

gods evolved from personal and tribal ancestors. It is the first step that costs : once you have got the idea of a god fairly evolved, any number of extra gods may be invented or introduced from all quarters. A great pantheon readily admits new members to its ranks from many strange sources. Familiar instances in one of the best-known pantheons are those of Concordia, Pecunia, Aius Locutius, Rediculus Tutanus. The Romans, indeed, deified every conceivable operation of nature or of human life ; they had gods or goddesses for the minutest details of agriculture, of social relations, of the first years of childhood, of marriage and domestic arrangements generally. Many of their deities, as we shall see hereafter, were obviously manufactured to meet a special demand on special occasions. But at the same time, none of these gods, so far as we can judge, could ever have come to exist at all if the ghost-theory and ancestor-worship had not already made familiar to the human mind the principles and practice of religion generally. The very idea of a god could not otherwise have been evolved ; though, when once evolved, any number of new beings could readily be affiliated upon it by the human imagination.

Still, to admit that other elements have afterwards come in to confuse religion is quite a different thing from admitting that religion itself has more than one origin. Whatever gives us the key to the practice of worship gives us the key to all real religion. Now, one may read through almost any books of the mythological school without ever coming upon a single word that throws one ray of light upon the origin of religion itself thus properly called. To trace the development of this, that, or the other story or episode in a religious myth is in itself a very valuable study in human evolution : but no amount of tracing such stories ever gives us the faintest clue to the question why men worshipped Osiris, Zeus, Siva, or Venus ; why they offered up prayer and praise to Isis, or to Artemis ; why they made sacrifices of oxen to Capitoline