

of worship or of religious meditation in the hope of getting comfort and inspiration from it, is too absurd and monstrous to be entertained for a moment. To do the adherents of this religion justice, they disavow anything of the sort. It is an ideal humanity, which is to take the place of "God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth," and to receive the honors which, by the common consent of the bulk of mankind, are due to Him. It is not anything that has existed, that does exist, or that we have any reason, apart from a certain theory of evolution and progress, to believe will ever exist. In a word, it is not the humanity which "we have seen with our eyes, and that our hands have handled," but "a complex synthesis of heart, intellect and moral energy," representing "almost everything that is called moral."* Whether it be like anything in the heavens above or not, it is certainly like nothing in the earth beneath.

Now, what are we to call this wonderful thing—an abstraction, a myth, a phantom, a creation of the imagination? But for one circumstance one would be disposed to call it by one or other of these names. Mr. Harrison tells us of an Unitarian minister who had been reading a description of this ideal humanity, and wrote to him to say that what he, Mr. Harrison, called humanity, he, the writer, called Christ. This fact is full of significance. It shows that the highest possible ideal of humanity is the Christian ideal. And this ideal is not a myth or an abstraction, but has been manifested in the flesh, "which," as St. John says, "we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled." "The Word"—that Word that was in the beginning, that was with God, and was God—"became flesh and dwelt among us."

This incident illustrates, too, the indestructability of the impression which the life, the character and the teaching of the Christ has made upon the religious thought of the world. The conception of such a life, such a character once given to the world, can never be lost. However far from the truth serious earnest men may stray, in their most inspired moments, whether consciously or unconsciously, they will turn to Christ. They

* Frederick Harrison, in the August number of the *Nineteenth Century*.