

fore devote a preliminary chapter to the consideration of this important subject.

Religion, says another group of modern thinkers, of whom Mr. Edward Clodd is perhaps the most able English exponent, "grew out of fear." It is born of man's terror of the great and mysterious natural agencies by which he is surrounded. Now I am not concerned to deny that many mythological beings of various terrible forms do really so originate. I would readily accept some such vague genesis for many of the dragons and monsters which abound in all savage or barbaric imaginings—for Gorgons and Hydras and Chimæras dire, and other manifold shapes of the superstitiously appalling. I would give up to Mr. Clodd the Etruscan devils and the Hebrew Satan, the Grendels and the Fire-drakes, the whole brood of Cerberus, Briareus, the Cyclops, the Centaurs. None of these, however, is a god or anything like one. They have no more to do with religion, properly so called, than the unicorn of the royal arms has to do with British Christianity. A god, as I understand the word, and as the vast mass of mankind has always understood it, is a supernatural being *to be revered and worshipped*. He stands to his votaries, on the whole, as Dr. Robertson Smith has well pointed out, in a kindly and protecting relation. He may be angry with them at times, to be sure ; but his anger is temporary and paternal alone : his permanent attitude towards his people is one of friendly concern ; he is worshipped as a beneficent and generous Father. It is the origin of gods in this strictest sense that concerns us here, not the origin of those vague and formless creatures which are dreaded, not worshipped, by primitive humanity.

Bearing this distinction carefully in mind, let us proceed to consider the essentials of religion. If you were to ask almost any intelligent and unsophisticated child, "What is religion ?" he would answer offhand, with the clear vision of youth, "Oh, it's saying your prayers, and reading your Bible, and singing hymns, and going to