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the masses of the people the importance and necessity of personal religion.

And in doing this, whilst maintaining its love for, and its connection with, the Church's system, it emphasized the duty of the Church, and indicated some of the lines along which that duty might be performed. The beneficial effects of the Wesleyan movement have been, and are being, felt in the Church of England, probably to a greater extent than anywhere else. And much of the spirituality of tone evinced in her to-day, as well as many developments of her methods of work, are, under God, traceable in a great measure to the Wesleyan revival of religion.

JAMES P. ROUNTREE.

ART. II.—THE ATONEMENT.

THE word atonement, as the readers of this article are aware, if taken in its etymological sense, means reconciliation, and in the only passage of the New Testament in which our Authorized Version employs it, it is the translation of καταλλαγή, and in its place the revisers have rightly substituted "reconciliation." But in the Old Testament it has a sacrificial reference, and conveys the idea of expiation and propitiation, as in the familiar expression, "to make an atonement for your souls." It is in this vicarious and sacrificial sense that the word is commonly understood, and in which it is here employed, its etymology not really affecting the different opinions regarding its nature. And the object of the writer is not to formulate any theory on the subject, but first to let Holy Scripture speak for itself, and then to add some thoughts —subsidiary, but not unimportant—in support of its (apparent) verdict.

When we speak of the practice and doctrine of sacrifice for sin in the Mosaic ritual, we are well aware that the very fact of its existence among the Jews, and of their regarding it as they did, has been used, *not* to strengthen, but to account for and to explain away the language in which Christ's death is spoken of in the New Testament. Does not rather the very opposite conclusion follow from the same premises? Let us look at the facts. We need not now consider whether sacrifice was originally a Divine institution, or the product of human instinct. Certainly it was adopted in the Levitical code, and an expiatory power attributed to it. And so far as we believe in the Old Testament Dispensation being ordered by special

Divine guidance, so far must we also believe that the practice itself, and the idea manifestly associated with it, had likewise the highest sanction. But not now to dwell on the daily morning and evening sacrifice, or the innumerable sin-offerings of individual offenders, let us call to mind the institution of the Passover—the lamb slain, and the blood sprinkled on the doorposts, as a security to those who dwelt within that the Destroying Angel would not injure them, would, in fact, pass over every door, and only those, on which that blood was seen. Or take the strange rite of the cleansing of the leper—two birds, one slain and the other dipped in his fellow's blood and set free—which, if not a sacrifice, yet symbolized the truth of life by death and out of death. Or, lastly, let us consider the Great Day of Atonement. A victim must be slain to put away the sins of the High Priest himself, before he is fit, after all his ablutions and purifications, to offer sacrifice for the people. Then the memorial of both these sacrifices must be presented before God in the sprinkling of blood within the veil, by which the holiest things were to be cleansed. And, finally, the High Priest, after slaying one of the two goats selected as a sin-offering for the people, laying both his hands on the head of the other, confesses over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and then sends him away to bear all those iniquities into a land not inhabited. We ask, What must have been the idea impressed by these startling ceremonies on the Jewish mind? Surely, that forgiveness of sin was somehow mysteriously connected with sacrifice, whilst yet this multiplication of forms of sacrifice witnessed to their insufficiency. There were, no doubt, customs religious and social among the Jews, derived from their ancestors or from other nations; and sacrifices, it may be said, were so universal that we might expect to find them in Israel as amongst the heathen. True, but granting a special Divine direction of this people, what can we say to the fact, not merely of the permission and continuance of sacrifices, as of that which they were accustomed to, and could not easily abandon, but of the institution of a very solemn, elaborate and expressive ceremonial, eminently calculated to emphasize and impress indelibly on the minds and feelings of the people the expiatory, propitiatory and vicarious nature of sacrifice, and fully to authorize the conclusion that "without shedding of blood there is no remission"? Will anyone reply: "We admit the difficulty; we can only suppose that this was necessary for the time—the New Testament has taught us a higher truth"? Let us turn to the New Testament; let us weigh well its statements, remembering that they were made in speech and writing to a people deeply imbued with the idea of the

remission of sin by sacrifice, and that the death of the sin-offering was instead of the forfeited life of the penitent offender. What terms do our Lord and His Apostles employ in dealing with such persons? Christ's forerunner introduces Him to his disciples as "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," suggesting certainly a sacrificial idea, whether the language be referred to the lamb of the daily sacrifice, or to the paschal lamb, or to that Lamb of whom Isaiah writes that "He was brought to the slaughter, but opened not His mouth; He was stricken for the transgression of His people, and bore their iniquities." Christ Himself says, "The Son of man came to give His life a ransom for many"—λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν—not ὑπὲρ in behalf of, but ἀντὶ instead of—and using the same word, λύτρον, which is employed by the LXX. in Num. xxxv.: "Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer." Again, "This cup is the New Covenant in My blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." St. Paul, with little alteration of his Master's language, writes, "Who gave Himself a ransom for all" (ἀντίλυτρον ὑπερ πάντων)—"Who gave Himself that He might redeem us (λυτρώσηται) from all iniquity; in whom we have redemption (ἀπολύτρωσιν) through His blood, the forgiveness of sins; through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth as a propitiation (ἱλαστήριον) through faith in (or by) His blood, having made peace through the blood of His Cross." St. Peter's words are no less expressive: "Knowing that ye were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"—"Christ has once suffered for us, the just for the unjust; who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree." St. John is equally clear, where he says: "God loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation (ἱλασμός) for our sins"—"We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and He is the propitiation for our sins"—for the sins of the whole world; "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

The Epistle to the Hebrews is yet more strong, because more full and explicit, its peculiar strength lying in this, that it declares Christ to be the end of the Law on its ceremonial side, as does the Epistle to the Romans more particularly on its moral side; and sets forth in detail how in Christ's full and perfect sacrifice is contained, and is available for evermore, all that those shadowy and ineffectual sacrifices symbolized but could not bestow. It draws out at length the parallel between "the High Priest entering yearly into the Holy Place by the blood of bulls and of goats, and Christ by His own blood entering once for all into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; having offered the

sacrifice for sins, and thereby having perfected for ever them that are sanctified, and obtained eternal redemption for us." And it goes on to state that "by the blood of Jesus"—that is, making Christ's atoning death the ground of access—all true Christians have now "boldness to enter into the holiest." With these passages agrees the expression in Acts xx. 28: "The Church of God which He purchased with His own blood"; and the song of the redeemed in Revelation v. 9: "Thou art worthy, for Thou didst purchase us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation." And it should be observed that, whatever weight these passages possess, it is certainly increased by the fact that neither in them, nor in any other part, does the New Testament give one word of caution against interpreting too strictly expressions used only by way of illustration. It simply emphasizes the meaning of all preceding sacrifices for sin, and declares their inability to remove it, by asserting that they were signs and types of one real sacrifice, which by its unique character and value effected what they only shadowed forth. And further, whilst isolated passages, such as have been quoted above, have their weight, it is to the testimony of the Scriptures as a whole that our appeal is made, when we maintain that in them an objective reality as well as a subjective efficiency, an expiation as well as an attraction, is attributed to the Saviour's death. We fully admit that such subjective efficacy is insisted on, and that its motive power is still felt, and ever will be felt, by Christians; but we contend that, unless Holy Scripture uses language calculated to mislead on a vital point, the words applied to Christ's sufferings, severally and collectively taken, mean more than that He died as our example, to call forth our love and gratitude by acting on our moral nature by the sense of His own love. We contend that the impression made by these words is at least this: that by His death He removed some obstacle to God's dealing with us as now in grace He can and does; and that He thus restored to penitent believers the lost right of access—"access through Him by one Spirit to the Father."

Before proceeding to some further thoughts, let us, at the risk of tediousness, recall the twofold argument which it has been attempted above to educe from the testimony of Scripture. Firstly, it has been shown that under the Old Dispensation sacrifice was not only permitted and enjoined, but that its expiatory character was set forth and emphasized by striking ordinances, calculated to make a deep and permanent impression. So that, without denying Divine sanction to such institutions, we cannot but suppose that it was intended to produce

and perpetuate this view of sacrifice in the minds of the Jews. But, if this was intended, must it not have been because these sacrifices were types of a real and true sacrifice for sin which was to come? Secondly, the language of the New Testament, taking particular passages or the general effect of the whole—especially when we consider the pre-existing conception of sacrifice in the minds of those to whom it was addressed—does convey to the thoughtful reader the impression and conviction that Christ's death was a vicarious and expiatory atonement for sin.

We now briefly address ourselves to those earnest minds who find it difficult to admit the idea of expiation, and who regard Christ's death merely as the highest proof of love, and an example of heroic self-sacrifice. Truly, it was all this. As truly do we deprecate any statement of the doctrine of Atonement which implies anger, in our low sense, in the Holy One, or unwillingness to bless in Him who is Love. We, too, sympathize with the gentleness of modern feeling and with the difficulties of the subject, and we claim of all honest seekers after truth to give us credit for this. But we cannot but ask them, if what they suppose sufficient were the sole ends of Christ's death, could there not have been given a less awful manifestation of love than the startling and soul-harrowing drama of Calvary?

If there existed no antecedent necessity for this death, no obstacle to our salvation to be removed by an expiatory sacrifice, can we conceive of the beloved of the Father being brought to the agonizing cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me"? Do we not here stand face to face with a most vital question, the nature of Him who died—not merely a righteous man, but the Incarnate Son of God? For in the long run men will be driven to the necessity of denying the true Deity of the sufferer, or of confessing the marvellous and blessed mystery that He was in His death, and is in its ever-enduring efficacy, the propitiation for the sins of the world. This argument, the inseparableness of the two doctrines of the Deity and the Atonement of Christ, demands the Christian's most serious thought; and to those who admit that Deity, seems well-nigh conclusive as to the expiatory nature of His death.

Closely allied to this is the testimony of experience. Mr. Gladstone has written his belief—in which the present writer concurs—that the great defect of modern Christianity is a weak sense of sin. Those who have but a slight feeling of its guilt and pollution will naturally be content with an emasculated doctrine of the Atonement, whilst, conversely, low views of Christ's sacrifice tend to lower our estimate of human demerit and corruption. It is, as Melancthon so frequently and so

feelingly asserts, "in the struggle of conscience, in real spiritual alarm,"[1] that the grace of Christ is understood. When faith is fighting with despair, and anguished fear with hope and confidence in mercy, then pardon through an atoning Saviour is the stay of the sinking soul. Such an one cannot be comforted by the assurance, so lightly given, that God will of course forgive sin upon repentance, still less by the theory that forgiveness is impossible, and that repentance and amendment—whence is the motive and the power to come?—must be man's only hope. He feels too acutely, as the noblest Christians have felt, the contrast between Divine purity and the heinousness of sin. He believes indeed that God is Love, but holy love, not easy, indulgent kindness—both Scripture and experience forbid the thought. He sees without him the wreck which sin has made in this fair but polluted world, how it has filled it with abominations which the Righteous One abhors, and with sufferings with which "He does not willingly afflict the children of men"—nay, how it has cast a shadow on the very holiness of God. And, turning to the world within, he has to mourn over mixed motives and selfish and inadequate contrition, whilst the nearer he comes to the light, the more clearly does he discern the stains on his spiritual purity, and the poverty of his highest attainments. "Cleanse Thou me from my secret faults" will ever be his prayer; but "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" his only hope.

As was stated at the commencement of this article, no attempt has been made to formulate a theory of the Atonement. The writer is certainly incompetent to do this, and he sees none in Holy Scripture; but as in the case of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, it is not less a truth because we cannot fathom its depth. Great thinkers—amongst them two Archbishops Magee—have written upon it, and perhaps Dr. Dale's treatise, highly commended by the late Canon Liddon, is one of the most important on the subject. St. Paul, of all writers of the New Testament, comes nearest to a theory, only to stop far short of it, in the celebrated passage partially given above (Rom. iii. 25, 26): "Whom God set forth to be a propitiation through faith in (or by) His blood to show His righteousness, because of the passing over of sins done aforetime in the forbearance of God; for the showing, I say, at this present season of His righteousness, that He might Himself be just and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus." Can anything less be implied in these words than that without that wondrous death a doubt, a slur, would have been cast on the character of

[1] "In luctâ conscientiæ, in veris animi terroribus."

the Holy One, because of His indulgent dealing with a rebellious world; but that now—His righteousness having been thus vindicated—He can pour forth on all who trust in Christ the riches of His grace? That is sufficient. The Atonement was a necessity, not only to show the love of God, but to demonstrate sin's desert and Divine righteousness, and to remove an otherwise insuperable barrier to the full outflow of His mercy on sinful man.

One concluding thought of considerable importance borrowed from Dr. Dale. We have in Holy Scripture the words "ransom," "propitiation," "sacrifice," and "offering," applied to Christ's death, as well as the very strong verb, in passages quoted above, to "purchase." Let us bear in mind two cautions. On the one hand, no one of these expressions must be isolated from the others, and made the basis of a theory of the Atonement; neither can the idea of each be fully followed out without landing us in confusion and contradiction—a common danger in the application of human analogies to Divine truths. But, on the other hand, no theory can be true and adequate which does not account for the employment of all these various terms. All must be felt to be apt and suggestive, though partial, expressions of this great truth. This great truth—which, as it has been endeavoured above to show, (1) Holy Scripture distinctly commends to our faith, (2) which seems to follow of necessity from the true Deity of Him who died, (3) and which, tried by the test of experience in practical religion, works a sense of sin which nothing else has been found able to produce, gives peace, comfort, and strength to the humble and contrite, together with a prevailing motive and desire for holiness of heart and life.

HAY S. ESCOTT.

ART. III.—"DARIUS, SON OF AHASUERUS OF THE SEED OF THE MEDES" (DAN. IX. 1).

BEING AN OLD HYPOTHESIS REHABILITATED.

INTRODUCTORY.

BY a truthful paradox we may say of Darius that he is celebrated chiefly for his obscurity. So very hard is he to find in the field of history that everyone is on his trail. Yet in view of the hundred-and-one contradictory legends which constitute our entire knowledge of the Median and early Persian Empires—as seen nowhere more glaringly than