

CHAPTER XV.

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION.

I.

It is likely that whatever existed among primitive peoples of higher mental life was comprised in their religion, and kept alive by some form of observance or cult. In a more advanced stage of civilisation philosophy may have tended to replace religion. Yet both these products of human thought have in later times, to a large extent, fallen into the background; in fact, in many highly civilised countries at the present day religious worship moves in secluded spheres, and Philosophy forms the privilege of a very small number, even among thoughtful persons.

It is not our object to investigate the historical appearance either of religious faith or of philosophic thought. We are more definitely interested in the beginnings and the growth of these mental activities in the individual mind in civilised society of the present day. Of these we have had occasion to treat in an earlier chapter, where we traced the religious sentiment to some form of obedience, that is, of acceptance of a leading authority, and the feeling of obligation to follow its commands.