

gle step to the very origin of godhead ; yet in the strength with which it asserts for the other half of its supreme deity (the Father, with his shadowy satellite the Holy Ghost) an immemorial antiquity and a complete severance from human life, it is the least anthropomorphic and the most abstract of creeds. In order to track the idea of God to its very source, then, we must apply in the last resort to this unresolved element of Christianity—the Hebrew Jahweh—the same sort of treatment which we apply to the conception of Jesus or Buddha ;—we must show it to be also the immensely transfigured and magnified ghost of a Human Being ; in the simple and forcible language of Swinburne, “ The shade cast by the soul of man.”

Furthermore, Christianity fails to be typical in that it borrows also from pre-existing religions to a great extent the ideas of priesthood, sacrifice, the temple, the altar, which, owing to the curious disappearance or at least unrecognisability of the body of its founder (or, rather, its central object of worship), have a less natural place in our Christian system than in any other known form of religious practice. It is quite true that magnificent churches, a highly-evolved sacerdotalism, the sacrifice of the mass, the altar, and the relics, have all been imported in their fullest shape into developed Christianity, especially in its central or Roman form. But every one of these things is partly borrowed, almost as a survival or even as an alien feature, from earlier religions, and partly grew up about the secondary worship of saints and martyrs, their bones, their tombs, their catacombs, and their reliquaries. Christianity itself, particularly when viewed as the worship of Christ (to which it has been largely reduced in Teutonic Europe), does not so naturally lend itself to these secondary ceremonies ; and in those debased schismatic forms of the Church which confine themselves most strictly to the worship of Jesus and of the supreme God, sacerdotalism and sacramentalism have been brought down to a