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A Presentation of Christian Conditions and Activities in *Every Country of the World* at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century by more than sixty Competent Contributors

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO RELIGIOUS THOUGHT DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

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NEW YORK.

THE twentieth century has opened with Christianity in a far more prosperous condition than it was at the beginning of the nineteenth. This is true not only in regard to its outward expansion, and the many practical applications which have been made of it in the social life of Christendom, but also in regard to its power in the realm of thought. Its right to the control of man's whole moral life is very generally admitted by philosophy and science; and this could not be if it were not recognized that religion represents a reality with which philosophy and science in some sense must deal. In fact, there is no more potent intellectual force to-day than Christianity. It cannot be and it is not neglected in any serious discussion of questions pertaining to man's deepest interests. Sociology, psychology, metaphysics alike give heed to it. Books which deal with it, or into which its problems enter, are the ones most widely read. The spirit of reverence toward it characterizes the attitude of all serious minds. Even scepticism, except in a few coarse examples, commonly strives to preserve the essence of religion while rejecting its dogmas. It is no longer possible for culture to speak of it in terms of derision or contempt. Christianity has made a long advance toward the day when "Every thought" shall be brought "into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

This result could not have been reached if the nineteenth century had not witnessed important contributions to religious thought. It has unquestionably been a century of religious revival; and revivals, to be permanent, must affect the intelligence as well as the emotions. The past century has been a stirring one. The activity of the human intellect has been very great in all departments of thought and action. Ambitious philosophies have assumed to give the final interpretation of the universe. Science has revolutionized our modes of thinking about Nature and life. Discoveries have illuminated

our views of ancient history. Society has realized with far-reaching effects the rights and limitations of the individual, the nature of the social unit, the defects of the social organism which should be rectified. Inventions have transformed our modes of living, brought the whole world together, modified our thoughts concerning foreign peoples by familiarizing us with their ideas. Amid this stir of thought religion could not but be affected. It certainly has been, and since the result has been the increased power of religion, we must believe that some contributions of real advantage have been made to religious thought.

It is the purpose of this paper to mention briefly some of the contributions which appear to the writer to have been the most important. They have indeed often been abused, carried to extreme positions, allied with movements prejudicial rather than beneficial. Yet a just discrimination will recognize that they have entered widely into the Christianity of the nineteenth century, and have added largely to its power.

1. In the sphere of purely religious thought, or of theology proper, mention should be made first of the new emphasis which has been laid on the immediateness of the Soul's relation to God in the experience of Christian life. This of course has not been a new truth. It is biblical teaching. It was one of the keynotes of the Protestant Reformation. It has been realized by devout souls in all the centuries. Nevertheless, it marks a notable contrast between the nineteenth century and the preceding, so far as its recognition by philosophy, and its wide dissemination in popular teaching, are concerned.

This contribution to religious thought has had, also, a complex history, has sprung from a variety of influences, and has been followed by varied consequences.

It appeared in the first place as a strong reaction against the cold deism and vulgar rationalism with which the eighteenth century closed. It has been like the substitution of fire for frost in the religious life; of the sense of life for the conception of a mechanical relation of God to His world. On its intellectual side its origin must doubtless be referred to the philosophical movement led by Kant, which led thought to the inspection and criticism of its own processes. The rise of the critical philosophy turned the mind in upon itself. The conditions and the possibility of all knowledge became the subject of investigation, with the result of creating an in-

tellectual scepticism which gave to the superficial rationalism of an earlier period its death-blow. But with this scepticism concerning the mind's ability to know aught beyond itself, there came, it would seem of necessity, the assertion of the worth of the affirmations of man's moral consciousness. This appears in ethics in Kant's own "Critique of the Practical Reason." In religion it appeared in Schleiermacher's Discourses. Schleiermacher has undoubtedly been the most influential personality in the sphere of past religious thought which the century has produced. He voiced the Soul's longing for a direct justification of its religious consciousness amid the scepticism to which the intellect seemed doomed, and the current dissatisfaction with the church. As is well known, he found the origin and indestructible cause of religion in the universal sense of dependence. But his influence was not limited by his particular theory. He initiated a movement of the religious spirit, which took various forms and became associated with the most diverse theological views; but which has been characterized by the assertion that religion is the life of the spirit in immediate relation with God. By this affirmation of the validity of the religious consciousness, a valuable contribution has been made to modern thought. In it many have found rest to whom sceptical objections created serious difficulties. The essential contribution, however, ought to be distinguished from many of its accompaniments and developments. It ought to be maintained earnestly that the scepticism which denies the ability of the intellect to attain to that which is beyond itself, and in particular in religion to lay a rational basis for a knowledge of Divine things, is unjustifiable. The intellect can and does know transcendental truth. It cannot indeed comprehend the Divine; but it can know it. In like manner scepticism concerning the historical basis of Christianity is unjustifiable. The evidences for the historical reality of the Christian revelation amount to a moral demonstration. Nevertheless, the strong affirmation which the nineteenth century has witnessed of the intrinsic validity of the religious consciousness, and the recognition of the Soul's own testimony to its relation to God, as given in the experience of Christian life, have formed a distinct contribution to religious thought, and have been one of the chief reasons for the admitted power of religion which, as has been said, marks the beginning of the new century.

In connection with this, it is also to be noted that a new emphasis has been placed on one phase of the relation of God to the world.

This has been the Divine immanence. The very phrase itself has become almost a characteristic of modern religious thought. It seldom appears in the writings of the older theologians. It has in a great measure replaced the term Providence. It is not, however, synonymous with the latter. The providence of God implies His control over the finite universe, both as being superior and external to it, and as working through or with its second causes. The doctrine of the Divine immanence conceives of God as in the creation, manifesting Himself through it, and unfolding His will and power by means of its operations. To complete the doctrine of Providence, therefore, the Divine immanence must be supplemented by that of the Divine transcendence. The emphasis, however, during the past century has been upon the former aspect. God is in the world. Its laws are the manifestation of His activity. Nature is "the life-garment of Deity." This, again, is the very opposite of the deistic idea which prevailed widely a hundred years ago.

Much might be said in criticism of some of the forms in which the idea of God's immanence has been presented. It is perhaps true that it has been allied with, and in some instances has grown out of, a monotheistic and even pantheistic philosophy. Often, also, has it been emphasized so exclusively as to result in a denial of the Divine transcendence. Yet, in spite of these errors, the truth itself has been a positive gain to religious thought. It is certainly a Biblical idea. In God "we live, and move, and have our being." As Jehovah dwelt in the temple, so does He in the universe of which the temple was in one view a type. It is also a conception which accentuates, as we have seen, one side of the doctrine of Providence, and by doing so prevents the latter from being conceived in a mechanical and purely external way. While it must be admitted that the idea, when pressed to an extreme, has tended sometimes to obliterate the distinction between the natural and the supernatural; yet, when combined with a proper view of the Divine transcendence, it has given a religious value to the natural which we would not willingly lose. The world now seems to us vitalized by deity. Its laws appear more than ever the expression of His will. Men feel him to be nearer than they used to do. He will never again be conceived of as a *deus ex machina*. He is the "universal soul" of Nature, as well as its Creator and Ruler. The life and growth of the universe, of which we are a part, is the unfolding of the purpose and power of Him who ever dwells within it.

Now, there is evidently a close affinity between the idea of God's immanence and that sense of the Soul's immediate relation to God of which we have spoken. It is not surprising that the two conceptions should have appeared and moved together. They may both, as already remarked, at times have been pushed into extreme and one-sided forms, and so have served error rather than truth. But that they have affected profoundly our religious thought cannot be questioned; and, when they are supplemented properly by other truth, they constitute a contribution which has supplied the corrective of other grave errors, and has made religion more vital and real to the mind of man.

2. The next contribution to be mentioned is the strong emphasis which has been placed upon the love of God. We should do gross injustice to the theologians and Biblical students of former ages if we supposed them not to have taught the love of God. But it must be confessed that often they were more concerned with His other attributes; and the strong emphasis laid to-day on God's love for the world as a whole must be reckoned a real addition to religious thought. It is also a complete statement of the teaching of revelation on the subject.

It is difficult to say how this contribution has come about. It appears to have sprung from practical rather than from philosophical causes, and to have been a reflex product of tendencies which were themselves born of Christianity. Thus the conviction that the Gospel was to be given to the whole world, naturally brought the love of God to all mankind into prominence. Again, the progress made within Christendom in the realization of the humane duties of man to man, the spirit of social helpfulness thus engendered, the growing conviction that Christianity is a religion of service and benevolence, has opened the mind to the unutterable goodness of God as He has revealed Himself. It has often happened that revelation has been reinterpreted through the effects which have been produced by it; and such seems to have been the case in this instance. We may add, also, that the attention directed to the Incarnation, with the emphasis laid on the humanity of Christ, and the perception that in His life of love the revelation of God was brought to its highest point, has added to the emphasis. But be the causes what they may, their feature has been a marked contribution to religious thought. It has become the central principle of some of the most influential theological teaching. It has transformed the preaching of the age.

It has brought forward the Fatherhood of God. It has beautified our conception of the Almighty. It has restored the integrity and proportion of the Biblical teaching on the subject. Of course, like all great truths, it has been pushed too far, and illegitimate inferences have been drawn from it. It has been used to destroy the co-ordinate truth of God's justice and righteousness. It has been perverted to the extent of denying that He will punish. It has led men to say that St. John's language, "God is love," is a complete definition of God, instead of a description of Him. But in spite of these errors, the emphasis placed on the intensity and breadth of the love of God has been a proclamation of truth which Christendom needed to realize and the world to hear. The other truths of His righteousness and sovereignty are equally precious, and must not be let go. But His love must shine out with the lustre which Christ gave to it, and that it has been made to do so during the past century is an immense gain.

It should be remembered also that the emphasis on the love of God has led to a more ethical conception of the revelation which He has made. This is another of the marked features of modern religious thought. Men have come to feel that metaphysical conceptions in the sphere of religion need at least to be clothed in the living flesh and blood of ethical reality, in order to be apprehended aright. Thus the unity of the Father, Son and Spirit is a moral unity of affection and purpose, as well as a unity of substance and of attributes. So the Fatherhood of God, because He is love, has become an intense, realistic idea, endowed with all the highest beauties of fatherhood with none of the defects which appear among ourselves. In short, theology has been, as one has said, "ethicized." The tendency has, like the others, been pushed to injurious extremes. The ethical has been in some cases substituted for the metaphysical, thus resulting in a body without a frame. The foolish attempt has been made to deny the value of doctrinal concepts, when stated in an intellectual or logical form. Nevertheless, the stress on the ethical aspect of doctrine has been a real advance beyond the dry statements of scholasticism. It has given impressiveness and practicality to doctrine. It has made dogma seem a living reality. In particular has the love of God, the realization of which has been the chief root of the ethical reclothing of theology, brought into religious thought an element which has seemed to many like a new revelation of the Gospel.

3. Turning next to quite a different direction, we mention the contribution to the religious thought of the century which has been made by historical criticism.

This science has made for itself a special place. It has sought to ascertain, without prejudice, the actual facts of the past. It has applied its instruments of investigation to both secular and sacred history. Casting aside all prepossessions, it has endeavored to read afresh the origin of nations, societies and institutions, and to trace their developments. It has brought to the task an untiring spirit of research, and has accumulated an immense mass of information. It aims to see things in their historical connections, to trace their mutual relations, to discover the forces which generated them, and the influences under which they advanced. The result has been, in many instances, that history has been rewritten, and, of course, the new conceptions have affected the thought of the present.

In the sphere of sacred history this criticism has been busily at work. It has studied afresh the origin of Christianity. The first three centuries of our era have been re-examined with the closest scrutiny. The origin of the books of the New Testament, and the rise of Christian institutions and dogmas, have been the particular objects of investigation. Apart from special results, the effect has been to create a lively sense of the historical character of Christianity, to show the actual circumstances of its origin, the phases of its early development, and the extraneous influences to which it was subjected. In regard to the Old Testament, likewise, a similar criticism has arisen. With a boldness hitherto unimagined, the whole course of Hebrew history has been revised, and the contest is still being waged between the old views and the new.

It must be confessed, however, that criticism in the sphere of sacred history has not been able to escape from the control of philosophical prepossessions, however much it may have thrown aside dogmatic ones. It has too often been pursued under the influence of rationalism. The supernatural has been discredited and the effort made to represent the history of religion as a purely natural evolution. Hence there have appeared the most diverse schools of historical criticism. In regard to the origin of Christianity, there has been the mythical school of Strauss, the "tendency" school of Baur, the "Hellenic" school of Ritschl; while, in the sphere of Hebrew history, Prof. Kuenen and Wellhausen have entirely overturned the Biblical narrative, and placed the ritual attributed to Moses at

the close, instead of at the beginning, of the national development of Israel. This has often been done with the open declaration that the supernatural cannot be recognized by the historian; and where the avowal has not been made, it has more frequently been assumed. Such a method is, of course, as prejudiced as that of the older dogmaticians. It really violates the canons of historical criticism. But it may be expected to cure itself. Already in the study of the Christian origins the cure has begun to work. The authenticity of nearly all the books of the New Testament is now acknowledged. The theories of Strauss and Baur are dead. A like result may be expected in regard to much of the current criticism of the Old Testament. Out of the long debate evidence is accumulating which is sure to buttress the essential facts of the history as given in the Bible, and to sift the final result down to the underlying question of the supernatural itself—a question which philosophy and experience must solve.

While, however, historical criticism has succumbed frequently to alien influences, its contribution to the religious thought of the century has been very valuable. Through it, for example, the Bible has become almost a new book, so fresh has been the light thrown on its original meaning and the relation of its parts. Systems of theology are no longer formed by the arbitrary selection of proof texts from any part of the inspired Word. The progressive character of revelation, as presented in the Bible, is fully recognized. The beginnings and the unfoldings of the religious and moral teachings of revelation have been carefully studied. What is known as Biblical Theology has gained a place as a definite branch of theological science, and its purpose is to set forth the historical process of revelation. On its results theology has come to rest. The result has done much to preclude mere speculation and to obtain a fairer conspectus of Biblical truth, even when put in the categories of a theological system. Meanwhile, the original signification of Biblical terms, and the relation of the parts of the Bible to one another, have been studied anew. Then, too, the historical development of Christian institutions has been made more clear. The rise of forms of church government, the observance of the sacraments, the more or less alien ideas which attached themselves to the original usages of the first disciples, the influence of pagan philosophy and customs on the thought and life of the early church, have been reinvestigated.

The effect has been, even when the supernaturalness of Chris-

tianity has been frankly accepted, to give a new sense of the historical movement in which the supernatural power operated. Ultra-dogmatism has thus received a severe blow. Revealed religion has been shown to be not unnatural, even though it be not a merely natural process. It came in accordance with historical needs, and under intelligible conditions. In the many books devoted to the history of Hebraic or Christian religion which have appeared during the century, we may see the profound influence of historical criticism on religious thought; and it may be maintained with confidence that, in spite of the speculations which philosophy has introduced under the guise of criticism, the issue has been a great gain in the apprehension of revelation and in the conception of the Word of God.

4. Still another contribution to the religious thought of the century has been made by the progress and results of physical science. This contribution, also, has been a profound one, for it has affected our whole thought concerning the relation of God to the universe. It has, moreover, been obtained after a prolonged conflict. During the first three-fourths of the century, religion and science were in a constant attitude of hostility. It has been only of late years that peace has been in some measure secured, and the real harmony of the two widely perceived.

The contribution given by science has not lain in the particular discoveries in the realm of Nature which science has made, but in the establishment of a certain view of the world and of the processes which are taking place in it. Science has observed that Nature is force under the control of fixed laws. These laws she has partly discovered and classified. She has found, also, that the forces of Nature are capable of transmutation one into another. The changes of the natural world are known, at least in most instances, to have proceeded slowly, and by the adaptation of objects, organic or inorganic, to new conditions. Geology has ascertained that the earth was gradually formed through vast ages into its present state. Biology has discovered a like history in the forms of living creatures. Kindred sciences have found evidences of similar processes operating elsewhere. In short, the scientific conception of the universe has become that of an unknown power, called force, or energy, evolved in accordance with ascertainable laws into the various objects and beings which now present themselves. Whether this evolution has been ever interfered with by a power from without is a mooted question. The purely scientific observer is apt to feel, indeed, that

he has no call to raise the question. It is his business simply to observe phenomena. But it must be admitted that science has not proved the spontaneous origin of life, nor the development of mind from lower forms of intelligence, while at the beginning it can only posit the great First Cause. Yet in general the scientific conception of the universe has obtained control of men's thoughts, and the relation of God to the world has been conceived very differently from the ideas current in former times.

It is not surprising that the new conception at first should have appeared to be in entire conflict with religion. It seemed to make Nature a Godless manifestation of force. It appeared to substitute natural law for Divine control. It was in opposition to the traditional interpretation of Scripture. Science often treated the religious view of the world with scorn. Many scientists openly repudiated religion or took an agnostic attitude with regard to supersensual truths. The conflict became the more bitter when science essayed to enter the field of human history, to reduce man to a higher form of animal, to explain the origin of his intelligence and conscience on the basis of natural development, and his subsequent history as a more extended evolution of the same kind.

In course of time, however, mutual concessions have been made. On the one hand science has come to realize that it is not and cannot be an ultimate interpretation of the universe. It is only the ascertainment of observed phenomena. The ultimate nature and reason of things it cannot learn. It cannot say why the evolution should have moved upward and onward to higher goals. It confesses itself, at least in its best forms, in the presence of a Power which, for reasons lying beyond the discovery of science, has led the course of the world in a given direction. Many of the ablest students of Nature acknowledge that life and mind are beyond scientific explanation. Others find the supernatural in the natural processes themselves. But the spirit of hostility has largely changed for one of reverence, and in the study of Nature the scientist finds it possible to worship God.

On the other hand, the scientific view of Nature has still more powerfully modified religious thought. It has been found that the old interpretation of Scripture was too crass and literal, a real misunderstanding of what Scripture meant to teach. It has been felt, also, that it is no less religious to admit that God has operated through natural laws, which He Himself impressed on the creation,

than to suppose that He frequently set them aside. In fact, the discoveries of science have given a larger sense of His immensity, infinitude and immanence. This need not mean that He has never set aside natural laws, and has never given fresh starting points for the life of the world. But religious thought, under the influence of science, has come to reduce these exceptional acts of God to a small number. Between them it recognized God in the processes of His laws. The latter now appear more sacred and inviolable than ever. In matters of detail, likewise, the scientific influence has been great. Religious thought is less tainted with superstition than it used to be. It depends more on intelligence and less on emotion. It has observed more carefully, and in the spirit of science, its own phenomena. That it will be able to maintain the integrity of its faith and the fervor of its life in the face of science, there is no doubt. It is even certain that science will become more and more the handmaid of intelligent religion, and that the two will combine in the worship of Nature's God and of the Incarnate Creator. That science has profoundly affected already the way in which God's relation to the world is apprehended by thoughtful, religious men, and that this has already proved a benefit, can hardly be questioned.

5. We should not fail to mention in the next place the influence exerted on religious thought by the idea that Christianity is a social force.

The eighteenth century was extremely individualistic. Its watchword was personal liberty. The individual asserted his rights, and revolted against tyranny in state and church. The result, however, was disorganization, making room at times for the restoration of tyranny. The nineteenth century, on the other hand, has felt the need of social reconstruction. The duty of the individual to society has claimed attention; the limitation which free society puts upon its members has been realized; the nature of the social organism itself has been studied; the socialistic tendency has replaced largely the individualistic; and in the study of society the place of religion has been widely recognized.

It has been perceived that only a religious sanction can bind society permanently into an orderly community, and redress social wrongs. Christianity, also, it has been seen, contains in itself the power of social progress. It aims to determine the relations of different members of society. It assigns to all both rights and duties. It is, in short, not merely a Gospel for the individual, showing him

how to be saved in the next world, but an uplifting and renewing power in the life of man under present conditions.

Under the inspiration of this idea the Christian activities of the century have been directed toward social betterment to a degree never before attempted. The redress of the grievous evils inflicted by human slavery, the amelioration of the lives of the wage-earning classes, the enactment of legislation in the interest of the poor and oppressed, prison and factory reform, are but illustrations of the movement. Christianity has become humanitarian. It has given rise to innumerable organizations for the improvement of life; it has revolted against the selfish assumptions of current political economy; it has created innumerable reforms. The stream of thought is moving in this direction more vigorously than ever. There is even danger that the message of Christianity to the individual may be forgotten in the zeal with which its social message is being proclaimed.

Now there can again be no question that this has been a real contribution to the religious thought of the century, as well as to its activities. It is quite true, indeed, that society is but the aggregate of individuals, and that the way to mould society is primarily and necessarily by the regeneration of its members. But this is so because the social aggregate is not a mass of distinct individuals related to one another merely by juxtaposition, but is an organism. The parts are vitally bound together. "The eye cannot say to the ear, I have no need of thee." The rich and poor, the capitalist and the laborer, the rulers and the governed, the healthy and the sick, are mutually dependent. The regeneration of the individual affects society as the restored health of any member of the physical body brings health to the whole. Conversely, the health of the whole reacts on the parts. Religion, therefore, has its social message and is so represented in Scripture. In past ages Christianity has been used to uphold the social fabric by the maintenance of monarchical institutions. It would have been a fearful loss if, with their dissolution, it had been identified with them. It was an unspeakable gain that its spirit was found to be in reality accordant with a free democracy, providing the sanctions by which such a society could hold together and the altruistic sentiments by which it could exist in health and vigor. This discovery has been made. The religious thought of the age has received from the social idea the occasion for another fresh interpretation of Christ's Gospel. Thereby it has

found the adaptation of Christianity to the new conditions of the modern world. The result has also been an immense enlargement of the conception of the mission of the religion of Jesus. No gain has been greater, whether we view it as manifested in thought or in life; for while the social message of religion has been re-announced and applied as never before, the message to the individual has not been, and is not likely to be, forgotten.

6. Finally, mention should be made of the contribution made by the comparative study of the various religions of the world. This has been possible only during the nineteenth century, because previously the non-Christian religions were not accurately known. In fact, such knowledge first became possible with the unification of the world by modern commerce and the spread of foreign missions. The religions of the world have now, however, been closely studied, their sacred books and customs investigated, and their ruling ideas reduced to system. Out of this has arisen the science of comparative religion. Religion is considered by it as a phenomenon of human life. Its rudimentary forms have been examined. The phases through which it has passed have been described. Christianity has been brought into the comparison, and its resemblances with and differences from other religions have been noted.

The effects of this comparison have been, as was to be expected, quite various. Many have been impressed chiefly by the resemblances between Christianity and other religions, and have inferred that all are manifestations of the natural religious instincts of humanity, and differ only as better from worse. A syncretism in religion has been created. The whole phenomenon has been explained on the basis of naturalism and naturalistic evolution. Christianity has been robbed of its uniqueness, though not of its preëminence. Others have seen into the facts more deeply. They have recognized in the resemblances between Christianity and other religions only what was to be expected, if Christianity was a real religion at all; and they have been more impressed by the differences. Christianity has appeared by the comparison to be the perfect and absolute religion, achieving what others failed to do. Its idea of God, its disclosure of a universally applicable way of salvation, its satisfaction of the yearning of conscience for peace, its regenerating power in the individual and in society, have appeared more brilliant than ever when contrasted with heathenism. To such observers the comparative study of religions has been fruitful in fresh zeal for the spread

of Christianity throughout the world. But, whichever of these specific impressions have been made, the knowledge of the religious life of humanity has deepened the consciousness that religion is an essential factor of human nature. Whatever theories of its origin have been held, it is seen to be a persistent, indestructible, fundamental fact in the life of man. It is imbedded in the very structure of his being. It can never again be regarded as the arbitrary creation of priests, nor as a political device. Neither science nor political economy can leave it out of consideration. The only thing that can be done with it is to purify it. It has taken its place as a constituent factor in the world's life, because arising out of the relation in which man finds himself to the universe, as well as out of the requirements of his conscience and intelligence. Thus, again, the thoughts of men have deepened concerning the very nature of religion; while more and more is it being felt that Christianity alone realizes the idea of religion and is itself the only absolute one.

Such appear to be the most important contributions which have been made to religious thought during the nineteenth century. They assuredly attest the fact that great progress has been made. They partly explain the revival of the religious spirit and give ground for hope that it will prove permanent. Through them all must we not recognize the working of the Spirit of Christ, supported also by the providence of God, who is steadily, though slowly, taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto men? For certainly the result has been to glorify Jesus Christ. At the beginning of the new century He, more than ever, stands before the world's thought as the supreme object of veneration. Religious thought sees, as never before, that in Him all truth centres and from Him all real life flows. He is plainly to be the Omega, as he was the Alpha, of the religious life of the centuries. The process, whatever it may be, by which Christ is becoming Lord of All, must certainly be the true progress of humanity toward the final goal.