

ghost at the grave. But the case of Jesus differs from almost every other case on record of a Deified Man in this—that his body seems to have disappeared at an early date ; and that, inasmuch as his resurrection and ascension into heaven were made the corner-stone of the new faith, it was impossible for worship of his remains to take the same form as had been taken in the instances of almost all previously deified Dead Persons. Thus, the materials out of which the Temple, the Altar, Sacrifices, Priesthood, are usually evolved (as we shall hereafter see) were here to a very large extent necessarily wanting.

Nevertheless, so essential to religion in the minds of its followers are all these imposing and wonted accessories that our cult did actually manage to borrow them ready-made from the great religions that went before it, and to bring them into some sort of artificial relation with its own system. You cannot revolutionize the human mind at one blow. The pagans had been accustomed to all these ideas as integral parts of religion as they understood it : and they proceeded as Christians to accommodate them by side-issues to the new faith, in which these elements had no such natural place as in the older creeds. Not only did sacred places arise at the graves or places of martyrdom of the saints ; not only was worship performed beside the bones of the holy dead, in the catacombs and elsewhere ; but even a mode of sacrifice and of sacrificial communion was invented in the mass,—a somewhat artificial development from the possibly unsacerdotal Agape-feasts of the primitive Christians. Gradually, churches gathered around the relics of the martyr saints : and in time it became a principle of usage that every church must contain an altar—made of stones on the analogy of the old sacred stones ; containing the bones or other relics of a saint, like all earlier shrines ; consecrated by the pouring on of oil after the antique fashion ; and devoted to the celebration of the sacrifice of the mass, which became by degrees more and more expiatory and sacerdotal