

more even than the conception of religion as an independent power in the life of the human soul, something more also than the feeling of absolute dependence, the definition with which his philosophical ethics started. The bringing together of reason and nature, of the divine and human, presented itself as an endless process, as an ideal, undefinable and realisable only in the infinite progress of human history, in the distant future of humanity. But this, which for the natural man would be an infinitely distant and not clearly defined aim and end, has been brought near and definitely fixed or revealed in the Christian doctrine and the person of its Founder. In spite of the endless process, of the infinite duration of human history, as the goal of which the union of the divine and human appears in the form of an ideal, we are in possession, through the historical Christian dispensation, of a living presentation of this union, of this ideal, in Christ. To Schleiermacher it is inconceivable that the Christian Church and Christian life could ever go beyond what was revealed in and through its founder.¹ In this way

¹ The principal passage in which this view is stated is to be found in a posthumous work published by L. Jonas (1843) from a manuscript left by Schleiermacher and notes taken of his lectures. In this work ('Die Christliche Sitte nach den Grundsätzen der Evangelischen Kirche im Zusammenhang dargestellt'), as the title shows, and especially also the standard passage (2nd ed., 1884, p. 72), two points are clearly brought out. First, the importance of taking note of an historically existing practical code of ethics as distin-

guished from philosophical ethics; and secondly, the fact that the principle of progress or development in ethical theory and practice is compatible only with the Protestant (or as the title says evangelical) conception of the Christian Church, and that this notion of a development is not compatible with the point of view of Roman Catholicism. "In the Catholic Church there can be no question of progress in the meaning we attach to it, as she does not believe in a development of her own ordinances, which she considers to be unchangeable,