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THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

In his recently published *Life of Christ*, entitled *The Man Christ Jesus*, the Rev. W. J. Dawson suggests an interpretation of the scene in the house of Simon the Pharisee (Lk 7³⁶⁻⁵⁰) which seems to be new.

Mr Dawson suggests that 'the woman who was a sinner' entered the banqueting hall according to a carefully arranged plot of Simon's. He says that the whole occasion was part of a stratagem to entrap Christ. Simon wished to place Him in a false position, to compromise both His reputation and His influence. And 'the means by which this piece of astute malignity was to be achieved was a woman.'

The woman came to the banquet, says Mr. Dawson, on Simon's invitation. She was accustomed to attend banquets. That was her trade. She brought fragrant oils and essences to anoint the hair and brows of the guests. The custom was really a Roman one, and Simon, 'in his pride of wealth, was merely imitating the manners of the conquerors of his country.' It would be this woman's duty to anoint the head of Jesus. Every one would see her play her part. If Jesus resented her touch, then He was a prophet; if He did not, then 'Simon's banquet would long be remembered

for its complete exposure of the prophetic claims of Christ.' For this woman 'was a beautiful daughter of shame.'

Simon was disappointed. 'This woman, full of gaiety and loveliness and youth, draws near the long divan on which the guests recline, to fulfil the duties of her calling. She is all smiles; she knows her beauty; she is conscious of the admiration it attracts; she is glad to find herself conspicuous, and there is no thought of shame or sadness in her mind. She approaches Christ with careless grace, and, behold, she stands suddenly arrested as by some unknown force, silent as a statue, with all her smiles frozen on her mouth.'

The interpretation seems to be new. But it is not credible. It falls to pieces over the single circumstance that Simon was a Pharisee. No Pharisee, however wealthy, would be found 'imitating the manners of the conquerors of his country.' He was a Pharisee just because he refused to do any such thing. It falls to pieces over its own unnaturalness also. The story in the Gospel is natural and consistent; it is spoiled of both by this supposition. And it falls to pieces over the notion that it was because she was 'a beautiful

daughter of shame,' that Christ was blamed for allowing her to touch Him.

In the last respect Mr. Dawson is at one with the most ordinary and orthodox interpreters. It is taken as quite an undisputed fact that this woman is called a 'sinner' because she was a prostitute. It is taken for granted that the objection to Christ's allowing her to touch Him was because she was so bad.

But was that an objection? Would any one at the feast have been offended at Christ's allowing a 'bad' woman to touch Him? Would Simon? Simon did not care how bad she was. What he cared for and considered was that she was a 'sinner.'

For the word 'sinner' carried a technical and universally understood meaning. There were two classes of persons in Palestine at the time—the righteous and the sinners. They were quite distinct. They had no social intercourse. They were almost, if not altogether, as separate from one another, as were the whole race of the Jews from the Samaritans. No righteous person would sit at meat with a sinner. When Jesus entered the house of the 'sinner' Zacchæus (all the publicans were 'sinners'), none of the righteous persons (most of whom were Pharisees) entered with Him. They would not allow a 'sinner' even to touch them.

Now Jesus belonged to the righteous class. He knew the Law. He was not one of 'this people that knoweth not the Law' and is accursed. And the great offence which the righteous persons found in Him was that He would not keep away from the sinners. Their continual complaint was that 'He ate and drank with publicans and sinners.'

Well, this woman was a 'sinner.' She belonged, not to the 'righteous,' but to the 'sinner' class. If she had been as bad as we make her, she would not have been more offensive to Simon. What he

considered was not her badness but her class. He knew that she belonged to the sinner class, because she lived in his own city. Jesus presumably did not know that. But then, reasons Simon, if He were a prophet, He would know, and would not let her touch Him.

But was she as bad as we make her? The proof is supposed to be conclusive. On examination it breaks down altogether. 'A woman which was in the city, a sinner,'—to quote the Revised Version, after what is supposed to be the best attested text (γυνή ἥτις ἦν ἐν τῇ πόλει, ἁμαρτωλός),—there is nothing, as we have seen, in that. Besides that, there is the phrase, 'who and what manner of woman this is' (τίς καὶ ποταπή). But these words carry nothing by way of description, and they are Simon's words. They express exactly Simon's astonishment, not at the badness of the woman, but at her class distinction. As the latest scientific expositor puts it, though he holds the ordinary and orthodox doctrine, the word translated 'what manner' *always implies astonishment, with or without admiration.*

And more than all, we lose the meaning of our Lord's rebuke if we do not see that the woman was simply one of the sinner class, as Simon was one of the righteous. No doubt the sinners were on the whole worse behaved than the righteous. In the parable of the Prodigal Son, the younger son, who represents the sinner class, goes farther astray than the elder, who represents the righteous. And so here. The woman owes, as it were, five hundred pence, Simon only fifty. But what of that, when neither has a penny to pay? It must be a matter of grace with both. Both must be frankly forgiven. Then their positions will be reversed. For Simon thinks he owes little, if he owes anything at all. The woman knows that she owes much, and when she is forgiven she will love much.

Who was this woman that was a sinner? What was her name? We cannot tell. Mr. Dawson

thinks St. Luke concealed it out of courtesy, though it is possible that his Source had concealed it already. But many names are concealed where no courtesy can be thought of. Of all the demoniacs who were healed by Christ, there is one name given, and only one. If courtesy had ruled, that name of them all would have been concealed. For the name was Mary of Magdala.

Mary of Magdala. It is hard, Mr. Dawson must think, that her name should come down to history. But how much harder that it should come down as that of 'a beautiful daughter of shame.' For so the Church in its carelessness has treated her. She has been identified with this woman that was a sinner, and this woman that was a sinner has been counted 'a beautiful daughter of shame.' Mary Magdalene—her malady was sore enough no doubt, for she was possessed by seven demons, but to have been made 'the patroness of unfortunates' is surely harder still.

What was Mary of Magdala's misfortune? To be possessed with seven demons, what was that? It is a question few can answer. It is a question which few can even attempt to answer in the present day. But there has just been published a thorough examination of this difficult matter of Possession, and we turn to it with interest.

Mary Magdalene, says Dr. Menzies Alexander (his book is mentioned on another page), was probably a widow in affluent circumstances, like Lydia of Thyatira. Her appearance in the company of the wife of Herod's steward, and her ministrations to Jesus in life and death, confirm his conjecture, he thinks, as to her good social position. And the interest of the situation lies in its indication of the existence of mental disease among the upper classes of the Jews at this date.

But what was her disease? And what is it to be possessed with *seven* demons? Dr. Alexander understands the seven to be the number of com-

pletteness. In the Magical Texts of Babylonia, he says, the 'Seven Spirits' are of frequent occurrence. Possession by the seven spirits was of the gravest significance, necessitating an appeal to Ea, lord of spirits. The mention of the 'seven' thus attests the severity of Mary's disorder. Her ailment, says Dr. Menzies Alexander, was acute mania.

Is it possible still to believe that the Fourth Gospel was written by St. John? It seems to be difficult to believe it in Germany. In England it is not so difficult.

It is not so difficult in England, because the victory of the last generation in favour of the Johannine authorship was won in England, and we have some proper pride in seeking to retain it. And besides that, it is not so difficult here, because here we are less moved by prepossessions which tell against the authorship.

Is it offensive to speak of prepossessions? The offence is committed by the Bishop of Worcester. Now the Bishop of Worcester is the last man needlessly to offend. If he is candid, he is also considerate. It is only when he has carefully studied the Johannine problem over again, and has found that there is neither new discovery nor new argument to explain the strong tendency of recent criticism in Germany to deny the authenticity of this Gospel; it is only when he has perceived that many German critics start with premisses which make the authorship of St. John impossible; it is only then that he speaks of prepossession. And he seems to be entitled to speak of it then.

The Bishop of Worcester has written two articles for the *Pilot* on 'The Problem of the Fourth Gospel.' They follow his articles in the same journal on the Synoptics. Together these articles form a sort of *Apologia pro vita sua*. For Dr. Gore is a higher critic. As a higher critic he

made much sensation in England some years ago. Why is it, he has been asked, that he believes in the higher criticism of the Old Testament and not in the higher criticism of the New. These articles are his answer. And what these articles say is that Dr. Gore believes in the higher criticism of the New Testament just as he believes in the higher criticism of the Old; but whereas the evidence was to his mind against the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, the evidence is in favour of the Johannine authorship of the Fourth Gospel. He is a higher critic throughout. But as a higher critic he considers it his business to approach the Old Testament and the New without prepossession, and to rest on the evidence alone.

So Bishop Gore warns us against prepossession. He has found English and French scholars ready to doubt the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel. He has recently been astonished on one or two occasions to find distinguished Roman Catholic scholars and priests speaking of the belief that St. John the Apostle wrote the Fourth Gospel as a position which has to be abandoned. And he cannot but think that this is 'largely owing to an undue deference to the supposed authority of German critics, without regard either to their fixed prepossessions or to the real weight of their arguments.'

The authenticity of the Fourth Gospel seemed to be established twenty years ago, why should it be abandoned now? There have been no new discoveries either for or against, there have been no new arguments. Unlike the controversy over the Synoptic Gospels, the problem of the Fourth Gospel has been stationary since the day, some quarter of a century ago, upon which its use by Justin Martyr and Basilides was finally established.

If there is any change at all, Dr. Gore believes that it is in favour of the authorship of St. John. The most significant fact is the admission by Harnack that the writer of the Fourth Gospel

was probably a younger contemporary and disciple of St. John, and that he may have used memoranda of the apostle himself. The questions of keenest interest therefore, at present, are who this disciple was, and whether he was capable of that which is attributed to him.

Harnack says that he was John the Presbyter. Now whether John the Presbyter was or was not capable of writing the Fourth Gospel, we cannot tell; for we know nothing about him. But if he was, even with the aid of St. John's memoranda, then it is surprising in the extreme that we know nothing else about him. For he was certainly the most remarkable literary product of his day.

Tradition says that the Fourth Gospel was written by 'John.' If this John was John the Presbyter, then John the Presbyter was a more remarkable man than John the Apostle. For John the Apostle may be supposed to have had recollections to draw upon, but John the Presbyter had none. Now, says Bishop Gore, if John the Presbyter had been this isolated literary phenomenon, we must have known more of him than his bare name. What he contends for, therefore, is that (except by some hypothesis of a literary prodigy), 'the man of the memories' must have been also the author of the Fourth Gospel, and that can be none other than St. John.

But the Bishop of Worcester does not imagine that to be shut up to St. John solves all the difficulties of the Johannine problem. For then the question arises in its acutest form, How does it come to pass that St. John's Gospel differs so greatly from the Synoptics? Certainly Dr. Gore does not make light of the differences. He believes that they are chiefly due to two causes. The first is that St. John wrote to supplement the Synoptics. The second is that St. John was himself something of an idealist.

It is the supplementary character of St. John's Gospel that explains to Bishop Gore the omission

of incidents so significant as the birth of our Lord, His baptism, His temptation, His transfiguration, most of His familiar miracles and discourses, His institution of Baptism and of the Lord's Supper, and the rest. His Gospel being supplementary, and being known to be supplementary, St. John does not even mention these incidents. Doubtless he had taught them for many years, his hearers were familiar with them. But he sometimes supplies a narrative which presupposes the incident, as the baptism of Jesus in the first chapter; or a discourse which explains it, as the Eucharist in the sixth. Sometimes, again, he silently, but Dr. Gore believes deliberately, corrects a prevalent misunderstanding of the Synoptics. He corrects the impression that the Last Supper was the ordinary Paschal meal celebrated at the ordinary time, and (in 1³³) he perhaps corrects the impression taken from Mt 3¹⁴ that John the Baptist 'knew' Jesus before His baptism.

But the great difference between St. John and the Synoptists lies not in omissions or additions. It lies in the whole impression which is conveyed to us by the miracles which St. John describes and the discourses which he records. In the Synoptics Christ's miracles are mainly works of mercy or of judgment; in St. John they are mainly self-manifestations. The longer discourses in the Synoptics are parables of the kingdom and laws for the conduct of its subjects; in St. John they are largely revelations of Himself in His divine Sonship, with occasional plain assertions of His pre-existent being.

Well, on this Bishop Gore says, first of all, that the ideas of the early Church are unintelligible without some such teaching as we find in St. John. The Synoptics may be simpler and seem more primitive, but St. John sunk deepest into the mind of the earliest believers. Again, he says that great as the difference is, it is a difference more of impression over the whole than of separate contradiction. St. John asserts the divine supremacy, but so do the Synoptists. The 'son'

of the parable is distinguished from the 'servants.' Christ is not merely David's son, but also his Lord. And apart from St. John's unique receptivity or other personal consideration, it has to be remembered that the discourses recorded by him are in inseparable relations to the ideas and thoughts of the contemporary Judaism of Judæa. If St. John chose to supplement the Synoptics by recording the Judæan ministry mainly, he had also to choose to record such incidents and discourses as were suitable to the Jews of Judæa.

But the form of the discourses is more difficult to explain than their matter, and Dr. Gore leaves that to the last. Here he admits a good deal of the pleading of his opponents. He has no doubt that the Synoptists give us the more accurate idea of our Lord's manner as a teacher. St. John's mind was more original. It caught and retained the rarer and deeper notes. But the more original a man's mind is, the less effectually it can merely report. 'In St. John's mind, then, what he had seen and heard and gazed upon and handled gradually shaped itself as a continued self-revelation of the Christ, the Son of God.'

Thus Dr. Gore 'admits,' and uses the word himself, that St. John was to some extent an idealist. Nevertheless, he does not admit that he had any of the faults of the idealist. His ideas are not general and abstract. On the contrary he has the greatest possible appreciation of individuality and of concrete events. His interest in particular persons and the divine dealings with them is at least as prominent as his interest in the divine self-manifestation generally. And his idea of the divine self-manifestation is attached indissolubly to particular scenes and incidents vividly remembered.

Then the Bishop of Worcester closes his papers with 'a real appeal to Englishmen' to use their own judgment on the Gospel according to St. John. The present excessive deference to 'critics,' he says, is a mere fashion. Let us not be carried

away with it. But if we must have contemporary intellectual authority, let us remember that 'there are no saner or fairer judgments to be found in the last generation of historical scholars or in the present than Lightfoot's and Sanday's.'

While Bishop Gore is writing on the problem of the Fourth Gospel and deploring our excessive deference to German criticism, there is published in English a contribution to the subject, which is the most original and most arresting of the last quarter of a century, and it is the work of a German critic.

In the year 1886 Professor Wendt of Jena published his *Lehre Jesu*. The first part dealt with the sources for the teaching of Jesus, and was not translated into English. The second part dealt with the teaching itself, and appeared in English in two volumes in the year 1892, translated by Dr. John Wilson, and published in this country, under the title of *The Teaching of Jesus*. In the first part of the German work Professor Wendt devoted one section to the discussion of the sources of the Fourth Gospel, and propounded a theory which at once attracted attention.

He has now removed that section and rewritten it. The years that have passed and the criticisms that have appeared since 1886 have convinced him of the correctness of his main position. He has found no hypothesis in any work on the Fourth Gospel that so well explains its phenomena. But he has found much in other works to support his own hypothesis, and even to render it necessary. He has therefore rewritten it and encouraged its translation into English. It appears under the title of *The Gospel according to St. John: An Inquiry into its Genesis and Historical Value*, published by Messrs. T. & T. Clark.

Professor Wendt's hypothesis may be stated in a sentence. He believes that St John's Gospel

as we now have it consists of two parts: one part is the work of St. John himself, the other is the work of an editor. But easily as it can be stated, it is neither easily believed nor easily refuted. Dr. Wendt understands the conditions of the problem. He has many arguments, some of which are most impressive, and he uses them with consummate skill. Writing clearly himself, he has also been translated into nervous natural English. His book is at once the most important and the most attractive contribution to the subject which all these years have brought.

The difficulty which Professor Wendt has experienced is not in suggesting an apostolic source and an editorial redaction in the Fourth Gospel, but in distinguishing the one from the other. There are critics who are most dogmatic when the evidence is least convincing. Dr. Wendt is not one of them. He is never dogmatic; he often confesses doubt; he sometimes yields to despair. One example of his method may be given.

It has to do with the familiar sentence in Jn 3⁵ about the necessity of being born 'of water and the Spirit' (ἐξ ὕδατος καὶ Πνεύματος). Many are the attempts that have been made to explain the necessity of water in so spiritual an experience. Professor Wendt's explanation is that the words 'water and' (ὕδατος καὶ) are no part of St. John's original writing. 'Probably,' he says, 'they have been added by the redactor to the Source. For it is the birth of the Spirit only that is spoken of (vv. 6 and 8). This birth of the Spirit of God, which initiates a life, not of the flesh, but divine, comes to pass, in the meaning of the Apostolic Source, when man receives with faith the words of Jesus, which are spirit and life (5²⁴ 6⁶⁸). It was, however, very natural to the redactor to think of the new birth to life eternal as happening specifically in baptism (cf. Mk 16¹⁶), and, in order to make this relation to baptism clear, to denote it as a being born of water.'

The most obvious objection to this—it is also

the most obvious objection to the whole hypothesis—is that the critic who distinguishes apostolic source from redaction, must first have a conception in his mind of what St. John was likely to write. Where did Professor Wendt obtain this conception? Has he altogether escaped the charge which the Bishop of Worcester makes, the charge of ‘prepossession’?

Dr. Hastings Rashdall has contributed an article to the *Journal of Theological Studies* on Dr. Moberly's theory of the Atonement.

Dr. Rashdall is glad that Dr. Moberly has written on the Atonement. For ‘within the Church of England, as well as outside it,’ an enormous but singularly silent revolution has taken place in the current conceptions of the Atonement. The most glaring sign of this revolution is in the subordinate place now occupied by the doctrine of the Atonement. ‘In official pronouncements, in formal theological teaching, as well as in the pulpit,’ the doctrine of the Atonement is ignored, the doctrine of the Incarnation has taken its place. But it is also seen in the new conception of the Atonement wherever it is touched. Dr. Rashdall derives the new conception from Maurice and Robertson. It has been accepted, he says, ‘by the school who are looked upon (even more perhaps than they look upon themselves) as the disciples of Newman and Pusey.’ He calls it ‘the preaching of the Atonement as a revelation of the love and the character of God.’

Dr. Moberly is a disciple of Newman and Pusey. He, too, preaches the Atonement as a revelation of the love and the character of God. But Dr. Rashdall has observed that even accomplished writers and preachers are apt to repeat traditional formulæ, which they have no right now to repeat. They are apt to use language which implies a theory of Substitution where no real Substitution is intended. He attributes this contradiction to

the bloodless nature of the revolution that has taken place. Having been accomplished in silence, there has been no occasion to distinguish battle-cries and sharpen verbal weapons. But the ghosts of dead doctrines are often troublesome. And Dr. Rashdall is thankful that in his now quite famous book, called *Atonement and Personality*, Dr. Moberly has come forward to put an end to vague thinking on the Atonement, and let us see how thorough is the revolution that has taken place.

Dr. Rashdall is at first well pleased with Dr. Moberly's book. He calls it ‘a great advance upon any attempt to deal in a formal and systematic way with the doctrine of the Atonement, which has been made by any Anglican theologian of late years.’ For Dr. Moberly recognizes that theology cannot be approached without first making terms with philosophy. Roman Catholic theologians, and even Protestant theologians on the Continent, usually recognize this. They usually have some philosophical basis for their belief. But ‘there are whole libraries of modern theology, especially of Anglican theology, which betray not the slightest consciousness that they are discussing great problems of human thought, which form the subject of a science, or group of sciences, called Philosophy, and which have been treated by some of the greatest intellects of modern Europe.’ Dr. Moberly appreciates the existence of such problems—witness his title, ‘*Atonement and Personality*’—and he recognizes the need of determining one's relation to them before one can reach a scientific or rational Theology.

Dr. Moberly desires to reach ‘a scientific or rational Theology.’ He attempts to explain the doctrine of the Atonement in such a way as to reconcile it with ‘the imperative demands of Reason and of the moral consciousness.’ The value of his theory lies in that. In that lies also its invitation to criticism. And Dr. Rashdall proceeds to criticize it.

The first thing that Dr. Rashdall expects of a man who writes on the doctrine of the Atonement and appeals to 'Reason and the moral consciousness,' is that he should say where he finds his materials and what authority he accords them. Canon Moberly ignores that expectation. Dr. Rashdall thinks that he must know something about New Testament criticism. He thinks that he must have some theory of Inspiration. But Dr. Moberly lets no hint of belief or knowledge escape him. And when he writes he practically ignores the existence of all such questions. Dr. Rashdall finds that when he uses Scripture he uses it as the Schoolmen did. When the philosophical armour is getting a little thin, he takes refuge in an isolated text, torn from its context, without any attempt to ascertain its real meaning or the intellectual atmosphere of its author.

In this way texts from St. John's Gospel are used as if they were not even coloured by their author's own reflexion, but in every case were the *ipsissima verba* of the Lord Himself. And texts from St. Paul—sayings the most difficult to reconcile with his own general thought as well as with the general teaching of the New Testament (Dr. Rashdall refers in a footnote to 2 Co 5²¹, Gal 3¹³, Ro 5¹⁴, etc.)—are treated as in their most obvious and literal interpretation, a conclusive and sufficient basis for a whole system of Doctrine, eternally binding upon the Christian Church.

But Dr. Moberly's deference to authority does not end with the Scriptures. He places the Church Fathers beside them. He uses the decisions of Councils, as if they carried with them not merely authority, but absolute infallibility. Fortunately this singular subservience does little harm, for there is little or nothing in the Church Councils that can be treated as a pronouncement on the doctrine of the Atonement. But Dr. Rashdall is surprised that a writer who seeks to commend his theology to 'Reason and the moral consciousness' should proceed with his work as though for him all that is implied

by the phrase 'historical criticism' simply did not exist.

Still Canon Moberly has authorities and authorities. Some of his authorities have more authority and some have less. Great is now Dr. Rashdall's surprise to find that the Latin Fathers have more authority than the Greek.

In the discussion of the great doctrine of the Trinity, it has generally been supposed that the Greek Fathers struck out definitions by means of their pliable Greek tongue, which the Latin theologians could only seek in crude and bewildering efforts to imitate. Dr. Moberly does not think so. The great historical word *hypostasis* (*ὑπόστασις*) dissatisfies him. It is too impersonal. It is abstract rather than actual. There is something positive lacking to it, and that 'lack of full completeness' the word 'Person' supplied. So the true doctrine of the Trinity was never grasped, or at least not expressed, by Basil or the Gregories. It was left to be discovered by the Latin Fathers. With needless apologies and foolish confessions of its unsuitability, they translated the Greek *hypostasis* by the Latin word *persona*. And no sooner had they translated it than their word, Dr. Moberly holds, became eternally binding on the Christian Church. Or does he mean the Latin word *persona* after all? He uses the English word *person*. Does he understand (he tacitly assumes at any rate, says Dr. Rashdall) that the word which the Latin Fathers so wonderfully struck out had all the meanings and associations which gather round the modern idea of Personality?

What is eternally binding upon us, therefore, is this. Personality, in the modern use of that word, belongs to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. But elsewhere Dr. Moberly affirms Personality in this full sense of the God who is One in Three. He accordingly lands himself and all of us in an authoritative impossibility.

It is not the Trinity that is Dr. Moberly's

subject, however, and Dr. Rashdall passes from it. He passes from it with this significant word. Dr. Moberly's confusion on Personality is due to his very strength. It is due to his philosophical basis. But his strength is not strong enough. Like 'so many of our more thoughtful theologians, his philosophical equipment is a slight tincture of Hegelianism rather than a serious study of the one original modern thinker of the very highest rank, whose thought is profoundly and without qualification, Christian—Hermann Lotze.'

Dr. Moberly's subject is the Atonement, and Dr. Rashdall passes to that. He is greatly pleased with Dr. Moberly's recognition of the necessity of clear thought on Punishment, Forgiveness, and the like. Modern theologians do not recognize that. Even Ritschl does not. And he is well pleased with his theory of punishment. For Dr. Moberly distinctly declares that punishment by God can never be retributive or vindictive, but must always be remedial. Dr. Rashdall says 'Amen' most heartily. He has reached the heart of Dr. Moberly's subject and he is delighted.

But a difficulty arises. Dr. Moberly believes in a Hell. He says that when punishment fails to reform the sinner, we do not cease to punish him, we punish him only the more. Do we? asks Dr. Rashdall. For the protection of society we may, but Dr. Moberly is speaking of God. And now there arises the curious position that God's punishment is wholly remedial, and yet when remedial punishment fails, God goes on punishing. 'Such an astonishing combination of opinions has never, so far as I am aware, been held before.' What is its explanation? Its explanation is not far to seek. It lies in that potent monosyllable, Hell. Says Dr. Moberly: 'We dare not, until the possibility of Hell has been authoritatively explained away, deny the ultimate possibility of the idea of a punishment which is *not* restorative.'

Now Dr. Rashdall has no patience with this word Hell. The whole question of its exist-

ence turns, he says, upon the correctness of an evangelist's Greek translation of a single Aramaic adjective, and even on the correctness of the popular interpretation of that translation. For he doubts if it is possible to make *aionios* mean 'everlasting.' As for punishment going on after all hope of the sinner's amendment is abandoned, and going on to all eternity, he says it is a doctrine opposed to the reason and conscience with which God has endowed us, as well as to the conception of His nature which Christ has revealed to us. He asks whether Dr. Moberly can point to a single word in the teaching of St. Paul or St. John in favour of the doctrine of everlasting punishment. And yet he finds him willing to undermine his own conception of punishment and to land himself in an amazing contradiction, because this doctrine has been handed down to him by authority.

What authority? asks Dr. Rashdall indignantly. It is not the authority of Scripture; it is not the authority of Reason or of Conscience; it is not even the authority of the theologian whom Dr. Moberly is presumed most to follow. For Dr. Rashdall quotes some sentences from Dr. Pusey which seem to show that to him the doctrine of everlasting punishment was 'inconceivable unless we are prepared to resign our faith in One God and Father Almighty.' It is the authority of the *Quicunque Vult* perhaps. Dr. Rashdall passes on in silence.

Then he reaches Dr. Moberly's actual theory of the Atonement. It has been long in coming, but it has come at last. It lies in the chapter on Penitence. For Dr. Moberly holds—and he offers it as his contribution to the subject on which he writes, he writes on the subject because he holds it—Dr. Moberly holds that Christ's Atonement for sin consisted in His being perfectly penitent.

The purpose of punishment is to make us penitent—for in spite of his belief in Hell, Dr.

Moberly still holds that all God's punishment is remedial. Now, if we were perfectly penitent, we should be accepted. If we were perfectly penitent, we should not need an Atonement. We should by our Penitence make the Atonement ourselves. But we cannot be perfectly penitent. So Christ is needed as our Atonement. He becomes our Atonement by becoming perfectly penitent for our sin.

Dr. Rashdall calls this a surprising doctrine. He wonders how a sinner whose penitence is imperfect can be forgiven his sin. He wonders how he can be forgiven because some one else is penitent. He wonders how One who knew no sin can be said to be penitent at all. Dr. Moberly seems to answer that it all comes from the solidarity of the human race. 'Are we not after all,' he asks, 'much more of one piece than we are willing to recognize?' All humanity, he says, is found in Christ. Each individual may be imperfectly impenitent, but humanity is perfectly penitent in the perfect penitence of Christ, and receives the perfect pardon.

Dr. Rashdall calls it a surprising doctrine still. And he is not less surprised at it that he knows it is not new. He believes that Dr. Moberly has found it mainly in M'Leod Campbell. It has also

been held by the Lutheran Theologian Häring in a form closely resembling Dr. Moberly's. But that only makes it the more surprising that Dr. Moberly holds it now. For he surely knows that in the form in which Häring held it Ritschl so answered it as to put an end, one had imagined, to its existence. Dr. Rashdall gives the reference to the English translation of Ritschl's *Justification and Reconciliation* by Mackintosh and Macaulay, the 553rd page.

With which Dr. Rashdall takes leave of Dr. Moberly's theory of the Atonement. He has found the theory wanting. He has found the book which contains it wanting also. For two great contradictions run throughout it. The one is a confusion between an effect on the character of the sinner and an obliteration of the sin or guilt which takes place independently of any such effect. The other is a confusion between the retributive view of punishment and the disciplinary.

Dr. Moberly has not discovered a doctrine of the Atonement. He thought he had. But then his mind is 'incapable of appreciating the fact that the gulf between fundamentally opposite and inconsistent modes of thought cannot be bridged over by a dexterous turn of phrase.'

The Historical Character of the Old Testament Narratives.

BY R. SOMERVELL, M.A., ASSISTANT MASTER AND BURSAR OF HARROW SCHOOL.

IN order to judge fairly of the character of any literary work, we must begin by asking what sort of work it purports to be. We must not condemn a Waverley novel because it is not accurate from the point of view of the historian, nor judge a popular sermon as if it were a treatise on theology.

If we neglect this elementary canon of criticism, we shall inevitably blunder. We shall condemn

works, which, judged from the standpoint of their own purport and object, we ought to praise. Scott was a great romancer, though he was not a historian. Savonarola and Spurgeon both knew how to speak to the hearts and consciences of men,—of Righteousness, Temperance, and Judgment to come,—though neither of them made any permanent contribution to theology by their sermons.

Such a mistake is, of course, far more serious