

obtain an easy or an undisputed entrance into the human understanding, much less to become an integral part of the thought and life of the community or of an individual man.

II. If it is important for us to remember that great changes take place slowly, it is not less so to recollect that *great changes are often followed by great reactions.*

In the evolution of the globe this truth is illustrated in that remarkable phenomenon called the Glacial Epoch. In the history of the Jewish Church it is illustrated by the repeated relapses into idolatry, both in the kingdoms of Israel and of Judah. We read the story of their perpetual retrogradations with incredulity and indignation, forgetting that it is the history of mankind in miniature. In the development of the Christian Church this truth is exhibited in the Dark Ages, when the heavenly lamp seemed to have almost gone out. It is exemplified in the history of whole areas over which Christianity once had dominion. Where are the "seven churches of Asia"? What became of the churches in Northern Africa? Some of the early missions of the Christian Church perished altogether from the face of the earth, and no traces of them have been found, although for a time they seemed to be highly successful. Theirs was the way of the eagle in the air, the way of the serpent upon a rock, the way of the ship in the midst of the sea. The first Christian church in Roman Britain had been quite forgotten, as Green reminds us, before the reintroduction of that faith in the seventeenth century under Theodore. In the fierce struggle which then ensued, there were great reactions from the first enthusiasm for the new faith, and while nominally accepting it, its adherents "retained their old superstitions side by side with the new worship. Plague or mis-hap drove them back to a reliance on their heathen charms or amulets, and if trouble befell the Christian teachers who came settling among them, they took it as a proof of the wrath of the older gods. When some log-rafts, which were floating down the Tyne for the construction of an abbey at its mouth, drifted with the monks who were at work on them out to sea, the rustic bystanders shouted: 'Let nobody pray for them; let nobody pity these men who have taken away from us our old worship; and how their new-fangled customs are to be kept, nobody knows.'"

Dr. Geikie quotes an old writer, who calls attention to the analogy between the character of Balaam, who joined the worship of Jehovah with heathen superstitions, and that of some of our English kings. "He was an ambidexter in religion, like Redwald, king of the East Saxons, the first who was baptized; who, as Camden relates, had in the same church one chapel for the Christian religion and another for sacrificing to devils. A loaf of the same leaven was our resolute Rufus, who painted God on one side of his shield and the devil on the other, with the desperate inscription, 'I am ready for either.'"

This behavior of our semi-Christian, semi-pagan ancestors is very sig-