of Eden: 'What intelligent person will believe that a first, second, and third day, with evening and morning, took place without sun and stars, and the first, as we call it, without even a heaven? Who would be so childish as to believe that God, after the manner of a human gardener, planted

a garden, and made therein a tree, visible and tangible, such that one could get the power of living by bodily eating of its fruit with the teeth: or, again, could partake of good and evil by feeding on what came from the other tree? If God is said to walk at eventide in the Garden and Adam to hide himself under a tree, I think that no one will doubt that these statements are figurative, declaring, by means of an apparent history, certain mysteries, not declaring what took place in bodily form. And Cain's going forth from the presence of God, stirs the reader to look for the meaning of the presence of God, and of anyone going forth from it. . . . All but the dullest eyes can gather examples in which events are recorded as having happened which did not happen in the literal sense.' Origen finds that even in the Gospels there are statements of the same kind—as when it is recorded that the devil took Jesus on to a high mountain to show him from thence the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them: 'Only a careless reader would agree with those who believe that by the eyes of the body the kingdoms of the Persians and Scythians and Indians and Parthians were seen and the glory given to their rulers.' [12]

Allegorism retained a position in the Church, but it was a severely restricted position. Difficulties were felt even by Origen himself. The Song of Songs is a test case. Origen saw that, understood literally, it is a dramatic love-poem. But the relations of the lover to her beloved were supposed to symbolise the relations of the Church to Christ and of the Christian believer to the divine Word. The position of the book in the Canon has again and again revived the ancient way of interpretation. With regard to Origen's treatment of the Song of Songs in his Commentary, Dr. Charles Bigg observed: 'Origen undertook the work with many misgivings. He was startled to find the Greek word which denotes sexual affection used, as he thought, of the love between Christ and his mystical bride; but he persuaded himself that here there is no real difference between the *eros* of poetry and the *agapê* of the New Testament. . . . Origen, without intending it, made a contribution to the language expressive of personal adoration of Christ, ending eventually in a religious

attitude in which the Father . . . has been obscured behind the Son, as the Son in turn has been behind the Virgin and the Saints.' [13]

As we approach the fourth century, and the controversies which were critical for Christian thought, we find that the authority of Tradition, in itself and as a rule of interpretation, was being merged in the authority of the organised Church. Thus, Basil, Bishop of Cæsarea, affirms that 'of the doctrines, and institutions [the reference is to the Sacraments], preserved in the Church, some are set forth in the sacred writings while others come from the Tradition of the Apostles. . . . But no one will repudiate the latter [the Tradition] if he has the least understanding of the authority of the Church.' And after referring to ceremonies at that time admitted by the Church without question, he goes on to say that 'herein are ordinances which formerly were not entirely divulged, and which the Fathers preserved silently, to protect them from mere curiosity'. This is in principle Clement's doctrine of a 'secret' Tradition, applied to the authority and efficacy of the Sacraments. Basil is entirely at one with his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and his friend Gregory of Nazianzus, in their agreement that certain terms used in the Nicene declaration are not to be rejected simply because they do not occur in Scripture. Thus, Gregory of Nyssa, writing against the extreme Arianism of Eunomius, affirms that 'for the proof of our assertion (the unique generation of the Son of God) we have the Tradition of the Fathers, which has come down to us, transmitted by the saints who were the successors of the Apostles'.[14]

When we turn to Augustine, we see before us the work of a man of whom it may be said that within the Catholic Christian a philosophical thinker of the first rank was restlessly active, and within both a religious genius of the highest order was working. His position in the history of Christianity is unique. As thinker, theologian, and ecclesiastical statesman, he largely bound the thought and conscience of Christendom for fifty generations; but, it must be remembered, his profound anthropological pessimism remained with little effect on Christian thought until the Reformation.

He was born at Tagaste, in North Africa, in 354, of a Christian

mother and a broad-minded pagan father. He was given a thorough training in Rhetoric, and became a brilliant and successful rhetorician, practising in Rome and in Milan. He had known the Christian Scriptures from boyhood, but he had little use for them in adolescence and early manhood. For several years he had accepted Manicheism as a satisfactory explanation of the world. Manicheism was the latest version of the extreme dualism historically connected with the Persian belief that Good and Evil are two independent Powers, wholly opposed and in eternal conflict. What attracted Augustine in Manicheism was its apparent solution of the problem of evil; but the materialism and crudities of the Manichean ' theology ' eventually disgusted him. His rejection of Manicheism was followed by a period of scepticism. In Milan his life was changed. He was delivered from scepticism by a study of at least part of the principal work of Plotinus; and he became acquainted with Ambrose. This ripened into a warm personal friendship.

At present, we are concerned specially with Augustine's doctrine of Tradition and its relation to the place of the Scriptures in the Christian faith. In a statement which has often been quoted, Augustine says: ' I would not believe the Gospel (that is, the written records of the Gospel) unless the authority of the Catholic Church moved me to believe ' (*ego vero evangelium non crederem nisi me catholicae ecclesiae commoveret auctoritas*). This statement must be read in the light of its context. It is from a comparatively brief but effective criticism of the Manichean ' theology ' in reply to an epistle by a Manichean who described himself as ' an Apostle of Jesus Christ '. ' I do not believe it ', says Augustine. What can the Manichean reply? ' If he says, Trust the verdict of the Catholic Church, I answer that the Church forbids me to trust the Manicheans. If he says, Do not rely on the verdict of the Church but turn to the written Gospel, then I tell him that he cannot appeal to the written Gospel to compel me to accept the Manichean doctrine, because the written Gospel has the authority of the Church behind it.' Then follows the statement quoted above; and Augustine continues: ' If he says, you are right to trust those who defend the Gospel, but you are wrong to trust them

when they condemn the Manichean doctrine: does he think that I am so foolish as to believe what he wishes me to believe in the written Gospel, and to reject what he wishes me to reject in it, without any reason being given? ' The whole passage is a further indication that the authority of Tradition, in itself and as a rule of interpretation, was now merged in the authority of the organised Church. The key-note of Augustine's belief about the Bible is heard in a typical statement: ' In what is clearly taught in the Scriptures we find all that is of the essence of our faith and the discipline of our life ' (*inveniunter illa omnia quae continent fidem moresque vivendi*). It became necessary therefore for Augustine to investigate the whole question of interpretation, which he did with characteristic thoroughness.

He laid down a principle of a general character to decide whether a statement in the Bible is to be understood literally or figuratively, and he illustrated it with reference to statements of a prescriptive character: ' If such a statement forbids a criminal act, or commands an act of benevolence, it is not to be understood figuratively; but if it seems to order a cruel or unjust act, or to forbid acts of prudence or benevolence, it must be understood figuratively.' Much more is this caution needed when such things are attributed to holy men, and, above all, when they are attributed to God. Nevertheless, every statement in the Bible which can be pressed to support the everlasting material torment of the damned, is pressed to its *strictest literal meaning*. He will not for a moment admit that any figurative interpretation of such statements is allowable. He endeavours to analyse the way in which God prepares the bodies of the damned, at the resurrection, in order that they may be everlastingly tormented without being destroyed. It is evident, from the way in which he discusses this doctrine, that there were some in the Church who seriously questioned it. But Augustine decisively rejects all hopes that future punishment is purgatorial, or that it may not be everlasting, or that it may be mitigated by ' the prayers of the saints '. This rigid literalism is the more remarkable, because in the case of Paul's reference to some who may be saved, ' yet as by fire ', Augustine applies it to those who ' have Christ for a foundation '.

and the 'fire' is to be understood figuratively. But for all others, except the 'elect', it is a never-ending torment of body and soul alike. It is important to bear in mind that the scriptural basis of this doctrine, or what he believed to be its scriptural basis, is *not a full explanation* of it; and we shall return to it in the sequel. At present we are concerned with the general principles of interpretation, as Augustine sets them forth.

Fundamentally, the task is to discover the thought and intention of the writer himself, and then through this, to discover the purpose intended by God (that is, in moving him so to write). The purpose of the writer is to be discovered by a reasonable and accurate examination of the text; the discovery of the purpose of God takes us beyond the text, and may require allegorism. In the first place, therefore, we must be prepared for an intelligent understanding of what is written. To this end, certain cautionary rules are of primary importance. They may be conveniently summarised under four 'heads'.[15]

(i) We must consider the period and the circumstances referred to, directly or indirectly, in the passage before us. A special application of this caution is in connection with the differences between the ancient Hebrew Law and the Christian Gospel. All this may be explained by reference to the different situations. The Mosaic legislation was valid for one period, for one group of circumstances; the Gospel, for another. Augustine takes as an illustration the scientific principles of medicine, which, as he regarded them, do not change; but on the basis of these principles, different remedies are prescribed for different diseases. There is no contradiction when we find that certain moral laws—which were binding under the special conditions of the particular time and place and people—did prescribe things which were afterwards forbidden, or forbade what was afterwards admitted.

(ii) In the case of a command, we must consider whether it was given to all mankind, or to a special class of men. For an important example: the saying attributed to Jesus and recorded in Matt. xix. 12, is not to be understood as a universal rule of Christian life. Augustine applies in such cases the principle of two levels of Christian life—the active and the contemplative;

and even in the latter reference, it does not follow that the particular rule is absolutely binding. This distinction is intimately connected with Augustine's convictions in reference to the claims and limits of the monastic life.

(iii) We must consider the meaning of particular words in the *context* of the passage. Among his examples, he examines the use of the words 'jealousy' and 'anger' for qualities ascribed to God. He believes that 'jealousy' in the sense of *guarding purity* may be ascribed to God, and 'anger' if we distinguish 'anger' from *vindictiveness*.

(iv) We have to consider the character of the original language. For Augustine, the most important applications of this caution related to the comparison of the Greek text of the Septuagint with the Hebrew of the Old Testament; and he considers the question carefully in *The City of God*, XVIII, ch. xlii–xliv. He had a great admiration for the Greek version, and he accepted the legend that the translators were divinely guided. And since the Hebrew is also inspired, how are we to understand statements in which they differ? The answer is, that 'in cases where the Greek version appears to differ from what is stated in the Hebrew (*ab Hebraica veritate*), consideration will show that *properly understood* they agree'. The words 'properly understood' (*bene intellecti*) can only refer to allegorism. This is evident from the examples which Augustine proceeds to give. His general view is indicated in the summary title given to ch. xlii: 'On the authority of the Septuagint version, which, granting the value of the Hebrew text (*quae salvo honore Hebraei stili*), is to be preferred to any other.'

Augustine laboured under the disadvantage of the traditional theory of biblical inspiration; he had no alternative to the prevalent view, and he loyally accepted it, though not without misgivings. He had postponed his baptism—the final stage of his conversion—because of the difficulties which he felt over many passages in the Old Testament. In his *Confessions* he tells how the teaching of Ambrose showed him how he could retain the integrity of his reason and at the same time accept the ancient Scriptures of the Church: 'I rejoiced because I was able to read

with other eyes those ancient Scriptures which used to seem so irrational. . . . Gladly did I hear Ambrose, in his sermons to the people, insisting on the words *littera occidit, spiritus autem vivificat* (II Cor. iii. 6) as a rule to be carefully observed, opening up the spiritual sense of passages which used to repel me, and which now I heard reasonably explained; and the authority of the Bible seemed more worthy of reverential faith, because, while all might read it, its inmost thought lay in these deeper meanings.' [16]

The strongest opponents of allegorism, in the East, were found among the theologians trained in what is called ' the School of Antioch ', that is, in the traditions of biblical study and interpretation which were prevalent in that city. They charged the allegorical methods of the Alexandrian theologians with explaining away the historical meaning of many passages in the Bible. The historical characteristics of ' the School of Antioch ' are seen most fully in Diodore (Bishop of Tarsus, A.D. 378–394) and his two famous students, Theodore, who died as Bishop of Mopsuestia in Cilicia, in 428, two years before the death of Augustine, and Chrysostom (the latter a powerful preacher rather than a systematic theologian). The few surviving fragments of Diodore's writings show that while he contested the trustworthiness of allegorism, he emphasised the importance of insight into the inner spiritual meaning of the biblical narratives. Theodore carries these principles further. He insists on getting at the historical meaning of the writings which he is studying, but he also insists on taking into account the historical circumstances under which they were written. Theodore is described as a ' rationalist '. It would be more instructive to say that his biblical studies show a determined reasonableness and penetration. His ignorance of Hebrew was a grave disadvantage, and led to his acceptance of the current fables about the infallibility of the Septuagint as a translation. The strength of his position was in his recognition of the fact that the two Testaments are not on the same level of religious authority and inspiration, and that we are not entitled to read into the Old Testament conceptions which do not properly belong to it. We must take our stand on the meaning which the original writers intended. It is impossible to

find the doctrine of the Trinity in the Old Testament. It was unknown to the Hebrews, and no proof-texts for it can be found there. The idea of the Holy Spirit as a distinct *hypostasis* (' personality ') was likewise unknown to the Hebrews. In this case, he believed that where the Old Testament speaks of the Spirit, the reference is to the providential order appointed by God, as in the great saying in Joel (ii. 28), ' I will pour out my Spirit ', that is, bestow upon all men my providential care.

Theodore recognised that in the historical, the prophetic, and the didactic writings contained in the Old Testament there are varying degrees of inspiration. He did not find *the higher inspiration* in the ' Wisdom Books ', not even in the Book of Job, the poetic power of which was probably beyond his understanding. He found little religious value in Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, and he perceived that the Song of Songs was a dramatic love-poem. The general conclusion was to see in the other books of the Old Testament a progressive unfolding of the divine purpose, reaching its culmination, beyond the range of the Old Testament revelation, in the Incarnation. Among the prophetic writings he found three different fields of reference. (i) There are prophecies which have a primary and direct reference to Christ, and no other historic reference whatever: such are, among the Psalms, the second, the forty-fifth, and the hundred and tenth. For the rest, he rejected the inscriptions at the head of the Psalms, and assigned the poems to various dates down to the Maccabean period. (ii) There are prophecies which have a primary and direct reference to Old Testament events, but which, provided the natural grammatical and historical meaning is observed, may be understood typically, in reference to New Testament events. A single example must suffice here. The historical reference in Amos (ix. 11) foretelling the restoration of the ' tabernacle ' is to the expected restoration of the Davidic monarchy. Theodore believes that a ' typological ' application of the passage is not only legitimate but is actually made in the New Testament (Acts xv. 16–18), where the restoration of the ' tabernacle ' is referred to the calling of the ' Gentiles '—' that the rest of men may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who are called by my Name '.

(iii) There are prophecies which refer only to Old Testament events. These are naturally very numerous. Theodore finds a conspicuous example in the powerful declarations in Micah (iv. 1–3), referring to the actual city of Jerusalem. On the other hand, Theodore claimed that the original meaning, in some cases, has a theological implication relevant to later Christian thought. For example, the original reference in Isaiah xlv. 23 is to the providence of God; but Paul transfers it to the risen Christ. Theodore's comment is to the effect that the words are not used *specifically* of the Father or of the Son, but of the divine Nature as such. Hence, he affirms, Paul's reference of the words to the risen Christ is justified, because there is no separation of *nature* between the Father and the Son.[17]

In his studies of the New Testament, Theodore held 'radical' views about certain writings afterwards finally included in the Canon. He criticised the 'Catholic Epistles', especially those of James, the second of Peter, and the second and third of John. But for him there was no question of the inspiration and authority of the remaining Epistles or the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. His treatment of the Epistle to the Galatians shows that he clearly understood the situation which confronted Paul there. He found it necessary carefully to consider Paul's references to the narrative of Hagar and Ishmael, and the Apostle's definite statement that 'this is an allegory'. Theodore concludes that Paul never intended to question the historical character of the story of Hagar and Ishmael, but to make a figurative application of it.

In the Introduction to his translation of the *Confessions* of Augustine, the late Dr. Charles Bigg made an instructive comment on the allegorical method in general: 'Allegorism was in fact philosophy, and a very fine philosophy, struggling, without the aid of scientific or large historical knowledge, against doubts which first suggested themselves to intelligent Christians or to opponents of the Church. Some of these doubts could be met only by knowledge or modes of conception as yet undreamt of; and in such cases the allegorist was often driven to answers which strike the modern reader as forced or even absurd. Some of these doubts flowed from those insoluble problems which lie at

the root of all thought; and in such cases allegorism was the voice of human reason, as highly cultivated as it has ever been since.'

As we have seen, allegorism, as a method of interpreting the Scriptures, retained an extremely restricted place in Christian thought. Such authority as it retained was merged in the authority of Tradition, and the authority of Tradition was merged in the authority of the organised Church. The culmination of the early Catholic view of Tradition is seen in the *Commonitorium* of Vincent of Lerinum, that is, of the then famous Monastery on the island near Cannes now known as 'L'Isle Saint-Honorat'. The work was written a few years after the death of Augustine. It appears that the author was roused by the apparently 'unprecedented' character of the Augustinian doctrine of Predestination and Election to consider the relation of the Faith of the Church *to its past*. He begins by stating what has been called the 'Vincentian Canon': 'Within the Church, the greatest care must be taken to hold that which has been believed always, everywhere, and by all (*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*), for that is truly Catholic, as the word shows, which is universally inclusive; . . . universal, if we confess the one Faith which the Church throughout the world confesses—ancient, if we never depart from those interpretations which our Fathers gave—agreed, if we follow the traditions and beliefs of all, or certainly nearly all, of the ancient doctors.' Vincent proceeds to answer two objections which naturally arise. 'Here perhaps someone will ask, Since the Canon of the Scriptures is complete, what need is there to give it the additional authority of ecclesiastical interpretation? The answer is, that owing to the very depth of Holy Scripture itself, all do not receive it with the same meaning, but interpret the declarations of the same writer in different ways, so that it seems possible to elicit from Scripture as many beliefs as there are men [who read it]. . . . It is very necessary on account of the variety of such errors, that rules should be laid down for the interpretation of the prophets and Apostles according to the catholic understanding of them' (*Commonitorium*, I. ch. xxiii). Then the other objection naturally arises: 'Perhaps someone will protest, Is there then not to be any progress of religion within the

Church of Christ?' Vincent replies, 'Progress, certainly, . . . but it must be real progress, not alteration (*permutatio*); for progress means development of the subject, while alteration means change of one thing into another; hence throughout the generations, as for individuals, so for the whole Church, wisdom and knowledge ought to be making wide and vigorous progress, provided that this lies within the same field. . . . The growth of religion should resemble the growth of a living body, which, though it develops and unfolds in the course of years, remains the same.' [18]

On the 'Vincentian Canon', as a general principle, Dr. T. H. Bindley observed, in the Introduction to his translation of the *Commonitorium*, 'Like every epigrammatic maxim, the rule had its limitations. Meticulously pressed, it becomes an impossible and indeed a ridiculous standard; but understood as I believe Vincent meant it to be understood, it is a valuable guide, and embraces even modernism.' We may add that, so understood, it demands an understanding of religious doctrines and dogmas which goes beyond the advice which Vincent gave to Christian teachers and preachers: 'Teach the same truths which you have learnt, but teach them in such a way that your manner may be new, but not your matter.'

CHAPTER II

GOD AND THE CREATIVE WORD

BELIEF in creation as a divine act or series of acts is vital to the Christian conception of mankind and of the world; but we must first consider, on general grounds, what it implies, apart from its treatment in distinctively Christian thought: not its history but its implications.

Our ordinary experience is of ourselves and others and the contents of the world in which we live as 'finite'—that is, of persons and things as *dependent on one another* in ways the variety of which defies enumeration; but, running through all of these are *relations of causation* in its various forms. Therefore experience naturally suggests the idea of a Being who is not dependent on 'anything else', who is not limited by other beings, who is in that sense self-dependent. Stated thus, in abstract terms, this is the philosophical conception of an 'Absolute', and is not necessarily theistic. It becomes theistic when the 'Absolute' is conceived as an existing Personality, and Creation as an act of self-conscious Will, supremely effective and supremely rational, bringing into existence a world which did not exist *in that sense* before, but which existed in the purposes of God. The apparently paradoxical idea of creation 'out of nothing', which frequently finds expression in the writings of the Fathers, had for them primarily a negative meaning—a definite rejection of the notion that God has to work with a material which is in some sense given to Him or objective to Him.

It is surprising that so little attempt was made by the Fathers to find a positive meaning for the creation of the world 'out of nothing', although there was a clue in the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 3), where the negative form implies the positive: the world was fashioned by the Word of God, *so that* visible things were not made 'out of phenomena'—out of other visible things. The

meaning is brought out in Moffatt's version: 'And *thus* the visible was made out of the invisible.' But the idea that the divine creation is 'out of nothing' established itself in the mind of the Church, with the natural conclusion that *how* creation proceeds 'out of nothing' is beyond the utmost limits of human reason to comprehend. It is true that the essential nature of the divine creative activity is beyond comprehension by human reason; but the problem can and must be carried farther back. Creation, as a divine act, means that what was in the Mind of God becomes *objective* to us as the world of our experience. This is possible only because we are finite beings, and consequently the *world of our experience* is limited in every respect by our limited capacity for apprehending it. The fundamental question therefore is this: how God has brought finite rational creatures into being; and this is absolutely beyond our comprehension. We cannot dig up the roots of our own existence.

A kindred question arises in connection with our knowledge of the nature of God. It is futile to ask, What God is 'in Himself', even if the question, so stated, has any meaning, which is doubtful. But when we ask 'What God is *to* Himself', we see that God's experience of His own being is and must be comprehended only by God Himself, for the plain reason that we are men, and not God. This undeniable and inevitable fact does not invalidate our belief that God has entered and does enter into relations with the created world—relations which transcend the divine act of creating it and maintaining it in being. Neither does it invalidate belief in the *relation of unity* between the Divine and the Human. Unity and difference, both in logic and in reality, are involved in one another. Stated thus, as a generalisation, this principle, so far from being a paradox, is almost a truism. Before we can assert unity, we must make a distinction which implies a difference; and if the difference disappears, the unity which we intended to assert disappears with it. Within the field of finite experience, the fact is universal. It is enough to point out that a living body is a unity only because it is a unity of different organs and functions. In historical theology the affirmation that 'God is One' is first of all an affirmation of monotheism, not an attempt to explain the

divine nature as a 'unity' which excludes all internal differences. Denial that *unity is a relation* usually rests on a disastrous logical fallacy which may be described, in general terms, as the 'All or None' fallacy. We are offered two contrary generalisations about the same subject, each stated categorically and without qualification. They cannot both be entirely true; and it is taken for granted that we must accept the one absolutely or reject the other absolutely. What is overlooked or ignored, in the 'All or None' fallacy, is the possibility that both the contraries may be wholly false, or, what is more usually the case, that there may be a partial truth (perhaps a very important truth) in each; and then it is our duty, as rational beings, to bring out the partial truths and examine the possibility of their reconciliation.

The 'key-note' of Christian theism in the Apostolic Age is heard in the words of Paul (I Cor. viii. 5 and 6), which we quote in Moffatt's version: 'So-called gods there may be, in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are plenty of them, both gods and "lords",—but for us, there is one God, the Father, from whom all comes, and for whom we exist; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom all exists, and by whom we exist.' At present, we are concerned specially with the purely theistic statement—one God, the Father, the Source and Object of all being. In a later generation a man of far more limited mental and spiritual outlook stated it thus: 'First of all, believe that God is One, even He who created all things and set them in order, and brought all things from non-existence into existence: who comprehends all things, but is Himself incomprehensible.' By placing this statement at the opening of his first 'Mandate', Hermas expressed his conviction that monotheism is the first principle of the Christian Faith. We may generalise this statement. When the Fathers insisted on conceiving the work of creation as a definite act or series of acts of Will, they were true to the intense monotheism of the prophetic tradition in Israel. The prophetic movement of which we have historic records began in the work of Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, and rose to its height in the ethical monotheism of the Second Isaiah, in which 'Jehovah' ceased to be a merely national Providence or Judge. He was a universal Providence, assigning to each

nation its mission in history. But the experience of the exiles to whom he spoke intensified the passion of nationalism and the sense of being a peculiar people; and when Ezekiel re-stated and emphasised the religious individualism of Jeremiah, his ideal was that of an ecclesiastical system which was at once a theocracy and a Church. The attempt of Antiochus 'Epiphanes' to hellenise the whole people led, through the Maccabean revolt, to the transfer of religious influence to the Pharisees—the Jewish Puritans. The domination of 'the chief priests'—as they are significantly called in the Gospels—inevitably came to an end after A.D. 70; but the monotheism of the prophets, capable of becoming a universal religion, became in the end a religion which was racial and national. Nevertheless, that monotheism had within it something which could not perish, and which entered into the heart of the Gospel gathered round the unique Person of Jesus Christ. And since men are rational beings, Christian thinkers looked, for an understanding of that Faith, to a principle which was distinctive of the higher religious thought of the time.

From the second century onwards, the Christian doctrine of creation is inseparable from the conception of the creative Word (the *Logos*) of God. The statements in the 'Apostolic Fathers' about this idea are fragmentary and undeveloped; but even during the later years of the first century we find it becoming of cardinal importance. The Greek word *Logos* has no exact equivalent in any other language; the conventional English rendering, 'Word', conceals part of the meaning—in reference to Christian thought, the most important part. The Greek term came to be used as the name of a philosophical principle of a distinctive character. For its Greek origin, we must go back to Heracleitus of Ephesus (500 B.C.). With him, it was grafted into an extreme pantheistic doctrine. The movement of the world was an ever-changing process of destruction and renewal involved inseparably in each other, but maintained in perfect order by a principle at once rational and active, which he named the *Logos*. This union of rationality and activity is one of his contributions to ancient thought; the other is his vivid intuition of the world in which all things are subject to perpetual change, and are continually dying

into each other's life. The philosophical idea of the *Logos* remained a floating idea in Greek thought, until the founders of Greek Stoicism made it widely influential. The activity of the founders belongs to the period which may be approximately dated from 275 to 200 B.C. They could not imagine the *Logos* in other than material terms; but they conceived it as not only rational and active but productive, manifested in all the phenomena of Nature, and present in all creatures. Only man shares in it in the highest degree, so that in virtue of this principle men are members of a universal community. The result was, that the idea of the *Logos* came to be common property among Hellenistic circles interested in religious thought, including Greek-speaking Jews; but Philo of Alexandria—whose importance for the history of Christian thought has been very much exaggerated—was the first Jewish thinker to work the idea into an elaborate syncretism of divergent Greek conceptions.

The author of the Fourth Gospel introduces the idea of the *Logos* as if it was generally known in the Christian circles for whom (in the first instance) he was writing. Whatever view we may or may not take in reference to the important historical and theological questions arising out of the Fourth Gospel, certain facts are beyond reasonable dispute. It cannot possibly have come as a 'bolt from the blue'. It must have come into use, at first, among thoughtful Christians who were specially interested in the religious significance of the *Logos* doctrine; and, so far as the Christian use of the idea was a subject of 'propaganda', Ephesus was its natural home. In Ephesus arose, or survived, a man of profound religious genius, who, at a date near the end of the first century, gave to his fellow-Christians this work, which bears every mark of prolonged and earnest thinking. Behind him stood the traditions now embodied in the synoptic Gospels, together with other sources not chronicled in those traditions. He took the decisive step, once for all, of applying to Jesus Christ the principle of the *Logos* as an essentially divine Being, with a meaning which was entirely alien to Greek thought and would have been inconceivable to Philo: 'The Word was made (or, became) flesh.' This difference is one of immeasurable

significance. In this sense the idea was used by the Greek Apologists during the century following, and it afterwards became one of the first principles of Christian thought and faith.

Among the Greek Apologists, Justin Martyr stands out through the comprehensiveness of his doctrine and the ability shown in his presentation of it. The difficulties into which he fell when endeavouring to explain the relation of the divine Word to the Person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, have lent plausibility to the charge that he was a 'muddled theologian'. This vital question will be considered in the sequel.

With regard to essential Theism, we can trace in Justin's writings the influence of what is known as the 'Middle Platonism' —one of the more important among the philosophies and pretended philosophies of the period from the first century B.C. to the second century A.D. It had departed from Plato—so far as his doctrine is represented in the Dialogues—in identifying the 'Forms' (the ideal principles which Plato believed to be the source of all real knowledge) with ideas actually forming the content of the divine Mind. But what is extremely important is the emphasis laid on the idea of the divine Mind as wholly transcendent, and not to be thought of as in direct contact with the material world or as accessible to the human soul in this life, save through intermediate beings, or in rare moments of illumination granted to a favoured few. As a representative of the movement at its best, we may name Plutarch, whose dates are from about A.D. 50 to 125. At its worst, the movement left open a large field, which spurious 'mysticism' and current superstition were ready to occupy.

We have barely indicated the most essential nature of the movement because we are here concerned only with its influence on Justin's theism. It is evident that Justin adopted the doctrine of divine transcendence with some degree of insight into its meaning, thus giving some definiteness to the current statements of the divine Nature as incomprehensible and ineffable; and he combined the conception of God which he had learnt from his Greek studies with the monotheism distinctive of Hebrew prophecy.

God is Absolute Being—the Septuagint version of Exodus iii. 14, where *no name* is given. Justin maintains that God has *no name*, for a name, when it has any real meaning, is the name of an individual or a class. The words God, Lord, Creator, Father are not 'proper names' in the grammatical or logical sense; they are descriptive terms derived from our experience of the relations of the Being so described to us and to the world. In particular, the word 'God' corresponds to the idea, which Justin believed to be 'innate' in human nature, of a Being indefinable in human terms because beyond all that is human (*Second Apology*, vi). He definitely rejects all 'anthropomorphic' ideas of Deity and any assumption that God is the Head of a 'hierarchy' of intermediate beings. In Justin's thought, therefore, the *Logos* is a living, principle of *mediation* between God, the absolute and eternal, and the world of ever-changing finite creatures. God, abiding for ever above the heavens, holds no unmediated intercourse with men. Justin insists on the need, as it were in the nature of things, of an intermediary Being: 'No thoughtful person would venture to say that the Creator of the universe, having left all that is above the heavens, appeared Himself on a small region of this earth.' Here he is thinking of the various ways in which the divine appearances on earth are recorded in the Old Testament. It was the *Logos* who appeared, 'sometimes in human form, sometimes as an angel, sometimes as fire, serving in this world the God who is above the world' (*Dialogue*, ch. lx). Again, having spoken in exalted terms of God the Father, Justin asks, 'How could He either be seen by anyone, or appear on a very small portion of this earth, when the people at Sinai could not bear to behold the glory even of Moses His messenger? . . . Neither Abraham nor any other man saw the Father, the ineffable Lord of all; but they saw him whom the Father sent, who according to His will was at once God, Lord, and Saviour' (*Dialogue*, ch. cxxvi). The true means of our approach to an understanding of the Nature and Will of God is through the divine Word, always in communication with mankind, always present in the world, but completely revealed in the Incarnation. Through Jesus Christ, we learn that God is the supreme Ruler of all created things, and Father of

every Good, rewarding and punishing all rational beings according to their works.

This indicates Justin's conviction of the relation of the divine Word to the human race at large. We find that he had adopted and made his own the idea implied in the Stoic metaphor of the *Logos* as ' seed ', but he uses it in a way which no Stoic philosopher would have accepted. Every race of men has had a share in the *Logos* scattered as ' seed ' among them, and on this ground men become responsible beings. ' Those who lived according to the divine Word were Christians, even though men called them atheists ' (*Apology*, ch. xlvi). ' Whatever truths men have discovered and expressed belong to us Christians, for all who spoke from the implanted Word spoke from a vision of the truth, though it was imperfectly seen. But the seeds of the Truth, given to men according to their capacities, are not the same as the Truth itself' (*Second Apology*, ch. xiii, abridged). On this ground Justin explains the apparent resemblances between the teaching of the great constructive philosophers and that of the divine Word. Sometimes he seems to entertain the idea of borrowing (on the part of the philosophers) from the Jewish Scriptures; but he does not elaborate the idea. His attitude towards the Greek philosophers is appreciative, and not at all ' denunciatory '.

In the work of Irenæus, we find that the assimilation of the divine Word with Christ the Son of God has proceeded far; and nothing is gained, for the understanding of his convictions, by attempting to set forth his doctrine of the *Logos* in distinction from his doctrine of Jesus Christ the Son. To this central question we return in the sequel.

Irenæus throws down the challenge to ' Gnosticism ' at the outset: ' It is right that I should begin with the first and most important belief—in God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth and all that is in them, the only Creator and the only Father, comprehending all things, yet remaining over all.' In reference to the many problems, some of them insoluble by our limited capacities, which theistic belief presents to our reason, Irenæus pleads for caution and humility: ' It is better far to be without much learning but through love to draw near to God, than to

imagine ourselves to have grasped the deep things of knowledge and to miss vital divine truth. When Paul said, Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up, he was censuring not a sound and saving knowledge of God, otherwise he would have been censuring himself, but men who, puffed up with knowledge falsely so called, and imagining themselves to be perfect, have lost the real knowledge of God. It is better to trust in God and abide in his love, even if we do not understand the reasons why created things are as they are, than to lose divine truth over subtle problems and be lost in a maze of words.' His own faith is thus summed up. After affirming that the unity of God is the first principle of nature and of Grace, he proceeds: ' One only God, the Creator: the Father who wrought creatively through His Word and His Wisdom, bringing into existence the heavens, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them: divine in Justice and in Goodness: the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of the living: who gave the Law, whose work the prophets foretold, whom Christ revealed.' [1]

Irenæus firmly held the reality of a primitive monotheism: ' All men, from the earliest times, have believed in one God, Maker of the heavens and the earth.' Speaking on behalf of contemporary Christian believers, he observes: ' We may rise in thought from the order of the natural world and the limited perfections of created beings to the nature of God: but not so as to ascribe to God these qualities in the form in which they exist in creatures. The divine Reason, comprehending all things, is rightly named Reason, provided we do not understand by it a reason like ours: it is rightly called Light, but not light as we understand it.' This combination of affirmation and negation implies an argument from analogy in reference to the relation of the divine and the human.[2]

The reference to a God-given order did not exclude, it even implied, belief in miracles; and neither did it exclude belief in a multitude of evil spirits (demons). Hence it is necessary to judge miracles by their purpose. The early Fathers were convinced that it was possible for Christian believers endowed with ' the gifts of the Spirit ' to achieve wonderful works of mercy, in particular the healing of what we now understand by ' mental

diseases'. Justin, referring to the miracles recorded in the Old Testament, had affirmed that the men who wrought them are worthy of our confidence 'because they glorified God and taught faith in His Word': 'the false prophets', he said, 'cannot accomplish these things (these spiritual deeds), though they do perform *wonders* to deceive men'—'wonders', the corresponding Greek term is frequently used in the Synoptic Gospels to describe the miracles of Christ. Irenæus takes the same view. He was prepared to believe that some of the 'Gnostics' could work miracles, 'but not by God-given power—only to glorify themselves'. This means that the value of any alleged miracle is to be judged by the purpose which it serves. The teaching of him who wrought the miracle justifies the miracle, not the miracle the teaching.[3]

When we turn to the work of the Alexandrian theologians, a preliminary question of the first importance at once arises. Tertullian would have called it a *prescriptio*, and settled it in a summary way himself.

A number of distinguished Christian scholars in the nineteenth century were accustomed to charge the Alexandrian Fathers—and indeed Hellenic theology generally—with placing metaphysics above ethics and religion, with the result that pagan philosophy took the place of the saving faith which is the essence of Christianity. This view underlies the whole treatment of the history of Christianity in Harnack's *History of Dogma*. It need not be said that Harnack does not deny that faith must give to its content an expression in words which state its meaning, and that its meaning must be made clear. But when this admission is made, it implies a claim which must be carried farther. The endowments of man's nature include a mind and a reasoning faculty; and when doctrines are offered to him as interpretations of his being, of his whole life here and hereafter, he must needs endeavour to study and grasp their meaning with the whole of his nature. Christianity became theological because man is rational. With an unsurpassed knowledge of the historical facts at the time when he wrote, Harnack sees in the history of Christian doctrine, and indeed in the history of the Church at large, an alien philosophical method and

an illegimate growth of ecclesiastical authority. The Gospel of the historic Jesus was diverted from its original religious value by the acceptance of Jewish 'apocalyptic' hopes, by the intrusion of Græco-Roman beliefs about God and the soul, and in particular by the *Logos* doctrine, resulting in a philosophy unfit for the expression of the Gospel. We cannot resist the conclusion that Harnack's estimate of the history of doctrine and of the Church is not only condemnatory to an excess, but is profoundly pessimistic. It is true that there has been a real spiritual danger emerging from age to age in the history of Christianity; but its sources have had nothing to do with the influence of philosophy on the Gospel. As time went on, more stress was laid on the *stated content* of the faith than on faith as an inner habit of mind. For the purposes of unity and fellowship, it was easier to deal with characteristics which were comparatively external, in the sense that they were *methods* of organisation which appeared to be necessary. And this was accompanied by a similar change of emphasis in the intellectual expression and formulation of what was believed to be essential Christian truth. Moreover, it is of the first importance to bear in mind the two ways in which the Fatherhood of God was understood, above all in the fourth century. (i) On the one hand, primary emphasis was placed on the philosophical significance of the Fatherhood, on the idea of God as the Infinite and Eternal, the Source of all being, the Almighty Creator of the heavens and the earth. (ii) On the other hand, primary emphasis was placed on the ethical and spiritual significance of the Fatherhood, understood in the light of the ideals of Life and Love set forth in the four Gospels. A controversy about the relation of the incarnate Christ to 'the Father' may differ fundamentally, when the 'Fatherhood' of God is understood primarily in the first of these two meanings, and when it is understood in the second.

Clement of Alexandria does not hesitate to carry to its extreme issue the idea of the transcendence of God. We rise to the idea of God, in His essence, first by abstracting from all corporeal and spatial conditions, and then by abstracting from all time and change: 'The First Cause is beyond time and space, beyond all

change, beyond all naming and understanding.' All that remains is the abstract idea of unity; but we must not say that 'God is One' if that means 'one among others'. If this were all of Clement's idea of God, it would simply be a doctrine of the 'Unknowable'. But it is not all of his thought of God. If God is in His essential being far away, in religious experience He is very near. If for logic there is an antinomy or apparent contradiction, Clement is prepared to retain the antinomy rather than sacrifice either side. This triumph of experience over logic is accounted for, so far as is humanly possible, through the idea of the divine Word. The doctrine of the divine Word (the *Logos*) is vital to the religious interpretation of the world in Clement's thinking, and to his understanding of the Christian religion.

The divine creative and over-ruling activity in relation to the world is mediated through the Word, the Power and Wisdom of God. Through him (the Word) the Power and Wisdom of God move into the world in a descending series of degrees: 'Rank is subordinate to rank, under different leaders; . . . at the upper limit of creation are the activities of the angels; and so, even down to ourselves, rank after rank is appointed, all saving and being saved by the initiation and through the instrumentality of One.' According to Clement, consistently with this 'doctrine of degrees', the narrative of the six days of creation, though it is not to be wholly allegorised, is not to be understood literally. The narrative of creation on successive days is a revelation of order: 'Not of a series of divine acts following after one another, but of the comparative worth of those things which are primary and from which others have come: through the divine Reason they were all created in one supreme act of Power, for the rational Will of God is for ever identical with itself.' The 'rest' of God does not mean that He ceased to be active. His Nature is the absolute Good, and if He ceased to manifest His goodness He would cease to be God. 'The rest of God means that the created order of things shall be preserved.' Reading as he did in the Greek version, Clement understands 'the Image of God' as the divine *Logos*, 'the archetypal Light of light': 'for there is in man a rational nature which is declared to have been created in the

image and likeness of God'—a capacity of the human soul which is rational because it is from the divine *Logos*.[4]

The Alexandrian Fathers appear to have been satisfied with the idea of creation 'out of nothing', although Tertullian, in one of his rare philosophical moods, had pointed out its positive implication: 'If God needed material for the work of creation, He had a far nobler and more worthy material [than what we call "matter"] namely, His Wisdom [another name for the *Logos*], the divine Wisdom through whom and with whom He created all things. . . . Who would not find inspiration in the idea that the Wisdom of God is the source and origin of all things, the material of all matter (*materia vero materiarum*), such as God could have needed for His creative work, needing as He did what was His own and not alien to Him?'[5]

The theory of Tertullian, that even spirit is a finer kind of 'matter', was impossible for the Alexandrians. Origen, like Clement, firmly maintained the transcendence of God; but he rejected (at any rate by implication) any merely abstract idea of 'infinity' in reference to the attributes of God. The divine attributes are essentially *related to one another*, and in that sense are 'limited': thus, the Omnipotence of God is limited by His Wisdom and His Goodness. In that sense, we may say that He 'is not able' to do evil for its own sake, for that would be a change in His essential nature.[6]

The first creation was of spirits, immaterial and free, but capable of self-directed action. Through that capacity, they 'fell'. Therefore God ordained for all created spirits differences in the range of their activities according to the extent of their departure from their primal state: some becoming angels, others being embodied in the souls of men, others animating the heavenly bodies, others surviving as, within their limits, hostile to God. For human souls, this world is a training-ground, where men, still being free, but not without divine aid, may regain what had been lost, and at length rise to the consummation where 'all that any rational being thinks, feels, or understands, is wholly God'.[7] This is possible, because the Spirit of God, incarnate as the indwelling Christ, enters into the souls of men as Master and Guide,

ever reminding of good and evil. Therefore, God does not enter into our minds wholly from outside; 'the holy thoughts that enter into our hearts are messages of God to us'. Our inner experiences are externalised by our own minds.[8]

Origen's belief about the consummation implies that it must be a very far distant event. He assumed a succession of worlds, each formed out of the material of its predecessor but *not identical* with its predecessor: 'Is it not absurd to suppose that God did not at first exert an activity essential to His own Nature, and that He afterwards came to exert it? If there never was a time when God was not almighty, there must always have been objects in virtue of which He was almighty, and beings owning Him as their Creator.' Thus, in reference to the Incarnation, 'there is no need for God to undergo change, as Celsus thinks we believe, and least of all for God to change from supreme perfection to limitation. He descends in coming to meet human needs by forethought and providence.' Origen therefore is convinced that innumerable ages of finite life passed before this world was made, and innumerable ages more will pass away before the supreme End of Creation is attained.[9]

In chronological order, after Origen, among the greater thinkers moulding the mind of the Christian Church stands out the figure of Athanasius of Alexandria. Athanasius died in 373; but in his teaching, and indeed throughout the Nicene period, the essential ideas of the nature of God, the relation of God and man, and the nature and destiny of man are actually part of the doctrine of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ. For the present, therefore, we turn to the Cappadocian Fathers: Basil, Bishop of Cæsarea, who died in 379; his brother, Gregory of Nyssa, who died in 394; and his friend, Gregory of Nazianzus, who died in 390. Trained in the best philosophical schools of the time, they did not sacrifice religion to philosophy. They endeavoured to make use of philosophical conceptions to help in the understanding of Christian truth.

With respect to essential theism, they found themselves in direct conflict with the propaganda of Eunomius, who was advocating extreme Arianism with great ability. But he started

with the assumption that the divine nature, being absolutely 'simple', is entirely comprehensible by the human mind. In other words, he started with a word which when used as a philosophical term is ambiguous in the extreme. The Cappadocian Fathers dealt with this assumption in the spirit of Origen. The divine Nature, as it is *for God Himself*, is beyond human comprehension, because we are finite beings, and God is infinite, that is, dependent on nothing beyond Himself. But they perceived that the logical result is not to conclude that God is *either* absolutely unknowable *or* entirely comprehensible by the human mind. Thus, Basil affirms that the primary possibility for our minds is to know God 'so far as the infinitely great can be known by the very small'; and again, 'the rational capacities of our minds were given to us so that we may understand the truth, and God is the essential truth', but not without divine aid: 'the mind which is animated by the divine Spirit becomes capable of beholding the greatest things . . . so far as its nature can comprehend them'. And Gregory of Nazianzus affirms that the limitations of our knowledge of God are due to our embodiment 'in the darkness of this world'; but, notwithstanding that, 'the divine Love and Mercy are ever open to our comprehension'. And Basil, again: 'He who had entered into all that pertains to the healing of the human race, through prophets, righteous rulers, and righteous men, at length granted us the mercy of His dwelling among us.'

When we turn to the West, and to Augustine, we see at once that the idea of Faith is of fundamental import for his philosophy of knowledge and for his theology. When he speaks of 'faith', he is not thinking of mere assent to theological propositions, or of mere 'intuitions'. Faith is an active function of the soul, prompting our rational faculties to search out the reasons for its content. If knowledge and faith are set in opposition to one another, the efficacy of both is destroyed: 'If we wish first *only to know* and then *only to believe*, we should not be able either to know or to believe.' If we attempted to start with knowledge entirely destitute of faith, we should find that knowledge itself, on such terms, was impossible: 'Understanding is the reward of

faith: do not seek to understand in order that you may have faith, but have faith in order that you may understand.' [10]

The Augustinian conception of Faith cannot be detached from the fundamental idea that divine illumination is needed for the apprehension and understanding of any truth: 'No created being, however rational, is illuminated by and through itself alone, but is illuminated by participation in eternal truth.' Augustine was, of course, aware that there was nothing peculiar to Christianity in the ascription of all knowledge to 'illumination' in this sense. Plotinus and his disciples had emphasised the conception, and it was in Plotinus that Augustine first met with it: 'Plotinus, commenting on Plato, repeatedly and strongly affirms that the soul becomes blessed only through that Light which is distinct from it but from which it came, and by whose illumination it is capable of rational insight. This great Platonist, therefore, affirms that all souls, even the souls of the immortals, derive the light of rational insight from no other source than that from which it is granted to us Christians.' [11] The central thought goes back to Plato, in *The Republic*, where he speaks of the analogy between the Supreme Good and the Sun. Just as the perception of colour requires something more than a coloured surface and an eye to see it—it requires *light*—so the simplest act of knowledge requires something more than a knowable object and a mind to know it: there must be something corresponding to the light of the sun, an illumination of the mind by its spiritual Sun, the divine Reason (for Augustine, the uncreated Word). This was, for him, an application to all knowledge of the Psalmist's words, 'In Thy Light shall we see light.' His quotations show that he attached great importance to all that is said in the Johannine writings in reference to the divine Light. It is a conception of Faith which has an important bearing on the position assigned to the proofs of the existence of God. Augustine holds that the argument from creatures as effects to God as Cause, must not be understood as an attempt at a logical journey starting from something assumed to be entirely undivine, and arriving at the existence of something absolutely divine. The argument is only possible and only valid in virtue of the actual presence of the divine Word

to the human mind as the Light of its understanding; and this implies a latent knowledge of God's existence. This is not a quotation; but it is a direct implication of Augustine's statements in reference to the reality of divine 'illumination'.

Augustine never supposed that every detail of human knowledge rests on a special divine revelation. The mind of man, even within its limitations as a finite created being, is endowed by God with a 'natural light', the light of its own rational understanding; and only because it is so endowed is the human mind capable of assimilating the divine illumination. 'The Light which enlightens is one thing; the light which is enlightened is another thing.' Then, pursuing the metaphor of our eyes as 'lights' (*lumina*; so in Cicero, Virgil, and others), he proceeds: 'As those eyes which we have in our heads and call "lights", when they are sound and wide open, need the aid of light from without, and if this is taken away, though they may be sound and wide open, they cannot see: so our mind, as rational, which is the eye of the soul, unless it is irradiated by the Light of Truth, and shone upon by Him who enlightens all, cannot attain to wisdom and righteousness.' [12]

In the light of this conclusion, what are we to understand by a miracle? The answer is clear and definite. The universe itself is a miracle. 'Those who doubt whether the unseen God has wrought miracles that can be seen, do not deny that He made the actually existing world. Whatever miracles, therefore, take place within the world are far less than the miracle of the world itself—the order of the heavens and the earth and all that is in them.' He points out that the familiar order of the heavens and the earth may be, and usually is, regarded as a matter of course; but when considered truly, it is seen to be as wonderful as any event which seems to be a breach of that order.[13]

A miracle, it is said, is contrary to Nature. Augustine replies as follows: 'Humanly speaking, we may say that an event is contrary to Nature when it is contrary to the ordinary course of Nature, to which mortals have become accustomed. But God, who has created and formed all natures, and from whom all variety, order, and harmony proceed, does nothing contrary to

Nature as Nature really is. For us, it is legitimate to say that God does something contrary to Nature when we mean contrary to what we know as Nature. But God never acts against the supreme and universal order which is the reality of Nature, for that would be to act against His own Being. The more the soul of man shares in the light of that universal order, the more clearly he sees what is possible and what is not; the further he is from that insight, the more he marvels at what is contrary to custom, and the less he discerns what is really possible.[14] Under the conditions of Christian thought at the time, it was inevitable that Augustine should maintain the actual historical character of all the miracles recorded in the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

The central avenue of the soul's approach to God by the way of pure reason rests on the fact that there is knowledge which is *certain*, and that God is the Author of certainty. The primary certainty is of one's own existence. Many passages might be quoted. We give two short but effective statements. Augustine imagines himself to be questioned by a voice expressive of Reason: '*Reason:* you desire to have knowledge: do you *know* that you exist? *Augustine:* I do know it. *Reason:* Whence or how do you know it? *Augustine:* I cannot tell. . . . *Reason:* But do you *know* that you are now thinking? *Augustine:* I do know it. *Reason:* Then it is *true* that you are now thinking? *Augustine:* It is true.' Again: 'Truths of this kind have nothing to fear from the sceptics. They say, You may be deceived. But if I am deceived, I exist; a non-existent cannot even be deceived. It is certain therefore that I am not deceived in knowing that I exist.'[15]

Then the question arises, are there any other truths in which the same certainty can be discerned? It is an error to attribute to Augustine a doctrine of 'innate ideas', resting as it were in our minds, with which God has endowed us, and which we can discover by looking into our own minds. But there are truths which when expressed as propositions and understood are accepted by all normally rational persons, although they are not given by our senses. Such are all propositions expressing *relations*

of numbers. For illustration, he takes a simple example, as 'seven plus three equals ten'. The assumption that such ideas are created by each mind from itself alone makes the agreement of different minds the result of accident: in other words, there is *no real connection* between *my* belief that seven plus three equals ten, and *your* belief. Augustine is convinced that there *is* a real connection, because the divine Word is present to all, not only as the word of the human teacher, or as the word of the pupil, but as common to both, as the real Teacher (*Magister*) instructing and leading them both to the same truth. The whole of the discussion in his *De Magistro* is based on the principle which we have stated.

Augustine finds in the laws of number a series of problems which we cannot solve; but our ability to state them *as problems* for our minds, implies a Mind for whom they are not 'problems'. In effect, he opens up questions in the philosophy of Mathematics which could not have been carried further in the light of science at that period. In the first place, he raises the question whether numbers as *units* can have a merely empirical foundation, based entirely on the material given to our bodily senses. He does not believe that this view is tenable. Since the idea of number is the idea of a unit successively applied, the idea of a unit is fundamental; and this idea cannot be derived from the ever-changing continuous material given to our bodily senses.[16] Much less can the *laws of combination* of such units be merely empirical. We must look beyond finite human reason for the source of such laws of our thinking. In the second place, there is the question of the infinity of numbers. 'However great is the series of numbers which we suppose to have completed, it can be increased by the addition of further units. There cannot be a completed enumeration of an infinite series of numbers; but this is not incomprehensible to God, whose Reason is not subject to enumeration. Thus, if every quantity is completed (*finitur*) in the mind of a man who thinks of the quantity as so defined, all infinity, in a way which we cannot comprehend, is completed in God, for whom there is no necessary passing (as there is for us) from the idea of a greater to the idea of a greater still, or from the idea of a smaller to

the idea of a smaller still.' [17] The laws of number, to the mind of Augustine, are a primary and fundamental case of the universal laws on which the *order* of the created universe depends, and which we may think of as ' Ideas ' in the Platonic sense, expressing to us the divine Reason, so that by this illumination we can conceive them.

The theory that the laws of the relations of numbers to one another are essential in the created universe, explains Augustine's conception of matter as identical with space: ' Nothing is corporeal unless, whether at rest or in motion, it has length, breadth, and depth, so that a larger part of it occupies a larger part of space, a smaller part of it a smaller part of space, and every part of it is less than the whole.' [18] The meaning of this statement is in principle the same as that of the Cartesian theory, thirteen centuries later, that ' matter ' is essentially ' extension '—space and movement. This implies the possibility of the infinite divisibility of ' matter '. ' Matter increases by occupying more space, and decreases by occupying less space. It may be increased so as to become the whole universe. It may be diminished by continual division into smaller and smaller particles, always approaching annihilation but never reaching it.' What remains, however small, is still a body and still spatial.[19]

Even if it had been possible for Augustine to pursue these questions further, it is improbable that he would have attempted to do so. His absolutely over-ruling interest was in religion, and we have seen that it was the bearings of these questions on the philosophy of theism that interested him most. The supremely worthy objects of knowledge are God and the Soul: ' *Deum et animam scire cupio. Nihilne plus? Nihil omnino.*' But he was prepared, when necessary, to bring forward arguments of a strictly scientific character. Thus, when criticising the Manicheans, he says, after recalling what he had read from trustworthy writers of the time on astronomical questions: ' I compared it with the statements of Manicheus, who in his crazy folly had written much on these questions; but I could not find [in what he had written] any explanation of the solstices, the equinoxes, the eclipses, and other facts of the same kind which I had learnt from

secular scientists. Yet I was to believe things which did not agree with the results of trustworthy calculations, or with my own observations, but was entirely opposed to them.' [20]

It seems that Augustine had been asked why this world was not created ' sooner '. He replied that the question has no meaning. ' Sooner ' implies time, and time was created when the world was created. God ' precedes ' all things, not as a workman precedes his work, but ' by the sublimity of His ever-present Eternity '. In our experience, we know what we mean by ' the present '; but if the present never extended into the past or into the future, it would be our Eternity. For us, past and future exist only as memory and as expectation; and both of these are present mental activities. Time is measured *as it passes*, and the results of the measurements can be applied to the past as remembered [he might have added ' or recorded '] and to the future as ' expected '. Time, therefore, if we understand it simply as a succession of past, present, and future, is *in the human mind*, which looks back (remembers), attends (in the present), and looks forward (expects). The following illustration is important: ' I am about to repeat a Psalm which I *know*. Before I begin, the whole is before me as expectation. When I have begun, the part of it which I have recited is placed in the past and extends along my memory. Thus, the process of this mental activity of mine is divided between memory, in reference to what I have recited; expectation, in reference to what I am going to recite; and *the present*, my activity of attention wherein what was future becomes past. The more often this is done, the more the decrease or shortening of expectation increases or fills memory, until the whole expectation is exhausted and the whole process passes again into memory. And what occurs with the whole Psalm occurs with each part of it and with each syllable. The same occurs throughout the larger activity, of which the recitation of the Psalm has been only a fragment; the same occurs throughout the whole life of man, of which all human actions are parts; the same occurs throughout all the ages of mankind, of which all the lives of men are parts.' [21]

This is the doctrine of the subjectivity of time. Here we can only point out the definite conception of time on which it rests.

Time is no more and no less than a *succession of events*, except in our direct apprehension of *the present*, where there is more than mere succession—there is duration, involving a unique subjective activity of apprehension. In our experience, time, understood as a succession, is due to the action of a supra-temporal or Eternal Being on our minds. The Eternity of God is a present which does not break up into past and future; in the words of Boethius, written nearly a century after the death of Augustine, Eternity is 'the complete and perfect possession of unlimited life all at once (*tota simul*), grasping the infinity of moving time as present'.

In view of the theory of the subjectivity of time, it must be remembered that Augustine did not hold the subjectivity of space. Space is objective in reference to our minds, and this is the basis of his distinction between body and soul. No spatial qualities can be predicted of the soul. The soul (including what we mean by mind) can form ideas of spatial qualities, but these ideas are not themselves spatial or objects of space-perception. Man therefore is a natural duality—body and soul. The connection between two such different natures is beyond our comprehension; but although corporeal matter is essentially spatial and the soul cannot be spatial, 'yet the soul, having its body, does not constitute two beings but one man or woman'. The instrumental theory of the relation between soul and body is fundamental in the philosophy of Augustine, and he states its meaning several times; for example, 'Man is a rational soul, using (*utens*) a mortal and earthly body.'[22] Even in an act of sense-perception, the mind is not passive in relation to the body; it is active, in attending to a subjective process aroused by an organic change.

The doctrine of the creation of the world, as set forth by Augustine, is of great interest. It seems evident that he had worked out a comprehensive theory of the order of creation derived in part from his own theory of the subjectivity of time, in part from his acquaintance with the Aristotelian doctrine of 'matter' and 'form', and based on an original interpretation of the biblical narrative. This comprehensive theory he expounded in three important works (important from the point of view of the Augustinian philosophy). These are known by their Latin titles: *De Genesi contra Manicheos*, *De Genesi ad Litteram*, and a shorter version of the latter, *De Genesi ad Litteram, opus imperfectum*. We are here concerned only with the cardinal principles of the doctrine; there are details which present difficulties of interpretation.[23]

God Himself is an eternal Being and not subject to any kind of temporal succession. This implies that creation, that is, the direct immediate divine act of creation, is not spread out into a succession of 'days'. The world and all things in it were created 'all at once'. Human apprehension of the creative act, or rather, the revelation of it in terms of our human limitations, yields the six 'days' of the Mosaic narrative: 'the divine act (*ipsa dispositio*) could not itself be consistently viewed by minds such as ours; it is therefore related in a form in which it might have been seen by a limited human vision'. Moreover, the succession of events in the world is not one of temporal succession: it is one of causal relations (*non intervallis temporum sed connexione causarum*); and the divine 'rest' on the seventh 'day' means that the original divine creative act ceased, but there remained an immanent divine activity pervading creation.

Augustine had become acquainted with the Aristotelian theory of 'form' and 'matter' as constituent factors of the structure of the universe. Aristotle, as a scientifically trained physician, found the most convenient illustrations in the world of life, in things that *grow*. The constituent tissues of an oak tree, for example, or the chemical elements of which these tissues are built up, are of the same kind as those of the thorn tree: these are the 'matter', but in the 'matter' there is a law of growth such that the acorn becomes not a thorn but an oak: this is the 'form'. Its growth may fail for various reasons; but by no interference can it be made to grow into a tree of a different species. In effect, Augustine adapts the biblical doctrine of Creation to this theory. God created the elements of the world in a fused or *nebulous* condition. This was the primeval 'matter'—not absolutely *formless*: indeed, absolutely formless matter, in the strict sense of the words, could not exist. Even matter, in its nebulous condition (*ubi nebulosa species apparet*) is not utterly devoid of 'form'. It follows, then, that the greater number of

beings existed potentially, as ' real possibilities ', in their created natural causes, created by God in a kind of fusion of elements which could develop and appear only when fitting circumstances were realised (*acceptis opportunitatibus prodeunt*). The whole process of the natural world from its primitive conditions is compared to a small seed becoming a tree: ' just as in the seed there is, invisible, all that after produces the life of the tree, so the world contains in itself all that is going to be manifested later: not only the heavens, the sun, moon, and stars, . . . but all other beings which the world has produced *potentialiter et causaliter* '. These latent energies were destined to develop during the six ' days ', and are destined to develop during the remaining ages of the world.[24]

Turning again to the biblical narrative, we find that Augustine is prepared to appeal freely to allegorical or figurative interpretation. The ' matter ', with its ' forms ' or laws of development latent within it, is called ' the heavens and the earth ' not because it actually and already was the heavens and the earth but because it was destined to become so. This conception is applied to the whole range of animate and inanimate being. The energies implanted in Nature have formed not only the egg, or the seed, but the living creatures which have brought forth the egg, or the seed. Above all, Augustine has no hesitation in applying this conception to the origin of the first human pair. How did Adam and Eve exist at the beginning? ' I answer, they existed potentially (*seminaliter*) ', through the productive power immanent in Nature. Their appearance as formed and visible beings took place ' when the time came '. It is vital to an understanding of the Augustinian conception of Creation to bear in mind that, in his belief, the whole productive process of the immanent powers of Nature would be impossible without the constant concurrence of the Deity, which emerged in special ways at particular times: and one of the greatest of these was when the first man, already a *living* being, became a living *soul*.

The question was raised, many years ago: Was Augustine an evolutionist, in the modern sense of the term, in reference to the ' origin of species '? Such a theory was not possible for Augustine, any more than it had been for Aristotle. The ' fixity of species ' was not questioned. All the elements of this world have their qualities and possibilities limited by the laws of their structure—by their specific ' forms ' immanent in their ' matter '. This is entirely in the spirit of Aristotle. Augustine raises the question of the extent of man's power to change material bodies, and he observes that it is an extensive power. But there is always a limit. The real possibilities of every existing thing depend on the ' law of its formation ', and this, in turn, depends on ' the immanent power of the Creator '.[25]

The reference to genuine astronomical knowledge, which Augustine made in criticising Manicheism, lends interest to his references to astrology. On the whole, it appears that he believed that the stars did influence human affairs. This belief was too ancient and deeply-rooted to be rejected at that time: but he is greatly concerned to discredit all beliefs which assumed that the stars influence, as it were mechanically, the destinies of individual men. Very interesting, also, is his distinction between ' lawful ' and ' unlawful ' medical art. ' It is one thing to say, If you drink the juice of this herb, your pain will be relieved; it is quite another thing to say, If you hang this herb from your neck, your pain will be relieved; though even this is lawful if done without incantations or superstitious ceremonies, because, if it acts, it acts by a natural virtue.'

Beyond all this, the study of external Nature is of value only so far as it leads to the knowledge of God: ' Be not troubled if you cannot understand the courses of the stars, or the number of bodies in the heavens or the earth. Behold the beauty of the earth, and praise the Wisdom of the Creator: behold what He has made, and praise Him who made it, and love Him who made it, for you also He made in His own image.' The holy angels find the knowledge of corporeal things to be insignificant in face of the saving knowledge of the incorporeal and immutable God; but they understand temporal and transient things far more deeply, because they behold the original causes of all these in the Ideas of the eternal Wisdom of God who made them.[26] In the end, it remains true that for Augustine the only absolutely worthy

objects of knowledge are God and the Soul. If we use the term 'mysticism' as the general name for a religious experience in which the feeling of God is at its greatest intensity,[27] we must recognise that there is a strong strain of mysticism which is vital to his religious thought, and that his interpretation of it was deeply influenced, sometimes even in his actual words, by his study of Plotinus. 'I beheld with the eye of my soul, such as it was, the Light Unchangeable, above my mind, above my soul; not the ordinary light of day, which all flesh may behold, nor even a greater light of the same kind: and not above my soul as the heavens are above the earth, but above my soul because It made me, and I below It, because I was made by It. He who knows the Truth, knows what that Light is, and he who knows It, knows Eternity. O Truth, who art Eternity—and Love, who art Truth—and Eternity, who art Love! I saw myself to be far away from Thee, as though I heard Thy voice from on high, saying, I am the food of grown men: grow, and thou shalt feed upon Me: nor shalt thou change Me, like the food of thy body, into thyself, but thyself shall be changed into Me. . . . Yet soon I was borne down again by my own weight, the habits of my body and mind, only there dwelt with me a remembrance of Thee, and I did not doubt that there is One to whom I might cleave. . . . Then I considered, whence it was that I was able to wonder at the beauty of things in the heavens and the earth, and whence it was that I was able to judge rightly about changeable things, and say, This ought to be so, and this not: considering, I say, whence it was that I so judged, I found the unchangeable Eternity of Truth above my changeable mind. Thus, by degrees, I passed from the body to the mind, which works through the bodily senses: and thence to its inner capacity to which the bodily senses represent outward things: and thence to its reasoning capacity, to which what is received from the senses is referred to be judged: which, finding itself also a changeable thing, became strong to the understanding of itself, and drew away my thoughts from the power of habit, that so it might find what the Light was, by which itself did see. Then, it began to know the Unchangeable, which unless it had in some way already known, it could not have desired above

the changing world. And thus, as in the flash of one trembling glance, it beheld *that which truly is*. . . . And yet, I could not fix my gaze thereon: I was thrown back again upon my customary habits, bearing with me only a wistful memory thereof.' But it was a memory that did not die.

CHAPTER III

THE NATURE OF MAN

THE doctrine of the early Fathers in reference to the nature of man was based on their actual experience of the world around them, interpreted in the light of their own moral and religious experience, and on the biblical doctrine of man, in which the narrative of the Fall inevitably assumed supreme importance. But when this narrative is read as it is written, without reference to doctrines and theories long afterwards built upon it, the following facts are clear. There is not a word suggesting the later theory of original righteousness or perfection, although the original state of ' our first parents ' is not represented as one of non-moral innocence. They are aware of the duty of a reasonable amount of work in the garden, and of abstaining from the ' forbidden fruit '; but their experience is limited by the primitive character of their surroundings. There is not any suggestion of a moral corruption or tendency to evil transmitted by the first man to his descendants. The results of his disobedience are of the nature of punishment: for the man, a life of hardship, struggle, and toil to ' make a living ', and for the woman, the pain of childbirth. The fourth chapter draws a picture of the evils resulting from knowledge and invention: Lamech uses the newly-forged weapon to exact a fierce vengeance for a small injury. But there is no suggestion of an *inherited* taint or tendency to evil. The account in the fifth chapter, of the long lives of the descendants of Adam, rather suggests the contrary. The statements in the sixth chapter suggest a ' Fall ' of an entirely different kind. The traditional doctrine of ' Original Sin ' was not historically derived from the Fall-story, and cannot be so derived. It must have had a far deeper root in experience. The inner experience of human evil, and the actual condition of the contemporary world, and the plain statement in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis that

there actually had been a first-created *human pair*, naturally led to the belief that there had been a *first sin*; and the Fall-story was interpreted in the light of that belief. Paul was convinced that Adam's disobedience communicated bodily death and a tendency to evil in the human race, but he knows nothing of any theory of *original perfection* or of *inherited guilt*. There is, however, among the Greek Apologists, a significant variation in the idea of man's original condition. We do not find it in Justin, but it is stated definitely by Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch in the last quarter of the second century: ' Man was created in an intermediate condition, neither wholly mortal nor wholly immortal, but capable of either ', being endowed with power over himself through his freedom of choice. In Paradise, God gave him a ' starting-point ' for growth in order that by growing, and at length becoming perfect, he might rise to eternal life. Theophilus affirms with emphasis that the fruit of the ' Tree of Knowledge ' was good: ' for knowledge, the fruit of the tree, is good when used by those who are fitted for it '. The fatal sin was not in acquiring knowledge but in disobedience. Adam was still, so to speak, a child, incapable of using knowledge worthily. God cast him out of Paradise, ' not to suffer him to remain in sin for ever, but in order that within an appointed time he might be reclaimed '. The final reward for those who obey, and the final punishment for those who persistently refuse to obey, is reserved for the resurrection.[1]

When we turn to Irenæus, we find that the keynote of all that he says about the Fall is this. The good which is the result of free voluntary choice is more worthy than the good which is a merely natural growth, like that of a plant. ' What merit is due to those who have not exerted themselves for what is good, or who have not won it through struggle? ' He does not question the historical existence of a ' first man '; but in a passage preserved by a seventh-century writer Irenæus takes the whole episode of the *serpent and the fruit* in a purely allegorical sense. He was convinced of the impossibility of such a creature being capable of understanding and speech and becoming the embodiment of an evil demon. Unfallen man was an imperfect and undeveloped

creature, yielding to a powerful and cunning enemy. Why was man not made perfect at the beginning? 'God had power at the beginning to grant *perfection* to men; but, as newly-created beings, men could not have received it, or having received it, could not have grasped it, or having grasped it, could not have kept it.' Human life since the Fall has been a process of education. God does not *compel* His creatures: 'even in the exercise of his faith, as well as in his conduct, God has allowed man to be free'. The Fall was indeed an alienation from God; but God turned it to serve His purposes, 'in order that man, living through experience and acquiring through trial the knowledge of what is good and what is evil might learn to know himself, his weakness and mortality, and learn the purposes of God'. The knowledge of good and of evil is needed to complete human experience: through the infinite patience of God man learnt to know the good of obedience and the evil of disobedience, so that by experience of both he might with judgment choose the better way. How could he be trained in what is good, unless he had known its contrary?[2]

The conception which we have outlined is carefully expounded by Irenæus; but it is crossed by another, which has its roots in the idea of 'Recapitulation'. Irenæus applies this explicitly to Christ as Redeemer. The idea was suggested to him by the reference to the exalted Christ in the Epistle to the Ephesians (i and ii). The idea of 'Recapitulation' implies that Christ—the Ideal Man, the 'second Adam'—'summed up' in himself the completeness and perfection of human nature. Harnack pointed out that when Irenæus proceeds to apply the idea of 'Recapitulation' to the 'first Adam', he is attributing to Adam in Paradise capacities in extent and range far in excess of those possessed by the imperfect being of whom he had spoken elsewhere; and in this connection he uses expressions suggesting the theory of an identity of the human race with Adam, who 'summed up' in himself all the possibilities of good and evil which have appeared in his descendants; and therefore when *we* refused to obey God and trust in His Word, . . . *we* offended in the first man. But it is impossible to ascribe to Irenæus a conception of the Fall as the

collective act of the whole human race, in the sense in which that doctrine was developed by Augustine two centuries later. The statements made by Irenæus are forcible but metaphorical expressions for one of his fundamental convictions, the unity of the human race. Man, in the divine purpose concerning him, was designed to become perfect; but the Fall brought him under the power of natural death. On the other hand, if man, created for life, had been wholly and for ever given over to evil, God would have been defeated, and Satan would have been finally victorious. The purpose of the Incarnation was to bring God nearer to us, in the form of a real human life, and to bring man nearer to God. In the Ten Commandments given to Moses, to be handed on to the people, Irenæus sees 'steps to the entrance into life', like a safe place which men may hold so that they do not fall back into evil. Their purpose was to bring men into friendship with God and relations of justice with one another; and Christ came to deepen and extend these relations and make them divine.[3]

When we turn to Tertullian, we find a Christian materialist. He was deeply influenced by Stoic thought; and like the later Roman Stoics, Seneca in particular, he could not conceive anything existing which was not 'body'. In his book *On the Soul* (*De Anima*) his view of the relation of the human body to the human soul is set forth at length. They are distinct existences; he never questioned the duality of body and soul. But though the soul is corporeal (otherwise he could not conceive how it could act on the body), it is of a finer and more 'subtle' kind of 'matter'. It possesses form (by this, Tertullian means spatial form); it is capable of existing apart from the body; it has a capacity for movement, activity, and the formation of ideas; in its present life it is acted upon through the body by external conditions; it has a limited insight into the future; and, apart from the body, it is invisible save to a few specially endowed individuals. With regard to the origin of the soul, Tertullian pours contemptuous criticism upon what he supposed to be the Platonic doctrine of re-incarnation; and he rejects the assumption that the soul was specially created and associated with the body.

He concludes that in its entire nature it proceeds from the parents. Hence, its sinfulness; but it has 'seeds of Good'.[4]

There is no evidence that Tertullian ever held the doctrine of original *guilt* (the liability of all mankind to *punishment* for the sin of the first man); but he was convinced that original *sin* was an inherited bias, 'an antecedent and natural evil, springing from our corrupt origin'. Neither does he teach the *total depravity* of human nature: 'There is a portion of good in the soul: . . . it can be obscured, because it is not God; but it cannot be destroyed, because it is from God. The good in the soul, being weighed down by evil, is either not seen at all, its light being wholly hidden; or, it is seen only as a ray of light is seen, struggling through. Therefore, some men are very good, and some are very bad; but the souls of all belong to the same natural class (*genus*).'

When we turn from Africa to Alexandria, we pass to a distinctively Hellenistic outlook on life. It is useless to ask whether Clement or whether Origen 'represents' that outlook more characteristically. Clement's temperamental optimism hindered his vision of the darker realities of the world. He recognises original sin only in a limited and qualified sense. To Clement, sin was a hindrance and a failing rather than a spiritual tragedy. Origen's convictions went deeper and covered a wider range.

Origen accepts, partly on scriptural grounds, the existence of unseen agencies hostile to God. All rational beings were created with the power of free choice in their actions, so that the different classes or characters of the 'angels', 'and of ourselves, who are called rational animals', have arisen through the use or abuse of free-will. The downward way begins with self-will in disregard of God's will. Thus, Origen is convinced of the reality of an unseen world, and of spiritual hosts of evil. He is further convinced that the *doctrine of degrees* is of universal import in the nature of all things below Deity: 'The cause of the diversity of rational beings is not in any arbitrary act of the Creator but in their own actions, which reveal varying degrees of spiritual strength or the reverse. Among all rational creatures there are none that are incapable of good or of evil: but it does not follow that every nature has become evil, nor, on the other hand, does

it follow that every being has become good.' But this is not the last word. God made rational beings for an end, and He has provided that they shall, by whatever severity of discipline, attain to it. For human beings, embodiment in this life is a stage in that discipline: man is made for a spiritual destiny, and he cannot find his lasting rest elsewhere.[5]

In his doctrine of the Resurrection, Origen keeps closely to the language of Paul. He repudiates with indignation the notion that the *bodies of the dead* are to be 'raised' and to exist for ever. In the fragments of his tract on *The Resurrection*, in two important sections of his work on *First Principles*, and in several sections of his reply to Celsus, Origen makes his own belief clear, and (perhaps with too favourable a judgment) implies that it was held by thoughtful Christians in general. Celsus believed that the literalism which prevailed in the popular view of the Resurrection was the essence of Christian teaching on the subject. Origen replies: 'Neither we, nor the words of Scripture, affirm that those who have died rise from the earth with the same bodies, without any change to a new condition.' It is in this connection that he places decisive emphasis on the saying that what is 'sown' is not 'the body that shall be'. He is, of course, aware that 'sown' is a metaphor: 'In the case of those who are, as it were, sown in dying, each one passes on with a body out of that which had been sown—a body which God has given him, according to his deserts.' What survives is the real and whole personality (*ratio substantialis corporis*) carrying with it the accumulated results of what the man has made of himself and his capacities during this life. Origen's position is accurately stated by Westcott: 'For Origen, the Resurrection is not the reproduction of any particular organism, but the preservation of complete identity of person—an identity maintained under new conditions, which he presents under the apostolic figure of the growth of the plant from the seed. The seed is committed to the earth and perishes; and yet the vital power which it contains gathers a new form answering to its proper nature. Judgment is no limited and local act, but the unimpeded execution of the absolute divine Law, by which the man is made to feel what he is, and what he has become, and

to bear the inevitable consequences of the revelation. Punishment is no act of divine vengeance, but a just severity by which the soul is placed at last in the way of justification: and blessedness is no sensuous joy or indolent repose, but a growing insight into the mysteries of the divine Counsels.'[6]

Although Origen held a lofty ideal of man's final destiny, his was no visionary view of men in their actual condition. The severe asceticism of his personal life, and his ancestry among the Copts of Egypt, made any visionary ideas scarcely possible; while at the same time, any tendencies towards fanaticism perished under the influence of his studies at the Museum or University of Alexandria. For Origen, this world was made to be a fitting place for the discipline and purification of a being such as man. Celsus had compared Jews and Christians who led sinful lives to 'worms' and other such creatures. If, said Origen, he really believed this, he should, of course, have said the same of sinful men belonging to other races and other religions: 'But it belongs to man's rational nature to be *capable* of virtue; and beings who have within themselves the real possibility of virtue, which they cannot entirely destroy, are not to be described as "worms"... Human reason, having its origin in the Reason which is divine, makes it impossible for any rational creature to be wholly alien to God. ... Human nature, formed for good, is not to be vilified because it sins. ... Life is a training ground, a gymnasium, where those may exercise themselves who are willing to contend according to the rules, for the achievement and possession of true good.' Origen might have added that in the training ground of life, the 'rules' are made by God: this is the meaning of his illustration, from one of the most familiar sights in the ancient world.[7]

In Origen's work on *First Principles* there is no doctrine of 'Original Sin' in the later meaning of the words. As we have seen, he allegorises the narrative of the Temptation and Fall, reading into it the theory of a pre-natal Fall of individual souls; but in some of his later Commentaries there is a difference of emphasis. Harnack supposed that during the period of Origen's work in Cæsarea he became acquainted with the custom of infant Baptism, and the supernatural efficacy attached to it, and was thus

led to reconsider his earlier teaching, and to find in human nature an inherited sinfulness involving guilt. This interpretation is supported by statements in his Commentary on the Book of Leviticus. We find it difficult to believe that Origen transformed one of his fundamental ideas because of a prevalent interpretation of the rite of infant Baptism; and the so-called 'earlier' doctrine actually finds expression in the 'Cæsarean' period. For example, 'Man has a spiritual capacity by which he can learn to believe in spiritual things, just as he can learn to believe in material things through the evidence of his senses.'[8] That is to say, even apart from the gifts of Grace, God has not left man without natural spiritual knowledge, through a natural law which is a Law of God. His actual references are to the well-known statements in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. The general doctrine is a Christian version of the later Stoic idea to which we have previously referred. Origen adds that the consciousness of the law of Nature comes with the growth of reason, and 'he who faithfully follows its precepts will not lose his reward'.

It is strange that some able students of Origen seem to forget the basic importance of the doctrine of *pre-existence* in Origen's view of man's nature and destiny. Origen took the idea of pre-existence definitely and seriously. Every individual is born with an inherited burden of failures and sins, not inherited from Adam but from his own previous life. We suggest that what took place in Origen's thinking on the subject was this: he found in the idea of inherited sinfulness a truth which he had not sufficiently emphasised before, but which, he believed, can be accounted for if each individual had gone through a previous life (or even previous lives). There is indeed an ethical paradox in assuming that part, at least, of the hardships and sufferings of this life are a disciplinary expiation for sins committed in a previous life of which the individual has no recollection; but even this paradox is qualified. The responsibility which his moral freedom throws on every man is limited, though it is not removed, by the Grace of God: 'No noble deed has ever been done except by the divine Word visiting the souls of men who were able, even for a short time, to receive his inspiration.'

In chronological order, after Origen, among the greater thinkers moulding the mind of the Church, stands out the unique figure of Athanasius of Alexandria; but in his teaching, and indeed throughout the Arian controversy, the question of man's nature and destiny is not only inseparable from but is actually part of the doctrine of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ. For the present, therefore, we turn to the Cappadocian Fathers.

Great as was their regard for Origen, the Cappadocian Fathers agree in rejecting any theory of the actual pre-existence of the individual human soul. We say 'actual pre-existence', for Gregory of Nyssa affirms that 'in the vast range of God's foreknowledge, all the fullness of human nature had pre-existence'. In their interpretation of the Fall-story they differ in reference to allegorism. Gregory of Nyssa was prepared to carry it farther than Basil. Apart from this, they are in agreement over the doctrine of the Fall, and its results: in particular, the Fall weakened but did not destroy human freedom.

Gregory of Nyssa probes the problem of the origin of the human soul as far as he can. His scientific knowledge taught him the closeness of the connection between mind and body, which he interpreted in the light of the conception of *growth*, taken not as a mere metaphor: 'Just as in wheat or any other seed the whole form of the future plant is potentially present, not as pre-existing but as being manifested in a certain order from the potentiality resident in the seed—in wheat, the leaves, the stalk, the joints, the grain—so we believe that the *human germ* contains the potentiality of its nature implanted in the first beginnings of its distinct existence, and that its capacities are manifested in a certain natural order as it approaches maturity: so that soul and body begin together, with their real source in the creative Will of God, but coming into existence in the moment of generation. And as no one could perceive these capacities in the human germ before they began to take form in the articulation of the bodily organs, so it is impossible to discern in the human germ the capacities of the soul before these become apparent; and we may believe that when no visible signs of mental life are apparent, the potentialities of the soul are none the less present, and that the soul manifests its

natural qualities and activities as it grows along with the growth of the body.'[9] This doctrine has been described as materialistic. It is nothing of the kind. Gregory quite evidently means that from its first beginnings the human soul is *embodied*; but as it grows it develops capacities incomparably wider and deeper in range than those of the body. The conviction of the Alexandrian Fathers—that man is made to share in the divine nature—is firmly maintained; it is for this supreme purpose that the work of creation expressed the divine Love. But for this, it was needful that there should be in man a capacity akin to the nature of God: the divine Good, for which we are made, is not alien to our own nature. None the less, man is a fallen creature. The Fall was the first act of voluntary disobedience on the part of the first man, not carrying with it an entire destruction of human freedom, but plunging man into a condition of mortality and sin. Therefore God, through His Son, from His essential being, entered into human life, becoming incarnate in a human body as Jesus Christ, who lived and suffered and rose again, in order that through him the resurrection-life should extend to the whole human race.[10]

The theory of inherited *guilt* (liability to punishment for the sin of the first man) is repudiated. This is seen clearly in Gregory's remarkable tract on *The Untimely Deaths of Infants*. He is convinced that the souls of infants who have died before the dawn of reason in their minds are not doomed. Their lot hereafter is proportioned to their capacities, though inferior to that for which the 'saints' are destined. But it is a real 'happiness', and Gregory believes it is possible that such infants may grow into knowledge of God, and at length attain to full moral and spiritual maturity. God does not condemn even hardened sinners, much less innocent babes, to eternal torment. There will be a purgatory, of greater or less duration, ending in the universal restoration in which Gregory had learnt from Origen to believe: 'If God will be all in all, it is impossible that evil will endure for ever.'

Gregory of Nyssa died in 394; and in the next generation a doctrine about the future which invites comparison with that of Gregory was urged by the ablest and most influential representative of what is called 'the School of Antioch'. This was

Theodore, Bishop of Mopsuestia, who died about 428. 'The question is, what will be the destiny of children and babes who quit this world without having committed any evil deeds or done any good deeds?' Theodore relates the question at once to the efficacy of Baptism, about which he took a high sacramental view: 'No Christian believer leaves his child without the sacrament of Baptism, unless the child has been taken from him by force. . . . Babes who are not baptised through the negligence of their parents go to heaven because it was not their own fault that they had not participated in the sacrament of Baptism; but their place in heaven is not of so high a rank [*literally* 'not so honourable'] as those who have the mark of the holy sacrament. . . . As to children of unbelievers, who leave the world in their childhood without having done any good or evil deeds, it is evident that they have a place in heaven because they have committed no sins; but their rank is not so high as that of the baptised: they are in an intermediate state. But they will not be excluded from heaven, and will not be left in torment; they have not done any evil. Thus the Grace of God is in no respect unjust to them.'[11] It is noteworthy that on the general question of punishment after death, Theodore, in his surviving writings, avoids any explicit statement of belief that the punishment is 'everlasting'.

Like most of the representatives of 'the School of Antioch', Theodore was only slightly interested in the theological and philosophical questions arising out of the idea of creation as a divine act or series of acts. He appears to have been satisfied with the idea of creation 'out of nothing' or 'from nothing', and with the absolute antithesis of the 'created' and the 'uncreated'. His fundamental conviction was that as God is One, so His creation is One. The universe (that is, the universe as conceived at that time) was a single whole, but involving within it a duality: in part visible (material) and in part invisible (spiritual). Man therefore is a composite being, akin on the one side to the world of sense-perception and on the other side akin to the spiritual world. He was designed by the Creator to be a bond of communication between the two realms of existence. To man, as the culminating work of the divine creative Power, the whole

creation is directed; for man, all things are made. Through man, creation gave to God the glory which was His due, and man was given capacities for the fulfilment of this end. In his original condition, man was endowed with the capacity for free self-determination, involving the possibility of temptation and surrender to evil, but also of moral growth. The Fall did not introduce sin into the world; it converted the liability to death into an actual fact, and made sin into a dispositional factor in the human race.[12]

On the other hand, sin is not a *nature*; Theodore finds no place for 'original sin' *in that sense*. The consequences of man's liability to bodily death are to involve him in constant infirmities, to fix his attention on the visible order of things, and to give play to his passions. Thus the tendency to moral evil in the human race is strengthened. Hence it has been said that in Theodore's belief, 'Mortality rather than sin is the great enemy of man.' But we are not abandoned creatures. Inclined to evil, we are none the less endowed with a consciousness of Good. So long as this consciousness could express itself in nothing more than a complex of vague instinctive impulses, feelings of dissatisfaction, and obscure effort, it could only result in a nature without achievement and aspirations without end. But it is not so. We are still rational beings, and the deeper desires of the soul rouse our reason to compare our present state with what the Incarnation has revealed. Even in our present state we can discern the promise and potency of the will to follow on the way that leads to union with Christ. This lends special interest to Theodore's interpretation of the narratives of Creation and Paradise in the Book of Genesis. We notice, in passing, the way in which he deals with the difficulty which Origen had pointed out—the creation of light before the creation of the sun, moon, and stars. The 'separation of light from darkness' was not the separation of night from day, in the later reference: it was the separation of the essential nature of light from the essential nature of darkness. This prepared the way for the night-day sequence which followed.

The essential part of Theodore's exposition of the creation-narrative has its centre in what he understands by 'the likeness of

God'. The infinity of God is absolute; but He gave to man a spiritual faculty which, within its natural limits, is akin to His own. Hence the human mind can pass in thought from farthest East to farthest West—from any point of space to any other, without transgressing its natural finitude. He has given to man a capacity for judging, reasoning, understanding, and through these for organisation and government. But this is not all. He has given to man a capacity reserved for man alone—of being to a limited but a real extent a creator: not a creator of new 'natures' or 'essences', this is possible only for God, but a creator by means of invention and construction, and 'ordering objects great and small'.

Theodore's understanding of the details of the narrative contained in the second chapter of the Book of Genesis is a curious combination of literalism and allegorism. The making of man from the dust of the earth is understood to mean that bodily man is from the material of which the earth is composed; the 'four elements' enter into and form his physical organism, and the divine breathing into his body of 'the breath of life' is to be literally understood, for only thus could man become a *living* being. The 'tree of knowledge' did not by its own nature as a tree confer any knowledge of good and evil; this was given by divine command. Man's approach to the tree, and the attraction which he felt for its fruit, gave him the idea of obedience and disobedience, according to his freedom of choice. The 'serpent' is named by Moses as the instrument *used* by Satan, because at that time man had no idea of invisible beings other than God Himself. The 'flaming sword' means that Paradise was lost for ever, so far as this world is concerned. Evidently this is a piece of pure allegorism; but it appears that Theodore never doubted the actual existence of the supernatural being with the sword 'flashing in every direction'.

Modern scholarship has shown that the charge of 'Pelagianism' brought against Theodore has no foundation in any of his surviving writings. There is reason to maintain that the violently biased declarations made against him at the 'Fifth General Council' (Constantinople, 553) were prompted by political

intrigue and theological misrepresentation and misunderstanding. There is no evidence that he had any direct intercourse with Augustine; but he befriended some exiled 'Pelagians', and wrote denying that sin is a 'nature', in the sense in which that doctrine was maintained by his great contemporary in the West.[13]

His contemporaries in the East regarded him as the foremost defender of Christian truth; and for his writings on the interpretation of the Scriptures he came to be known in the East as 'The Interpreter'.

From the East we turn to the West, and to the work of that great man who from his obscure seaport on the North African coast swayed the whole western Church as if he had been its theological dictator. The range of Augustine's writings, the penetrating character of his thought, and the impossibility of deriving from him a *system* of Christian doctrine necessitate special care in order to avoid placing undue emphasis on certain statements as compared with others; but the risk, such as it is, of doing this is negligible in reference to his doctrines of Grace and Predestination, which are repeated and discussed in the many controversies in which he was compelled to engage. We may take as a 'text' a passage from the thirteenth Book of Augustine's greatest work *The City of God*. 'God created man as he ought to be (*rectum*); but man, being of his own will depraved, and justly condemned, begat depraved and condemned offspring: for we all were in that one man, since we all were that one man (*omnes fuimus ille unus*). Already the seminal nature was there from which we were propagated. Thus, being vitiated by sin, and justly condemned, man could not be born of man in any other state; and thus, from the evil use of free-will, which with its chain of miseries carries the whole human race from its depraved origin as from a corrupt root, man moves on to the destruction of the second death, which has no ending: only those being elected for salvation who are freed by the Grace of God.' With this profound anthropological pessimism—confirmed by all that he saw of the world around him—the soul of Augustine was saturated.

The paradox of inherited *guilt* (liability to deserved punishment) sprang from an intensely realistic conception of the connection of

the whole human race with the first man: 'We all were that one man.' Adam included in himself the actualities of all men after him. Augustine saw no alternative but to accept the misunderstanding of Paul's words in Romans iii. 23 (compared with I Corinthians xv. 22) as found in the ancient Latin versions and perpetuated in the Vulgate: 'In Adam all have sinned', instead of 'inasmuch as all have sinned'. The guilt of Adam was infinite, and therefore every man is born subject to the penalty of everlasting punishment. Whatever offspring has been born from the first man must drag through the ages the burden of sin and guilt, by which it is itself dragged down. Divine 'Justice' demanded that no one at all should be saved; but through His 'Mercy' God elected in eternity and called in time certain favoured individuals, moving them through His Grace, through the saving waters of Baptism and through faith in Christ, to final salvation. The number of the 'elect' is fixed, and cannot be changed. It is large in itself, but small in comparison with the number of the lost.

To ascribe this doctrine entirely to his reading of Scripture texts is a psychological error as serious as to ascribe it all to 'the logic of a fanatical Africanism'. There is, it is true, a relentless logic at work. Every picture, even the darkest, is drawn with firm strokes, with its bounds clearly marked. But the roots of his belief in irresistible Grace were in his own experience. His half-Christian, half-pagan education in Carthage, his adoption of Manicheism as seeming to offer an explanation of the origin of evil, his subsequent scepticism, the moral distress of fighting a losing battle with his own bodily passions, left him divided against himself: 'It was through myself that habit had gained such a victory over me. I had willingly gone where I did not will to go. I refused, O God, to fight on Thy side, as much afraid of being freed from these bonds as I ought to have been afraid of being bound by them. I knew it was better to surrender to Thy Love than to yield to my own lusts, and yet these pleased me and held me bound. I was on the point of resolution, I all but did it, but I did not do it, hesitating to die to death and live to life.' There is no need to repeat the story of his experience in the

garden in Milan, which laid the storm within him to rest. He believed it was a sent message, sent through no will of his own, to save him.

The dark view of the condition of the human race which had penetrated the thought and feeling of Augustine, lends special interest to his view of the original state of man, which, as he conceived it, was a state of perfection in body, thought, and feeling. But the first man was endowed with the dangerous gift of freedom of choice in willing. He was able to defeat and actually did defeat the purpose of God in creating him. In his fallen state man cannot defeat the purposes of God: 'To will or not to will is in the power of the man who wills or does not will, but this does not defeat God or impede His purposes, . . . so as to prevent Him from doing what He wills to do. Thus, God brought about the election of Saul to be king of the Israelites solely through the wills of men themselves, because in His almighty Power he so moved the minds of men.'[14] In his laborious treatise on the Freedom of the Will, Augustine leaves only the profoundly unsatisfactory conclusion that we are free to do what we choose to do, but we are not free to choose what we ought to choose. At the beginning of the second Book of his *Retractiones* (that is, 'Revisions') Augustine says: 'We laboured on behalf of human freedom, but the Grace of God conquered.' The result is, that there is no real freedom of will. No man can do anything that is right in the sight of God, until the Grace of God moves him.

Nevertheless, Augustine was convinced that ideal freedom was a real possibility, the 'ideal freedom' which is an actual condition of the soul, described as 'inability to sin' ('*non posse peccare*'). This is not merely successful resistance to evil; it is a condition of being 'unable to sin' because every kind of evil has lost all power of attraction. The negative statement of it is evidently inadequate. In one of his descriptions of the final blessedness of the redeemed Augustine says: 'The will is more truly free when it is set free from the transient pleasures of sinning to enjoy the lasting happiness of being free from sin. . . . This final freedom is all the more powerful because it will not have the power to sin, and this, by the gift of God, and not by its own unaided nature. . . . One

who thus partakes of God has received from Him the inability to sin. . . . As the original immortality of his nature, which Adam lost by sin, was the ability not to die, . . . so the final freedom is such that the desire for freedom and righteousness will be incapable of being lost.' It will exclude the possibility of all that conflicts with that supreme desire.[15]

Augustine knew well the fearful force of the question, Why has not God chosen to bestow saving Grace upon all men? ' They say, that God could turn even the evil wills of men to good, since He is almighty. Indeed He could. Why then did He not do it? Because He did not will to do it. Why did He not will to do it? The answer rests with Him.' Near the end of his life, Augustine was approached by two laymen from Marseilles, both sincere admirers of his work. Their purpose was to inform him of the concern which his doctrine of an absolutely unconditional predestination was arousing in the South of Gaul. They wrote saying that many Christians in that region felt serious misgivings over that doctrine, with its logical implication that none could be saved except by an irresistible act of divine anti-natural Grace. It was felt that the doctrine was closely allied to the theory of fatal necessity; and that in any case it led to recklessness on the part of those who believed themselves to be ' lost ' and carelessness on the part of the ' elect ', since neither carelessness nor recklessness made any difference to their final destiny. And even if the doctrine were true, ' it ought not to be preached '.

Augustine considered these difficulties very carefully, and in reply he composed his last writings dealing with the question : *De Praedestinatione Sanctorum* and *De Dono Perseverantiae* (A.D. 428–29). In these works he made various distinctions, which may be summed up as an emphasis (indicated in the titles) on the positive side of the predestination-theory, although the negative side is firmly held. The Grace by which men are saved is a pure gift, given in one case, withheld in another, for reasons entirely beyond our comprehension. In the second of the two works mentioned above Augustine makes two admissions. Caution and discretion must be used in preaching the doctrine. In the case of a ' general congregation ' care must be taken not to speak

so that they will all regard themselves as predestined to eternal damnation. And in the last section of the book, Augustine seems to express willingness to submit his doctrine of predestination to the judgment of ' the Doctors of the Church '.[16]

It can scarcely be doubted that the mission of Pelagius, and the resulting controversies into which Augustine was driven, strengthened his conviction that the whole human race, save the limited number elected for salvation by Grace, was eternally doomed. To the individual person Pelagius, Augustine usually refers with respect. Pelagius first becomes prominent about A.D. 400, engaged in a kind of mission to the imperial city. The moral standard of the Roman Church at that time was low, chiefly through a century's influx of half-converted heathens; and Pelagius appears as a missionary, denouncing the sins of society, and inculcating a highly ethical and puritan type of religion, representing the external and disciplinary factors in monasticism. But the essential fact about *Pelagianism* as a doctrine was its insistence on the absolutely undetermined freedom of the human will. The sin of Adam injured only himself; so far as it injured others, or his offspring, this was only as a ' bad example '. The freedom with which every human being is endowed is unaffected even by acquired habits; and whatever transmission of evil takes place from one generation to another, takes place through bad laws, bad customs, or bad examples. The doctrine of Pelagius, in reference to the will, could allow no excuses for wrong-doing—no appeals to natural weakness or the power of habit; but its unbalanced insistence on the unlimited power of every individual's personal will over his actions is in flagrant conflict with actual experience as well as with scientific knowledge; and Augustine found it in irreconcilable conflict with the experiences of his own early years.

It is not difficult to disentangle and state clearly the radical assumptions on which the Pelagian theory of the freedom of the will rested : they may fairly be formulated as above. But in the resulting controversies the Pelagians used certain cardinal terms in an ambiguous and evasive manner, and Pelagius himself cannot be acquitted of responsibility for this. They were confused in their

statements about the significance and need of infant Baptism; and above all, they 'played fast and loose' with the idea of divine Grace. In consistency, Pelagius, when affirming as he did the necessity of Grace, could only mean that Grace *makes it easier* for men to do right, without in any way impairing their freedom of choice. This is diametrically opposed to the Augustinian doctrine that it is impossible—without an irresistible and anti-natural gift of Grace—for men to do right, if by 'doing right' we mean realising the purpose of God in creating man. The doctrine of Augustine is definite, as he intended it to be; but the Pelagians used the term 'Grace' in a number of different ways, according to the particular controversies in which they were engaged. The resulting confusion was increased when Julian, Bishop of Eclanum in Campania, rose to 'take the field' against Augustinianism. Julian became the principal leader of the movement known as 'Semi-Pelagianism'. It may equally be described as 'Semi-Augustinianism'. Here again the radical factors in the controversy can be disentangled and definitely stated. The primary assumption was that we must, in the interests of human responsibility, affirm at all costs that *nature unaided can take the first steps* towards its own recovery. There was a period, however short, in the life of each individual, when Grace was not needed. At no point was it entirely irresistible; but without it men cannot advance into the condition of spiritual health necessary for salvation. Julian's controversial methods were verbose, and sometimes abusive. He was embittered by the opposition which he had to face, and by his exile. As a matter of conviction, he was repelled by the assertion that all who die unbaptised, including infants, are doomed to eternal damnation, and that divine Grace, when granted, is irresistible. 'As to the former, Julian's moral sense recoiled from the terrible assertion, and he took the line afterwards taken by John Stuart Mill against the Calvinism which Mill mistook for Christianity—holding that Augustinism was immoral inasmuch as it offended against our primary idea of Justice. And in protest against the idea of indefectible grace, he repudiated determinism and accused Augustine of quibbling about free-will.'[17] The only truth in this last statement made by Julian

points to the fact to which we have already called attention, namely, that Augustine only succeeded in showing that we are free to do what we choose to do, but not free to choose what we ought to choose.

The controversies aroused by the propaganda of Pelagianism and Semi-Pelagianism, and by opposition to the extreme predestinarianism of Augustine, were becoming injurious to the life of the churches, particularly in southern Gaul. It is remarkable that the conciliatory and statesmanlike action of one man was able, in effect, to bring these controversies to an end. This was Cæsarius, Bishop of Arles. Cæsarius himself was not merely hostile to Augustine in this matter. He understood how Augustine had been led to hold this doctrine. After some friendly correspondence with the Bishop of Rome, he drew up a series of declarations or 'canons' which he presented to a gathering of Bishops assembled at Orange for the dedication of a new church (A.D. 529). The canons were expressed in a manner free from denunciations or threats of excommunication or (with one exception) of 'anathema'. They were followed by a doctrinal statement affirming positively what was implied in the negative statements of the canons. This may be rendered as follows: 'According to what is written in Holy Scripture, and according to the declarations of the Fathers, we ought, with the help of God, to believe and teach, that by the sin of the first man the free-will of all his descendents has been so perverted [*inclinatur* or 'turned aside'] and weakened that no man has been able to believe in God or do what is good in the sight of God, unless the Grace of God first moves him.' Then after affirming that the patriarchs 'and the multitude of those whose faith the Apostle praises' did not inherit their faith from the perfection which was in Adam before the Fall but received it by the Grace of God; and, after quoting from the New Testament (Phil. i. 6 and 29, Eph. ii. 8, I Cor. iv. 7, James i. 17, and the Fourth Gospel iii. 27), the declaration proceeds: 'All those who have been baptised can, with the aid and co-operation of Christ, in virtue of the Grace received in Baptism, achieve all that is needed for salvation *if they will faithfully work for it*. But as for the doctrine that by the Will of God

some are predestined to evil, if there be any who hold such a detestable belief, we reject it as anathema. . . . We believe and teach that in every good work the initiative is not with us in such a way that the Mercy of God *follows*: (we believe and teach) that before any merit on our part God first inspires in us a consciousness of the end (to which we ought to move) and of the love (which we ought to feel for Him), in order that we may desire Baptism, and after being baptised may *with His aid* accomplish what is pleasing in His sight.'

Although the Council apparently did not quote the declaration made by Paul, '*Itaque . . . cum metu et trementia vestram salutem operamini, Deus est enim qui operatur in vobis et velle et perficere pro bona voluntate sua*', the meaning of their canons, with respect to the essential question, is expressed in this apparent antinomy (Phil. ii. 12, 13). Apart from the doctrine of the efficacy of Baptism (to which we return in the sequel), what they affirm is that from the first beginnings of our growth into moral and spiritual consciousness we grow by the aid of divine Grace, not by our unaided nature; but divine Grace demands the co-operation of our wills. The 'anathema' pronounced on those who say that men are predestined by God *to evil* implies logically a total rejection of absolute divine predestination to good or to evil. Thus, what is rejected is: (i) any unqualified doctrine of absolute predestination, and (ii) the Semi-Pelagian doctrine that the first initiative comes from the *unaided* nature of man. The public opinion of Christians at the time—if we may use the expression 'public opinion' in this connection—was evidently ready for such a solution, which prevailed in the mind of the Church until the whole question was opened up again at the period of the Reformation.

CHAPTER IV

DOCTRINES OF THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

(1) BEFORE THE COUNCIL OF NICÆA

THE life, work, and death of Jesus Christ aroused in his followers a new consciousness of spiritual ideas and ideals. He stood in the line of that great Tradition which went deeper than all that was represented by the Pharisees—the Jewish Puritans—and the men learned in rabbinical lore: that great Tradition represented by the prophets, psalmists, and seers of Israel, for whom religion was inseparably bound up with morality and morality with religion. To his disciples he was not only 'Master' (that is, 'Teacher', so described many times in the four Gospels, and occasionally so by his critics and opponents). He was their Lord. In what sense? There were 'gods many and lords many'; but he was Lord *and Saviour*. The impulse given by him was such that the religion of his disciples was no longer centred on an Idea, as Judaism was and continued to be. Through all its phases, from the earliest years, in each of its many types, Christianity had always for its centre the personality of Jesus—a penetrating spiritual power, rousing into new directions the beliefs which his disciples had inherited as Israelites, and through them and through Paul demanding expression in ways beyond the range of the Judaism from which it sprang.

Nevertheless, it had its roots in Judaism. The prophets were believed to be fore-tellers as well as forth-tellers. Many statements made with emphasis by early Christian writers, especially those who wrote definitely in defence of Christianity, reveal—as Harnack put it—'the prominent and even commanding part played by the prophecies recorded in the Old Testament', and, we may add, among these above all by the *messianic* prophecies.

This term needs a word of comment. It has often been applied to everything in the Old Testament which is thought to refer, even indirectly, to Christ or to the Church, and even to all passages which speak of the hope of a better and glorious future. We use the term here in its more legitimate sense, in reference to passages which declare or imply the coming of a great personality, usually described as a king, who will be in a special way sent and endowed by God. The expectation of a divinely-appointed deliverer, the 'Anointed One', the 'Messiah', entered into the prophetic hope of the ideal future, though not into every expression of it. The utterances which had the greatest effect on Christian theology are found among the prophecies in the canonical book of Isaiah. The relation of the birth-narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke to the declaration in Isaiah vii. 14 (when understood to refer to a supernatural birth without a human father) is evident. The prediction in ch. ix. 6 and 7 is not referred to again in the Old Testament or in the New; but in ch. xi the prophet gives a picture of the messianic kingdom and a prediction of a personal Messiah of David's line, the inaugurator of a new age, when 'the land (that is, the land of Israel) shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the depths of the sea'.

That Jesus did believe himself to be the Messiah is beyond reasonable doubt; but he charged his disciples not to make it known. It was to be a secret until he claimed it at the end. The praise of Peter for his confession of it is followed by a severe condemnation when Peter refused to admit the possibility that his Master was a Messiah *giving himself* to death at the hands of blind and evil men for a victory more wonderful than any set forth in the words of the prophets. Therefore, in the New Testament, the title 'Messiah' has a far richer depth and range of meaning and content than any given to it in the Old Testament or in later Jewish literature.

We do not expect to find, in the Apostolic Fathers, a systematic doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ. It is sufficient here to refer to Clement of Rome and to Ignatius of Antioch. Clement is influenced by the Epistles of Paul, and, naturally, by the first to the Corinthians. His main purpose was one of practical

urgency, as we have seen; he is led to set forth the meaning of faith in 'the Lord Jesus Christ', and these words have a theological as well as a religious and ethical significance. There is no evidence that he entertained the doctrine which later theologians fastened on the major Epistles of Paul—that the *death* of Christ, as distinct from his *life*, is the sole ground for our justification in the sight of God, and therefore for our salvation. When Clement teaches that the death of Christ is the divinely-appointed means of our forgiveness, it is because that death and those sufferings move men to gratitude, repentance, and amendment. The following passages are decisive. 'Let us look steadfastly on the blood of Christ, and learn how precious it is to his Father, because, being shed for our salvation, it won for the whole world the grace of repentance' (ch. xii). 'Through love were all God's chosen ones made perfect. Without love, nothing is well-pleasing to God. In love the Master took us to himself: on account of the love which he had for us, Jesus Christ our Lord, with the Will of God, gave . . . his life for our life' (ch. xlix). 'Through him our hearts are opened, and our darkened understanding rises again into his wonderful Light; through him, God has willed that we should share in the knowledge which gives us life' (ch. xxxvi).

Ignatius emphasises, more than the other teachers in this group, the need of faith in the power of the death of Christ; but there is no suggestion that it was a substitutionary suffering or a source of righteousness 'imputed to us'. The death of Christ is one of the mysteries 'which cause men to exclaim in amazement, but which God achieved in silence' (Ignatius *To the Ephesians*, xix. 1). The root of the whole mystery is, that 'faith is the beginning of our true life, and love the fulfilment of it'.

Before the end of the first century thoughtful Christians perceived that the idea of the *Logos* was the principal category of the higher religious thought of the time (we may refer to page 66 above); but it was applied to Christ with a meaning which was alien to Greek thought, and would have been inconceivable to Philo of Alexandria: 'The Word was made (or, became) flesh and dwelt among us.' This distinctive principle of the Christian

doctrine of the *Logos* is of immeasurable significance: 'And we have seen his glory, glory such as an only son receives from a father' (Moffatt's version of John i. 14, reading 'receives' instead of 'enjoys': literally, as in R.V. margin, 'as of an only-begotten from a father').

The writings of the second-century Apologists show that the assimilation of the idea of the divine *Logos* with the religious ideal of divine Sonship, manifested in the person of the incarnate Christ, had become a first principle of Christian thought. The work of Justin Martyr is decisive in this respect, though he did not see the full range of the theological problem involved. 'In the beginning, God brought forth a rational Power, who is sometimes called Wisdom, sometimes Lord and Word, sometimes Messenger, sometimes God: for he has all these names because he ministers to the purposes of the Father, and was brought forth by the Will of the Father' (*Dialogue*, ch. lxi). We honour the prophets of the old Dispensation, but they had partial and separate gifts of the divine Spirit—that is, each according to his special needs and circumstances; but Christ was endowed 'with the fullness of the Spirit, which is and was and shall be with him alone'. Again: 'His Son, . . . being in Him [that is, in God] before all created things, and being brought forth when He [that is, God] created all things through Him [through the Son], is called Christ as creative Word, though that name has a deeper meaning than we can understand; but Jesus is his name as man and as Saviour' (*Second Apology*, ch. vi). In a few places Justin, when speaking of the Son as creative Word, speaks of him as a 'second God', 'not distinguished from the Father in name only, but another Being, generated from the Father . . . not by division, as if the being of the Father were reduced by the going forth of the Son'. On account of such statements, Justin has been charged with confused inconsistency. But the charge is unjust. He is trying to express in words the duality in unity realised in the relation between the Father and the Son. The metaphors which he uses show this: 'When we utter a word, we beget a thought, but not so as to diminish the thought in our own minds by expressing it; or, again, when one fire is kindled from another, the latter is not diminished but remains the same, while the fire kindled from it shines by its own light.'

Justin never questioned the historical character of the Fall-story. But his repeated declarations that men are saved by the death of Christ do not mean that there is a direct, essential, and exclusive relation between the *death* of Christ and the forgiveness of sins. The Fall brought on mankind no *necessity* of sinning: 'He created man a rational being, able freely to choose what is true and what is good; therefore there is no excuse for men in the sight of God, for men are intelligent beings' (*Apology*, ch. xxvii, a reminiscence of the Epistle to the Romans i. 20 and 21). But 'if God postpones punishment, it is for the sake of men, for He has foreknowledge of those who will be saved through repentance, even before they are born; and, foreseeing the ways in which men would misuse their freedom of choice, He ordained the means of salvation' (*Dialogue*, ch. cii). It is not exclusively through his death that Christ saves men, but by the whole of his work as incarnate Word: his revelation of the Father, his teaching, his resurrection. Men are saved through Christ because he has a unique power of bringing them to repentance, and helping them to sin no more (*Dialogue*, ch. cxi).

A fundamental consideration of general interpretation arises here, with a reference wider than to the doctrine of Justin. The early Christian belief in the saving power of Christ cannot be fully explained by the effects of his sufferings and death on the hearts of men. His sufferings and death seemed to be a concentrated and appalling victory of evil, all the more mysterious because the Victim was divine as well as human. The Fathers appealed to ancient prophecy (Justin quotes at length from Isaiah lii to liv), and to the recorded utterances of Jesus himself, and to the Epistles, to show why it was *necessary* that one who was at once divine and human should thus suffer and die. They were feeling after the real explanation: because he was divine as well as human, *he gave himself*.[1]

The life and work of Irenæus belong to one of the most critical periods in the history of Christianity. The elaboration of speculative theology and mythology in the writings of the greater

'Gnostics', and their endeavour to read the technicalities of their systems into the words of the New Testament, had been the subject of his drastic criticism. His reaction was not only that of a systematic theologian. He was prompted to plead for humility and simplicity in the face of profound problems: 'If a man asks, how the Son is begotten from the Father, we reply that no created being understands that generation, or manifestation, or by whatever name we may describe that production which though real is ineffable—no being, not even the angels, but only the Father who begets and the Son who is begotten.' These expressions do not betray confusion of thought, but a strong desire to avoid the exclusive use of any particular technical term. For Irenæus, 'the Father is the invisible of the Son, as the Son is the visible of the Father'. Among the metaphors which appealed to Irenæus, is that of measure (*mensura*, used in the figurative sense of a plan or course of action which reveals a nature): 'God makes all things by measure and order: the infinite God the Father reveals His Measure in the Son, for the Son is the Measure of the Father.'

The fact is, that Irenæus is the first among the early Fathers to suggest a doctrine of *kenosis* in reference to the Incarnation. It is generally agreed that the important conception indicated by this technical Greek term has its scriptural source in the Epistle to the Philippians (ii. 6–8): Christ Jesus, 'though he was divine by nature, did not set store upon equality with God, but emptied himself by taking the nature of a servant: born in human guise and appearing in human form, he humbly stooped in his obedience even to die, and to die upon the Cross' (Moffatt's version). Irenæus saw that the question is closely related to the limitations of Christ's human knowledge. Thus, addressing in imagination the Valentinians, he says: 'In your irrational arrogance, you profess to comprehend all the ineffable mysteries of Deity; yet even the Son of God Himself said that the day and the hour of Judgment were known to the Father alone. . . . If then the Son of God was not ashamed to ascribe the knowledge of that day to the Father alone, . . . let us not be ashamed to leave to God those mysteries which are too deep for us to fathom.' Irenæus is content with the affirmation that, in reference to our humanity, 'The divine Word came down

to us not as he was able to come, but as we were able to receive him. He could have come to us in his eternal glory; but as yet we have no power to endure the greatness of that glory. . . . He therefore was so understood as men were able to understand him.'[2]

In their interpretation of Paul's statement neither Irenæus nor any of the Fathers supposed the meaning to be that the Word in becoming incarnate divested himself of any of his divine attributes. The self-emptying therefore was equivalent to the Incarnation, and was in no sense an explanation of that mystery. The divine Word in becoming man remained what he was before. But another term in the Pauline statement is not free from serious ambiguity—the Greek term rendered 'robbery' in the Authorised Version. Its literal meaning is 'a thing to be grasped' in the sense of being 'kept' or 'retained'. In this connection it is evidently a metaphor requiring careful interpretation. Taken entirely apart from its context, the expression could be understood simply as an affirmation of the Deity of Christ—'thought it not *usurpation* to be equal with God'. But, as Lightfoot made clear, the interpretation which the context requires is that the Greek term in question (which we transliterate as *harpagmos*) must be taken in an alternative and entirely legitimate sense as implied in the margin of the Revised Version—a 'treasure' or 'prize' to be kept, a privilege to be maintained and manifested. Christ did not so regard it, but 'humbled himself' in becoming incarnate. This interpretation was adopted without question by the Greek Fathers.

The reason for the incarnation is clear in the mind of Irenæus. 'The Word of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, became what we are (though without sin) in order that he might perfect us to be what he is. For we could learn the things of God only because our Master, the divine Word, became man. Only God's Word could declare to us the things of the Father. We could not learn, unless by seeing our Master, and hearing his words, so that we might have communion with him according to his sayings', receiving from him strength to overcome the evil within us. 'Because that evil which is against God had entered into us, we

who by our nature belonged to God were estranged from Him and from our nature; and the divine Word in his spirit of eternal righteousness came to redeem God's possessions from the power of evil, . . . but by persuasion, for God takes to Himself what He will, but not by force.' [3]

In this connection Irenæus uses expressions which imply that in his belief, mankind, whom Satan had perverted and subjected to himself, must be bought back, and that Christ's sufferings and death were the ransom paid to Satan for that purpose. But to assume that this was what Irenæus intended, is to rule out the 'Recapitulation' doctrine as irrelevant, and even to empty it of definite meaning *in its reference to Christ*. His fundamental conception of the work of Christ is that of a victory over Satan; and for the achievement of that work, Christ's life and not only his death is of supreme import for mankind, because faith in Christ sanctifies human life: 'He came to save all through himself, all, I repeat, who through him were restored to God: even infants and little children, and boys and young men and old men. He lived through every age. Being made an infant, for the sake of infants he sanctified them: among little children, sanctifying them even at that age by his trust and obedience: among young men, becoming himself one of them, he sanctified young men to God: among older men, becoming himself one of them not only to communicate the Truth but to sanctify these also, as an example to all: and at the end, he gave himself to death, to conquer death, and to reveal himself as Master of life, before all and above all.'

We must accept Harnack's judgment that Irenæus is quite as free from the thought that Satan has real 'rights' over man as he is from the idea that God accomplished His work of salvation by deceiving Satan.

Irenæus had destroyed the influence of 'Gnosticism' as a serious factor in Christian thought; but even then the Churches had no generally accepted doctrine of what was meant by the Deity of Jesus Christ. Shortly after the death of Irenæus, and during the early years of the third century (the exact dates are uncertain), there arrived in Rome, from Asia Minor, certain theologians to whose propaganda the name 'Monarchianism' was given.

There has been considerable discussion about the origin of this name, but there is no doubt about what it meant in the minds of these men. The first principle of their theology, the fundamental idea on which it rested, was the sole Deity of the one and only God the Father—the 'Monarchia'. And for them, to speak of 'one God' meant not only the exclusion of polytheism but the absolute unity of the divine nature. In the light of this conception, they wanted a clear statement of what was meant by saying: (i) that Jesus is God, and (ii) that Jesus is the Son of God. On the other hand, there is no evidence that the Monarchians themselves had any clear idea of the logical meaning of 'unity', or that 'unity', if it is to mean more than a numerical 'unit' in counting, must mean an *internal relation*. It soon appeared that there were two groups among them, or rather two tendencies of thought, differing fundamentally in principle. We may retain the terms which Harnack used to distinguish them—'Adoptionists' and 'Modalists' respectively.

According to the Adoptionists, Jesus began life with a personality entirely human. But by reason of his unique personal qualities, he was chosen by God, endowed with miraculous powers, and—as it were—'used' by God for a divine mission as Teacher and Saviour. The divine Word (the *Logos*) was the divine activity in relation to the Man Jesus, who thus became Son of God by 'Adoption'. As a matter of historical fact, the Adoptionist Christology was entirely consistent with the assumption that the divine Word was in relation with Jesus from the beginning of his individual conscious existence, so that at no period of his earthly existence was he a *mere man*. But it was essential to the Adoptionist Christology to maintain the complete reality of Christ's human nature and of his perfect obedience.

The Adoptionist Monarchianism became known in the West when its advocates came forward in Rome; but its most influential exponent was Paul of Samosata, the royal city of Syria, who became Bishop of Antioch about A.D. 260. His theology was officially condemned at a Council held in Antioch in 268, when he was deposed from his episcopal office. His deposition was due as much to his personal character and his political activities as to

his theology: he was Chancellor to Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, to whose kingdom Antioch then belonged. He refused to acknowledge his deposition, until he was expelled by the Emperor Aurelian, who had restored the unity of the eastern empire after the fall of Zenobia. The theology of Paul of Samosata is historically more important than his personality. His deposition and banishment did not put an end to its influence.[4]

Only fragments of his theological writings have survived. But it is clear that for him, Adoptionist Monarchianism was the fundamental truth. The divine Word, the *Logos*, he believed was a rational and spiritual energy, issuing from God and acting on the human Jesus from the beginning of his personal existence with increasing power, raising him to be Christ and Son of God and Saviour of the world.

'There is nothing marvellous in that the Saviour had one Will with God.' Paul of Samosata affirms this, and maintains that 'as Nature reveals one and the same essence underlying different beings, so love, as a way of life, creates in different beings one and the same will through one and the same inner world of desire'. According to Paul, no other union between personal beings is possible save a union of will, and no other is praiseworthy: 'different natures and different persons have only one means of union, springing from a harmony in the activities of those who are thus brought together. In this way, the Saviour, being joined to God, possesses for ever one and the same Will with God.' Unfortunately for the consistency of his Christology, Paul of Samosata, so far as we can judge from the passages from his writings which have survived, had not grasped the essential meaning of the principle which he himself had stated—that unity of essential nature is possible between beings who are not identical. He sometimes speaks as if *will* were a distinct and separate faculty in the nature of man and in the nature of God, and sometimes as if it were of the very essence at once of the nature of God and the nature of man. It is confusing to speak of the will of God and the wills of men as sometimes 'in harmony' and sometimes as 'one and the same' (an absolute identity). But there is no confusion in Paul's conviction that the nature of the incarnate

Christ was a completely human nature, and that what is most divine in man is goodness: 'By the constancy of his disposition and his perfect obedience to the indwelling Word, he became like God and was united to God.'

The Modalist Monarchianism is important because of its lasting effects. Its most prominent advocates in Rome were three theologians from the Near East, Praxeas, Noetus, and Sabellius. Our knowledge of Sabellius is limited to statements about his teaching made by his theological opponents, who did not distinguish between Sabellius, the individual, and 'Sabellianism'. The orthodox Fathers looked upon 'Sabellianism' as a doctrinal danger to be carefully avoided. It is possible, however, to discern the outlines of what Sabellius himself had taught. Like the Adoptionists, he was supremely interested in the maintenance of monotheism; but in other respects, Sabellius and the Adoptionists stood at opposite extremes. The cardinal principle of his Christology was that during his earthly life Jesus Christ was a direct embodiment of God. This was to exclude any idea that Jesus was in any respect a derived being, and to affirm that 'Jesus was God' in the most literal and logical meaning of the words. It appealed to all who felt the immeasurable import of the death of Christ on the Cross, for it pointed to the Cross as the Father Himself suffering. The doctrine of Sabellius, however, extended farther than this. It seems clear that he believed in three direct manifestations of Deity in relation to mankind and the world: as 'Father', as 'Son', and as 'Holy Spirit', and that he believed these three manifestations to be in some way *subject to succession in time*: as 'Father', He was Creator and Lawgiver; as 'Son', He was Redeemer; as 'Spirit', He was Giver of life and rationality. Thus, the absolute 'unity' of God admitted diversity of action in relation to finite or created beings, but it excluded any difference, within the divine Nature, of the kind which the Church afterwards called 'personal'. Since unity is essentially a relation, a unity which excludes internal diversity is an empty abstraction; but there is no evidence that this consideration ever entered into the minds of the modalist Monarchians. The illogical conception of 'unity', which Sabellius never questioned because he was

unconscious of holding it, made it impossible for him to believe that the Son might be divine without being absolutely identical with the Father. It must be admitted, however, that any attempt to recover the teaching of Sabellius, the individual, can be only hypothetical. What 'Sabellianism' became is seen in the work of Marcellus of Ancyra, at a later date, when it became an object of severe criticism in the Nicene period.

The name of 'Praxeas' appears among the references to Modalism in Rome; but the chief importance of 'Praxeas' is that Tertullian used his name as a label for the Modalist movement so far as he knew it.

Praxeas had said that the term *Logos* meant no more than an expression uttered by a particular individual. If this statement is correctly reported by Tertullian, it betrays an extraordinary ignorance of the historical meaning and use of the term, and above all of its use in the Fourth Gospel. Tertullian holds that the term *Logos* is a legitimate metaphor involving a vital truth, because the Greek term *Logos* and the Latin *Sermo* (used as its equivalent) imply both a necessary distinction and a necessary relation between the thought or reason and its expression. He finds it necessary to guard against the charge of falling into the Gnostic assumption of 'emanations', which, as Tertullian understood it, implied an entire separation between the Being produced and the Source from which he is produced: 'What I affirm, is the most intimate union between them.' But, with this intimate union, there is the difference denied by Praxeas, and this had to be explained. Tertullian was acquainted with the Greek language, but he wrote and thought in Latin. In Greek there were more terms available for theological use; but Tertullian was certainly right in fixing on the two most important of the Greek terms. These may be transliterated as *ousia*, of which the logical meaning is 'essence', and *hypostasis*, of which the logical meaning is the individualisation of the 'essence'. Greek thinkers did not always keep consistently to the logical meaning of these words, but in the present connection, this is irrelevant. Tertullian, writing and thinking in Latin, used *substantia* for *ousia*, and *persona* for *hypostasis*.

These were terms current in Roman Law, where the word

substantia meant in general what we understand by 'status', and therefore is logically an abstract term. It has been asserted that Tertullian made use of Roman legal conceptions in order to state his doctrine of the Person of Christ. The question is about his use of the term *substantia* as a definite *theological* conception: and we may maintain that in this connection he abandoned its technical legal reference. He used the term *substantia* to signify a mode of concrete existence; and he therefore affirmed, as between the Father and the Son, the distinction of their Persons in the unity of their Substance. This, he affirms, is the meaning of Christ's saying, 'I and my Father are One.' 'Father' and 'Son' are correlative terms: 'Fatherhood' implies 'Sonship', and 'Sonship' implies 'Fatherhood'. His criticisms of Praxeas are frequently expressed with characteristic violence of language; but it is clear that he was endeavouring to formulate a conception of unity which would avoid both sides of what we have called the 'All or None' fallacy—*either* absolute identity *or* no real unity at all.

The result was, that Tertullian bequeathed to the western Church a conception of the Trinity in which the term 'Substance' is equally fundamental with the term 'Person'.

When we turn to Egypt and Asia Minor, we find that what some modern theologians describe (as if by a technical term) as the *Work of Christ* was not believed to be limited to the days of the Passion or to the single experience of his death. His death was believed to be the climax of his submission; but the real submission of the divine Being was made manifest when it could be affirmed that *the very God had entered into the domain of human experience*. Clement of Alexandria boldly applies the allegorical method of interpretation to the whole story of the Fall. For example, he affirms that the 'serpent' signifies the attraction of 'pleasure'. The 'Blood of Christ', shed for men, signifies Christian knowledge—that rational insight into the truth about God and about His relation to mankind which it was the purpose of the Incarnation to give to the world.

In the case of Clement of Alexandria the doctrine of the Incarnation must be approached from his conception of the divine

Word, the *Logos*, and the relation of the *Logos* to the world and to mankind. The fundamental conclusion which he derived from it is this: Christ, who is the divine Word, was in the world before he appeared in the human person of Jesus. He was preparing the world for his visible advent. This, in Clement's belief, was the education of the world under its divine 'Instructor'. The 'Instructor' gave philosophy to the Greeks, the *Torah* to the Hebrews, and prophecy to the Prophets. The Incarnation, therefore, was no absolute break in man's religious history: it was not an absolutely new beginning; it took its place in a long series of divine movements in human nature. It follows that for Clement, all history is one, because all Truth is one: 'There is one river of Truth, but many streams flow into it on this side and on that. The fruits of Reason, apart from the Incarnate Word, are to be judged not from the ignorant and sensual, but from such men as Heracleitus, Socrates, and Plato. For such men, knowledge is a covenant with God.' Nevertheless, 'the truths which we gather are fragmentary; each man seizes a fragment, and thinks that he has the whole'.

Although the Incarnation has its place in a long series of divine dispensations towards mankind, Clement is convinced that it has a unique place. The following sentences from the preface to his *Exhortation to the Greeks* are typical: 'Inasmuch as the *Logos* was from the beginning, he was and is the divine Source of all things. . . . This very *Logos* has appeared as man, he alone being both God and man. . . . Our divine Ally and Helper is one and the same: the Lord who from the beginning was Revealer, and now calls us to salvation.' All men belong to him: all souls are his. But 'some belong to him by way of knowledge, while others have not yet attained to this: some belong to him as friends, others as faithful servants, others only as servants'. Having taken to himself a body which could be seen and touched, he came into the world to reveal to man what is possible in obedience to the commandments of God: 'He could not abandon his love for mankind.' In this connection, Clement affirms the 'impassibility' of the incarnate Christ. This is often misunderstood. By the 'impassibility' of Jesus Christ, Clement meant that he had so

trained his body as not to be moved by passion arising from personal physical causes.[5] To assume that the 'impassibility' of the incarnate Christ, in Clement's belief, meant that it was impossible for Christ to feel bodily pain would be to attribute to Clement some form of docetism.

When we turn to Origen, we find that belief in Christ is placed in a wider cosmic setting. The world which we apprehend through our senses is only a portion of the invisible world—the universe. The distinctively Christian application which Origen makes of this Platonic idea is that the universe, conceived as a whole of interdependent parts, itself depends absolutely on the Being who is at once active Reason and active Love: and Love, if it is more than a mere egoistic passion, must be conceived as not only revealing itself but as *giving itself*. This is the eternal generation of the Son of God, 'a generation worthy of God, for which no comparison can be found in our finite human nature, because through it the unbegotten God becomes the Father of the only-begotten Son'. In a fragment preserved from his Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, Origen quotes from the Book of Wisdom (viii. 35), and affirms that the natural meaning of the words is that the Son, here named the 'Wisdom of God', is co-essential (of the same nature) with the Father. In several passages in his reply to Celsus, the Deity of Christ is expressed with a certain difference of emphasis; for example: 'We believe that the *Logos* was united with the soul of Jesus in a far higher degree than with any other soul, for he alone was able to receive a supreme share of the Father's perfect Wisdom and perfect Love. Through him the divine and human natures were so united that man's nature may become divine by sharing through faith in a nature more divine, not in Jesus alone but in all who not only believe in Jesus but live the life which Jesus taught.'[6]

There are statements in Origen, which, isolated and taken 'at their face value', affirm a subordination of the Son of God, the divine *Logos*, to the Father who is the Source of all being; and 'subordinationism' was afterwards supposed to be a characteristic of the Alexandrian Christology. As far as Origen is concerned, this is a mistaken interpretation. What he has in view is the

range of the activity of the Word in relation to the world and to mankind. Through this conception he explains the appearances recorded in the Old Testament: they were changes in relation to those who beheld him according to their several capacities. The same general idea is applied by Origen to the sayings of Christ recorded in the Gospels. Different sayings have different references. Men vary according to their needs and capacities, and therefore the incarnate Christ appears in different relations to different beholders. He was not the same to the sick at the foot of the mountain of Transfiguration as to those on the mount, who by reason of their strength were able to behold a divine appearance. Thus, there are those who need him as spiritual Physician and Redeemer; while others, who have become more perfect, are able to receive the higher gifts because they see in him the Wisdom and Love of God.

Origen certainly entertained the idea of a *kenosis*, but he does not seem able to satisfy himself as to its application. 'The eternal Son of God became in Jesus Christ a being of a two-fold nature, divine and human. For us, with our limitations, it is enough to know that the Son of God assumed a human body and a human soul. He emptied himself of his absolute equality with God the Father, and showed us the way to know the Father. . . . We are lost in wonder that a Being, supreme over all created things, should have divested himself of his condition of majesty and become Man.' The reference to the oft-quoted passage in the Epistle to the Philippians is unmistakable: 'The divine goodness in the person of Christ appears greater and more divine because he humbled himself, than if he had believed equality with God to be a condition to be held and maintained, and had shrunk from becoming a servant for the salvation of the world. It was for the sake of those in bondage that the Son of God took upon himself the form of a servant.' 'We must not believe', he observes again, 'that all the majesty of his Deity was confined within the limits of a human body, as if the whole of the divine Word, his Wisdom, his very Truth and Life, could not be thought of as acting anywhere else and he were forced within so small a compass.' None the less, the vital truth remains: the Son of God,

'even within the compass of a human body, revealed the Will of the Father'.[7]

Celsus had objected that what is true in the Christian Scriptures is no better and no more true than what is found (as we should say) in 'pagan' writers. Origen replies that God has planted in the souls of men a consciousness of the laws of righteousness and of ideals prompting them to a better life, and has been sending teachers through the ages to call that consciousness into life, in preparation for the full revelation of its meaning in the words of the Prophets and the Saviour.[8] He dwells on the significance of this fact in relation to the sacrifices of those who have been willing to lay down their lives for the sake of their fellow-men. Think of the labours of the Christian Apostles. 'I believe', Origen declares, 'that any one who candidly considers the facts will perceive that these men could not have devoted themselves to lives of danger, and even to certain destruction, without a profound consciousness of the truth which Christ had created in their hearts. They saw, in the death of him who was crucified for the human race, something akin to the deaths of those who in all nations have willingly died to save others. There is, in the nature of things, for certain mysterious reasons, . . . a Law, such that even one just man, dying for the common good, may be the means of destroying many spirits of evil.' 'We need not wonder, then, that at length a chosen One came forth among men unique, in that there were none with him or before or after him such as he was.' The best that is in men is due to him: 'Through him there have been many Christs in the world, even all who like him have lived for righteousness and defeated evil.'[9]

We have already seen the significance of Origen's universalism (ch. III. p. 95). The subjection of all things to Christ means the salvation of all created spirits—their supreme salvation, in which they become as divine as the angels—if not in this age, then during the countless ages which are to come. How, then, does the life and death of Christ achieve this great salvation?

Origen deals very freely with the Pauline doctrine that men are 'justified' by the righteousness of Christ; and he had already convinced himself that the details in the narrative of the Fall are

to be interpreted allegorically (see above, ch. II. p. 52). He affirms the meaning of the Pauline doctrine to be that it was by the example and influence of Adam that his descendants and their posterity yielded to evil; and the supreme sacrifice of Christ, in *giving himself* to suffering and death, moves the hearts of believers to divine righteousness. This is the real faith. Faith which does not issue in ' good works ' is not real faith : ' It is impossible that one who has taken evil into himself can be accounted righteous, even if he believes in God who has raised the Lord Jesus from the dead.' [10]

The beginnings of the controversy which plunged the eastern Church into a long period of strife arose shortly after the death of Origen. An important indication of what was to come is seen in the correspondence between Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria (from 247 to 265), and his namesake of Rome (Bishop from 259 to 280).[11]

In his anxiety to guard against ' Sabellianism ' the Alexandrian Bishop used expressions which were later employed for controversial purposes by the Arians. He was charged with error by some members of the Alexandrian Churches, and the question was referred to Rome. A Synod convened at Rome condemned the statements attributed to the Bishop of Alexandria, but contented itself with affirming that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit really exist as Three, but the Three are at the same time One. The Bishop of Rome wrote to Dionysius of Alexandria reporting the findings of the Roman Synod, and asking for explanations. Dionysius wrote from Alexandria making an elaborate reply, in the course of which he made clear that he had no thought of a separation between the Father and the Son. The Father, because He is a Father, cannot be alien to the Son, nor the Son to the Father : the very names themselves signify a vital relation between the two beings; and in the same sense the Holy Spirit is not alien to the Father (from whom the Spirit proceeds) nor alien to the Son (who bears the Spirit). He repudiates the charge that he had represented the Son as a *created* being (the essential Arian doctrine); only the human body which he assumed was created. ' But we say that in a sense the Word was *made*, as some of the wisest men among the Greeks say that they are the makers of their books, while really they are the fathers of their books.'

The Alexandrian Bishop used many illustrations from natural events to suggest the true view of the relation between the Father and the Son, and some of these he admitted, in his letter, were not appropriate. But his fundamental principle is interpreted by Athanasius : ' Life is begotten from life . . . as light is kindled from light which is not thereby reduced.' This illustration was regarded by the Fathers as of great value. We meet with it frequently : ' Light from unquenchable Light '. Thus the Bishop of Alexandria explained his conviction that the Son is one in essential nature with the Father. The Bishop of Rome was not thinking specially of Sabellianism. He was protesting against any beliefs which stated or implied a division in the divine Nature—a division in the ' Monarchia ', ' the most sacred doctrine of the Church of God '. He was thus prepared to use the principal term characteristic of the Sabellianist heresy, in order to avoid any suggestion of the idea of three Gods. The explanation given by most historians is almost certainly the true one. While both Bishops used the trinitarian formula, one emphasised the unity and the other the distinction of the three ' Persons '. The discussion did little more than open up the problem, a problem at once theological and philosophical, arising from the fact that any rational conception of Deity implies the reality of internal relations within the divine Nature.

Through the work of the Fathers whose teaching we have hitherto surveyed, we have seen that one conclusion of the first importance had been firmly established in the minds of Christian thinkers. It was a conclusion resting on the assumption that, in the case of any object of thought, a quality or attribute is a characteristic simply possessed by that object—a characteristic which it simply *has*. Hence the Fathers were convinced that the divine Word, the *Logos*, was no mere quality or attribute of God, in that sense; and the identification of the divine *Logos* with the eternal Son of God gave to that conclusion its final form.

During the later years of the third century, Christians in the empire were largely unmolested, although they were becoming a

strongly organised movement in the State; and being most numerous in the towns, they exercised an influence larger than their numbers seemed to suggest. But the beginning of the fourth century was marked by the last and worst persecution in the empire. It was ordered by Diocletian, and carried on with the utmost ferocity by his colleague Galerius after his abdication. But during his last illness, Galerius changed his mind, and in the year 311 he issued the famous 'Edict of Toleration', which declared Christianity to be a *religio licita*: in other words, no legal disabilities or dangers attached to open profession of the Christian religion or to the maintenance of Christian worship. There is some evidence that Galerius issued the Edict through the advice and persuasion of his colleagues Constantine and Licinius, although Licinius remained a pagan. A short-lived attempt was made to restore the power of paganism in Asia Minor; but all persecution ended in the following year.

There is no reason to doubt that Constantine was sincerely attracted to Christian theism; and after he had put an end to persecution, crushed his rivals in Asia Minor, and made himself master of the Roman world, he hoped for a united empire and peace; but his hopes were destroyed by the rise and spread of the Arian controversy.[12]

CHAPTER V

DOCTRINES OF THE PERSON AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

(II) THE COUNCIL OF NICÆA AND AFTER

THE beginnings of Arianism and its early chronology are obscure; but we hear definitely of Arius as an individual when in 312 he was ordained as presbyter by Achillas, then Bishop of Alexandria. Arius was not a busy heresiarch; he was a blameless Presbyter, with a strongly rationalistic mind, trying to make everything clear and distinct, but with no understanding of the logical conditions required to make 'clear and distinct' the ideas which he was himself employing. He was not a systematic theologian, but he was a skilful propagandist. He not only made his opinions seriously known to the Bishop of Alexandria, but, it would seem in order to popularise them, he set them out in metrical form, in a form used for convivial songs. The Bishop, Alexander, who had succeeded Achillas, was obliged to summon a Synod to meet in Alexandria, A.D. 321. Arius was excommunicated by the Synod, after his opinions had been decisively condemned. He then left Alexandria, and soon afterwards found refuge with Eusebius of Nicomedia, one of the influential 'court prelates' of the time, afterwards prominent as an Arian leader.

Arius now set himself to secure all the support that he could obtain from the eastern bishops. His propaganda was so far effective that by 324 the Emperor found a controversy raging which threatened political as well as ecclesiastical trouble. Agreement must therefore somehow be secured. The former method, of summoning regional Councils or Synods, was evidently insufficient. Constantine therefore decided to summon all the bishops of Christendom to a General Council. If he could bring them to a decision, he could then give it the force of law.

And so he issued invitations to all Christian Bishops to meet him at Nicæa in Bithynia in the summer of 325. There are different statements about the actual number of bishops who attended; but all the larger sees were represented, except Britain. From Spain there was only one bishop, Hosius of Cordova; but he was an ecclesiastical statesman and a theologian of wisdom and ability.

From what Arius himself had written, only a few fragments of the 'Thalia', the 'metrical version' of his doctrine, have come down to us, together with two letters, one to Eusebius of Nicomedia, the other to the Bishop of Alexandria—the latter communication, probably by the advice of Eusebius, being expressed in 'moderate' terms. There is no doubt, however, about the theological position from which Arius started. He took for granted the antithesis between the idea of the 'uncreated' and the idea of the 'created', though he may not himself have drawn the full logical conclusion from it. He used it in the first place to put a definite meaning into the idea of the 'subordination' of the Son of God. The essentials of the Arian Christology may be thus stated: (i) God is the one and only God, in Himself incomprehensible, but revealed as creative by His Will. The divine *Logos* is a quality essential to the nature of God, and in no respect a distinct power or person. (ii) Before the universe existed, God created an independent Being, by means of whom all other beings were to be created. This Being was not of the nature of God. He was a 'creature', and as a 'creature' his knowledge of himself and of God was imperfect. As incarnate in a human body, he was capable of bodily feeling and suffering, and of moral growth and change; and through final and complete perseverance, he freed himself from change, and entered into a special relation with God. (iii) The doctrine of the Holy Spirit—a doctrine which the Arians felt themselves obliged to retain, on grounds of Scripture and Tradition—was inevitably in an uncertain position. There is some evidence that they believed the Spirit to be a created being, created by 'the Son'. Harnack justly observed that the *impossibility of personal communion with God* follows inevitably if the Arian propositions are accepted.

When the Council of Nicæa met, the Arians presented a creed

stating their principal propositions. It was rejected with cries of indignation. It appears that the Emperor was surprised at the strength of the opposition to Arianism; and when he learnt from Hosius that the West would never accept it, he perceived that Arianism was politically hopeless, as it actually was, at that time. He then exerted all his influence to induce the Council to arrive at an agreed conclusion on some other ground. He did not understand the issue that had been raised; but he wanted agreement. A group led by the Bishop of Alexandria, guided by his deacon and secretary, Athanasius, who was then in his twenty-seventh year, desired a declaration which would exclude Arianism. But between this group and the outspoken Arians moved a great conservative centre-party, conservative in the sense of holding that the existing creeds and confessions provided a sufficient basis for a true statement of the Deity of Jesus Christ, without using any novel terms which were not found in the Scriptures. Their leading representative was Eusebius of Cæsarea, probably the most learned prelate present, though his strength lay in literature and history rather than in theology. Eusebius presented the creed of his own Church, which aroused little hostility. Its Christological section may be thus translated: 'And we believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word (*Logos*) of God, God from God, Light from Light, Life from Life, Son only-begotten, first-born of every creature, before all ages begotten from the Father, by whom also all things were made, who for our salvation was made flesh and lived as a citizen among men.' The Arians would have accepted this statement, knowing that they could have put their own interpretation on its terms; but Athanasius and his friends insisted on formulating a new creed containing terms which would explicitly exclude Arianism. After much debate, the Nicene Creed in its original form was declared to be the faith of the Church. Its vital Christological section is as follows: 'We believe . . . in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten from the Father, that is, from the essential nature (*ousia*) of the Father: God from God, Light from Light, very God from very God, begotten not created, co-essential (*homo-ousios*) with the Father, through whom all things in the heavens and the earth

were created: who for the sake of us men and our salvation descended, was made flesh, became man, suffered, rose on the third day, ascended into the heavens, and will come to judge the living and the dead: and (we believe) in the Holy Spirit. Those who say that there was a time when he (the Son) was not, (or) that before he was begotten he was not, . . . or who say that the Son of God was created, or was capable of change or alteration: these the Catholic Church anathematises.' [1]

Shortly after the bishops separated, Constantine issued an imperial decree of banishment against Arius and those who had refused to accept the final declaration of the Council. As a matter of historical fact, the victory over Arianism at Nicæa was gained by the superior insight, energy, and decision of a small minority, with the help of half-hearted allies—'half-hearted', because they were more than doubtful about the use of non-scriptural terms as a test ('from the essential nature of the Father' and 'co-essential with the Father'). Moreover, since Arian worship, and in particular Arian sacraments, did not differ from the orthodox ritual, and since the Arians used the term 'Son of God' freely (though putting their own meaning into it), it was almost inevitable that the multitudes who could not see beneath the surface saw Arianism as what it seemed to be; and the Arian leaders exploited this for their own ends. Many of them honestly thought that their position was a tenable one and their doctrine of Christ's Person the true one; others were unscrupulous adventurers skilful at working court intrigues. And beyond all these forces there was a feeling that Arius and his friends had been treated unjustly by the Emperor. An Arian reaction followed. Athanasius was singled out as a special object of attack after he had been appointed to the office of Bishop of Alexandria in the year 338. The stormy controversies which followed are described and analysed in Gwatkin's indispensable work *Studies of Arianism*.

These years of what seemed to be perpetually renewed defeat—when Athanasius hoped for the best and experienced the worst from the despicable tyrant Constantius, and above all the years of his third exile (356–361), when he could communicate with the world only through the hands of trusted friends—were the years

in which he did most to make the Church feel the force of the faith in defence of which he had staked his life. Only after he had returned to Alexandria from his third compulsory exile, in the seventieth year of his age, was it possible for him to enjoy a few years of peace.

During the third exile of Athanasius Arianism seemed to have finally triumphed; but it was already beginning to disintegrate through internal dissensions. It is possible to discern three parties, moving in different directions.

(i) The 'Semi-Arians', whose leader was Basil, Bishop of Ancyra from 336 to 360. These men were not busy anti-Nicenes; they were moved by worthy motives and conscientious scruples. They distrusted the extreme Arianism of some contemporary theologians; and they began to see that they must move nearer to the position of Athanasius. Hence they adopted the term 'like in essential nature' (*homoi-ousios*) to express the relation of Jesus Christ to the Father. Athanasius took a sympathetic view of their declarations. 'We are discussing the question with them as with brothers', he observed. The Bishop of Ancyra, and those who believed as he did, used expressions in controversy with the extreme Arians which implied all that the terms distinctive of the Nicene declaration implied: the Father, Fount of Wisdom and Life, the Son, Radiance from eternal Light. 'But how', asked Athanasius, 'can this be more fittingly expressed than by "co-essential"? When we speak of him as co-essential with the Father, we are passing in thought beyond physical things; we mean that he is really from the Father, and co-essential in no merely corporeal way.' Athanasius desired to detach them from an alliance to which they were traditionally but not by real conviction committed. He pointed out that the rejection of the term 'co-essential' at the Council held at Antioch in A.D. 169 was irrelevant, resting as it did on the assumption that the term was to be understood 'in some corporeal way'. On the other hand, the 'Semi-Arians' damaged their cause by their denunciations and personal attacks on the 'Anomœans'.[2]

(ii) The 'Anomœans' were so called because the watchword of their Christology was 'unlike' (*anomoios*): Jesus was in every

respect *unlike* the Father. The movement began to attract general notice through Ætius, a deacon in Alexandria, who set himself to attack the 'Semi-Arians'. Eunomius, his pupil and secretary, proved to be abler and more learned, and is remembered as the historic leader of the 'Anomœans'. The importance of his propaganda is shown by the attention given to his writings by the Cappadocian Fathers. He pressed to the utmost extent the opposition between the uncreated and the created. The 'Son' was only the first-made of all 'creatures'. Eunomius wrote frankly and definitely, avoiding evasion and vagueness, and he made no attempt to secure party support for his opinions through court intrigues. In this, he compared favourably with the 'Homœans'.

(iii) The 'Homœans', whose leader was Acacius, Bishop of Cæsarea, came forward as advocates of 'comprehension' and 'compromise'. But it was compromise of the worst kind, resting not on unity of principle but on vagueness of terms. The watchword of their Christology was the word 'like', a radically ambiguous term, which, emphasised by itself, covers all kinds and all degrees of 'likeness'. The leaders of this movement were a party of experienced court intriguers, and the 'Semi-Arians' were manœuvred into defeat. The Emperor Constantius was determined to force the Homœan compromise on the East and West, and by every means short of physical violence he secured the signatures of representatives from both sides to what has come to be called the 'Dated Creed' of Sirmium, drawn up under his supervision. This, with a few verbal changes, was adopted at a Council (dominated by 'Homœan' bishops) held at Constantinople early in the year A.D. 360. This appeared to be a complete and final victory for 'Homœan' Arianism.

The appearance of victory was an appearance only. It is evident historically that Arianism was disintegrating into conflicting parties and into doctrinal confusion. But for the peace of the Church it was needful that the Emperors should be unanimous; and this did not occur until Theodosius became ruler in the East when Gratian was ruling in the West. Both these men were supporters of the original Nicene declaration; and at a Council held in Constantinople in 381 the original Nicene doctrine was definitely reaffirmed. This was eight years after the death of Athanasius.[3]

Even apart from its importance in the history of Christianity, the position taken by Athanasius is of great significance philosophically and theologically. The Arians treated the two orders of existence, the merely created and the absolutely uncreated, as *together exhaustive of all being*. Athanasius believed that this was to miss the essence of Christianity. Christianity introduced a new idea, the idea and ideal of Sonship to God. He, of course, well knew the importance of this idea in the Old Testament, and the emphasis placed upon it by the earlier Fathers; but in his conviction, it became the *first principle* of the Christian religion, historically realised only in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. Thus, in reference to the words 'I and my Father are One', Athanasius affirms that they are One, not as one Being twice named, as if the same Being were at one time Father and at another time Son (according to the error of Sabellius); 'they are One, because their nature is One; and they are two, because the Father is Father and the Son is Son, not as a Being external to the Father, but as sharing His characteristic nature' (from the *Third Oration against the Arians*, chapter XIII. iv). And again, in the *Fourth Oration*, the writer affirms that 'the Son is one with the Father because he is from the Father: the inseparable union consists not in two things being the same, as this *is* that, but through the Son being in the Father and the Father in the Son'. The writer evidently believed that this statement, rightly understood, excludes 'Sabellianism' in affirming, not that 'I am the Father', but that 'I am the Son of God', and that it excludes Arianism in affirming that 'I and the Father are one'. (The reference here is evidently to the words which follow the famous text in the Fourth Gospel, x. 30 compared with x. 36.)

We see therefore the essence of the conviction for which Athanasius and his friends contended. There are three possibilities: (i) The Father and the Son are two names for the same Being: this was the error of Sabellianism—there is no distinct existence for the Son of God. (ii) The Father and the Son are

two entirely separate Beings: this is the logical issue of Arianism, and is equivalent to polytheism. (iii) The Father and the Son are co-essential: this is unity realised through difference. It is clear, from the statements of Athanasius and other Fathers, that they were greatly concerned to avoid either of two opposite extremes: on the one side, that there is no difference between God and Christ—the Incarnation was God embodied; and on the other side, that between God and Christ, there is all the difference between the absolutely uncreated and the 'creature'. This is not the place or the occasion to raise the question, how far the traditional Christology of the Church has succeeded in avoiding both these extremes.

Athanasius was aware that even the idea of 'sonship' in reference to Deity is an ideal symbol, an 'image' illustrative of a relation too fundamental for adequate formulation in human terms. Every such 'image' is inadequate in one or other of its aspects.[4] Since God contains in Himself all perfection, He contains the perfection of every vital relationship among created beings. Some aspect of the perfect and eternal divine generation is reflected as it were, in an immeasurably reduced form, in each natural generation. In human sonship three things are present: bodily form and feeling, priority of the parent in time, and community of nature. In this third factor the meaning of divine Sonship is reflected. The relation of priority in time, involved in human parenthood, applies to Deity as little as bodily form and feeling. In the essential reference, unity, and community of nature, the illustration from human fatherhood is best; but in reference to the eternal co-existence of the Father and the Son Athanasius uses the metaphor found often in the early Christian thinkers—eternal radiance generated from eternal Light.

The ancient metaphor of the 'Word' (*Logos*) is likewise only a symbol. If we knew Christ only as 'Word' we might think of him only as an impersonal quality; but when we know him as 'Son of God' we know that he is the *living* Word. The value of the illustration is to indicate that the Father does not lose in the generation of the Son, but completes His Deity therein, just as human reason does not lose but actually gains when it finds

adequate expression in rational utterance. In human experience the ideas which find rational expression themselves become more clear and distinct. All finite spiritual beings increase only by self-giving. And since Deity is not the finite but the perfect and complete, in Deity there is the eternal completion of the Being of the Father in the Son.

When these religious principles are applied to human nature and human life, as Athanasius knew it in the contemporary world, the fact, evident before all else, is that *men need salvation*. What do they need to be saved from? This leads to his interpretation of the narratives of Creation and the Fall, in the first three chapters of the Book of Genesis.[5] Creation 'out of nothing' means to Athanasius, as it does to the Fathers generally, out of nothing existing independently of God. He rejects the theory of independently existing 'matter', as implying an imperfect conception of God, as if He were an artificer working (like a carpenter) with given material. Athanasius accepts the Fall-story as history, but not as literal history in every detail. In the case of mankind, to be created 'out of nothing' means that man's whole nature is essentially *mortal*: the bare act of creation did not confer the capacity of independent or even of continuous existence. Therefore God did not simply 'create' man but gave him 'a portion of the power of His own Word, that thus being made rational man might abide for ever in blessedness'. In Paradise man led a life free indeed from pain and sorrow, but not perfect, though it involved the promise of participation in heaven. Thus, the downward tendency, belonging to the nature of the merely *created* being, is counteracted by the upward tendency through participation in the divine Word. 'God made all things out of nothing through His own Word, that is, through our Lord Jesus Christ; and with special mercy on the race of mankind, which through the conditions of its origin could not continue [as merely created]. He gave them a further gift, not merely creating man as He had created all other creatures, but making man after His own Image, giving man a portion of the Power of His own Word.'[6] The divine *Logos*, pervading all creation, made man able to become a rational being, to recognise the Wisdom

immanent in the universe, and to rise to a knowledge of God as the Source of all being and of himself as made ' in the image of God '. Men were saved from what we may call the ' metaphysical penalty ' of the merely created being—the downward tendency to non-existence as human. But they were not, so far, saved from the consequences of misusing their own wills. Man began to choose the worse against the better; and in this rejection of the better, which is a rejection of the best, all the vice and evil of the soul consists.

To Athanasius, the Fall was the source of an increasing evil, spreading as a disease spreads. Men rejected the Word which moved within, and which had power to save their souls. They contrived evil for themselves, and fell back into their merely natural state, ending in disintegration and death. The world became a scene of all manner of evils: ' cities were at war with cities, and nations were rising up against nations, and the whole world was rent with civil strife and war '. The collective consequences of the Fall are declared by Athanasius in the two terms which we have quoted, ' disintegration ' and ' death ' (the Greek term usually rendered ' corruption '. By ' death ', as a result of the Fall, he does not mean merely bodily death. The word is almost certainly used to signify that condition into which the soul passes through persistent rejection of what is good, a condition from which in the end the distinctive ethical and spiritual qualities of humanity are absent, a life which has in effect ceased to be human. It has been said that a ' personification ' of *death* takes the place of the ' devil ' in the Athanasian view of the Atonement.

What, then, is to be the fate of man? ' It is monstrous ', he declares, ' to suppose that creatures once made rational and sharing in the life of the divine Word, should turn again to the downward path which leads to disintegration and death, whether by their own self-will or by the deceitfulness of evil spirits. . . . Otherwise what is the use of man having been made originally in God's Image? It had been better for him to have been made simply like a brute animal, to live the life of the brutes. . . . God made man for Himself, for a destiny not other than divine.' In a striking passage in

the *De Incarnatione* he develops the metaphor of a picture overlaid with dirt: the Image of God still existed in human nature, though effaced by sin: ' When a likeness painted on a panel has been effaced by stains, . . . he whose likeness it is must come again for the portrait to be renewed on the same wood: for the sake of the portrait the mere wood on which it was painted is not thrown away.' [7] So the Son of God came to our humanity, to renew what was formerly made in his likeness: ' Who, then, was needed but the Word and Son of God, . . . who gave movement to all things in creation and by them made known the Father? Even he by his own ordering of all things was teaching men concerning the Father—he it was who could renew this same teaching as before.' How, then, could this have been done? ' Some may say, by the same means as before, . . . for him to show forth the truth about the Father once more by means of the works of creation. But this was no longer a sure means, for men missed seeing this before, and turned their eyes no longer upward but downward. . . . Therefore he came to dwell among us as a man, taking to himself a body like other bodies, so that they who did not know him from his ruling and ordering of all things might learn, from what he said and did in the body, that he was indeed the Word, the Son of God, and that through him they might know the Father.'

The eternal Son of God, through his creative activity and abiding immanence, has an inherent relation to the human race. But the increasing dominance of evil necessitates his entering on a special relation to the world in which he had always been present —a uniquely intense and effective relation. Only thus can the disintegration, which is the inevitable result of wrong-doing, be counteracted. It is the inner life that is wrong, and the inner life needs to be renewed and healed. No external act can suffice: ' If the curse had been removed by an act of power, there would indeed have been a manifestation of the *power* of God's Word, but man would only have been the recipient from without of a Grace which had no real place within his nature ', that is, which was not an unfolding of his inner capacities. Salvation is impossible, except through a nature akin to our own; we can be

redeemed only by that with which we have something in common: salvation therefore is impossible *except through man*, and therefore the Son of God came to live a natural human life on earth. But it is equally true that salvation is impossible *except from God.* Salvation therefore is the work of the Son of God, who is divine by nature and yet became man. The death of Christ was a part, but only a part, of the work of redemption: Christ did the work, not as a substitute for man but as a *representative of man.* What this meant is clear, when we remember that for Athanasius, as for Irenæus, the solidarity of mankind is primary and fundamental. The Incarnation became the saving force because therein the divine Christ became partaker of a complete human experience, save that he was without sin, and in his Resurrection revealed his power over death.

Personal experience taught Athanasius that divine saving power is actually at work among men, through Jesus Christ, but only through Jesus Christ; and this salvation he believed to be the direct and immediate action of the Infinite and Eternal God. Thus, the spiritual and philosophical meanings of the Fatherhood are brought together into unity. In devoting all his strength to defence of the principle that true sonship implies kinship of nature, that the Son is co-essential with the Father, Athanasius was contending for the preservation of one open channel by which the redeeming power that is divine may pervade humanity. Arianism cut off all such channels, and left men with a subordinate created God as a commander-in-chief. Athanasius was therefore contending for a religious reality which is vital to Christianity. But the theological setting in which he places his faith in that Reality rested on his assured conviction that the divine dispensation, is set forth in a miraculously inspired literature whose statements, historical and doctrinal, are final.

For this reason, Athanasius devoted the main body of his principal work against the Arians (regarding the three 'Orations' as a single work) to an examination of the 'stock texts' of Arianism, including a very elaborate discussion of the famous statement: 'The Lord formed me (Wisdom) in the beginning of his way, the first of His works of old' (Prov. viii. 22, as given in

the margin of the Revised Version). There is no reasonable doubt that the Hebrew verb should be rendered 'formed' or 'created', as in the Septuagint, as a matter of exact translation; but Athanasius was convinced that this did not settle the question of its interpretation. We are not, he maintained, obliged to read into the word the meaning which the Arians read into it. Indeed, the difference between his understanding of the whole verse and the Arian understanding of it went far beyond questions of translation. It rested on an irreconcilable difference in the convictions with which they approached the words. Arius came to the text with the conviction of an absolutely irreducible antithesis between the idea of the created and the idea of the uncreated. Athanasius came to it with the conviction that there is no such absolutely irreducible antithesis. The work of the divine Word pervading creation means that even 'fallen' man is not a *mere* 'creature'.

At the Council of Nicæa the vital question had been over the relation of the divine Word to God the Father Almighty, the Creator of the heavens and the earth. When the Nicene declaration was coming to be generally accepted, that the relation was one of Sonship, and that the Word was the essentially divine Son of God who became incarnate in the man Jesus, it was inevitable that the question should arise: In what way was the Son of God, divine and eternal, related to the *human* nature?

One of the strongest supporters of Athanasius at Nicæa was Apollinarius, afterwards Bishop of Laodicea in Syria (A.D. 361–377). His contemporaries speak of the range of his learning and the extent of his literary work. Historians have pointed to the interesting fact, that even after his separation from the orthodox Fathers they speak of him with much more respect than they usually give to 'heretics'. To the end, he remained on terms of personal friendship with Athanasius, notwithstanding the difference in their respective convictions over the doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ. Epiphanius, a man with a talent for zealous abuse of all whom he conceived to have fallen into theological error, declared that he himself, as well as Athanasius and 'all Catholics', 'loved that illustrious and venerable old man'. Only fragments and short extracts from his authentic writings have survived.

Most of all to be regretted is the loss of the whole of his elaborate treatise dealing with the attack on Christianity made by the Neo-Platonist Porphyry, whose criticisms were more serious and more fundamental than those of Celsus, with which Origen had dealt in the previous generation.

Apollinarius was convinced that if Jesus Christ is a divine Saviour *of men*, then his divine and his human nature must be vitally related. But divine nature is beyond all possibility of change. (Here we must again emphasise the fact that when early Christian writers speak of the divine nature as without change, they are thinking of that kind of change which implies increase or decrease in range of being or perfection.) The divine nature excludes change as necessarily as it excludes sin. How, then, does it come into vital relation with human nature? What is the constitution of human nature? Apollinarius follows Paul in accepting the three-fold 'division', current in contemporary thought, according to which man's nature consisted of: (i) the visible and tangible body, as such, with all its internal organs; (ii) what is usually called the 'animal soul', including all that modern psychologists have classed as 'organic sensations' and all those instincts and impulses directly correlated with bodily life—the 'animal soul' being described as non-rational, in the sense that when we consider it by itself it lacks the controlling principles of reason and freedom; (iii) the rational and spiritual soul, the controlling principle which is distinctive of man, but which is subject to growth and change, and to the power of inherited evil. In this conception the factors (i) and (ii) are so intimately intermingled that they may be counted as one, in which case we have a two-fold division; and for the higher element the English word 'mind' is often used.

How, then, may we think of the *embodied* Christ as absolute-divine Saviour? Apollinarius found himself driven to the conclusion that the divine Word took the place of the rational and spiritual Mind in Jesus Christ. The Word took to himself a human body with all its inherent qualities and tendencies, and completely animated these human elements with the higher divine life. This meant, and Apollinarius intended it to mean, that the

divine Word, the *Logos*, took the place of Mind in the man Christ Jesus, so that in his Incarnation the human element was impersonal in the strict meaning of the term, consisting as it did of the body and the mental processes most closely correlated with the body.[8]

Apollinarius was convinced that a true conception of the Person of Jesus Christ implied a real unity of the divine and the human. He was at one with Athanasius in believing that the essential purpose of the Incarnation was to deliver men from sin (Fragment 74). Experience of the world around him had also convinced him that sinfulness had become such an inevitable part of human nature that only an absolutely unique divine act could deliver men from it (Fragments 51, 95, and 196): 'But those who say that there are two Minds in Jesus Christ, a divine and a human, are asserting what is impossible (are "trying to write with a finger on a stone"); for, if the divine Mind is always moved by an unchanging Will, it is impossible that in one and the same individual being two opposite wills should exist together, each realising its own purposes by a self-determining tendency. The divine Mind is always self-moved to One End, for it does not change; while the human mind, though self-moved, does not always move to the same end. The Changeless and the changing do not unite together to constitute one and the same individual being. Such a being would be in a state of inner conflict through the movements of mutually opposed wills' (Fragments 150, 151). The conclusion therefore is that he was not co-essential *with man* in the most distinctive element of human nature—the mind (in the wide sense of this word which we have already indicated). Apollinarius makes a striking use of Origen's illustration of the white-hot iron: 'If the union of heat and iron makes the iron look like fire and makes it do what fire does, and yet does not change its nature as iron, so the union of God with the human animate body offers to those who can touch it the energy of the divine nature' (Fragment 128).

The influence of Apollinarius, and indeed the possibility of an adequate understanding of his teaching, suffered from the activities of his followers, who endeavoured, with limited success, to build up a sect of 'Apollinarian' congregations. To them is

probably due the idea that he believed that the *body* of Jesus was ' eternal in the heavens '. Apart from this mere misunderstanding the orthodox Fathers were right in asserting that the Apollinarian Christology implied that God had *not become man*. Understood strictly, it is the idea of God, as present, so to speak, in a human ' shell ', which is not an Incarnation but a mere ' theophany '. The statement that ' two complete and perfect beings ' cannot become one depends on the meaning given to the cardinal terms ' perfect ' and ' one '. The statement can be understood to be a bad case of the ' All or None ' fallacy : the ' perfect ' being defined so as to exclude every kind of limitation, and unity (' one ') being defined so as to exclude every kind of diversity. It is scarcely possible that Apollinarius, a student of Aristotle, should have been guilty of this fallacy. On the other hand, the statement that ' two complete and perfect beings cannot become one ' may be understood as the admission of an undeniable fact. Complete and perfect Deity, Deity limited by nothing beyond Himself, whose activity therefore is beyond all limitations of time and space, cannot be completely manifested in a human nature which, though perfect, is embodied and therefore subject to limitations of time and space. To make this intelligible, some form of the *kenosis* doctrine is needed. Apollinarius had perceived this. The Incarnation involved the necessary absence of certain divine attributes, but not ' a limitation of the divine Word which left him nothing beyond corporeal existence ' (Fragment 138). ' Corporeal existence ' includes those mental states which in modern terminology are called ' organic sensations '.

The suggestion has been made that when Apollinarius was defending himself against the charge of ' mutilating ' the humanity of Jesus Christ, he intended to teach that the *Logos* was the ' archetype ', the divine original and originative ideal, of human nature. All human souls are in their measure akin to the divine Word; but when in Christ the *Logos* was actually present in a human body the highest form of humanity was realised. Therefore, in becoming the Incarnate Word, with the Word, the divine *Logos*, ' taking the place ' of the mind as in other men, Christ was *not less human but more human* for the difference. The implications

of this conception are important. The human element in the incarnate Christ does itself point to the divine as its ideal completion; and the Incarnation is the revelation, on the field of time, of what was latent in the divine Word from all eternity. The very nature of the divine Word was to become man in historical form; and in that sense ' the Word, who by his essential nature is the eternal archetype of humanity, bears within himself a movement towards a real Incarnation. Christ then is the archetype of humanity, . . . and in becoming like to us assumed *our* humanity in order to exalt us.' That Apollinarius held this doctrine, with all its implications, cannot be conclusively shown from the surviving portions of his works; but there is nothing in them to show that he never entertained it or never intended to teach it. It is naturally suggested by the great importance which he attached to the Pauline statement that Christ the ideal Man, was ' the Lord from Heaven '.[9]

The work of the Cappadocian Fathers was contemporary with the propaganda of the ' Apollinarians '. Arianism, even in the form advocated by Eunomius, was ceasing to be a dangerous factor in Christian thought. We shall endeavour to interpret the Christology of the Cappadocians in immediate connection with their doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the Trinity. In the present context we are concerned with the Christological controversies which distracted the eastern Church after the death of Apollinarius.

The character of these controversies was as much due to the temperament and tendencies of the men who carried them on as to the importance of the theological questions involved. The great religious thinkers of the eastern Church, Irenæus, Origen, Athanasius, the Cappadocian Fathers, had no successors to equal them. In the Greek-speaking provinces of the East, there were three great sees, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Antioch; but every town, at least in the more civilised parts, had its bishop, and the eastern prelates were possessed by a kind of agitation which made them suspicious, loquacious, and disastrously ready for controversy or for compromise. And beyond all this, ' racial hatreds, political animosities, ecclesiastical rivalries, and personal

jealousies, continued to exasperate theological differences; they went on, increasing in bitterness, until the seventh century, when the judgment came, and eastern Christianity was delivered into the hands of the Moslems '.[10]

During the first half of the fifth century, two men stand out as promoters of conflicting attempts to explain *how* God and Man ' became one ' in the Person of Jesus Christ. These are: Nestorius, Bishop of Constantinople from 428 to 431, and Eutyches, Archimandrate of a large monastery near Constantinople, who exercised a wide influence among the monks of Egypt and Asia Minor.

Nestorius was charged with dividing Christ into two personalities existing together in conjunctive union. Nestorius had come from Antioch to Constantinople; and Theodore, the most distinguished representative of the ' School of Antioch ', is usually asserted to have been the ' founder ' of ' Nestorianism '. But if what the orthodox Fathers attacked as ' Nestorianism ' was not the teaching of Nestorius himself, who was a personal friend of Theodore, then Theodore cannot have been responsible for ' Nestorianism '. He was an abler thinker and theologian than Nestorius, and is more interesting for modern thought; but the part taken by Nestorius in the controversies which ensued make him historically the more important figure, Theodore died in 428, the year in which Nestorius came to Constantinople.

Theodore was convinced that the Church, in condemning ' Apollinarianism ', had affirmed belief in the complete humanity of the incarnate Christ, and, as a Christian thinker, he was determined to hold the reality of the divine and the human in Christ, and to admit only such a union as was consistent with that reality. As a matter of personal religion, he believed that Christ must have been *a man*, whatever more he was: a man, having a real body, a rational soul, going through a real (not merely apparent) growth in spiritual qualities as well as in bodily stature, liable to temptation but *without sin*. Such was the Christ he found in the New Testament, and such was the Christ who could lay hold on human sympathies. The divine Word, having taken upon himself human nature, took upon himself all its consequences. God did

not impart to that human nature all wisdom in childhood, but granted it gradually. Hence there was a growth in knowledge, with the consequences that there were some things which the incarnate Christ did not know.

According to Theodore's reading of the Fall-story, the original condition of man was one of changefulness, arising from his capacity for self-determination, not indeed without divine guidance, but with a guidance which was not compulsion, and which did not exclude the real possibility of moral growth, and of temptation and surrender to evil, resulting in death. The Fall of man did not introduce death into the world: it converted the *liability* to death into a fact; and above all, it made sin, not a *nature*, but a dispositional factor in the human race. All mankind followed in the way of the first man; and death served to increase sin. It involved men in constant infirmities, and physical weakness strengthened the tendency to moral evil. But the divine foreknowledge covered all of this, and *the divine purpose was not defeated*. Man's destiny is for perfection; and the way to it was inaugurated by the Incarnation, but again, not without the co-operation of the wills of men.

For that reason, in the first place, the Law was given, to call forth the consciousness of good and evil, and to show to man his inability by his *own efforts alone* to attain to real righteousness. In our present state of changefulness and mortality we cannot conquer the forces of evil without divine aid. Therefore the Son of God, the divine Word, became incarnate, to raise mankind to that higher freedom where the attacks of moral and spiritual evil will not have any effect. To fulfil this mission, it was needful that the Son of God should pass through all the experiences of human life, including the experience of real choice between good and evil; but in his case without sin.

Theodore attached special importance to the words written in Luke ii. 52: ' The child increased in wisdom as in years, and in favour with God and with men.' He understood these words to mean that the growth in wisdom was increased by the favour which Jesus had with God: ' Men indeed saw him growing, but God not only saw it, God co-operated with him in all that he did.

He practised every virtue with greater ease and more perfectly than other men, because God had united him to Himself by granting to him that larger power needed for the vast labour of saving mankind. God guided all his efforts, inspired him to strive ever after supreme perfection, and at some moments relieved and lightened his labours of body and soul.'

In what way, then, was the divine Word united with the man Jesus? Theodore describes that union in different ways. Sometimes he uses the words ' connection ' or ' conjunction '. These words are not as vague, in his Greek, as they are to us : as we have seen, he uses them of the relation between the visible and the invisible in the one universe. But above all, he believed that the essential fact is indicated in Paul's repeated references to the divine ' indwelling ' (Rom. viii. 11, Col. iii. 16, and II Tim. i. 14). How, then, did the divine Word, the Son of God, *dwell in* Jesus Christ? God cannot, in His own essential nature, have dwelt in the man Jesus, for God cannot be limited or circumscribed. Neither can we say that God's indwelling in Jesus was an exertion of His almighty power, for the whole creation and the providential order of all things is due to His almighty power. It remains that we must think of God's indwelling as through His Love to man, that is, in those who are well-pleasing to Him, ' though not equally in all '. Thus God is said to ' dwell in ' the prophets and the apostles, or in righteous men. But in Christ there is something unique. In Christ the divine Word dwells ' as in a Son ' : ' By this indwelling, he joined entirely to himself the human personality which he had taken up, and made that human personality share in all the high qualities which he, the indwelling Son of God, had by nature : by this indwelling, he joined the human personality to himself, giving to the man a share of the divine power, subject to the difference in the characteristic qualities of the two natures.' The criticism passed on Theodore's Christology, by ancient and modern writers, is to the effect that he affirms a moral but not an essential unity. However, there is (to borrow Tertullian's expression) a *praescriptio* in the case of Deity : what is the relation between a ' moral ' and an ' essential ' unity? Can there be a *real* moral unity which is not essential?

Theodore's almost passionate concern to make clear the religious import of the real humanity of Jesus Christ—that there was in him more than a human *nature*, there was a human *person*—compelled him to recognise the development of the manhood of Jesus. When the child became capable of discerning between good and evil, he was quicker in moral judgment than others : ' He had an extraordinary impulse towards what was good, through that union with the divine Word with whom he was united from above.' In this connection Theodore interprets the Septuagint version of Isaiah vii. 15–16 (where the Greek is not clear) as meaning that before Jesus came to the age at which men are able to know what ought to be, he was able, even as a child, to distinguish good from evil because he possessed a capacity beyond that of others : ' for, if even among ourselves we sometimes meet with those who, though children in years, show such wisdom as to astonish those who know them, how much more must the Child of whom we speak have surpassed all others at the same period of life? ' Thus the divine indwelling in Jesus was unique. Theodore found a scriptural basis for this conviction in the records of the Baptism and the Transfiguration, as well as in those passages in the Gospels where Jesus speaks of a unique personal relation to ' my Father in Heaven '. In Jesus, for the first time, human nature offered up to God that which it was God's purpose that all the children of men should offer.[11]

Theodore's last years were troubled by controversy. When the Pelagian leaders found themselves deposed from their offices and driven from the West, they travelled to the East and sought sympathy with the chief living representative of the ' School of Antioch '. It was after their visit that Theodore wrote his book ' Against those who say that men sin by nature ' ; in other words, against the doctrine that sin is a nature which men possess, or, rather, which possesses men. In the last year of his life Theodore received a visit from Nestorius, when the latter was on his way from Antioch to Constantinople. Among other questions, Nestorius had been troubled by the use of the expression ' Mother of God ' in reference to the Virgin Mary (*theotokos*, of which term the accurate rendering is ' God-bearer '). Theodore was

willing to admit it, provided it was also admitted that as Mother of the incarnate Jesus Christ she was ' Man-bearer '.

Nestorius had been trained at Antioch, where Theodore had made his influence deeply felt. Nestorius was a Presbyter of some distinction—a popular and powerful preacher and head of a large monastery near the city. His importance for the history of Christian doctrine begins with his appointment to the office of Bishop of Constantinople in 428, though he held that position for only three years. His first proceedings indicated that he believed himself to have a heaven-sent mission to destroy ' heresy ' of every kind, and he succeeded, with the help of the Court, in making an end of the surviving ' Macedonians ', who denied the Deity of the Holy Spirit, and of the few Arians who remained in the city. Nevertheless, this ' scourge of heretics ' was soon to be condemned as a heretic himself.

The controversies which arose over the teaching of Nestorius (and which were embittered by his arbitrary action in Constantinople and by the unpopularity of the clergy whom he had brought with him from Antioch) had a two-fold origin. Nestorius rejected the term *theotokos*, and, as his opponents asserted, taught that there were two personalities in the incarnate Word.

The trouble began when one of the clergy who had accompanied Nestorius from Antioch delivered a sermon in which he denounced the use of the term *theotokos* in reference to the Virgin Mary, which, he insisted, implied the monstrous doctrine that God was born of a human being. As a matter of fact, this term had been in use for at least a century, and the crude interpretation of it had been explained away. But the sermon at once aroused doctrinal strife, which extended when Nestorius himself delivered a course of sermons elaborating and defending the grounds on which he repudiated the term *theotokos*. A number of his sermons were collected and circulated in Egypt; and Cyril of Alexandria entered into the controversy. His correspondence with Nestorius reveals a Christology which is not free from ambiguity and not entirely consistent. While affirming that the unity of the two natures, the divine and the human, in the incarnate Christ is utterly beyond our power to explain, he maintained that it was

a union so close and organic that we may with entire truth believe that in Christ the two natures became one Person, but without ' mixture ' or ' confusion '. The two natures became united from the first dawn of conscious life in the infant Jesus. Nestorius refused to accept this interpretation of the union; and the third letter which Cyril addressed to him was a definite theological challenge, concluding with twelve ' anathematisms ' against the doctrines attributed to Nestorius, who replied in turn with twelve counter ' anathematisms '.

Cyril then decided to send to Rome an account of what had occurred, together with copies of his own letters. This was in effect an appeal to the Pope. Leo, who ruled in Rome from A.D. 440 to 451, was one of the great Popes of the early ages. The powers claimed by the papacy in after generations were all implied in his policy and his ideals. We see him, for example, acting as head of the city government; checking Attila the Hun outside the walls of Rome; preaching powerfully on doctrinal questions; imposing his authority on prelates even in distant parts of the West. After receipt of Cyril's communications, a Synod was held in Rome at which Nestorius was condemned and Cyril was commissioned to execute the sentence. This meant that Cyril was given authority to depose Nestorius. In the meantime he had been promoting an intrigue in the Court at Constantinople in favour of his position; and Theodosius was moved to call a General Council to meet in Ephesus in the summer of 431. It was not a General Council in any proper sense of the word; and what actually occurred was not creditable to any of the parties concerned. The Bishop of Antioch and his party were late in arriving, and Cyril seized the opportunity of presiding over the assembly without them and securing the condemnation and deposition of Nestorius, who had refused to attend. It must be added that throughout the controversy Nestorius had been unconciliatory and provocative. When the party from Antioch arrived in Ephesus, they held a Synod of their own, and, with the approval of the Emperor, deposed Cyril. On further consideration, however, not unconnected with the clamour of the monks at Constantinople, Theodosius changed his mind, and approved the

decision of the Council in deposing Nestorius, who died in exile.

The confusion occasioned by the two sets of 'anathematisms' moved the Emperor to endeavour to effect a reconciliation between the two parties—Cyril and his supporters on the one side, and his strongest opponent, John, Bishop of Antioch, and his supporters on the other side. Under pressure from the Court, the Bishop of Antioch agreed to the condemnation of the doctrine attributed to Nestorius, and Cyril sent to the Bishop a letter which was evidently an 'eirenicon' and was accepted as such. This letter has an interest because it was not written on behalf of any Synod or Council. In it he states what was called the 'Formula of Reconciliation'. He strongly repudiates the opinions falsely attributed to him—of a 'conversion of the divine into the human' or of any kind of 'fusion' or 'mingling' of the two natures. The 'Formula of Reconciliation' had been brought to Cyril by Paul, Bishop of Emesa, together with other documents, and Cyril accepted it. It ran as follows: 'We confess our Lord Jesus Christ, only-begotten Son of God, perfect God, and perfect Man in his rational soul and body: in his Deity begotten of the Father before the ages, and in these last days the same [*sic.*: that is, the Son] in his Manhood born of Mary the Virgin for us and for our salvation: co-essential (*homo-ousios*) with the Father in his Deity, and co-essential with us in his Humanity, a union being realised of the two natures: through which we confess one Christ, one Son, one Lord: and through this unconfused union we confess the holy Virgin to be God-bearer, because the divine Word took flesh and lived as Man, and from this conception united with himself the temple which he took of her.'

Cyril expressly declares that this union is 'ineffable' (a mystery to the human intellect). The divine Word remained unchanged. He is for ever impassible, though in his all-wise administration of the mystery 'he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant', and he is seen (*sic*) to attribute to himself the sufferings which befell his flesh. Thus Cyril raised the essential question of the *kenosis*. In the Incarnation the divine Word 'emptied himself' and yet remained what he had been and for ever is. It is clear

that the primary meaning of the *kenosis*, to Cyril and to the leading Fathers of the eastern Church, was that the Incarnation is a *real* Incarnation. The divine Word took upon himself all that pertained to his humanity as embodied: birth, bodily growth, growth in knowledge, hunger, thirst, exhaustion, suffering, death. The incarnate Word took upon himself all these human experiences, without sin; and the same incarnate Word was the Creator of all things, working miracles and rising from the dead.

Cyril was well aware of the critical importance of the question, how are we to understand the ascription to the incarnate Christ of growth in wisdom and grace as a child, and (in mature manhood) of ignorance in reference to a vast cosmic event in which he was to be the central Figure? Cyril discusses it many times. And yet, on the most sympathetic interpretation, we must admit that he was never able to get beyond *appearance*: the *kenosis* is real in his bodily organism, but only apparent in his divine Nature. 'He said, I do not know, not as revealing ignorance but as revealing his humanity: since he allowed himself to become man, and to suffer in a human way all that is recorded of him, we ought not to be dismayed when, as man, he said that he was ignorant, because he bore the same body as we.' The incarnate Word, as divine, cannot be ignorant of anything, but he willed to appear ignorant, because this pertains to humanity. 'It would indeed', so Cyril proceeds, 'have been a marvellous thing if, being yet an infant, he had manifested his Wisdom in a way worthy of God; but he increased it gradually according to the age of his body, and thus gradually made it manifest to all: and so he may be truly said to have increased in Wisdom.' [12]

The question remains, however, what was the Christological doctrine actually held by Nestorius himself? New light was thrown on this question when, at the end of the nineteenth century, scholars realised the importance of a Syriac manuscript bearing the strange title of *The Bazaar of Heracleides*. It was found to be a Syriac translation of a work by Nestorius himself constituting his 'Apologia'. The title was probably chosen for reasons of safety. From this work it is clear that Nestorius based

his Christology, in its purely doctrinal sense, on a philosophical theory which is open to serious criticism on general grounds. He held that in every being, indeed in every existing thing, we must distinguish: (i) the *ousia*, the essential nature of the being; (ii) the *physis*, the sum of the qualities constituting the individuality of the being; and (iii) the *prosopon*, by which Nestorius meant the external manifestation of the being, by which it can be seen and judged. The *prosopon* is not to be identified with the *ousia* or with the *physis*; but it is not a mere 'appearance', and therefore we have used 'manifestation' as its English equivalent. How, then, are these distinctions to be applied to the Person of the incarnate Christ? Nestorius was convinced that 'Deity' and 'Humanity' are mutually exclusive terms; they must therefore be distinct in the incarnate Christ, if he is perfect God and perfect Man. The unity is in the identity of the *prosopon* of Deity with that of Humanity: 'The *prosopon* of the Deity is in the Manhood, and the *prosopon* of the Manhood is in the Deity.' From the philosophical point of view, to assume a combined manifestation in one human form of two beings whose natures are defined by mutually exclusive terms is a radically unsound theory.[13]

In opposition to Nestorius, and to Cyril, arose the movement known as 'Monophysitism', affirming the *one nature* of the incarnate Word. This technical name for the doctrine came into use after the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451). The doctrine was vigorously advocated by Eutyches, whose position gave him extensive influence among the eastern monasteries. He was a man of little theological learning or ability, and his sincerity became obstinacy. He was summoned before a Council under Flavian, then Bishop of Constantinople. Flavian was prepared to deal generously with him; but it was impossible to move him from his formula, 'One Nature, after the Incarnation'—all duality being excluded by this conception of 'unity'. He could give no intelligible account of the human body of Jesus, the embodiment of a Being in whom the divine and the human were not only united but were absolutely one. He laid himself open to the charge of 'docetism', and he was deposed and excommunicated.

Cyril had died in 444, and was succeeded as Bishop of Alexandria by Dioscorus, a man of violent temperament and intense ambition. His aim, in ecclesiastical affairs, was to secure the supremacy of Alexandria in the eastern Church. As contributory to this end, he vigorously defended Eutyches, and instigated the Emperor Theodosius to summon a Council to meet in Ephesus in 449. Here, with help of Roman soldiers who were present, and of a number of fanatical Egyptian monks whom he had brought with him, Dioscorus terrorised all who would have opposed him. Flavian died in consequence of the violence to which he had been subjected.

Shortly before these events, the Pope, Leo the Great (justly so called, for he was one of the few really great Popes in the early ages), had written to Flavian, sending an exposition of the doctrine of two natures in the incarnate Christ, the famous 'Tome of Leo', which Dioscorus refused to allow to be read at Ephesus. This so-called 'Council' created a dangerous division in the eastern Church, Egypt and Palestine, strengthened by the support of the Emperor, supported Dioscorus, while Rome, Asia (the Province so named), and Syria denounced the proceedings of the Council as a *latrocinium*, and protested against the acquittal of Eutyches and the treatment of Flavian. As the real state of the case became generally known, a revulsion of thought and feeling took place, which found expression after the death of Theodosius in July 450. His successor perceived that the centralisation of ecclesiastical authority in Alexandria would endanger the stability of the eastern empire; and with the co-operation of the Pope, a general Council was summoned, which met at Chalcedon, near Constantinople, in October 451, in order to put an end to the controversy. Here, after various documents had been read, including the letters of Cyril to Nestorius and to the Bishop of Antioch, the 'Tome of Leo' was carefully studied, and its doctrine finally approved.

The 'Tome of Leo' is a document of great importance, not only for the history of Christian doctrine but for the history of the Church, and to a certain extent for the history of Europe. It provides evidence that the powerful influence of Rome in the

West was extending to the East, although it was not in the East accepted as a source of dictatorial declarations.

After censuring Eutyches for theological ignorance and incompetence, and after affirming the divine nature of the incarnate Word in terms of the original Nicene declaration, Leo proceeds to expound the doctrine of two natures in one Person: 'The essential qualities of the two Natures continued and co-existed in one Person. . . . And to make good what was needed owing to our condition, an inviolable Nature was united to a nature capable of suffering: so that, as was needed for our salvation, there was one and the same Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, who was capable of death in the one nature and incapable of it in the other. . . . Thus, in the complete and perfect nature of real manhood, the very God was born, complete in His own [nature and attributes] and complete in ours: and by "ours" I mean those which the Creator formed in us at the beginning, and which His design was to restore—in order that the unchanging God, whose Will cannot be separated from His Goodness, might perfect His original design of mercy towards us by a more wonderful mystery [the Incarnation, *sacramento occultiore*].'

At this point the Pope proceeds to use the words of Paul: 'He assumed the form of a servant, without the stain of sin, increasing (*augens*) what was human, not taking away what was divine. That self-emptying, by which he who was invisible made himself visible, and the only Creator and Lord of all willed to become mortal, was a condescension of mercy, not a loss of power. . . . As the Nature (*forma*) of God did not take away from the nature of a servant, so the nature of a servant did take away from the Nature of God. . . . He who was incomprehensible willed to be comprehended. He who exists above all time, began to exist in time. The God who suffers not did not disdain to be a man who can suffer, nor the Immortal to submit to death. . . . There is nothing illusory about this union: for the lowliness of manhood and the loftiness of Deity have their separate places (*invicem sunt*). [This expression can only mean that the particular sayings and deeds of the incarnate Christ manifested at one time humanity, at another, Deity.] It does not belong to the same nature to say, I and the Father are One, and to say, the Father is greater than I. One of these truths without the other would not suffice for our salvation, for there is equal danger in believing that the Lord Jesus Christ was solely and only God [*tantummodo*, emphatic] and not man [*sine homine*] and in believing that he is solely and only man and not God [*sine Deo*].'[14]

What the Pope set forth is stated formally in the Christological declaration finally adopted at the Council of Chalcedon. 'We, following the holy Fathers, do with one consent teach all men to confess one and the same Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ, who is perfect in Deity and perfect in Manhood: truly God and at the same time truly Man, of rational soul and body: co-essential with the Father in his Deity, and co-essential with us in his Manhood: in all things like to us, except in sin: begotten from the Father before all ages through his Deity, and also in these last days born for us and for our salvation from the Virgin Mary, the God-bearer (*theotokos*), through his Manhood. We confess one and the same Christ, to be acknowledged in two natures without confusion, change, division or separation: the distinction between the two natures being in no respect annulled by the union, the essential characteristics of each nature being preserved and together concurring in one Person and one Substance (*hypostasis*) not separated or divided into two persons.'[15]

It must be admitted that the Christological declaration at Chalcedon was an advance. We say 'an advance' because in view of the growing accumulation of confusions against which it was directed, it is definite enough to be reasonably criticised or reasonably defended. It has been severely criticised, and by the theologians who are by no means hostile to the Nicene declaration. Its distinctive statements constitute a doctrinal formula in the most technical sense of the word 'doctrinal'. Its technical terms are negative, not positive. These terms have no spiritual significance. The unity which is asserted is inexpressible in spiritual terms. And while claiming for Jesus Christ a complete and perfect human nature, it implies definitely that his human nature was not personal. It is noteworthy that the 'Tome of

Leo ' recognises the need of a *kenosis* doctrine, though no attempt is made to explain it.

We now retrace our steps, back to the early years of the fifth century, and pass to the West, where the influence of Augustine was beginning to sway Christian thought. Augustine's labours at Hippo (A.D. 396–430) were contemporaneous with the rise of theological strife in the East from conflicting endeavours to explain the union of the divine and human in the Person of Jesus Christ, after Arianism had ceased to be a serious factor in Christian thought.

No passage from Augustine is more significant than the remarkable statement in the seventh Book of the *Confessions*, in which he makes clear what he found and what he did not find in Neo-Platonism. (We give the extracts from the Fourth Gospel and from the Epistle to the Philippians in the Latin words in which Augustine quotes them.)

' In the writings of the Platonists ', he says, ' I found, not indeed in the same words, but the same truth strengthened by many different arguments, that *in principio erat Verbum, et Verbum erat apud Deum, et Deus erat Verbum : hoc erat in principio apud Deum : omnia per ipsum facta sunt : . . . in eo vita est, et vita erat lux hominum : et lux in tenebris lucet, et tenebrae eam non comprehenderunt.* I read also that the soul of man, though it bears witness to that Light, is not itself that Light : that the Word, God Himself, is the true Light, which enlightens every man coming into this world, . . . and the world did not know Him. But that He came to His own, and His own would not receive Him, yet to all who did receive Him believing in His Name, He gave power to become Sons of God : this I did not find in those writings. Again, I found there that the Word . . . was not born of flesh and blood, nor of the will of men, but of God. But that the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us : this I did not find in those writings. I did indeed discover in them, though expressed in different words and in many ways, that the Son, being in the Form of the Father, *non rapinum arbitratus esse aequalis Deo, quia naturaliter id ipsum est.* But that *semet ipsum exinanivit, formam servi accipiens, in similitudinem hominum factus et habitu inventus ut homo, humiliavit se, factus*

obediens usque ad mortem, . . . propter quod Deus eum exaltavit a mortuis : this those writings did not contain. I read also that Thy only-begotten Son abides above all time, with Thee : that of His abundance all souls receive, that they may be made blessed : that by participation in the Eternal Wisdom they are renewed to become themselves truly wise. But that at last (*secundum tempus*) He died for the unrighteous : that Thou didst not spare Thy only Son, but didst deliver Him up for the sake of all : this is not in those writings.'

The root of Augustine's theological answer to the question, ' What think ye of Christ? ' is that in Christ the Incarnation was *unique*. An effective illustration is seen in a passage from his *De Agone Christiano* (*On the Christian Struggle*). He refers to the belief of those who say that ' the Eternal Wisdom of God took the man Jesus to Himself as the same Wisdom takes other men who are truly wise '. Augustine replies : ' The Divine Wisdom, the Word through whom all things are made, took the man Jesus to Himself in a way other than the way in which He takes the rest of the saints. It was in order that the Wisdom of God should visibly appear to men. . . . For it may truly be said of all wise and spiritual souls that they have in them the Divine Word ; but that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, can truly be said of our Lord Jesus Christ alone.' And when dwelling on the metaphor of Christ as ' The Way ', Augustine says : ' The Divine Christ (*Christus Deus*) is the home-land (*patria*) towards which we travel : the human Christ is the way by which we travel thither.'[16]

CHAPTER VI

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE TRINITY

THE doctrine of the Holy Spirit is vital to the conception of the Trinity in any sense usually considered orthodox. And even apart from its evident historic importance in distinctively Christian thought, we may maintain that belief in man's response to the actual working of the divine Spirit in the world is vital to any theism which avoids a dualistic antithesis of the divine and the earthly, and which leaves open the idea and ideal of the Spirit as the ultimate expression of the essential communion of man with God.[1]

Historically, the Church found two extreme opinions which must be avoided: an extension of Sabellianism with its triplicity of manifestations, and an extension of Arianism with its triad of individuals; and the avoidance of these two extremes involved an explanation of the relation between the eternal Son of God and the eternal Spirit.

Nevertheless, the explicit formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity, with systematic consideration of the theological problems involved, could hardly have been undertaken until the doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ had been carried at least as far as the Nicene declaration of A.D. 325. The way was opened in that declaration by the simple statement 'And [we believe] in the Holy Spirit'. Athanasius maintained that the Council of Nicæa, though not stating a doctrine of the Spirit, yet by adding these words intended to equalise the Holy Spirit as divine with the Father and the Son.[2] Here he certainly overstated his case. Modern students of the subject are generally agreed that the brief mention 'And in the Holy Spirit' indicated the undeveloped doctrine of the Spirit in the ante-Nicene period, as compared with the words of the Creed of Constantinople: 'And in the Holy Spirit, Lord and Life-giver, proceeding from the Father, who

with the Father and the Son is to be worshipped and glorified, who spoke through the Prophets.' This creed, wrongly described simply as 'Nicene'—though, apart from the doctrine of the Spirit it reaffirmed all the essentials of the original Nicene declaration—has been in universal use.

The identification of the divine *Logos* with the eternal Son of God, which began, as we have seen, when the *Logos* doctrine began to find a home in Christian thought, did not lead directly to the doctrine of the Trinity. Professor Bethune-Baker observes: 'In the New Testament that doctrine [of the Trinity] is not at all clear; and indeed its formula is impeded rather than helped by the identification of Christ, the Son of God, with the divine Wisdom or *Logos*. As long as that identification exists, we have a *duad* rather than a *triad*. The real doctrine of the Trinity only arose when some of the characteristics of the divine Wisdom or *Logos* were transferred from the incarnate Son and hypostasised as the Spirit of God. It was by the differentiation of Christ from the Wisdom of God that the doctrine of the Trinity was reached.'[3] The Scriptural sources of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit are rather wider than is suggested by this quotation. The scriptural sources of the doctrine are unmistakable, and even when brought together in the most summary way are extremely significant. We refer, of course, to the Greek Old Testament and to the New Testament *as the Fathers read them*.

The Hebrew word which we transliterate as *nephesh* is almost uniformly rendered *psyche* in the Greek Old Testament and in the New Testament, and 'soul' in the English versions. It reaches its highest religious significance in the Psalter, where it is used as a paraphrase for the personal pronoun, but in a special sense—sometimes as a consciousness of human limitations and failures—but more often as the expression of those higher factors in human nature which make possible man's appeal to God and communion with Him. The Hebrew term *ruach*, on the other hand, is almost uniformly rendered *pneuma* in the Greek and 'spirit' in the English versions. The higher ranges of meaning given to this word in the Greek Old Testament may be briefly summarised as follows. (i) The Spirit of God is creative (Genesis

i. 2; Psalm civ. 30); the Spirit of God is omnipresent (Psalm cxxxix. 7); by His Spirit the heavens are beautiful (Job xxvi. 13); His Spirit 'has made me and given me life and understanding' (Job xxxii. 8 and xxxiii. 4). (ii) His Spirit moves in the hearts and minds of individual Israelites (Ezekiel xxxvi. 27; Psalm li. 12 and cxliii. 10); the Spirit moves the prophet to preach good tidings (Isaiah lxi. 1); the Spirit of God moves in the Messiah and in the Servant of God (Isaiah xi. 1 and 2, and xlii. 1). (iii) The Spirit guides the people as a whole (Isaiah lxiii. 10; Nehemiah ix. 20), above all in the ideal future (Isaiah xxxii. 15 and xliv. 3; Ezekiel xi. 19; Joel ii. 28).

None of the great reforming prophets of the eighth century (and after) belonged to the earlier groups of 'prophets' (many of them bands of excited devotees) to whom reference is sometimes made. Amos disowned them. Micah and Hosea denounced them. In Deuteronomy xiii and Jeremiah xiii they are treated as deceivers, or as men self-deceived, claiming to have been given revelations through dreams; and in Deuteronomy other characteristics are named: 'There shall not be found among you . . . any one who uses divination, one who practises augury, or a sorcerer, . . . or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a necromancer' (xviii. 10 and 11).

The range of meaning given to the term *pneuma* in the New Testament extends far beyond all that is implied in the sacred books of the Jews. It is suggested in the following references: The word could be used of the wind in motion, and, in the same verse, of the Holy Spirit (John iii. 6 and 8). It could be used of spirits of evil, or, without reference to evil, of a bodiless spirit, an apparition (Luke xxiv. 27). In reference to mankind, it is the source of the inner disposition and tendency of the mind (Luke ix. 55); as human, it may be 'willing' as contrasted with the 'weakness' of the body (Matt. xxvi. 41). Then, as the range of meaning rises, it is the Holy Spirit of God (I Thess. iv. 8) and a supremely divine gift to men: 'You have received no slavish spirit that would make you fall back into fear; you have received the spirit of sonship: and when we say, Father, Father, it is this Spirit bearing witness with our own spirit that we are children of

God' (Rom. viii. 15). The Spirit descended in a unique way on Jesus (Matt. iii. 16 and John i. 33); and his teaching, his words of instruction and warning, were 'through the Holy Spirit' (Acts i. 2).

In Paul's hymn to Love, the word 'Spirit' is not used; but the meaning cannot be mistaken: 'Make Love your aim, and then set your heart on spiritual gifts' (I Cor. xiv. 1). The spiritual gifts here spoken of are different ways in which the Spirit is active in human life. The decisive passages are in I Cor. xii. 4–11 and 28–30, and Rom. xii. 6–8. All the gifts and endowments which Paul names here are gifts of the same Spirit and gifts of God. They are endowments of varied character, extending over a wide range of human life; giving to men mental capacities of the highest order and power to acts of heroism; and among them he does not hesitate to name 'helps in administration' and acts of 'service' (*diakonia*). And yet it is the same Spirit that can raise human life to such a height that even the body may become a 'Temple of God'. We cannot look to Paul for a 'theology of the Holy Spirit' or for any 'explanation' of how the Spirit of God is related to the eternal Christ. His passionate faith springs from a two-fold source: 'For us, there is one God the Father, from whom all things come, and for whom we exist: and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom all things exist, and by whom we exist' (I Cor. viii. 6; Moffatt's rendering 'for whom we exist' seems preferable to the ambiguous 'unto whom' of the R.V.).

In the Fourth Gospel there is no reference to any 'extraordinary' gifts like those the limitations of which Paul discusses so carefully in the fourteenth chapter of First Corinthians. In the Fourth Gospel the Spirit is the indwelling *paracletos* (no single English word can be given as an equivalent: it suggests or implies protection, guidance, and teaching). The 'eschatological' passages in the first three Gospels are replaced—or perhaps we may say interpreted—by a sublime doctrine of the spiritual return of Christ. The Pauline ideal of the Spirit as the divine source of all worthy human gifts is concentrated into an ideal of the Spirit as the giver of Life—Life as moral fellowship with God. And above all, the Pauline ideal of the Spirit as the giver of new saving

knowledge becomes the centre of the Johannine theology. The Spirit of Truth (the words are used six times) is a divine essence actually communicated from God to man, and 'Truth' is the reality of the divine Life revealed historically in Christ. For us men, the 'Spirit of Truth' is the spirit of Christ. But the *paracletos*, the divine guide, is not only identical with the spiritual presence of Christ: the Spirit is another *paracletos* sent by Christ to interpret and extend the revelation already given. And at the supreme height and depth of reality, before all else, stands the immortal word: 'God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.'

The group of writers known as the 'Apostolic Fathers' have many references to the Spirit, but they do not carry us beyond the words of Paul. Clement of Rome, in particular, finds it necessary to appeal to him as the source of a guidance bearing apostolic authority. There is no doctrine of the Trinity, in any later meaning of that doctrine; but the three Names are freely used as equally divine. When we turn to the Apologists of the second century, there are only a few references to the Spirit as a divine agency different from the divine Word (the *Logos*). Theophilus of Antioch appears to be the first to use the *term* Trinity (*Trias*), but the Trinity which he contemplates is of 'God and His Word and His Wisdom'. Athenagoras is rather more definite: the Spirit is 'the bond of union between the Father and the Son'. But it seems clear that the Apologists are so pre-occupied with the doctrine of the divine *Logos* and its value for their interpretation of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ, that their ideas, so far as they are at all systematic, reveal little or no endeavour to expound a theology of the Holy Spirit. Among their numerous differences in detail, there are certain convictions common to them all, including Justin Martyr. God is the transcendent Source of all Being: and the whole divine activity—creation, self-revelation, providence—is mediated by the *Logos*, coming forth from God for the purpose of creation, permeating the world, sporadically illuminating philosophers and prophets, and finally becoming incarnate in Jesus Christ. The result is, that when the Spirit is named *as distinct from the Son*, the nature and work of the Spirit

are spoken of in terms similar to those used in reference to the *Logos*.

In Irenæus, though we find expressions which, it is true, could afterwards be explained as 'anticipations' of the later doctrine of the Trinity, there is no evidence that in his own mind he contemplated that doctrine in its developed form. In an important passage—one of those which indicate an advanced stage in the formation of 'The Rule of Faith'—Irenæus emphasises belief in 'One God the Father, Maker of the heavens and the earth and all that is in them: in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who was made flesh for our salvation: and in the Holy Spirit, who by the prophets foretold the birth, sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ, and his return in glory to judge the righteous and the wicked' (*Adversus Haereses*, I. x. 1). He did not confine the activity of the Spirit to the past. In his popular work *Exposition of the Apostolic Preaching*, he says: 'The Holy Spirit, through whom the prophets spoke, and the fathers learnt the things of God, and the faithful were led into the paths of righteousness, was manifested in a new way, reconciling men to God.' The 'new way' is the incarnation of Christ; but the question remains, how is the Holy Spirit of God related to Christ the eternal Son of God. From the point of view of practical religion, however, there is no doubt: 'By degrees men advance, first by the Spirit ascending to the Son, and then by the Son to the Father.' As we have seen, Irenæus deprecates speculation about the internal relations of the Being of God.[4]

We now turn to Alexandria. The two foundations of Origen's philosophical theism are: (i) the transcendent unity of the divine Nature, and (ii) the eternity of creation as an essential divine activity.

The notion that there ever was a time when the divine Nature was inactive is irreconcilable with the very idea of Deity. There must always have been *objects* of the divine Wisdom and Goodness. Thus there never was a time when God was not a Creator. He did not begin to create after spending ages in idleness. There are difficulties, owing to the limitations of our human minds: 'but one truth rises before us: that the Being of God the Father is

eternal, and eternally finds expression in His only-begotten Son, who is also called the Wisdom of God and the Word of God; and through that Wisdom and Word the divine creative power went forth'. This is the first principle of Origen's theology, and from this point of view he formulates a trinitarian conception of Deity. Origen never doubted that a doctrine of the Holy Spirit is vital to Christian theism; and the scriptural warrant for that doctrine, as we have seen, is evident and is extensive. Origen was well aware of the importance of the question which then arises: the distinction of the functions or activities of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.[5]

There can be no separation of being and no temporal succession in the field of work of the only-begotten Son and the Holy Spirit. Origen's fundamental conviction about the place of the Spirit in the Trinity is seen in many passages in his commentary on the Fourth Gospel. For example: after referring to alternative opinions, Origen affirms: 'We are justified in believing that there are three *hypostases*—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and that it is truer and more reverent to believe that the Spirit is the most exalted of all beings created by God the Father through Christ the Word. I think that this is the reason why the Spirit is not spoken of as the Son of God. . . . The Spirit needs the Son of God for his existence, enabling him not only to exist but to be wise and just and all that the Spirit has through participation in the nature of Christ. And I believe that the Spirit grants, to all who by participation in him [in the Spirit] are accounted saints, the substance of the gifts which come from God: so that the substance of these gifts becomes a power from God, is ministered to men by Christ, and enters into men by the Spirit.'[6] Thus, in Origen's version of the doctrine of the Trinity, the Son is from the Father alone, and the Spirit is from the Father through the Son, supreme above all created beings, but included among them. The apparent contradiction, 'from the Father' and yet created by the Son, arises because, except in relation to the self-existent Deity, Origen simply never entertained the 'All or None' antithesis of the 'created' and the 'uncreated'. The divine *creative Will* is from the divine *essence*, otherwise it would not be a *divine Will*. It is noteworthy that with special reference to the doctrine of the Trinity, Origen's later critics (Jerome in particular) ought at least to have attempted a better interpretation than the one over which they attacked Origen. But they left the real problem unsolved, and were content with a formula.

As the years of the third century moved on, it became evident to Christian thinkers in the East that further interpretation of Christian Theism required the use of some of the terms current in the constructive thinking of the Greek philosophical schools. Justin, as we have seen, had attempted to do this, but, like the second-century Apologists in general, he had not avoided the assumption of a 'second God'. Two of the Greek terms in particular came to be of fundamental theological importance: we may transliterate them as *ousia* and *hypostasis*. The philosophical usage of the term *ousia* is due to Aristotle, in his philosophical tract known as *The Categories*. Common sense recognises the distinction between what a thing *essentially is* and what it, so to speak, 'happens' to be. Abstractly regarded, *ousia* means 'essence'; more concretely regarded, the 'essence' of a thing consists of those characteristics which, being individualised in it, make the thing what it 'really is'. But Aristotle distinguished a 'primary' and a 'secondary' application of the idea of 'essence': the former referring to any individual in which the essence is, as it were, *embodied*; the latter to the class to which the individual belongs because with all the other members of the class it has the essential characteristics named. Then the further question inevitably arises: whether the class *is nothing more* than a set of individuals thought of together because they happen to be alike in some important characteristics, or whether they are properly classed together because their essential qualities actually depend on a real principle uniting them. Whatever ambiguities may have arisen over the term *ousia*, the ambiguities of the term *hypostasis* were much more extensive. Reference to the last edition of 'Liddell and Scott' will show the variety of meanings (having little logical connection with one another) which had come to be attached to it. From the period of Greek Stoicism, it was coming into use as a philosophical term, first as referring to the actual

existence of a thing with a ' constitution ' of its own, and then to what *underlies* the object perceived by our senses; in this latter sense, *hypostasis* became indistinguishable from *ousia*. But it was evident that a distinction must be made between *ousia* as a ' universal ' which was common to the individuals of a class and *hypostasis* as that which makes an individual what he is, or constitutes his individual existence. It was evident also that care was required in the application of these distinctions to the conception of a Trinity, if the assumption of ' three Gods ' was to be avoided.

The Greek thinkers treated the distinction of the three Names from a point of view different from that of the West as represented by Augustine. They started with what we have ventured to describe as the philosophical conception of the divine Fatherhood (see above, page 73). God the Father is the Source of all existence, realising in Himself complete and perfect Being, and therefore dependent on nothing beyond Himself. The Son is Son because he is ' begotten ' from the Father: being ' begotten ' is the characteristic of the Son, who is co-essential (*homo-ousios*) with the Father. The characteristic of the Holy Spirit is to be ' sent forth ' from the Father. Being ' sent forth ' is the exact meaning of the Greek term, awkwardly rendered in English by ' procession '. Thus, both the Son and the Spirit derive their being from the Father, and the derivation is eternal. The typical Greek conclusion was that the Son is immediately from the Father, and the Spirit mediately from the Father through the Son.

In certain passages Athanasius seems to identify the meaning of *hypostasis* with that of *ousia*. But his final conclusion is evident: ' When we read *I am he who is* [the LXX version of Exodus iii. 14] we understand nothing else than the perfect and complete essence (*ousia*) of Him who is, and that His essence is to be almighty God and Father '; and the Son, though ' begotten ' is none the less co-essential with the Father.[7] Therefore the question of how the Holy Spirit is related to the Father and to the Son arises directly from the idea and ideal of divine Sonship; and the answer given by Athanasius is what we have called the ' typical Greek conclusion '. All our knowledge of the Spirit is derived from the Son. The Spirit is sent and given by the Son as his own, and in this

sense is equal to the Son; but none the less the work of the Spirit is the gift of God through the Son.

It has been suggested that the struggle carried on by Athanasius for the faith that the Son is co-essential with the Father had the result that in his mind the whole question of the work of the Spirit was a secondary question, especially as in his early work *De Incarnatione Verbi Dei* there is no reference to any special activity of the Spirit. Even the miraculous birth of Jesus is attributed to the divine *Logos* (*De Incarnatione*, VIII. ix). But to assume that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was for Athanasius a kind of ' afterthought ' would be a serious misunderstanding. His letters to Serapion, Bishop of Thmuis in the Delta, make this clear.[8] In these letters the ' heresy ' in view is that associated with the name of Macedonius, who died about A.D. 360 after he had been Bishop of Constantinople, where his record was a disgraceful one. The theory said to have originated with Macedonius was adopted by some who, while adhering to the Nicene declaration about the Person of Christ, affirmed that the Spirit was a created being, differing from the angels only in ' degree '. Some of these men were called ' tropici ', or, as we might say, ' metaphoricals ', because they interpreted as ' tropes ' or metaphors all those passages which could not be reconciled with the idea that the Spirit was a created being. The solution affirmed by Athanasius is simply based on the principle that the Spirit is *from* the Father *through* the Son. The salvation, the deliverance from ' death ', which was the purpose of the Incarnation, is essentially related to the work of the Spirit: ' It is through the Spirit that we are said to become partakers of God, because through the Son the Spirit is given to the disciples and to all who believe in the Son of God ' (Letter I, sections 23, 24, and Letter III, section 1).

The monotheist motive of the *homo-ousion*, that there is no ' created ' Son in the divine nature, seemed to Athanasius to exclude equally the idea of a ' created ' Spirit. The Trinity, if it is a fact in the divine nature, is an eternal fact: the change of an original duality into a Trinity by the addition of a created nature is an idea not to be entertained by Christians. As the Trinity ever was, so it is now. Such statements, and others could be quoted,

show that Athanasius had not arrived at any definite conception of the internal relations between the three *hypostases*. He is content to affirm their unity and equal Deity; and he deprecates speculations about the inner nature of Deity. On the other hand, the functions which he assigns to the Spirit are those of the Son over again. The 'blasphemy against the Holy Spirit' is against the divine nature of the Son (Letter IV, sections 19, 20). It is evident that in the time of Athanasius the doctrine of the Spirit had not been studied with the thoroughness which we find afterwards in the Cappadocian Fathers and in Augustine. Even in the latter part of the fourth century, Gregory of Nazianzus dwelt on the unsettled condition of belief on this question. In the 'Oration' numbered XXXI (the fifth of the so-called 'Theological Orations') he observes that 'some men believe the Holy Spirit to be a divine Energy, others a created being; while others, from reverence for Scripture, are uncertain what to call the Spirit, because Scripture makes no definite statement about it'.

The three Cappadocian Fathers start from the declaration of Nicæa, accepting the term *homo-ousios* in its original sense, and they follow Athanasius in his ideal view of the purpose of the Incarnation—to reveal to man the divine Image in Christ and to restore the divine Image in man.[9] But they were confronted by the extreme Arianism of Eunomius, and by the need of settling Greek terminology. Their discussions involve, more or less implicitly, the logical question of the nature of those relations which express real connections between facts, and which therefore are as real as the facts or beings related. This is seen in the way in which Basil of Cæsarea opens his work on the Holy Spirit. He urges that the examination of *terms* used in theology is of the first importance: 'To examine even small words is not a futile task, even if the questions raised may seem futile to some persons. . . . As it is with the arts and crafts, so it is with true religion, which grows slowly by small increments: and he who despises the first elements will never attain to fullness of wisdom.' This is introductory to a discussion of the Greek prepositions used in stating the trinitarian conception of Deity. Basil gives special attention to those used in such statements as by Paul: 'One God the Father, *from* whom are all things, . . . and one Lord Jesus Christ *through* whom are all things.' He concludes that the different prepositions indicate not differences of nature but differences in mutual relation and in operation.[10]

Basil perceived the importance of distinguishing between *ousia* and *hypostasis*. The difference is, first, between the individual, or the 'particular', and the 'general'. So far, the distinction in language is between a general name or class-name and an individual name; and if applied to the interpretation of the Trinity in that sense, it leads at once to the assumption of three Gods. Such possibilities are excluded, when Basil proceeds to explain his meaning by reference to human nature: 'Each of us shares in a *common nature*, which is his *ousia*, while through his own qualities he is this or that individual.' It is evident that if this is illustrative of the divine Trinity, it implies a rejection of the theory that a class simply is nothing but a set of individuals which happen to resemble one another in important respects. It implies that when a classification is based on essential qualities of the individuals concerned, these essential qualities are, so to speak, the embodiment of a real principle on which they depend. In its theological reference, Basil's distinction means that the *ousia* is the *common divine nature* of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and the *hypostasis* refers to the special characteristics of each. The question of these 'special characteristics' is vital for the trinitarian interpretation of theism.

God the Father, the Source of all being, creates through the Son and perfects through the Spirit. This is the divine order, as it were, the 'downward' order. For us, finite created beings, it is the 'upward' order: 'The way to the knowledge of God is from one Spirit through one Son to one Father.' Basil attaches great importance to the words of Paul: 'No man can say "Jesus is Lord" but in the Holy Spirit.' Beyond this, Basil can only say that the trinitarian formula is at best 'a symbol and a reflection of the truth, not the truth itself'.[11]

In the Cappadocian Fathers we can trace the results of the point of view from which Greek orthodox theologians interpreted the doctrine of the Trinity. Their conviction of the absolute unity of

God is unwavering; and their endeavour is to explain—so far as our human limitations allow—in what way the Three are One, with the Father as the Source from whom the Son is ' begotten ' and the Spirit ' proceeds '. Their theology is seen in its most developed form in the writings of Gregory of Nyssa (Basil's brother); and in what follows we shall be referring specially to Gregory.

The purpose of the Incarnation was to arrest the process of disintegration which was the result of sin proceeding from the Fall. The Incarnation was no anti-natural intervention in an otherwise abandoned world. The immanence of God in the world shows that the ' plan of redemption ' was from the beginning involved in the Wisdom and Goodness of God. ' In things which concern our life here, there are some without which the end could not be realised, though the beginning as contrasted with the end seems insignificant: as when we imagine the contrast between the grown man and his first origin in the act of physical generation, without which nevertheless mature growth could never have taken place.' In like manner, ' that which happens in the great resurrection, incomparably vaster though it be, has its beginnings and its causes here. . . . In saying this, I am not thinking only of the remoulding and refashioning of our composite bodies. . . . I am thinking of the restoration to a blessed and divine condition, free from all shame and sorrow. . . . Not all who are granted a return to existence at the resurrection will return to the same kind of life. . . . For those whose vices have become inveterate must enter into a condition fit for their state, as a furnace is fitted for metal which is to be purified of dross: so that, their vices being purged away, after long ages their natures may be restored pure again to God.' [12]

No merely external act of redemption could have sufficed: man must be *touched* in order to be saved. Moreover, if Christ had not a complete human soul, the soul of man would not have been redeemed. Hence Gregory makes the doctrine attributed to Apollinarius a special object of criticism. Jesus Christ had a human will; he grew or increased in knowledge; he lacked knowledge of the future; and he submitted (though without

yielding) to temptation. As we have seen, Gregory held a view of the *kenosis* which relieved some of the difficulties of belief in two complete natures in the incarnate Christ. But ' it is entirely in keeping with his divinity that he who thus entered into our nature should accept that nature in all its qualities; . . . for since the whole of human nature had been defiled, a purifying power was needed to penetrate the whole; . . . and one thing above all is worthy of the majesty of God—to do good to those who need it '. He did not exclude our nature from communion with Himself, ' fallen though that nature is as the result of sin '.

Therefore the Deity of Christ is central in the doctrine of the Trinity. But the distinct existence of the Holy Spirit is not questioned. It is no mere after-thought. In his two tracts *De Communibus Notionibus* and *Quod non sint Tres Dei* (*On general conceptions or logical universals* and *That there are not Three Gods*) Gregory faces the question which had been opened up by his brother of Cæsarea, and he explores it further. ' If Peter, James, and John are *three men*, why not admit three Gods? ' His fundamental reply is that the Name ' God ' *when used in its philosophical reference* connotes essence (*ousia*), not distinct individuality. In reference to Deity, and to mankind, it is reasonable to maintain the unity of the *ousia* in the individuals. Individual men are distinguished by *variable* qualities, relations, circumstances; but the distinctions between the divine *hypostases* (or ' Persons ', to use the conventional language of western theology) express relations within the divine nature which are constant and eternal.

The differences between individual men have led to the term *ousia* being used in the plural; but, strictly speaking, the *ousia* is the same in all individuals: as when—to use an entirely modern illustration—in biological classifications the term *homo sapiens* is employed. Here Gregory, as we have observed, is following his brother of Cæsarea in a doctrine which had a long history and became a subject of keen controversy many centuries later, under the name of ' logical realism '. Stated abstractly, it means that when individuals can be classed together because they have certain *important* characteristics in common, this is because these common qualities are the expression of a real principle, a factor

pervading and operative throughout the members of the class. Applied superficially, this leads to absurd results; but applied in the case of qualities which are *essential* to the individuals concerned, it is found to be an important theory. An example of its ethical import may be seen in the saying, that: 'Human ministers of Justice may fail, but Justice, never.' In other words, Justice is a real principle, an actual factor, in the 'nature of things'. The various actions and characters which are just, are so because, and only because, they partake of, or share in, the real principle of Justice. Justice would still be real, even if no just acts were done by men and no just human characters existed, though in such a case Justice would, so far, have had no embodiment in human life. If 'logical realism' is affirmed in an extreme form, as it was by at least one prominent mediæval theologian, then the 'universal' is assumed to be the sole reality, with the individuals as transient expressions of it, and 'logical realism' becomes metaphysical monism, or, in its theological aspect, pantheism. To attribute such a doctrine to Gregory of Nyssa would, of course, be absurd. But in some of his statements he goes so far as to imply that the use of the term 'men', in the plural, is erroneous; in strict logic we should speak not of this or that man, but of this or that *hypostasis* of the nature 'man'. However, he concludes that the actual correction of the contrary habit of speech is not possible: 'How can you persuade any one not to speak of human beings who have the same essential nature as so many *men*? Habit is always hard to change. We do not go far wrong in speaking thus of finite beings, since no harm results from so doing. But in the case of the divine nature, the same habit would be a source of dangerous error [the assumption of three Gods].'[13]

The only difference recognised in the Trinity is in the order of derivation. God the Father is 'unbegotten', that is, dependent on nothing beyond Himself; the Son and the Spirit are derived, the Son immediately from the Father, the Spirit mediately from the Father through the Son. This is the final conclusion of the orthodox eastern Church on the origin of the Holy Spirit, technically described as 'procession', a conclusion formed by taking together the words of the Fourth Gospel (xv. 26), 'The

Guide (or Helper) whom I will send to you from the Father, . . . who proceeds from the Father', and the words of the Epistle to the Galatians (iv. 6), 'God sent forth the Spirit of His Son.'

We now retrace our steps, back to the later years of the second century, and to North Africa, where the first Christian Latin literature was produced (apart from the ancient Latin versions of the New Testament) and where Latin was still a living language. Our first knowledge of Latin Christianity is through Tertullian. His dates can be only approximately determined; but his conversion to Christianity may be dated within a few years of the end of the second century. He soon began to write in defence of the Christian religion as he understood it.

It may fairly be said that his most important theological work is the book *Against Praxeas*: because, although in form it is a criticism of modalist Monarchianism, the cardinal terms (*una substantia, tres personae*), which he continually uses in his exposition of trinitarian Christology, came into general use in the West. The special ground of his criticism relates to the assumption made by all the Modalist theologians, namely that belief in one God necessarily implies that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three manifestations of one and the same being, but revealed in three successive periods. Tertullian replies:[14] 'We believe that while they come equally from one Being, in unity of substance, the natural order of origination, which we call *dispensatio* and the Greeks *economia*, must be admitted—the order of origination which implies the unity of the Trinity, while Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three: three, however, not in individuality but in rank and relation, not in substance but in mode of action, not in power but in divine characteristics: and yet of one *status*, one substance, and one power, because it is one God from whom these are derived and named respectively Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (*non statu sed gradu, nec substantia sed forma, nec potestate sed specie: unius autem substantiae, unius status, et unius potestatis, quia unus Deus ex quo et gradus iste et forma et species in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti deputantur*).' This reference to 'gradus', 'forma', and 'species' explains Tertullian's emphatic declaration: 'Whatever the substance of the Word was, that I call a

Person, and I claim the name of Son for him, and as Son of God I recognise him as second from the Father.' Perhaps Tertullian was not entirely satisfied with the legal terms which he had been using in his endeavour to explain the doctrine of the Trinity.

In like manner he affirmed the Deity of the Spirit, ' one God with the Father and the Son : hence the Spirit is the third *from* [not *with*] God and His Son '. The following is a typical statement—and it must be remembered that ' we ' refers to those who follow Tertullian in his understanding of the ' Montanist ' doctrine : ' We, who by the Grace of God understand the intention of the scriptures, being faithful disciples of the divine *paracletos* [guide, or helper] and not of men, affirm . . . three divine Beings, according to the dispensation which is capable of numerical expression. Thus the Father is God, and the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God.' [15]

Notwithstanding these brave words, Tertullian has left two serious questions unanswered. (i) How is the Holy Spirit related to Christ the Son? In reference to the Annunciation (Luke i. 35) Tertullian declares : ' the Spirit of God is the same as the Word : for when John says, the Word was made flesh, we understand the Spirit also; and so here, we understand the Word under the name of the Spirit : for the Spirit is the substance of the Word, and the Word is an activity of the Spirit, and the two are one '. Other statements to the same effect might be quoted. (ii) He has not avoided a subordination not only in the order of revelation to mankind but in essential being. Even if we set aside his purely metaphorical illustrations, we find it clearly stated that the Father is the *originating principle* of the Son and the Spirit, and therefore holds in relation to them a certain superiority : ' The Father is wholly essential Being (*substantia*) : the Son is derived from the Whole as part thereof (*portio totius*) : the Father is greater than the Son, as One who begets, who sends, who acts, is greater than the One is begotten, who is sent, through whom He acts.' The precise meaning of the word *portio* is not clear : ' One who is God from God will be Deity so far as He came from the essence of God Himself, thus being from the essence of the Whole and part of the Whole.' [16]

With regard to the duality (not ' dualism ') within the divine nature, Tertullian's meaning is clear. ' At first, God was alone, being to Himself His own universe—alone, because there was no being beyond or outside Him : yet not alone, because He had within His own nature His Reason or Thought. . . . When first God willed to produce all that in His Thought and Wisdom He intended, He first produced the Word, in order that through the Word all things should be made, which had already been made so far as the divine Reason was concerned (*quantum in Dei sensu*).' Here the real meaning of the distinction between the immanent Word and the externalised Word is clear. What existed already in the divine reason became *for us*, under our human limitations, a matter of sense-perception and memory (see above, page 64). This must not for a moment be taken to imply any lowering of the power of the Spirit. Vital to Tertullian's Christian faith was his conviction that the Spirit was still working in the life of the Church; and this led to his interest in Montanism.[17]

Some details about the local origin and early history of the Montanist movement are uncertain. That it arose in Phrygia in the middle years of the second century; that it claimed the inspiration of the Spirit for Montanus and his ' prophets ' and ' prophetesses '; that it found expression in that region in fanatical exhibitions of ecstasy and similar phenomena; that it looked for the ' New Jerusalem ' to be established there; all this is beyond reasonable doubt. These facts, however, do not explain the spread of the movement. The background of it was in the far-reaching changes which were pervading the Churches, and which under the conditions of the time were inevitable. The canon of the Scriptures was closed, and the work of the Churches in relation to them was only one of interpretation. Divine revelation was becoming a thing of the past. The churches were becoming ' a Church ' with an organisation and with traditions. And an organisation of such extent must of necessity in some sense ' accommodate itself to the world ' in which its destiny was to live and grow. In the difficult and critical years of the second century, when the Gnostic movement was threatening the existence of Christianity, and Christological questions of the first importance

were being pressed, the authority of the Church was taking form in definite ways of doctrine and discipline. Without accepting Harnack's severe judgment on the facts, it is not to be denied that the changes to which we have referred created a vague and general feeling of unrest. Tertullian shared this feeling, which in one of his temperament became definite and forceful. The working of the spirit, he urged, cannot be confined to one age. At times, he even identified the Church with the Spirit: 'The visible Church is the Spirit of the undivided Trinity. . . . The whole number of those who accept this faith are counted as the Church of Christ. The Church will indeed forgive sins, but it is the Church of the Spirit speaking through a spiritual man.' Thus Tertullian completely abandoned the position which he had vigorously defended, as we have seen, in his early tract *De Praescriptione Haereticorum*.[18]

Nevertheless, it must be said that if to be a 'Montanist' means to be a disciple of Montanus, then Tertullian was not a 'Montanist'. The whole question, and for him the first question, was the activity of the Spirit; and this is the ground of his appeal when he writes, often with characteristic violence of language, on such subjects as the Christian duty in times of persecution, or in relation to military service, or to pagan amusements or customs in general; or again to questions relating to marriage and fasting. On the other hand, we find that those of his writings which have had important effects on the development of Christian doctrine in the West were produced during his so-called 'Montanist period'. And he did not uncritically accept the 'visions' of any Montanist as by themselves decisive of truth. An interesting example of this is seen in his book *On the Soul* (*De Anima*, IX) when he speaks of the 'visions' of a Montanist woman: 'We have now with us one who has been granted gifts of revelation, which she experiences in visions during the sacred ritual of the Lord's day in Church. She converses with angels, and sometimes with the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Whether it be in the reading of scripture, or in the singing of Psalms or in the offering of prayers—in all these religious services matter and opportunity are afforded her of seeing visions. . . . After the people have departed, she reports to us what she has seen in visions: for all her communications are examined with the greatest care, in order that their truth may be ascertained.'

The consequence of Tertullian's work was that Augustine found in general use a terminology bearing the authority of a tradition originated by Tertullian: '*una substantia, tres personae*.' Augustine was not satisfied with the use of these terms in reference to the doctrine of the Trinity; but his reverence for Tradition led him to bequeath to western Christianity a view involving the use of these terms. Some of the expressions which he uses occur in the trinitarian clauses of the 'Athanasian' creed; but whether the authors of that creed had any adequate understanding of the *ideas* underlying Augustine's terminology is another question. He repeatedly emphasises the fact that on questions relating to the inner nature of Deity, human language must be inadequate: 'We speak of three Persons, not in order to affirm that conception, but to avoid being silent, in order that we may be able to say in some degree what we cannot say perfectly: for the nature of God is more truly *conceived* than expressed, and *exists* more perfectly than His nature is conceived.'[19]

The first step to an understanding of Augustine's doctrine of the Trinity is to distinguish the idea of Deity and the trinitarian development of that idea. The idea of Deity, conceived abstractly, is the conception of pure Being, absolutely one and absolutely self-dependent: not 'infra-personal' and not 'impersonal', but not '*a* Person'; a 'substance', or rather, 'as the Greeks say, *ousia*'. But when, in Christian theism, the abstract conception is completed, it ceases to be abstract. It becomes the conception of Being expanding and completing itself, expanding without temporal succession in an order of causal dependence, in all its complete perfections, eternally and equally in three 'Persons', Father, Son, and Spirit. 'So complete is the equality in the Trinity that the Father is not greater than the Son in His divinity, nor the Father and Son together greater than the Spirit; nor is each single Person, whichever of them it be, less than the Trinity itself' (VIII, Preface).

Thus, the Augustinian conception of the Trinity is that of a divine Nature capable of being conceived apart from the 'Persons'

but never realised or never existing apart from them. This conception of 'Personality' is evidently and entirely different from the conception current in ordinary human language and from any legal conception of 'Personality'. Augustine sometimes expresses dissatisfaction with the theological use of the term. Thus, he observes (V. 10) that most Latin writers, who can speak with authority, 'speak of one Substance and three Persons, because they could not find any better way to express in words what they understood without words'; and he adds that it may be necessary to say 'three Persons', not because the Bible says it, but because the Bible does not contradict it. He is prepared to leave the word 'Person' in use in connection with the doctrine of the Trinity (VII. 8).

With regard to the term Substance, Augustine is rather more definite. The term suggests to him (as it does to us) a being possessing qualities which may change—a being which, in the terminology of Logic, is 'a subject of attributes'. It is 'impious' to apply such a conception to Deity, as if God were not His own Goodness, as if Goodness were *in* Him as in a subject. Augustine's point, in this and other passages, is quite clear. The whole conception of 'subject and attribute' is utterly inapplicable to Deity. The divine attributes are not qualities 'possessed' by God as a wise man 'possesses' the quality of wisdom. To say that God is wise means, when properly understood, that God *is* Wisdom. 'It is clear, therefore, that God is not properly called Substance. He is properly and truly called by the more usual term Essence. However, whether He is called Essence, by which term He is legitimately and truly called, or Substance, as He is improperly called, He is so called in reference to His own Nature' (VII. 10, abridged). The term 'essence' need not give rise to difficulty: 'as wisdom (the abstract term) is conceived through those who are wise, and knowledge (the abstract term) from those who know, so from existence (*esse*) is conceived what we call Essence' (V. 3). This is more fully stated in a later passage (VII. 2): 'As being wise is to Wisdom, and having capacity is to Power, and being just is to Justice, and being great is to Greatness, . . . so is existence itself to Essence.' In other words, in the case of finite

beings, we must distinguish 'essence' and 'existence'; but in God *essence and existence are one*. Augustine points out that in human nature the cardinal virtues, though they differ in meaning and application, are not separate from one another: thus, mental and moral courage carry other virtues with them. But in God there is a unity not only of qualities with one another but of qualities with Being: in God *to be* is to be all these qualities in a complete and perfect form, 'a manifold simplicity and a simple multiplicity' (VI. 6: *si quid de illa simplici multiplicitate vel multiplici simplicitate dixeris*). The interconnection of the cardinal human virtues is an incipient analogy in reference to the divine attributes, where existence and essence are one.

Although he does not formally discuss the question, it is evident that Augustine held a theory of fundamental importance about the reality of *relations*. It is a commonplace to point out that our experience consists of individuals, objects, and events, related in innumerable ways. It is not always obvious that the relations are as real as the objects related. This conclusion may be carried through, to relations which enter into the innermost nature of reality, and it is of the first importance in reference to what may be defined as *internal relations*, arising from the essential nature of the beings related. And when we think of God the Father in relation to God the Son, the relation is eternal. 'The words are used to express a reciprocal relation—a relation of each to the other. To be the Father and to be the Son are not the same: but the difference is one not of essence but of mutual relation (V. 6: *ad invicem et ad alterutrum dicuntur*).' Hence his belief in the place of Love in the Trinity. Though in each of the three 'Persons' the whole Trinity is concentrated, we may think of a divine intercommunion within the Trinity: 'There is one God loving him (Christ) who is from Himself, and one Christ loving Him from whom he is, and there is Love itself' (VI. 5). Augustine then asks, 'if that Love is not *substantia*, how is God *substantia*?' Here it is difficult to acquit him of assuming what is to be proved—so far as 'proof' can be thought of in this subject. His question implies the need—to use Tertullian's expression—of a *praescriptio*: what is meant by *substantia*? The term must be understood

in the sense which Augustine himself gives to it, namely, ' essence '.

Augustine's question therefore means that the essential internal relation among the three ' Persons ' is Love in its ultimate ideal realisation. He finds the first beginnings of this in the union of a group of individuals moved by a common worthy aim, a union of spirit (VI. 3). In relation to mankind and the world, all divine activity is of the whole Trinity, and the mutual relation of the Three is (to express it in technical terminology) internal and *convertible*. They are One, because absolute Deity is realised and fulfilled in each, in their mutual ideal Love. Wherein, then, does the *difference* consist? The only answer, from the position defended by Augustine, is that though all divine activity is of the whole Trinity, it is revealed to us, necessarily owing to our human limitations, in differences of operation. And since in every field of divine activity the whole essential nature of Deity is active, the conclusion is, not indeed a ' modalist ' doctrine (this is excluded, both logically and spiritually), but a Trinity of modes of operation. Whether Augustine would have approved the conclusion as thus stated is another question. In any case, the Church fell back on the traditional distinction between the Father as ' unbegotten ' and the Son as ' begotten '—a non-convertible relation.

The ' proof-texts ' on which Augustine dwells at the end of his great work are from the New Testament; but even the New Testament, believed to be throughout infallible, presented difficulties. He found it necessary to reconcile text with text, and dogma with Scripture. But he did not attempt to base the doctrine of the Trinity directly and immediately on Scripture texts: he endeavoured to explain the biblical statements in the light of that doctrine as he held it. Most of his second Book is occupied with a study of the visions and voices ascribed in the Old Testament to direct divine agency. His conclusion is that in most cases the voices and visions were wrought through the ministry of angels, manifesting themselves in audible or visible forms, but themselves acting under direct divine impulses.

Augustine searches creation for analogies or ' vestiges ' of the

Trinity. The results are extraordinarily interesting for a study of his psychology. From the theological point of view, it is evident that in the spiritual nature of man he found the ' image ' of the Trinity which satisfied him most. The illustration which he seems to value most of all is in the ' trinity ' of the human mind, ' remembering, understanding, and loving itself '. The meaning of the term ' memory ' is widened so as to include *consciousness of self*; and ' loving itself ' is cleared of all merely egoistic associations: ' the mind is present to itself so that it can understand its own thinking, and the mind and its thinking be united by love of itself ' (XIV. 14, 15). He well knew that ' three faculties belonging to one human person cannot represent the three divine Persons ' (XV. 45). The trinity in the human mind becomes an ' image of God ' only when the consciousness of self is so far deepened that it becomes also a consciousness of God. This was his own ideal. ' So far as Thou hast made me able, I have sought for Thee. I have desired to see with my understanding what I believe, and I have laboured and argued much. My strength and my weakness are in Thy sight: preserve the one and relieve the other. My knowledge and my ignorance are in Thy sight: where Thou hast opened to me, receive me as I enter: where Thou hast closed to me, open to me as I knock. May I remember Thee, understand Thee, love Thee.'

CHAPTER VII

THE CHURCH AND THE MINISTRY

THE importance to be attached to the Christian idea and ideal of the *ecclesia* has resulted in a comparative neglect of a fact equally important for an understanding of the experiences of the first Christian believers. Whatever conclusions we may or may not hold, about the supernatural happenings recorded in the second chapter of the Book of Acts, the fundamental question remains: what was the permanent and enduring result of this 'coming of the Spirit'? It was the emergence of a new experience of 'fellowship' (*koinonia*). A very early expression of this experience is found in Acts ii. 42 (where we must read, not as in the A.V., 'to the teaching and fellowship of the Apostles' but 'to the teaching of the Apostles and to the fellowship'): 'the disciples devoted themselves to the instruction given by the Apostles *and to the fellowship*.' The symbolism of the fellowship was the breaking of bread, and common prayer, and shortly afterwards was expressed in the mutual sharing of possessions. It was a community of spirit creating a community of life. The intense reality with which this community was felt finds expression in such statements as in Acts iv. 32: 'the multitude of those that believed had but one heart and one mind'.

This was the ideal of Paul. God had called them into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ, the fellowship named after him, 'the fellowship of the Spirit' (I Cor. i. 9, Phil. ii. 1). In the familiar words of II Cor. xiii. 14, 'the *communion* of the Holy Spirit', the same Greek word is used (*koinonia*). His prayer is that the fellowship created by the Spirit may grow and extend, through new groups of believers, among whom the differences that loomed so large in contemporary life would become insignificant. The fellowship, in Paul's ideal, is not limited—as it was at first—to men and women belonging to the same race and with

inherited and kindred religious traditions. His first great struggle was to unite in one Fellowship of the Spirit, Jews and Gentiles, hitherto separated by an impassable gulf, and then to gather together groups of believers united by a Spirit where there was neither Jew nor Gentile, male nor female, bond nor free. This is at once the work of the Holy Spirit of God and of the risen Christ: 'You are the body of Christ, and severally members of it' (I Cor. xii. 27)—members of Christ *through the Fellowship*; 'As the human body is one and has many members, all the members together forming one body, so it is with Christ. . . . So, too, for all our members, we form one body in Christ, and we are severally members one of another' (I Cor. xii. 12, Rom. xi. 5).

The term *ecclesia* comes into use as the ideal of Fellowship, more and more widely realised, calls for organisation and leadership—the growth in the Christian communities of what in modern terminology is called a 'corporate consciousness'.

Here we are concerned only with the use of the term *ecclesia* of the early communities of Christian believers, becoming organised as such. In the Old Testament, which the early Christians had in the scrolls of the Greek version (the 'Septuagint'), the distinctive and most important use of the word is to express an idea springing from the intensely *theocratic* interpretation of Hebrew history which continually emerges: for example, the whole community (*ecclesia*) of Israel (Numbers viii. 9, and in many other passages bearing a kindred reference).

Turning to the New Testament, we find the term used of the tumultuous assembly which filled the market-place in Ephesus (Acts ii. 32 and 41); and in v. 39 of the same narrative it is used of a regular and lawful meeting of the citizens. But the religious significance of the word, due to its use in the Septuagint, determines its usual meaning in the New Testament, where it is constantly used of an existing local Christian community, such as the Church in Corinth. So understood, the word could be used in the plural, as it is many times by Paul. Perhaps the most significant of all his references is in II Corinthians—his daily burden, 'the care of all the churches'. Such communities, in different places, but with kindred beliefs and hopes, animated by the same

spirit of fellowship, became conscious of themselves as a corporate whole and were spoken of as 'the Church'. The result was a double use of the term: thus, in Philippians iii. 6 we read that Paul persecuted the *ecclesia*, apparently a general application of the word, while in iv. 5 a particular *ecclesia* is referred to. So in Colossians i. 18 and 24, 'the *ecclesia*' is declared to be 'the body of Christ', while in iv. 15–16 a particular *ecclesia* 'which is in their house' is referred to. In the four Gospels the word occurs only twice, in Matt. xvi. 18 and xviii. 17. The latter reference, which we assume to be authentic, shows that the fellowship had acquired a certain authority.

We cannot accept the view maintained and defended with learning and ability by Charles Gore—not to mention more recent theologians—that Jesus actually intended to found a community having a mixed membership, with officers having authority, and that he was training his disciples to form the nucleus of such a community, which he foresaw would—and intended that it should—become a corporate body charged with solemn ceremonies and legislative decisions, and having a priesthood to keep it 'one, holy, and catholic'.[1] This interpretation of the facts gives rise to many difficulties: in particular, the inherent opposition between Judaism and Christianity would have been evident from the very beginnings of the movement. Why were the first believers so slow to recognise the inevitable separateness of the Christian Gospel from Jewish ecclesiasticism? (We emphasise the term 'Jewish ecclesiasticism', which, especially as it existed in the time of Jesus, was an entirely different influence from that of the religion of the Old Testament.) Why was it necessary for Ignatius to warn the Churches against men who went about advocating a Judaising Christianity? His words do not lack emphasis. 'It is monstrous to speak of Jesus Christ and to practise Judaism', for 'Christianity did not believe in Judaism, but Judaism in Christianity'. 'If any man propounds Judaism to you, do not listen to him: such persons are like tombstones over the dead, on which are inscribed only the names of men.'[2]

On the other hand, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that

Jesus *created a Spirit* which he foresaw would create communities irreconcilable with those fostered by 'the Jewish Church'. A growing alienation can be traced in the Gospel records, until in the end 'the chief priests' realised that if they could not destroy Jesus and his work, the result would be the destruction of everything in the ecclesiasticism for which they stood and on which their official existence depended (see especially Mark xv. 1, 3, 10–11). The culmination is seen in the Fourth Gospel. Among those openly hostile to Jesus, the 'High Priest' or 'the chief priests' are mentioned twelve times; the 'Pharisees' or the 'chief priests and Pharisees' seventeen times; and 'the Jews' (without any other qualification) at least thirty times.

We have seen reason to believe that the first results of the ideal of Jesus, moving in the minds of Paul and his fellow-workers, are seen in Christian communities with no bonds of organisation other than what was necessary for order to be maintained in a fellowship based on brotherly love, and in a living faith in Jesus Christ as 'Lord and Saviour'. Through this faith, they were convinced that the Spirit was still working among them, and through this conviction of the actual present working of the Spirit, and the human need for leadership, the primitive ministry arose. For the existence and character of this primitive ministry there is abundant evidence in the New Testament. It appears not to have been a permanently localised ministry; but Paul believed that in principle it was of divine appointment. 'God has set some in the *ecclesia*, firstly apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers' (I Cor. xii. 28); and, in one of the latest Epistles (if not Pauline, then by a disciple of Paul): 'He gave some to be apostles, and some prophets, and some pastors and teachers, . . . that we should be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine' (Eph. iv. 11, 14).

The use of the term 'apostles' in these and kindred passages shows that in the Apostolic Age the terminology was very 'fluid'. No general theory can be based on identity of names used in different circumstances in the Apostolic Age. But the passages from the epistles to the Corinthians and to the Ephesians, quoted above, and in particular the reference in the latter passage to the

purpose of the ministry, show that these workers were ' evangelists ' in the modern meaning, or meanings, of this term, and that their work included *teaching*. Among these workers, the ' prophets ' are specially named. The man who ' prophesies ' is superior to the man who ' speaks with a tongue ' (whose religious emotions find expression in a flow of unintelligible words, or words intelligible to no one but himself); and again, ' let only two or three prophets speak, while the others exercise their judgment upon what is said ' (I Cor. xiv. 3 and 29). In the Book of Acts the work of the prophets is prominent: xi. 27, ' prophets from Jerusalem '; xiii. 1, ' prophets and teachers in the Church at Antioch ', five being named, including ' Saul '; xv. 31, ' prophets at Antioch ', two being named.

Hence the urgency of the question, How to recognise false prophets and true prophets? The answer is, ' by their lives '. Not every man who speaks in the name of the Spirit is a prophet, ' but only if he have the ways of the Lord; from his ways, therefore, the true prophet and the false prophet shall be recognised. . . . Even if a prophet teaches the truth, and does not do what he teaches, he is a false prophet.' These statements from the *Didache* were even at the time, much too like ' platitudes '; but Hermas (*Mandates*, ch. xi) is more definite: ' The man who only appears to have the Spirit is self-assertive, talkative; . . . if he is not given money, he does not prophesy; . . . he seeks out the doubtful-minded, and the empty-minded, and speaks only to gratify their desires; test therefore by his life and works the man who says that he is moved by the Spirit.'

The later the date of the *Didache*, the more important is its evidence regarding the Christian ministry, unless we adopt the extreme view that it originated from some obscure *ecclesia* ' in a corner ' in Egypt, and that it is of no value for questions about the contemporary Churches as a whole.[3] Setting this aside, we find in the *Didache* evidence that the ' prophetic ' ministry, the evangelical missionary ministry, continued after a localised and more permanent ministry had arisen in the Christian communities, that the two worked side by side, but that the work of *teaching* was beginning to be transferred to the local leaders of the community.

And, in addition to the work of teaching, the need of leadership in the sense of *oversight* to secure a necessary minimum of regularity and order had been felt, and had led to practical results: ' Appoint for yourselves Bishops and Deacons worthy of the Lord, men upright and proved, for they too render to you the service of the prophets and teachers ' (*Didache*, ch. xi). The writer adds that they are not to be disregarded; ' they are to be honoured along with the prophets and teachers '. There is no suggestion that the ' Bishops ' here referred to held an office of sacramental authority transmitted from the original Apostles. The name signifies *the kind of work done*—having *episcopê* or oversight (compare the marginal notes in the English Revised Version on the New Testament usage of the term, Philippians i. 1, I Timothy iii. 1 and 2, I Peter ii. 35). The picture, if we may so put it, in the *Didache* is that of the Christian ministry in a transitional state.

The occasion which prompted Clement of Rome to write at length to the Church in Corinth was at bottom one of discipline and order. ' The Apostles knew . . . that there would be strife over the responsibilities of the leaders' office [the " overseers "]. For this reason they appointed their first converts, and gave instruction that when they had passed away, other approved men should succeed to their administration ' (ch. lv). The office-bearers are the Bishops and Presbyters and Deacons; but with regard to the kind of work done, the two former names are synonymous. The writer claims no official authority for himself; he writes on behalf of the *ecclesia*—' the Church in Rome to the Church in Corinth '. Indeed, he seems to have regarded the community as the authority (' What is ordered by the people ', ch. liv). In the Church in Corinth certain men had been turned out of their *episcopê*. ' It is a grievous sin to have driven from their oversight men who have reverently offered the prayers of the congregation. . . . We see that you have displaced certain men from the ministry which they have carried on without blame. . . . It is shameful to have it reported that the ancient Church in Corinth should make sedition against its Presbyters, through the intrigues of a few persons. . . . Let the flock of Christ be at peace with its duly appointed Presbyters.' It is evident that before the

end of the first century the Presbyters were in a position of effective oversight, and the attempt of a few to arouse a movement against them was regarded as 'sedition'.[4] Clement appeals to the organisation of an army 'under our rulers' (the Roman government). Taken rigidly, the illustration is entirely inconsistent with what he had said about the relation of the leaders to the Christian community; but probably he intended it only to illustrate the need of organisation: 'All are not prefects, nor rulers of thousands or of hundreds; . . . but each man in his own rank executes the orders given to him. The great without the small cannot exist, nor the small without the great. There is a kind of mixture in all things, and therein is utility.'

Thus, before the end of the first century the practical problems of leadership were becoming more urgent; but 'Bishop' and 'Presbyter' were still two names for the same office. The fourth-century Fathers were aware of this. Jerome, in particular, called attention to the fact and emphasised it, in his epistles numbered 69 and 170, and in his commentary on the Epistle to Titus. The principal passages to which he appeals are: Acts xx. 17 and 28 (the Presbyters whom the Spirit had made Bishops, Greek 'overseers', in the Church in Ephesus); Philippians i. 1 (where the natural inference is that 'Bishop' includes 'Presbyter'); I Timothy iv. 14 (where the spiritual gift was transmitted 'when the Presbytery laid hands upon you'); and I Peter v. 2 (where the Presbyters are said to be 'exercising oversight'). The island of Crete seems to have been a difficult field for Christian work; and the qualifications of a 'Bishop' ('overseer') are named as an additional incentive to Titus to appoint 'Presbyters' in the Churches in the island. Apart from this special case, the references which we have given can only be understood as showing that the work of the Presbyters was entrusted to them by the local *ecclesia*.

The next movement in this history is one the importance of which can scarcely be exaggerated: the differentiation of the office of Bishop from the office of Presbyter. The need of religious leadership created the need of one responsible individual as leader. This was the view of Jerome: 'When afterwards one Presbyter was chosen to preside over the rest, this was done to

prevent personal strife and schism. . . . The Presbyter appointed as Bishop would be one of their own number, chosen by themselves for a higher position.' Thus it was possible, and at least occasionally necessary, for a local Bishop to be a bond of intercourse and co-operation with other Churches, with regular conferences of neighbouring Bishops for counsel.

These earlier Christian communities have been compared with contemporary pagan confraternities on the one hand, and with Jewish synagogues on the other. That there were points of resemblance in both cases need not be disputed; but, as a matter of historical fact, the organisation of the Christian communities proceeded by a path peculiar to themselves. Starting from the simplest form of union, they framed their ministry to serve their own needs. We turn therefore to Ignatius of Antioch.

Ignatius in his seven Letters speaks not as a historian describing what had taken place, but as a prophetic preacher dwelling on urgent needs. He had an ideal view of what the Episcopate might become. To him, Christianity is a Gospel of personal salvation; but communion through *meeting together* is essential to it. Thus the believers become 'fellow-initiates with Paul'; and when they meet together frequently, 'the powers of Satan are cast down, and his evil comes to nought in the concord of your faith'. Therefore, 'move in harmony with the mind of God, for Jesus Christ, our inseparable Life, is the mind of the Father'. Then comes the ideal touch: 'Even as the Bishops, settled in the furthest parts of the world, are one in the mind of Christ' (Ignatius, *To the Ephesians*, ch. xii, xiii). His insistence on the principle of the authority of the Bishop shows that he did not find it everywhere realised. He makes no reference to the office of the Bishop in writing to the Romans or to the Philippians. He found that the office of the Bishop was generally recognised, but urgent guidance, persuasion, and advice were needed to secure that what he believed to be *their legitimate authority* should also be recognised. Every Church is and must be a community of which the Bishop is at once leader and ruler. The ministry which he had in view, though it was a ministry of spiritual and saving truth, was also one of regularity and order: 'Do nothing without your Bishop, but

be obedient to the Presbyters; . . . in like manner, respect the Deacons, . . . even as they respect the Bishops as being a type of the Father, and the Presbyters as the Council of God' (Ignatius, *To the Trallians*, ch. ii and iii). The purpose is at once religious and practical: the sacredness of order, not the sanctity of 'orders'. We say 'the sacredness of order', in view of such a passage as this: 'Do ye all study obedience to God, and respect one another. . . . Let there be nothing among you with power to divide you. . . . Do not attempt to think anything right for yourselves apart from others; let there be one prayer in common, one mind, one hope in Jesus Christ. . . . Hasten to come together, all of you, as to one Temple, even God [the text is doubtful], as to one Altar, even Jesus Christ, who came forth from the Father. . . . Be obedient to the Bishop and to one another' (*To the Magnesians*, ch. iii, vii, xiii).

Ignatius apparently did not contemplate a general union of the many individual churches into one Church, a union maintained by ecclesiastical officers and creeds; this belonged to the future, and in large measure was inevitable, because of the activities of 'heretical' movements—in particular, Marcionite and Valentinian Gnosticism—whose victory would have been the destruction of all that was valuable in Christianity. As we have seen, his main purpose was to secure effective recognition of the importance of the episcopal office for the individual community. The separate communities are to be united by a common faith and common hopes, and to be made known to one another by mutual visits of representatives and friends; but he could hardly have failed to see that the Bishop must become the principal organiser of such intercourse if it was to be effective and not merely casual.

In the writings of Irenæus we find further indications of the direction in which the organisation of the Churches was moving. It would be futile to attempt to fasten on Irenæus any theory of the identity of the offices of Bishop and Presbyter. But it is noteworthy that *in relation to the past* he uses the term 'Presbyter' for the leaders of the Church, especially for those who were responsible for the preservation of the apostolic Tradition—referring to them almost in the way in which we refer to 'the Fathers' (the

passages are collected and translated by Lightfoot and Harmer, *op. cit.*, pp. 554 and following). For Irenæus, especially in his attack on the 'Gnostic' claim to the possession of a 'secret' Tradition, what was of supreme importance was the preservation of the continuous line of apostolic truth. 'We ought to listen to the Presbyters, who are in the Church, who have the succession from the Apostles, . . . who with their successors in the Episcopate received the sure gift of the Truth' (Irenæus, *Adversus Haereses*, IV. xxvi. 2). He had already spoken of the Apostles having appointed in the Churches Bishops whose succession can be traced in an unbroken line; but the responsibility of the Presbyters seems to have been specially for the security of the Tradition. There are a few passages where the terms 'Bishop' and 'Presbyter' seem to be interchangeable, though without the suggestion of any general view of the historical relation between the two offices: for example, 'Where the free gifts (*charismata*) of the Lord are placed, there we must learn the truth, among those in the Church who have the succession from the Apostles; . . . these guard our faith' (IV. xxvi. 5: the immediately preceding passage shows that the 'Presbyters' are referred to).

The essentials of the Tradition, as we have seen, could be and were stated in brief summaries, not always verbally identical, but identical in all essentials; and to these we look for the ancestry of what is now known as 'The Apostles' Creed'. Irenæus had convinced himself that the unity of the Churches consisted in their fidelity to the apostolic Tradition; and the rejection of this was the radical vice of the Gnostic systems: 'When we refer these men to the Tradition which had its origin through the Apostles, and which is guarded by the succession of the Presbyters in the Churches, they repudiate the Tradition and declare that they know better than the Presbyters and even than the Apostles: they value their own self-importance and self-love more than the unity of the Church' (Irenæus, III. ii. 2). Hence Irenæus is led to declare that to be outside of the Truth is to be outside of the Church: the latter is a consequence of the former (*qui sunt extra veritatem, id est, qui sunt extra ecclesiam*, IV. xxxii. 7).

With regard to the 'unbroken line', Irenæus observes: 'We

are able to enumerate those whom the Apostles appointed to be Bishops, and their successors, down to our own time (*usque ad nos*) ', but, he adds, ' because it would be a very lengthy task to enumerate the succession in all the Churches ', he concentrates on Rome, ' the Church founded by the Apostles Peter and Paul ' (III. iii. 1 and 2). It must be remembered that this reference to ' the successions ' does not imply a succession of consecrator and consecrated, but a succession of occupants of the same office. That office was increasing in importance with the passage of time : nevertheless, originally it was not an ' apostolic succession ' in the later meaning of the term. The security of the deposit of the Faith was guaranteed by *apostolic successions*. Tertullian is at one with Irenæus in his appeal (before he embraced ' Montanism ') to the churches founded by the Apostles : ' The Apostles founded churches in every city, from which the rest of the churches have derived the transmission of their faith and the seeds of their doctrine, and are daily deriving them in order to become churches. Every kind of thing must be classed according to its origin. Therefore these churches . . . form but one primitive Church founded by the Apostles, from which they all derive : so that all are primitive, and all are apostolic.' [5]

The Bishop is the *representative* of each church, so much so that the Church itself is regarded as the guardian of the Truth. The expressions used by Tertullian suggest the meaning soon to be attached to the term ' catholic ' : no longer a geographical or international universality, but a fixed attribute implying ' orthodoxy ' as opposed to ' heresy ', and conformity as opposed to dissent.

The famous statement of Irenæus about the position of the Roman Church (III. iii. 2) needs to be interpreted in the light of the literature of the period, and not only in the light of later theological presuppositions. The passage, for which we have only the Latin translation, is as follows : *Ad hanc enim ecclesiam propter potentiorem principalitatem necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam, hoc est, eos qui sunt undique fideles, in qua semper ab his qui sunt undique, conservata est ea quae est ab apostolis traditio.*[6] ' To this Church, on account of its central position, it is necessary that the

whole Church—I mean the faithful from all parts—should resort : [this Church] in which the Tradition, which has come down from the Apostles, is preserved by those from all countries.' If Irenæus had even contemplated the supremacy of the Roman Church in the sense afterwards maintained, would he have concluded this statement in words so weak and vague? The essential fact is this : the statement is an argument from the position and reputation of the city of Rome, which was a commonplace among the historians and literary men of the Hellenistic age. If the word ' primacy ' is to be used at all, it is in the sense that Rome was the centre of contemporary culture as well as of business and commerce. A scientific physician like Galen, a historian like Diodorus, a rhetorical essayist like Athenæus, found in Rome an ' epitome of the civilised world '.[7] In reference to the Christian Tradition the ' commonplace ' yields a natural interpretation. What Irenæus *means* is that to Rome, as the centre of the empire, Christian believers from all parts came together, and not only did the Roman Church preserve the Tradition of the founders, but her Tradition was reinforced by that of all the Churches represented there.

We may summarise the conclusions advocated and defended by Irenæus and Tertullian. The churches—largely through the serious challenge of ' Gnosticism ' and to some extent the challenge of ' Montanism '—had collectively become aware of the problems of authority and catholicity, and through this had become conscious of themselves as ' The Church ', starting from the records and epistles contained in the New Testament, and resting on the Tradition of the churches founded by Apostles, the content of which was summed up in the ' Rule of Faith ', and which was preserved unbroken by the succession of Bishops.

Cyprian of Carthage, whose episcopate marked an epoch in the history of the Church, belonged to the generation immediately following Tertullian. He came of a wealthy and popular pagan family. At the age of thirty-five, in A.D. 245, he was converted, baptised, and appointed to the office of Presbyter. After the death of the Bishop of Carthage, the public opinion of the *plebes* (as we should say, of ' the laity ') called him to the office. They

would take no refusal, and Cyprian reluctantly consented. Thus, in his case, the acclamation of the *plebes* superseded any further process of election. The consent of the other Bishops would be given at his consecration, although opposition was organised by a small group of Presbyters, who promoted a faction against the authority of Cyprian. The usual procedure over the appointment of a Bishop, ' the custom observed by almost all the provinces ', was for the choice to be made by the neighbouring Bishops, with the support (the *suffragia*) of the laity, and ' the Judgment of God ' (this probably refers to the religious ceremony of consecration) : ' All the neighbouring Bishops of the same province should meet together, among the people for whom the Bishop is to be ordained, who know his manner of life. . . . This was done at the ordination of our colleague Sabinus, by the *suffragia* of the whole brotherhood, and by the judgment of the Bishops who met together in their presence.' [8]

A year after the appointment of Cyprian, the persecution organised by imperial decree of Decius broke out, and lasted from early in 250 to the summer of 251. It is evident, from the letters of Cyprian as well as from other sources, that after the ' long peace ' of the previous forty years, the number of the ' lapsed '—who had ' sacrificed to the gods ' when ordered to do so by the local Roman official—was very large, much larger than the number of the ' confessors ' (who had survived the various kinds of imprisonment then inflicted) and of the martyrs. The number of the ' lapsed ', their efforts to be received back into Communion, the resulting strife between the advocates of rigorism and the advocates of moderation, the question of Baptism in relation to ' schismatics ', and the ' schism ' led by Novatian from Rome, were a heavy burden on the episcopate of Cyprian.

Novatian, a Roman Presbyter with a numerous following and an able theologian, expected to be consecrated Bishop of Rome when the appointment had to be made in 251; but Cornelius was chosen as Bishop. Novatian then appears at the head of a party opposed to any kind or any degree of concession to the ' lapsed '; but personal feeling entered in beyond any question of principle, and Novatian was consecrated as rival Bishop of Rome. The

opponents of Cyprian in Carthage formed a ' Novatianist ' party with its own Bishop. This was a ' schism ' in the special sense of the term—that is, an organised body advocating secession on grounds not of doctrine but of what were asserted to be the needs of ecclesiastical order and discipline.

Cyprian's position was based on his unquestioned conviction that ' outside the Church there is no salvation '. Outside the Church (*extra ecclesiam*) there can be no sacraments. ' Schismatic Baptism ' is null and void—it is not Baptism at all. The question remains, however—what precisely is meant by ' outside the Church '? This question became urgent when Augustine was dealing with the Donatist ' schism '. It appears that for Cyprian this question had only one answer, in the case of the ' Novatianist ' sect: they were entirely ' outside the Church ', although they were known to be theologically orthodox. Nevertheless, apart from its complication with merely personal antagonisms, the case against Cyprian was a strong one. If the Sacraments are ' holy ' in themselves, if the influence of the Spirit is conveyed through them, they are not made more holy, nor is the power of the Spirit more surely effective, through the ministering individual. It is Christ who baptises; and when the Trinity is invoked, or the name of Christ, the faithful believer receives supernatural benefit. This position has been generally accepted, so far as the morality or the private opinions of the Minister are concerned. Professor S. L. Greenslade has called attention to its unqualified statement in the twenty-sixth of the Articles of the Church of England, entitled ' Of the Unworthiness of the Ministers, which hinders not the effect of the Sacrament '; and he observes: ' The argument that the invocation of the Divine Name and promise necessarily brings Baptism to the believer is attractive, but not conclusive, at least without further elaboration [explanation?], but it overlooks the possibility that the promises are only attached to Sacraments within the Church, . . . and that the human minister, though his personal belief and morals are irrelevant, must have authority to act as a minister of the Church, of Christ in his Church. Article XXVI in fact is expressly speaking of ministers within the visible Church. . . . To say that

God will do nothing for anyone outside the Church, is great presumption; " God is not tied to the sacraments " (*Deus non alligatur sacramentis*). But to say that He will not act *sacramentally* [the italics are ours] except within the Church, if unprovable, is at any rate not derogatory to His goodness. And this might apply both to Sacraments the minister of which has been generally held to be, of necessity, ordained, and to Baptism, where he need not be ordained.' [9]

Cyprian's position with regard to Baptism is clear. The sacraments are the sacraments *of the Church*, and therefore can only be ministered within the Church. But Rome was against him. The Roman practice was based on the difficult and indeed ambiguous distinction between ' valid ' and ' effectual ' Baptism. We shall meet with this again in the case of Augustine.

It is in the case of the ' lapsed ' that the question, What precisely was Cyprian's conception of ' The Church '? becomes vital for understanding his position. In Carthage the factious clergy were moving the confessors to give letters promising rehabilitation for the ' lapsed ', and they called on Cyprian to support this. In reply, he was obliged to explain his general policy and the principles on which it was based. The following is an illustrative example:[10] ' I discovered that many of those who had defiled their hands and mouths [with food which had been sacrificed or dedicated to idols] were approaching the Confessors with importunate emotional appeals to be given letters urging their rehabilitation, and that many such letters were being given every day. I wrote to the confessors urging them to remember the warnings of our Lord (Matt. x. 32 and Luke xii. 8); and I wrote to the Presbyters and Deacons who, careless of the order of the Church, were receiving the lapsed to Communion. At the same time, as far as I could, I calmed the minds of the laity, so that ecclesiastical discipline might be preserved. But when some of the lasped were attempting to secure by violent means the commendation which the confessors had promised, I wrote to the clergy (*ad clerum*) urging that disorder must cease. At the same time, I directed that those of the lapsed who were suffering from mortal sickness, and had declared their repentance and their desire to be received

into Communion, should not be refused; . . . and in this, I stood by the judgment set forth in your letters, in order that our actions, which should be consistent and harmonious, should not conflict. With regard to the others, who had received letters from the confessors, I sent instructions that such cases should be reserved until my return, so that, when the Lord shall have granted us peace, and a sufficient number of Bishops are able to meet together, we may, with your judgment before us, restore regularity and order.'

The details of policy concerning the ' lapsed ' are less important for the history of the Church than the principles of ecclesiastical organisation which were being worked out under the stress of the facts. The instructions given by Cyprian to the African Churches were based on a guiding principle of a general character. The general terms of rehabilitation were to be decided by a Council of Bishops belonging to the district affected; and then, the Bishops, with the clergy and laity assisting, should consider each case on its merits.

Meanwhile, however, the ' Novatianist ' party was growing in strength, and was emphasising an extreme ethical rigorism—an extreme ' puritanical ' view of what was urgently needed. Cyprian dealt with the situation in his important tract on the unity of the Catholic Church (*De Catholicae Ecclesiae Unitate*). Cyprian did not make the distinction between ' schism ', in the technical sense mentioned above, and ' heresy ', in the sense of unorthodox theological or doctrinal error. As a matter of fact, those who maintained the distinction found it ambiguous. A ' schism ' involved and implied a theory of the nature, authority, and extent of ' The Church '; and this is obviously a theological question of fundamental import, and raises other equally important questions.

After quoting from the Latin version the words of Matt. xvi. 19 and John xxi. 16 (' Tend my lambs '—*Pasce agnos*) Cyprian states what he believed to be the essential fact. ' When our Lord gave to Peter his commission, " Whatsoever *thou* shalt bind " (Matt. xvi. 19) and then renewed it to all the disciples, " Whose soever sins *ye* forgive " (John xx. 23) it is evident that he placed

them all on the same level; but, by first addressing Peter alone, he showed the unity of the commission in itself. And ever since, the unity of the Church has consisted in a united episcopate—the authority of every Bishop being his own, yet forming with others not a mere conglomerate of powers, but a totality like that of shareholders in a joint property. Therefore, though the authority of the Bishop [one Bishop in each district] is independent, yet when an issue of vital import for faith and order arose, decision should be made by the body of Bishops.' Thus, Cyprian's principle is the equality of all the Bishops; but at the same time, he admitted that a Council of Bishops had an authority greater than that of an individual Bishop, and he held Councils accordingly. He had no doubt whatever that when a Bishop was appointed in the manner approved by Cyprian himself, the appointment was divinely approved, and he even claimed supernatural sanction for it (Letter 66); none the less, the basis of the unity of the Episcopate is mutual concord, ' so that, if any of our College (*sic*) should attempt to introduce heresy, the others may come to our aid ' (Letter 68).

Benson observes that Cyprian's ideal was a unity resting on a moral and religious foundation, which, he was convinced, was broken by the contemporary ' schismatics '. But in the case of Cyprian we see logic and idealism at variance over the same question. This became evident, when the difference between the African Bishops and Rome, over Baptisms administered by ' schismatic bodies ', took a much more serious turn. The new Bishop of Rome, Stephen, had been advocating a more conciliatory attitude towards the ' Novatianist ' Bishops; and when the second Council of Carthage re-affirmed the contention of Cyprian and the African bishops, Stephen replied by a decree of excommunication, which had no effect because of a local persecution. The African view was strongly supported in the Near East, especially in Cappadocia. A report of the proceedings of the Carthaginian Council and of the action of Stephen had been sent to Fermilian, influential Bishop of the Cappadocian Cæsarea. Fermilian's letter to Cyprian, in a Latin version, is included in the correspondence of Cyprian, in the third volume of the *Corpus*

Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum in the Latin Series (p. 810). Fermilian admits that in many provinces ' there are many differences, varying with places and persons; but there has not on this account been any departure from the peace and unity of the Church. This, Stephen has now dared to do, breaking the peace which his predecessors maintained with you [i.e., with Cyprian].' It appears that Stephen claimed the right of excommunication, in virtue of the centrality of Rome (emphasised as we have seen, by Irenæus) and of his own position as occupant of the Chair of Peter by right of succession. In this connection ' succession ', as with Irenæus, signifies ' apostolic succession ' from holder to holder of the same office, not from consecrator to consecrated.

Logically, Cyprian should have insisted that Stephen had excluded himself from the Church. But his native common sense, and his determination to tolerate, for the sake of Christian unity, what he believed to be a serious mistake in ecclesiastical policy, made it impossible for him to regard Stephen as excluded from the Church. On the other hand, the assertion that the breach between Carthage and Rome ' laid Cyprian's theory of the Episcopate in ruins ' needs qualification. His theory failed because of the direction in which the Church, East and West alike, was moving. His ideal of the moral and religious unity of the Episcopate was defeated by the wills of men. If Cyprian's dogma, that to be out of communion with the Episcopate is to be alienated from Christ and from God, is simply rejected, and when his actual application of his theory is sympathetically examined, we see (if two modern political terms may be used as illustrative) that it excludes any ecclesiastical ' totalitarianism ' with its centre in Rome, and affirms an ecclesiastical ' federalism '.[11]

To turn from Cyprian, and his troubled Episcopate in Africa, to Alexandria and to Origen is to come into a different atmosphere. Origen died in A.D. 254 in consequence of his sufferings during the Decian persecution—the persecution which created the ecclesiastical problems that confronted Cyprian. Origen, who speaks more often of ' the churches ' than of ' The Church ', accepted the organisation as he found it embodied in each church in the responsibilities of the Bishop, the Presbyters, and the Deacons.

He respected the see of Rome, but he recognised no unique supremacy granted to Peter or his successors. Origen is convinced that all the original Apostles were endowed with the same privileges as Peter. The case of Peter is interpreted as typical of all true believers: 'All believers, so far as they are true Christians, are *Peters*.'[12]

We have seen the fundamental importance which Origen assigned to Tradition, and to the Church as validating the authority of Tradition; though for the determination of the deeper content of Tradition he advocated the methods of Alexandrian interpretation applied to the Bible. It is clear that, for Origen, the Church was before all else the guardian of divine Truth. His ideal Bishop, while an efficient administrator, must be a great teacher of the Christian faith. Origen could not foresee the tragic history of Christian thought among the eastern churches during the century that was to follow, and the struggle of Athanasius to save the truth that God had in very deed entered into humanity.

It is strange to reflect on the fact that a century after the time of Cyprian a movement arose in North Africa which in its original principle was akin to 'Novatianism'. During the intervening years, Constantine had put an end to the last great persecution of the Christians by the Roman State. The Council of Nicæa had met, and had promulgated the declaration which marked an epoch in the history of Christian theology. The Arian movement had ceased to be a serious factor in the life and thought of the eastern churches. But when Augustine came to Hippo as Bishop, he found the churches in North Africa divided and distracted by the Donatist movement, which had become a 'schism' in the special meaning of the word. The original leaders of this movement were not 'heretics' in any technical sense. They took their stand on the affirmation of Cyprian that Baptism by 'schismatics' was neither 'valid' nor 'effective'. As raised at this time, it specially concerned the clergy. Not only did the character and personal beliefs of the minister affect the validity of the rite, but any who yielded to the demands of a Roman official—above all, by giving up copies of the Christian Scriptures—were *traditores*,

forfeited all right to administer sacramental acts of any kind, and lost their clerical status.

Personal feuds soon entered into the Donatist propaganda. In 312—the year in which Constantine had embraced Christianity—the catholic party in Carthage secured the consecration of Cæcilian as Bishop. A rival party, the majority of which consisted of Bishops from Numidia, consecrated a rival Bishop, Majorinus; and they brought against Cæcilian, and against Felix, the Bishop who had consecrated him, the charge of having been *traditores*, as well as charges of immoral living. Cæcilian and Felix were declared to be innocent 'on all counts', by a succession of courts and inquiries, civil and ecclesiastical. But the Donatists refused to accept these verdicts, although they themselves had appealed to the emperor to appoint a 'neutral' court of inquiry, which was held in Rome. The movement, as it increased, gathered together forces of many kinds special to Africa. There was provincial jealousy—the proconsular province of Africa was much more 'Romanised' than the adjacent districts of Numidia and Mauretania. There was nationalist fanaticism—to be anti-Roman was to be a local 'patriot'. And what was most dangerous was the social and economic unrest rising in bitterness among the labourers on the estates of the great land-owners. This stirring and mingling of different forces, among a population largely African by race, made the movement into a faction of the worst kind. Moreover, the violence and atrocities committed by the wandering bands of fanatics called *circumcelliones*, if not authorised, were certainly to some extent used by the Donatists. The result was that Augustine was driven to defend the use of force against the 'schismatics'—a policy which he generalised. In any case, the Roman Government would have intervened because of the social and political disorder for which the Donatists were indirectly and sometimes directly responsible.

On the other hand, Augustine's attitude to the leaders who represented the original principles of the movement—such as Donatus himself, who gave his name to it, and Tyconius, with whose rules for the interpretation of the Bible Augustine was largely in agreement—was not one of mere hostility; though

the differences were irreconcilable. Augustine affirmed that the parable of the field, with its 'wheat' and 'tares', was to be understood of the visible Church as contrasted with the Church as it was to be hereafter. This was implied in his general doctrine that the actually existing Church contained unworthy as well as worthy members, who can be separated only at the last Judgment. The Donatists insisted that while the 'good' and the 'bad' were together in the world, they ought not to be together in the Church. This, of course, implied that the Donatists themselves had the right to decide who were the 'bad' and who were the 'good', and had the right to act accordingly. That the Donatists themselves were outside the Church was evident to Augustine; but the question of the Sacraments still remained open. When they administered Baptism, in the way used by the catholics, Augustine re-affirmed and emphasised the old but difficult and ambiguous distinction between 'validity' and 'efficacy'. Baptism is not invalidated by the wrong beliefs of the human Minister. But what is meant by 'validity' and distinguished from 'efficacy'? The only possible answer, if the distinction was to be maintained, was that schismatic Baptism, though rightly administered, does not convey to the recipient the supernatural benefit which Baptism ought to convey. This benefit is, so to speak, 'suspended' until the schismatic returns to the Church, when it becomes effective without re-baptism. This interpretation of the facts, Augustine applied also to the Sacrament of Ordination. Nevertheless, he perceived the difficulty of maintaining the distinction.

The fact is, that Augustine's position with regard to the Donatist movement was, perhaps more than he himself realised, complicated by his doctrine of absolute divine Predestination and irresistible Grace, which crossed his conception of the Church, and by his philosophical idealism, firmly held, though not claiming to be a matter of revelation.

The sack of Rome by the Goths under Alaric in 410 was a sensationally dramatic event which made a profound impression on men's minds, and which prompted Augustine to produce what now stands as one of the greatest works of ancient Christian

theology. He gave it the title *On the City of God* (*De Civitate Dei*), which he saw was inadequate to its contents, but which named the ideal that he had most at heart. A large division of the work is devoted to a pathology of Roman history and Roman religion, showing the utter falsity of ascribing the calamities of the western Empire to Christian antagonism to the Roman State-religion and the Roman gods.

In this survey of a very great work all that we can do is to form clear and distinct ideas of the essential principles on which the constructive portions of the work rest, without turning aside to discuss matters of controversial interpretation which are side-issues. There are, then, certain fundamental conclusions which emerge, so far as clear answers can be given to the following questions: What is the significance of the term *Civitas*, usually rendered 'City'? What is the ground of the distinction between the two extremes—the *civitas superna*, the heavenly City, the City of God, and the *civitas terrena*, the city of Satan? What is the relation of these, respectively, to the visible Church and to the secular State?

The usual rendering of the title is generally admitted to be inadequate. *Civitas* is neither 'city' nor 'State'. 'Community' comes nearest to the original meaning, as Augustine himself suggests, when he speaks of 'what we call figuratively (*mystice*) two cities, that is, two communities'. This is far from being a mere matter of words. Augustine is convinced that human nature is nothing if not social; human life is essentially community-life. For example, he suggests a definition of what is meant by a *people*: 'A people is an assemblage of rational beings united by general agreement as to the objects of their love; whatever it loves, if it is an assembly of rational beings and not of beasts, if it is united over the objects of its love, it is rightly called a people.'[13]

Ideally, the contrast is between two communities: 'There are two communities, arising from two opposite kinds of love: the earthly, from the love of self even to the contempt of God, the *civitas terrena*; the other, from the love of God even to the contempt of self, the *civitas superna*. The one glories in itself, the

other glories in God.' He passes immediately to an illustration in mundane terms: 'In the one, the love of power (*dominandi libido*) drives the rulers and crushes the nations it conquers; in the other, the rulers and the ruled serve one another in mutual goodwill—the rulers taking thought for all, the ruled obeying willingly.' [14]

It is important to bear in mind the range of meaning given to the word 'love' (*amor*) in these statements. 'Love' is more essential in human nature even than 'will': 'The good will is love well directed; the evil will is love ill-directed. Love, longing for what it loves, is desire; possessing and experiencing what it loves, it is joy; fleeing from what is against it, it is fear; hindered and frustrated, it is sorrow. These passions are evil if the love from which they spring is evil; good, if the love is good.' Many such statements might be quoted, all showing that love is an inner impulse ceaselessly moving the soul to seek satisfaction. Augustine compares it to the attraction of gravitation (of which he had an imperfect understanding): 'a body by its own weight seeks its own place; oil poured into water rises above the water; water poured into oil sinks below the oil. . . . Thus, when out of their order, material things are restless; restored to their order, they are at rest. In like manner, the thing that I love is the weight (*pondus*) of my soul; whithersoever I am borne, that is what bears me.' [15]

The ground of the contrast, therefore, consists of two absolutely opposed directions of that essential urge in human nature called 'love'.

Then, Augustine's vision shows him that neither of the two communities does exist, or ever has existed, in its fullness, on earth. 'We must distinguish', he urges, 'two periods in the history of the Church: the Church that now is, where evil men are found as well as good men: and the perfected Church hereafter, into which no evil can enter. Therefore, in the mystery of the divine foreknowledge, many who seem to be within the Church are really without the Church, and many who seem to be without are really within.' Again: 'Do not marvel at the number of bad Christians who throng the Churches and even communicate at the altar: they are with us, in the Church that now is, but hereafter they will not be found in the kingdom of the saints.' [16]

When, therefore, Augustine speaks of the Church as free from all imperfections, he is not referring to the Church as then existing, but to the Church *whose existence is being prepared on earth*. The true City of God is a transcendent spiritual community—the community of all those who have been and are to be saved by divine Grace. Therefore the true City of God has always existed, though not in visible form; and it follows from the mystery of the divine Predestination that salvation is not limited to believers in the historical Christian religion. Salvation has been made accessible to those who are worthy in all ages. Before Christian times there were outside the Hebrew race men who belonged to the fellowship of the heavenly City: 'We may rightly believe that in other nations there may have been men to whom that mystery was revealed and who were urged to proclaim it. . . . For though no other people than the Hebrews were specially called the people of God, they (the Jews) cannot deny that there were men among other nations who belonged not to the earthly but to the heavenly fellowship.' Then, taking the case of Job, who was not an Israelite by descent or race, Augustine suggests that from this one case they might learn that men well-pleasing to God were found in other nations: 'Therefore the true religion, although formerly practised under other names and with symbols different from ours, and formerly revealed more obscurely and to fewer men than it now is in a time of clearer light and wider diffusion, none the less is one and the same in both periods.' [17] In view of such statements, which are evidently intended to be fundamental, Augustine's denunciations of all non-Christian religions cannot be taken in their full and merely literal force. On the other hand, the doctrine of Predestination implies that though salvation is not limited to believers in the historical Christian religion, those in whom salvation by divine Grace has in all ages been made effective have not been chosen for any merits of their own. In this sense, 'Augustine's narrow predestinarianism led him to break down any narrow conception of the Church'.[18]

None the less, the visible Church made a penetrating appeal

to him. In his belief, it was the central factor in human history. Though it did not consist wholly of the redeemed, yet so far as it did consist of the redeemed, it was the earthly organ of the heavenly City. Its teachings, its worship, its sacraments, helped to purify men's lives, and make the means of Grace effective for those who are marked out for the last and crowning Grace, the gift of perfect perseverance.

What, then, is the *civitas terrena*? The *civitas terrena* in its full and fearful meaning is the kingdom of Satan, the realm of evil, irreducible, ultimate, final. The fallen angels, who fell from *love of power*, and all the host of the lost from the first dawn of human life on earth, all these have fallen into the kingdom of Satan. But to call this the *civitas terrena*, as though it was wholly embodied in the actual human race, was to invite misunderstanding. The actual *civitas terrena* is the earthly State, which does not consist wholly of the lost, any more than the visible Church consists wholly of the saved. The following passage is decisive, though others might be quoted: 'The pilgrim City of God must remember that among her earthly enemies those are concealed who are destined to be her fellow-citizens [in the heavenly community]: she must not believe that she endures in vain what they as her enemies inflict until they become Confessors of the Faith. And, as long as she sojourns in this world, the divine City has some in her own communion who will not share in the eternal life of the saints. Some of these we do not know; others will make themselves known. . . . Such are the men whom you may see thronging the Churches (with us) today, and tomorrow rushing to the obscene shows in the theatre. And yet we must not despair of the salvation even of such, when even among our open and declared enemies there are some who are destined to become our friends. In truth, the two communities are so intermingled in this life that only the Last Judgment shall separate them.'[19] But the redeemed who are in the Church, even if they do not know it, are working for her purification to become a fitting forecourt to the heavenly realm.

Augustine's vision of the intermingling of the two communities in this world explains his attitude to the earthly State. But the

question remains: What does he mean by the State? We may admit that his definition of 'a people' (quoted above) may be taken as a definition of the State, because in his view the State is essentially an organisation of *individuals*, which may be good or evil. Therefore he does not exclude Justice, by definition, from the very nature of the State. In a human society *organising itself apart from God* there can be no Justice: 'Unless the individual just man, and the people of the just community, live by the faith which works through love—the love in which man loves God as He ought to be loved, and his neighbour as himself—unless these things are so, there cannot be the justice of a community of men associated by common interests and a common recognition of right.'[20]

It is characteristic of Augustine's method of exposition, first to give a definition in abstract and ideal terms, which he holds to be true, and then to judge actualities in the light of it. As he did with the idea of Love, so he does with the idea of peace (he uses the ordinary Latin word, *pax*). Peace, in his belief, is not merely the absence of civil strife or international war: 'The peace of a State is a well-ordered harmony of rulers and ruled among the citizens.' The peace of the *civitas superna* is the perfectly ordered and harmonious enjoyment of God and of one another in God. The peace of the universe is the tranquillity of order, and order is the distribution of all things, equal and unequal, each in its place. 'Even a community alienated from God has a peace of its own, which must not be condemned: though they will not enjoy that peace because they will not have used it for the best before the end comes. . . . But it is to our interest that it should have this peace meanwhile in this world, for so long as the two communities are intermingled, we too enjoy the peace of the *civitas terrena*, from which, by faith, the community of God are so freed that they can sojourn in it. . . . Therefore the Apostle urged the Church to pray for those in authority; and the prophet Jeremiah (xxix. 7), when he was predicting the captivity which was to befall the ancient people of God, urged them to go obediently to Babylon, and even to pray for it, *quia in pace ejus est pax vestra*.'[21]

Augustine did not set forth a theory of what a Christian State

should be, nor did he exclude the possibility of a Christian State. ' The things needful for this mortal life are used by members of both communities—by each in its own characteristic way. The *civitas terrena* seeks a merely secular peace; but the heavenly community—or, rather, that part of it which sojourns in this present life and lives by faith—must needs use that peace until the conditions of mortality which necessitate it shall have passed away.' And if we ask, what are the duties of subjects in the secular State? we may refer to the following characteristic answer: ' Let those who say that the teaching of Christ is incompatible with the well-being of the Roman State, give us an army such as the teaching of Christ requires soldiers to be, let them give us such subjects, such husbands and wives, such parents and children, such masters and servants, such kings, such judges, even such tax-payers and tax-collectors, as the Christian religion has taught that men should be, and then let them dare to say that the Christian religion is adverse to the well-being of the State. Nay rather, let them no longer hesitate to confess that this doctrine, if it were obeyed, would be the salvation of the State.' [22]

CHAPTER VIII

THE SACRAMENTS

BAPTISM AND THE EUCHARIST

As the doctrine of the authority of the Church became more definite, the doctrine of the Sacraments developed along with it, and in fact was inseparable from it. We need not dwell on the various meanings of the word *sacramentum* in Roman Law, beyond referring to the meaning of the word which appealed to Tertullian (the oath of allegiance taken by a soldier): ' We are called to the military service (*ad militiam*) of the living God, when we answer in the words of the sacrament.' Tertullian is speaking of the confession of faith made by a candidate for Baptism. But in his own time, Christian theologians were using the word ' sacrament ' as descriptive of the whole ritual of the two principal Christian sacraments—Baptism and the Eucharist. The reason why the baptismal controversy in the time of Cyprian roused so much bitterness, and almost led to a ' schism ' between Carthage and Rome, sprang directly from the interpretation given to the traditional ritual authorised by the Church, and the unquestioned belief held by Cyprian and his followers that Baptism had a supernatural efficacy for the recipient only when administered by one who was authorised by the Church.

Baptism is one vitally important factor in the Christian inheritance from Judaism. It had acquired a special significance among the Jews because of the increasing number of ' proselytes '—converts from heathenism. The Rabbis regarded it as a purification from heathen defilements and an incorporation of the convert into the ' chosen race ', under the ancient Covenant between the God of Israel and *the people as a whole*. The proselyte immersed himself, in the presence of the Rabbis, who recited to him portions of the *Torah*. There was no question of the presence of priests.[1]

We may assume that conversions from heathenism began long before the birth of Christianity, and that ceremonial Baptism by immersion began in consequence. The use of water for all kinds of purifications and initiations was universal in the contemporary world. What is distinctive in Baptism as a religious rite is *the interpretation put upon it.* Among Christian believers it was in effect *universalised,* becoming a ceremony not merely of initiation but of incorporation into a new fellowship with God and man through the forgiveness of sins and the power of the Holy Spirit. We may say with confidence that there is no warrant in the New Testament for regarding Baptism as a ceremony believed by itself, merely as a ritual, to secure the favour of God.

When we turn to the narrative of the work of John the Baptiser, it is evident that while he administered Baptism by immersion, its real meaning for him was ' repentance ', change of mind and heart, and that this inward change was to be intensified with immeasurable range and power when the Messiah himself came to baptise ' with the Holy Spirit ' (Mark), ' with the Holy Spirit and with fire ' (Matthew and Luke).

In the synoptic Gospels there is no record that during his earthly life Jesus Christ made any reference to water-baptism. Belief in his direct sanction for the administration of Baptism by his Apostles rests on the resurrection-saying recorded in Matthew xxviii. 19. There is no reasonable doubt that this saying is a genuine part of the Gospel of Matthew in its final form.[2] The question remains, however, whether the saying is authentic, or whether it was inserted by the Greek editor to put on record an interpretation current later. It is significant that in the Book of Acts, Baptism is ' into the Name of the Lord Jesus ' (viii. 16, xix. 5), and that where Paul dwells on the meaning of Baptism he speaks of being baptised ' into Christ ', or ' into his death ', or ' into one body ' (Rom. vi. 3, 4; I Cor. xii. 13; Gal. iii. 27). The words of the famous text are not referred to. The power of the Holy Spirit supervened when the Apostle ' laid his hands upon them '. Moreover, the use of the Greek prepositions is important. The Greek is not ' baptise in ' (*en*) the Name, that is, by the authority of Christ, but ' into ' (*eis*) the Name—signifying willing

submission to the spiritual power of Christ. The belief and feeling about personal names, in the Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian Scriptures, is interesting. There are indications in the Old Testament that from the intimate connection between the person and the name, the name came to be regarded (in certain cases) as an expression of the personality. A remarkable example is that of ' Bezalel ' (R.V.), that is, ' under the shadow, or under the protection, of God ', whom God called to be a skilful artificer, craftsman, and inventor (Exodus xxxi. 3). The Name of the Deity inevitably acquired a unique significance. The ancient Latin version, used by Augustine (Exodus iii. 14, R.V.), reveals the traditional Christian interpretation: *Ego sum qui sum; . . . Qui est misit me ad vos:* [3] ' " He who is " has spoken; " He who is " has sent me.' So, in the New Testament, the Name Jesus Christ expresses his Person and sums up the knowledge of him: ' As many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, to those that believe in (*eis*) his Name ' (John i. 13, in the rendering of the Revised Version). Paul is recorded to have wrought a miracle through that Name (Acts xvi. 18), but in order to accomplish this, an inner knowledge of Christ was needed (Acts xix. 13).

The words recorded in John (iii. 5) ' born from water and the Spirit ' certainly refer to Baptism. Assuming their authenticity, we still ask, Where is the *real emphasis* of the words placed? The reference to Baptism ' in water ' must have been well known to Nicodemus, a ' teacher in Israel '. The natural interpretation is, that unless the power of the Spirit supervenes on the familiar ceremony of the water, no spiritual regeneration will take place.

In the Epistles the expressions used are highly figurative. The believers who have been baptised into Christ Jesus were ' baptised into his death '; those who were baptised into Christ ' put on Christ ' like a garment, and ' in one Spirit were baptised into one body ', when all distinctions of race, sex, and social conditions disappeared. It is no violent extension of such figurative expressions when a saving efficacy is attributed to the water itself. At a time when the Christian community seemed to be the one refuge in a doomed world and the one visible organ of the Spirit,

it would not have been surprising if much stronger expressions than those now found in the New Testament had been used of this significant act, which might be followed by serious personal consequences.

Justin Martyr gives a careful description of the rite of Baptism as it had established itself in his time (the middle years of the second century). It included: (i) a period of preliminary instruction; (ii) the use of the three Names; (iii) a moral demand. Referring to those who are persuaded and believe that 'what we teach is true', and who promise to live accordingly, he proceeds: 'We bring them to where is water, . . . and in the name of God the Father and Lord of all, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, they receive the bathing of the water. In the water, there is called over him who chooses the new birth and repents of his sins' the three Names 'in order that we might not remain children of ignorance and custom and habit, but by deliberate choice and understanding might repent and be forgiven'. And then, 'we bring him to those whom we call the Brotherhood, where they are gathered together, to offer prayer for ourselves, for him who has been enlightened [that is, by Baptism] and for all others everywhere, that it may be granted to us, having learnt the truth, to be found by our works good citizens, and faithful to obey the commandments, and attain to eternal salvation'.[4]

Tertullian's account of Baptism, at any rate as administered in North Africa, reveals a more extensive elaboration of ritual, in which 'laying on of hands' by the Bishop *or* by a Presbyter was a principal part, after the invocation over the water had given it the power of sanctification. Tertullian believed that the water thus sanctified had the power of purifying the *body* from sin; but the gift of the Spirit followed the 'laying on of hands' in response to the confession made by the candidate.[5] Of great importance, in view of the after history of Baptism, is Tertullian's teaching about its proper recipients. He was thoroughly opposed to the Baptism of children, as dangerous to the child and to the sponsors. He was convinced that sin after Baptism was not forgiven. Moreover, children (*parvuli*, not necessarily infants) cannot make the responses or understand the significance of what is being done.

Harnack observed, with entire justification, that we are in complete obscurity as to the general adoption of the custom of infant Baptism by the Church. That it existed in the time of Tertullian is evident from the urgency of his objections to it; and its prevalence in the time of Cyprian is evident. The peculiarity of Cyprian's position is that he recognises and approves the Baptism of children and of adults. 'Faith in the inspired Scriptures reveals to us that all, whether infants or adults, have the same share in the divine Gift. This divine and spiritual equality is known, because all rational beings are equal (*pares atque aequales*) in that they have been originally created by God. Our age in years, with the growth of our bodies, will differ according to secular reckoning, but not according to the reckoning of God. Otherwise, the Grace which is given in Baptism would be given in smaller or larger share according to the age of those who receive it. The Holy Spirit is not given by measure, but by the Grace and Mercy of the Father is given equally to all.' This interesting passage, as Cyprian intended it, refers only to the question of Baptism: it has no reference to unbaptised persons of any age. The whole question of Baptism by 'schismatics' or 'heretics' naturally was one which concerned only adults; but that Cyprian approved of infant Baptism is evident not only from the statements quoted above, but from the fact that he discusses the number of days after birth at which Baptism may properly take place.[6] On the other hand, the conviction, emphasised by Tertullian, that sin after Baptism was not forgiven, led to the custom, on the part of adults, of postponing Baptism to a late period in life, in order to escape that danger.

Not until we come to the Cappadocian Fathers do we find any further endeavour to provide a theology of the baptismal rite. Gregory of Nyssa looks at the constitution of human nature as he knew it, dwelling on the view of Baptism as a 'second birth' which enables the believer to rise above 'mere mortality'; but 'faith, prayer to God, invocation of the heavenly Grace' are needed, as well as 'water'. Gregory is convinced, however, that the invocation of divine Grace over the water does really endow it with supernatural power; and this, he suggests, is no

more wonderful than the growth of a rational being from the minute 'germ' resulting from the act of conception. In both cases we see the working of divine power using natural means for the production of a higher end. It is strange that Gregory, who was a philosophical theologian, should have imagined that such a fallacious analogy is even an illustration, much less an argument. He is on surer ground in explaining the meaning of the 'new birth'. Some who come to Baptism deceive themselves, being born again only in appearance, not in reality. The object in view is the renewal, or change, of our nature; but the nature of the change is carefully explained: 'Neither the power of rational thought nor the faculty of understanding, nor any other distinctive faculty of human nature, undergoes a change. Such a change would be for the worse, if any of these faculties of our nature were replaced by something else. . . . Clearly, it is when the evil tendencies of our nature have been destroyed that change for the better takes place.' Then referring to the words of Isaiah i. 16, he proceeds: 'If the stains of its passions are not washed away *from the soul*, and the life after initiation is of the same character as the uninitiate life, then the water is only water, and the Holy Spirit is not given.' [7]

Augustine deals with the question of infant Baptism in a way which seems to indicate that it was becoming generally prevalent. 'An infant, though not yet a believer in the sense of having that faith which includes the voluntary consent of him who exercises it, nevertheless becomes a believer through the Sacrament of that faith. For, as it is answered [by the sponsors] that he believes, he is accounted a believer, not because he assents to the truth by an act of his own judgment, but because he receives the Sacrament of that truth. When, however, he begins to have the discretion of manhood, he will not repeat the Sacrament [will not need to be baptised again]. He will understand its meaning, and of his own will live by the truth which it contains. During the time when he is by reason of youth unable to do this, the sacrament will avail for his protection against evil powers. It will avail so much on his behalf, that if he dies before he comes to the age of reason, he will be delivered, by the love of the Church commending him

to God through the sacrament, from that condemnation which by one man entered into the world. . . . The baptised infant, though not yet possessing a faith animated by understanding, is not obstructing faith by any antagonism of the understanding, and therefore receives the full benefit of the sacrament of Grace.' [8] In view of this passage, we cannot acquit Augustine of the charge of representing Baptism as an *opus operatum* which can not only secure eternal salvation but even in this life wards off the power of evil spirits. At the same time, it is clear from Augustine's words that the efficacy of Baptism, *apart from the reason and will of the recipient*, is limited to childhood, until reason and will co-operate with the original efficacy of the rite; but it is also clear that Augustine's interpretation has not been generally accepted by the Church.

The word 'Eucharist', it need hardly be said, means 'thanksgiving'. The corresponding Greek word does not occur in the New Testament. The Church has extended its meaning to signify the whole ritual of the observance, which in modern times is most often named the Holy Communion.

The early record in Acts ii is based on the same Tradition to which Paul appealed. 'They continued steadfastly in the teaching of the Apostles, and in the fellowship (*koinonia*) of the breaking of bread, and in prayer: . . . breaking bread at home, they took their food in gladness and singleness of heart'. It was an expression of the purposes of Christ himself, rather than a copy of any Jewish institution.[9] But as Paul received the Tradition, it had become a special observance, the sharing of the broken bread *and of the cup*. In Mark xiv. 22–25 and in Matthew xxvi. 26–29 the command 'do this' is not recorded. It appears in Luke xxii. 19 in a passage which textual scholars believe to have been compiled from Mark and from Paul. But in I Cor. xi. 23–25 Paul records it twice, once over the broken bread and again over the cup. It has been suggested that a common meal which Jesus held with his disciples had a larger part in his ministry than is usually recognised. If so, the Last Supper was in truth the last, because it was held under the shadow of his death. Whatever the month and day may have been, and however we may explain the

differences between the Marcan and the Pauline narratives, the central fact remains: the inner meaning of the Last Supper is related *not to the Jewish Passover but to the Cross.*

Paul's statement that he had 'received from the Lord' what he had 'delivered' to them cannot mean that it had been miraculously conveyed to him. It is noteworthy that in chapter xv (v. 3) of the same epistle he uses the same words in reference to a truth which he had 'received' as a Tradition and had 'delivered' to them. The account which he gives of the Last Supper had come down to him from a Tradition going back to the time of Jesus himself. The important fact is the existence of such a Tradition at so early a date.

Paul's account in chapter xi is seen out of proportion if it is detached from the whole passage to which it belongs (verses 20–34). His purpose was to correct abuses which had arisen in the Corinthian church of his day, and he recalls the words and acts of Jesus in order to remind the Corinthians of the true significance of their common meal. It appears that Lightfoot's interpretation of the Pauline passage has not been shaken (*Apostolic Fathers*, Part II, col. ii, p. 313). Lightfoot was convinced that from the earliest days Christians held a common meal, which before long was called the Agapê. With this was combined a special observance on the lines signalised by Paul—a Eucharist in the proper meaning of the word. The Agapê was at first a meal for the whole community. It was not held everywhere, and for various reasons was abandoned. Its importance in any case decreased as the importance of the Eucharist increased.[10]

In the Fourth Gospel (vi. 41–59) the emphasis differs materially from the Marcan narrative. The passage is before all else *an interpretation of the Bread and the Cup.* There is no reference to a communal meal in the background. The communal meal was probably going out of use. It has been pointed out that in any case the difficulty of combining a decently conducted communal meal with a religious observance was not limited to Corinth; and in such a numerous community as that of Rome, the difficulty as well as the danger of organising a communal meal for the members of the Church is obvious.

The Letters of Ignatius show that the communal meal was giving way to a distinctively religious observance, to which supreme importance is attached. We cannot look to Ignatius for a theology of this; but he is convinced that the Bread and the Cup are indispensable for the spiritual efficacy of the rite, because the Body of Christ is in some sense present. This is not unrelated to his denunciation of the delusions of Docetism: 'Mark those men who hold strange beliefs concerning the Grace of Christ: they have no care for the widow and the orphan, none for the afflicted or for the prisoner, none for the hungry. They abstain from thanksgiving, because they will not believe that the Eucharist is the body of our Lord Jesus Christ.' Here special emphasis is laid on thanksgiving in direct connection with a conviction that the Eucharist celebrates the Real Presence of Christ.

The statement of Justin Martyr, in a well-known passage in his *Apology*, is ambiguous, not to say confused.[11] But in the immediately following passage he gives a description of the Eucharist as part of the Sunday Service, together with the reasons for its observance on Sunday in particular. 'On the day named after the Sun, we assemble together, and the records of the Apostles, or the writings of the prophets, are read, so far as there is time. Then, when the reader has finished, the Leader instructs us in words of warning and exhortation to live according to these glorious precepts. Then, we rise together and offer up prayer. . . . Then, bread is brought in, and wine and water, and the Leader offers up prayer and thanksgiving, and the people respond with Amen. Then, the distribution of the food thus blessed is made to each of those present, and is taken by the Deacons to those who are absent.' Immediately following the religious observance, 'those who are prosperous, and who desire to do so, make gifts, each according to his choice, and what is collected is placed in the hands of the Leader, who, with it, gives help to the orphaus and the widows, to those who from illness or any other cause are in want, to those who are in bondage, and to strangers from afar'.

Then Justin explains why the assembly is held on the 'day of the Sun': because that was the first day of God's creative work, when He said, 'Let there be Light', and because Jesus Christ on

that day rose from the grave: 'For, on the day preceding the day of Saturn, he was crucified, and on the day following the day of Saturn, he rose, and appeared to his disciples.' In this passage, Justin makes no reference to the Jewish Tradition about the 'seventh day' or the 'Sabbath'. Elsewhere, criticising the sabbatarian legalism of the Jews, he affirms that the Sabbath was ordained for the Jews alone, lest they should forget their Creator; and he observes that the laws of Nature 'rest not and know no Sabbath', and that God Himself continues the same administration of the world, 'on the Sabbath day as on all other days'.[12]

Irenæus makes no reference to the Agapê in his work against heretical sects. His concentration on the Eucharist indicates its growing importance as a distinct and definite religious rite; but throughout the work he has in view the 'Gnostic' theory that the body of Jesus was only the appearance of a material body, together with the Marcionite theory that the created world was the work not of the supreme God but of an inferior Being, and the more extreme Valentinian theory that the created world was the product of mere ignorance and a mere 'abortion'. The position defended by Irenæus as the prevailing doctrine of the Church is summed up in the following affirmation: 'Just as the bread which came from the earth, when it has received the invocation of God upon it, is no longer common bread, but becomes a Eucharist consisting of two parts, an earthly and a heavenly, so our bodies, when they participate in the Eucharist, are no longer perishable, because they have the hope of a resurrection into eternal life.' Irenæus does not offer any theology of the way in which the material elements undergo this transcendent change; but it is not an entire 'transubstantiation' of the elements—it is the addition of a supernatural efficacy to them.[13]

The idea of the Eucharist as a Sacrifice can be traced from the time of Ignatius onwards, appearing at first rather incidentally; but we find that by the time of Cyprian such statements have become more definite. Thus, he observes (Letter 65): 'If Jesus Christ our Lord and God offered himself as a sacrifice to the Father, and commanded this (the eucharistic observance) to be done in commemoration of himself, then the priest acts in Christ's

stead (*vice Christi fungitur*): the priest imitates what Christ did, and offers a true and full sacrifice to God the Father.' We must not read too much into a statement like this; the emphasis in the word sacrifice is often primarily on *offering*; but Cyprian means that the office of an ordained priest is essential. We suggest that if the idea of a sacrifice in the Eucharist is to be made definite, it must mean that the real sacrifice is that of Christ, who descends to make these material elements the means of conveying to the communicants a spiritual good which he alone can give. The Real Presence of Christ becomes effective there and then, and in that way. This was perceived by Augustine. He held that the real sacrifice was the sacrifice of Christ himself, renewed in the Eucharist: '*Christiani peracti hujus sacrificii memoriam celebrant, sacrosancti oblatione et participione corporis et sanguinis Christi.*'[14]

When we turn to the great Alexandrians, we find, as might be expected, that while the historical institution of the Eucharist by Christ is never questioned, great importance is attached to its allegorical interpretation. So far is this carried by Origen, that 'it is sometimes difficult to decide when Origen is speaking of the Eucharist and when of general spiritual communion with Christ'.[15] Origen distinguishes between the way in which the Bread and the Cup are understood 'by the simple, according to the ordinary understanding', and 'the nourishing truth' understood by those who have learnt to listen 'with an ear of deeper and keener range'. His fundamental teaching is this: 'God the Word did not say that the bread which he held in his hand was his body, but that the bread which was to be broken was a symbol of the Word; nor did he say that the wine in the cup was his blood, but that the wine which was to be poured out was a symbol of the Word. What else can the body and blood of God the Word be, except the Word which nourishes the soul and rejoices the heart?'[16]

Gregory of Nyssa, on the other hand, endeavours to rationalise the idea of a real change in the elements, on the basis of his philosophical theory of the nature of 'matter'. The elementary (visible) components of the broken Bread and of the contents of the Cup are not identical with their essential nature. Gregory starts from the facts of human physiology so far as he knew them.

The human body maintains itself in existence through the energy supplied to it by nourishment from without; and this nourishment is assimilated by the body, 'becoming what the body is'. In the Incarnation the human body, which became the receptacle of the divine Word, was in some sense identical with the divine Word, and became his body, and the nourishment which was changed into the nature of the human was changed into the body of the Divine Word: 'with good reason, therefore, we hold that the Bread which is sanctified by the divine Word is changed into the body of the Word; and when we share in the Eucharist, our mortality participates in immortality'.[17] Involved in this is the conviction that certain effects of the Incarnation are continued in the Eucharist. In the Incarnation Christ 'mingled with' the perishable nature of mankind, and in the Eucharist he 'mingles with' the perishable elements. By this communion with Deity in the Eucharist man may at the same time be 'deified'. This was a Christianised and spiritualised version of an idea familiar in the 'Mystery Religions' of the time. But Gregory's Platonic interpretation of the Christian rite did not win general acceptance, although he helped to spread the theory of a supernatural change in the elements; and the eloquence of Chrysostom went far to popularise it.

If we venture to detach and state separately the fundamental idea involved in these apparently divergent interpretations of the Eucharist, it could be expressed in two propositions: (i) the essential fact in the Eucharist was the Real Presence of Christ; and (ii) the Real Presence of Christ carried with it a change in the elements on the Altar.

This was developed further by Ambrose of Milan. He believed and taught that the words of consecration pronounced over the elements on the Altar changed their nature in such a way that we do not receive the Sacrament merely *in similitudinem*, symbolically: 'How can that living Bread descend from heaven? Because he shares (*consors est*) in heavenly and in earthly existence: and you, in receiving what is earthly, share in the Food which is his divine Substance (that is, his essential Nature).'[18]

When we turn to Augustine, there is a primary and fundamental fact to be remembered. He was a philosophical idealist. His idealism is not a theoretical side-issue with little or no bearing on his theology. It was a conviction of fundamental import for his whole view of the world, of mankind, and of religion. As we have seen (page 83), it meant for him in the first place the entire subjectivity of our experience of events as *merely successive*. Space he did not hold to be subjective in that sense. Space was a vast system of relations, objective to the human mind, but created by God as the field for revealing His works in the order of Nature. When Augustine speaks of 'matter', he means *space*, so understood. In any other sense, 'matter' is a mere fiction—as, for example, in the sense of a 'substance' which though created is non-mental, bearing the qualities which our senses perceive. For that reason, a doctrine of the 'transubstantiation' of a *material* substance would have had no meaning for Augustine. No 'material substance' exists to be thus transformed. Hence, as we have seen (page 80), all *miracles* are special actions of the divine Will, differing from the universal activity of the divine Will in their unique character and in the significance of their meaning and purpose. His *interpretation* of the two principal Christian Sacraments is an application of his idealism. It is characteristic of Augustine that he gives definitions of a sacrament, not always in the same words, but not differing in principle. In a Christian Sacrament, 'things visible become signs (*signacula*) of things invisible, but by them the visible things are honoured'.[19] Such a statement, taken by itself, might suggest that the Sacrament is only a memorial; but, as we shall see, this was not the interpretation placed upon it by Augustine.

The ritual of Baptism is valid even if the minister is unworthy, or even if he is a 'heretic'. The conclusion can be summed up in two brief statements. *Non cogitandum quis det sed quid det*, and *aliud est non habere, aliud non utiliter habere*. What is to be considered is not, in the first place, who gives but what he gives; and it is one thing not to possess a Good at all, but another not to possess it to any good effect. If the efficacy of the rite depended on the character of the minister, doubt would be thrown on the

whole sacramental life of the past, and the efficacy of the Sacrament would depend on men. The defender of the Catholic position could never accept that conclusion. Augustine affirms the supreme importance of the ritual acts, and the comparative unimportance of the human minister: 'Baptism is not validated by the worthiness of those who administer it or of those for whom it is administered, but through him by whom it was instituted, by his own holiness and truth.'[20] In other words, it is the Holy Spirit in Christ that is effective in Baptism.

The same idealism is involved in his interpretation of the Eucharist. The Real Presence of Christ is manifested in a unique manner in response to the invocation over the elements on the Altar, in a way transcending any other miracle save the Resurrection. If Augustine had been asked, Why does Christ act in this unique way when these ritual acts are faithfully performed? he could only appeal to the Gospel records as he read them before him: Christ ordained that it should be so. Whenever Augustine refers to the Eucharist, he affirms the Real Presence of Christ in it: this is the 'spiritual food' made effective for the faithful communicant.

In a Sermon addressed to 'lay' folk, Augustine relates his interpretation of the Eucharist to a cardinal utterance of Paul (I Cor. xii. 27): 'What you *see* in the Sacrament is the Bread and the Cup: what your faith needs to understand is the Presence of the Body of Christ. . . . The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ ascended into heaven: how then can the Bread be his Body and the Cup contain his Blood? Brothers: the Sacrament is thus set forth because in it one thing is *seen* and another is understood. What is *seen* is the material appearance: what is understood, is the power of spiritual food. If you would understand the Body of Christ, remember the words of the Apostle. If, then, you are the body of Christ, the mystery of the Lord's table is in yourselves.'[21]

In his exposition of Psalm xcviii, Augustine interprets the words of Christ at the Last Supper: 'It is not this visible body that you are about to consume, nor that blood which they who will crucify me will shed. I have declared to you a mystery (*sacramentum*): understood spiritually, it will give you help. Although it must be visibly celebrated, it must be spiritually understood.'[22] And again, near the end of his *De Civitate Dei*, Augustine thus interprets the words recorded in John vi. 56 ff.: 'When Christ said, "he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood, abides in me and I in him," Christ declares . . . what it really is to consume his Body and his Blood. It is to dwell in Christ. It is as if Christ said, He who dwells not in me and in whom I do not dwell, let him not imagine that he can consume my Body and my Blood.'[23] The Sacrament is one thing, the virtue of the Sacrament is another thing. The virtue of the Sacrament is the spiritual food after which the faithful hunger.

We briefly indicated above (page 225) the bearing of Augustine's philosophical idealism on his interpretation of the elements in the Eucharist; but that philosophical idealism is expanded and deepened until it becomes a profound spiritual ideal. In his last conversation with Monica (his mother) he shows how they tried to ascend, through images derived from the created world, to some realisation of the blessedness of perfect union with God, and how, as they spoke of their longing for it, they seemed for a moment to reach out to it. When they tried to express in words what they had felt, they said: 'Suppose all that we perceive in earth and sea and air were put to silence, and all the tumult of the flesh in us were hushed, and even the soul spoke no words to itself but passed beyond all thought of itself: suppose that all dreams and works of imagination were hushed, with every word and sign and all that belongs to this changing world: suppose they were all silenced—though, if they could speak to one who had ears to hear they would say "we made not ourselves, He made us who abides for ever": suppose they uttered only this and then were silent, when they had turned the ears of the hearer to Him who made them, leaving Him to speak alone, so that we could hear His voice not through tongue of flesh nor voice of angel, nor in thunder nor in any likeness that hides what it reveals: suppose then that God, whom through all these changing things we have learnt to love, were to be revealed to us directly without any such mediation: suppose that this vision of God were to be prolonged

for ever, and all imperfect ways of vision were taken away, and that this alone should so overwhelm him who beheld it and fill him with mystic joy, and that life were for ever like that moment of insight and inspiration to which we rose: would not this be what is meant by the words, Enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord?'

APPENDIX

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

INTRODUCTION

THE BACKGROUND: HISTORICAL OUTLINE

[1] (p. 20). Harnack, *Mission and Expansion of Christianity*, English translation, vol. I, pp. 31 ff. (on religious Individualism).

[2] (p. 21). Virgil, *Aeneid*, bk. I, 278–279 and VI, 851–853.

[3] (p. 22). Irenæus, *Adversus Haereses* (*Against heretical Sects*), bk. I, ch. xxiv. section 2 (why human Governments were appointed by God). The translation of this work in Pusey's *Library of the Fathers* is useful for reference.

[4] (p. 22). Ambrose of Milan, Epistle numbered 73 in Migne, *Patrologia* (Latin Series, vol. XVI, col. 1251).

[5] (p. 23). Among the numerous books on the 'Background', most of which are valuable for students of Christian history, we may mention Samuel Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius* (1904); H. A. A. Kennedy, *St. Paul and the Mystery Religions* (1913); S. Angus, *The Mystery Religions and Christianity* (1925); A. Loisy, *Les Mystères païens et le Mystère Chrétien*, and review of this book in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. XIX, pp. 183 ff.

CHAPTER I

TRADITION AND INTERPRETATION

[1] (p. 28). The quotation (by permission) is from *According to the Scriptures*, by Professor C. H. Dodd, ch. VI, pp. 126–127.

[2] (p. 29). The writings grouped under the title 'The Apostolic Fathers' have been published in one volume, with Greek texts and English translations, by Lightfoot and Harmer, based on Lightfoot's classical edition in four volumes. The most important are *The Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians* (the so-called 'Second Epistle of Clement' is an anonymous homily), and the Letters of Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, written to seven Churches, during his journey to Rome, whither he was being taken to martyrdom. On the remarkable tract *The Teaching of the Apostles* (the *Didache*), we may refer to Dr. J. M. Creed's Essay in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. XXXIX (1935), pp. 70 ff.

[3] (p. 38). The questions arising out of the origin of the 'Rule of Faith' are analysed, with references to the sources, by Canon J. N. Kelly, *The Early Christian Creeds* (1950). The work done in recent years on the origin and history of the 'Apostles' Creed' is set forth impartially by Fr. de Ghellinck, *Les Recherches sur les Origines du Symbole des Apôtres* (Paris, 1945). But the first 'seed', as it were, of the 'Rule of Faith' is seen in the facts of the Gospel as recorded in the passages quoted above from the second chapter of the Book of Acts (compare also ch. v. 30–32).

[4] (p. 40). This much-discussed statement (on the central importance of the Roman Church) is from Irenæus, *op. cit.*, III, iii. 2.

[5] (p. 42). The quotations are from Tertullian, *On the Prescription of the Heretics*, ch. XII and XIV, in the translation of T. H. Bindley.

[6] (p. 44). In his study entitled *Marcion, der Evangelium vom Fremden Gott* (*The Gospel of the Stranger God*) Harnack considers all the questions relating to Marcion's life and work. More recently, the Rev. E. C. Blackman, in *Marcion and his Influence* (1948), has carried the subject further, and has discussed the points of affinity between the religion of Marcion and that of some modern theologians. On the Gnostic movement in general, we may refer to the article 'Gnosticism', in Hastings, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. VI, and (especially) to F. C. Burkitt, *Church and Gnosis* (1932).

[7] (p. 47). The best account (in English) of the life and work of Clement of Alexandria is that of R. B. Tollinton: *Clement of Alexandria, a Study in Christian Liberalism* (1914). In 1902 Drs. F. J. Hort and J. B. Mayor published (with Greek text and English translation) an edition of the seventh Book of the *Stromata*, in which Clement discusses the character of the 'Christian Gnostic'.

[8] (p. 48). The quotations are from the *Stromata*, bk. VII (Hort and Mayor, *op. cit.*, pp. 96, 117, 157, 167).

[9] (p. 50). A very comprehensive study of Origen's life, writings, and thought, is that of E. de Faye, *Origene, sa Vie, ses Œuvres, sa Pensée* (three volumes, Paris, 1928). The second volume contains a discussion of the work done on Origen by Huet, Denis, Redepenning, Harnack, and Bigg. Harnack's elaborate and heavily annotated exposition appears in English in the second volume of the translation of his *History of Dogma*. Bigg's Bampton Lectures (1886) on *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria* have been reprinted, with additions and some corrections, by F. E. Brightman (1913). The Essay by B. F. Westcott, 'Origenes', in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography* (edited by Smith and Wace) retains its value after more than eighty years. Of Origen's work on *First Principles* we have now a most adequate translation by Dr. G. W. Butterworth, with an Introduction which is an important contribution to the understanding of the history and character of the work.

[10] (p. 50). Origen's conception of the nature and authority of Tradition is discussed by the Rev. R. H. Hanson in a valuable Essay in *The Journal of Theological Studies* (1948) (on the literal and spiritual sense of passages in the Old Testament). The translation is that of Armitage Robinson, given in Gwatkin, *Selections from Early Christian Writers*, p. 127.

[11] (p. 51). Origen, *First Principles*, I, vi. and IV, ii.7. (on the literal and spiritual sense of passages in the Old Testament). The translation is that of Armitage Robinson, given in Gwatkin, *Selections from Early Christian Writers*, p. 127.

[12] (p. 52). On Origen's interpretation of the Temptation, see the passage quoted in Gwatkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 137–139.

[13] (p. 53). On Origen's interpretation of the Song of Songs, see the comments of Bigg, *Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, p. 231, and Preface, pp. 6–8.

[14] (p. 53). The statements of Gregory of Nyssa, in his reply to Eunomius, on the authority of Tradition, represent the general position of the Cappadocian Fathers (Migne, *Patrologia*, Greek Series, vol. XLV, cols. 461 and 650).

[15] (p. 56). Augustine's fullest statements, in reference to the interpretation of the Bible, are given in his *De Doctrina Christiana*, ch. xxvi–xxviii.

[16] (p. 58). Augustine speaks definitely of his indebtedness to Ambrose in his *Confessions*, bk. VIII, ch. ix (the quotation here is given from the translation of C. Bigg).

[17] (p. 60). In this survey of Theodore's methods of interpretation I have been indebted in particular to Dr. Devreese, in his *Essai sur Théodore de Mopsueste* (1948), in which adequate account is taken of the results of comparitively recent investigations.

[18] (p. 62). The translation of the passages here quoted is almost that of T. H. Bindley, *The Commonitorium of Vincent of Lerinum* (1913).

CHAPTER II

GOD AND THE CREATIVE WORD

[1] (p. 71). Irenæus on Christian monotheism: *Adversus Haereses*, II, xxv. 19.

[2] (p. 71). Irenæus on the natural sources of belief in God: II, xiii. 3 and xxx. 9.

[3] (p. 72). Irenæus on the alleged confirmation of doctrine by miracle: II, xxxi. 2 ff. (Compare Justin, *Dialogue*, ch. viii.)

[4] (p. 75). Clement, *Stromata*, bk. VII (Hort and Mayor, *op. cit.*, p. 17); and on the interpretation of the Creation-narrative, *Stromata*, bk. VI (Migne, *Patrologia*, Greek Series, vol. VIII, col. 212, and vol. IX, col. 369). We have detached these ideas from the fantastic number-symbolism on which Clement is inclined to enlarge. Westcott (*Epistles of St. John*, pp. 276 ff.) observes: 'Many of such arguments appear to us frivolous and pointless: it requires a serious effort to enter into them with sympathy and understanding. But such an effort is worth making. Conclusions which rest upon arbitrary assumptions as to the symmetries of things bear witness in an imperfect fashion to a deep sense of the divine order in creation: and we are unjust to those who held them if we allow the greatest errors of expression to blind us to the conception which they most inadequately embody.'

[5] (p. 75). The quotation is from Tertullian, *Adversus Hermogenem*. Hermogenes was an artist with leanings to Gnosticism. He had argued for the existence of a material *datum* objective to God—formless, but real enough to limit the divine activity; and Tertullian wrote this tract in reply.

[6] (p. 75). Origen on the inter-relation of the divine attributes: see *First Principles*, II, i (Butterworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 79 and 134).

[7] (p. 75). Origen's use of the metaphor of life as a 'training-ground': see *First Principles*, III, v and vi (Butterworth, pp. 248 and 125–126).

[8] (p. 76). The quotation is from Origen's commentary on the Psalms, XXVII, ch. i (Migne, *Patrologia*, Greek Series, vol. XII, col. 1284).

[9] (p. 76). Origen's interpretation of the consummation when 'God shall be all in all': see *First Principles*, I, ch. ii and iv (Butterworth, pp. 24, 34, 37): also in his work *Against Celsus*, IV, ch. xiv (Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. XI, col. 1044).

[10] (p. 78). Augustine on the meaning of Faith: see his Commentary on the Fourth Gospel (*Tractatus in Johannis Evangelium*), XXV, ch. ix (Migne, *Patrologia*, Latin Series, vol. XXXV, col. 1610).

[11] (p. 78). Augustine on Knowledge as Illumination: see *The City of God* (*De Civitate Dei*), X, ch. iii (*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum*, Latin Series, vol. XL (i), p. 448.

[12] (p. 79). Augustine's interpretation of 'In Thy Light': see his Commentary on the Fourth Gospel, XXXV, ch. iii (Migne, *Patrologia*, Latin Series, vol. XXXV, col. 1658).

[13] (p. 79). Augustine on the meaning of miracle: see *The City of God*, X, ch. xii (*Corpus*, vol. XL (i), p. 468).

[14] (p. 80). Augustine on belief in miracles and belief in 'custom': see his *Contra Faustum* (the Manichean), XXXVI, ch. iii. (The quotation is abridged from Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. XLII, col. 481.)

[15] (p. 80). Augustine on the basis of certainty: see his *Soliloquia*, II, ch. ii (Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. XXXII, col. 885; also *The City of God*, XI, ch. xxxvi, *Corpus*, vol. XL (i), p. 557).

[16] (p. 81). Augustine on the essential mutability of all created things: see his work *On the Nature of the Good* (*De Natura Boni*), ch. i (Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. VIII, col. 551). This is the 'key-note' of all his references to sense-experience. In a few statements there are reminiscences of Heracleitus: 'No object of sense-perception remains unchanged even for a moment of time.'

[17] (p. 82). Augustine on 'the Law of Number': see *The City of God*, XII, xviii (*Corpus*, *loc. cit.*, p. 559, abridged in translation).

[18] (p. 82). Augustine on 'matter' and space: 'matter' to be defined in terms of space: see his *De Genesi ad Litteram*, VII, ch. 21 and 27 (Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. XXXIX, col. 365). This definition of 'matter' in terms of extension and movement seems to be essentially an anticipation of the Cartesian view. Augustine states it repeatedly: see, especially, the Epistle numbered 166 (Migne, *Patrologia*, XXXIII, col. 722).

[19] (p. 82). Augustine's discussion of 'endless divisibility' occurs in his work on the Immortality of the Soul (Migne, *Patrologia*, XXXII, col. 1028).

[20] (p. 83). On the absurdities of the Manichean cosmology: see Augustine's *Confessions*, bk. V, ch. iii.

[21] (p. 83). On the meaning of 'Eternity' as conceived by Augustine (and long afterwards by Boethius), see the *Confessions*, bk. XI, ch. xiv. (The last three books of Augustine's *Confessions* are specially important for understanding of his thought on a number of fundamental questions.)

[22] (p. 84). This has been described as 'the instrumental theory' of the relation of Mind to Body (Migne, *Patrologia*, XXXII, col. 1332, and XXXV, col. 1553).

[23] (p. 85). Augustine's conception of the Creation of theWorld is carefully examined by E. Gilson, *Introduction a L'Etude de Saint Augustin*, third edition, 1949, pp. 256 ff.

[24] (p. 86). Augustine's conception of continuous Creation (not 'evolution'): see the discussion in Gilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 270–271.

[25] (p. 87). Augustine on the limits of man's power even over material things: see *De Genesi ad Litteram*, IX, ch. 27 and 32 (Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. XXXIV, col. 103 and following).

[26] (p. 87). Augustine on the limited value even of true natural knowledge: *Confessions*, bk. V, ch. 5; also *De Trinitate*, IV, ch. 1, and Sermon numbered 68 (Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. XXXVIII, col. 438, and vol. XLII, col. 888).

[27] (p. 88). To reach after and possibly attain to the immediate experience of God: Augustine, *Confessions*, bk. VII, ch. x.

Chapter III

THE NATURE OF MAN

[1] (p. 91). The reference for the opinions of Theophilus of Antioch, on the limitations of the 'first man', is to his *Apology* addressed to 'Autolycus', ch. xxxiv–xxxvi. In Tatian we find a view similar in principle: *Ad Graecos*, ch. viii (Migne, *Patrologia*, Greek Series, vol. VI, cols. 819 and 1089 ff.).

[2] (p. 92). On the view of Irenæus, that the 'first man' was imperfect and undeveloped, see his *Adversus Haereses*, bk. IV, ch. xxxviii; and for the quotation from Anastasius of Antioch (Migne, *Patrologia*, Greek Series, vol. LXXXVI, col. 1013).

[3] (p. 93). Irenæus on the Jewish *Torah* as a 'stepping-stone': *op. cit.*, IV, xii and xiii.

[4] (p. 94). Tertullian expounds this 'traducian' theory of the origin of the soul with numerous physiological details on which it is not necessary to comment. Here we are considering only the ethical significance of the theory.

[5] (p. 95). Origen on the final destiny of man: *First Principles*, I, viii and II, i (Butterworth, *op. cit.*, pp. 69 and 78).

[6] (p. 96). On Origen's conception of the resurrection of the dead: Westcott, article 'Origenes', *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, p. 21.

[7] (p. 96). Origen on life as a process of training and preparation: *Against Celsus*, IV, xxv and VI, xliv (Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. XI, col. 1064 and 1305).

[8] (p. 97). Origen on the spiritual capacities of Mankind: see his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, bk. II, ch. vii.

[9] (p. 99). Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Making of Man* (*De Hominis Opificio*), abridged from the translation given in vol. V, pp. 421 ff. (in the Series *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*).

[10] (p. 99). Gregory of Nyssa follows Origen in his doctrine of universal salvation: *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. V, p. 407.

[11] (p. 100). The destiny of the unbaptised: *A Synopsis of Christian Doctrine according to Theodore of Mopsuestia*, translated from the Syriac by Dr. A. Mingana, Question 29.

[12] (p. 101). In what follows, I am again indebted to Dr. Devreese, *op. cit.*, pp. 12 ff., on the results of the Fall.

[13] (p. 103). Devreese, *op. cit.*, p. 101: Theodore not a 'Pelagian'.

[14] (p. 105). Augustine, *De Corruptione et Gratia*: 'God cannot be defeated' (Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. XLIV, cols. 943–944).

[15] (p. 106). Augustine on Freedom as a spiritual ideal: *The City of God*, bk. XXIII, ch. xxx.

[16] (p. 107). The key-note of Augustine's work *De Dono Perseverantiae* is that there is no escape from Predestination: the gift of divine Grace carries 'the Elect' even through failure and sin to final salvation.

[17] (p. 108). The quotation is from B. J. Kidd, *History of the Church*, vol. III, p. 129.

Chapter IV

Doctrines of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ

(i) Before the Council of Nicæa

[1] (p. 115). A most adequate translation of Justin's *Dialogue* is that of Dr. A. L. Williams, *Justin Martyr: the Dialogue with Trypho* (with Introduction and Notes).

[2] (p. 117). Irenæus, *Adversus Haereses*, II, xxvii. 6 (suggestion of a *kenosis* doctrine).

[3] (p. 118). Irenæus, V, ii (salvation 'not by force'). Here we may observe that the best work, in English, on the saving work of Christ is that of R. S. Franks, *History of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ*.

[4] (p. 120). Surviving fragments of the work of Paul of Samosata are given by Dr. J. H. Lawlor, *Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. XIX. The quotations here used are from that Essay, p. 39 ff.

[5] (p. 125). Clement of Alexandria, from the *Stromata*, bk. VII (Hort and Mayor, *op. cit.*, pp. 11 and 15: the Body of the incarnate Christ was really human but 'impassible').

[6] (p. 125). Origen firmly held that there was a real union of the divine and the human in the incarnate Christ: *Against Celsus*, III, xxviii, and V, xxxix.

[7] (p. 127). That Origen held some form of the *kenosis* doctrine is evident from such passages as those in *First Principles*, I, ii; II, vi; IV, iii and iv.

[8] (p. 127). Celsus asserted that what is true in Christian writings is better said by pagan writers. Origen's reply: *Against Celsus*, I, iv; III, lxviii; and IV, iv.

[9] (p. 127). The Saviour Christ and human saviours: Origen, *Against Celsus*, I, xxxi; IV, vii; VI, lxxix; also in his Commentary on the Fourth Gospel, I, ch. x.

[10] (p. 128). Genuine Faith creates 'good works': Origen, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, IV, ch. vii.

[11] (p. 128). This correspondence is discussed by Athanasius, *De Decretis Nicaeni Synodi*, and in his *De Sententiis Dionysii*: for the most relevant passages, see vol. IV in the series *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, pp. 249 ff. and 173 ff. Dionysius of Alexandria was a theologian of ability: his surviving writings are translated in the *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, vol. XX.

[12] (p. 130). The policy of Constantine in relation to the Christian Church has often been discussed: we may refer in particular to an instructive Essay by Dr. N. H. Baynes in the *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 1949, pp. 341 ff. An English translation of the edict of Galerius is given in J. B. Bury's edition of Gibbon, vol. II, pp. 141–142.

Chapter V

Doctrines of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ

(ii) The Council of Nicæa and After

[1] (p. 134). This translation of the Christological section in the original Nicene declaration is almost that of Bethune-Baker, *Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine* (eighth edition, pp. 168–170), where further references are given.

[2] (p. 135). Athanasius on the 'Semi-Arians': *De Synodis*, ch. xl–xli (*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. IV, pp. 472 ff.).

[3] (p. 137). On the later 'Nicene' Creed of the Liturgies, we may refer to Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 188 and note, and to *Early Christian Creeds*, by Canon J. N. Kelly, ch. x and xi.

[4] (p. 138). For what follows, the most important reference is to Athanasius, *First Oration against the Arians*, ch. viii–xxxvi, especially to ch. xxvi, on symbolic statements of divine realities.

[5] (p. 139). The *Contra Gentes* and the *De Incarnatione Verbi Dei* were intended by Athanasius to form a single work, written before the Arian controversy had broken out.

[6] (p. 139). Athanasius on the 'Image of God' in man: *De Incarnatione*, ch. ii and vii.

[7] (p. 141). Athanasius on the metaphor of the soiled picture: *De Incarnatione*, ch. xiv.

[8] (p. 145). In Dorner, *History of the Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ*, English translation, vol. I, pp. 365 ff., a careful account of the work of Apollinarius is given. The surviving fragments of his Christological writings have been collected, with Introduction and Notes, by Hans Lietzmann, *Apollinaris von Laodicea*.

[9] (p. 147). For further consideration of the surviving fragments of the writings of Apollinarius, we may refer to Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 241, and to Review of Lietzmann in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. VI, p. 621.

[10] (p. 148). The quotation is from B. J. Kidd, *History of the Church*, vol. III, p. 209 (the eastern Church 'delivered into the hands of the Moslems').

[11] (p. 151). In this account of Theodore, I have been indebted to Swete, *Theodore on the Minor Epistles of St. Paul* (the Introduction to his Commentary), and especially to Dr. Devreese in the work already referred to.

[12] (p. 155). Cyril's correspondence with Nestorius, owing to its highly controversial character, is not the best source for an adequate estimate of his Christology. It is very carefully analysed by Kidd, *op. cit.*, vol. III, ch. xii. Cyril's letter to the Bishop of Antioch is given by T. H. Bindley, *Œcumenical Documents of the Faith* (fourth edition, edited by Canon F. W. Green), pp. 141, 221 (in Greek and English).

[13] (p. 156). The importance of *The Bazaar of Heracleides*, as a personal 'Apologia' from Nestorius himself, was made known in this country by Bethune-Baker, *Nestorius and his Teaching* (1908), and by F. Loofs, *Nestorius and his Place in the History of Christian Doctrine* (1914). We have now an edition of the whole by Driver and Hodgson, with an English translation. On the use made by Nestorius of the term *prosopon* we may refer to this work and especially to Appendix IV contributed by Prof. Hodgson.

[14] (p. 159). These quotations from the *Tome of Leo* are based on the translation given in Bindley and Green, *op. cit.*, pp. 168 ff. and 224 ff. (Greek and English). Canon Green observes: '*How* the union of the two natures could be realised Leo was no more able to say than Cyril had been: both fell back on its mysterious character. . . . Some theory of *kenosis* is inevitable in any restatement of our conception of the Person of Christ.'

[15] (p. 159) I have rendered the Greek preposition (*ek*) by 'from' instead of the conventional 'of'. And though the term 'Mother of God' has established itself in Roman Catholic theology, as the equivalent of *Theotokos*, yet 'God-bearer' is the exact equivalent of the Greek word.

[16] (p. 161). The statements here quoted are from Augustine's *De Agone Christiana*, ch. xx, and from his Sermon numbered 123 in Migne, *Patrologia*, Latin Series, vol. XXXVIII, col. 603.

Chapter VI

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE TRINITY

[1] (p. 162). On the general significance of the doctrine of the Spirit in recent Christian thought, we may refer to E. F. Scott, *The Spirit in the New Testament* (1923), H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Spirit* (1928), and Vincent Taylor, *The Holy Spirit* (Headingly Lectures, 1937).

[2] (p. 162). Athanasius, *Ad Afros* (an encyclical letter addressed to the Bishops of Africa); *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. IV, p. 434.

[3] (p. 163). The quotation is from a review by J. F. Bethune-Baker, *The Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. XXI, p. 88.

[4] (p. 167). Irenæus, *Adversus Haereses*, V, xxxvi, 1 (Man's approach through the Son to the Father).

[5] (p. 168). Origen, *First Principles*, I, iii, 2 (Butterworth, pp. 30 and 42–43).

[6] (p. 168). Origen's conception of the Trinity is seen in his Commentary on the Fourth Gospel, bk. II, ch. vi (from the Greek text in the edition of A. E. Brooke, p. 71).

[7] (p. 170). Statements in *De Synodis* and in *Ad Afros* suggest that Athanasius identified *ousia* and *hypostasis*, but this was not his final view (Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. XXVI, cols. 753 and 1035).

[8] (p. 171). A very convenient edition of the letters to Serapion is that of C. R. Shapland (London, 1951).

[9] (p. 172). The Cappadocian Fathers accept the cardinal term *homo-ousios* in its original meaning, not in the sense of *homoi-ousios*. For an examination of this question we may refer to the Essay by J. F. Bethune-Baker, in *Texts and* Studies, vol. VII, part i.

[10] (p. 173). Basil of Cæsarea, *On the Holy Spirit* (Introduction), on the importance of theological terms: *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. VIII, p. 3.

[11] (p. 173). Basil, *op. cit.*, and Epistle numbered 48: *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. VIII, pp. 29 and 139–140.

[12] (p. 174). Gregory of Nyssa on the real purpose of the Incarnation: 'Catechetical Oration', XXV: *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. V. p. 503. (We pass by his extraordinarily crude idea that the sufferings of Christ were a 'ransom' to Satan over which *God deceived Satan*: it falls apart from his real teaching on the saving work of Christ.)

[13] (p. 176). Gregory of Nyssa: 'not three Gods' (from the translation in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, vol. V, p. 332: the translation has been slightly altered).

[14] (p. 177). Tertullian, *Against Praxeas*, ch. II (attempt to formulate the doctrine of the Trinity).

[15] (p. 178). Tertullian, *op. cit.*, ch. XIII.

[16] (p. 178). Tertullian, *op. cit.*, ch. IX and XXVI (use of the term *portio*).

[17] (p. 179). Tertullian, *op. cit.*, ch. V and VI (God was never 'alone'). The quotations referred to in the last three Notes are from the translation by A. Souter.

[18] (p. 180). Tertullian, *De Pudicitia*, ch. XXI (Migne, *Patrologia*, Latin Series, II, col. 1023).

[19] (p. 181). The references to Augustine *On the Trinity* are given by Book and section-number, not chapter. The English translation of this work, edited by Marcus Dods, is useful for reference.

Chapter VII

THE CHURCH AND THE MINISTRY

[1] (p. 188). Charles Gore, *The Church and the Ministry* (from the edition of 1936).

[2] (p. 188). Ignatius, *To the Magnesians*, ix, x, and *To the Philadelphians*, x: Lightfoot and Harmer, *op. cit.*, pp. 145, 154 (The Church and Judaism).

[3] (p. 190). 'The Riddle of the Didache': see Dr. J. M. Creed's Essay under this title, *The Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. XXXIX (1938), pp. 37 ff.

[4] (p. 192). Clement of Rome, *To the Corinthians*, xxxvii, lxxx, lvi (Lightfoot and Harmer, *op. cit.*, pp. 73, 76–77, 80–81).

[5] (p. 196). Tertullian, *On the Prescription of the Heretics*, xx (from the translation of T. H. Bindley, p. 61).

[6] (p. 196). In what follows, I am indebted to an important Note by Dr. W. L. Knox, *The Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. XLVII (1946), pp. 180–185.

[7] (p. 197). Rome the centre of the civilised world: see Knox, *loc. cit.*, for some effective examples.

[8] (p. 198). Cyprian on the choice of a Bishop: Epistle 67. The letters of Cyprian are here numbered as in the *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum*, Latin Series, third volume. The best account of Cyprian, in English, is still that of E. F. Benson, *Cyprian, His Life, Times and Work*. The Letters are translated in Pusey's *Library of the Fathers*. On the interpolations in the fourth section of the *De Unitate* we may refer to Benson, *op. cit.*, pp. 200 ff.; to J. H. Bernard's Essay, 'The Cyprian Doctrine of the Ministry' in the volume *The Early History of the Church and Ministry*, second edition, 1921; and to Hartel's Latin Preface, *Corpus, loc. cit.*, pp. xlii ff. There is no necessity to speak of 'forgery' in this connection; the interpretation may have been suggested, and afterwards inserted in good faith.

[9] (p. 200). The quotation (by permission) is from Professor S. L. Greenslade, from his comprehensive historical and critical survey, *Schism in the Early Church* (1953).

[10] (p. 200). From Cyprian's 'Epistle' numbered 20; addressed to the 'Presbyters and Deacons holding Office in Rome', where false reports concerning himself had been sent.

[11] (p. 203). An interesting comparison between Cyprian's theory of the Episcopate and the system of Presbyterian Church Government as developed in Scotland, is given by T. M. Lindsay, *Church and Ministry in the Early Centuries*, pp. 282 ff.

[12] (p. 204). From Origen's Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, XII, x (Migne, *Patrologia*, Greek Series, vol. XIII, col. 1004).

[13] (p. 207). Augustine, *The City of God*, XV, i, and XIX, xiv (in what follows, this work is referred to as 'D. C. D.').

[14] (p. 208). D. C. D., XV, xxviii.

[15] (p. 208). D. C. D., XIV, vii, and *Confessions*, XIII, ix. No translation of the Confessions is of much use for understanding Augustine's thought unless it contains the last three 'Books'.

[16] (p. 209). The two 'Communities' within the visible Church: Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. XLIII, cols. 196 and 659, and vol. XLVIII, cols. 292 and 298.

[17] (p. 209). D. C. D., XVIII, xlvii, and Sermon numbered 26 in Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. XXXVIII, col. 173.

[18] (p. 209). Robertson, *Regnum Dei* (Bampton Lectures, 1901): bearings of Augustine's doctrine of predestination on his doctrine of the Church.

[19] (p. 210). Separation of the two 'Communities': D. C. D., I, xxxv.

[20] (p. 211). D. C. D., IV, iv, and XIX, xxiii.

[21] (p. 211). D. C. D., IV, xiii and xxv (recognition of secular authority).

[22] (p. 212). D. C. D., XIX, vii (Christianity could be the salvation of the State).

Chapter VIII

The Sacraments: Baptism and the Eucharist

[1] (p. 213). Emil Schuerer, *Geschichte des Judischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi*, third edition, pp. 129 ff. The existing English translation is from the second edition. And for a view of the subject over a longer period, *Judaism in the Early Centuries of the Christian Era*, by G. F. Moore, is indispensable.

[2] (p. 214). On Matthew xxviii. 19: we may refer to the Essay by F. H. Chase, *The Journal of Theological Studies* (July, 1905), pp. 499 ff. If this is accepted as an authentic command of the risen Christ, it is noteworthy that the Apostles did not follow it, but baptised simply in (*eis*) the name of Jesus Christ.

[3] (p. 215). Augustine on Exodus iii. 14: Sermon numbered 6 in Migne, *Patrologia*, Latin Series, vol. XXXVIII, col. 61.

[4] (p. 216). Justin's account of Baptism and its meaning; *Apology*, sections lxi and lxv.

[5] (p. 216). Tertullian, *De Baptismo*, sections 6 and 8.

[6] (p. 217). Cyprian, Letter numbered 44.

[7] (p. 218). Gregory of Nyssa, 'Catechetical Oration', sections xxxiii and xl (Dr. Srawley's translation).

[8] (p. 219). Augustine, Epistle numbered 98.

[9] (p. 219). We may refer to Professor T. W. Manson's discussion in the volume *Christian Worship, Studies in its History and Meaning* (edited by Dr. N. Micklem), p. 48.

[10] (p. 220). This whole question is thoroughly discussed by Dr. J. H. Srawley, *The Early History of the Liturgy*, second edition, revised, Cambridge, 1947.

[11] (p. 221). On the question of interpretation of this passage in Justin, we may refer to an important Note by Dr. Bethune-Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

[12] (p. 222). The references to Justin here are to the *Apology*, section 67, and to the *Dialogue*, sections 23 and 29.

[13] (p. 222). Irenæus, *Adversus Haereses*, IV, xviii, 5.

[14] (p. 223). Augustine, *Contra Faustum Manicheum*, XX, xviii.

[15] (p. 223). Bigg, *op. cit.*, p. 266; and on the place of the Agapê in the Alexandrian Churches, p. 137 note.

[16] (p. 223). Origen's Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, section lxxxv (Migne, *Patrologia*, Greek Series, vol. XIII, col. 1734).

[17] (p. 224). Gregory of Nyssa, Catechetical Oration, section xxxvii: Dr. Srawley's translation, pp. 109–112.

[18] (p. 224). Ambrose of Milan, *De Sacramentis*, section 1 (we assume that the two works *De Sacramentis and DeMysteriis* are both the work of Ambrose: in any case the interpretation of the Eucharist is the same in both).

[19] (p. 225). Augustine, *De Catechisandis Rudibus* (on instructing the unlearned), Migne, *Patrologia*, Latin Series, vol. XL, col. 344.

[20] (p. 226). Augustine, *Contra Cresconium*, IV. xvi (*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum*, Latin Series, vol. LII, p. 52).

[21] (p. 226). Augustine, Sermon numbered 272 in Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. XXXVII, col. 1247.

[22] (p. 227). Augustine on Psalm xcviii (numbered as in Migne, *Patrologia*, vol. XXXVI, col. 1265).

[23] (p. 227). Augustine, D. C. D., XXI, xxvi.

The literature on the life, writings, and teaching of St. Augustine is of vast extent: a bibliography to 1949 is given in the indispensable work of M. Etienne Gilson, to which reference has previously been made in these Notes. English students in recent years seem to have been mainly interested in Augustine's political doctrines, with special reference to the *De Civitate Dei*. Dr. J. N. Figgis has published a valuable introduction to the study of this subject, *The Political Aspects of Augustine's 'City of God'*, with references to the literature.

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