

tion and essence of their religion. But these five books were not written all at once; their composition extended over several centuries. From time to time the traditions of early times (Abraham's, Isaac's, and Jacob's) were committed to writing; this began as early as B. C. 800, or perhaps earlier. Then the accounts of the Creation and the first fortunes of the human race were probably learned from the Babylonians during the Exile; and all these stories were put together to form the book of Genesis. Similar traditions concerning the march from Egypt through the wilderness to Canaan constitute the historical part of Exodus and Numbers. At the same time collections of law were being made. About B. C. 750 or 800 some man wrote down a little law book, including in it the chief civil and religious laws of that time. More than a century later (B. C. 622), the legal part of Deuteronomy was composed. After this, other usages came into existence, and were set down in books. As the idea of the Temple-worship expanded, the priest would make new prescriptions. So, finally, the books of Leviticus and Numbers, and the account of the Tabernacle in Exodus, were written. Then some one—perhaps Ezra—brought all this material together, and the Pentateuch was formed. And, inasmuch as Moses was looked on as the great law-giver, all of it was ascribed to him.”—(*The History of the Religion of Israel*, pp. 90, 91.)

According to this account, Christianity and the Scriptures—which are a record of its history and doctrine—are purely human productions, and all immediate Divine interposition is thoroughly eliminated. Their inspiration, if admitted at all, is simply the inspiration of human genius: the Pentateuch is inspired in the same sense that Shakespeare's Hamlet is, and in no other. Christianity, in its present form, is the product of a natural development or evolution. Its history furnishes a complete parallel to that of the Origin of Species, as taught by Darwin and others.

Herbert Spencer, in his late work, “Progress, its Laws and Cause,” lays down, as a principle of the widest application, “That the law of organic progress is the law of all progress. Whether it be in the development of the earth, in the development of life upon its surface, in the development of society, of government, of manufactures, of commerce, of language, literature, science, art, this same evolution of the simple into the complex, through successive differentiations, holds throughout.”—(*Humboldt Library*, Vol. II., p. 234.) And, as he teaches in another part of his work, the evolution is a purely natural process.

Huxley gives expression to the same idea in the words:

“The constancy of the order of nature has become the dominant idea of modern thought. To persons familiar with the facts upon which that conception is based, and competent to estimate their significance, it has ceased to be conceivable that chance should have any place in the universe, or that events should depend upon any but the natural sequence of cause and effect. We have come to look upon the present as the child of the past, and as the parent of the future; and, as we have excluded chance from a place in the universe, so we ignore, even as a possibility, any interference with the order of nature.”—(*N. York Lectures on Evolution*, Lect. I.)

The “Higher Criticism,” as Dr. Toy interprets and applies its principles, would make the history of Christianity different in no impor-