In Algazel philosophical scepticism was combined with religious dogmatism and mysticism. He subjected the doctrines of the philosophers to a keen and hostile criticism, and maintained that reason was incompetent to reach the knowledge of God, yet cherished an ardent and exalted faith in God, based partly on the Koran and partly on mystic contemplation and devout experience.@@1

Jewish and Mohammedan religious thought were inti­mately connected in the Middle Age, and ran a nearly parallel course. The Rabbanites and the Karaites of Juda­ism corresponded to the orthodox and the Motazilites of Mohammedanism. In their theism there was no new feature or peculiar significance. Jewish theosophic mysti­cism found expression in the Kabbalah. The idea of God there presented was at once excessively abstract and excessively fanciful. It must be studied, however, in the original source or in special works. The Jewish philoso­phers differed little from the Arabian philosophers in their teaching regarding the evidences of the Divine existence, the nature and consequences of the Divine unity, and the meaning of the Divine attributes. At the same time, they, with a few exceptions, affirmed the non-eternity of matter, and did not, like the Arabian Aristotelians, represent pro­vidence as merely general. They maintained strongly the transcendence of God and the impossibility of the human mind forming any positive conception of His essential being. They held that He was known as necessarily existent, but also as in Himself necessarily unknowable. Their view of the unity of God led them to an idea of God which may not unjustly be designated agnostic, and which prevented their regarding either nature or Scripture as a revelation of what God really is. Almost alone among eminent Jew­ish writers of the Middle Age, Jehuda Halevi contended that the representation of God given in the revelation to Israel was self-evidencing, independent of the support of philosophy, and unattainable in any speculative way. The function of reason was, in his view, not to sit in judgment on what had been delivered regarding God to the Jews, but to repel the objections which philosophy had brought against it, and to show the inadequacy of the results reached by unaided human intelligence. Maimonides undertook to establish that reason and faith, science and revelation, were at one in what they affirmed regarding God, but in order to make out his thesis he sacrificed the literal sense of Scripture whenever it did not accord with the tenets of his philosophy, and substituted for the representation of God given through Moses and the prophets one very different in character. His idea of God is highly abstract and metaphysical,—the idea of a being so unlike every other being that no name or predicate whatever when applied to Him can bear its ordinary, or indeed any intelligible meaning. Existence, eternity, unity, power, wisdom, justice, and other attributes, are not in Him what they are in any other being or even analogous in Him to what they are in any other being.@@2

In Christian Europe the human mind took a fresh start at the epoch of the Renaissance. It revolted against the authorities to which it had long been submissive, and exercised private judgment with a confidence uncorrected and unmoderated by experience. It turned with ardour to the free discussion of the greatest theme of thought, and probably at no period of history has there been more individual diversity of opinion on that theme. God and His relation to the universe were treated of from a multi­tude of points of view. Scepticism, naturalism, and pan­theism appeared in various forms ; all ancient systems of thought as to the Supreme Being found advocates; all modern theories as to the nature of the Divine were in some measure anticipated. Did our limits permit it would not be uninteresting to expound the speculations concern­ing Deity of several of the writers of the Renaissance,— and especially, perhaps, of these three—Nicolaus of Cusa, Giordano Bruno, and Thomas Campanella. The theo­sophic mysticism of the period was a preparation for the Reformation.@@3

The fusion of theology and philosophy was the distinc­tive feature of mediæval Christendom ; their separation has been a marked characteristic of modern Christendom. Even when both have been occupied with religious inquiries and thoughts of God they have kept apart ; they have often co-operated, but seldom commingled. Theology has been on the whole cleric, and comparatively conserva­tive ; philosophy has been on the whole laic, and compara­tively progressive. But for theology holding fast to what had been handed down as truth regarding God there must have been little continuity or consistency in the development of religious convictions ; but for philosophy restlessly seek­ing ever more light there would have been little growth or increase of knowledge of the Divine.

The Reformers held that there was a knowledge of God naturally planted in the human mind, and also derivable from observation of the constitution and government of the world, but that this knowledge was so marred and corrupted by ignorance and sin as to require to be con firmed and supplemented by the far clearer and fuller light of the special revelation in the Scriptures. They were deeply sensible of the evils which had arisen from the over-speculation of the scholastic divines on the nature of God, and were under the ' impression that it would have been well if men had been content to accept the statements of Scripture on the subject with simple and unhesitating faith. Luther wished theology to begin at once with Jesus Christ. Melanchthon said, “ There is no reason why we should devote ourselves much to these most lofty subjects, the doctrine of God, of the unity of God, of the Trinity oi God”; and in the early editions of his *Loci Communes* he entered into no discussion of these themes. Zwingli in his *De Vera et Falsa Religione* and even Calvin in his *Institutio Religionis Christianae* delineated the *doctrina de Deo* only in outline and general features. In the confessions of the churches of the Reformation nothing which the ancient church had oecumenically determined as regards that doctrine was rejected, and nothing new was added thereto. It soon became apparent, however, that the mind would by no means confine its thoughts of God within the limits which the Reformers believed to be alone legitimate and safe. The idea of God is so central in religion that it must affect and be affected by every change of thought on

@@@1 Schahrastani’s *Geschichte der religiösen u. philosophischen Secten bei den Arabern,* Germ. trans. by Haarbrücker, 1850-51 ; Wüstenfeld, *Die Akademie der Araber u. ihre Lehrer,* 1837 ; Schmölders, *Essai sur les Écoles Philosophiques chez les Arabes,* 1842 ; Munk, *Mélanges de Philosophie Juive et Arabe,* 1859 ; Steiner, *Die Mutaziliten oder Freidenker in Islam,* 1865 ; Renan, *Averroes et L’Averroïsme,* 1852, &c. On Eastern mysticism, see Tholuck, *Sufismus s. Theosophia Persarum Pantheistica,* 1821, and *Blüthensammlung aus der morgen­ländischen Mystik,* 1825 ; Cowell, “ Persian Literature, ” in *Oxford Essays* for 1855 ; Palmer, *Oriental Mysticism,* 1867 ; Redhouse, *The Mesnevi of Jelalu-d-Din,* 1881 *sq.* ; Vaughan, in *Hours with the Mystics,* treats of the Oriental as well as Christian mystics. For Persian mysticism in its latest forms, see De Gobineau, *Religions et Philosophie dans l’Asie Centrale,* 1866. On Algazel, see Gosche, “ Ueber Ghazzâlîs Leben u. Werke,” in *Abhand,* (*philol. u. hist.*) *d. k. Akad. d. Wiss. z. Berlin,* 1858.

@@@2 Munk, *Esquisse Historique de la Philosophie chez les Juifs,* 1849; Eisler, *Vorlesungen über die jüdischen Philosophen des Mittelalters,*

1870, 1876; Joël, *Beiträge z. Gesch. d. Philosophie,* 1876. On the Kabbalah, see Franck and Ginsburg. Kaufmann, *Geschichte der Attri­butenlehre in der jüdischen Religionsphilosophie der Mittelalters, 1877*; Friedlander, *Guide of the Perplexed of Maimonides,* 3 vols., 1885.

@@@3 Μ. Carrière’s *Philosophische Weltanschauung der Reformationszeit,* 1887; *Pünjer’s Religionsphilosophie, i.* 51-59, 69-75, 76-80; Bobba’s *Conoscenza di Dio,* iii. 1-90.