is indeed of such importance and reality in the present case that in order to ensure its unflagging continuance two other men are engaged in supporting the great leader, who, on behalf of a whole people, is raising aloft his hands in sure token of conquering strength.

It is clear, therefore, that the linguistic evidence makes entirely for the view of Exodus xvii. 11, which is here advocated, and if the undoubted failure of all the other proposed explanations be added to this and the other arguments brought forward in this paper, it will, I hope, be admitted that a sufficient case has been made out for the new theory formulated in this place, and I, at any rate, trust that my explanation may not be found unworthy of further investigation on the part of scholars.

G. MARGOLIOUTH.

THE THREEFOLD CORD.

ὁ φιλόσοφος καὶ ὁ μουσικὸς καὶ ὁ ἐρωτικὸς ἀνακτέοιν (Plotinus, Enn., 1. 3. 1.1

The human mind, when in a healthy state, sets before itself three objects of desire—the good, the beautiful, and the true. The love of the good is religion; the imitation of the beautiful is art; the pursuit of the true is science or philosophy. These three objects are all right, that is to say, they are objects for the healthy mind; and they are all ends in themselves—they refuse to be followed as means to any end above them, or as means to each other. And yet, in spite of their independence—their claim to stand each in its own right, these three ideals are so closely interrelated,

1 A sentence in the "letter of Plotinus to Flaccus," quoted by Prof. Max Müller (Psychological Religion, p. 433), would have supplied a better text. But I have not been able to discover the Greek original of this document, which appears to be a cento of Plotinian phrases thrown into the form of a letter to an imaginary correspondent by Vaughan (Hours with the Mystics, vol. i. p. 78).
that no sooner is one of them discarded in the supposed interest of another, than a swift Nemesis follows in the frustration of the end too exclusively sought. Thus, there is no more deep-seated faithlessness than that of the religious dogmatist who stops his ears and takes up stones when he hears the word "science" or "criticism" mentioned; his onesidedness is punished either by all manner of puerile superstitions, or by a harsh and narrow Puritanism, or, most often, by unconfessed, paralysing doubts. Similarly there is no philosophy of the universe so self-contradictory and so unscientific as that of the naturalist who will acknowledge nothing but mechanical forces, and who scoffs at every kind of idealism. And lastly, there is no art more ugly and repulsive than that which begins with a repudiation of morality, and ends with an attempt to improve upon nature's types of beauty. Mankind cannot dispense with any of these three great pursuits—religion, art, and science. And yet they often seem to hinder and conflict with one another, so that there is, and nearly always has been, considerable friction between the worshippers at these three shrines. It is hardly necessary to mention such time-worn controversies as those connected with free will, special intervention, and the reign of law, or with diverging aesthetic and moral standards in art, literature, and conduct. Those who have tried to reconcile and mediate between these antagonists have met with only very partial success. It seems quite certain that in dealing with the relations of the good, the true, and the beautiful, we occasionally encounter antinomies which the human reason cannot solve. If this be granted, it is plain that we are presented with three alternatives. Either we may choose one of the three ends and make it our own to the exclusion of the other two, a course which, as has just been affirmed, defeats its own aims; or we may adopt the pessimistic conclusion that the human mind is radically at variance with itself, so that no
synthesis is possible; or, lastly, we may perform an act of faith, and accept a hypothesis which we cannot prove, namely, that the mind is not really divided against itself, and that ultimately the good, the true, and the beautiful, are one and the same,—that, in other words, they meet in God. This thought may remind us of the argument of Prof. Seeley in *Natural Religion*—that the naturalist and the artist "worship God" as well as the saint, and that their ideals also deserve the name of religions. There is truth in this, in so far as we are bound to admit that the pursuit of the true and of the beautiful as ultimate ends is right and proper; but the use of religious terms in these connexions tends to obscure the fact that the object of religion—the good—is distinct from those of science and art; and if "religion" is used to cover all these three pursuits, that which aims directly at the good will have no distinctive name. But though this widening of the scope of the word "religion" is on the whole more confusing than helpful, it has two advantages; it implies that the nature of God (who as the Good is of course the object of religion) contains the true and the beautiful; and also the choice of the word indicates the supremacy of the good over the other two objects of desire. The subordination of the beautiful to the good is expressed by Plotinus (who in this matter was the teacher of Augustine, as will be shown presently) by saying that though the good and the beautiful may be rightly identified in God, yet if we must distinguish, the good is the source and origin of the beautiful (*Enn.*, 1. 6, *ad fin.*) and the desire of it is "older" and prior to that of beauty (*Enn.*, 5. 5, 12).

Historically, there can be no doubt that the conception of the Divine Nature as uniting in itself the good, the true, and the beautiful, is a legacy of Greek philosophy, and especially of Plotinus, to the Church. The much derided "vision" of the great Neoplatonist is an attempt at a
final synthesis of admiration, knowledge, and love.¹ The second of these substantives has rather characteristically dropped out in the famous line of our great Platonic poet, and its place has been taken by hope, which may or may not be based on reason and experience. But fact and law claim recognition, which cannot be denied them with impunity. Whether the "philosopher," who, according to Plotinus, has the advantage of the artist and the lover in the upward path (since the last has to be weaned from the love of visible forms to that of the good) be a metaphysician or a naturalist, his intellectual life may elevate him to the knowledge of God, no less than art may raise the poet, or devotion the saint. The ascription of perfect beauty to God, and the belief in His self-revelation through beauty, have been too much forgotten in western theology, which has always been in danger of letting slip the Greek element in Christianity. Augustine, however, adopts in toto the teaching of Plotinus on this subject. Like Plotinus (and Shaftesbury in modern times) he speaks of three grades of beauty, corporal, spiritual, and divine (compare Enn., 1. 6. 4, with de Ord., 2. 16. 42 sq.). "Fair is the face of justice and righteousness," says the Pagan philosopher, "yea, fairer than the evening or the morning star"; and Augustine echoes him with "iustitia summa et vera pulchritudo est" (compare Enn., 1. 6. 4, with Enarr. in Ps. 44. 3, and Ep. 120. 20, "quid est alius iustitia vel quaelibet virtus, quam interioris hominis pulchritudo"). Augustine, like Plotinus, asserts repeatedly that God is the highest beauty —"Deus pulchritudo pulchritudinum omnium"; "omne pulchrum a summa pulchritudine est quod Deus est" (Conf. 3. 6. 10; de Civ., qu. 83, qu. 44). Both avoid the snare of

¹ This is well shown by his disciple Augustine, who accepts his doctrine of Vision, though not of Ecstasy. "Tendit bene vivendo etiam ad speciem pervenire, ubi est sanctis et perfectis cordibus ineffabilis pulchritudo, cujus plena visio summa est felicitas" (Ench., 5).
deifying the beautiful, instead of ascribing beauty to the
divine (see *Enn.*, 1. 6); and, so long as the supremacy of
goodness is thus acknowledged, no objection can be taken
to a line of thought which consecrates and purifies one of
the strongest and noblest of our faculties.

If, then, we may follow Plotinus and Augustine in re­
garding art, science, and religion as three paths on the
upward journey, converging towards a point still in the
clouds, where they meet at the topmost peak of existence,
we have our justification for an act of faith consisting in a
frank recognition of the claims of religion, art, and science,
and an equally frank avowal that there are points of conflict
between them which cannot as yet be reconciled, though we
absolutely refuse to admit that the contradictions are real
and ultimate. On the debatable ground we must admit the
fallibility of our judgment, though with a firm faith that our
deepest convictions, whether in art, science, or religion, will
not have to be sacrificed when the full vision is attained.

The rational idealism of the Alexandrians, whether Pagan
or Christian, and of their Christian followers down to
Scotus Erigena, is a side of religious thought which can
never be neglected without danger. The attitude towards
art and science, which I think is encouraged if not incul­
cated by their teaching, and which has been the subject of
the present paper, is only one of the lessons which we may
learn from them. There is, indeed, no more interesting
epoch in the history of thought than the struggle between
Christianity and Neoplatonism in North Africa, when a
religion sprung from Judaism, and a philosophy sprung
from Hellenism, competed against each other in an orien­
talized environment, which forced them both, as it were, to
develop new organs, till they became very much alike.
They quarrelled with the rancour which generally distin­
guishes two parties which like to express the same ideas
in slightly different language, till the Church won the battle
—that is to say, it absorbed the rich gains of Alexandrian thought, converted its best opponents, and left the remainder to lose themselves in vain dreams and curious arts, forgetful of their master's warning—τὸ δὲ ἐντὸς νοῦν ἡδὴ εἰσὶν ἐξω νοῦ πεσεῖν. In Augustine, at the best period of his life, we find an apparently stable reconciliation; but history proved that the two elements were ready to fall apart again. For the dominant type of Christianity, at least in the West, is one which tends to degenerate into crude anthropomorphism and excessive individualism; while Neoplatonism tends to degenerate into the opposite error of pantheistic mysticism. It is only on a high plane that the two can combine. But Christian Platonism can never be ousted from the Church while we have the Fourth Gospel, where the Logos doctrine, with all its far-reaching consequences, is brought into indissoluble connexion with the historical Christ. And so long as the Church identifies itself with a dogmatic system which was mainly built up during this period, a knowledge of the later Platonism, and some sympathy with it, will be indispensable to a true understanding of its formularies. A recent study of Plotinus has convinced me that the works of this philosopher, irritating as they are from their wretched style and chaotic arrangement, are of the very highest value to a student of Christian dogma. They throw much light on the growth of the doctrine of the Trinity (John Damascene even dares to say, too boldly of course (1. 7), that "we owe to Judaism the unity of the Divine Nature, but to Hellenism the distinction of persons"); on the idea of the Logos as in a sense the Ego of the universe (cf. Erigena "certius cognoscas Verbum Naturam omnium esse"); on the doctrines of union with Christ (cf. Plotinus' teaching on the relation of individual souls to the world-soul, which Augustine is far from rejecting), and of the membership and essential unity of all living spirits—notions which become
fantastic speculations or mere figures of speech to those who press the idea of personality as far in the direction of monadism as many do, but which really lie at the bottom of the whole Christian doctrine of redemption.

W. R. INGE.

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

II.

OTHER NEW TESTAMENT TEACHING.

We have seen that the writers of the New Testament set before their readers, as a goal to be pursued, an ideal human excellence which they called perfection, or, as their language might be more correctly rendered, the maturity of moral and spiritual manhood. This ideal character, they described in different ways: and the variety of description suggested that they had not always in view precisely the same moral standard.

This perfection is, in the sermon on the mount, identified with a love to our enemies like the indiscriminating kindness of the God of nature. In the First Epistle of John the duty of love to our brethren is enforced by the example of the love manifested in the mission of the Son of God. We also read that such love banishes fear, and that he who fears is not perfected in love. This agreement of documents so different emphasises this aspect of Christian perfection.

The same ideal receives still further emphasis and unique honour in Matthew xxii. 37-40, Mark xii. 29-31, where our Lord teaches that to love God with all our hearts and to love our neighbour as ourselves are the two great commandments on which hang all the Law and the Prophets. The same two commands are enforced in Luke x. 27. In remarkable agreement with this teaching of