

them. The Christians do not discriminate. But the Christians say that the beings to whom they are dedicated are not gods but demons, and that worshippers of God ought not to worship demons."

Celsus explains: all things are ordered according to God's will; his providence governs all things; everything which happens in the universe, whether it be the work of angels or other demons or of heroes, is regulated by the will of the most high God. He believes that God has assigned to the lower order of agencies, popularly called gods or demons, various departments of authority and activity and various nationalities. Jesus, he remarks, said, "No man can worship two masters." But Celsus submits whether it is not just that he who worships God should serve those also to whom God has assigned such power. His argument is simply the divine right of kings applied to an order of invisible beings. In honoring the king you do not dishonor God; and in honoring one of the king's officers you do not dishonor the king. The way in which he reproaches the Christians with inconsistency will be interesting to modern Unitarians: "If those people worshipped one God alone and no other, they would perhaps have some valid argument against the worship of others; but they pay excessive reverence to one who has but lately appeared among men, and they think it no offence against God if they worship also his servant." His argument is essentially: "If you are going to worship Jesus, why can you not pay respect to the other heroes and messengers? What is to hinder those who are most devoted to the service of Jesus from taking part in various public offices?"

That Celsus was not a man without faith in the prevailing religion is shown in his earnest defence of oracles. It might almost be published to-day by Dr. Wallace as a defence of modern spiritualism. And Origen accuses him of being quite as superstitious in his way as the Christians. But Origen here, as often before, misses the point. Celsus does not disbelieve in spiritual communication and what we call the supernatural; but to him there is no gap between the natural and the supernatural; it is all a part of a divine order. But in another passage he does not hesitate to warn people against being too much influenced by the demonology and the spiritualism of the day, to the neglect of higher things. After reading this passage, we have thought it possible that Celsus might have written the book against magic of which Lucian speaks. Celsus has first used the similarity of Christianity to other religions to show that it cannot establish exclusive claims to inspiration. Now he uses the same fact to urge a reconciliation with the prevailing religion.

"Just as you believe in punishment after death, so do the priests who interpret the sacred mysteries. The same punishments with which you threaten others, they threaten you. It is worthy of examination which of the two is more firmly established as true, for both parties contend with equal assurance that the truth is on their side."

Celsus is tolerant; he is willing to submit everything to the tests of reason and examination. In an earlier part of his work (6, 42) he has attacked the Christian doctrine of the devil, and expresses his opinion