

be the rule, two things have to be borne in mind. In this case the degeneracy is largely a wilful one, due to the prevalence of sin. Because of sin men did not care to retain the true God in their knowledge, but made gods for themselves, more to their own mind. And man's religious history is yet incomplete. In the past, degeneracy has been the more prominent factor. But we are not without good grounds for hoping that the tide has now turned, and that henceforth the upward movement will be more marked through the energetic prosecution of missionary enterprise. When the record is finished it will be clear that on the whole the progress has been decided enough.

Our conclusion as to man's religious starting-point seems to require an explanation of how he attained his primitive religious conceptions, and there has been no little discussion of the subject. A word or two on that point may, therefore, be offered in conclusion. It must be borne in mind, however, that a fact is one thing, the explanation of a fact another, and quite different thing. Our statement as to the fact may be perfectly true, while our explanation may be erroneous or defective. We accept many things as facts which we cannot as yet explain. The appearance of every new type is so far an unsolved problem even to the thoroughgoing evolutionist.

The short and easy answer with many theologians has, of course, been that man obtained his first knowledge of God by a primitive revelation from heaven. In some sense that must be true, God never could have been known by man then or now unless in some way He had revealed His presence and His character. But as an explanation of the fact, that statement never satisfies the scientific mind, because it does not go far enough. We want to know how God manifested Himself to man so that he became aware of His existence. We may attempt to block further inquiry by saying that it was through some supernatural method which we cannot understand at all. But the Bible never seems to take quite that ground. In the nineteenth Psalm, at any rate, and in the first chapter of Romans, as well as in Paul's address at Lystra, attention is