

HEATHEN RELIGIONS.

WHENCE DID THEY DERIVE THEIR ELEMENTS OF TRUTH ?

Max Muller has said that the real historic religions of mankind amount to no more than eight. The Semitic races have produced three, namely, the Jewish, the Christian and the Mohammedan. The Aryan races an equal number, namely, the Brahman, the Buddhist and the Parsee. The Chinese have produced two, namely, the system of Confucius and that of Lao-tse—eight in all.

Six of these religions are heathen: they have no Christ. All but one have been, and still are, tremendous powers in the world. The contemplation of them must profoundly impress the mind of the thoughtful student, whether he considers the vast regions of the earth which they have overspread, the great age to which they have attained—some of them dating back to a remote antiquity—the varied and cultured civilizations they have produced, or the vast multitudes they have influenced and are even yet influencing in every department of human experience.

Each of these great religious systems, amid much that is false and pernicious, has a great central root-truth which has vitalized it and made its continuance possible, and at the same time made it a prediction of something higher and better. Thus the great truth in the system of Mohammed is the doctrine, "There is one God:" in the system of Confucius it is the doctrine, "There can be no happenings without Order—Order is Heaven's first law:" in that of Buddhism it is the doctrine that, "Ignorance is the cause of wrong living, and wrong living is the cause of unhappiness." Truth is one and is eternal, therefore all that is true in religion will endure, while all that is false will ultimately perish for the Master has said, "Every plant that my Father hath not planted shall be plucked up."

But right here a natural question arises, namely, whence did these great religious systems derive their truths? We answer,

1. *From a primitive revelation.* The human race far back in prehistoric times once spoke the same language, and traces of that original speech are to be found in all the great languages of earth. In like manner the race once worshipped the same Divine Being, the One Living Soul, God, and held the same religious truths, and