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# Our Hour with the Editor

## REVEALED RELIGION

Those who contend that there is no such thing as revealed religion have a case which cannot be proved. By religion we mean that sense of responsibility to each other and to a Supreme Being, which exists to a greater or less extent among all races of men. If we go back to the beginning of the human race we will fail to discover any higher instinct than that of self-preservation, from which a religious system could be evolved. From this it is possible to derive the whole fabric of human law. The thunders of Sinai were not necessary to convince men that they should not steal or that they should not act in contravention of any other of what may be called the material commandments. When the need of property as was recognized and the value of the home was understood the right to protect one's property and to safeguard one's home would follow as a matter of course. So far as those particular aspects of human conduct are concerned we are not essentially materially different from the brutes around us. There was no necessity for a revelation to teach man that he must respect rights which those claiming them were able to enforce. In process of time the instinct of self-preservation would lead to the formation of organized society, and the laws which originally derived their sanction from individual right, would thereafter be enforced by the community. We do not have to presuppose a revelation in order to account for much of what is called the moral law, and it is preposterous to suggest that there is any merit whatever in complying with it.

Revealed religion has to do with the spiritual side of man's nature. It seems to be a means whereby we may overcome death and fit ourselves for a higher existence. It does not consist of a series of probations; it is constructive. It substitutes love for fear in determining what our relations to each other ought to be. It changes the whole outlook of those who live under its influence. It endows its possessors with a power which is greater than any material power. One cannot imagine how the ideas upon which this religion is based could be evolved from the law of self-preservation or be derived from the contemplation of natural phenomena. It is not difficult to see how they might be confused with natural phenomena. For example, if we suppose men in a lower stage of human progress than we now are to have received from some source the idea of a Supreme God, it is easy to conceive that they might identify Him with the Sun or some other object or phenomenon; but the moment we speak of worshipping the Sun we presuppose the existence of the idea of worshipping something, and this idea must surely be the result of inspiration from some source external to humanity. When once it had entered into the minds of men it would assume varied forms, and the logical result of theism operating in crude intellects would be polytheism, until, as has been said of Hindustan, there would be as many gods as there were men. Each man would make a god in his own image; that is, he would conceive of the Deity as like himself, only greatly exaggerated. It seems as if we must of necessity concede that the Monotheistic idea was a revelation. When, to whom and under what circumstance man first heard in his soul those tremendous words: "I am the Lord, thy God," we cannot hope to know. It is historically certain that the Monotheistic idea, as we have it today, that is, the belief in one god, comes to us through Abraham; but there is reason for doubting if it originated with him. Indeed, there is some ground for assuming that from the earliest dawn of civilization the Monotheistic idea has existed, and it is a quality of human nature which distinguishes humanity from the brute creation. Last Sunday we spoke of man as an animal that invents; we may also define him as an animal that worships. Let us at this point meet the evolutionists on their own ground. Let us concede that all animal life originated from the same primal form, and that it has been shaped by environment, the survival of the fittest, and all other such influence, so that it has developed in all the various lines in which we find it today. In one line, that is, the human, the idea of worship is found. Must we not of absolute necessity assume the derivation of this idea to have been from some external source? How else shall we explain that what is evolved from matter worships that which is spiritual? The evolutionists, who hold to materialistic views, endeavor to explain the existence of great difference in forms of life by assuming unlimited periods for their evolution, but an eternity of evolution could not produce something from nothing, and if we accept the doctrine of material evolution, we must either suppose the idea of worship of a Supreme Being to have been present in the chaotic nebula, out of which the earth was formed, or to have been derived from some source exterior to physical nature. Hence it may with reason be claimed that the fact of man's being a creature that worships, and yet is physically not dissimilar in essential particulars from other animals, proves incontestably that at some stage, and a very early stage, in human development there came an inspiration to worship. Whenever this was, it was the beginning of revealed religion.

If this position is correct, that is, if there must of necessity have been a revelation, or inspiration, or whatever you choose to call it, to explain the existence in the human mind of the idea of worship, there is no difficulty in supposing other revelations; nor is there

any difficulty in holding that these revelations may have been in harmony with the people by whom they were received. There seem at all times to have been lofty souls which caught the rays of divine truth, although all around them was shrouded in darkness, just as the snow-capped mountain peak catches the light of the sun, while yet the valleys are in shadow. Such a human mountain peak was Abraham. But Abraham's conception of God was beyond that of his descendants. He realized a Being supreme over all; the Jews were able only to conceive of a tribal deity, who was greater than the gods of other tribes. When we study the basic principles of the ancient religions of India and Persia, we find in them the same essential quality, and when we note how those religions have been distorted by those who received them, we see evidence of the inability of unaided human intelligence to grasp the ineffable conception of God. God must be made manifest to us in terms of humanity. Such a manifestation we have in Jesus of Nazareth, and from Him we have learned that "God is love." This thought never could have been derived from nature, for the processes of nature are, regarded from the human standpoint, cruel and remorseless. In Jesus Christ we have the revelation of God as He is, of the future life which is open to humanity and the means whereby that life can be attained.

## SLUYS AND CRECY

In these days when we hear so much of the possible invasion of England, it is interesting to know that nearly eight and a half centuries have passed since a foreign foe set foot upon its soil. There are no places in the "right little, tight little island," whose names are commemorated in connection with the military glory of the nations of Continental Europe; but the list of those in France, Spain and elsewhere on the Continent, which have a place in the story of the triumph of British arms is a long one, and perhaps it may be well in this series of articles on the great battles to tell briefly of these, although in so doing it will be necessary to depart from the chronological order, which has been observed as closely as possible in previous articles.

Edward III. of England, claimed the right to the Crown of France. His mother, Queen Isabella, of England, was descended from the succession by the Salic law, but Edward claimed that by the correct interpretation of the right descended to him, being only in abeyance during his mother's lifetime. Being a resolute man, he determined to make good his claim by force of arms. In 1338 he landed a considerable force in Flanders, where his claims were favorably regarded; and in 1339 he declared war against France. Nothing of importance happened until June 23, 1340, when the English fleet encountered that of France off Sluys, a port of Flanders. The French fleet, numbered one hundred and twenty large vessels. Froissart, whose account of this fight and that of Crecy is summarized in this article, does not say how large the English fleet was, but he tells us that "in this fleet were a number of ladies from England, countesses, baronesses and knights, and gentlemen's wives, who were going to attend the Queen at Ghent." The historian adds: "These the king had guarded most carefully by three hundred men at arms and five hundred archers." Both navies were eager for the fight. It was a splendid struggle. It lasted from early morn until noon, "and the English were hard pressed for their enemies were four to one, and the greater part of them were used to the sea." The first achievement of the English was to capture the Christopher, which had been taken from them by the French in the previous year. "Then there were great shouts and cries, and the English manned her with archers and sent her against the Genoese." The English victory was complete. The whole French force perished. This was the first of England's great triumphs on the sea.

The landing of the English forces met with no opposition after this sea fight, but King Edward did not seem greatly disposed to bring matters to a crisis, and six years and two months elapsed before any land struggle at all decisive in its nature took place. The king of France assembled a very large army, that is large relatively speaking, for in those times most of the fighting was done by forces, which would now not be regarded as numerically great. Froissart says it was 100,000 strong on the day of the battle, but there must have been a large number of other troops available, for the same authority tells us that the French king had eight times as many soldiers as the English king, and the latter led between 30,000 and 40,000 men to the field. Whatever the actual numbers may have been there is no doubt that the English were greatly outnumbered. The actual strength of the English troops engaged in the fight was very much less than the number stated above. They were divided into three battalions. One of these was led by Edward, the Black Prince. In it there were 800 men at arms, 2,000 archers and 1,000 Welshmen. The Earl of Northampton commanded the second battalion, which consisted of 800 men at arms and 1,200 archers. The king himself commanded the third battalion, which was made up of 700 men at arms and 2,000 archers. King Edward had his troops in splendid order, and after they had lunched heartily, he ordered them to lie down and rest. Meanwhile the King of France drew near with his vastly superior force. His marshals advised him not to precipitate a battle, but to rest his men for a day. Some of his hot-head-

ed counsellors urged an immediate attack lest the English should escape, but Lord Moyné said to him: "Rest assured, they will wait for you." The French king would have delayed the attack, but the impetuosity of his men was such that they would bear no restraint, and at 3 o'clock in the afternoon the king sent 15,000 Genoese forward. "Order the Genoese forward," he cried, "and begin the battle in the name of God and St. Denis." The Genoese protested that they were unfit to fight, for they were wearied with their long march, moreover their bowstrings were relaxed by a heavy rain that had fallen. Their spirits also were depressed "by a very terrible eclipse of the sun and a great flight of crows hovering in the air and making a loud noise." Nevertheless, they advanced to the charge with great shouts, thinking to intimidate the English by noise and numbers, but as soon as they were come near enough "the English archers advanced one step forward and shot their arrows with such force and quickness that it seemed as if it snowed." Froissart continues: "When the Genoese felt these arrows, which pierced their arms, breasts, heads and through their armor some of them cut the strings of their crossbows, others flung them on the ground, and all turned about and retreated quite discomfited. The French had a large body of men-at-arms on horseback, richly dressed, to support the Genoese. The King of France seeing them thus fall back, cried out: "Kill me those scoundrels, for they stop up our road without any reason." You would then have seen the above-mentioned men-at-arms lay about them, killing all they could of these runaways."

The account of the battle will be continued in the next article. It was an important event, for it was the beginning of the Hundred years War between England and France, which was only ended by the achievements of the Maid of Orleans.

## GREAT INVENTIONS

### II.

When man had invented a means of making fire permanency of residence followed as a matter of course. The preservation of fire became of prime importance. Indeed, it is only of comparatively recent years that it has ceased to be so in most parts of the world. There are people now living who have heard their grandfathers talk of "borrowing fire," when the coals on their own hearths had become cold. We used to have a curfew bell here in Victoria. Curfew is a survival of the ancient habit of covering fire, not as a social ordinance, but as a necessity. William the Conqueror directed curfew to be rung at a certain time, but long before his day the act, which the bell commanded, had been practised in every home in the land. The difficulty of producing fire would lead to exceptional care in preserving it, and hence where the fire was kept alive would be the family headquarters. We can, without much stretch of the imagination, suppose that when men began to live in communities the duty of preserving fire would be entrusted to some one person, and the fire-place would easily in course of time become the altar, the people who cared for it would become priests, fire itself would become deified and sacrifices would be offered to it. Hence the origin perhaps, of fire-worship. But this is a digression.

It is evident that when fire had led to permanency of residence, the necessity would be felt of bringing things to it, and one of the first to be brought would be water. How it came about that primitive man first cooked his food is purely a matter of guesswork, but we may feel very sure that one of his earliest experiments was in the way of heating water. Hence a very early invention must have been pottery. Pottery is something that would suggest itself to the mind as soon as the necessity of carrying water was experienced. Only a very limited power of observation would be required to teach even the most primitive people that water would remain in hollows in clay, and to use clay vessels for the purpose of carrying it must have come almost as a matter of course as soon as the need of providing a means of doing so was felt. Before fire came into use men would naturally go to springs or running streams, when they needed drink; but man in a cave with a fire would be no longer primitive. He would have advanced further from the brute beasts around him than all the generations of humanity have advanced since. He had begun to have artificial wants. It would not be enough that there should be a bubbling spring or a murmuring brook a short distance from the mouth of his cave. He would wish to have some of the water in his cave, and he would make a vessel of clay to carry it in. Pottery and the remains of fire seem to be the oldest evidences of human civilization, although Grosse in "The Beginnings of Art," claims that basketry was an older invention. He finds evidence of this in the fact that the earlier pottery has basket patterns cast upon it, and says, "the basket is everywhere the forerunner of the pot, and has consequently everywhere been its prototype," and he quotes Holmes as follows: "The vessel of clay is a usurper which has taken possession of the place as well as of the dress of its predecessor." There are reasons why baskets might have been invented before pottery, but it is doubtful if the ornamentation on the latter in imitation of the former is proof that it is the more recent invention of the two. Ornamentation is so great an advance upon the invention of pottery that no trustworthy con-

clusion can be drawn from its presence. Centuries may have elapsed after the first crude jug was made before any one thought of ornamenting it in any way, and the suggestion that jugs were ornamented to resemble baskets, simply because the latter were the older invention, is an assumption which any one can accept or reject as he pleases. But no matter which of them was the first, we may infer that the making of receptacles of some kind followed very closely upon the use of fire for domestic purposes.

Cooked food may be regarded as an invention, although possibly it was, strictly speaking, a discovery. There is an Indian legend, which says that the eating of smoked salmon originated when a tribe, driven out of their home by volcanic eruptions, came upon fire that had been smothered by subterranean fires, and, nearly famished, ate the unaccustomed food, and carried some of it with them in their flight. But whatever the origin of the practice may have been, a man surrounded by his woman and children in a cavern heated by artificial fire, clad in the skins of beasts and eating cooked food, had already ascended several of the most difficult rounds in the ladder of civilization.

It is, of course, absolutely impossible to follow the progress of invention historically. At what stage man first learned that a hollowed log would transport him across water must remain a matter of guess-work. When he invented the bow is absolutely unascertainable. The bow may have been suggested by the springing action of the branch of a tree, but the device of a bow and arrow implies a degree of thought, observation and ingenuity which is truly wonderful. When the first arrow left the first bowstring the door was opened to almost limitless possibilities in the way of invention. Centuries, perhaps hundreds of centuries, elapsed before mankind was able to devise a more efficient weapon, but in the bow we have a utilization of the properties of natural objects, which shows that men were beginning to develop intellectually. They were becoming the masters of creation. With the bow they were able to overcome their handicap in the lack of speed of their movements. No animal could run so rapidly, no bird could fly so fast that an arrow could not overtake it. The supposition of most archaeologists is that the use of the spear preceded that of the bow, and that is very probable, for the spear is hardly an invention. It is only a sharp stick, of which then must have been hundreds ready to the hands of man even in his most primitive condition. Later he improved on the natural weapon by fastening a sharp stone to its point, but this was an improvement, not the discovery of a principle or the invention of an original device. Possibly we may state the primary inventions of mankind in the following order: Clothing, the production of fire, pottery or basketry, cooked food, the bow and arrow. Thus equipped mankind was prepared for the conquest of nature.

## The Birth of the Nations

xviii.

(N. de Bertrand Lugrin.)

### THE CHINESE—I.

Boulger, in his history of China, tells us that the Chinese are "the only living representatives today of a people and government which were contemporary with the Egyptians, the Assyrians and the Jews." Therefore, to speak of the birth of the Chinese as a nation is to refer back to very remote times indeed, so remote, in point of fact, that no historian can give a date to the beginning of this branch of Oriental civilization. Up to a very few years ago it might be very truly said that these people had advanced very little since the time of Confucius. The varying customs of Europe, the march of civilization in all other parts of the world had small, if any, effect upon the Chinese nation. Since intercourse has been established with other powers this vast Eastern empire may be said to have awakened to the fact that there exists a world beyond her own borders; and she is using the knowledge consequent upon the awakening for the furtherance of her own interests to an extent greater or less as the passing of time may show.

Probably one reason why we can derive so little information as to the earliest history of the Chinese Empire is owing to the destruction of all the books during the reign of Hwangti, two hundred and ten years before Christ. Hwangti belonged to the Tsin dynasty, and very early in his career incurred, for some reason or other, the enmity of the literary class, who attacked him most virulently, and even went so far as to throw doubt upon his right to rule, claiming that he was not a Tsin at all, but a usurper. They objected to any measures he introduced, and so embittered him by their censure that he determined to put a stop to their attacks for all time. A council was called; and Hwangti and his minister Lisseh denounced the literary men, and proscribed all books. A command was given that all works except those relating to science, medicine and agriculture, should be destroyed, that five hundred of the most prominent of the literati should be executed and many thousands banished. These orders were carried out with terrible promptitude, to

the everlasting shame of Hwangti, and the irreparable loss to the history of the nation. It might be mentioned, however, that Hwangti, apart from this one act of vandalism, was a very competent prince, and has been called one of the greatest emperors China ever had. He was responsible for the building of the great wall, which has been considered one of the wonders of the world. While it may be of but little use now, it served as a wonderful safeguard in Hwangti's time against the invading tribes beyond the border.

We are told that the first Chinese were a wandering tribe, who settled in Shensi, in the northeast of China, and that the first ruler among the tribe was named Fohi. The most famous among the early princes, or Wangs, as the rulers were called, was Yao, whom the Chinese reverence today as one of their worthiest dignitaries. It was an early practice to choose as their ruler the one whom they considered to be best able to administer to the welfare of the people irrespective of birth or prestige. Yal, Chun and Yu, succeeding one another, directed the affairs of the nation, and were men of such exceptional ability and moral strength that the time in which they reigned has been likened to the age of the Antonines, and described as the most brilliant and perfect in Chinese history. These rulers believed that "a prince entrusted with the charge of a state has a heavy task. The happiness of his subjects absolutely depends upon him. To provide for everything is his duty; his ministers are only put in office to assist him. A prince who wishes to fulfill his obligations, and to long preserve his people in the ways of peace ought to watch without ceasing that the laws are observed with exactitude." Temperance and chastity were observed under this triumvirate. They believed in a form of government conducted entirely by the people, with the prince or ruler as the chosen head. With these three able men passed away the practice of selecting the leader from among those best fitted to serve the interests of the people. Therefore the privilege descended from father to son.

Probably the most interesting period in Chinese history is the time in which Laotze and Confucius lived. This was during the sixth century before Christ, several hundred years after the death of Yao, Chun and Yu. These two philosophers found the nation plunged in a very low state morally and religiously, and Laotze, who came first, and who has been termed the Chinese Pythagoras, at once set himself the herculean task of reforming his fellow countrymen. The religion he founded is called Taoism, and has very few adherents today, though his philosophical tenets are widely quoted. A noted German historian writing about one hundred years ago, having made an exhaustive study of Taoism, said that in his treatise "many things about a Triune God were so clearly expressed that no one who has read this book can doubt that the mystery of the Holy Trinity was revealed to the Chinese five centuries before the coming of Jesus Christ." A short quotation from the final chapters of the Book of Laotze will show us that the philosophy of the earliest of the Chinese differed very little from that of some of our modern writers:

"All things spring up without a word spoken and grow without a claim for their production. They go through their processes without any display of pride in them; and the results are realized without any assumption of ownership. It is owing to their absence of assumption that the results and their processes do not disappear. It only needs the same quality in the arrangement and measures of government to make society beautiful and happy."

The following will recall some of Ruskin's views on political economy:

"In a small state with few inhabitants I would so order it that the people, though supplied with all kinds of implements, would not care to use them; I would give them cause to look upon death as a most grievous thing, while yet they would not go away any great distance to escape from it. Though they had buff coats and sharp weapons, they would not do or use them. They should think their coarse clothing beautiful, their plain food sweet, their poor houses places of rest, and their common, simple ways sources of all enjoyment."

At the time of Confucius, China did not comprise more than one-sixth of the present empire, and the population was only 12,000,000, as compared with the 430,000,000 of the present day. It will be seen that the country has grown to a great extent territorially and in regard to her population. Confucius, however, found a very bad state of affairs in his country, and according to his disciple, Mencius, was the saviour of the empire, socially and morally. Adopting the philosophy of this great teacher, China literally was born anew, and if we can believe but little in regard to her history before the time of Confucius, we have fairly authentic records of the centuries since.

During tunnelling operations on the East River, New York, it was observed by an engineer named Brasher that the water was perfectly calm in the vicinity of caissons filled with compressed air, from which it escaped in small quantities. Mr. Brasher thereupon experimented on the effect of compressed air on sea-waves by running pipes in which small holes were pierced along a sea-wall and forcing compressed air through them. He discovered that even in the most violent storms the waves were almost perfectly calm near the pipes.