before God; if Christ had made only a partial reconciliation between us and God, we should need to supply what was lacking in our salvation; but because Christ is "a full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world", there is nothing left in our salvation for us to achieve.

Now, since the sufficiency of the work of Christ leaves no room for the works of man as the instrument of justification, we are driven back to nothing, emptiness, hunger and thirst—by which expressions, you will remember, we described *faith*. Faith is no work, for it adds nothing to what Christ has done for us. It is our participation, by the power of the Holy Spirit, in the work of Christ. It is for this reason that we say that the uniqueness and worth of Jesus Christ as the object of faith demands the affirmation of *by faith alone*. If we were to refuse this word *alone*, it would mean that we were not merely introducing another element besides faith into justification, but another element beside Jesus Christ. Thus we should be detracting from the glory of Christ, and destroying the New Testament insistence upon His uniqueness as Mediator.

Finally, if this is true, then Luther was right in calling this the doctrine by which the Church stands and without which it falls. For the Church is founded upon Jesus Christ, and upon Him as He appears in the witness of the prophets and apostles. Therefore, if *justification by faith alone* is synonymous with *justification by Christ alone*, the Church destroys her foundation if she denies this doctrine. "If the foundation of the Church," says Calvin, "be the doctrine of the prophets and apostles, which enjoins believers to place their salvation in Christ alone, how can the building stand any longer, when that doctrine is taken away?" (Inst. IV. ii. 1). Hence we must say that the word *alone* in this formula is to be regarded as the dividing point between the true and the apparent Church—and that not only historically but permanently.

The Doctrine To-day

By The Rev. Douglas Webster, M.A.

THIS paper makes no pretensions to being a learned contribution to the theological study of the subject. It is written not from the point of view of the pure theologian but rather from that of the parish priest. For theology is in danger when it is studied and discussed purely for its own sake. If our theology is to be living, it must have men and women in mind at every point, and the indispensable link between the two is the minister of the Gospel in his pulpit and his parish. Our task then is to try to discover what we to-day mean by the doctrine of justification by faith, what is its place in the total Gospel, and how it is to be related to the other truths of the Gospel, especially those which are being recovered by our contemporaries, that we may be better able to interpret and present it to ordinary Christians.

This doctrine is deeply embedded right at the heart of traditional Protestantism and all that it holds most precious. Brunner has written: "Justification is the most incomprehensible thing that exists. All other marvels are miracles on the circumference of being, but this is the miracle in the centre of being, the personal centre".[1] It describes the typical evangelical experience of conversion in the terms of technical theology. Yet we are bound to recognise that this doctrine has received scant treatment, if any at all, at the hands of the most influential and popular Anglican teachers. It is ambiguous to theologians because it conveys the impression that men are saved by faith and not by Christ, when the truth of course is that we are saved not *propter fidem* but *propter Christum per fidem*. Faith is the condition, not the cause, of being saved. The doctrine is remote to the layman because he seldom speaks or thinks in terms of justification. Indeed, the very word is associated with self-justification and has a not very pleasant flavour, and the word faith (unattached or unexplained) is hopelessly vague. It is always dangerous, as Vincent Taylor has warned us, to use a term in one sense in theology and in another sense in common speech[2], for religious terminology is not static but organic, inasmuch as it is the language of the Christian society progressively guided by the Spirit of God. And yet, if Vincent Taylor is right in his conclusion that for St. Paul the idea of 'being justified' was a much richer concept than that of 'being forgiven',[3] we who accept the authority of the Scriptures must preserve and make intelligible all that St. Paul and the Reformers found to be of such worth in this undeniable part of the original and eternal Gospel.

There is no need in this final paper to re-state the classical formulations of this doctrine to be found in St. Paul, the Reformers and the early Anglican divines. Our wisest course would seem to be to attempt to assess the meaning and value of the doctrine to-day, to examine briefly some of the problems and criticisms associated with it, and finally to look at it in its relation to those other equally essential elements of the Gospel from which it must never be isolated.

I

First, then, its meaning and value. It seems clear from the New Testament that although Christians are not intended to be at ease in Zion they are certainly meant to be happy in their Father's house. The Christians of the N.T. were not sick souls, nor were they primarily concerned with their own salvation, like Luther in his early period; their concern was missionary, the salvation of others. But this in no sense implied either a patronising manner or an appearance of self-righteousness, for like St. Paul they combined at one and the same time a sense of sin and a conscience at peace. The reason for this was their conviction that the forgiveness of Christ was real and permanent and free, that it was the initial and continual Christian experience. We live the Christian life not in order to obtain an eventual forgiveness; we live it because we have already been forgiven and have accepted it. Our Lord did not extract promises or vows, nor did He prescribe rules before saying to a sinner, "Thy sins be forgiven thee". This came first always. This is the grace of God, preceding everything

else. That is why it is only sinners who are called by Jesus into the Kingdom, for salvation is not earned by character : character is transformed by salvation. The whole emphasis both in the Gospels and the Epistles is that salvation is not won by human achievement. It is given by God, and given from the Cross. Only sin itself deals in terms of wages and deserts.[4] God deals with men in terms of gifts. This is the background of all St. Paul means by justification by faith. Moral effort can only result from the experience of justification ; it cannot procure it. He knew that there was much he had not yet obtained : " I count not myself yet to have apprehended . . . but I press on toward the goal ". Yet St. Paul lived without fear, rejoicing that there was no condemnation to those who were in Christ Jesus, consciously aware that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus had made him free from the law of sin and death,[5] that He who had begun a good work in him would also complete it,[6] and that to have been called involved not only being justified but also being glorified.[7]

With these twin aspects of the Christian life in mind, we are better able to understand the idea of justification itself, though we must content ourselves with only a few points of particular significance to-day.

1. Justification is primarily a relationship between an individual and God ; it is given by God on His own terms and enjoyed by the individual in conformity with these terms. This is why it is more than forgiveness. It is a status, not won by us but conferred by God. Brunner put this vividly when he wrote, " Just as the touch of the royal sword transforms a burgher into a noble, so the Divine declaration of forgiveness raises the sinner into the state of righteousness ".[8] It involves therefore the parallel Pauline metaphor of adoption into the family of God.[9] For this reason it cannot be divorced from the sacrament of Baptism or the doctrine of the Church—as we shall see later—for the Church is that family of God and Baptism the formal manner of entry. It is because Protestantism has so often failed to relate the inward with the outward that its doctrine of justification has fallen into disrepute in circles which have taken the visible Church and sacraments more seriously.

God, apparently, is always more concerned with our relationship to Himself than with the measurements of our moral stature. This is why in the religious sphere faith is more important than works and a bad Christian better than a good pagan. Even of John the Baptist, the greatest of the prophets, our Lord said that he that was least in the Kingdom of heaven was greater than he.[10] Relationship with God is more fundamental than moral achievement. Mary Magdalene and the penitent thief and the publican were more pleasing to Christ than the self-righteous, immaculate Pharisee. The righteousness of the latter is egotism and pride ; the righteousness of the former consists precisely in this, that *they know themselves not to be righteous*, and so there is room in their lives for the righteousness of Christ.

But this relationship is not static and must not be thought of solely in terms of status. It is a growing thing, involving an ever new giving of ourselves to Christ and a constant looking to Him. This whole doctrine can be as much jeopardised by a rigid belief in final persever-

ance as by a sentimental belief in universalism. If our first faith is as a grain of mustard seed in its minuteness, it must also be as a grain of mustard seed in its potentiality for growth and development. Relationships between persons either deepen or die : and this is also true of the relationship we have by faith with the justifying God.

Further, it is out of this relationship that moral progress is born. This is the crux of the Protestant disagreement with the traditional 'Catholic' approach. For the Catholic, moral progress means a progressive entering into a relationship with God. For the Protestant, the relationship with God is given by Him at the outset and is the only means towards moral progress. Hence the strong, if exaggerated, language of Article XIII about works done before justification. Sanctification is not to be confused or identified with justification ; it is the gradual outcome of the relationship into which justification has brought us ; it is the practice of walking in the light, of having fellowship with God, of being cleansed from sin by sharing in the faith which overcomes and by participation in the Eucharist, and so of growing 'like Him'. If justification is becoming a son of God and being able to cry 'Abba, Father', sanctification is learning to live as a son in the family. The one is an event, the other is a process. But we shall return to this later. The point here is that justification is primarily a relationship.

2. Justification must also be thought of in eschatological terms. Put at its simplest it means that God accepts us now, not because of what we are, but because of what we shall be when He has finished His work in us. "Our relation at the last day is put forward into time."[11] If we are learning to think of the Church eschatologically as One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic now only in an incomplete sense, but as destined to be all these things at the end of time, so too we must learn to think more of the members of the Church eschatologically, growing towards perfection as the Church is growing towards fullness. All that can be said of Christians in their present state has been summed up by St. John, " Beloved, now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that if He shall be manifested we shall be like Him ; for we shall see Him as He is ".[12] The New Testament thinks of Christians chiefly in terms of their destiny and final state, because each day their salvation is nearer than when they first believed. It is never concerned with whether they are in or out of a state of grace at any given moment. If forgiveness has a past reference it also has a future one, and as Niebuhr has said, " Forgiveness is as necessary at the end as at the beginning of the Christian life ".[13] If the Church of the early centuries had not lost the eschatological note of the Apostolic age it would not have been so concerned with the problem of post-baptismal sin.

It is in this respect that the doctrine of justification has suffered more than it deserved through being associated chiefly with the law court as it was known in Roman times. Then the problem of the criminal was his punishment. Now the problem of the criminal is his cure. One is naturally hesitant to add to the stock of crude analogies by which evangelists have sought to explain to bewildered audiences the meaning of justification, but if we are to think analogically surely

it should be along lines which import other ideas than the merely legal. Very tentatively one might suggest the following. If the sinner is to be likened to the criminal at the tribunal and Christ is to be thought of as the Judge, He must never be thought of as Judge and nothing more, for He is the Divine Healer too, the Great Physician of mind and body. It is as if a human judge, who was also an expert physician and psychiatrist, decided to acquit the criminal on condition that he would put himself solely into his hands for cure. This putting ourselves into Christ's hands for cure is surely what the New Testament means by faith : it is not an ignoring of past sins and a pretending that they are not there ; rather it is a growing out of them by growing into the likeness of Christ. John Oman expressed something like this idea when he wrote : " To be justified is not to have the consequences of sin condoned or even obliterated, but so to be reconciled to God in spite of sin, that we can face all evil with confident assurance of final victory over it, and by God's succour transform all its consequences ".[14] In another vivid passage the same writer speaks of pardon as dealing " with the actual moral situation by means of moral realities, and the result must be power to look the whole moral situation straight in the face. It must not mean palliating, or ignoring, or transferring, but courage to open all cupboards, assured of finding no skeletons. To be forgiven ought to mean that all need has gone from us to think anything, either in ourselves or in our situation, other than it is. The essence of being justified is emancipation from moral juggling with ourselves by giving us power to look all reality in the face ".[15] C. S. Lewis has described the Christian life as " going in for the full treatment ".[16] It is on this basis only that we are accepted by God, not because of our nature but because of our destiny, not because of what we are but because of what we shall be. That is why we find even the Apostle Paul, in the maturity of Christian experience, calling himself the chief of sinners,[17] and our Lord saying of the man that smote his breast and cried out, " God be merciful to me a sinner ", that he went home justified,[18] and reminding us that when we have done all we are still unprofitable servants.[19] The whole notion of justification is seriously distorted if its eschatological aspect is forgotten.

There are two more points connected with the meaning of justification which should be mentioned, if only briefly. First, the ground of justification is God's atoning work in Christ and secondly, the condition of receiving it is faith. The former assertion involves the doctrine of the Atonement into which we must not digress. But it is an essential reminder that the subjective experience of justification is grounded upon an objective work of Christ, Who, having overcome the sharpness of death, opened the Kingdom of heaven to all believers. The offered Christ of Calvary is not only the sacrifice for the sins of the world, He is also the representative and pledge of the new humanity created in Him, a creation made possible by the Cross. In the words of Forsyth, " It is Christianity which first adjusts man to the holy and then creates the holy in man, and does both through the Cross with its atoning gift of eternal life ".[20]

And the condition of justification is *faith*, a word which must be

given its full Pauline meaning if the doctrine of justification by faith is not to read as theological nonsense. Faith is the only possible response at the Cross, for the Cross sweeps from under our feet every ground of human confidence and every shred of pride, eliciting at the same time an act of committal and trust. The faith which leads to justification is always faith in the Crucified and Risen Christ, " faith in the Son of God Who loved me, and gave Himself for me ". Denney has said that a man's faith (in the New Testament sense) means " to abandon himself to the sinbearing love which appeals to him in Christ and to do so unreservedly, unconditionally and for ever ".[31] When the sinner does this, he does the one right thing for which the situation calls. To quote Denney again, faith is " not simply the act of an instant, it is the attitude of a life . . . it is just as truly the whole of Christianity subjectively as Christ is the whole of it objectively ".[32] If Dodd has reminded us that faith is ' pure receptivity ',[33] Brunner has also reminded us that faith is obedience and continual decision.[34] If this is what we always mean by the faith which justifies, there is little likelihood of its being degraded into a work and contrasted detrimentally with other good works. For faith means personal attachment to Jesus Christ, and such attachment to Him always issues in the reproduction of His features and His ways in the Christian's life, such as we find in the Apostles after Pentecost and in Christian saint-hood throughout the ages. The Pauline faith includes something of the Johannine love.

Summing up the meaning of justification we would say then : (i) It is primarily a personal relationship with God. (ii) It must be thought of eschatologically. (iii) Its only ground is the Cross of Christ. (iv) Its one condition is faith in the full-orbed Pauline sense of attachment to Christ and not debased into mere assent or credal orthodoxy, nor extended to include Christian graces which follow after it.

II

We now ought to face the problems in which this doctrine has become involved and the criticisms which it has incurred. The usual complaints are these :

1. How can justification be by faith *alone*? For example, the report entitled *Catholicity* asserts that justification is by the grace of God and that this works through Baptism.[35]

2. Protestantism dissociates justification from sanctification.[36]

3. Protestantism by its doctrine of justification puts the individual before the Church.[37]

4. If the so-called justified sinner is not really righteous in a moral sense, is not this doctrine purely fictitious?

Of the first of these it can be admitted that the expression " Justification by faith alone " is certainly unfortunate and liable to misunderstanding.[38] In its defence one might say that Luther and those who used it first did so with the intention of denying the idea of merit, not the efficacy of Baptism. We shall consider its relation to Baptism in the concluding section. Again, the relation of justification both to

sanctification and the doctrine of the Church will have to be considered briefly in the final section. The criticism which concerns us most here is that of a legal fiction. It arises from the doctrine of imputation being isolated from St. Paul's other teaching on justification, from a failure to give faith its full New Testament meaning, and from thinking of righteousness in terms of goodness, in ethical instead of eschatological terms. Nevertheless, there is a genuine difficulty. It is widely agreed that to justify in the New Testament does not mean to make righteous; yet all the alternate renderings seem to imply an ethical fiction, in that someone who is clearly not righteous is said to be righteous, and his faith is 'reckoned for righteousness'. There is nothing particularly new that can be said about this problem; we can but assert that no one would have been more astonished at such a criticism than St. Paul himself, for whom the righteousness of the Christian was most positively real simply because it was not his own righteousness, but "that which is through faith in Christ", namely, "the righteousness which is of God by faith".[20] In addition to this, certain other points might be made.

1. It is nowhere claimed either in the New Testament or in the Protestant tradition that the righteousness the Christian has by faith in Christ is equivalent to moral perfection or even goodness. We have already seen that justification means a new relationship. To be *dikaios* means to be free from the fear of condemnation and from the law of sin and death. The justified man is by no means righteous in the sense of moral perfection; but he is genuinely righteous in the sense of being within the only relation through which moral perfection can be attained. The Prodigal had to return to his father and be put right in this sense before he could enjoy the privileges and manifest the virtues of good sonship. This is what is meant by justification.

2. To have been justified by faith is no short cut to holiness; but it does mean that the sinner's face is turned in the right direction and his feet are on the right path. As J. S. Stewart has said: "It is by direction, not position, that God judges us".[20] When the sinner's face is turned towards Christ and he has ears to hear the word of pardon and a heart beginning to open to the power of the Divine Love, something is happening to him which is no mere legal fiction but a deep reality. Is not this another instance of the danger of thinking of justification simply in terms of status? C. S. Lewis writes in one of his books that the world cannot be divided simply into 100 per cent Christians and 100 per cent non-Christians, but rather into those who are moving towards being Christians and those who are gradually ceasing to be Christians in all but name.[21] So the justified are righteous in that they are at least moving in the right direction; they are being led by the Good Shepherd into the paths of righteousness.

3. Despite the skill of the Tridentine statement on justification, which even Harnack regarded as a theological masterpiece which might have altered the course of the Reformation had it been in existence earlier, it is simply not true to the New Testament to insist that justification includes sanctification and the renewal of the inner man by the reception of graces and gifts through which he becomes righteous. Protestants could accept this as a description of the whole Christian

life but not of justification, which, though in the writings of St. Paul indissolubly linked with sanctification, is at the same time quite clearly distinguished from it.

4. It would seem difficult to improve on Vincent Taylor's conclusion: " Righteousness springs from faith as it is related to its object."[33] The believer is pronounced righteous because through faith he really is righteous in mind and in purpose, although not yet in achievement. Niebuhr comes to much the same verdict when he says, " It happens to be true to the facts of experience that in one sense the converted man is righteous and in another sense he is not ".[34]

III

It remains for us to attempt to relate the doctrine of justification to certain kindred doctrines, and chiefly the Church, Sanctification and Assurance.

There is a real link between justification and the idea of the Church. Even Ritschl, for whom justification was of paramount importance, taught that men can make saving contact with the work of Christ solely through the mediation of the Church as the community of believers, the living fellowship in which the Gospel is preached and the work of Christ perpetuated. " Justification," he said, " is related in the first instance to the whole of the religious community ".[35] Indeed, the doctrine of the Church is as much a part of the Gospel as the doctrine of justification, for if by the one we mean a personal relationship with the living Christ, by the other we mean incorporation into the Body of Christ, in which alone that personal relationship can develop and deepen. To follow Jesus in the days of His incarnate life invariably meant doing so in the company of all the other disciples : not to want them was to miss Him.

So justification by faith must not be thought of merely in individualistic terms. If Protestants have been inclined to put the individual before the Church this tendency should be checked. On the other hand the Catholic emphasis on the Church as a visible institution, defined in outward terms of historic succession, and on faith as acceptance of Church teaching, has tended to relieve the individual of the responsibility of personal decision, a responsibility from which the individual in the last analysis cannot be relieved; for it is as individuals that we must all stand before the judgement seat of Christ and give account. The doctrine of justification by faith enshrines all that Evangelicals mean by the experience of personal conversion resulting from personal decision, and this is why we can never surrender it. But just because we also believe that God's grace precedes and makes possible all our acts of faith, we dare not dissociate the doctrine of justification either from the Church which proclaims the Gospel to us and apart from which we should never have heard the saving Word, or from Holy Baptism through which, long before we asked to, we entered that Church, which is the sphere of justification. But Christ died for our sins centuries before we lived to commit them or to realise our need of forgiveness, and the grace which is given in Baptism in no way invalidates the doctrine of justification by faith, nor does it render it superfluous simply because it is operative before we are aware of it.

A. H. Rees in an article on ' Justification in the Anglican Reformers ' suggests that the distinction between faith and sacraments in the work of justification seemed to them to be this: " the sacraments are instrumental causes conferring justification, while faith is an instrumental cause receiving it ".[35] Whether modern Evangelicals are prepared to accept this or not does not alter the fact that the compilers of the Prayer Book, all ardent adherents to the principle of justification by faith, found no incompatibility in providing the Church of England with a rite of Infant Baptism or in defining the sacraments as effectual signs.

The doctrine of sanctification, as we have already seen, is inevitably involved in our understanding of justification. The reason for this is the indestructibility of the biblical paradox: *Christus pro nobis, Christus in nobis.* Protestants have put all their energy into explaining the first and Catholics have done likewise in explaining the second. But we cannot have Apostolic Christianity without both Calvary and Pentecost, justification and sanctification, personal religion and the corporate fellowship of the Catholic Church. Forsyth has said that if in Augustine the stress was on justification by grace alone, and in Luther on justification by faith alone, to-day it should be on justification by holiness alone.[36] For the atoning thing was not Christ's suffering but His holiness.[37] " Christ for us," he said, is only intelligible as " Christ in us " and we in Him. The Cross set up a kingdom of holiness, a new covenant, a new humanity.[38] Forsyth goes even further than this and sees in the Cross a regenerative force. He writes: " Our evil is overcome by good. We are won from sin by an act which at the same time makes us not simply innocent but holy ".[39] The reason, then, why justification and sanctification can never be separated is that both depend on the Cross. " He died that we might be forgiven, He died to make us good, that we might go at last to heaven. . . ." There in the lines of the children's hymn we have the ideas of being justified, sanctified and glorified, all following each other quite naturally as the sequence of the Cross. One cannot but conclude that if Catholics have been guilty of confusing justification with sanctification, Protestants have been guilty of holding them too far apart. The quality of Church life and the evidence of holiness should be as much the concern of the parish priest as evangelism. Let him who doubts read Joyce Biddell's play, " The Gates of Hell ".

Finally, we must glimpse at the neighbouring doctrine of assurance, a distinctive feature of evangelicalism. It seems clear from the New Testament that although there are times when Christians are called to examine themselves, they are not meant to be continually taking their spiritual pulse or worrying about their destiny. " Being therefore justified by faith let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."[40] Christian assurance is based not on any vows we may make and break, but on the sure promises of God. " My sheep hear my voice," said Jesus, " and I know them and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand ".[41] But even this, perhaps the most explicit basis of assurance in the New Testament, is not wholly unconditional. It is assumed that the sheep are still hearing His

voice and still following Him. There is no more divine compulsion after justification than before, and the human will that is still free to sin is free also to lapse. To insist on " once a Christian, always a Christian " seems to run in the face of all the New Testament teaching about apostasy and to think of the Christian life again in static terms. It is difficult to see why those Protestants who hold the doctrine of final perseverance are not also universalists, for both involve much the same assumptions. However, the doctrine of assurance is not to be confused with that of final perseverance. St. Paul himself enjoyed deep assurance, but this did not blind him to the possibility of being a castaway if he were disobedient. But whenever Christian faith is genuine, looking only to Jesus, and when devotion is centred upon Him, assurance will grow and fear disappear, for " perfect love casteth out fear ". Undoubtedly this is meant to be the experience of the justified, in whose life the Spirit Himself is the guarantee of ultimate redemption and final perfection. Those who walk by the Spirit do not fear ; but neither do they absorb themselves in the things of the flesh.

Our conclusion then must be that we do not need to apologise for our doctrine of justification by faith, for it is at the heart of the Gospel. It reminds modern man that he cannot enter into relationship with God on the basis of his own achievements or on his own terms ; it enables the scrupulous Christian to rise above his doubts and fears, because his spiritual growth will come not by attention to his own inner life so much as by attachment to a personal Saviour in the fellowship of His Church ; and it assures every Christian that in being ' put right ' with God through Christ, he has but been initiated into a great healing process, which leads through sanctity to glory.

FOOTNOTES

[1] E. Brunner, *The Mediator*, p. 524.
[2] Vincent Taylor, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation*, p. 25.
[3] ibid., p. 30.
[4] Rom. vi. 23.
[5] Rom. viii. 1, 2.
[6] Phil i. 6.
[7] Rom. viii. 30.
[8] Brunner, *The Mediator*, p. 523.
[9] Gal iv. 5 ; Rom. viii. 14-16.
[10] Luke vii. 28 (A.V.).
[11] See J. E. Lesslie Newbigin, *The Reunion of the Church*, pp. 76f and 84 ff.
[12] 1 John iii. 2.
[13] R. Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, vol. II, p. 109.
[14] John Oman, *Grace and Personality*, p. 231.
[15] ibid., p. 209.
[16] C. S. Lewis, *Beyond Personality*, p. 42.
[17] 1 Tim. i. 15.
[18] Luke xviii. 14.
[19] Luke xvii. 10.
[20] P. T. Forsyth, *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind* (1907 edn.), p. 205.
[21] J. Denney, *The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation*, p. 290.
[22] ibid., p. 291.
[23] C. H. Dodd, *Epistle to the Romans*, p. 56.
[24] Brunner *The Mediator*, p. 338f ; *Revelation and Reason*, p. 421 ; *The Divine-Human Encounter*, p. 48.
[25] *Catholicity*, pp. 22 n., 23.
[26] ibid., p. 25.

[37] ibid., p. 27.
[38] A masterly defence of this phrase is given in the report, *The Catholicity of Protestantism*, pp. 67-90, published since this paper was written.
[39] Phil. iii. 9.
[40] J. S. Stewart, *A Man in Christ*, p. 257.
[41] C. S. Lewis, *Beyond Personality*, p. 50.
[42] Vincent Taylor, *Forgiveness and Reconciliation*, p. 58.
[43] R. Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, vol. II., p. 129.
[44] H. R. Mackintosh, *Types of Modern Theology*, p. 168.
[45] A. H. Rees, *Justification in the Anglican Reformers* (" Theology " reprint), p. 16.
[46] P. T. Forsyth, *The Work of Christ*, p. 81.
[47] ibid., pp. 206-210.
[48] ibid., p. 130.
[49] ibid., p. 202.
[50] Rom. v. i.
[51] John x. 27, 28.

Contemporary Commentary

A Quarterly Review of Church Affairs and Theological Trends

By The Rev. F. J. Taylor, M.A.

THIS NATION UNDER GOD

THE phrase which serves as the title of this note is taken from the famous Gettysburg address of Abraham Lincoln and has been adopted as the theme for a convention of more than ordinary importance to be held in Cleveland, Ohio, shortly before the end of this year. The source of the quotation is significant and points to the hope entertained by the sponsors of the convention, that it may mark a notable step forward in the fulfilment by the churches in America of their Christian obedience in this present age. The principal business before the delegates will be the proposed constitution in the United States of a National Council of the Churches of Christ, which in its constitution and functions will be analogous to the British Council of Churches.

To despise such ecclesiastical machinery on the grounds that it is a superfluous luxury, a bureaucratic organisation, or that it obscures the need for a whole-hearted dependence upon the Spirit of God, is to be blind to the necessities of the hour and to suppose that the Spirit cannot use the organisations which men fashion in response to the challenges of contemporary history. There may be in America legitimate fears of the danger of over centralisation in the planning of large scale Christian activity. Yet the pattern of society in our time does demand the conception of a total Christian strategy and adequate means for its implementation. This would suggest the necessity of some council able to survey the whole field of operations and to dispose of what are always likely to be inadequate Christian resources in the best possible way.

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, founded in 1908, pioneered a form of co-operation and consultation for common