

religion, but to do right [ceremonially] and to worship the village god.' "

In short, I maintain that religion is not mainly, as the mistaken analogy of Christian usage makes us erroneously call it, Faith or Creed, but simply and solely Ceremony, Custom, or Practice. And I am glad to say that, for early Semitic times at least, Professor Robertson Smith is of the same opinion.

If one looks at the vast mass of the world, ancient and modern, it is quite clear that religion consists, and has always consisted, of observances essentially similar to those just described among the Central African tribes. Its core is worship. Its centre is the God—that is to say, the Dead Ancestor or Relative. The religion of China is to this day almost entirely one of pure ancestor-cult. The making of offerings and burning of joss-paper before the Family Dead form its principal ceremonies. In India, while the three great gods of the mystical Brahmanist philosophy are hardly worshipped in actual practice at all, every community and every house has its own particular gods and its own special cult of its little domestic altar.

"The first Englishman," says Sir William Hunter, "who tried to study the natives as they actually are, and not as the Brahmans described them, was struck by the universal prevalence of a worship quite distinct from that of the Hindu deities. A Bengal village has usually its local god, which it adores either in the form of a rude unhewn stone, or a stump, or a tree marked with red-lead. Sometimes a lump of clay placed under a tree does duty for a deity, and the attendant priest, when there is one, generally belongs to one of the half-Hinduised low-castes. The rude stone represents the non-Aryan fetish ; and the tree seems to owe its sanctity to the non-Aryan belief that it forms the abode of the ghosts, or gods, of the village."

Omitting the mere guesswork about the fetish and the gratuitous supposition, made out of deference to the dying creed of Max-Müllerism, that ancestor-worship must