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THE ATONEMENT

by Thomas Hywel Hughes

The New Psychology and Religious Experience

The Psychology of Preaching and Pastoral Work

The Philosophic Basis of Mysticism

Psychology and Religious Origins

Psychology and Religious Truth

THE ATONEMENT

Modern Theories of
the Doctrine

by

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*This book is dedicated
to the memory of two of
my best friends*

The Rev.

RODERICK GLYN DAVIES

M.A.

and

The Rev.

WILLIAM PHILLIPS

M.A., PH.D.

*both valiant upholders
of the truth of the Gospel
and devoted Servants of
the Kingdom of God*

Preface

THIS volume cannot be regarded as a history of the doctrine of the Atonement, nor yet as a study of the Scriptural witness to it. It is rather an examination of the various theories and the more recent trends of thought with regard to it. An explanation is necessary with regard to two points in the study. First, it is confined to Britain and the tendencies of thought in this country. No effort has been made to examine the ideas or the tendencies on the Continent, except in incidental references. The same is true with regard to American thought. A consideration of those would have made the volume unduly large, or have demanded a second volume. It was deemed wise, therefore, to limit the study to British Theories. In the second place, the inclusion of such stalwarts as Drs. Dale and Fairbairn in the volume seems to belie the claim that it is a consideration of "Modern" theories, for the works of both these are well over fifty years old. But Dr. Dale's work on *The Atonement* has been so influential and still carries such weight with a large number of scholars, that it was found imperative to include it. The same is true regarding the work of Dr. Fairbairn and it applies to several others. Only those thinkers have been included who have exercised an appreciative influence in certain circles and whose contributions to the subject have carried weight in the sphere of theological thought. The conclusions are my own and I must bear responsibility for the views expressed. I can only plead that I have given patient and sustained thought to the consideration of every judgment. I cannot expect all my conclusions to be accepted without criticism, but I send the volume forth in the hope that it may help some seekers to reach a clearer conception of the truth that is central to and determinative of Christianity.

The sum of my debt to other thinkers cannot be estimated, but I have sought to give expression to my feeling with

regard to some of it, in the notes. I must, however, mention the name of one who has rendered me signal service. My friend, Mr. G. Gwyn Jones, B.A., has read the whole manuscript through and made many valuable suggestions for which I am grateful.

SWANSEA

January 1945

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Publisher's Note

SHORTLY before his death Dr. Hughes asked us to arrange with Dr. J. T. Hornsby to read the proofs of this book for press. Proofs were not available until some months after the death of Dr. Hughes, but Dr. Hornsby has not only read them for press with great care, but also provided the excellent bibliography and index which appear at the end of the book. We should like to take this opportunity of expressing our deep appreciation to Dr. Hornsby for his efforts.

Introduction

IDEAS change as the atmosphere of life changes and as the outlook of thought and experience varies. Concepts become fashionable, then fade or pass away; systems have their day and cease to be. This is true of all ideas, of all concepts in every range of thought and of systems in all realms of knowledge. One of the most disturbing features in the progress of knowledge is to discover terms that at one time fitted the ideas they sought to express, but which fit them no longer. The atmosphere has changed; life has moved forward leaving the older ideas behind, so that all the vitality and most of the meaning have gone out of the terms. This is perhaps more true in the realm of theology than in any other field of knowledge. But it holds in all spheres of thought, even of the very latest scientific thought. Dogmas stated in terms and expressing ideas of a past age grow old and effete. Philosophical concepts, as those of Greek thought, fail to express clearly the ideas of a later day; so much so, that a well-known bishop once stated that the findings of the Council of Chalcedon with regard to the Person of Christ, marked the bankruptcy of Greek philosophy in its application to Christian truth.

Probably this is less true with regard to the doctrine of the Atonement than to the majority of the dogmas of the Church. Two reasons may be assigned for this probability. First, there is the fact that, in reality, there is no dogma of the Atonement. The Church, at its Councils, has never made a definite pronouncement with regard to this doctrine. There are, therefore, no stereotyped words, or sacrosanct terms, which can hinder men from expressing their thoughts in their own way. In the second place, the doctrine of the Atonement is more dependent on the experience of Christian men than almost any other basal truth of the Christian faith. It has, in reality, to be experienced to be understood, and interpreted. This is so with regard to all living truth. Experience must be first, and interpretation must follow. Truth has to be lived through, before it can be understood. Interpretation is dependent on

life and follows it in every sphere. But this is more profoundly true with regard to the Atonement. Something must be experienced in the soul and must become a fact of consciousness, before there is any probability of its being understood or adequately expressed.) Apart from this, any attempted explanation will be abstract, inadequate and indecisive.) Dr. Grensted is on safe ground when he insists that we must approach the Cross from the point of view of experience, of living emotional and regenerative experience.¹

✧ Most of the great theories of the Atonement follow from the experience of God's saving grace in the soul, although they are moulded by the modes of thought of the time in which they are stated. Very few, if any, are purely philosophical or theological. A case may be made out for Anselm, that he based his theory on philosophical principles and that he followed a particular method. A somewhat similar claim may be made for the Grotian theory. But from Augustine to Luther, from Calvin to Dale, and on to the present day, men's theories spring from their experiences, and reflect aspects of such experiences. In almost all cases, these theories emphasize one aspect of the truth of the Atonement, oftentimes to the detriment of other aspects. This is what creates and constitutes the problem of the history of the doctrine. But, in the ultimate, it is better to experience the Atonement than to understand it. Moreover, our understanding of it depends on the experience. So true is this that Dr. Dale boldly asserts that it is the fact of the Atonement that saves, rather than our understanding of it. It is the fact, therefore, that matters, not the theory. Moreover, the Atonement may be experienced as a blessed fact even when the theory may be inadequate or insufficiently understood. Dr. T. R. Glover also stresses the importance of the fact, and the experience of it as a fact, rather than the full understanding of it.

With regard to this, we may say that it is not wise to press the distinction between fact and theory so strongly as these men have done, for the fact implies a theory, and without

¹ See a volume of essays entitled *The Atonement in History and in Life*. The first essay.

some theory it is of little value. A mere fact is an abnormality, and, therefore, an irrational element in the universe. To emphasize the distinction, however, may serve some purpose, if only to stress the truth that it is only as a fact of experience that we have any hope of understanding the reality of the Atonement, or of reaching a theory of it that is satisfactory to heart and mind.

There are, in these days, definite movements of thought in the direction of new ideas and deeper understanding of the meaning behind the fact. The trend of thought is highly significant. Fifty years ago the late Professor James Orr noted a tendency "to give a spiritual interpretation to the great fact that lies at the heart of our Redemption, not necessarily to deny its judicial aspect . . . but to remove from it the hard, legal aspect".¹ This tendency revealed itself in an attempt "to find spiritual laws which will make the Atonement intelligible and further to find spiritual laws which connect the Atonement with the new life which springs from it". The trend thus noticed has proceeded far since the above words were written, so far that the judicial aspect has been almost wholly eliminated. Its basal principle has been changed from justice to love, whilst the view of God on which it rests is that of Father, rather than Judge or Moral Governor.

It may be stated generally that the process of change has gone beyond anything that Professor Orr envisaged, and that the tendency in these days is to rationalize, to ethicize and to spiritualize our ideas of the Atonement, for it is ultimately a great spiritual reality, with bearing on the ethical and rational aspect of man, and affecting the whole personality and life of men. Certain more definite trends are becoming evident. It is quite clear that there is a strong movement of revolt against all penal theories, especially against the more objectionable features in them. Again the Moral Influence Theory has enjoyed a certain vogue, due to the influence of Schleiermacher and Ritschl. But there is today a decided movement away from this view in the direction of an

¹ *The Christian View of God and the World*, p. 296.

“objective” view that is free from some of the weaknesses of the older objective theories.

Again there is a movement to explore the ideas and implications connected with the conception of the Messiah, and a fruitful field is discovered here, more especially when it is linked on to the idea of the Suffering Servant of the Lord, as it appears to have been in the mind of Jesus. In this connection also a sincere effort is being made to understand the witness of Scripture, and to examine the self-consciousness of Jesus in the effort to find there the root ideas of Atonement. Research is being carried on in connection with the Sacrificial ideas and practices in the Old Testament and their modification in New Testament times.

Moreover, psychology is being called in, as an ally, in the effort to understand the experience of redemption through Atonement, and of eliminating some of the cruder conceptions of earlier days. It is not improbable, therefore, that a new outlook on the question is about to dawn, and that more understandable and acceptable ideas are being evolved. The time is ripe for a new attempt to be made in this field, and this is a task that awaits the scholars and thinkers of the future. We do not need, nor do we hope, for a thoroughly new theory, for it is clear that all the historic theories have certain elements of truth and value which must be preserved. No new theory can be acceptable which ignores or disparages the kernel of truth in the ancient ideas. This must be conserved and woven into a larger and more comprehensive theory. In this way only is there hope for the future. It is, however, a distinctly Christian duty to reach a conception of the Atonement that shall do no outrage to our reason or to our moral sense, and to form our ideas of it in accordance with the Spirit of Jesus. We can also say definitely, as Professor Farmer has insisted, that no theory that is derogatory to the love of God can be entertained. It must be admitted that some of the older theories were guilty of doing this. Some exalted justice above love in God; others emphasized honour and law more than Fatherhood in God and Sonship in Man. Still others stressed sin rather than the sinner and

dwelt on the fault rather than on the personality of man, insisting more on the anger of God than on His love.

A number of recent writers have made efforts to break away from this entail of the past. Thus Dr. Scott Lidgett endeavours to make Fatherhood central, and to discover the spiritual element in the Atonement. Dr. W. L. Walker seeks to make the idea of the Kingdom of God basal to the whole question. All such efforts are along right lines, for we may say that "God has still more light to give us" on the matter, and it is our duty to try and catch this light and interpret the Atonement on the background of the basic truth of divine love and of the self-consciousness of Jesus Christ. It is too much to expect a final theory, for in so far as experience grows and our insight into truth becomes deeper and wider, we cannot hope for a final conception. We shall, perhaps, get such a theory when "faith has vanished into sight and hope has blossomed into rich fruition" and love alone remains; when we shall see truth face to face, and understand what we see in this world only in part and "through a glass darkly". This can only be in the presence of the Redeemer.

We note, further, that one of the most promising movements of thought in these days, is to make Christ central to all consideration of the Atonement, and to insist that the final solution of the problem is to be found in relation to Him personally, in a union of love with Him. Many modern writers, among them Forsyth, Mackintosh, Denney, Taylor, Walker and Macaulay, come ultimately to the conclusion that the Atonement is to be experienced and understood only "in Christ". There is undoubtedly a mystical element in the reality, and its experience. We shall dwell on this point later, but it is surely to the good to find men's thoughts resting on the Person of Christ as the secret of His work, and to make that work actual in men through a mystical relationship to Him. This is really St. Paul's Christ Mysticism at its best, and it is undoubtedly true that this Christ Mysticism is in reality the original and most creative element in St. Paul's teaching. Most of the other great ideas of the Apostle are tinged with the Jewish conceptions of his time. Justification

by faith, which has, since the Reformers, been regarded as his most important and basic truth, is now seen to be a fragment of Jewish and Rabbinical thought, with elements of Christian experience and some original thinking, woven into it. But the Christ Mysticism is St. Paul's own. It is creative of all the best in his contribution to men. So when he speaks of being "in Christ" or of "Christ being in me", he is putting his finger on what is essentially Christian experience. In like manner when he insists that men must be crucified with Christ, he is making a real contribution to Christian thought and life. He carries this idea so far as to suggest that the Christian believer reproduces in his experience the outstanding facts and moments in the life of Jesus Christ, even to rising with Him in newness of life, and ascending with Him to the heavenly places. Much has been done in the study of the Mysticism of St. Paul, especially by Albert Schweitzer and Professor Deissmann, but there is need of a still more penetrating study in the light of our deeper understanding of the Spirit of Christ.

An ancient theory of the Atonement has recently been revived by Bishop Gustav Aulen in his book entitled in translation *Christus Victor*.¹ After a fairly thorough study of the New Testament, he maintains that the main theory in the Epistles, with some hints in the teaching of Jesus, centres round the idea that Jesus in His death conquered the hosts of evil spirits that held men captive and plagued them. By this conquest He secured deliverance and freedom for men. Aulen insists that this was the "classic" theory of the Atonement in the early days of Christianity, but that later it was superseded in the Church and in the Roman Empire by the Latin view which bore legal and transactional implications. This seems to have first been held as the theory of a ransom paid to the devil, first suggested by Irenaeus, adopted among other views by Origen, and fully expressed by Gregory of Nyssa. The theory was opposed by Gregory of Nazianzus, and half-heartedly expressed by Augustine, but it retained its position in the thought of the Church for nearly a thousand

¹ Published by the S.P.C.K.

years. Bernard expressed it in opposition to the views of Abelard, but it was finally abandoned through the efforts of Thomas Aquinas. It was a grotesque theory from the beginning, full of serious difficulties, and often expressed in revolting and unchristian terms. Historians maintain that this was the first definite theory of the Atonement in the Church, although there are suggestions of other views more in harmony with the teaching of Jesus, and with the New Testament witness as a whole.

Aulen maintains that the view of the Atonement as a victorious conflict in which the demons and evil spirits were defeated on the Cross, was prior to that of a ransom, but that it lost its place in the thought of the Early Church. He claims, therefore, that in asserting his views he is restoring the earliest definite theory, and, moreover, that it is in complete harmony with the teaching of the New Testament. He insists, further, that this theory, although superseded for centuries by the Latin view, was revived by Martin Luther, but was again superseded by the Latin conceptions of Luther's followers and the post-Reformation divines. Two facts give a measure of support to Aulen's position. In the first place, we know from Plutarch and other ancient writers, that the theory of demons, as powers of evil, was very deep and widespread throughout the Roman Empire, although it appears that they were not all evil powers. Some were thought to be indifferent; others were even thought to be good and ready to help and succour men. It is clear that a somewhat similar conception existed in Palestine during New Testament times, for many cases of demon possession prove this. Moreover, there is manifest opposition to demons in the attitude and actions of Jesus Christ, as is clear from several incidents in the Gospels. Aulen is, therefore, on safe ground, as far as this is concerned. The second fact is that the death of Jesus is regarded in the New Testament as a victory over demons. There is a suggestion that His death was caused by them and there are statements that emphasize the truth that He is stronger than they, that the principalities and powers are kept under by Him. None of the hosts that haunt the spaces

between earth and heaven can snatch believers from His hand since He has vanquished them all (cf. Romans viii). Through Him believers also can become more than conquerors. He leads captivity captive, and we have a picture, in one of the Epistles, of the evil powers following His triumph like vanquished foes in a Roman triumphal march. There are other suggestions also, so that on this point again there is a foundation on which Aulen can rest his theory.

When, however, we examine his foundation, we discover that it is not as strong as it appears. In the first place Aulen finds the strongest support for his theory in the writings of St. Paul, but he is not entitled to infer that it is the primary, much less the only, theory in St. Paul. There are suggestions of at least four theories in the Apostle's writings,¹ and the conquest of demons is not the most important of them. Further, in any acceptable theory of St. Paul's views, some place must be given to the suggestions and implications of all four. We certainly cannot get a satisfactory theory by ignoring most of these suggestions, and emphasizing one particular view, and that, to all appearances, the least definite and central of these suggestions.

Again it is not clear that Aulen's review of history is quite accurate. As far as we can see there are only stray hints of his view in the Early Church, in casual sayings and, partly, in devotional passages that glory in the achievements of Jesus Christ. One outstanding feature of these achievements is the conquest of the evil forces that haunt men. The theory does not seem to have achieved the distinction of having become a distinct and definite belief in the Early Church. The views of Aulen have been accepted by not a few modern writers, and have been woven into a theory in combination with other aspects of thought, so that it seems to be taking a place among modern theories and cannot be wholly ignored. It will not be necessary to consider Aulen's views further, for it has not become a major theory, and, moreover, it is some-

¹ See Bethune-Baker's *Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine*, p. 20 on this point.

what alien to British ideas on the matter, although it is suggestive at some points.

We must, however, touch on another recent tendency of thought. The social emphasis of these days, with the increased interest it displays in social questions, has had its influence on the doctrine of the Atonement, more especially as regards its scope and extent. Men are insisting that the idea of Social Salvation, of the redemption of society, must have a larger place in theological thought regarding the Atonement, instead of concentrating on the individual, and making the work of Christ bear mainly, or wholly, on the units of personal life. It is stated that Protestantism has been too exclusive in its concern for the redemption of the individual and that this has had the effect of obscuring, if not of ignoring, the larger issue of a redeemed society. It is pointed out that the individual can only be fully saved in a society in which all the environment and interests of life are consecrated by being comprehended within the scope of the work of Christ. A certain amount of sanction for this position is found in the social implications of the Kingdom of God, but it is doubtful whether this can be sustained. While it may be true that in the Old Testament the community aspect of the Kingdom was prominent, it cannot be said to have been so in the New Testament. It is clear that in the mind of Christ the *Kingship* aspect is supreme, the Sovereignty of God in individual life. So much is this so, that the great majority of modern scholars and commentators translate the phrase which Jesus used, by the "realm" or the "reign" of God. Those who obey that "sway" (another term used) inevitably form a fellowship, or a community, but it is first of all an individual acceptance of the reign of God and the surrender of the will to His will. The fellowship is born in the community of interests and life of those who own God's sway and surrender themselves to the sovereignty of the Eternal. This means that there must first be an individual relationship to Christ, and the individual's willing acceptance of the will of God. The community is one step removed from this and issues from it.

This aspect of the matter is, to a large extent, met in the Church as a body of the redeemed, a community of believers centring around Jesus Christ, and based on each individual's experience of the saving grace of God in Him. The idea of a "beloved community"—to use Josiah Royce's phrase—is inherent in the experience of redemption and inevitably issues from it. Moreover, it is the task of this community to bring about a better society. But the dynamic for this creative factor lies in the individual as impelled and infused by the Spirit of Jesus. The source of power is in the relationship of the individual to his Lord, and in his experience of what his Lord has done for him. The idea of the "beloved community" does not, however, satisfy the minds of those who emphasize the redemption of Society, for they demand that the whole of Society, in all its varied interests, should be comprehended in the scope of redemption. Dean Inge is doubtful whether this will ever be accomplished. It is difficult to acquiesce in this conclusion, because it seems to set a limit to the purpose of God's heart, and to curb the creative power of the living and victorious Christ. We would fain believe that the day will dawn when every knee shall bow to Him, and that there is to come "a great far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves". There is inspiration in this picture, and certainly there is ground for such a hope in the New Testament. We find it in St. Paul's picture of Creation groaning and travailing, waiting for the coming of the Son of God, in the words of Jesus about going to all the world with the Gospel, as well as in the philosophy of history as developed by St. Paul in Romans ix-xi. It is, however, to become a redeemed world through redeemed souls, and through the community of the redeemed in the true Church. The community may neglect its task and leave the world to be ruled by its own spirit, but this does not alter the idea and the hope of the Gospel, nor does it narrow the area of the work of Christ.

Some thinkers say that Jesus did not die for the individual. He died for the world; His death had a cosmic reference and a world-wide scope. Dr. Forsyth often emphasizes this aspect

of the matter, saying: "We are living in a forgiven world", in a redeemed universe, for "Christ did not merely die for each man, He died for the world, and the individual has only to claim the universal forgiveness and appropriate the blessings of Christ's death for himself". It still remains true that the potentially forgiven world has to become the actually redeemed world, through the individual souls who accept and claim the universal salvation thus envisaged. There are hints in the New Testament that the scope of redemption is even wider still, and extends to the other world as well as to this, but Christian thinkers have been reluctant to explore the matter in relation to the unseen world. Dr. Hastings Rashdall has touched the subject, but he does not carry his studies very far. He suggested, however, that in the light of what Christ has done in His atoning work, we should accept the theory of "Eternal Hope" rather than that of Eternal Punishment. Some such conclusion seems to be inevitable when the question is fully faced and its implications drawn out.

In considering the subject we note first, that the New Testament assumes, and definitely asserts, that the work of Christ is continued in the other world. "He ever liveth to make intercession for us"; "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and for ever"; "able to save to the uttermost those who come to Him", are some of the statements made. It is clear from these statements, and others like them, that the range of Christ's work is not limited to this world nor is its efficacy confined to this life. Moreover, in the strange picture in one of the Epistles of Peter,¹ of Christ going down to the spirits in prison and preaching to them, we have a suggestion that He is carrying on, and proclaiming His redemptive mission to sinners and unbelievers in the world of spirits. Whatever this passage may mean—and some strange meanings have been read into it—it at least implies that Christ is active on behalf of men in the other world, and we may take it as axiomatic that His work there is in line with, and a continuation of, His work on earth. We cannot speak with any measure of certainty in this region, but we can say that the

¹ 1 Peter iii, 18-20.

probabilities are on the side of the position taken in the New Testament.¹ We can surely believe that the love of God does not change towards those who have passed into the spirit world, even though they have done so as unbelievers and unrepentant. Nor can we justly regard Him as less than loving towards those who have never heard of Jesus Christ, and so have had no chance of giving themselves to Him. Moreover, since He has made a supreme act of outgoing love on the Cross in order to overcome sin, and to bring men to Himself, we have ground for believing that He will not suffer His love to be finally defeated. The one unthinkable conclusion here is, that God's love will be frustrated and defeated, and this is what would happen if any one soul were finally lost or were allowed to suffer endless punishment. Punishment that achieves no result, and which is purely and eternally retributive, is an irrationality in a world of moral beings. It is more than an irrationality in a world governed by a God whose essence is love. If, then, in the final summing-up of things, one soul is left outside the victorious sweep of love's forgiving activity, the love of God has failed in this one case, and the forces of evil have been too strong for the Eternal. If we are entitled to believe—and we surely are—that the great moral and spiritual realities remain in the other world, some measure of will power will be retained by men, if personality and personal identity remain. We must, therefore, regard it as at least possible that the element of choice left may continue to resist the approach of divine love. In such a case eternal punishment may be a possibility, but it is not God's will. It is rather man's choice. In such a case also "Hell" may be a reality. On the other hand, the probabilities are against this.

We may state the probabilities thus. God's love will surely not rest in final defeat. If He has gone to so great a length to redeem men in this world, He may be expected to go to still greater lengths in the other world. The Cross and its self-sacrifice are God's supreme effort to win men under the

¹ Professor Farmer in *The World and God* (pp. 183-239) has touched this question.

conditions of human life in this world. This does not mean that no other effort is possible to Him in the spirit world, under the conditions of existence there. We can imagine that in that world the real values of life will be seen more clearly; that men's insight into truth will be deeper, and the possibilities of grasping the revelation and approaches of divine love greater. Further, it is at least possible that the reality of sin, as well as of the power of divine love, will be more fully understood. We cannot rest in the belief that no fuller revelation of God and His love is possible than what He has given us in the life and death of Christ. As far as this world is concerned, that was the utmost revelation possible. But there are deeper places in the divine heart, mightier potencies of divine love than men can grasp here. In the clearer light and the greater spiritual freedom of life beyond, these mightier potencies may be perceived and understood. If, then, the revelation of love's suffering and vicarious sacrifice has power in this world to win men to repentance, so casting themselves on the love of God in Christ, we may well believe that in the changed conditions of the other life, this revelation can be greater and more constraining. It is possible that it may be so overwhelming that the most stubborn will is subdued, and so love's victory is made complete. This is, perhaps, the meaning of St. Paul's great picture¹ of the last enemy being subdued until "God is all in all". We can say more, that this is probable on the ground of what we know of God as revealed in Jesus Christ. The probabilities are that in the other life there will be a revelation of divine love so overwhelming and convincing that all who failed or refused to believe here, are subdued and won, so that no one is left outside the range of love's complete victory. They shall share in the redeeming work of Jesus Christ after this life. If this be so, we can understand what Josiah Royce means when he speaks of "the most vital of all Christian teaching, the doctrine of the Atonement".

One point remains. Many writers on the Atonement emphasize the fact that it was necessary. Others have gone so far as to hold that it was necessary in the very form revealed

¹ 1 Corinthians xv, 24-28.

to us, that it is through the Cross with its suffering and sacrifice, and followed by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We have now to enquire in what sense the Atonement was necessary. Anselm made it one of his basic principles that there was a "necessitas" at the heart of the work done by Christ. How are we to understand this? We might say, first, that man being what he is, and sin being what it is, the Atonement became necessary on man's account. Man's condition and need under the dominion of sin made some method of deliverance imperative. This need was deepened and intensified by the fact of man's relationship to God as His Child. There was really an element of necessity inherent in this relationship. But it is clear that this does not make it imperative that the way of deliverance should be found in the death of Jesus Christ. Moreover, this fact of human need is not a sufficiently secure basis on which to rest so decisive a manifestation of the power and sacrifice of divine love.

We may advance a step further and say that the effect of sin on man's moral and spiritual nature was such that only by suffering and sacrifice could it be removed. We know from human experience that the suffering of the righteous goes some way towards redeeming men. Suffering, when it is voluntarily and vicariously borne, is the most powerful dynamic for good in the world. We may, then, legitimately maintain that man's condition under sin made the New Testament method of Atonement necessary. Even this, however, can scarcely be regarded as adequate, since it is God who undertakes the task and makes the sacrifice. Only when the Atonement is seen to be rooted in some moral and spiritual necessity in the nature of God Himself, can we rest on it with a measure of certainty and security. This necessity is grounded in the love of God, the spiritual necessity which makes it imperative for love to go forth in self-giving, if it is to live. From our human experience we can well believe and understand that the love of God was chafing at the barrier set by sin to the free flow of its outgoing which was essential to its life. The estrangement wrought by sin acted as a dam, hampering and frustrating God's love. Probably it

was the effort to express this sense of frustration on the part of God's love, that gave rise to the Old Testament phrase, "the wrath of God". Other elements were woven into the phrase in later thought, elements derived from the hatred and the spirit of revenge which the Jews felt towards the enemies that oppressed them. For this reason the phrase embodied notions of indignation and vindictiveness. These notions, however, were superimposed on a far deeper reality, that of the urge or chafing of love when defeated or hampered in its approach to men. If theologians had kept this truth in mind, they would not have been so prone to treat "The wrath of God" so literally or to make it the basis of their views of the work of Christ, as some have done.

Further, Christian thought would have avoided some of the unethical theories which have prevailed, many of which were derogatory to the nature of God as Father, and at variance with the teaching of Jesus in its deepest ranges. It is, then, inconceivable that the love of God would, or could, endure frustration for ever, unless He were willing to suffer final defeat. His love had sooner or later to assert itself and its mastery, if He were to retain His Lordship over the universe. Love had, somehow, to overcome the obstacle, and break down the barrier that kept it back in its self-giving. The necessity was thus inherent in the nature of divine love, and at its deepest this is what we have in the death of Christ. The Cross is love's supreme and victorious effort to overcome its own frustration, and to enable it to flow unimpeded into the souls of men. This is its significance for God; it is a blessed reality for us. Eternal love is eternal self-giving, the perpetual out-going of God in gifts to men, most of all the gift of Himself, and giving because it was His nature to give wherever there was need. By the divine compulsion of love and the imperative rooted in His nature,—we may say it reverently,—God could not keep Himself back without denying His own nature. Sin, with its estrangement of spirit and its frustration of love's outgoing, had to be overcome, if God was to be supreme in His world.

Professor Grensted has insisted strongly that the only

adequate basis for a theory of the Atonement must be found in the nature of God Himself. We can go further and insist that it must rest in the love of God. Some theories in the past have erred through finding the basis in God's justice, others have stressed His compassion, whilst still others have rested on the moral order of the universe. We only have a secure and adequate foundation in the nature of God as love, and in the final issue this is the basic truth of the New Testament.

Chapter I

THE SATISFACTION THEORIES

THE Satisfaction Theory is often called the Substitutionary View, but since the term "substitutionary" applies to many different theories, it is better not to use it in this connection, and to consider the various aspects of the satisfaction idea. Some writers have traced the root idea of the Satisfaction Theory back to Tertullian, but there is really no ground for this position. It is true that Tertullian first used the term "satisfactio", as he did many other theological terms that became established in the language of the Church in later days. But in this case he used the term in a totally different sense from the meaning that developed and became the recognized term in relation to the Atonement in subsequent generations. Tertullian signified by it the satisfaction that man could render to God by obedience and holy living, and in this connection he also used the term "meritum" of the merit which such living could acquire.

It is more than likely, as Dr. Franks¹ has suggested, that the idea which became established in the Church originated from the growing conception of "merit", which became one of the pillars of the penitential system of the Mediaeval Church. Some suggestions of this have been found in Ambrose of Milan, and there are vague hints of it in certain of Augustine's writings, as well as in Hilary. But it developed greatly in later days, becoming a means of power and of profit to the Church. Certain flagrant abuses crept into the practice of this penitential system, and this fact, more than anything else, became the lever, and provided the force, that produced the Reformation in its early phases.

In the course of the development of the idea of merit, two conceptions appeared which later became determinative of

¹ In his *History of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ*. 2 vols.

the theory of satisfaction in its bearing on the Atonement. The first was the idea of man's life and service as a debt owing to God. From this the conception of sin as the failure to pay this debt, grew. As the result of the theory of the transmission of sin from the Fall of Adam, the thought developed of the utter inability of man to pay his debt. This conclusion was greatly strengthened by the teaching of Augustine, which had become by this time decisive in the thought of the Church. He had taught that man after the fall was totally depraved. The human will, through the entail of sin, had lost its power of willing the good; it was only free to will evil. It could, in consequence, only produce evil. Thus man sank deeper and deeper into sin; his will became more and more fettered through habitual sinning, until all semblance of freedom was lost. It could only be restored by divine grace, by the infusion into the human will of a power stronger than sin. When this infusion of grace took place, and it could only happen through the Church, man could acquire a measure of merit, through his good action as well as through his penitence and sorrow for his sinful acts.

The second conception emerged somewhat later, during the elaboration and development of the theory we have emphasized. This is the idea of works of supererogation by which it was thought possible for men, by devotion and strict observance of duty, but most of all by penance, to acquire a superabundance of merit. Man could, by divine grace, succeed in doing more than his bounden duty, and achieve more than was expected of him. By this means he could acquire more merit than was needed for himself. At this point another idea developed, that this superabundant merit could be transmitted to others, and bring additional blessings to them. It is easy to see the welter of abuse which this conception made possible, and to understand the need of reforming the system as a whole. Many attempts had been made to purge the Church from within and there were several puritan groups inside the Church before the time of the Reformation. These, however, were of little avail, and in the end the evils of the system outraged the consciences of many

faithful Christians and produced the fires that spread through Northern Europe in the Lutheran Reformation, and later developed into the Reformed Church.

When we examine the second idea mentioned above, we find in it the germinating centre of several conceptions that hampered progress in later years, and led to the establishment of unethical principles in men's thoughts regarding Christian truth and sane doctrine. This was notably so with regard to the idea of the Atonement. First, from the idea of transmitted merit, the idea of transmitted guilt was deepened and more strongly established. This led to the more complete transference of man's guilt to Jesus Christ. The conception grew that His suffering was a punishment for the sins of men, and that human guilt had been transferred to Him as a substitute. This opened the way to some of the most unethical ideas regarding the penal sufferings of Christ, and a theory of the Atonement that has not yet been completely purged from the thoughts of men and of Churches.

From the same root the idea grew of the imputation of righteousness to men through the death of Christ in such a way that men were not only reckoned righteous, but were thought to be actually made righteous in justification by faith. This led to a certain amount of confusion between justification and sanctification, a confusion that still remains in certain aspects of the teaching of the Roman Church. It is being realized in these days that all such conceptions are ethically unjustifiable, as well as psychologically improbable, if not impossible. Moreover, it is becoming clear that such theories are contrary to the basal principles of Christ's teaching, for, according to Him, no man can do more than his duty. The best possible to him is yet but his duty, and all men are unprofitable servants even when they have done their duty. There would thus seem to be no room, on the Christian view, for works that produce a superabundance of merit, or an overflowing store of virtue which may be passed on to others. The goodness of men may influence and benefit others, and their example may stimulate and enrich men's moral power, and so be a means of grace to them, but this is not by

the method implied in the Church's theory and system of operation.

The first definite and systematic expression of the Satisfaction Theory was made by Anselm in his book *Cur deus homo*. He elaborated his views along some of the lines we have mentioned, and if we grant his premises, his argument seems to be sound and logical. But it has serious weaknesses, as we shall see. It owed a great deal to the prevailing conceptions and principles of the Church's teaching, and not a little to the feudal ideas and the political atmosphere of the time.

We need not give an elaborate and detailed statement of the theory. This can be secured from any good history of the doctrine.¹ All that is necessary is a brief sketch bringing out the main points. It must be said first, that Anselm treats the whole matter in the light of great illuminating principles and truths, and that he seeks, in the ultimate, to base the work of Christ, and the method of the Atonement, on the nature of God, and to derive all that is done from the moral and spiritual necessities of His Being. He insists that there is some "necessitas" in the whole movement of God to redeem the race. This is a safe principle and it must be observed in any and every theory of the Atonement. It must be regarded as efficacious and as fulfilling all the demands of life and thought only as it is made to rest in God's will and purpose, whilst these are regarded as dependent on the deep, inscrutable necessities of His nature. Although we cannot follow Anselm in all his treatment, it must be acknowledged that he has enunciated a great principle and promulgated an important truth.

Moreover, he follows the strictly scientific and logical method of his day in his treatment as far as that can be followed in dialogue form. This method is, of course, the deductive method, which starts with *a priori* ideas, and argues down to the fact, applying those ideas to it, and viewing it in the light of the principles and truths implied in them. He

¹ See Frank's work mentioned or Grensted's work. Dr. Scott Lidgett has an excellent sketch on *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*.

starts with the idea of sin as a debt owing to God by every man. It is a debt that no man can pay, for the fatal entail of sin has incapacitated him, and made full payment impossible. Moreover, even if he could discharge the debt of the present, and so, fulfil the demands, and square the accounts of ordinary living—a thing impossible of course—yet there remained the enormous and awful debt of the past. In view of this it is absolutely hopeless to expect that man can pay it. The debt is due, in reality, to the honour of God, to His greatness and His pledged word. The sum of it is so great that God Himself was alone adequate to pay it. Yet it was man who owed it and the responsibility was his. In view of this predicament, it becomes clear that the only person who could pay the debt and be adequate to meet the demands was one who was God and man. This then is one reason "why God became man".

Another principle is then brought forward. Sin deserves punishment, for both from a moral point of view as well as from the standpoint of the honour of God which is at stake, it must be punished unless it is forgiven. The case is one of either forgiveness *or* punishment. We shall see later that the reformers, more especially the post-Reformation divines, changed this principle into punishment *and* forgiveness, so that sin had to be punished before it could be forgiven. This is a departure from the principle of Anselm, and goes far to annul his argument. Anselm nowhere declares that the punishment of sin is necessary before there is forgiveness. We may, perhaps, surmise that he thought forgiveness to be an expression of the love and mercy of God, whilst punishment would be the expression of His justice. This distinction between the divine love and the divine justice, became accentuated in later thought, and they were made to stand over against each other—in some cases to be opposed to each other,—whilst the claims of justice were regarded as supreme. Such an idea is not articulated in the writings of Anselm, although something similar may have been in the background of his thought. The sufferings and death of Christ on the Cross were the punishment of sin, and by these He paid the debt owing by men, and cancelled the account. Man was

delivered thus by Him and was therefore free. This, then, is another reason "why God became man", so that by His payment of man's debt, man may gain deliverance and freedom.

In later thought, questions of the exact equivalence of the sufferings and the debt were brought forward, the exact amount of each being examined and estimated. This accentuated the quantitative aspect rather than the qualitative aspect of sin. This view of sin was inherent in the conception of it as a debt, but it had not been forced to the front.

Another principle enters into Anselm's theory at this point. The idea of works of supererogation had developed, as we have seen, and Anselm accepts the conception of such merit, and applies it to the work of Christ. In His sufferings and death Christ did not only pay the debt of sin; His experience and sacrifice were so precious and potent that it did much more. It acquired superabundant merit, so much merit that it secured blessedness for every believer. The future beatitude of men was the result of the work of supererogation accomplished by Christ on His cross. In this way the death of Christ achieved more than deliverance for men, it gained for them eternal life and blessedness. So Anselm builds up from some of the ideas of his time a theory that ends in the blessedness of men and the bliss of eternal life.

This sketch is very brief and does less than justice to many important ideas expressed by Anselm, but it emphasizes some of the essential points in his theory, and makes it clear and intelligible. Many objections have been brought against the theory as a whole. It has been criticized for its excessively transactional features, whereas the Atonement is in reality a personal matter, a relation and an achievement that holds between personal beings rather than an abstract, and more or less mechanical, transaction in the region of debt and payment, and implying certain legal realities. Again the theory has been condemned because it ignores so much of the Scriptural witness, and does less than justice to the positions of the New Testament. It almost wholly ignores the life and teaching of Jesus Christ and concentrates on His death.

Thus, Harnack emphasizes this point very strongly, insisting that the scheme is quite independent of the historical Christ apart from the fact of His death. To quote his words: "This theory manages to describe the work of redemption by Christ without adducing a single saying of His . . . the death is entirely severed from His life and work on earth and isolated. The God-Man need not have preached, founded a Kingdom and gathered disciples, He only required to die."

Harnack noted another difficulty, that, according to Anselm, it was as man that Christ died, while it was only by treating His death as really that of God that it can have the infinite worth that is needed to save men from sin. A graver criticism is directed against Anselm's superficial and too facile conception of sin and its consequences. This criticism must not be misunderstood. There are notable passages in the *Cur deus homo* that emphasize the enormity of sin, so much so that one tiny sin is regarded as deserving of more punishment than man can bear. The question, then, is not that of the extent and awfulness of sin; it is rather the superficial and emaciated conception of sin as a debt and of the Atonement as a commercial transaction for annulling the debt. Such a conception is far too easy and lacks ethical and psychological insight as well as spiritual perception.

It is a well-established fact that every theory of the Atonement must rest upon, or arise from, men's idea of sin, and if the fact and the entail of sin are treated superficially, the view of the Atonement will be more or less unsatisfactory. Sin is more than a commercial matter, more also than a moral fault or a breach of the moral law. It is even more than a crime against society, or a wrong done to human life and manhood. It may be regarded as any one, or all of these, but they do not exhaust its meaning nor give a satisfactory account of the reality of sin. None of these conceptions can, in reality, give a full account of the sense of guilt that arises and follows from sin, and the pain of spirit which is the essence of guilt. Sin is, in the ultimate, a religious term, rather than a moral or social one. It holds in the realm of personal relations, and is really a matter between men and

God, for in the end it is against God that sin is committed. In essence it is an outrage against divine love, an unfilial attitude to a Father and Fatherhood; a flouting of divine affection in a wrong choice in the face of absolute love. As such it is far deeper and different from the failure to pay a debt whilst its results, in the personality of the sinner, go much deeper than the non-payment of a debt. Sin renders the sinner incapable of profiting to the full from the outgoing love of God, and although that love does not give up the sinner, it is hampered in its out-flowing and is unable to bless to the full, the sinful soul. We are beginning to understand that the greatest punishment of sin is the separation from God which it brings about. This truth was seen in Old Testament times, though its implications were not fully brought out. It is a basic assumption in the New Testament, so that the deepest idea of the work of Christ in its pages is that of "reconciliation", the bringing together of two parties that have been separated, the restoration of a broken harmony, and the reknitting of a fellowship severed by sin. It is in reality the renewal of a shattered friendship between God and man.

As the separation from God, the effects and consequences of sin are disastrous to the personality of the sinner. There is loss of spiritual vitality, a gradual deterioration of manhood, a diminishing sensitiveness in conscience, and a lack of will power to fight against wrong. These features cannot be estimated in terms of debt, or payment made or not made. We need a different balance by which to weigh the quality and the enormity of sin before we can understand it. But it is evident that we need some other way of reaching deliverance and re-forming the friendship broken by sin than a purely commercial transaction, or even a predominantly moral achievement. In reality we need a more spiritual and personal idea of the Atonement than is possible on the assumptions and the basal principles of Anselm.

Most writers find his defective view of sin as the main blemish in the theory. Moberly is very strong on this point, so strong that he is led to regard the theory as of little worth.

He says that his definition of sin is so defective that it vitiates the whole discussion. "It makes sin in its essence quantitative, and as quantitative external to the self of the sinner, and measurable, as if it had a self, in itself."¹ But sin has no existence apart from the sinner and in him it is not so much quantitative as qualitative. Stevens² differs somewhat from Moberly, but he also condemns Anselm's view of sin, saying, "It would be difficult to name any prominent treatise on atonement whose conception of sin is so essentially unethical and superficial".

It would seem, however, that the most severe feature of criticism of the theory is its view of God. It is not easy in these days to understand how, or to accept the fact, that the sufferings and death of Jesus, *per se*, could render any satisfaction to God, if we hold on to the conception of God as personal, and view Him in the light of the life and teaching of Christ. Whatever satisfaction He derived must have sprung from a spiritual reality, rather than a physical fact. In other words it must have come not from the sufferings and death of Jesus, but from His willing surrender to the divine will and purpose, from His obedience to the consciousness of vocation from God and all this involves. This is the kind of satisfaction that God as a personal being, and more especially as a Father, must value. It is the perception of this fact that accounts for the rise of a school of thinkers in recent times, called the Ethical Satisfaction School. We shall deal with the theories of members of this school at a later stage, but one reason for the appearance of these theories is found in the revolt against the commercial and the transactional view of satisfaction, and the rather degrading idea of God which it entails. No theory can finally be accepted that is derogatory to the conception of God as a moral and spiritual being and, in the final issue, as a being in whom love is supreme and determinative.

Anselm sought, all through his book, to uphold the honour of God, but there is a deeper honour and a more real and

¹ *Atonement and Personality*, p. 370.

² *The Christian Doctrine of Salvation*, p. 242.

honourable conception to uphold, God's ethical perfection and spiritual supremacy. It is clear that this perfection suffers serious deterioration on the supposition that God is such a being that a commercial transaction and an abstract mechanical experience of suffering as the payment of a debt can afford Him any satisfaction. It is suggested in the New Testament that the perfection of His character lies in His love being made perfect (1 John iv, 12) and that this is achieved by the outgoing of this love to redeem and save men.

We can say that in the ultimate Anselm's theory rests on a somewhat derogatory view of God and one that is far removed from the specifically Christian view. The instincts of men, as well as their Christian insight, have brought the realization that the theory is unsatisfactory without serious alteration and more Christian presuppositions.

Dr. Hastings Rashdall criticizes Anselm's conception of God from a somewhat different point of view. He insists that a God who really thought that His honour was increased by millions of men suffering eternal torments—a position which Anselm regards as basal—or even a God who regarded it as a satisfactory compensation to Himself that an innocent God-Man should suffer on the Cross in place of the punishment of those millions, is not really a God who deserves worship, and that in his heart of hearts Anselm himself would not worship such a God.¹

Attempts have been made to smooth over these defects. We have already mentioned one such attempt. Some thinkers have surrendered Anselm's basal positions, and brought more ethical and Christian principles into the theory. But they accept the primary idea of a satisfaction made by Christ to God, and further, that its acceptance and acknowledgment by God is proved by the resurrection of Christ. This position is often spoken of as the "objective" element in the Atonement, something done for God and in God by the death of the Cross. The theory, therefore, has its modern advocates, although they state it in a greatly modified form. The modi-

¹ *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology* (Bampton Lectures), p. 356.

fications are seen in a deeper conception of sin, a more ethical and spiritual idea of God, and the refusal to accept the idea that the death of Christ wrought a change in God. The change is in man and his relationship to God. Emphasis is thus passed over from the view that God is reconciled to man, for He has always been so, to the view that it is man who is reconciled to God, and that, in the final issue, it is God Himself who brings about this reconciliation, as St. Paul says: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself not imputing to them their sins". The theory is mainly improved in these directions.

Professor Grensted,¹ after giving a brief sketch of Anselm's theory, notes the following points of value in the position: (a) Anselm does not press his views as final; (b) yet he does claim that by his line of argument it can be seen that not only had atonement to be made, but had to be made in accordance with the New Testament record; (c) the attempt is made to present the Atonement *logically necessary* in terms of "honour"; (d) his conception is important in view of later developments, and we must remember that he regards Christ's offering as totally inadequate in itself, apart from its acceptance by God. On the other hand he points out that (a) Anselm almost puts God's love out of sight; (b) his theory is weak at every point in his expression of the manward side of the Atonement. This is due to his inadequate definition of sin, which is far below the view of Athanasius, and still more below that of Augustine. Grensted insists that Anselm's influence, both in his day and during later times, was greatest on the negative side.

When the post-Reformation theologians developed and added to the theory of Anselm, the Socinians assailed the positions they advocated. In this situation Grotius wrote a treatise, as he thought, to defend the theories of the reformers, but in so doing he really broke away from their position, and surrendered the basal idea of the Anselmic view. He did not accept Anselm's view of God, nor of sin as a debt and an insult to the honour of God. So the problem of Atonement

¹ *A Short History of the Doctrine of the Atonement*, chap. vi.

is not for him as to how God could get reparation for a private injury, but that of safeguarding the interests of His moral government. This changed position leads him further, so that, first, he holds that love and not justice is the primary attribute in God, and that His justice is under the control of His love. Secondly, his view of God leads him to give up the whole scheme of debt and its satisfaction, as well as the attempt to find an equivalence between the satisfaction and the sin. In the final issue, however, sin is sin against God Himself in his personal being, rather than against His government, as Grotius maintained. His view is called the "governmental view", and it was in this form that it influenced subsequent thought, especially in the theories of the New England divines, Jonathan Edwards and his disciples.

(A) DR. P. T. FORSYTH

Dr. Peter Taylor Forsyth, after ministering to several Congregational Churches, became Principal of Hackney College, London, and he remained at his post until his death over twenty years ago. He was a great thinker, massive in mind, profound in his grasp of truth, wide in the sweep of his interests, dealing always with big subjects, and dealing with them in a big way. He was a prolific writer, and nothing that he ever wrote was trivial or superficial.¹ Impatient with triflers, he had a fine sarcasm and a deep sense of responsibility for the safety of the ark of the Lord. His style is obscure and difficult, full of paradoxes and epigrams and a multitude of coined words and phrases; but he was capable of superb passages of writing, and was a stylist worthy to take his place among the bests writers of the English tongue.

Dr. J. K. Mozley thinks that Dr. Forsyth's outstanding contribution to the idea of the Atonement is his effort to ethicize the whole conception, to rid it of all material elements, to purge it of all legal, governmental and transactional con-

¹ His main works are *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ* (1911), *Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind* (1907), *The Cruciality of the Cross* (1909), *The Work of Christ* (1910), and *The Justification of God* (1916).

ceptions and to base it broadly on moral and spiritual foundations. To him the Atonement is a spiritual reality, growing out of the ethical necessities of the divine nature. No writer has more consistently and passionately proclaimed the centrality of the Cross. His treatment, at all points, moves on the high places of spiritual insight, and there is about it all a sense of the tremendous issues involved, and of the magnitude of the forces implicated in the struggle and the victory of the Cross.

In the final issue, it is as the victory of God in Christ over the demonic and evil forces of the world that he construes and interprets the work of Christ. In His death Jesus triumphs over the evil that is entrenched in human nature, and heals the disharmony at the heart of the cosmic processes. He brings back the moral world to equilibrium and balance, and has enthroned holiness at the heart of things. This He does through the power and worth of His willing obedience to God. It is, however, very difficult to give a consistent account of Dr. Forsyth's view, for he never gave a full statement of his theory, but rather incidental references in addresses and talks to ministers, or expressions and ideas in the course of the consideration of other kindred subjects. So we find emphasis laid on aspects of the satisfaction theory, and even of the penal theory; great stress is laid on the holiness and justice of God, and in the very same passages noble tributes are paid to the love of God. All we can attempt is to reach as satisfactory a picture as possible of his main positions.

I. *Basal Principles*

(a) We note at once that he makes the Cross central to the whole of Christianity. The death of Christ is the crucial fact in the Gospel, not only in a general way, it is determinative of all else. Nothing that God ever did revealed Him so clearly to the world as this supreme and central act of the Cross. If there had been no Cross, some elements in God's nature would have for ever remained unrevealed and unknown. So we must finally form our idea of God in the light of Christ and Him crucified. The death of Christ determined the

question of Christ's person, for it is the crucial fact of Christology, and we are driven to accept His divinity because He has done for the world what only God could do. He goes further and suggests that Christ Himself came to His fulness—His plerosis—in the Cross. He was made perfect, and attained the completeness of His being, in the self-giving of the Cross. "In His death He found Himself."¹ So His full divinity was revealed only in His death, for He had the Cross latent in His very nature, and that not only as His fate, but as His consummation.² He speaks of the death of Christ as "the one thing that gives His person its full scope and effect";³ and "the real Incarnation lay, not in Christ being made flesh for us, but in His being made sin" and dying for us.

Further the Cross is determinative of Christ's teaching as well as of our Christian Faith. It is basic to the meaning and reality of the Holy Spirit. On it is based the Church and through it the Bible came to be written. It is the crisis of history, the watershed of the ages, the decisive moment in the moral and spiritual life of the world. Through it all it was God who was acting and suffering.

(b) The emphasis on the influence of Christ's death on the moral universe, brings us to another of his basic principles, that the essence of reality is to be found in "Will", and that, in the final issue, the Ethical is the real. The universe is not only rational it is moral through and through, and real knowledge and certainty are only possible in the ethical realm: so "I must find my practical certainty in that which founds my moral life and especially my new moral life". "There is no *rational* certainty by which this *moral* certainty can be challenged." "This moral certainty is the truly rational certainty." Moreover, the core of personality in God and man is in its ethical nature. So "God's divine act . . . makes Him the last moral reality" for "the last moral reality is a person, not in repose, but in action with the world".⁴ So the *will* was the

¹ *The Cruciality of the Cross*, p. 141.

² *The Work of Christ*, p. 108.

³ *Positive Preaching, etc.*, p. 360. Many other references to these points could be given.

⁴ *Positive Preaching, etc.*, p. 346.

secret of Christ's personality. "He went to His death as a necessity of His own person", and this willed action is so mighty that it changes the foundations of the moral universe.

Again, this moral ground of the universe and of human nature is what constitutes the solidarity of the race. It is in the ultimate "a unity of conscience". This made possible the cosmic meaning of the death of Christ. So "He died for the whole organic world of people", and Christ's work "is a reconciliation of the world as a cosmic whole". "He put His corporate race in right relation to a Holy God."¹ "We are spiritually in a reconciled world."

(c) His emphasis on the ethical basis of personality brings us to the third of his basic principles, that "Holiness" is the essential element in the nature of God, and in His great act in Atonement. Looking at this view in general, we note a certain kinship to the Old Testament view rather than to that of the New Testament. Dr. Mozley points out that there is an element of hardness and severity in Forsyth's theology as a whole. The root of this is the Old Testament atmosphere which pervades his views. So he insists that "there is a height and depth in the Father beyond His utmost pity and kindest love", for He is Holy and "the source of redemption is to be found in His Holiness". So "the new revelation in the Cross was more than 'God is Love'". God is at His divinest in holiness, and "holiness is the root of love, fatherhood, sacrifice and redemption", and "the Father's first care is holiness". "God is love is not the whole Gospel", it is rather holiness and this is expressed in judgment. This leads Forsyth to lay great emphasis on the "wrath of God", an emphasis that becomes unethical and derogatory to the love of God. There are suggestions that the supreme interest is in sin, rather than in the sinner, with holiness more than with Fatherhood.

We may say, then, that there is a sterner face on Forsyth's God than on the face of the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ". This is one of the primary weaknesses of Forsyth's view, for it is opposed to the New Testament con-

¹ *The Cruciality of the Cross*, pp. 172, 182.

ception. There the love aspect of Fatherhood is in the foreground. Only once, and this a doubtful case, is God's Fatherhood brought into relation with punishment. It has always to do with mercy and love. Moreover, it is never said in the New Testament that God is holiness, but it is stated and implied all through that "God is love". Forsyth goes so far as to say that the Father's joy in the Holy Son is His "love of His own holiness",¹ and that "love is the outward movement of holiness". Moreover, "it is the holiness of God that gives the law to His love".² Further, "the great word of the Gospel is not 'God is Love'," it is that "Love is omnipotent for ever, because it is holy".³ The cross is not the supreme effort and sacrifice of divine love, "it is the central act of God's holiness". We can put by the side of these words the words of Redlich. "God loves all men equally and impartially. He is not primarily the giver of the Moral Law and the Judge who punishes. He is supremely Love and even the Moral Law . . . must be interpreted by all Christians in the light of the peremptory law that we must love our neighbours. The great reality is love in action . . . forgiveness is love in action, and is the highest experience possible to man, for it is sharing in the nature of the Great Reality."⁴

From this emphasis on holiness we are led to expect that Forsyth's view of punishment will be retributive and punitive. He regrets the idea of its being vindictive, but it is never educative and reformatory and there is a penal element in all the judgments and punishments of the eternal God.

II

In the light of these basic principles we must endeavour to build up Forsyth's theory of the Atonement. His basic conception of the Atonement in action is that of Reconciliation and that it makes reconciliation possible. He believes strongly in an "objective" Atonement and regrets completely the "Moral Influence" theory, for it emphasizes "what man himself can do for God to secure deliverance",

¹ *Sermon Holy Father*, p. 94.

³ *The Justification of God*, p. 227.

² *The Cruciality, etc.*, p. 72.

⁴ *The Forgiveness of Sins*, p. 311.

whereas the objective view stresses "what God can do, and does do, to redeem men". He rejects the post-Reformation idea of an opposition between the justice and mercy of God, and refuses to believe that the Father punishes His Son, although he is prepared to admit that the Son bore the punishment of sin in His death. Further, he rejects Anselm's idea of satisfying the honour of God, as well as the thought of substitution, as usually held. The correct view of substitution is that it is representative. Anselm's idea of satisfaction is inadequate, but there is a satisfaction, it is made to personal holiness. He has, however, a real regard for the older views, because they were stages on the way to more adequate views. He has sympathy with the views of McLeod Campbell and Moberly, and shows affinities with some of their ideas, but he insists on the vicarious obedience of Christ rather than His vicarious penitence. This obedience was so potent that through it Jesus "revolutionized the eternal foundations of our moral world".¹ Further the confession that Jesus offered to God is a confession of holiness, and it is this aspect of His offering that gives it its creative power.

In some passages he treats Christ's death as an expiatory sacrifice, comparing it, and contrasting it, with the sacrifices of the Old Testament. He insists that "obedience" is the essential spiritual meaning of these ancient sacrifices. The virtue lies in the obedience to God's will, and this is the supreme value of the death of Jesus Christ. It was a real inner sacrifice, Christ's self-oblation and the efficacy lies in "His complete, central, vital obedience to the holy will of God in a necessary act on the eternal scale".² The real meaning of an "objective" Atonement is that God Himself makes it, objectivity here means, not that it was made to God, but by God.³ Further, he insists that Jesus turned the penalty He endured, into a sacrifice He offered, whilst the sacrifice He offered was the judgment He accepted. It is clear that Dr. Forsyth stands firmly on the side of an objective atonement, that he accepts the idea of a satisfaction made

The Cruciality, etc., p. 212.

² *Ibid.* pp. 177 f.

³ *The Work of Christ*, pp. 91 f.

to God, though this is not the satisfaction which Christ in His sufferings and death offered as the payment of a debt. It is the satisfaction which His willing and absolute obedience, even unto death, gave the Father.

He sails very near accepting the penal view of Christ's sufferings, though he hesitates to believe it. He seeks to smoothe over the difficulty in two ways. First, he refuses to believe that God punishes Christ; and secondly, he distinguishes between penal and penitential, saying that "the penal judgment or consequence of sin fell on Christ, the penitential did not". He says also "I do not see why we should avoid describing the suffering of Christ as penal", but he insists that it is penal as a consequence of sin and as God's punishment of any and every sin. "It was penal in that it was due to the moral order of sin." It was not penal in the sense that the Father deliberately punished His Son. "This is unthinkable", and "to speak of Christ being punished robs the whole act of moral value". Jesus' "penalty was not punishment because it was dissociated from the sense of desert". Yet he says that "He felt the weight of God's wrath in full". This makes it difficult to understand the distinction between penalty and punishment, and here we touch another weak point in his treatment. He states¹ that the work of Christ did three things. "He subdued Satan, rejoiced the Father, and set up in humanity the Kingdom", and "the same act as disburdens us of guilt, commits us to a new life".

Christ's death, then, is primarily a victory over Satan and sin, "a complete victory over the evil power or principle", "the moral conquest of the world's evil". The conflict means that "it is sin's death or God's".² To win the victory "the whole of God was needed". But the victory was so decisive and final that it revolutionized the eternal foundations of the moral world, righted the twist or the abnormality wrought by sin, and made the world ever after a redeemed and reconciled world. The victory, in the final issue, lies in the voluntary obedience of Christ to the will of God and His confession thereby of the holiness of God. It is not the suffering

¹ *The Work of Christ*, p. 224.

² *Positive Preaching*, p. 343.

of the Cross that makes it effective, but the "holy obedience", and this was "a perfect racial obedience". This was the satisfaction made to God. So "the atoning thing is not obedient suffering, but suffering obedience". The satisfaction then is experienced in the ethical nature of God by Christ's recognition of His holiness, and His acquiescence in the judgment of this holiness on human sin. The Cross did not change God but wrought a change in the relation in which men stood to Him. It enabled the creative energy of divine holiness and love to become effective in men. So "Christ creates our holiness because of . . . His complete victory over the evil power".¹ How can men appropriate the blessings of forgiveness? Dr. Forsyth replies: By union with Christ, mystic union such as is implied in the phrase "in Christ". By this union "believers . . . are integrated into the new goodness and God makes them partakers of His eternal love". Moreover, "the very nature of our faith in Christ is union with Him".²

There are a few points at which the theory is weak and inadequate. His hard conception of God, and his Old Testament tendency, have been mentioned, the emphasis on holiness rather than on love, and his acceptance of the punitive aspect of the wrath of God, have also been noted. He states that Christ bore the punishment of sin, but he sees also that punishment in its entirety cannot be transferred.³ The difficulties here can only be avoided by a frank recognition that the sufferings of Christ were in no sense penal, and that it is His obedience that atones. In reality the transference of guilt or penalty is morally and spiritually impossible. Finally there is in Dr. Forsyth's theory something that is akin to the cleavage made by the reformers between justice and mercy in God. At any rate he seems to introduce a dualism into God's nature by his frequent insistence on the fact that the offering of the Cross is made *by* God and made *to* God. Many passages emphasize this distinction, which, if pressed, results in some such cleavage as that made by the reformers, although it may not be at the same point. It must be said also

¹ *The Work of Christ*, p. 213.

² *Ibid.* p. 129.

³ *Ibid.* p. 181.

that Dr. Forsyth's thought moves on a juristic plane, and it is quite certain that no satisfactory view of the Atonement can be reached if we remain in this plane. In spite of these criticisms no one can fail to see the real greatness and sweep of the treatment. He has placed the Atonement in the very nature and heart of God, and insisting that it cost Him—touched Him to the quick is his way of expressing it—the extreme sacrifice of the Cross. These are great truths and for them all Christian thinkers should be grateful.

(B) PROFESSOR H. R. MACKINTOSH

Dr. Hugh Ross Mackintosh was for thirty-two years Professor of Systematic Theology at New College, Edinburgh. After a distinguished university career, followed by an equally distinguished theological course, he studied in Germany and came under the influence of Herrmann and the Ritschlian School. A prolific writer, he has enriched our theological literature, and when his work on *The Person of Jesus Christ* was published in 1912, he was at once acclaimed as one of the foremost theologians in Britain. He was probably the best-informed student of German Theology in this country.¹ He died suddenly in June 1936. The influence of Herrmann upon him was very deep, and he remained a Ritschlian to the end, although he did not accept all Ritschl's positions. He was drawn to Karl Barth during the closing years of his life. He himself thought his volume on *The Christian Experience of Forgiveness*, the best he ever wrote, but probably future generations will give that place to *The Person of Jesus Christ*. He was a Kantian in philosophy, yet, in the final estimate, he rests his view of the Atonement on a mystic union with Christ akin to the Christ-Mysticism of St. Paul. Few theologians have dwelt so richly on the love of God in the Cross of His Son, or sought so consistently to emphasize the place of love in the Christian life. He has asserted unfalteringly the uniqueness and the authority of Jesus Christ. His treatment

¹ His chief works on the Atonement are *The Christian Experience of Forgiveness* (1927), *The Christian Apprehension of God* (1930), and *Some Aspects of Christian Belief*.

of the Atonement is solidly based on the Scriptures, and more especially on the New Testament, and he insists that although the divine forgiveness in its fulness and its mystery is beyond the understanding of men, it can be experienced by the believing soul, and that only those who have had such an experience can get any measure of understanding of its mystery. It is clear that he was greatly indebted to Dr. Forsyth, but the hard, stringent note so evident in Forsyth is almost wholly absent from his treatment, although we have faint echoes of Forsyth in his emphasis on the "wrath of God", and in his view of punishment.

I

The fact that Dr. Mackintosh is not dealing directly with the Atonement, but with "the Christian Experience of Forgiveness" influences his treatment in several ways. In the first place it makes his approach more psychological, and in the examination of forgiveness and the various aspects of the soul he displays keen psychological insight and knowledge. He even touches on "the Unconscious", and Freud's treatment of the contents of that region. Secondly, his emphasis on experience gives him a certain sympathy with the Moral Influence Theory, and he insists that nothing is so potent in inducing repentance and kindling love in the heart as the Cross of Christ. He does not, however, accept the subjective view, for he considers that there is a real "objective" element in the work of Christ. He was greatly interested in McLeod Campbell's position,¹ but refused to accept it, because he felt that the Atonement must mean and cost something to God in addition to the offering of confession or penitence to Him by man. On the other hand, he stresses very heavily the vicarious obedience of Christ, insisting that obedience voluntarily and fully undertaken must mean much to God, and must have powerful reactions on the moral universe, as well as yielding satisfaction to God. There is thus a satisfaction to God in the work of Christ, but the satisfaction is in His obedient surrender to the will and purpose of the Father.

¹ See *Some Aspects of Christian Belief*, pp. 80 ff.

He touches on the Substitutionary and Representative ideas, discusses the Penal and the Ransom theories and dwells at considerable length on the view of the Atonement as a sacrifice well pleasing to God. In dealing with the idea of substitution, he meets the objection that this implies the transfer of moral responsibility to another by saying that there is no such transference. Christ is our Substitute, not in the sense that our guilt was imputed to Him, or His righteousness imputed externally to us, but in the sense of union with Christ, "a spiritual and willed self-identification with Christ the righteous, making us, by no fiction, but in actual will and spirit, right with the Father". The substitution is thus not the crude transference of guilt or of righteousness, but substitution in the sense that He did for us, not instead of us, what we could never do for ourselves.

In dealing with Christ as our Representative, he bases this idea again on our union with Him; insisting that the sacrifice of the Cross "must come to be within us". As being "in Christ", we are pardoned "for Christ's sake", not by any external decree, but as being identified with Christ through our willed surrender to Him. With regard to satisfaction, Dr. Mackintosh maintains that the life and death of Christ are a satisfaction to some "ultimate necessity based deep in the nature of the Father's Holy Love". This necessity we gather is the moral necessity arising from God's essential being, and Dr. Mackintosh tends to identify it with "the holiness of God". The satisfaction is not that of an incensed deity, but it is not easy to reconcile his position here with his strong insistence on "the wrath of God" and his declaration that "God was angry". The penal view of the later reformers is rejected but he comes into line with Dr. Forsyth, that the satisfaction was ethical. Here again, however, it is difficult to reconcile his position with certain statements he makes. Thus he speaks (p. 200) of God receiving "unto Himself the assaults of sin", of "the judgment of God on sin striking Jesus" (p. 204).¹ He is opposed to the idea that Jesus as a sacrifice propitiated God, and the sacrifice is "the spiritual

¹ The pages are those of *The Christian Experience of Forgiveness*.

sacrifice of obedience". Further he maintains that we elucidate the problem of Atonement by viewing the Cross as a sacrifice in which we partake by faith.¹ Here again he brings forward the idea of "Union with Christ".

II

Dr. Mackintosh speaks of forgiveness as "one of the foci . . . from which it is possible to survey the whole circumference of Christian trust", and insists that "it implies a destructive view of God, of man and sin, of the universe and of Jesus Christ". He exhausts language in trying to express the love and grace of God in forgiveness. Here are some of the terms he uses: unimaginable and incredible (p. 240), inestimably precious (p. 246), astonishingly great (p. 246), amazing (p. 255), exhaustless (p. 258), passing knowledge (p. 260), unspeakable and stupendous (p. 277), and numerous other terms, all of which are expressions of the superlative worth of divine love. It is again difficult to reconcile these expressions with others which insist on holiness in God. To Dr. Mackintosh as a Kantian, the ethical is basic in God, and it would appear that the divine holiness is supreme and determinative in His nature. Thus we note that when he speaks of love as basal, he describes it as "holy love". True he insists that holiness and love are indistinguishable and that the separation between the justice and love of God is unjustifiable. But it is evident that with him, as with Forsyth, holiness determines love's action, and controls its self-giving. On this ground, he can speak of "the wrath of God", of God's attitude as "menacing and hostile", and he commends Herrmann's saying regarding Ritschl, that his "elimination of the wrath of God is a wrong against the Christian soul". Further, he speaks of "God's indignant antagonism to the sinner and his ways" (p. 163), and of "the reality of the divine wrath against sinners and their sin". It is a difficult task to harmonize some of these statements with the basal conception of the New Testament.

Again Dr. Mackintosh's basal conception of the universe

¹ *Ibid.* p. 225 f.

as moral, together with aspects of his Calvinism, leads him sometimes to speak as if man had no rights before God. Yet if God made man a moral being, his moral rights exist, even with regard to God. While seeming, thus, to disparage man, Dr. Mackintosh refuses to regard him as totally depraved, and insists that in the Cross we can see dimly the value of man to God. His conception of sin does not go quite deep enough, but he is strong in his insistence that the most real punishment of sin is separation from God and all this entails. Moreover, in the final issue, the sense of guilt is an expression of this separation. It is one aspect of the punishment of sin, whilst the degeneration of the personality of the sinner is another. Dr. Mackintosh accepts the retributive view of punishment, maintaining that "the purely reformatory view leaves the essence of the matter unexplained". He asserts, however, that punishment by itself cannot produce the evangelical kind of penitence, and that there is a sense in which men never reap the full harvest of their evil deeds. Some force in the universe holds back part of the punishment, and this shows how it is possible for the great act of forgiveness to hold back, or suspend, the operation of laws that work degeneration in the life and character of the sinner.

III

We must examine more fully the treatment of forgiveness, of the Cross and of the essential facts in the atoning work of Jesus Christ.

(a) *Forgiveness*.—Dr. Mackintosh insists strongly that a negative idea of forgiveness as remission of penalty is inadequate, and that it is closely related to, if not identified with, "justification". So "to be justified in the sense that counts for experience, is simply to be forgiven and accepted by God". Forgiveness is "the fundamental and creative act whereby salvation—in the sense of being brought into trustful communion with God—is made and kept real". On man's side forgiveness annuls the separation between God and man, and the soul finds itself "drawn close to the Father's heart". On God's side it means "the untroubled communication of

His love to unworthy men". It issues in renewed fellowship with God, and becomes a dynamic in the soul that transforms and rebuilds it. Atonement is what it cost God to overcome the spirit of evil in men and win them back to Himself. This cannot be understood by the reason, nor explained by logic, for it cannot "be shown to follow necessarily . . . from any rational notion of God". But we are certain that it can be experienced, and the experience bears at its heart the sense that all through the initiative is with God; that "the spring of forgiveness is in God, not in man".

When we ask what is the dynamic and creative element in forgiveness, we discover that it is the trust that God has in us, in spite of our failures and sins. So strongly does Dr. Mackintosh emphasize this fact that he declares that it is only in forgiveness, and as forgiven, that man becomes truly a person. Forgiveness, however, is never without conditions. The first condition is that forgiveness should not be granted in such a way that it leaves the moral realities out of count. Again it always costs something to forgive, so "the Cross represents God's anguish" and grief, the cost "answering to the greatness of the remitted sin". It must also cost something to man. Dr. Mackintosh sometimes speaks as if forgiveness was made possible by the incoming of a new idea (see p. 234). This is based on the psychological fact that ideas tend to work themselves out, but it becomes clear that nothing can produce forgiveness but the incoming of a new affection, "a supernatural gift", as the self-giving of God to the sinner in such a way that His love becomes a power in the soul.

(b) "The Atonement is what it cost God to forgive", "the act and experience of God in reconciling the world to Himself" (p. 185). Dr. Mackintosh seeks to discover what it means to God, by examining what it means for one man to forgive—really forgive—another. In doing this there is always an experience of sacrificial pain and of vicarious suffering. We can say that "the forgiveness of God rises up through the depths of a self-abandoning passion that sinners can never fathom". It involves an act of self-sacrificing and

suffering love, and as such, it has an objective reference. The Cross is, therefore, more than the physical death of Jesus, it means something to God, to Jesus Himself, and to men. It is the whole movement of the eternal in the process of saving men. In it God takes the initiative, and it is the final revelation of the nature of God. It was not an isolated fact in the life of Jesus, rather it was the keynote of all His life. So the Cross was necessary as "the culmination of Christ's self-identification with sinful men". It is God's creative act in relation to sin and it actually conveys forgiveness and makes it effective.

We find another meaning in the Cross. It is God's judgment on sin, for, in the first place, it reveals the awful nature of sin. Again it reveals God's view of sin and His attitude to it. Moreover, it is a revelation of God's condemnation of sin. All sin causes suffering and the universe is so constituted that it reacts against sin, and in the final issue, this involves suffering. So the Cross reveals the inevitable connection between sin and suffering. Finally sin is condemned by being defeated on the Cross. Dr. Mackintosh agrees that something was done in the death of Christ that wrought a change in the moral universe. This is only another way of saying that through it, and the changed attitude it achieves, the gift of God's spirit is made possible to men, and by this means the work for men on the Cross becomes effectual and is completed in men. Three things are needed for forgiveness, Repentance, Faith and Union with Christ, and in the ultimate the decisive element is union with Christ, self-identification with Him by which His redemptive energy becomes real to the surrendered soul. Through this union the virtue of Christ's sacrifice becomes effectual within us. All that the Cross achieves is a revelation of God's love and "the love of the Father is the fount of all redemption". So the "Cross brings about a new relationship" (p. 212) and "it actually conveys forgiveness and makes it effective".

IV

Looking at this treatment as a whole we note the following:

- (1) Dr. Mackintosh puts the whole matter within the realities of the divine nature, and insists that God from eternity had Saviourhood in His being. From this he advances to the
- (2) Truth, that the initiative in the whole matter is with God and the whole movement of redemption originates in God's love.
- (3) This love is holy love, and though he does not stress "holiness" as much as Dr. Forsyth, yet he becomes perilously near to overthrowing the supremacy of love in God.
- (4) His view is very near to that of the Moral Satisfaction School.

There is a satisfaction to God in the death of Christ, but it is given to God by His vicarious obedience and His self-identification with the will and purpose of God. This is the "objective" element in the atoning work of Christ. We can see that Dr. Mackintosh's treatment is masterly, and that it has elements of great value. But there are some points of criticism:

(a) First, we may say that the treatment is descriptive rather than explanatory. This was inevitable, for Dr. Mackintosh set out to write on *The Christian Experience of Forgiveness* rather than to produce a systematic study of the Atonement. This is probably why he did not attempt to coordinate the various aspects of the matter on which he dwelt.

(b) We might doubt whether one of his basic assumptions, that of the complete self-identification of Christ with the sinful, is permissible without regarding Jesus Himself as sinful. By no psychological or spiritual method can a sinless being become identified with the consciousness of sin and guilt as these are experienced by those who are actually sinful. There can be no transference of guilt in this sense.

(c) Again Dr. Mackintosh's tendency to treat men as if

they had no rights before God, in reality undermines the ethical basis of the nature of God.

(d) He has not been thoroughly true to the principle he himself laid down, that nothing is to be affirmed of the Atonement that is out of harmony with, or opposed to, the Fatherhood of God as taught by Jesus Christ. His emphasis on the "wrath of God", and the "anger of God", and his insistence on the purely retributive element in punishment, go far to annul his principle. No earthly father, worthy of the name, punishes his son without having in mind his ultimate good. If the punishment were merely retributive it would fail of this purpose. In the final issue, the holiness of God is taken to mean that element in God that reacts against wrong in punishment, that is, the retributive justice of God. It is a nobler and more Christian idea to regard the basic element in God as the love that reacts to sin in forgiveness. God is never, in the New Testament, said to be "holiness". He is said to be holy, and holy is adjectival, whereas in the saying "God is love", love is a substantive. So in "holy love" the term "holy" qualifies the love which is the basic reality. In spite of these frailties, we must admit that Dr. Mackintosh's work is of lasting value, and cannot fail to be helpful to all who study it with care and thoroughness.

(C) DR. J. SCOTT LIDGETT

Dr. Scott Lidgett states at the outset that he is searching for "the spiritual principle of the Atonement considered as a satisfaction offered to God for the sins of the world".¹ He refuses to regard Christ's sufferings, *per se*, as a satisfaction, and insists that "the ethical content of the sufferings looms larger than the suffering itself". The old doctrine of Satisfaction needs to be revised, but we must not lose the idea that Christ's death was a satisfaction for the sins of men, rather must we try and bring out how necessary it was. This statement in the Introduction determines the line that Dr. Scott Lidgett follows.

¹ His book is entitled *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*.

After considering "The Historical Cause of our Lord's Death" and devoting a chapter to a careful study of the New Testament witness, he examines "Some Theological Accounts of the Atonement" (chapter iv). Here he deals with Anselm's view, with the Calvinistic view of the Active and Passive obedience of Christ. He then touches on Grotius and proceeds to give a lengthy account of Dr. Dale's views in which he refuses to accept Dale's retributive idea of punishment. He considers the views of McLeod Campbell, saying that these are unsatisfactory, because the chief stress is laid on a declaration,—on the perfect Amen,—whilst the demand of God is for active fulfilment of His will, rather than a declaration. We might also ask concerning the theory whether confession must be made in terms of suffering and death? After considering further the views of Maurice, Westcott, Bushnell and Ritschl, he comes in chapter v to deal with the crucial question of "The Satisfaction of God". Here he endeavours to view the whole matter in the light of the central truth of the Fatherhood of God as taught by Jesus Christ. He begins by insisting that the Scriptures teach three specific truths with regard to the death of Christ, that (1) it has a Godward significance, (2) that our Lord died on our behalf, and (3) that the spirit in which He accepted death is of vital importance to the efficacy of His sacrifice, for His death is a sacrifice for the sins of the world. That spirit and indeed the crucial point is Jesus' great and willing obedience to the will and purpose of God, and this is, in the final issue, the satisfaction which He gave to the Father.

Dealing with these three points, he maintains that the death of Christ is the ground of God's forgiveness and of the gift of His grace and love. It is God who provides the Atonement. Now the efficacy of the death of Christ is a spiritual influence, independent of our interpretation or theory. So we must seek the spiritual laws that make the Atonement intelligible, and which connect it with the new life which arises from it, and so find the rationale of the Atonement, but we must not forget that here experience is primary and decisive, for it must become our own. Omnipotence could

not do it apart from our cooperation. We must, therefore, try to answer three questions.

I

What is the relation of God to man in virtue of which God demands and provides the Atonement? This relationship is that of Fatherhood, and Fatherhood implies that creation—more especially the creation of man—is out of God's own life, and like Himself motivated by love. God's Fatherhood determines the fact and the method of the Atonement for several reasons.

(a) It is the characteristic revelation of Jesus Christ as found in the Sermon on the Mount, and in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

(b) Fatherhood is by necessity legislative and judicial, as is seen by the emphasis on His holiness in the Old Testament. He is the upholder and defender of the Eternal Law of Righteousness. This means that we cannot find the heart, or the history of the Atonement, in the parable of the Prodigal Son. Fatherhood, then, determines the Atonement in two ways: (1) As regards our Lord, the Son of the Father's love, and (2) as regards men as sons of God who is the ground and the head of the race.

II

The second question to be faced is, What is the condition of man which makes an Atonement necessary? The answer to this is "Sin". We can only understand sin in relation to God, for, in the ultimate, it is an offence against Him. It is rebellion against His authority, transgression against His laws. It issues in distinct rebellion, and causes estrangement. This is the essence of sin. Behind sins are sinful dispositions due to heredity and the solidarity of the race. So society becomes sinful, and this fact in its turn intensifies the sin of the race and of the individual. All this is due to the fall of man, which poisoned the race at its source, and this is transmitted. Sin produces the sense of guilt and this proves that the responsibility rests with man himself. Another effect of sin is that it brought the "wrath of God" upon man. Dr.

Scott Lidgett asks at this point: "Can one love and be angry at the same time?" He answers Yes!, for because God is love, he can be angry with what opposes His love. So the "wrath of God" is that side of His love that is turned towards sin. The result of this wrath is punishment, but the punishment of God differs from that of men, for (1) it is universal, because God is immanent, and (2) God's transcendence involves the external punishment of sin. This penal element is summed up in death, not physical death only, but spiritual death. This conception of sin is not conclusive, nor is it adequate, for sin is essentially a personal matter, its essence is an outrage on love and more than rebellion against a law. Dr. Scott Lidgett suggests this when he insists that sin brings about an estrangement between God and man, but he does not follow out this suggestion.

III

The third question is: How has sin affected the relationship in which God stands to man, and the change brought about by the Atonement? The first part of this question has been answered already. With regard to the second part, Dr. Scott Lidgett states the changes wrought by the Atonement to be that sinners are forgiven, are adopted as sons, and have fellowship with God in place of separation and estrangement. These blessings were brought about by Christ through His death. In His death He not only completed a supreme self-surrender but gave proof of His adherence to righteousness and of His repudiation of unrighteousness. Jesus Himself treated His death as the goal of all His work, and He carried it out as our Head and Representative. What was done on the Cross must ever remain a mystery, but whatever was done must be in line with Fatherhood.

Dr. Scott Lidgett at this point comes to what he calls "the main question". Does a Father require any satisfaction? The Socinians say No!, for the death of Christ saves us by showing us the greatness of God's love and sympathy. But there is an obvious demand by Fatherhood for satisfaction before a father can forgive his child, and there is the further fact that

the father's punishment is in the interest of the child himself. The satisfaction depends on the response on the child's part, for there must be submission to the moral law, and homage to its authority. So it is with regard to God. Sin has called forth the wrath of God, and this is punitive, and our Lord submits Himself on the Cross to the manifestation of the wrath of God against sin. Dr. Scott Lidgett is too much influenced in his position by Dr. Dale, whose theory he greatly admires. So great is this influence that he gives a partial adhesion to the idea of a penal element in the death of Christ. He accepts Dr. Dale's saying that God's "hostility to our sin has received adequate expression in the death of Christ". So, it seems, that after all his emphasis on the obedience of Christ and the spiritual meaning of the Atonement, he comes to rest in the idea that the penal suffering of Jesus is the satisfaction to the Father. It seems clear, however, that he is not quite comfortable in this conclusion, for he immediately switches off to the obedience of Christ which is set against the disobedience of mankind, saying that His sufferings and death "summed up and expressed His spirit of obedience", and that "death was the crown of His obedience and the supreme test of it". So "Christ's death fulfilled all the conditions of filial obedience", and in doing this "He tasted to the full the *penal* conditions which reveal the wrath of God against sin".

The question arises: To whom was satisfaction made? To the Father or to the Trinity, and only the Son could make such satisfaction. In this sense the death of Christ is vicarious—that He did for us what was necessary and what we could not do. Dr. Scott Lidgett at this point introduces another idea, that the death of Christ was, in reality, His self-fulfilment. "He is perfected by it." Moreover, "His death was the highest expression of His highest spiritual life". Only by making satisfaction, thus, could the fulfilment of His manhood be obtained. So it was the fulfilment of the true life of humanity, as well as the satisfaction of the Fatherly heart of God. As such there is redemptive power in the death of Christ and this in two senses. The satisfaction it gave to God

is the ground of forgiveness, and secondly, the energy derived from it creates new life in the forgiven. Thus, the Atonement was necessary on Fatherly grounds, and its quality makes it well pleasing to God.

Dr. Scott Lidgett discusses in the succeeding chapters, "The Perfection of our Lord", "His Relation to the Race", and here he accepts the impossibility of the transfer of guilt (p. 357). In view of this it is difficult to see how it can be said that Christ endured the full penalty of sin, for one of the deepest elements in that penalty is the consciousness of guilt. Other questions considered are: The relation of Christ's Divinity to the efficacy of the Atonement; the principle of the Atonement in relation to the spiritual life of individuals and of society. There is a very valuable appendix giving the history of the historic theories of the Atonement, and emphasizing the recent trends in the doctrine. Dr. Scott Lidgett has not always been true to his purpose of emphasizing the spiritual principle of the Atonement, and of viewing it in the light of God's Fatherhood, but he has given us a well-thought-out theory with elements of great value and deep spiritual insight.

CANON VERNON F. STORR, M.A.

It is doubtful whether we ought to include the late Canon Storr in this group, for he has strong leanings towards the Moral Influence Theory, saying that he thinks it possible to state this theory in such a way that it is open to fewer objections than any other. He, however, suggests modifications in the theory that make it profoundly different, and on the whole these modifications are along the line of a satisfaction theory. We must carefully note, moreover, that the satisfaction is not rendered to law; nor yet to justice. It is a satisfaction to love, the satisfaction which the absolute obedience of a son affords to a father. The self-surrender of Christ and His voluntary acceptance of the will of God at every point, yields a satisfaction to the love of the eternal, and issues in forgiveness as a dynamic and creative power in the spirit of man. It

would seem wiser, therefore, to assign him a place in this section.

In his book entitled *The Problem of the Cross*, Canon Storr gives a very careful and well-thought-out survey of the whole question. He begins by saying that "no fact is more central to Christianity than the fact of the Cross, yet none creates more difficulties". Many of these difficulties are due to phraseology, to changes in the meaning of words; others are due to men's conception of God; whilst yet others arise through treating the Atonement in isolation from the rest of Christian doctrine and from the life and work of Jesus Christ. He then lays down the principle that the determining factor in our thought of the Atonement must be our conception of God. Two other truths are fundamental: (1) that no doctrine of the Atonement can be accepted which offends our moral sense, and (2) that our theory of it must be capable of harmonizing with the rest of our knowledge. We must also bear in mind that speculation alone can never solve the problem of the Atonement, for the problem lies much deeper than the logic of demonstration can penetrate. Thought can never overtake life, while the life of the spirit cannot be reduced to logic, for its logic is deeper than that of the understanding. The truth of the Cross must be lived through and experienced before it can be understood, and for the discovery of spiritual things, the spiritual eye is needed.

The Canon next considers "The Cross in the Mind of Jesus". Here he insists strongly that Jesus was a true man, and His manhood real, in such a sense that "the union of the divine and human was conditioned throughout by the manhood". Further "a study of His consciousness makes it abundantly plain that He conceived of Himself under the role of the (Suffering) Servant", and "we are safe in believing that the meaning of the Cross was interpreted by Jesus through the Servant". He would do His Father's will cost what it may, and bear whatever pain was involved in carrying it out. So He realized that the suffering of the Servant was redemptive. This meaning grew clearer as His ministry proceeded, and thus the Cross came to signify for Him (*a*) an act

of service for God and humanity, and the crown of self-giving; (b) an aspect of it was connected with sin; and (c) a supreme act of surrender to the Father's will. Jesus saw in the Cross something that was a test of His complete acceptance of His Father's will.

St. Paul's view of the Cross is next considered, and here Canon Storr insists that the Apostle finds in the Cross a revelation of love not of law. There was much mystery about it, but he appears to have found three things in it: (1) a supreme example of self-sacrifice; (2) a proof of the forgiving love of God to himself; and (3) a principle which had power to transform all his life. The Cross, however, was not the Atonement, but the Person crucified upon it. The magnet was the Saviour Himself and the Atonement became a reality through union with Him. The Cross must, therefore, be linked on to Pentecost and "explain it how you will, it is a fact of history that Pentecost brought quickened life", the result of an act of the Spirit of Christ on men. Some of the difficult texts of St. Paul are examined and here Canon Storr accepts Rashdall's conclusion that "it is impossible to get rid of the idea of substitution or of vicarious punishment from any faithful representation of St. Paul's doctrine". He goes on to say, "We are in no way bound to accept Paul's interpretation of Christ's death. I dismiss from my mind all ideas of substitution, or of the innocent paying the penalty of the guilty because these ideas offend my moral consciousness and I seek some other meaning in the expressions that I can accept. I see the sinless Jesus patiently bearing all that human sin puts upon Him and entering, with the divinest sympathy, into all the doom which sin involves, in order that men's hearts may be moved and that by the power of the Cross they may be liberated from Sin."

After touching on the witness of Hebrews and of St. John, the Canon considers the question of "Divine Anger and Punishment". Here he maintains that "anger is too human an emotion to be transferred without change to God", and that the New Testament never says that God is angry but speaks of "the wrath of God", and this means "the reaction

of the divine nature against wrong". As to punishment we must eliminate all notions of personal vengeance for sin. It is God's reaction against sin in the laws of the universe and in man. It is never merely retributive but is always reformatory. Sin is an offence against the love of a Father, and this aspect of it is far more serious than sin regarded on the background of law or of the moral order.

Canon Storr then discusses the various historic theories. Anselm's theory has some points of value, but is lacking in several respects. Its conception of sin is inadequate, for a spiritual fact, as sin is, cannot be stated or handled in terms of mathematics or of a commercial transaction. Its representation of God is unsatisfactory, for it implies a fundamental dualism in His nature. Moreover, there is no room in the theory for the free gift of God's forgiveness. Canon Storr agrees with the criticism of Dr. Mozley that the scheme was constructed without sufficient reference to the Scriptural witness.

With regard to the Substitutionary Theory, he insists that we must reject the views that God was angry with Jesus, that Jesus was guilty, and that there is an opposition between justice and mercy in God. All such views are intolerable and our ethical sense revolts against them. Further, we must distinguish between vicarious suffering which is a basic fact in the universe, and vicarious punishment which is an offence against the elementary ethical principles. Again we must reject the idea that the death of Christ effected a change in God. We must look at the matter in the light of our moral consciousness and this bears witness to (*a*) the fact of a close connection between sin and punishment and also (*b*) that the moral law is not man-made, but is rooted in the nature of God. In the light of these facts we see that "it cost God the Cross to deal with human sin". Jesus saw sin as God sees it, a violation of love, and the Cross reveals this aspect of it.

Was it necessary for Christ to die? It was not necessary as a satisfaction of divine anger, nor was it necessary to restore balance between opposing attributes in God, nor yet to afford satisfaction to divine justice. It was a moral necessity,

the necessity of love, and it yielded satisfaction to the love of the Father, through Christ's unswerving obedience even to the Cross. Canon Storr gives a careful and lengthy treatment of the theory of Christ as a representative. The idea of Christ as "inclusive man" and the head of humanity carries the suggestion that in some way the Cross was an act of all humanity. This idea is in Moberly's theory, as well as in McLeod Campbell's book. The valuable point in the representative theory is that it insists that the phrase "Christ died for our sins" does not mean that nothing more is to be done.

But Canon Storr will have nothing to do with the representative theory as usually understood for two reasons: (a) in the ultimate it regards the Atonement as a transaction, and (b) its view of Christ as a representative is untenable. If we mean by saying that Christ is our representative that He was typical man, the perfect specimen of the race, there is no reason to reject the idea. But if we mean more and regard Him as "inclusive man" in whom, in a real sense, humanity acted, as Moberly and Dr. Du Bose hold, then we must reject the idea. "What do they mean by 'inclusive man'? They cannot mean that we died in Christ by proxy. Do they mean that humanity has a life of its own apart from the individuals that compose it? Is the race an abstraction and has it a centre of consciousness? What we mean by 'the race' is the totality of individuals who compose it. Apart from them the race is nothing." "There is a real sense in which we can speak of Christ as representative, for He was genuinely human and His whole life and death were representative because He shared human experiences. But to admit this is not to admit that humanity as a whole was somehow present in what He did." "I did not die with Christ on the Cross and was not 'included' in His act." So we must avoid the term "inclusive" for "it suggests that an abstract thing called humanity was stored up in Christ, whose actions were consequently not simply the action of an individual, but the action of the race". All agree that Christ offered to God the sacrifice of perfect obedience. The question is whether this fact makes it possible

for God to forgive us. God forgives because, being love, it is in His nature to forgive where repentance is real. "The necessary condition of forgiveness is that we ourselves become forgiveable", that is, that we bring our wills into harmony with the will of God.

Canon Storr discusses the Moral Influence Theory in chapter x, giving it a qualified support. But after discussing the view of Abelard, he says, "I question whether the theory of Abelard does full justice either to Christian experience or to Christian theology. There is more in the Cross than an appeal to emotion, nor is it enough to say that through its appeal, the love of God energizes in us." Forgiveness, if it is real, "always costs something and the work of forgiveness is to be measured by the intensity of the suffering inflicted by the offender". The man who endures the injury suffers the chief pain. The Cross reveals the forgiving love of God, but it also shows the divine antagonism to sin and the suffering which sin inflicts on God. Although the theory has several things to commend it, Canon Storr cannot accept it because (1) it makes light of sin; (2) there is more in the Cross than an appeal to the heart; (3) it is not true to New Testament teaching; and (4) it gives no adequate explanation of why Jesus had to die.

In the next chapter, the suffering of God is considered. As Jesus suffered from and for sin, so God suffers, and there is a profound difference between pain forcibly inflicted from without and pain voluntarily endured with some higher end in view. God limits Himself in the Incarnation, and this suggests that self-surrender is the basic principle in the world and that there is a Cross in the heart of God. That God suffers is evident from two facts, that God is Love and that He is immanent so that He suffers with and in us. "The Cross was no after-thought, but was an expression, at a definite moment of history, of something which represents an external actuality in the divine life". To give Himself is the nature of God and He suffers because He chooses to suffer. He became subject to an historical process which involves suffering and death so that we may grow in ethical

and spiritual life. Moreover, the Cross stands as a pledge of love's final triumph.

In a final chapter Canon Storr considers "The Cross and the Mind of To-day". Eternal love, just because it is love, has always been giving itself in the service of humanity and was most fully revealed in its true nature on the Cross. "In Jesus we see the very heart of God and most clearly when we see Him on the Cross." This is a very thoughtful treatment and has many elements of suggestiveness and value.

Chapter II

THE PENAL THEORIES

WE have seen that there were echoes of the penal view of Christ's suffering in both Forsyth and Mackintosh, and that these were more insistent in Dr. Scott Lidgett. This fact is due to reluctance to break completely with the older view, and to the influence of Calvinism in the early training of these men, for in the early days of the Reformation the idea of the satisfaction offered to God is that of the penal endurance, by Jesus Christ, of the punishment of sin. It is probable that the development of this penal conception arose from the idea that His death, and more especially the endurance of His sufferings, afforded satisfaction to the justice and the honour of God. We cannot trace the conception of the penal sufferings directly to Anselm, nor yet to Grotius, but that it grew, indirectly, from the main positions of the Satisfaction School is more than likely. Moreover, it would appear that the idea of law and its punishment, more especially the conception of the certainty and inevitability of the punishment, developed in opposition to the idea which many of the indulgences involved and proclaimed. It was becoming clear that the easy cancelling of the consequences of evil-doing, and the avoidance of the natural punishment of sin which the theory of indulgences implied, made light of moral distinctions, and imperilled the necessities of the operations of law and of moral certainties. At any rate, men were beginning to see that the authorities of the Church, however august they might be, could not play fast and loose with the great moral issues, or weaken and endanger the very pillars on which the moral universe rested. This had the effect of forcing the question of punishment to the forefront, and it was realized that the penalties of wrong-doing and evil living were in the nature of things. This emphasized the punitive aspect of the nature of God, and the element of justice which demanded,

and made inevitable, the punishment of all sins.

The dominance of Augustine in theology was still very strong and the reformers appear to have had no quarrel with his views regarding sin and human nature. They accepted his views on original sin and the depravity of man, and though they were doubtful about the idea of "total depravity", they emphasized the thought of original sin in certain aspects of its bearing on man. In fact the reformers' conception of sin was deeply tinged with Augustinian ideas.

The leading reformers were not theologians, for neither Luther nor Zwingli were great thinkers. The theologian of the movement was Melancthon. When Calvin came upon the scene things were different, for he was a man of great intellectual power, of logical and discursive acumen, with spiritual intuitions of a high order. He gave to the world a truly great system of theology, and if we grant his premises, it is difficult to find any flaw in his elaborate argument. But we note that he went beyond Luther in emphasizing the "curse" attaching to sin. There are sayings of his which gave sanction to the more extreme penal views. Thus, he says: "He bore in His soul the tortures of a condemned and ruined soul". This aspect of Christ's suffering was developed by subsequent thinkers, until it became a clear-cut and definite conception of the punishment of Christ in His sufferings and death for sin. The further idea of the transmissibility of merit led to the conception of the transfer of punishment, while the growing practice of substituting men to do penance for payment instead of the guilty, led to the idea of the substitution of Christ for the sinful, in their guilt and punishment for Sin. It seems that in some such way as this the ideas of penal and substitutionary sufferings grew.

The leading figures in this further development were Osiander, Turretin and Quenstedt. It is not necessary to dwell on their ideas, only to say that they grew to fantastic theories grotesque and cruel, utterly unchristian, although they were promulgated in the supposed interest of Christian faith and life. Turretin, for instance, insisted that Christ on the Cross suffered the punishment of the damned and that He actually

endured the terrors of Hell. Such ideas flourished in this country through the contact of some of the puritans and others with the Continent, and they became determinative in Scotland, through the influence of John Knox. Some aspects of Calvinistic teaching became objectionable through its unreasonable emphasis on the Absolute Sovereignty of God, and its ghastly theory of predestination and election, and the devaluation of man which this involved. It was not realized that man, as a moral being, and as the creation of a God who is moral, had rights, as well as duties, in relation to God; that he had moral value as well as responsibilities, and that a moral God should not—indeed could not—treat men as if they were goods or chattels. He must act towards them in moral ways, and treat them as moral beings with personalities of their own. Further, that God dare not treat them otherwise without imperilling His moral perfection, and undermining His throne in the moral and spiritual universe.

When we look at the penal theories, as a whole, several inadequacies and unsatisfactory points force themselves upon us. The first and basic weakness is in the idea of God; for this developed in such a way that some of the attributes of God grew to be regarded as greater and superior to His personality. His attributes, more especially His justice, swayed Him and determined His moral being. This led men to think of God as acting in a way repugnant to moral ideas, and certainly opposed to the picture of Him as Father, which the New Testament gives us. The supreme attribute was regarded as Justice and this was interpreted in a somewhat narrow and punitive sense. Its demands were treated as supreme, and all other aspects of God's Character were treated as if they were subservient to this. So justice was elevated to the throne of God's personality, which in its rich and gracious perfection, was made to vacate, for the time being, the supreme position. As the punitive aspect of justice was emphasized, it demanded the idea of absolute power and sovereignty in order to enforce the punishment of sin. In this way the Sovereignty of God tended to be regarded as one of power, His omnipotence as one of might and force. There

was little or no suggestion that the omnipotence may be one of love, an omnipotence adequate to carry out the extreme demands and impulses of His Love. The love of God was certainly emphasized, but only in a secondary sense, and at the call of justice and subservient to it. Thus there developed the idea of an opposition between God's justice and His love. There grew thus a devastating dualism in the nature of God which went to the root of His being, and vitiated the conception of personality in God.

The fact mentioned, that man was often regarded and treated as if he had no rights, grew from this excessive emphasis on the punitive justice of God. Another result of this was that men's minds tended to emphasize sin, rather than the sinner, and to regard the punishment of sin as more important than the restoration of the sinner. Thanks to the development of moral intuitions and spiritual insight, we realize today that no theory of the Atonement can be adequate, nor can it be fully Christian, if it emphasizes sin at the expense of the sinner's personality, or if it treats the breach of the moral law as of more importance than the spiritual being to be redeemed. The fact that it is the sinner, in his sin and need, who must be in the centre of the picture should be taken as axiomatic in any theory of the Atonement that meets modern needs, and satisfies the minds of men in these days.

Again, as we view the main theory from the point of view of psychology, the question of the transfer of punishment from one person to another forces itself upon us. Some aspects of the punishment of wrong-doing may be transferred, but these aspects, on examination, are found to be the outward aspects and are, thus, outside the inner reaches of the guilty person. The legal penalty, for example, such as a fine, and even an imprisonment, may be borne by another person. Such substitution is often met with. Again the physical aspects of punishment, such as the thumb-screw or the flogging, may be accepted by another in place of the guilty one. But these aspects are by no means the deepest and most real penalties of wrong-doing, nor do they exhaust the mean-

ing of sin's punishment, more especially if it is deliberate sin. This punishment enters into the very nature of man, and affects his personality. There is a moral degeneration and the loss of sensitiveness in the conscience; a deterioration of personality and the loss of spiritual power supervene. The sense of guilt becomes real, and this can only be a personal matter in the soul of the evil doer. Others may feel the shame of his wrong-doing, but they cannot experience his sense of guilt. Many a brave mother's heart has been rent at the shame and agony of her child's sin, whilst many a noble father would gladly endure the pain of the sinner's guilt. But this is impossible. The guilt is the sinner's own, a wound in his spirit, a stab in his consciousness. No one can experience it in its fulness and poignant reality but the sinner himself, and no one can bear it for him without the surrender of his own moral reality, a thing impossible in a moral universe.

It is open for anyone to say that the case is different in relation to Jesus Christ, in view of His central position in the race and of His unity with humanity. But even here it must be realized that the great moral realities must be respected, and if anything, more absolutely respected, by Jesus and even by God Himself, as well as by Men. It is difficult to see how, on any spiritual or psychological ground, the punishment of one man can really be borne by another in all its deepest and most important aspects, in the reality of its moral and spiritual impact on the personality of the wrong-doer himself.

Another question arises here, whether a sinless being can experience the whole pang of the guilt of sin. Another may go far in this direction by sympathetic identification, and he may enter very deeply into the experiences of the sinner, but this can never be fully complete. The barrier and the unity of personality prevent this. On this account the idea of the transmissibility of the consciousness of guilt, and of its punishment, from men to Jesus Christ is extremely difficult to hold, in view of the deeper understanding of personality, and the whole range of implications in sin, made evident in

the more complete psychological knowledge available in these days.

It was, perhaps, some dim intuition of this that accounts for another weakness in the older views, their over-emphasis on the physical aspects of Christ's sufferings and death. We cannot but feel that this was a false emphasis, an emphasis on the less essential, to the detriment of the really essential elements. We must believe that the Atonement is a truly spiritual reality, and moves wholly in the realm of spirit. It is quite true that physical things may mediate spiritual truth and initiate spiritual experiences. There is a sacramental element throughout the world of physical realities, but, at best, the physical only dimly reflects the spiritual, so that we see "through a glass darkly". It is not reasonable to suppose that the most spiritual experience should rest almost wholly on a physical basis. The virtue of the atoning death of Christ cannot, therefore, rest as fully as the old theory implies, on the physical aspect of Christ's suffering and death. We may argue that suffering has moral value, and that it carries within itself rich potencies for good, and a good case can be made out for this, as we shall see later. But it is difficult to think that mere physical suffering and death can be so fruitful of good, and produce so transforming an experience as that of the Atonement must be. The virtue of the Atonement, its power to redeem and recreate men, must be found in the inward being of Christ rather than in His outward sufferings. It is to be found, in the final issue, in His will and His personality. It must lie in His surrender to the purpose of God at whatever cost, in His obedience to the claims and demands of His vocation from God. This is why so many thinkers in these days emphasize so strongly the absolute obedience of Christ. We must insist that the Atonement moves in the sphere of the spirit, and is a profound dynamic in spiritual experience and life. It issues from the spiritual realities of Christ's being, and shows us the deepest spiritual elements in God. Obedience is its dynamic, willing surrender is its secret, and the spiritual impact of the living Christ is His creative power. The writers, like Moberly and others,

who link the Cross to Pentecost and the indwelling Spirit of God made available there, are surely on the right road.

We must note another point. The idea of punishment, its meaning and purpose, which underlies the older views is inadequate and needs to be revised. This is a subject often to be met in our study, so we had better face it here. The basic idea of the older theory regarding punishment is that of retribution, and primarily the expression of law. So, considerable use is made of the idea of the anger and the "wrath of God", although efforts are made,—not always successfully,—to show that there is not in these any vengeful element, and that they are quite free from the limitations and weaknesses evident in anger on the human plane. The anger is such as befits God, and is not such as to mar the perfection of His Being. In the form in which this anger finds expression, more especially in some of the writers of the post-Reformation period, it is difficult to see how these protests can be maintained, for some of their statements, and many of their images, savour of a kind of anger that is vengeful and even cruel. It seems clear that, as long as there is a law with a punitive element within it, a retributive element in punishment is necessary for the maintenance of the authority and regality of this law. But surely there is something more important in all punishment than this retributive element and its safeguarding. Dr. Vincent Taylor insists that it is the retributive element that is effective in punishment, and is the element in it that tends to produce repentance and obtain forgiveness. This view can only be of the nature of a counsel of despair, for it regards fear and the terror of punishment as the chief powers in inducing penitence. This is not true, for on purely ethical grounds it is being insisted that acts done from fear lose much of their ethical value. Much of the older preaching dwelt on the fear element, on the "dies irae" and the dire consequences of not repenting, and this often succeeded in winning men to a kind of allegiance to Jesus Christ. Men were frightened into the Kingdom of God, just as in the early days of Mahomet, men were converted at the edge of the sword. The only difference was in the nature of

the sword. We might argue that it is better to get men into the Kingdom of God by fear than not to get them at all. But their attitude to, and loyalty in, the Kingdom cannot bring out their best in service and surrender. Fear has never been productive of the best, for it breeds servility, cringing and slave labour. So from the ethical point of view, the weapon of fear, though it may have its uses, can never produce the best in allegiance and service. The best comes from willing surrender, working for love alone.

In view of this fact we can suspect that the purely retributive theory of punishment is not, and cannot be, regarded as the best. More especially is this so in the region of religion, and most of all in the Christian religion, where the idea of Fatherhood is supreme with the basic fact of love. From this conception of God we may expect that He will seek to win men, rather than to constrain them by fear, to make His love, with its sacrifice, the messenger to men, and the effective agent in winning men to Himself. As far as we can see, on ethical and on Christian principles, the only adequate view of punishment is that it is educative and remedial. Some have urged that the mission of punishment is preventative and restraining. It has this influence, but the very fact of this emphasis on its preventative efficacy suggests that it carries at its heart something better and more valuable. It prevents men from doing wrong in order that they may have the opportunity of becoming better.

Still another point must be noticed, that the central element in the Atonement is not the honour and authority of law, nor is it the maintenance of men in harmless ways of living. The central reality in man is his ethical and spiritual personality, and all punishment, both natural and spiritual, is ultimately meant to reform and build up his character, and enhance his life. We must believe that the main concern of God is to win men back to righteousness, so as to bring them to fellowship with Himself, and that, moreover, He will seek to do this in ways conformable to His purpose and to the longing of His heart. It was in accordance with this purpose that He took up the task of redemption, thus making the Atonement a

reality, and reconciling the world to Himself. The retributive view of punishment on which the old theory is based, vitiates much of its meaning. Punishment, in the ultimate, is the expression of law, and it rests on the authority of law. It may become an expression of love, and the punishment of love is the most severe and poignant, but it is also the most effective. In reality it is the only fully effective punishment in the whole realm of spiritual values, and life, for it can, and does, win the sinner.

We can regard it as a sign of ethical maturity and of clearer spiritual insight, when men revolt against the penal aspects of the old view and attempt to soften some of the austerity of its tenets. It would seem that Karl Barth is re-enforcing the Calvinistic view, and adopting the same idea of punishment as retributive. Emil Brunner also, in a lesser degree, shows the same tendency, although in both cases the idea must be somewhat different, for the growth of ethical values, and the fuller knowledge of personality, have made it impossible to hold the older view in exactly the same sense. The terms and expressions may be the same, but the implications must differ. Some thinkers in this country have stood up for the old view, though they have generally had to modify it. The modification is along the line of purging the theory of its grotesque and cruel aspects, and an attempt is made to express it in more Christian ways.

(A) DR. R. W. DALE

Dr. Robert William Dale (1829-1895) was one of the greatest preachers of his generation and a shining light in the Congregational Church. His work on the Atonement is contained in a series of lectures,¹ together with three sermons in his volume on *Christian Doctrine*. The Penal Satisfaction Theory has no more sincere and able advocate than he, and his treatment, even in these days, is regarded as the weightiest and most powerful in this country. There is throughout his lectures, a fine spirit and a deep moral earnestness, together

¹ Congregational Lectures entitled *The Atonement*.

with a noble devotion to Jesus Christ, His teaching and His work. Although Dr. Dale was a strong advocate of the post-Reformation doctrines, he was not a slavish defender, for we find him often criticizing them, and in some points he parts company with Luther, Calvin and Turretin. We note also that when he defends the post-Reformation doctrines he almost invariably tones down their asperities and abandons their polemical strain. He was a fine scholar, deeply versed in the Bible, and he inaugurates a new phase in the use of the Scriptures, as applied to the Atonement. Instead of appealing to separate texts he seeks to trace the whole line of teaching throughout the Bible, and he refers all his views to, and tests them by, the witness of Scriptural writers.

Moberly thinks that Dale accepted the traditional view of the inerrancy of the Bible, as well as the historical truth of the Genesis story of the Fall. This is scarcely true, for Dale was one of the most enthusiastic supporters of historical criticism, as is clear from his volume on *The Living Christ and the Four Gospels* and his numerous expository studies of the Epistles. He rarely, if ever, mentions the Fall story, but he assumes the reality of sin, and its devastating power in human life. Moberly, although he criticizes several points in Dale's treatment, has a profound sense of the value of his book, and regards it as the best statement of the Penal Satisfaction Theory. He thinks that "there is an undying value in the book". Dr. Dale has a firm grasp of the history of doctrine and some of his criticisms of the older theories are acute and to the point. He completely rejects "the ransom to the devil" theory and refuses to accept the views of Anselm, saying that righteous anger cannot be soothed by anything in the nature of a money payment (p. 356),¹ but he respects Anselm's treatment and quotes extensively from the *Cur deus homo*. He rejects, however, its view of sin as "a failure to render God His due", but he regards Anselm's identification of the Eternal Law of Righteousness with the Divine Will as of great importance, and much of his own view rests on

¹ The pages mentioned are from *The Atonement*, except where otherwise stated.

this identification. So much is this so that he almost makes God a slave to this law. He, further, believes that the reformers were more concerned with the conditions by which the benefits of Christ's death can become ours, than with the nature of the Atonement or the grounds of its possibility. But he commends Luther for insisting that Christ "assumed the penal responsibilities of mankind", and with saying, that "He clothed Himself with the sins of the human race, so that *God inflicted on Him* the sufferings which the sins of the race had deserved" (p. 290). Moreover, we note that he says little by way of criticism of the extreme views, the unchristian views of the post-Reformation divines. Dr. Dale has scant regard for the Moral Influence Theory, and he is severe on Abelard, and on Horace Bushnell whom he accuses of identifying "the remission of sins" with forgiveness. Yet Dale's own views are almost wholly the same in respect to these. There is no adequate attempt made to understand the Subjective Theory, although in his sermons he shows more sympathy with Bushnell's view.

I. *Basic Principles*

(a) It is a fundamental truth to Dr. Dale that it is the "Fact" of the Atonement that saves men rather than any "theory" regarding it. He insists that this distinction is clear in the New Testament, that it held its place in Christian thought, and that it is sustained throughout the whole range of Christian experience. Thus he insists (p. 436) that though we know little of the laws of the Atonement "it may be a relief for us to remember that the triumphs of the Christian faith are won . . . not by theological theories, but by the great facts of the Gospel". In p. 358 f. he insists that the terms "Sacrifice", "Propitiation", "Substitute" and others, are illustrations and nothing more, and that they assume the fact, whilst he declares (p. 314 f.) that "it is not the theory of the death of Christ that constitutes the ground on which sins are forgiven, but the death itself". Many other passages insist on the "fact" as the ground of salvation. This position is true to a point, for it is something done on the Cross, a great creative

fact in the moral and spiritual world, that makes salvation possible. But to emphasize the distinction, as Dr. Dale does, is to raise serious difficulties.

First, we may ask whether there is such a thing as a "fact", without some theory being involved, for a fact in isolation is an impossibility. It is a fact just because of its place in, and its relation to, some system of reference, and some assumption or theory underlies its very existence. Again we can ask what in reality the fact is? He mentions the death of Christ as the fact. Are we then, to believe that the Crucifixion itself is the saving power? But the Crucifixion would have no power apart from the person crucified. It is the Christ who died and rose again, that saves, not the mere fact of His dying. Dale appears, also, to accept the sufferings of Christ as the "fact". But we can only believe in the efficacy of His sufferings, if we regard Him as voluntarily accepting it. So there is something behind the sufferings that gives them their value. Again shall we regard Christ's obedience as the fact? But behind this is the will and purpose of God. Wherever we touch the fact, there is always behind it something that gives it meaning, and constitutes its value and power. In this way it is clear that the distinction which Dale emphasizes does not hold.

(b) *The View of Sin.*—Dale's view of Sin is that of a breach of the law, and this aspect of sin leads him to treat all the process of the Atonement as taking place on the legal plane. It is a matter of penalties borne to secure remission, of a substitute taking the place of the guilty before a tribunal. The evil done is to the "Eternal Law of Righteousness" and it is in accordance with the claims of this law that the whole transaction takes place. We have already protested against this view, for sin is much more serious as an outrage on love, that it cannot be treated as a breach of law and that, therefore, the Atonement must move in the sphere of personal relations rather than in that of law. God's problem in Atonement is not that of satisfying the claims of law or of vindicating the authority of law. It is the problem of getting his erring sons home and sweeping away the estrangement

wrought by sin. This is love's task, and on the Cross it becomes love's achievement.

(c) *Punishment*.—There is no compromise or dubiety in Dr. Dale's view of punishment. He stands four-square on the idea of punishment as retributive, and rejects completely the view of punishment as educative and remedial. In principle and motive punishment is penal and retributive, and the theory of it as remedial is "utterly rotten", for it is not a process to effect future reformation, "it is the suffering which has been deserved by sin, and to make it anything else than this is to destroy its essential character" (p. 376). In reality "the idea of retribution which underlies ordinary criminal justice, cannot be excluded from our conception of the penalties which God inflicts on those who have sinned". It "belongs to the very essence of that conception . . . that the penalties of sin are primarily an expression of the principle that the sinner deserves to suffer" (pp. 378-379). The only conception of punishment "which satisfies our . . . moral convictions . . . is that which represents it as pain and loss inflicted for the violation of a law" (p. 383). There is no need to reiterate what we have said on this point, but it may be stated that there is absent from Dr. Dale's thought on this question any idea of God as a Father facing a situation in which His children are concerned.

(d) "*The Eternal Law of Righteousness*".—We have noted that Dale commends Anselm for identifying the law of righteousness with the will of God. But Dr. Dale, in some aspects of his teaching, goes beyond this position, and seems to regard the "Law" as above God so that He is limited and controlled by it. The law is self-acting. But neither in the Old Testament, nor in the New, is there any sign of a self-acting moral law, or of a machine-like penalty. A breach of the eternal law "justly deserves God's anger and hostility" (p. 348). "It provokes, not mere displeasure, but wrath." God is hostile to the sinner and "we may even find it possible to believe that His anger may at last become so great that if it were revealed, the revelation would utterly consume and destroy us" (p. 343). Yet Dale identifies the Law with the

Will of God. He makes a suggestion (Lect. 9) that Jesus is the utterance of the moral imperative, the expression of the ethical nature of God. But we are probably right in inferring that Dale is thinking of Law as arbitrary as if God could will anything, even what was opposed to His nature, for he refuses to admit that the moral distinctions of right and wrong originate in the nature of God (p. 370).

On the other hand he rejects the idea that the Law is independent of God, or that He is subject to its authority, saying: "We instinctively reject it: even in idea, nothing can be higher than God" (p. 371). Yet, in spite of this refusal, he comes, in the final issue, to regarding the Law as an entity apart from, co-existent and co-eternal with, God. It is clear, also, that to him God is not free, but is in some sense under the authority of the Law. All through his treatment here, we are dimly conscious that Dale is striving to justify, or to smooth over the cleavage between justice and mercy in God made by the later Reformers. God's will is abstracted from His nature and Being, and in the form of the "Eternal Law of Righteousness" is placed almost on an equality with Him, having some measure of authority over Him, and the power of the free utterance of His nature and love. There is little sign that Dr. Dale understands that the Law is that of a Father in relation to his children. Two other points stand out in Dr. Dale's treatment, the relation of Christ to the race, and the meaning of the cry on the Cross. Those will be discussed at a later point.

II

It is not easy to gather Dale's view into a coherent theory in a small space, yet it becomes clear that it is all of one piece, and if we grant his presupposition, it has a great measure of cogency and carries conviction. He makes it clear, at the outset, that he thinks that the "remission of sins", as the blessing which the Atonement brings men, cancels the penalties due to sin so that they need not fall on men. Such remission is only possible on condition that sin gets its proper punishment, so that, with the reformers, he accepts the

position of punishment *and* forgiveness, rather than that of Anselm's punishment *or* forgiveness. Christ voluntarily accepts the punishment, becomes a substitute for us, and endures, in our stead all the actual penalties of sin, even to the experience of being forsaken by God. The satisfaction of the "Law" is the way to remission and the prelude to forgiveness. He is not quite clear as to the relation of remission to forgiveness, for he sometimes identifies them, and at others distinguishes between them. We are probably correct in thinking that he takes a wide view of remission; and includes in it the fact of forgiveness and the restored harmony with God, which constitutes reconciliation.

His plan of treatment is to assume that the remission of sins is a reality in Jesus Christ, and then to test this assumption by a careful study of the New Testament witness. He raises the question whether the remission is possible in a world ethically and spiritually constructed. There is no insuperable barrier to remission, but certain conditions must be fulfilled. First, it must be accomplished according to the demands and principles of the "Eternal Law of Righteousness". If this law demands that sin must first be punished, then God has to respect this demand. In the second place, whatever is done to secure remission, must be done by one who stands in a special and peculiar relationship to the race that has sinned. Jesus in His death fulfils these conditions, for in His suffering He took upon Himself the penalties of the race as its representative and "Federal Head". Dale does not hesitate to say that it was God who punished Jesus, in response to the demands of the Eternal Law (p. 393), for He was "angry", "hostile to" the sinner, was wrath with the race (p. 342), and although He was not angry with Jesus, He subjected Him to the sufferings which His wrath might have inflicted on the race. This is an outline of his argument and the ground-work of his theory. So God could not forgive before the demands of the Eternal Law were met, and the honouring of this Law is the satisfaction which Jesus afforded to God; and this is the objective element in the Atonement. Christ's voluntary giving of Himself also gives

satisfaction to God. If, now, we ask proof that Christ had actually borne the penalties of sin, we find it in two facts:

- (a) That remission of sin is a reality through the death of Christ. This possibility is established by Christian experience.
- (b) By the cry of Christ on the Cross. This is a proof that there was some element in the experience of Jesus on the Cross that is not present in an ordinary man's death.

Dale lays great stress on this cry. He first emphasizes the "great terror" that came over Christ in the Garden, and stresses the fact that this is different from the way good men face death. This was not fear of physical death, and it is inexplicable until we consider Christ on the Cross, and His cry. The cry means that "The light of God's presence is lost, He is left in awful isolation" (p. 60); "in the very extremity of His woe, He is deprived of all Divine consolation; He declares that God has forsaken Him!" (p. 61). So Dale accepts the cry at its face value, and insists that the anguish it reveals has relation to the redemption of man. He says "Either the Death of Christ was the Atonement for human sin, or else it fills me with terror and despair" (p. 63. Cf. pp. 360, 424, 429, 433). This cry is a quotation from the Old Testament, and probably Dale makes the cry carry too much weight, relying on the one meaning of it which he gives. But we may say, at least, that it implies some element of uniqueness in the death of Christ, and as such, it must be taken into account in any adequate theory of the Atonement. Dale's interpretation of it makes it clear that his view is that of full penal substitution, and that this is a satisfaction both to God and to the "Eternal Law".

If now we ask how the death of Christ derives its power, and procures remission, Dale makes several suggestions: (1) its moral significance is derived from the fact that it was inflicted by the will of God (p. 393). (2) Certain elements in the death of Christ make it unique and constitute its expiatory power (p. 360), such as His cry. (3) Again the death was that of the Son of God, and (4) the element in Christ that counts

most, is His voluntary obedience to the will of God. Dale does not make much of this point, he merely suggests it.

Moberly and Professor Grensted have pointed out that, towards the end of his treatment, Dale brings forward a view totally different from his basal theory. He insists that the Atonement becomes a reality only in union with the living Christ, and that it was won through His union with us as our Representative. In the last issue, then, we are saved by being "in Christ".

III

It is easy to criticize Dale's view and it is not surprising that the book has met with great opposition. His theory is clear-cut; there is no attempt to compromise with any other theory. The criticisms already brought against the Penal Theory as a whole hold in his case, but there are others specifically against his view. Moberly has criticized Dale for not connecting Christ's death with His resurrection, and for his view of Scripture. Neither of these criticisms is quite fair. Dr. Hastings Rashdall holds that Dale cuts off the death of Christ from the rest of His life, and that he assumes that "salvation through a crucified Saviour is the same as salvation through the crucifixion of that Saviour". This criticism has to be accepted with reserve, for Dale frequently refers to the teaching and the life of Christ, as well as to His consciousness, but it is true that the death of Christ holds by far the most prominent place in his treatment.

We might ask whether the necessities which Dale suggests in connection with the death of Christ, are the only ones applicable to it. More specifically, is it necessary to hold that sin *must* be punished before it is forgiven, and is it necessary in order that the authority of the "Eternal Law" may be asserted that God should *punish* Christ? To hold that these are necessities involves a hard, austere, and indeed an unchristian view of God.

Again Dale's view involves the psychological puzzles regarding the transference of punishment and the other questions already mentioned. Finally we can ask: How are

we to conceive of the Son of God dying, and can death mean anything in the experience of God Himself, apart from the mere fact of its existence? We have no hint of how the death of the Son of God effects reconciliation, except that of His acceptance and fulfilment of the demands of the "Eternal Law of Righteousness". In spite of all these difficulties, Dale's book is a great book, and through its influence those who are called to the ministry, and many others, have found comfort and help, and have resolved that henceforth, with stronger faith and deeper earnestness, they will preach "Christ and Him crucified".

(B) PRINCIPAL J. DENNEY

Dr. James Denney (1856-1917), after a course of study in Philosophy and Classics, became minister of the Presbyterian Church at Broughty Ferry, near Dundee. He was appointed to the United Free Church College in Glasgow in 1897, and became Principal in 1914. He did not live long as Principal for he died in 1917. He has many books to his credit, including numerous commentaries, together with a careful study of the Scripture witness in *The Death of Christ*. We find his mature views on the Atonement in a volume of Cunningham Lectures entitled *The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation*, to which our attention must be most fully given. All his books give us the impression that he had studied his subjects thoroughly, and thought out his positions with great care. He was a great Bible scholar, with a profound reverence for St. Paul, yet one is his Master, even Christ. His standpoint regarding the Atonement is largely that of Augustine and the reformers, but this is interpreted in the light of the best knowledge of the Bible available in his day. He rejects the "ransom to the devil" theory, root and branch, but he deals sympathetically with Athanasius, and the soteriological emphasis of the great Alexandrian appeals to him, though he refuses to follow him when he seeks to make the Incarnation take the place of the Atonement. Anything that seemed to make the Cross unnecessary was summarily condemned.

His treatment of Augustine is penetrating and convincing, but he does not think the Genesis story of the Fall is to be accepted at its face value, and though he accepts the idea of Original Sin he has grave doubts as to the theory of "Total Depravity". He insists, all through, that the Atonement is not to be understood *in abstracto*, nor yet on *a priori* grounds; it must be approached along the line of experience. No logic can fathom it, but in the experience of passing under the Shadow of the Cross, the believing soul catches something of its wonder, and gets to know a little of the "love that passeth knowledge", from which it springs. Dr. Denney accepts several of Anselm's points, especially his view that the Incarnation is seen to be rationally necessary only through the Atonement.¹ He sees, however, that Anselm's view implies "Universal Salvation", but he passes this by saying that Anselm did not raise it. If Denney himself had faced it, there would probably have been some modification of his views on certain critical points of his doctrine. Though he attempts to defend Anselm in his view of sin, he insists that no conception of sin can be adequate that ignores the *personal* relation between man and God. His own view of sin is not adequate, however, for he does not face fully the fact that it is an outrage to a Father's love, and he kept it, almost wholly, on the plane of the moral realities of the universe, rather than on the spiritual plane of divine love. But Anselm's profound sense of the seriousness of sin and the desperate situation it produced, found an echo in his heart, but he criticizes Anselm for not giving any clear account of how the work of Christ benefits men (pp. 71 ff.).

He touches on Abelard, Peter Lombard and Aquinas, and although he differs from them on many points he insists that they all show that the idea of "satisfaction" is the one interpretable category of the Church in its thought regarding the Atonement. In his references to the reformers, he is illuminating, both in what he accepts, and in what he rejects, of their teaching, for he rejects their emphasis on the "merit"

¹ *The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation*, p. 65. The references in the section on Principal Denney refer to this book except where otherwise stated.

of Christ winning forgiveness, while accepting the Socinian protest that if God forgives on the basis of a "satisfaction", He does not forgive freely. Forgiveness must be free, a gracious gift of God, but it is never unconditional. He criticizes Socinus, however, because he shows no consciousness that "*in Christ God somehow takes part with sinners against Himself*" (pp. 96-100).¹

We touch, at this point, one of Denney's basic assumptions. He insists often that in the work of Christ, God takes the part of sinners against Himself. He completely rejects the idea of some of the reformers that there was a conflict between justice and mercy in God, and here again he accepts the protest of Socinus that there could be no schism in God, and that in giving the primacy to justice as against love, the reformers were doing an injustice to the Scriptures. Further, he refuses to accept the basal assumption of the reformers that God needs to be reconciled to men, insisting that God is always, in the New Testament, the subject of the verb "to reconcile" (p. 236). Moreover, he maintains that it is God who takes the initiative in redemption. Finally, he rejects the position of the reformers, that Christ on the Cross suffered the extreme penalties of sin, and he speaks of this view as a "perversion". Yet he accepts the reformers' penal satisfaction theory, and stresses, as they do, the physical sufferings of Christ. He believes implicitly in an "objective" Atonement, and though he is prepared to admit that the "subjective" theory is right in insisting that the Cross is powerful in inducing penitence, he thinks this is only possible because there is an "objective" element in the Atonement, something effected in God, as well as by God.²

I. *Basic Principles*

(a) Dr. Denney stands firmly on the position that we must find the ground of reconciliation—for it is as reconciliation that he views the Atonement—in the moral and spiritual

¹ The italics are his.

² Denney treats Abelard very fully, rejects Dale's distinction between fact and theory, opposes Du Bose's view because an "example" is not enough; accepts some points on Moberly's view and gives a lengthy treatment to Ritschl's view.

necessities of God's being. We cannot get a rational understanding of it on a *a priori* ground, nor by metaphysical discussion, nor yet by considering it in the light of some abstract conception such as Law, the "Honour" of God, or His rectorial demands. We can only find a secure and a truly Christian view of it, by finding its foundation in the heart of God. So he insists that "there is a divine necessity in all that belongs to it" (p. 7), and that Christian experience testifies to the sense, that "in the work of man's deliverance from sin . . . we are in contact with moral necessities which cannot be ignored" (p. 32). "The gospel rests upon the character of God" (p. 156), and the Cross is divinely necessary and has value, not only for us, but for God" (p. 162). In the Cross Jesus "gave Himself up to awful divine necessities" (p. 279).

(b) The work of reconciliation always moves in the realm of personal relations, for sin is not merely a matter between men and the law, but between men and God. It is only in such personal relations that the kind of situation can arise with which the Atonement deals. So God can only forgive by "doing justice to the uttermost to those inviolable relations in which alone . . . man can participate in eternal life".

(c) These personal relations are, in essence, moral and spiritual, for the world is moral, man is a moral being, and God is a moral reality. So also, "the power which Christ exercises in reconciling us to God is a moral power . . . and in its operation it is subject to the laws of a moral order" (p. 22). We should note, also, that in spite of Dr. Denney's emphasis on the justice of God, he yet believes that "love . . . is the radical principle of all the genuine and victorious morality in the world". Denney is convinced that we can only know God's nature and purpose by an inference backward from the work of reconciliation (p. 185), and that without the Cross, the deepest and most precious element in God's being, would have remained unknown. Further, he speaks of love as "the last reality in God" (p. 301), and that "nothing reconciles but love", that "the last reality, is not sin . . . but rather love itself making our sin its own in all its

reality" (p. 218). He insists that the source of reconciliation "is to be found purely in the love of God" (p. 233), and that the last reality is beyond sin, in a love that submits itself to all that sin can do, and "the last of all things is sin-bearing love through which the sinner may be reconciled to God" (p. 20).

As against this position, we find him stressing very strongly the "wrath of God" arising from the punitive justice of the Father rather than from His love. He seems to feel that there is an inconsistency at the heart of this position, for he sometimes apologizes for insisting on the "wrath" of the Eternal. At other times he tones it down, and appears to identify it with the fact of estrangement (p. 237), whilst at others he substitutes for it the terms "anger" and "offended". It would appear that he toned down his conception in his last book, for he is more tolerant than in his early works. He even raises the question whether the idea of God's wrath is inconsistent with the conception of God as a Father (p. 144) and replies that this is really a question of fact. When, however, he seeks to substantiate the fact, he appeals to St. Paul rather than to Jesus Christ. We have already suggested a meaning to the term "wrath of God", as the girding or the chafing of love against the obstacle raised by sin to its free flow to men, and this seems to be more in harmony with the New Testament idea of God. It does not matter how much we tone down these terms, there always clings to them a suggestion of vindictiveness which is unchristian and out of harmony with love. Denney does not shake himself free from using these terms, and he speaks of the anger of God working for the destruction of sin, and "for the destruction of *all who are identified with it*"¹ (p. 212). This emphasis is seen in Denney's view of punishment, for while admitting that it may be educative and reformatory, he opposes all attempts to rob it of its element of retribution, insisting that its whole power to reform, or to educate, depends on the fact that it is retributive (p. 208). He even maintains that punishment as retributive is in the nature of the universe as the divine reaction against sin (p. 203). His views here are reflected also in his

¹ Italics mine.

conception of sin. As already mentioned, he believes that sin is ultimately a matter of personal relations, based on moral kinship between man and God. He points out that it is social as well as individual, indeed organic, so that there is a "kingdom of sin" on the earth. He refuses to regard sin as merely a breach of law, it is nothing less than a disturbance of the moral relations between God and man. Its worst result is that it separates man from God and causes estrangement between them. Moreover, he believes that death, in all its widest meaning, physical, moral and spiritual, is the result of sin. Mortality is a consequence of sin and is the punishment of evil-doing.

He discusses this position in the light of growing scientific knowledge, and also of the fact that death comes to some people in the guise of a gracious gift of God, but he refuses to surrender his conviction, saying that transfigure it how we will, death remains the last enemy, "something monstrous and alien to the spirit". Many will feel that Denney's arguments here are not convincing, that he does not mention that the death which was originally predicted on sin in Genesis, did not come to pass, that as St. Paul says, "God passed it over and winked at it". Further, Jesus did not regard it in such a way for He speaks of death as "falling on sleep" and as "going home".

II

It is significant that Dr. Denney treats of the work of Christ as Reconciliation rather than justification, although, in one instance he identifies them (p. 169) while in another he regards forgiveness as one aspect of reconciliation though not the whole. Propitiation is essential to forgiveness. Although in his earlier books he spoke of forgiveness being *won* from God, he avoids speaking of it as such in his last book, where he repudiates the idea of it "as earned grace". But forgiveness is never conditional, for God cannot forgive unless the sinner is in a condition to receive it, and it cannot be given unless it is taken (p. 132). When the experience of forgiveness is real, it becomes the greatest regenerative force in the life of man (p. 6), and its end is the creation of saints

(p. 12). The method of reconciliation is the revelation of the righteousness of God, while this revelation is made necessary by the expression of God's wrath (p. 142). In reconciliation "God takes part with us against Himself", and it consists of the removal of alienation and estrangement, so that the sinner comes into harmony with God, and enjoys fellowship with Him (p. 164). What "has value to God in reconciling . . . is the personality of Jesus" (p. 41), and apparently His personality becomes powerful in working reconciliation, through the great and final act of giving Himself to death. From another point of view reconciliation is only possible when Atonement has been made, and the demands of the moral universe are met. This is done on the Cross, and this was the satisfaction made to God. In one passage (p. 262) Denney declares that this is not penal, and at this point he seems to be about to break with the penal theory. But, in the final issue, he swings back to the idea of the satisfaction as penal, resting in the sufferings and death of Christ, as offering satisfaction to God, and that this satisfaction is one aspect of the "Objectivity" of the Atonement, for it works some change in Him as well as a change in the relations between man and God. This "objective" element costs God something and it yields "satisfaction to some element deep in the nature of the Eternal", so that "there is a change in God's inner being" (p. 74).

If now we ask what gives the satisfaction to and is of value for God, Denney answers that it is the substitution of Christ for all that appertains to sin and its punishment. He mentions the sympathetic self-identification of Christ as contributory to this value. Here he insists that we should remember "that it was God who made Christ sin". So at the Cross our sins were laid on the sinless one, and it was this that accounted for the cry in the Garden, and again the most poignant cry on the Cross. So Denney reaches the full idea of Christ as our Substitute, and concludes that Jesus, thus, made Atonement.

Two criticisms may be made of his position at this point.

First, Denney ignores the fact that in the New Testament almost all references to Christ's death use the preposition

“hyper” meaning on behalf of rather than “anti”, instead of suggesting that it was vicarious rather than “substitutionary”.

In the second place, it is difficult to understand how Christ could bear *all* the punishment for our sins. Denney says several times that: He suffered all the punishment except that of a bad conscience (see p. 272). This admission makes a profound modification of the situation. On examination of Denney's position we find him mentioning other things which Christ did in relation to sin. Thus, He conquered sin personally, sympathized with the sinful, but Jesus' supreme task was to bear the wages of sin in our stead, and in this He reveals the love of God. He is not sure, however, that Jesus bore *all* the punishment of sin, and is not consistent in his statements on this point. He says, that in every sense and to every extent He made our sins His own (pp. 162 and 251), realizing “all that sin means” (p. 278) and “feeling to *the full* the divine reaction against sin”. Now he has said that Jesus did not have a bad conscience, but part of the *full* punishment of sin is the bad conscience.

On the whole Denney leans to the Calvinistic view that Jesus bore all the penalty. Again, we have noted that the supreme punishment of sin is death. So “to say that Christ bore our sins is precisely the same thing as to say that He died for our sins”, and His death is but the abstract fact of dying. “To regard it as merely a physical . . . is to miss the very nerve of the Gospel.” The crucial fact to Dr. Denney is thus Christ's death, not the spirit in which He died, nor the obedience behind His death, but His death itself: “if He had not *died* for us He would have done nothing at all” (p. 274). His obedience meant something to God and His resurrection also has value, but all else in Jesus has value through His death. If now we ask what Jesus did through His death, Denney mentions several things. He fully revealed God, gained a victory over death, mediates forgiveness and achieves reconciliation, but all these are made possible because in His death, Christ accepts God's judgment on sin, and so doing for man what man himself could not do. In

the final issue, then, the Cross is a manifestation of divine antagonism to, and judgment on, sin, and this is what makes it a power unto salvation.

III

Denney has been severely criticized. Dr. Mozley says, his views on the Atonement puts it "outside us". This may be true of Denney's early views, it is not his final view in his last book. Rashdall is severe in his strictures. We may ask whether Denney has really abandoned or transcended the dualism of the post-Reformation divines, for when he speaks of "God taking sides with sinners against Himself", he comes very near to such a dualism. If we push this position to its ultimate, it is difficult to see that the cleavage in the divine nature has been transcended, in spite of Denney's repudiation of it.

Again the emphasis laid on the death of Christ as moral and not merely physical, is difficult to reconcile with his statement that Christ did not suffer the punishment of a guilty conscience. This is the most serious objection to his view. He insists that the death of Christ has moral elements that make it "awful", "most solemn" and "of dreadful content". If we ask what makes death terrible, Denney replies that it is the shadow of a bad conscience (p. 279). If, then, Jesus did not know the shadow of a bad conscience, death could not have meant for Him what it means to the sinner. This being so, what becomes of His agony and His cry from the Cross? Further, how could he experience *all* the penalties of sin? Denney can only save his estimate of the place and the power of Christ's death, by assigning to Jesus the guilty conscience which he says He never experienced.

Finally, Denney's view makes the place and the power of the Holy Spirit in the experience of forgiveness, unnecessary. In spite of these weaknesses, however, Denney's work is an honest and sincere attempt to solve a great problem. It has elements of real value, for no one can read his writings without catching something of his enthusiasm, and realizing how deep and real was his devotion to Christ and his loyalty to his Lord.

(C) DEAN J. K. MOZLEY

Dr. J. K. Mozley, formerly Dean of Pembroke College, Cambridge, and afterwards Head of the Clerical School, Leeds, published in 1915 an excellent book on *The Doctrine of the Atonement*. In it he gives a careful and concise treatment of the Scriptural basis of the doctrine, discusses, with remarkable clarity, its history, and gives short summaries of the views of Dale, Denney, Forsyth and Moberly. He was deeply impressed with Forsyth, and considered his views at greater length than any of the other modern theologians. In a later volume, *The Heart of the Gospel* (1925), he discusses at length, and with great sympathy and insight, "The Theology of Dr. Forsyth", and dedicates the book to him. His debt to Forsyth is very great, as may be gathered from his insistence that the death of Christ works a change in the moral universe and so has a cosmic reference; that on the Cross we see God in action; that the divine love is "holy love", and that the victory of God and the establishment of the Kingdom of God as the manifestation of His final purpose for the world, depended on the Cross. "The Kingdom is already present, won and secured in the Cross."

After his review of history, he writes a final chapter entitled "Towards a Doctrine" in which he expresses more fully his own views. He criticizes Moberly and Denney at considerable length, then says (p. 216): "I do not, therefore, think that we need shrink from saying that Christ bore penal suffering for us and in our stead".¹ His view is clearly that of the Penal Theory, and he says that this view appears to him to do greater justice to the Biblical writers than any other, and is more in harmony with the claims of the moral consciousness, as well as with the testimony of Christian Experience. His main ground for accepting this view is the witness of man's moral consciousness. Nothing can eliminate from this consciousness its primary verdict that sin deserves punishment. This is an inalienable and ineradicable conviction, and though Moberly may speak of punishment

¹ *The Doctrine of the Atonement*.

changing its character, it cannot change in this respect. It is correct, therefore, to say that there is a retributive element in all punishment, although it may also be remedial and restorative. The acceptance of the idea of retribution in punishment, however, "does not in itself make clear the meaning of such expressions as 'Christ died our death' or 'He bore the penal consequence of sin', and we must go on . . . towards a more satisfactory reply to the question, 'how does salvation depend upon the death of Christ?'" He answers by pointing to the fact that the strength of the penal view lies, in addition to the witness of Scripture, "in the sanctity with which it invests the conception of the moral law, from which arises the ideas of reparation and satisfaction". From it also comes the sense that nothing can make amends for its violation except some act similar in quality to the essential quality of the law itself.

Mozley sees that one difficulty in the penal theory is to connect it with the needs of men, since it is primarily concerned with the demands of law. This weakness, however, is overcome by the fact of the Incarnation, with its consequence that "God suffered in the flesh". To this fact must be added another, that God was acting in the death of Christ in the best way to draw men's hearts to Himself. Further, the suffering was vicarious, and vicarious suffering always reveals man at his best. It excites his admiration, but it must be voluntarily and consciously borne. Such suffering is supremely moral, but not the suffering itself. Rather is it the voluntary self-giving, the selfless love behind it, and the spirit of the person who suffers. Christ in His death voluntarily accepted and "submitted Himself to the final curse upon the race, the curse of death". The cry on the Cross suggests that it was not purely physical death. It is difficult to imagine what death would be in a world of sinless beings, yet in Christ what we have is the death of a sinless personality. The fact of His suffering and death did not leave the experience of suffering and death exactly as they were before. His death alters their reference, His experience of them makes them different, and the element of judgment in the universal

fact of death, exhausts itself on the Cross. Death is not now the same as what it was before Christ died, for, "it is transmuted for sinners because the Son of God died, for them, bearing the penalty of sin instead of them". Further, what Christ did, had an objective reference, for He had first done it unto God by His victory over sin,—“by breaking the chain of guilt . . . and by the establishment of a new Kingdom grounded in holiness and sacrificial love”. So “the Atonement, as the counter-stroke to sin, is of God’s eternal purposes . . . human salvation is from all eternity hinged upon Christ” (p. 219).

Mozley, thus, accepts the penal substitutionary theory, but he rejects such notions as the elevation of punitive justice above love, that the vengeance of God was satiated by the punishment of Christ, and that God chose the way of inflicting suffering on His innocent Son, when other ways were open to Him (p. 219). In his later book Mozley includes three addresses on “The Atonement”. In these he links the Cross more closely to Pentecost (p. 30), insists more strongly on the moral basis of the universe, and treats more fully of the Cross as a cosmic reality, showing God’s effort to reach His final purpose of making the world a moral world. Further, he maintains more emphatically that the death of Christ is more than an example of heroic self-sacrifice, because the “greatest love needs an end worthy of the quality of its self-sacrifice”. We note also that here he lays greater stress on the “holiness of God” which is manifested when “God justifies Himself for ever in the Cross as His final achievement”. On the Cross Christ does a work for God and for man. On God’s side He accepts God’s judgment on man and expresses God’s judgment on sin (p. 60). So the Cross is the beginning of a new history. Mozley, however, does not abandon the penal substitutionary theory. His treatment keeps close to Bible teaching, and to the moral realities of the universe and he makes the Cross central to Christianity. His view, however, is open to most of the criticisms passed on the theories of Dale and Denney.

There is a more fundamental objection to his position, and

to that of all theologians who emphasize the moral as the basal fact of the universe. This acceptance of the moral aspect of reality as final is a legacy from Kant and many philosophers and theologians still rest in it. But it is becoming clear that the "holy" is deeper than the ethical, that the religious consciousness of man is more radical and comprehensive than his moral consciousness, and that the spiritual is, in the ultimate, the basis of the moral. In the spiritual realm, the great moral realities hold, but there is more than these, aspects of reality and life which the ethical fails to fathom. The Atonement moves in this realm and works its miracle of grace at a lower stratum of human nature than its moral consciousness. It takes in more of God and more of man than the ethical side of their nature. So to rest a final theory of the Atonement merely on a moral basis is inadequate. It must be planted in the whole personality of God in its spiritual reality, as well as made to apply to the whole spiritual being of man. The other view must be rejected. There is a fine spirit in Dr. Mozley's writing and in his approach to the subject, but it is difficult to find in his position, ground on which finally to rest.

(D) PRINCIPAL LEWIS EDWARDS

Dr. Lewis Edwards was Principal of Bala Welsh Presbyterian Theological College and wrote a book in Welsh on the Atonement, which his son, David Charles, translated into English.¹ This book in its Welsh form was for many years regarded as the standard Welsh treatment of the subject, and it still has influence among Welsh Presbyterians, although not as much read as it used to be. The treatise was published in 1860 and the translation in 1886. It shows considerable scholarship and much spiritual insight and philosophical acumen. Dr. Edwards knew his Plato well, speaks much of the ideas and refers to the religious consciousness as the soul's reminiscence of its previous home. He knew his Bible well also and some of his expositions are keen and full of suggestion,

¹ *The Doctrine of the Atonement*. It is interesting to note another of his sons was Thomas Charles Edwards, first Principal of Aberystwyth University.

but he is a strong Calvinist, although he objects to Calvin's view of Election and the idea of a limited salvation. His view is definitely that of penal substitution, and he says again and again that "Christ suffered instead of sinners". He makes much of the idea of merit, of surety, imputation and satisfaction. His idea of the place of the Atonement in life is noble and of great elevation, and in spite of his emphasis on the legal aspect, he comes towards the end of his treatment, to lay considerable stress on "Union with Christ", as the way of deliverance.

He insists that the Atonement rests on two truths, union and merit, but while he refers to, and acknowledges the place of love as the spring of the movement of redemption, it is of Justice that he speaks most, and it is in the light of this that he views the whole work of Christ. His knowledge of the history of the doctrines is accurate and wide, and his references to ancient and modern thinkers in the field are well-informed and apt.

The book is in dialogue form and is in four parts: (1) the Atonement in relation to God, (2) to Jesus Christ, (3) to man, and (4) to the Church. In his preface Dr. Edwards states definitely that "the justice of God's nature demands an atonement in order to forgive sins" and that the divine government is founded on immutable justice.

I. *The Atonement in relation to God*

Here he insists that the existence of God is the one undeniable truth, and that His nature is justice and love. The Moral Influence Theory's emphasis on the revelation of God's love cannot be right for two reasons: (1) the Bible shows that the dominant fact "is a manifestation of the justice of God; and (2) the Atonement could not display the love of God if justice did not make it absolutely necessary" (p. 25). God proves this by showing that it was impossible to forgive sin unless Christ had died. If God could forgive sin without punishing it, there would be a radical inconsistency; it would be contrary to reason and rectitude, for there was a necessity

in the nature of God to punish sin before forgiving it.

The question may be asked what necessity could have been in God that required Him to lay the punishment of sin on an innocent person? In answer to this we must note that while God has no limits, there is a limit in His actions. The power of God is unlimited, but in the work of creation it was necessary that this power should work within limits. In like manner His redemption activity has limits, and it seems that this limitation induced him to lay the punishment of sin on an innocent being. At any rate we know that the power manifested in man's salvation is love, "we must believe that love operates in accordance with the order of Divine justice" and it is "the glory of God's plan that it magnifies the law and makes it honourable". "All the infinite love of God manifests itself within the limits of justice and law" (p. 41) while in the next chapter Dr. Edwards suggests that there could not have been a manifestation of God's love unless justice made it necessary. He asks: How would God's love be manifested if He could have saved sinners without the death of Christ? If the Atonement were not necessary, then the death of Christ would prove the absence of God's love. God's holiness leads directly to the necessity for the *eternal punishment* of sin.

Answering a question, Dr. Edwards brings in the idea of merit saying that Christ's obedience to death has infinite merit, and it outweighs the demerit of the sins of those who believe in Him and blots it out. "Because Christ is a divine person there is merit in His sufferings and because of this merit, His sufferings are an atonement, while the worth of the Atonement corresponds to the worth of the merit" (p. 49). This merit is thus the foundation of His work. The idea of a surety is then brought forward, and the obedience of Christ is another element in His merit; for in rendering a perfect obedience to the law He gained infinite merit. There was enmity in God to sin, and a clear view of sin makes it evident that an infinite merit is necessary before sin can be forgiven, while the Atonement brings forgiveness and reconciliation. The actual reconciliation is also justification. We must not

believe that the Atonement consists of a definite sum of merit as a payment, but in the infinite merit of an infinite person and obedience contributes to this merit.

II. *The Doctrine of the Atonement in relation to the Person of Christ*

Jesus was more than a good man and it is evident that He regarded Himself as God. We must believe that there was a divine element in Him, for the fact of the resurrection proves this. So the sufferings of Christ are different from those of ordinary men. This is evident from the agony of the garden, and from the cry of the Cross. Again His obedience was not an ordinary obedience, for "the merit of this is the essence of the atonement". The principle of the Atonement existed from Eternity, and the obedience of Christ became an atonement, because it corresponded to the plan in the divine mind. If we ask why the divine will required Christ to die, we fall back on God's justice. Immutable justice made the punishment of sin necessary. So Christ came into so close a union with us, that His death was the same in the eye of the law, as if we had suffered and died in our own persons. Further His merit was thrown over us. His self-denial was part of His merit, His own personality was another element in it, but there would have been no merit in His suffering apart from His obedience, while there is no merit in obedient suffering apart from the greatness of the person who obeys.

The deepest suffering and perfect obedience meet in Christ. Love was the actuating cause of God's plan, but since justice made atonement necessary before men could be saved, God sent His Son *to die for them*. No other explanation accounts for the death of Christ. So "because the person was the Son of God there was merit in His obedience, and because there was merit in His obedience it was an atonement". "The merit abides for ever in His person", and the person must be in the act, whilst personality has the right to transfer the merit of the act, and still to retain the merit in Himself.

It must be remembered that the greatness of the merit depends on His humiliation and self-sacrifice in His act. The Incarnation would have been enough without the death, but since moral evil merits eternal punishment, infinite merit must be obtained before forgiveness is possible. Further, if all merit abides in Him, it follows that we must be brought into union with Him to be justified. Christ died in His human nature, for it is impossible for God to die.

III. *The Atonement in relation to Man*

In this section Dr. Edwards discusses justification and sanctification, insisting that man stands in need of a change of state in relation to the law of God. Justification is wrought through the Atonement and it changes the sinner in relation to the law, making the guilty righteous in its eyes. It raises man to a new state in his status before the law, and whilst forgiveness is different from justification, it must never be separated from it. It issues in sanctification, for in virtue of Christ's death, we die to the power and dominion of sin, and in virtue of His resurrection we share in the life of sanctification. Laws cannot make men moral, nor can education do this. The heart must be changed, and this is done through the death of Christ, and the strongest incentive to holiness and good works is found in the doctrine of the Atonement, in which "God gave His Son to die in our stead" (p. 196). God could not forgive without the death of Christ. More than the moral impression is necessary, and for this reason the Moral Influence Theory is inadequate. Again Dr. Edwards states that men are justified only through union with Christ. He dwells at considerable length on this point of union with Christ.

IV. *The Atonement in relation to the Church*

Here he deals with the ancient theories, and again he speaks of Christ as "His Son to die in their stead" (p. 228). It is clear that Dr. Edwards's theory is that of Penal Substitutionary suffering and death. Whilst there are points of value

and suggestiveness in his views, his emphasis on "merit" is an echo of Anselm, his stress on holiness and law reflects the post-Reformation divines, while the whole treatment and outlook is Calvinistic. His terms and treatment sound strange in these days and are completely out of date, in spite of Dr. Edwards's careful and thoughtful efforts.

Chapter III

ATTEMPTS AT RE-STATEMENT

WE have already noted that attempts have been made to modify the older views so as to bring them into line with modern intellectual and moral demands. Dr. Denney makes a great effort to break away from the more objectionable aspects of the penal theory, although he does not succeed in extricating himself from its toils. Dr. Mozley only gives a grudging acquiescence to the theory, although he appears finally to have accepted it. Even Dr. Dale rejects some of the implications of the older view, and seeks to rectify the more severe aspects of it.

There are, however, certain thinkers, who, whilst breaking away from the ancient theories, seek to retain some of the truth contained in them, and to re-state them in a more acceptable form. Various attempts to achieve this purpose have been made along different lines. Some have sought to do so by a more thorough study of the Scriptures, so as to discover the implications of the Atonement underlying Biblical teaching. Others have sought escape from the difficulties of the older theories, by emphasizing the ethical satisfaction which God experienced in the work of Christ. We shall consider both these attempts in some of our later chapters.

In this chapter we have to examine the theories of some thinkers who definitely set out with the purpose of purifying the ancient theories of their objectionable features, and to build up a more acceptable and convincing Christian view. When we study these efforts we discover certain outstanding features. (a) Thus a change is made from the legal and juristic basis to a more personal foundation in divine love; (b) this involves a change in the conception of God; whilst (c) there is a deeper understanding of the psychological issues of the whole situation. We must examine, briefly, some of these changes. It is not necessary to dwell exhaustively

on the first change. This just means abandoning the transactional, the commercial and the legal aspects of the older views. The conception of law is seen to be too abstract to suit the spiritual reality of the Atonement. It means the subordination of personal relations between man and God to the demands of an abstract law, while making justice predominant in God instead of Fatherhood and love. We must dwell at greater length on the other changes.

(a) The efforts to reach a more satisfactory conception of God result in important modifications. We have already seen that Dr. Scott Lidgett seeks to smoothe over the difficulties of the Satisfaction Theory by basing his theory on the Fatherhood of God, and on what this conception implies as to the relationship between man and God, so as to reach a more spiritual view of the Atonement and its operations in human experience. In reality this changed emphasis is decisive, for if Jesus means anything by the truth of Divine Fatherhood, He means that the relation between God and man is eternal and cannot be broken. It is the only relationship that cannot be broken, for once a father, always a father; once a son, for ever a son. Man may be unworthy of his sonship, and may sin himself out of the rights and privileges of such sonship, but, as far as we can see, nothing can ever make him less than a son,—a wayward and unfilial son, perchance, but still a son. On the other hand, a father may disown his son and expel him from the home and from the inheritance, but he can never make himself less than his son's father, nor the son anything else than a son. We must not press the fact of physical fatherhood too hard in this region. This was the root of the Arian heresy, for Arius pushed the physical aspects of fatherhood to extreme limits. The relationship must be kept within the realm of spiritual things, but even in this region the relationship holds in essence, whatever happens.

If this be so, we can see the bearing of this truth on the work and theory of the Atonement. The Father could not give up His children to the ravages of sin and iniquity, without doing something to save them and win them back; going

“to the uttermost”, is the Scriptural way of saying this. The supreme motive of the Atonement, therefore, is not the safeguarding of law by punishment, but the deliverance of children, and as it appears, deliverance at heavy cost. In a very real sense the suffering of the Cross is a faint shadow—Forsyth would say it is the suffering of the Father—of what it means for the Father to deliver His sons and bring them back to Himself. It is this aspect of the situation, with the changed conception of God which it involves, that we find, for example, in Dr. W. L. Walker’s treatment, when he makes the basis of his theory “the Kingdom of God” and proceeds to show what kind of God is presupposed in the idea of the Kingdom, and its function in the world. We shall follow his treatment later in this chapter, but it is worth noting that he sets out, on his own admission, to re-establish the old views on a more secure foundation, and to state them in a form more acceptable to the minds and hearts of men as well as more in accord with the basal principles of the Christian Faith.

Again the idea of the Kingdom of God brings us face to face with the question of the Messiah, and his vocation to inaugurate and promulgate the Kingdom. This brings forward the question of the consciousness of Jesus of being the Messiah, involving the sense of being a special representative of God to do God’s work, and the effect this sense has on His conception of Himself and His relation to God. In this way fresh interest is being taken in the Messiah in the Scriptures, and men are keen to discover what is implied in the idea of the Messiah, more especially in its relation to the Suffering Servant pictured in Isaiah. The question is raised as to what modification was made in the popular idea, by introducing into it the conception of the Servant, and how far this influenced Jesus’ idea of His vocation and of the task of bringing in the Kingdom.

Several important books have recently been published along this line. One such book¹ by Principal Wheeler Robinson falls to be considered in this chapter, for the Principal

¹ *Redemption and Revelation.*

definitely claims that his purpose is to rehabilitate the older ideas, and to state them in more acceptable ways. His book might well be considered in a later chapter, but his claim demands that it should be considered in this chapter. It is sufficient to say at this point, that Dr. Robinson endeavours to achieve his purpose by a careful and detailed study of the Old Testament witness on the side of its sacrificial ideas and system, linked to the idea of the Messiah in conjunction with the conception of the Suffering Servant. Fine scholarship is evident in every page, together with spiritual insight of a very high order. Dr. Robinson has also made a valuable contribution to the problem in an earlier book.¹

(b) The more definite psychological interest and knowledge is the other factor evident in the attempt at re-statement. The contribution of psychology to the elucidation of the problem of Atonement will fall to be considered in a later chapter, but one aspect of this contribution has to be examined at this point, for it is of great influence in the effort to re-state the position, and to arrive at a theory that commends itself to the modern mind. This is the fuller development and the more complete knowledge of personality which psychology affords us, together with the bearing of this knowledge on our conception of God. The consideration of personality is one of the major aspects of philosophical study in modern times. This question of values, and more especially moral values, and the problem of personality may be said to have been central to philosophical and psychological thought for over a generation. Further, since the core of the study is that of moral values, and such values imply personality, and only exist in and for persons, it will be evident how central the question of personality is in modern philosophy. The bearing of the problem is very wide and deep in relation to all human activity and purpose, and it is being realized more clearly that it is of determinative importance with regard to divine activity and the outgoing of God in His redemptive efforts for men.

Looking at the question as a whole, it may be said that it is along the line of moral values, and their meaning to

¹ *Suffering, Human and Divine.*

personality, that we reach the most cogent and satisfactory proof of the existence of God and the reality of His Being. This is the line followed by such outstanding philosophers as Sorley, Pringle-Pattison, Ward, Royce and Hocking. Now psychology has added its contribution to this study, and along this line of approach also valuable results have been acquired, and important conclusions reached. Some of these conclusions are of great value in relation to the theory of Atonement, more especially in correcting many of the errors and weaknesses of the older theories. Thus, it has been established beyond doubt that consciousness is a unity, and that self-consciousness, the innermost sanctuary of personal life, is all of one piece in spite of its multitudinous interests and operations, so much and so real a unity, that it cannot endure any disruption within itself, or any disunity within its essence. We are growing to understand that personality, the whole of personality is operative in all human activities. Certain aspects of conscious life may be more prominent in some operations than others, but the three basic elements into which consciousness is regarded as divided,—feeling, knowing and willing,—are present in every act, and work together in all operations. The three aspects are never found in isolation, for they work together and constitute a unity that transcends all other unities known to men.

We need not dwell on this fact at this point, but it will be seen at once that it bears directly on one of the principal weaknesses of the older theories. We have already noticed the tendency to make a cleavage in the personality and nature of God, a cleavage which developed into a conflict between justice and mercy, or between law and love in God, and brought about a disruption or a dualism in His Being. We see clearly now that such a dualism is impossible, since the unity of conscious life is so deep and real. Justice as well as mercy involves God's whole being; willing and loving involve Him altogether; acting and suffering lay under tribute the whole personality of God. No one aspect can be operative at the expense of, or in opposition to, the others. All God is present in every act of His. This view, as will be seen,

undermines the basis of the older theories, and so corrects their main weaknesses.

Another truth has become clear, largely through psychology, that God must be passible, that He must know suffering as well as joy, and this idea has a profound bearing on our view of the Atonement. If God is personal, He must be able to feel and to experience pleasure and suffering. We cannot imagine what suffering must mean to Him, nor can we argue simply from our suffering, or even from the sufferings of Christ, and draw conclusions with regard to His suffering. We can infer that whatever suffering He endures must be purely spiritual, and must fall on the background of His knowledge of all things. Yet we can believe that since He has personality, this carries in its essence the possibility of suffering, and that suffering—our sufferings and those of Christ—mean something to Him, and that the prophet had seen into the inmost being of God when he says that He “bore our griefs and carried our sorrows”, and that He was afflicted in our afflictions, and understood our infirmities. The possibility of passion or feeling in God had not always been believed.

The tyranny of Greek philosophical terms and ideas had kept men's minds from freely discussing the question. To the Greeks one of the main aspects of deity was impassibility. God was regarded as unmoved, changeless, and not liable to any feeling. Aristotle's unmoved Mover existed in unbroken calm, indifferent to any human suffering or need, and this conception held the field for centuries. This view is being abandoned by almost all modern thinkers. Principal Fairbairn strongly opposes it, and asserts, with conviction and enthusiasm, that God can and does suffer. Dr. Forsyth maintains it no less clearly and definitely in all his writings. More recently Dr. Mozley has come out on the side of this truth, while Professor Brabant has examined the whole question most carefully in his work on *The Impassibility of God*. This changed conception of God has an important bearing on our ideas of the Atonement, for it makes it possible for us to believe that it is in the final issue, an Act of God,

and that the sufferings of the Cross are a reflection of the pain and agony of the divine heart at the waywardness of men, and at the sinfulness of persons who are in reality His sons. The idea of God's passibility has close relationship, also, to the Ethical Satisfaction Theories.

Some modern writers approach the question of Atonement from the point of view of the meaning and value of personality in God and in man, and by this method of dealing with the subject seek to avoid the inherent difficulties of the older theories, and to build up a theory more in harmony with the best thought of our time. From a somewhat different standpoint, Professor John Baillie builds up a new view on the essential truth of the older views. We should note, also, that all who seek to do this definitely reject the penal view of Christ's suffering, while they endeavour to conserve what is essential and true to the fact of the Atonement as revealed in Scripture and in human experience. There are other aspects of psychological truth, but these shall be treated in another chapter.

(A) DR. W. L. WALKER

Dr. Walker was for some years the minister of the Congregational Church at Laurencekirk, near Montrose, and has several important volumes to his credit. His chief work on the Atonement is *The Cross and the Kingdom* (1902), but he wrote another book on the subject entitled *The Gospel of Reconciliation* (1909) in which he makes fresh suggestions of great value. He says in the preface to his first book, that it is "intended as a defence and re-statement of the Evangelical doctrine of the Cross, based on the teaching of Christ . . . and on His work as the Founder of the Kingdom of God freed from some misconceptions and from certain objections that have been widely felt and sometimes urged against the doctrine". He further insists that "a much fuller conception of the Cross . . . is reached by means of a fuller conception of what is involved in the idea of the Kingdom of God and its establishment".

We note at the outset that Dr. Walker takes a different

view of the Cross from almost all other writers, in that he regards the death of Christ as necessary in order that His Spirit may be made available as a power in the life of men, and it is this power in men that makes the Atonement an effective reality in their souls and experience. He had written an earlier volume on the Person of Christ¹ in which he insists strongly that the divine element in Christ is the Spirit of God, and that through Him this Spirit can become an indwelling presence in men. He now takes his stand on the position, that the Spirit has become available to men through the Cross, and that it was necessary for Christ to die in order that it might become so. Herein lies the *necessity* of the Cross. To quote his words: "The living Christ represents a certain Presence and Power of God, which through the life and work of the incarnate Saviour has entered our Humanity—the Holy Spirit, as the great Christian gift—a spiritual Presence and Power, which in its ethical and spiritual influences, must not be separated from the Person of Christ, nor the Person of Christ therefrom. This Divine, ethical Power comes above all *through the Cross*" (p. xiii). It is through this power and its operations in men, that the Kingdom of God is to be established, hence Dr. Walker's purpose to consider the Atonement in the light of the Kingdom.

Another feature of his treatment becomes evident when we view it as a whole. His line of approach is very wide and comprehensive. He attempts to view the Atonement in the light of the best modern knowledge in theology, philosophy and Biblical science, and even of modern science, for in one section he considers the light thrown by the theory of evolution on the Atonement, and its bearing on the whole idea. It will be seen, thus, that there are elements of very great value in Dr. Walker's contribution to the subject.

In Part I of *The Cross and the Kingdom* he insists that Christ had to die before His claims could come with constraint on the minds and hearts of men, and more important still, before His Spirit could become a universal Presence and Power in men. He shows in successive chapters what

¹ *The Spirit and the Incarnation.*

he thinks Christianity would be like without the Cross, what it is with the Cross, and the place and fact of the Cross in Christian life. It is the presupposition of Christian experience, the secret of the experience of the Apostles, and the core of their teaching. Their experience of the Cross was apprehended as salvation.

Parts II and III deal with Christ's references to the Cross. Here Dr. Walker gives us a careful and painstaking study of the relevant passages in the Gospels, dealing especially with the "ransom" passage and the words at the Last Supper, dwelling at considerable length on the question of the "remission of sin". This work is done with reverence and with penetrating spiritual insight so that the study is rewarding and satisfactory.

In Part IV we come to the question of "the Interpretation of the Cross", in which Dr. Walker considers first the "Necessity, Nature and Efficacy of the Cross" (chap. i). There is no definite teaching found in the words of Jesus as to its necessity, but He appears to have been conscious that it was necessary in the Wisdom and Love of God for the coming of the Kingdom and the establishment of the new covenant of spiritual salvation. Because of this consciousness He accepted it. He could not have understood all that it meant at first, yet He seems to have sensed the fact that it was through His death, that forgiveness was to go forth to men. The disciples did not understand, for the full meaning could only come through the influence of the Spirit that came upon men through Christ. In the book of Acts the Cross is usually regarded as a crime, and yet as the fulfilment of "the determinate counsel of God". Enemies slew Jesus, but God raised Him up and vindicated Him. There was the further idea, that like the case of the Suffering Servant, Jesus' death was a vicarious sacrifice on behalf of men.

In St. Paul the interpretation becomes fuller and clearer. "He died for me and suffered what I deserved" may be regarded as St. Paul's attitude, and this raised the Cross to a cosmic reality is his final conviction. It was through the Spirit that this conviction was reached; but the interpretation

is expressed in old forms. To really understand the Cross we must begin with Christ Himself and be true to the facts of the Gospel. Every age interprets it for itself, and this is why there are so many theories, some of which Dr. Walker considers in chapter ii, "Inadequate Theories". We must cling to the belief that to Christ His death was in furtherance of His Father's purpose. It was not meant to propitiate God, nor to satisfy justice, nor yet to expiate sin, by doing something that affected God. It is in no sense like a heathen sacrifice offered to make God propitious. It was sacrifice but vicarious sacrifice, like that of the Suffering Servant. It was clear that it was according to the will of God, but it was not clear *why* it was so. We can be sure that God was not angry with Jesus and punished Him. Nor can we think of abstract justice demanding His death. We are on safe Biblical ground when we say that it wrought "reconciliation". This is the richest New Testament word for the work of Christ, not "propitiation", nor "justification" but reconciliation, an Atonement with God. Wendt insists that the Cross was an act of perfect obedience, and that as such it pleased God. Obedience does please God, but this cannot be the sole ground of Atonement, since it is said that God provides the atonement. For Him to do this, His forgiveness must have preceded and prompted the work of atoning.

When we examine the fact of self-identification with Christ and make this spiritually our own, it meets a need of the soul that feels its own sinfulness, and we know that Christ has done something that needed to be done, but which we could not do ourselves. He has given expression to the evil of sin in the eyes of God, but also the expression of the forgiveness of the Father's heart, and this is the ground of the proclamation of the divine forgiveness, though not of the forgiveness itself. Now it is indubitably true that Christ had to die before His Spirit could become a universal Presence in the world of men. But we may ask, how is this fact related to God? It might have been an accident, or a coincidence of the historical situation. Dr. Walker replies. It has just been stated that the Gospel is the proclamation of forgiveness,

though not its cause. Forgiving love was in God's heart before the Gospel, and in it we find the source of the Gospel and the secret of God's purpose. In this way we are driven back to the basal necessity for the death of Christ, and, for the purpose it was to achieve, to the necessities inherent in the nature of God, in His eternally forgiving love.

Dr. Walker then turns his attention to the question of Christ's sufferings. These are the result of sin, but they can not be regarded as penalties or punishments. They are features of sin's punishment, but not of His punishment. The whole penal view rests on a false idea of God and His relation to men. Historically the Cross was a criminal act against God, but He made it serve His gracious purpose. The question is raised whether physical death is the result of sin, and answered in the negative. No such idea as that of the penal death of Christ has any sanction in the teaching of Jesus. Moreover, the fact that sin is always punished, is no ground for ascribing wrath to God.

Again, we cannot say that the Cross was necessary to reconcile righteousness and grace, and it is unscriptural to assume that there is opposition between them. The more conclusive view is that righteousness is grounded in love. We must not further think that sacrifice moves God, and to imagine that God demands sacrifice or punishment, is an idea unworthy of Him. It is also wrong to say that the Cross was merely a manifestation of the love of God. It was this, but we must believe that there was need of the sacrifice Christ made, and that the love in it was manifested in the recognition and the satisfaction of this need. Jesus believed it was necessary to die in order that He might go to God and become powerful in establishing the Kingdom, and so fulfil God's purpose. This is the secret of the moral power of the Cross. It also makes it clear that the Moral Theory is not enough, for it leaves out a very essential element of the moral power of the Cross. We may then view the Cross from several points of view. On the part of man, it was a great crime against God; it was also a martyrdom for truth and righteousness. Further, it was an act of complete obedience to the will

of God, and as such, was the basis of at-one-ment with God.

Finally, Jesus represented His sacrifice as being necessary for the redemption of man and the coming of the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom is the illuminating centre, and Christ sanctified Himself to proclaim and establish it. So it was necessary for Him to die, that the Kingdom might come, and the Kingdom was to come through awakening in men the sense of sin, through leading them to believe in, and experience, the divine forgiveness, and through creating in their hearts love to God and devotion to His Kingdom. These effects were produced through the interpretation of the Cross as a sacrifice made for sin, and we may infer that this was a real element in the significance of the Cross.

So the Gospel starts from the proclamation of forgiveness as its first word to sinful men, and forgiveness is not passing over sin, but defeating it, and making entrance into the Kingdom possible. What was done in the Cross was done by our representative, and it was done *for* and *by* men in Him. It was not a dramatic thing, merely to make an impression, but was grounded on deep divine necessities if men were to be saved. It was God Himself who was moving Him to this great sacrifice. Through the Cross there goes forth power that can win men's hearts to God. It must, therefore, be connected with the resurrection, for it is the power of the Spirit of the living Christ that energizes, through the Cross, for the bringing in of the Kingdom.

From another point of view the Cross is the culmination of vicarious sacrifice, the voluntary acceptance of suffering for others. Suffering is inevitable in sin, because it is a departure from the divine order, and this is made clear in the Suffering Servant. The redemptive value of vicarious suffering, is not in the fact of the suffering itself. It is the effect that suffering produces that gives it value. The suffering of Christ manifests the evil of sin, and impresses men with it; it leads to the experience of the forgiveness of sin on God's part; it leads men to repentance, and it diffuses the true spirit which is in suffering. These are the chief elements in vicarious sacrifice. The Cross may also be regarded, as it is

sometimes in the New Testament, as a triumph over evil and evil powers. "It broke the power of evil and the reign of death is over." From God's side it is a manifestation of His love, and it is a basal truth of the Atonement as well as of the Incarnation, that God is both *in* the world and transcends the world. The Cross was the crowning expression of Fatherly love, and it was God who was active in Christ all through His sufferings on the Cross, and through Christ He was reconciling the world to Himself.

The final purpose of God for us is to win us into His eternal Kingdom. This is the only end worthy of God as a Father. The ultimate purpose and power of the Cross, therefore, is the sending forth of the Spirit, and the Kingdom could not come until the Cross had been endured. It was the breaking down of the obstacle to the achievement of the eternal purpose of God. In Part V Dr. Walker considers the Cross in the light of evolution. Here he is not thinking so much of material evolution as the evolution of the mind and spirit. Evolution is not a power, but a process in which a truly creative power is manifested, and this is the gradual realization of a divine idea in material form. The environment is of great importance, and in the realm of Spirit, the environment is God. So, if the Cross was necessary with a view to the Kingdom, it meant the carrying-out of a divine idea, and as such was consonant with evolution. Some think that the idea of evolution throws doubt on redemption, because it seems to deny the "Fall". What can be said of this is that it is impossible to create a holy being, for holiness must be freely won and so is an evolution. The Cross thus keeps the process of evolution through its creative power and by setting men on the way of evolving in spiritual life and power. We note also that in the evolution of life, sacrifice and suffering are among the most potent factors making for progress, and here again the Cross comes into harmony with the evolutionary process, more especially in the realm of spiritual life.

In his later book¹ Dr. Walker dwells more fully on the idea of At-one-ment or reconciliation, and on the Cross as

¹ *The Gospel of Reconciliation.*

the means whereby God was effecting the at-one-ment of the world with Himself. That Calvary was followed by Pentecost was no accident, for Pentecost was a consequence of the Cross, because through the death of the Cross the Spirit went forth in power to save. Christ was full of the Spirit of God and through the Cross He poured it forth on the world. This is the value of the doctrine of the Atonement, and the doctrine is of no use without this idea of power in it. The Power is to regenerate, and love is most potent in this field. The Gospel was effectual in recreating men, thus proving itself to be the power of God to salvation. It is probable that no complete and adequate doctrine of the Cross can be formulated, for it is so many-sided, but the fact that it meets human need is a proof of its divineness. Dr. Walker insists that it is not merely atonement,—covering as “kipper” in the Old Testament—but it brings men to fellowship with God, that is, it is at-one-ment, which is the motive and purpose in the Cross. It was not expiation, then, but reconciliation; not making an angry God propitious, but coming home to a loving Father.

St. Paul’s doctrine of the Cross is examined at length, more especially his saying that “Christ was made sin” for us, and his idea of law in its relation to sin. Dr. Walker repudiates, if possible more strongly, the idea of the penal sufferings of Christ, insisting that the New Testament rarely speaks of Christ suffering “instead of us”, but “on behalf of us”. Dealing with the Cross in its historical setting, he declares again, that it was a criminal act, but that it came in the course of the mission of Christ to bring in the Kingdom of God. The Cross was, therefore, a manifestation of the love of God, and of the absolute obedience of Christ. The early Christians interpreted the Cross in Old Testament terms mainly through the picture of the Suffering Servant. The New Testament speaks of Christ bearing our sins. How does He bear them? Not by transfer, but vicariously, not by divine infliction, but by voluntarily taking them upon Himself. Vicarious suffering is in the Moral Order, and it is clear in the picture of the Suffering Servant that it is the result of His relation to a

people whose sin had grown. In the case of Christ, He was representative of humanity and was not separated from those who crucified Him, but was identified with them. "He suffered as the consequence and punishment of human sin in the divine order", and we can see that in the Cross is the climax of sin, making clear that its doom is death. Further, it is God's judgment on sin. It does not make any change in God or in His attitude to men, but it was a complete manifestation of divine love. Moreover, "had the evil triumphed on the Cross it would have shattered the moral universe, for sin means and works desolation and death". So He saved the world.

Dr. Walker asks if Christ had not been crucified, would the race have progressed? It might have done so, but to what goal? It would not have been to a moral and spiritual goal. The Cross is also a manifestation of the righteousness of God, and Christ makes it possible, not for God to forgive sins,—this was in His heart from eternity—but that the forgiveness in His heart may go forth to the world and save it. But it must be insisted that the sufferings of the Cross were not inflicted on Christ as a punishment, but as a consequence of the moral effects of sin and the righteous judgment of God upon it. "It was God's condemnation of sin not of Christ".

In dealing with the Gospel of Reconciliation (chap. xi) Dr. Walker insists: (a) That the forgiveness and acceptance in Christ do not imply the negation of all the consequences of sin in those who accept it. (b) Men never really make forgiveness their own, until they come to God. (c) The real evil from which we need to be saved is self and self-love. (d) It is in Christ that God comes to us in His reconciling love. (e) The acceptance of Christ is not final salvation. It must go on until men reach the likeness of Christ.

After touching on the social aspect of the gospel, Dr. Walker comes to the Final Question. Saying that forgiveness is not grounded in the Cross, but rather the Cross is grounded in the forgiving love of God. Neither does forgiveness annul all the consequences of sin but is rather the restoration of men to the consciousness of the forgiving love of God. We may, therefore, say that all Christ's life is a revelation of the

Holy and loving Spirit of God, and a proof of His goodwill to men; His acceptance of the Cross was the proof of divine love; and that forgiveness through the Cross is consistent with righteousness.

(B) PRINCIPAL WHEELER ROBINSON

Dr. Wheeler Robinson was Principal of Regent's Park Baptist College, London, and afterwards at Oxford. He has written many scholarly and thoughtful books, and holds a position of great influence in the theological sphere by his scholarship and keen insight into realities. A recent work of his, *Redemption and Revelation*, gives us his mature views on the subject of the Atonement. He had, however, written an essay on "The Gospel of Redemption"¹ before this, as well as a volume on *Suffering, Human and Divine* in which he faces some aspects of the question. Our main interest is in his latest book, but we must touch on the other contributions. In his volume on "Suffering", Dr. Robinson suggests that God has a measure of responsibility for human suffering. He does not carry this idea over to its bearing on human sin, though he might have done so with illuminating results. We shall consider this possibility at a later stage. In the essay mentioned, he insists that any religion worthy of its name must offer some solution to the three dark shadows that fall on human life: moral evil, pain and death. Moreover, the value of a religion is to be judged by the kind of solution it offers. Christianity throws all the emphasis on emancipation from moral evil, but it also has power whereby suffering can be transformed, and it promises triumph over death in everlasting life.

The New Testament has several ways of giving expression to this fact of deliverance. Paul's way is richest as seen in Romans vii, where he declares how he was delivered. It was through Jesus Christ, who brought a new dynamic to reinforce his spirit. This dynamic had become effective through faith, and it was based on the redemptive work of Christ on

¹ In a composite volume entitled *The Christian Faith*.

the Cross. Dr. Robinson insists that Christianity meets the deepest needs of men, by offering the forgiveness of sin, by providing a real redemption and deliverance from moral evil and its consequences in life, by bringing to man a new moral dynamic, and by transforming death and suffering. Sin is the religious name for moral evil. Guilt is born in man's sense of responsibility. To remove these the first demand of Christianity is for repentance, but it needs more since moral evil concerns God so deeply that He has to do something with regard to it. Here is the source of redemption, and it is characteristic of the Christian Faith that it answers the need by a historical event, and not by philosophical discussion or an idea. This event is the life and death of Jesus Christ, and the Christian faith is in origin an interpretation of God in terms of Jesus Christ, insisting that God is like Jesus, that in Jesus there is a unique act of God in history, and that the Cross is central in this act of redemption.

Jesus' attitude to sin is seen in His forgiveness of those who slew Him, and this shows God's attitude to it. So forgiveness is basal, but it is costly both to Christ and to God, costly in its outpouring of sacrificial love. We see something of its meaning in the fact that Christ bore the worst that men could do to Him, and transformed even this sinful act into the best that we dare hope and believe of God. The actual need of redemption was met at Calvary by an actual forgiveness of sin. But there is no forgiveness worthy of the name without suffering, and God must suffer in ways we cannot understand. "The impact of sin on His holy Being must be to His holiness what corresponds to suffering in our experience." One reaction finds expression in the term Wrath of God; but there is a deeper reaction, that of Holy Love, and this issues in the voluntary acceptance of the suffering in order to save the sinner. All is of grace, and springs from love. From this act and what follows its expression, there comes into men's hearts, by the contact of faith, a dynamic that changes human life. Some of this power comes from the experience of forgiveness and the new trust which this involves, but it is mostly the result of the indwelling Spirit of

Christ. All this has become possible through the Cross. The Cross does even more than this. It can, and does, transform suffering, for it can be transmuted by the power of grace and love. Through the Cross and the consequent resurrection, "death is swallowed up in victory".

It will be seen that this is a very suggestive treatment of the fact of redemption. In his latest book Dr. Robinson amplifies his ideas, and lays a firm foundation for them, by a detailed study of the Scriptural witness, more especially with regard to sacrifice. He does this, so he says, to vindicate and re-state the truth that lay under the older theories, although mingled with many errors.

In his *Redemption and Revelation* he insists, at the outset, that the revelation made in the gospel is a revelation of redemption, but it is not the revelation itself that leads men to live good lives. The revelation produces a "subjective" change in attitude and conduct because it is a revelation of an "objective" redemption "which God has independently wrought in Christ, and which is completed in the actual transformation of men's lives". Penal substitution is one way of expressing the objective character of redemption, but it is an inadequate way, if only because the conception of God as righteous and just, is not the whole truth about Him. God is Judge, but He is far more. He is a Father who loves and forgives. It is, however, certain that it was beyond man's power to atone for his wrong-doing; it required a divine redemption, and this was made actual in Jesus Christ, while His work constitutes the supreme revelation of God.

Dr. Robinson then embarks on a long treatment of history. His consideration is based largely on Professor Whitehead's idea of Actuality, and rests on the conception of God as "the Actuality", and of human history as the working out in actual life of the mind and purpose of the divine actuality. The Bible emphasizes the volitional side of God rather than the intellectual, and this suggests that the living God can only be known in terms of life, and not in terms of thought. History is the expression of God's will and purpose, and it means the making actual of what is real in Him. Human

wills may interfere with this working-out of His purpose, and appear to frustrate His will. In the end, however, He will prevail, even though He has to make a supreme effort to curb evil forces and reach His goal. This is what He does in Christ.

In the course of his treatment of this aspect of his subject Dr. Robinson discusses the validity of Christian experience, and the reality of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in men; considers the ministry of error; the symbolism of language, and the actuality of good and evil. Here he reiterates the idea that God is responsible for the actuality of pain and evil, but insists that His responsibility is confined to "the creation of man and His endowment of him with such a nature as is capable of initiating evil". He concludes his study of this aspect with a consideration of the Divine Initiative.

In Part II he deals with the media of revelation, considering such subjects as the development of the moral consciousness of the Hebrew prophets, the use of the Law, and the cultus of the Hebrew religion. He examines the physical media, such facts as divination, flights of birds, and the psychical media, such as dreams, ecstasy and possession. Under this head he gives an interesting account of the growth and nature of the prophetic consciousness in Israel, coming to the consideration of the relation of history and revelation. Here he insists that Jesus actualized in history the whole attitude of God towards man. This brings him to the consideration of the Christian revelation. Here he insists that while the presence and activity of the transcendent God may be seen in the Natural Order, there is also a providential control of history, and this really means that there is a continual activity of the Spirit of God through it all, but most of all in Christian history. This phase of history culminated in the life and death of Jesus Christ. Through Him it is present in the movements and operation of the world, and it may be seen in the fact that there is a transformation of the moral evil of the world into occasions of divine grace of which the Cross is the supreme example. This energy,

working such a transformation, is really the activity of the love of God, sacrificial love transforming evil into a medium of revealing grace.

In this way we may say that the keyword of redemption is the transformation in actual reality of sin, so that it becomes an occasion of grace by God's attitude to it. This transformation belongs to the very essence of redemption, and of the gospel that declares it. This brings Dr. Robinson to Part III in which he considers "The Fact of Redemption". He begins by considering the Redeemer. It is clear that in the New Testament, the first distinctive category to be applied to Jesus is "Messiah". This linked His Person to the Old Testament figure, but it was capable of being transformed by being associated with the figure of the Suffering Servant. This was actually present in the consciousness of Jesus, and it became the most potent and effective element in the Apostolic interpretation of His Person. The idea of the Messiah had been growing in the Old Testament, while in Enoch—one of the Apocalyptic books—it had come to mean a supernatural Person, to whom was assigned the task of restoring the Kingdom. This was the background of New Testament thought, but Jesus modified it, mainly by linking it to the idea of the Suffering Servant.

In Paul, the Apocalyptic idea of a supernatural person, brings forward the question of Christ's Pre-existence, and this suggests that Christ is the redemptive personality of God Himself. So Jesus was God-Man. The idea of a God-Man must be understood through personality which is a unity and a centre of creative initiative, with potential relations to higher forms of reality. This makes it possible to regard it as a fitting vehicle of the divine, and of becoming a temple of the Holy Ghost. This is the central fact in the Person of the Redeemer, God dwelling in Him and the unity is an identification of divine and human wills.

Turning to the meaning of redemption, Dr. Robinson says the word and the idea emphasize the objective work of Christ. He examines the terms used in the Old and the New Testaments for sacrifice and offering and atonement. He

admits that St. Paul appears to have conceived of the death of Christ as both substitutionary and penal, but there is also an objective reference in all he says. "Christ becomes to all that believe in Him, the cause of salvation so that all the gospel of salvation is wrought in Christ." The redemption He achieves is from the bondage in wrong, from the guilt of conscience and from the fear of punishment.

In the next chapter, Dr. Robinson deals with "The Redemptive Suffering". He examines Aulen's theory, and thinks his theory is not a theological solution at all, for it says little of what the Atonement cost to God. Only by bringing together the suffering of Christ and the suffering of God can we hope to avoid the idea of transactionalism and make Christ's work the work of God. It can be claimed that Christ's ultimate victory consists in the suffering at once divine and human, which, through the attitude of the sufferer, transforms the consequences of evil. We must start with the idea of redemption in the sense of ransoming, though we must remember that this is a metaphor or a symbol. In the same way sacrifices were symbolic acts, and the sacrificial interpretation is clear in the picture of the Suffering Servant. Moreover, the metaphors of sacrifice underlie the words of Jesus at the Last Supper in His reference to the New Covenant and also to the remission of sins. St. Paul makes little use of the metaphor of sacrifice and prefers the forensic ideas of righteousness and justification. The metaphor of sacrifice is most used in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the sacrifice is not only one of life, but of ethical obedience.

This idea of the death of Christ as a sacrifice has held a prominent place in Christian thought down until our time, and it lends itself easily to the conception of ransoming. We can say that every doctrine of redemption implies the vicarious principle, suffering on behalf of others, but we must not identify this work with the idea of penal substitution. We can understand a little of this through the idea of corporate personality, in which each individual is regarded realistically as the representative of the group. It is difficult for us to transfer this conception to modern theology, because we

think individualistically. We can only get a satisfactory conception of the Atonement, by holding that the life and death of Jesus brings something to pass which is admittedly the fulfilling of God's will. "Behind the Cross is the whole force of Christ's obedience and His consecration to His Father's purpose" (p. 260). His sacrifice and offering, both in life and in death, is therefore of the highest worth to God. How does the sacrifice avail for us? Perhaps the best answer is that Christ linked the imperfect personality of man with the perfect personality of God.

This position might mean that the Incarnation is the Atonement, but Dr. Robinson avoids this conclusion by insisting that Christ was victorious over moral evil, and in His death offered the sacrifice of perfect obedience to His Father. Moreover, He reveals God as suffering, and this must be true if God is love: "So the Cross is the symbol and manifestation of the hidden, suffering God by which men are moved to repentance, and inspired to believe that the God who suffers through Him is ready to forgive. Something still more is needed for an adequate doctrine of the Atonement." The Cross must be brought into relation with sin and guilt. God is Himself responsible for the possibility of sin, but man is responsible for the abuse of his freedom, and in this he has inflicted pain and caused sorrow to God.

What will be the reaction of a Holy God to the impact of this suffering? In antagonism to sin He might react in punishment or forgiveness. There is a place for punishment, and we must not eliminate this from our idea of God. The idea of the "wrath of God" is a metaphor, and the wrath of God is not blind, for it is the wrath of a divine personality, and does not exhaust the activity of that personality: His personality has other aspects, and He is redeemer as well as judge. So "God enters the temporal arena where sin challenges Him, and wins His victory there". This is part of the divine purpose from eternity, and this is the central fact in the relation of God to man. It is behind both the Incarnation and the Cross. In His prayer for His enemies, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do", Jesus actualizes the

divine grace, and by it He is seen transforming His Cross from defeat to victory, from shame to glory. Transformation is the key-word in the doctrine of divine redemption. The result of grace was the transformation of the event of the Cross. We must not forget that in speaking of the redemptive suffering of God we are moving wholly in the spiritual realm, nor that it emphasizes that redemption centres in God rather than in Christ. We must also think of man's guilt in relation to the holiness of God, and the guilt of man is nothing less than the consciousness of causing suffering to the Holy One.

Finally, we must see the essential act of redemption in what God does with the suffering which springs from guilt. By bearing it He transforms the suffering, and in this way, removes the guilt—"His loving acceptance of it transforms it into grace". God Himself, suffering in His Son and beyond His Son's historical suffering, is the ultimate redeemer. None but God could so bear human sin, and none but God could so transform its consequence of suffering. In a final chapter Dr. Robinson dwells on the redeemed, the Christian personality that is the product of the Christian redemption. This book is a very valuable contribution to the theory of Atonement, and its influence on the development of the doctrine will be a growing and transforming power in the days to come.

(C) PROFESSOR JOHN BAILLIE

Dr. John Baillie was Professor of Theology at Toronto and later at New York. From there he was called to fill the Chair of Divinity at Edinburgh University, where he still carries on his work. He is the author of many important books, among which is one entitled *The Place of Jesus Christ in Modern Christianity*. In this volume he deals mainly with Christological questions, but there is a chapter on the Atonement (chap. viii) which gives us his early views on the subject. He starts with a brief statement of Anselm's views of the Atonement as the payment of a debt and a satisfaction to the honour of God. To this theory he objects strongly, and

enumerates as many as eleven points in which he differs from it.

The most important of these are: (*a*) Anselm's view of God is that of a taskmaster rather than a Father, and this leads him to regard justice as primary in His nature rather than love. Moreover, it leads to the subsequent growth of the idea of a conflict in His Being between love on the one hand, and His justice and desire for honour on the other. (*b*) His view is more concerned with the future punishment of sin than with the present spiritual estrangement between men and God, caused by sin. (*c*) Anselm's view of punishment is purely retributive, having behind it the idea of the "anger" of God. Further, there is a serious discrepancy in his estimation of Adam's Sin and men's usual evaluation of sin in their punishment of sin in children. (*d*) The theory is based upon, and made operative through, one act, that is, the sending of Christ to the world to die. Little or nothing is said of the life and teaching of Christ, while attention is concentrated almost wholly on His death. Moreover, in its application there is a legal artifice, an artifice in the juristic sphere, but not in the moral and spiritual realm. This is the idea of the substitution of one not guilty for those who are guilty. (*e*) This artifice, as Anselm imagines it, is bound up with an unwarranted conception of two natures in Christ, and even here his theory lays little emphasis on the spirit in which Jesus offered Himself on behalf of men. Having stated these objections, Dr. Baillie dwells on the good features of the theory, and seeks to re-state these elements in more acceptable ways. There are five stages in this re-statement and here we come upon the positive views of the Professor.

(1) He first emphasizes the redemptive activity of Jesus Christ during the days of His flesh. He won men back from evil ways by associating with them, and trusting them, as in the notable cases of the woman taken in adultery and of Zacchaeus. He revealed to the sinful a love that swallows up wrong, and this fact of love overcoming wrong by enveloping the sinner with its warmth is forgiveness. Love has the ability, not merely of opposing and resisting evil; it can, in a very

real sense, destroy it, and in this lies the strength of real love. Now Jesus exercised this energy of love all through His life, and in every deed, and not only in His Cross. He was always giving Himself in love and thus was continually exercising a redemptive influence on men. This was most potent in His vicarious suffering, for suffering voluntarily borne on behalf of others, is the most powerful dynamic in the world for the production of moral and spiritual good, as well as for the destruction of evil. Nothing can win men back to goodness like the readiness to suffer for them.

Dr. Baillie gives several instances of this potency from history and modern life. We have an instinctive feeling that the Professor is here on right lines, and that suffering, really borne for others, has great redemptive power, and is the most decisive influence for good in human life. It seems clear that the value, as well as the efficacy, of such suffering lies in the readiness of the person who suffers to accept and undergo pains and affliction for another. This implies that the value is not in the suffering itself, nor is its virtue in its endurance, but in the spirit of the sufferer and in his obedience to the need of the situation and his surrender to it. This is predominantly true of the sufferings of the Cross.

(2) Dr. Baillie brings forward his second point, that the redemptive efficacy of Christ's life and death has been carried over into history, so that men everywhere can experience it. The most effectual means of this experience is through the community, in other words, through the Church's memory and experience of it. In the early Christian community there was a sense that Jesus had suffered for their sakes, and without the consciousness of this fact there would have been no fellowship and no community. It is through the fellowship and through consecrated souls in it, that the experience is most effectual throughout the ages, for—and this is the third point—

(3) Christ's redemptive and self-giving activity spurs on His followers to a like activity. They "fill up what remains of the sufferings of Christ" and this sacrifice, together with the sufferings it involves, makes them fellow-labourers with

Christ in His great redemptive efforts in the world. Here Dr. Baillie brings forward the sacrifice of Dr. Albert Schweitzer in Lambarene, as an example. The vicarious sufferings of Christ in His life, as well as in His death, becomes effective in destroying sin, and is a perpetual inspiration and example to His followers. In this they follow Him, for He is their example as well as the dynamic that gives them power.

(4) In his next point, Professor Baillie emphasizes the position that the redemptive passion of Jesus Christ brings us light on the Nature of God, making it clear and certain that His essential being is constantly giving itself in love in its specific action of redeeming. This is evident, first, in His throwing the mantle of forgiveness over the sinner, and again in His giving of Himself in suffering on his behalf. In doing this Jesus shows us what God is, "To turn our eyes from self and realize what God is", is the way of deliverance.

So far, then, Dr. Baillie's theory is little more than the Subjective Theory, for to know what God is in reality, is to be delivered. This knowledge of God is, and must be, an element in the deliverance of man, but in so far as sin goes deeper than his mind, and becomes a power in his spirit, something more than knowledge is needed, some power or grace that overcomes sin. Professor Baillie bids us forget self and sin and concentrate on God and His goodness, but we need more than to forget sin. Something is necessary that enables us to destroy sin. It is this deeper work of divine love to solve the problem of the sinner's past that is comprehended in the meaning of "Atonement". Further, it solves the need of the future also, for it "breaks the power of cancelled sin".

Dr. Baillie seems content in the early phase of his thought, represented by the book we have considered, to rest in the Moral Influence Theory, while he insists that it is all of grace and not of the merit of man, it is of grace in a somewhat deeper sense than that implied in the Subjective view. It is clear from Dr. Baillie's more recent books¹ that in some respects he has moved away from the position he held in his earlier writings. He was then strong in his emphasis on the

¹ More especially his *Our Knowledge of God*.

view that the moral is at the basis of all life, and is the deepest fact in human consciousness. It seems evident that he has come to see that there is something deeper than this, that the spiritual factor of "The Holy" is more determinative in life than "The Ethical". God and His relation to men have to be taken into consideration rather than the relation of men to one another, which is the sphere in which the moral rules. This involves another truth, that the religious consciousness and the religious relation are deeper facts in the conscious life of man than the moral and the intellectual aspects. Now if this conception is carried to its ultimate, it means that God in His presence and Christ in His power come into life, not primarily by the way of knowing, but by the way—as Principal Wheeler Robinson has insisted—of acting and doing. He comes into life and heart most by what He has done in the region of man's spiritual life, and what He has done is an "objective" element in the Atonement. This means that we cannot rest finally in a purely "subjective" view, and there are many tokens that Dr. Baillie has moved forward to an "objective" theory in the deeper sense of that term.

(D) PRINCIPAL A. M. FAIRBAIRN

Dr. Fairbairn was the first Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, a man of great learning and of a very wide sweep of thought. Well versed in German theology, he did much to commend some of its aspects, but he condemned others. He wrote a number of very able books, including *Christ in Modern Theology* in which he strongly urges a "Back to Christ" movement in thought and life, and *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion*, a massive work on the basal elements and truths of Christianity. He never published a systematic work on the Atonement, but, inasmuch as he regarded it as the central fact in Christianity, he refers to the Atonement in almost all he wrote. We shall deal mainly with his treatment of it in *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion*, for in this book we have his mature and well-considered views.

We note first that Dr. Fairbairn absolutely rejects the idea

of the impassibility of God: "Theology has no falser idea than that of the impassibility of God".¹ He goes on to say that if God were capable of loving, He must be capable of sorrowing and suffering. "To be passible is to be capable of sacrifice; and in the presence of sin the capacity could not but become a reality. . . . There is a sense in which the Patripassian theory is right; the Father did suffer, though it was not as Son that He suffered, but in modes distinct and different." But "this surrender of the Son represented the sacrifice and passion of the whole Godhead".² The limitation of the Son involved His passion and death, while the surrender and self-limitation of the Father involved the sorrow that was an invisible sacrifice. God's great act of sacrifice was the surrender by Him of the Son, and this was "the measure alike of His love to men, and of the suffering He endured to save them".

Dr. Fairbairn examines the consciousness of Jesus with regard to His mission and His death. First we note that He was conscious of being the Messiah, though He interprets the Messiah's vocation in His own way, and this interpretation was very different from the popular view, for it was that of a suffering Messiah. Jesus reached this conception through considering the Messiahship in the light of the Suffering Servant. So, like the servant, He must be prepared to surrender His life, while woven into this idea is the conception of giving life as a ransom. This purpose of the surrender of His life brought Him intense agony because of the men who were to commit the crime, but He must have felt, in the act of surrender, the joy of doing His Father's will. In the consciousness of this vocation and what it involved, He began to tell His disciples that He was to die. Here we note a development in the idea, for it would appear that, in the early stages, the death was regarded as inflicted, but later it is viewed as voluntarily accepted. He lays down His life and no one takes it from Him. The entrance of the voluntary element changes the whole conception, for the death becomes, not a martyrdom, but a sacrifice. The action of the crowd was necessary

¹ *Christ in Modern Theology*, p. 483.

² *Ibid.* pp. 483-484.

to determine the form of His death, but its real essence was determined by His Spirit; "its value to God and man proceeded from the spontaneity with which it was undertaken and endured".¹

Another idea comes into the situation, that which is done, is done in obedience to God, an act that thus becomes "the very end of His existence", and the cause why He came into the world. In this way His death ceases to be an incident; it assumes universal significance; it is taken into the purpose of God and it becomes the means of the realization of the divine will. This purpose, though variously described, gradually comes to centre on the idea that His death is the means by which God effects deliverance from sin. Yet another idea thus becomes woven into His sense of vocation, that of the vicarious principle, as the result of His complete identification with humanity. Thus, the express purpose of His death was to create a new and emancipated people of God. From the idea of His death Jesus never shrinks, but He shrinks from the suffering and the experience it involves. This is what happened in the Garden, and this was intensified by the discovery that evil had got a foothold among His disciples in the case of Judas.

Having examined the development of the redemptive consciousness of Jesus, Dr. Fairbairn shows how the idea of the death came into Christian worship, and became an institution. He considers how Levitical ideas came into the Christian conception so that it became interpreted in Levitical categories. Sacrificial ideas proved to be too strong to be quite ignored by Paul, and they were utilized in the interpretation of Christ's death by almost all the early Christians. Prophetic ideas, especially that of the Suffering Servant, were used also in the process of interpretation, and even Rabbinical ideas. All these focused, in time into the love of Christ as a new law, as the source of His sacrificial death, with His risen life as the spring of power and new life. So we come to the idea that the function of Christ's coming in the Incarnation was to save the soul of man from personal sin, and also save the race from collective sin.

¹ *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion*, p. 409.

Now the first step in saving from sin is to execute judgment on it, and to do this in such a way that, although it is God's judgment, it shall become the sinner's own. The supremacy of God's will is the supremacy of good, and salvation can only come by sin-bearing; it has to be vanquished by the surrender of the sinner to God rather than the surrender of God to sin. God could not treat sin lightly, and what cost God no pain to forgive would cost man no pain to repeat. So if God saves men it is certain that He will condemn and overcome sin. His judgments are never merely retributive, but are meant to change man's attitude to wrong, so that he takes the standpoint of God with regard to it.

How do the Incarnation and the death of Christ accomplish this? First, by the revelation of God's own attitude to, and judgment of, it; then, by making clear His love and His purpose regarding it, and that He accepts suffering for sin and its conquest. So without the Father there could have been no atoner and no Atonement, but with the Father-God "the atoner and the Atonement could not but be". So Dr. Fairbairn finally places the atoning act on the inner necessities of the Father's nature and love. So to be saved is to see sin as God sees it, to judge it with His judgment, and to see what it cost Him in sending His Son, as well as through the suffering of the Son. All this is found in the Cross, and in the death of Christ the sinner realizes it. But there is more than this in the Cross, for in it and through it new power comes into life, and into the hearts of men. From the Cross come, then, a new consciousness of God and a new consciousness of sin. In the Atonement, thus construed, many truths and principles are involved. We note a few of them.

(1) As God is the cause and the Incarnation, the organ and mode, of the Atonement it derives from the eternal its validity, and from Christ all its reality, as well as its adaptation to its end.

(2) As the work of one so constituted as Christ, the representative of God and man, it is in its very nature substitutionary.

(3) The Atonement has satisfied both the love and the

righteousness of God—His love, in recovering and saving sinners, and His righteousness, in vanquishing sin in the world and in the sinner, and so vindicating the authority of the eternal will.

(4) The end of God in the Atonement is the creation of an obedient and happy universe, and as a creation of God's grace it achieves this end. So Christ is the Head of a new humanity, and His obedience is the source of a collective righteousness.

(5) The Atonement exhibits God as a being who does not need to be appeased, nor to be moved to mercy, but who suffers unto sacrifice that He may save men. "The higher the character of God appears, the greater the happiness of the universe, and so we may say that the work of Christ has modified, for the better, the state of all created beings, even of the lost."

There are elements of real greatness in this theory of the Atonement, but it needs hard thinking as well as sincere living to catch its deepest meaning. Dr. Fairbairn was strong in his insistence that theology should be Christo-centric, and that Christ and His work should be at the heart of all Christian thinking. Since his day men's thoughts have moved forward, and they are insisting that all religious thought should be Theo-centric, finding its focus and its inspiration in God. This is a development that can bring nothing but good, as long as we put Christ at the core of our Theo-centric ideas. This means that we take Christ as determinative of our conception of God, so that we are able to say, as many today are saying, that God is like Christ, that His essential nature has been made known to the world in His Son Jesus Christ. In this disclosure, the Cross, with its suffering and death, is the deepest aspect of its reality, while the Atonement is the supreme act of God for a superb world.¹

¹ In the later portion of this sketch Dr. Fairbairn's *Christ in Modern Theology* has been largely used. See pp. 486-487.

Chapter IV

THE ETHICAL SATISFACTION THEORIES

ANOTHER effort to avoid the more doubtful features of the older theories while preserving their essential truths is made by emphasizing the ethical and spiritual aspects of the Atonement. By this means it is sought to rectify the post-Reformation tendency to stress the physical aspects of the sufferings and death of Christ, and to eliminate the commercial, the legal and the governmental elements, so as to make it a purely spiritual fact. In this way the element of "satisfaction" is retained, but its character is essentially changed. It will be evident that this view presupposes that God has feelings and passions, that in the words of Lord Balfour, "He is a being who has likes and preferences", in contrast to the unmoved, unchanging, passionless being of ancient thought. This, as we have seen, was a basic assumption in Greek thought, but to the Hebrews the idea of God was totally different. The emphasis on power and creative energy, so evident in the early days of the Semitic peoples, forced to the front the element of God's will, and this gave an impetus to the development of the conception of the Personality of God.

There is no trace in the Hebrew Scriptures of any conception of God that falls short of the idea of His personal existence. He is one who rejoices, is angry, changes and modifies His actions, suffers with, and in, His people, is with them in their woes, and always cares for them. This view has been regarded in certain circles as anthropomorphic and anthropopathic, and, therefore, as unfitting in our conception of a supreme being, as well as derogatory to His majesty and spiritual perfection. It is difficult, however, for us to imagine how else we can conceive of a God who is able to meet and satisfy all religious needs. The philosophical idea of God as "the Absolute" may satisfy logical and intellectual needs. It

may be reached as the crown of an intellectual system, the last step in a logical process. But this is far too abstract to yield any satisfaction to the deeper needs of man's spirit, though it may afford a measure of satisfaction to his intelligence.

This failure to meet the deeper needs is probably the reason why so many modern philosophers express dissatisfaction with the conception, and move away from it in the direction of the idea of a Personal God, or to the conception of "the Absolute" as personal. This is what has happened in the case of Professor Pringle-Pattison, as well as of Sorley, Ward and others. These thinkers have to leave the purely philosophic realm to reach this conception, and to enter into the sphere of religion and of religious experience. They do this along the line of an acute examination of the idea of moral values.

It is certain that in this sphere, as well as in the religious sphere, a measure of anthropomorphism is inevitable, for, as already mentioned, personality is the highest category known to us, and we must, if we are to reach any conception of God, approach it along the line of what we know of ourselves. This does not mean that we limit God, or measure Him by ourselves. It means, however, that we think of God as such that He is not less than human personality, and that He possesses in Himself the highest and best we can know of ourselves, however much more He possesses. The cry of anthropomorphism, therefore, is nothing to be feared, or to be avoided, in relation to God, as long as we do not limit Him to the stature of a great man. In fact there is, and must be, an element of anthropomorphism in all knowledge, for, in the final issue, the deepest conceptions of truth we draw out from ourselves, from our own sense of power and our experiences. For example, the principle of Causation, on which so much of our science rests, is anthropomorphic, for in the ultimate it arises in our own consciousness of being efficient agents, and of exercising powers that move or produce things.

In much the same way we can show that the ultimate

principles which lie at the basis of all our knowledge, and that the foundations of the structure of truth are anthropomorphic. We are not alone in thinking of the ultimates of knowledge as anthropomorphic, for it can be shown that all ultimates carry the same element in themselves. We need not, therefore, be afraid of the term, forbidding though it may appear, because we are in good company, for a multitude of men follow the same trail in their discovery and perception of truth.

The Ethical Satisfaction Theories are thus based on the conception of God as a Being who feels interest in men, is pleased and derives satisfaction from deeds of goodness, more especially with deeds of self-forgetfulness and self-sacrifice for others. He is One who has likes and preferences, and who values the best efforts of the soul of man. He can, therefore, be affected by man's ethical and spiritual achievements, and can find a measure of satisfaction in certain human actions and experiences.

Another principle underlies these theories, the principle of vicariousness. This appears to lie deep at the heart of the universe, and finds exemplification in a variety of ways, and in every phase of life. It has been emphasized in thought mostly in relation to suffering, but it appears in other aspects of experience, for it is written large on the face of all life. On the physical level it can be seen in the endurance of the pain of child-birth, in the willing surrender, by every mother, of part of herself in the production of children. On a higher level it reveals itself in the various sacrifices that parents make for their children, in the dangers they will face for them, and the hardships they will endure to save them, or to give them a chance in life. On a still higher level it is evident in such a fact as the sympathetic identification of one man with the lot of another, and the willing acceptance of suffering or evil fortune for his sake. This brings us very close to one aspect of the meaning of the Cross, and it enables us to see through it that there is, in a sense, a Cross at the heart of things.

It thus becomes clear that a personal God who feels and understands human need cannot stand aside from the struggle

of human life. He cannot remain an indifferent spectator of the follies, the mistakes and the sufferings of men. Rather can we say with Professor Pringle-Pattison, that there is a Sufferer at the heart of the universe, who shares in the conflict, enters into the turmoil, and also tastes something of the joy of victory and rejoices in the final conquest. He cannot, therefore, avoid the issue, but must take sides in the struggle. We shall return to this subject at a later stage of our study, but it is well for us to note that there is a sense in which the principle of vicariousness applies to God Himself, and that this truth bears on the fact and on the theory of the Atonement.

On the other hand, this is probably the most difficult as well as the weakest point in the Ethical Satisfaction Theories. Here we can ask whether the ethical actions, and the qualities on which these theories rest, are transferable; in other words, whether they can be vicarious in the full sense of the term. When, for example, Moberly emphasizes the vicarious penitence of Christ and makes this the deepest meaning of the Atonement, we are impelled to raise the question whether it is psychologically and spiritually possible for one man to be penitent instead of, or on behalf of, another, and in such a way as to make his penitence efficacious to new life and to a reconciliation with God. Penitence must be each man's own in the sense in which every action of his is his own. Nothing is more intimately his own than any man's deed. It stands apart from all else in underlined individuality, and differs from anything that any other man can do. So no man is so much his own as he is in his deeds, and there is a sense in which man's personality is what it does, and also that he reveals himself most, not in what he says or pretends, but in what he does. So we must admit that some things cannot be done by anyone else in such a way as to become our very own. Moberly seeks to establish his view along the line of a Mystical Union of humanity in Christ, but even this does not do away with all the difficulty.

There is, also, another difficulty in Moberly's theory. How can a sinless being repent, seeing he has no sin to repent? There is no trace of any consciousness of sin in Jesus,

and no suggestion of any penitence, no sign of regret or any pang of sorrow with regard to any act He had done. Is it possible for one who has done no wrong to experience penitence even for others? Sorrow he may experience, and shame he may feel, but not even the closest sympathetic identification of one with another can make him feel penitence for him. Here, it seems, every man must bear his own burden, and experience his own spiritual pain. To this question Moberly replies that it is only a sinless being who can really repent, and so offer perfect penitence to God. It is not easy to understand how this can be so, since penitence is a personal matter which is implicated with wrongdoing. This disability seems to rest on all theories of ethical satisfaction, with perhaps the possible exception of vicarious obedience, but even this is not certain.

We must look at this question more carefully. As we do, it becomes clear that obedience and the surrender of man's will which it involves stand on a different plane from penitence and other ethical satisfactions. We grow to understand that the experience of penitence has efficacy and value within the ethical and spiritual life of the penitent. It is true that this experience, and the attitude it implies, render the penitent's spirit open and accessible to God, so that His mercy and grace can enter. As such, it is a primary condition of any experience of forgiveness and reconciliation to God. In this sense it is essential to the union with God—or at-one-ment—which is the heart of the Atonement. Other conditions are involved, but the first step must be repentance, not only as a first step, but as the prevailing attitude throughout the whole experience. We can go further and say that the attitude of penitence, as well as the experience itself, are well-pleasing to God, affording Him satisfaction. All this is true, yet the fact remains indisputable, that whatever efficacy it contains is inward to the person who is penitent, the blessings it secures are his very own, although it can, and does, afford satisfaction to God.

When, however, we examine perfect obedience to God, with the surrender of the will which this implies, even in the

case of a sinful man, we realize that something happens that works a change, not only in the man himself, but also in the moral universe, and that it influences the moral order. Our knowledge of ethical and spiritual laws is as yet insufficient for us to dogmatize, but we know enough to enable us to draw certain conclusions. Thus, Professor Sorley has insisted strongly that man can be creative only in this sphere of ethical endeavour. In all other spheres he is imitative, reproducing and combining aspects and facts already known and in existence. When, however, he makes his ideals actual realities, he is creating something that never existed before, except possibly in the mind of God. By his effort he adds to the sum of moral values in the universe, and contributes something to the wealth and potency of the moral order.

We must recognize again that devotion to the imperatives of duty, and the surrender this implies, work important changes in the spirit of the individual who makes the surrender. His spiritual state, as well as his ethical potency, develop. Moreover, we are growing to understand that man only attains real freedom in proportion to the measure in which he makes such a surrender. The phrase "freedom of the will" is a doubtful one, for freedom is limited and fettered by evil habit, by tendencies and dispositions, and by the entail of the past. Men are in bondage and enslaved. Augustine was right in this at least, that the will of man is only free—really free—as he lets divine grace come in and attain the mastery of the human will by the indwelling of the Spirit. So we may say that man is only free as he is the slave of God, and that, in a profounder sense than we have realized, he breaks the bondage only as he is "in Christ", and is, as St. Paul calls himself, the bond-slave of Christ. In this way an act of obedience works great changes in the human soul itself.

But we can go further and claim that it works a change in the moral universe, and has repercussions on the spiritual order of the world. First, the act of obedience and surrender does make an addition to the sum of good in the world, and as such helps on the victory of righteousness, adding its

weight and value to the coming of the Kingdom of God. Further, it links itself in fellowship to all noble sacrifices and deliberate self-giving into a community of good and a dynamic of progress. We know, also, that such an act can bring about a change in the whole moral atmosphere, while its example can spur men on to heroic deeds and noble self-sacrifices, so that in this way it adds to the power of the ethical order of the world.

When, now, we realize the position of Jesus at the heart, and at the head, of humanity, man, as God originally meant him to be, it dawns upon us, that His obedience and the surrender of His will in the fulfilment of His vocation and the carrying-out of God's purpose must possess dynamic power of exceptional range and potency. From the heart of humanity, the act of will, and the attitude implied in His prayer, "Not my will, but thine, be done", had such energy and meaning that it could work an immense change in the moral order. It revolutionized its basis and made the world a forgiven world, "a world of redemption". It also worked a revolution in the moral forces of the world, securing the triumph of spirit over flesh, to use Pauline language. It was sufficiently mighty to overcome the evil forces in the world, and to make it a free, as well as a saved, world.

We find it difficult to envisage this wonderful achievement, but we catch something of its meaning in the bold challenge which St. Paul flings out in Romans viii, 35, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" He enumerates many of the prominent malignant powers of the world, but none of them can bring about such a separation, for "we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (Romans viii, 37). Jesus won the victory over all such evil powers, and men can share in His triumph. We have here a great picture of the wonder and the magnitude, the range and the meaning, of the work done by Christ in His surrender and death. Here, probably, more than anywhere else, we are to find the dynamic of the Cross and the mystery of its power. These lie in the perfect obedience of Christ and, behind it, the sacrificing love of God.

It has already been maintained that the power of Christ's work is not to be found in the physical aspects of His sufferings and death, although suffering, willingly borne for others, has dynamic and redeeming power. But the Atonement moves in the realm of spirit, and so the sacrifice must be one of spirit, and in the ultimate we must find it in Christ, not in the sacrifice of His body and the surrender of physical life, but in the surrender of His will, the handing over of Himself to the demands and purposes of the will of God. We have noted that almost all the thinkers whose work we have hitherto examined emphasize the place and importance of the obedience of Christ in His atoning work, but no one has completely worked out this idea. The thinker who has gone furthest in this direction is probably Dr. Garvie, for, although there are other aspects in his view, the idea of Christ's obedience is central to his thought. His views will be considered in this chapter together with the views of McLeod Campbell and Moberly, the main representatives of the Ethical Satisfaction Theory.

Another view calls for a brief notice. The late Dr. W. P. Paterson, Professor of Divinity at Edinburgh University, spoke to me on several occasions of his view that the vicarious element in the sacrifice of Christ was to be found in His implicit *faith* in God, because it was from this that His obedience sprang. This is an interesting suggestion, and inasmuch as it involves the God-consciousness of Jesus with its sense of a unique relation to God as well as intimate knowledge of Him, we are able to see a little way into its value and meaning. In so far as "faith" at its highest in the New Testament means the committal of the whole personality to God or to Christ, this suggestion opens out great possibilities and envisages profound meanings.

At first sight, however, the same difficulty surrounds this suggestion as that of vicarious penitence. It is not easy to see how one person's faith can be transmitted or transferred to another in such a way as to become efficacious as a spiritual dynamic in the soul. We cannot be sure on this point, and we must await fuller knowledge of spiritual laws, and a more

profound study of the nature of human personality, before we can definitely reject Professor Paterson's suggestion. His suggestion, however, is of sufficient importance to demand fuller consideration when the day of more complete light appears. Till then we must wait in patience, and lay hold of every opportunity of developing the hint made by Dr. Paterson.

(A) REV. J. McLEOD CAMPBELL, D.D.

The first serious attempt at an Ethical Satisfaction Theory was made by a minister of the Church of Scotland, the Rev. J. McLeod Campbell of Row in Argyllshire. He wrote a book on *The Nature of the Atonement* in which he gave expression to a view which was in those days regarded as heretical. He was twice arraigned before the General Assembly, being finally condemned and deprived of his living. After some time he came to Glasgow to become minister of a church built for him by a number of his friends. When finally his health broke down, and he was obliged to give up his church, he advised all its members to join the Barony Church of which Dr. Norman McLeod was minister.

His book on the Atonement was published in 1856. Born in 1800, he died in 1872. He cannot thus be called "modern", but the growing influence of his book demands, and warrants; careful attention. His view has affinities with the subjective theories, but it differs radically from them on some points, notably in the fact that he believes in an objective element in the Atonement. Moreover, he held that it works a change, not only in men, but that in some way it makes a difference to God, and that the change wrought in men would be inefficient without the change wrought in God.

There were deep stirrings in those days both in England and in Scotland against the penal theory of the Reformation. In England, Maurice, Benjamin Jowett, Kingsley and others were seeking a broader view, and a freer atmosphere, while in Scotland, Erskine of Linlathen started a movement against the rigid orthodoxy of his time. Thus Campbell grew up in

an atmosphere of enquiry and expectancy, and the book he wrote was a work which Dr. Franks says is the most systematic and masterly volume produced by a British theologian on the work of Christ during the whole of the nineteenth century.¹

Campbell's view, in general, may be described as that of vicarious penitence and confession. All that is needed for God to forgive sin is for men to repent really and sincerely. God is eternally forgiving love and is always ready and waiting to forgive, whenever and wherever He finds a soul open to receive His forgiveness. The ready and open soul is the truly penitent soul. Man cannot himself repent really and fully, because the ravages of sin have made this impossible. But Jesus Christ, out of the heart of humanity into which He was incorporated at the Incarnation, and, as the representative of humanity, offers to God a perfect repentance and confession of sin. This makes it possible for God to forgive the sins of all men. Christ was in no sense punished for the sins of men, but He made a sacrifice to God of a truly penitent heart, and in this way Christ's death is vicarious and His penitence avails for men.

Campbell, in the course of his treatment, gives expression to an important principle of interpretation, saying that the Atonement must be interpreted by itself. We must not start with an *a priori* supposition or a fixed idea, but must examine the Atonement in the light of what it does, and the way in which it meets the deepest needs of men. We must follow his treatment.

He first examines the ends contemplated in an Atonement, asking what it seeks to do? His answer to this question is, that it seeks to bridge over the gulf between God and man, and so bring them together. That this is needed is clear, first, from the conscience of man. This conscience is what accounts for the various sacrifices offered throughout the ages as an effort to reach some union with God, or to win His approval. In the second place, Christ and Christianity bear witness to this need, and in this connection we must note the fact that, in the history of Christianity, those have reached closest

¹ *A History of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ*, vol. ii, 392.

communion with God who see the glory of the Cross. Examining this need more fully, Campbell concludes that it has reference to the past and its guilt, to present sin and to the final destiny of man. The very first demand which the Gospel makes upon us, in relation to the Atonement, is that we believe that God forgives sin, and this fact is presupposed in the Atonement. Socinians and others say that God did not need any Atonement. But, says Campbell, "love forgiving without any condition" is on a far lower moral plane than love forgiving at infinite cost. Moreover, God's love is seen most clearly and fully in His providing the Atonement and bearing the cost Himself.

In the next three chapters he considers the teaching of Luther (chap. ii), of Calvin, as represented mostly by the New England divines (chap. iii), and the modified Calvinism of his day as represented by Pye-Smith, Wardlaw and others (chap. iv). He rejects Calvin's views, because he limits the Atonement to a few, and because he substitutes a legal standing for a filial one, for the Atonement is not meant to restore a legal standing in relation to God, but to bring erring sons back to the Father.

In the next chapter he enunciates his basal principle, that the Atonement must be seen in its own light, and not in the light of any legal or governmental figure whatever. He further states that it must be the holiness and love revealed in the sufferings of Christ that saves, not the sufferings themselves, for God could not suffer physical pain, yet sin caused pain in God's heart. The idea of Christ's sufferings as a punishment is thus given up, and Campbell maintains that He suffered to make known the suffering of God's heart. So the Atonement is spiritual, and the spirit in which it was accepted is what atones. Here Christ's obedience is the most important element in the sacrifice He made. The Atonement, then, is the active outgoing of self-sacrificing love, and as such it has two aspects: (a) Christ's dealing with man on the part of God and (b) His dealing with God on behalf of men. This means that the work of Christ has a retrospective aspect in dealing with the past, and a prospective aspect

dealing with the future. There follow two crucial chapters, (chaps. vi and vii) dealing with these two aspects.

In chapter vi Campbell deals with "The Retrospective Aspect" under two heads. First, he considers (*a*) Christ's dealing with men on the part of God. He came to bear witness to men of the will and love of God. This was done in His perfect manhood, His character and His life. This witness-bearing is part of His sacrifice, and it took Him to the Cross. The Cross was not all suffering, for there was "joy" in it, the joy of being conscious of doing God's will, and of giving Himself for others. All He did, as well as all He endured, was a part of His witness-bearing for God. It was not penal, therefore, but the expression of the divine mind with regard to sin, and what it meant to God.

(*b*) In the second section, Christ's dealing with God on behalf of men is considered. In this section we might have expected some emphasis on the penal aspect of Christ's sufferings, for Campbell deals with the judgment and the "wrath of God". We do not, however, find this, but the insistence that what Christ does, is to make a perfect confession of our sin to God. He could do this, because He was one with us, and one with God. His confession is "the Perfect Amen of humanity" to the judgment of God on sin, and it enables us to see sin from God's point of view. To see it thus is to conquer sin and to get forgiveness. The confession Christ makes was a result and a growth of the holy sorrow that was in Him in knowing and bearing our sin, and the "Amen" is given from the depths of humanity. He who thus perfectly repents for, and makes confession of, sin bears and absorbs the punishment of sin. The suffering He endures in doing this is vicarious and expiatory, but it is not penal. It is an atonement for sin rather than a punishment of sin.

Considering the question of a perfect repentance, Campbell insists that man feels that if a perfect repentance could be achieved, this would be enough to cancel sin. But man, sinful as he is, cannot do this. So Christ made it for us. He not only makes confession for the past, but He intercedes for the present also, for the intercession of Christ is the response in

His humanity to the divine love in its yearning over the sinner, and a perfect expression of the forgiveness God cherishes towards all those who return to His love.

Chapter vii deals with "The Prospective Aspect of the Atonement". Here Dr. Campbell starts by reiterating his view that the Atonement is a bridge between what man is and what God desires him to be. Its nature is to be determined by this ideal of humanity, and we must understand it in the light of what it was meant to do, and what it does actually do. This is in accord with Biblical witness, for it is said He died that we might live to God, and He "suffered . . . that He might bring us to God". The present immediate effect of the Atonement is justification; the remote effect is the gift of eternal life, and the acquisition of the righteousness of Christ in us; in other words, it is sanctification, which is nothing less than the sharing in the life and spirit of Christ.

In this prospective aspect, again, Jesus (*a*) deals with men on the part of God. This He does by revealing the Father, and making it possible for us to enjoy fellowship with God. Jesus' Incarnation proves God's attitude to men, and His desire to come into humanity and save it. But Jesus does more than this: He shows what man is capable of becoming, and that he is, in reality, a child of God. In His life and conquest over sin Jesus shows man what he ought to be, and can be. (*b*) Jesus also deals with God for man. Here Dr. Campbell insists that Christ seeks to reproduce His own life and righteousness in us, and by so doing actually gives us the gift of eternal life. His seeking for men in His life, and His intercession in His risen life, are an expression of this purpose. Moreover, He endeavours to kindle in our hearts the same trust in God as He had, and to stir in us the same filial spirit as His. In the final issue, this filial spirit of His is what constitutes the perfection of His atoning work.

Dr. Campbell concludes his study with another chapter, in which he illustrates his position more fully, and works out in greater detail his essential points, more especially the central point that the offering of Christ to God was that of a perfect confession of sin and of penitence. This was made out

of the heart of humanity, and it makes possible the forgiveness of sin.

We are conscious that this is a fine spiritual treatment of the subject. Its influence on subsequent thought was very great in its liberating power. It helped to break the narrow, and in some cases the unchristian, domination of Calvinism, and it broadened men's ideas in many directions. We can see on the surface the strong points of the theory. It commended itself to thinking men by its surrender of the extreme penal views held in Dr. Campbell's day, by its change from the legal and commercial basis of the older views to the personal and spiritual realm.

Again its appeal to Christian experience in dealing with forgiveness and the other facts, made possible by the Atonement, rang true, and found an echo in the souls of men. Moreover, the fine devotional spirit with which the author approached his subject made the appeal of his book very powerful. On the other hand, some points of criticism can be made. The first point has already been mentioned, that of the difficulty of conceiving how one person can feel penitence for another, and the deeper question of how a sinless being can experience a sense of penitence at all.

Dr. Scott Lidgett has noted another point, that the declaration and confession of sin are regarded as sufficient. He thinks that some power beyond these is needed.¹ Professor Mackintosh has mentioned another weakness, that this theory does not represent the Atonement as meaning enough to God. He insists that no theory can be fully satisfactory that does not emphasize the Atonement's meaning to God.² In reality criticism goes deeper than this. We might say that Dr. Campbell's view appears adequate to deal with the question of the guilt of sin and its entail from the past, on the moral consciousness of man, but that it fails to deal with the past entail of sin as a power in the soul, and even, in some respects, in the body, of man. Sin grows in power until it has dominion over men; it enslaves them. Evil habits become

¹ In *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement*.

² See his book *Some Aspects of Christian Belief*, pp. 80 ff.

stronger and the opposition of man's will weaker. Some power is needed to reinforce the weakened will, and to master the dominance of sin's power in the soul. Dr. Campbell does not adequately provide for this. He says that to "see sin from God's point of view is to be saved".

This is scarcely sufficient for two reasons. In the first place, sin is more than an intellectual matter, and for its care more is needed than the illumination of the mind and the fuller understanding of the issue, although these can go far. Secondly, Dr. Campbell's view may deal adequately with the intellectual entail of sin in the moral consciousness as the sense of guilt. But it is scarcely adequate to combat, or conquer, the dominion of sin in the flesh and in the soul. More is needed for this, nothing less than an impartation of grace and power from the Spirit of God. This power was made available through the death of Christ. Something came into human nature in the Incarnation of Jesus, and this was made possible to all men in Christ, something more than revelation of truth, for it empowers man's weak will, strengthens his instinctive reactions, and makes him more than conqueror. Dr. Campbell fails to link the death of Christ to His resurrection and His exalted life. In spite of this his theory has great value and abiding meaning.

PROFESSOR R. C. MOBERLY, D.D.

Dr. Moberly (1845-1903) was for a time Principal of Sarum College, and afterwards Regius Professor of Pastoral Theology at Oxford University. He was an eloquent preacher, and became an Honorary Chaplain to Queen Victoria. He was a High Churchman with strong sacramentarian sympathies, as can be seen in his treatment of the Atonement. He published his great work on the Atonement in 1901.¹ This is one of the greatest books on the work of Christ, massive in grasp and treatment, keen and penetrating in insight, with deep psychological acumen, while through it

¹ *Atonement and Personality*. He wrote also *Christ Our Life; Sorrow, Sin, and Beauty*, and a volume on *Ministerial Priesthood*.

all there runs a sincere spiritual tone, and a real Christian outlook. The style has a certain rhetorical quality, and Dr. Hastings Rashdall maintains that this is excessive, but he admits that "whatever may be thought of the position he takes up, it must be admitted that *Atonement and Personality* is a serious attempt at theological thinking and that it demands serious attention, consideration and discussion".

Moberly's line of approach is intriguing and differs from that of almost all writers on the subject. He realized that the older theories of the Atonement, as well as many modern conceptions, are defective, because the view of personality on which they are based is inadequate. So he first gives us a deep and suggestive psychological analysis of personality, and an equally able examination of Punishment, Penitence and Forgiveness. His views on Free-Will are somewhat difficult, and his theory of "inclusive personality" open to grave objections, yet this part of the work is thoroughly done, and shows deep thought and patient study. He touches on a great variety of subjects, such as The Person of Christ, The Personality of God, The Holy Spirit, The Trinity, Human Personality, Pentecost, The Church and Sacraments, Spiritualism, Mysticism and several other important topics.

We note, further, that Dr. Moberly appears to accept the Genesis story of the Fall as if it were literally true, and makes this assumption the basis of some aspects of his treatment.¹ Another point is clear, that Moberly has no real discussion of sin, and we are left in doubt as to his views on this important subject. He assumes the reality of sin, and its guilt and power in human life; there is also considerable discussion of the psychological aspects of sin, but he never tells us what he understands by "sin". This omission finds a measure of compensation by Moberly's treatment of punishment, penitence and forgiveness. The book, admirable though it be in some respects, raises many important questions, and it leaves us with the feeling that the author has not really accomplished what he set out to do.

¹ *Atonement and Personality*, pp. 88, 123.

I

Dr. Moberly's affinities are with the Fathers of the Eastern Church. His suggestion of "Recapitulation", his insistence on the Logos in interpreting the Person of Christ, as well as his stress on the Incarnation and its importance in the work of Atonement, remind us of the Greek Fathers, more especially Athanasius, and his idea that the Incarnation is the Atonement. The union of God and man was actually achieved in Christ and this itself constitutes the Atonement. Moberly does not say that the Incarnation is the Atonement, but he treads, at some points, very closely to this idea. He dwells on other facts, such as the penitence of Christ and His obedience. But it appears clear that the main emphasis is on the fact of the Incarnation, so that we get the impression that Bethlehem is more important than Calvary, and that the incoming of God into humanity is the decisive fact in the whole work of Christ. He insists that we must view the Atonement from three points of view, past, present and future. With regard to the past, we have to deal with guilt; in relation to the present, we have to consider the power of sin in human life, the habits formed, and the deterioration of character, which are the result of sin in the soul; regarding the future we have to consider the new life in Christ, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in human personality, which is the continuation and reproduction of the Incarnation in the redeemed humanity, or the Church. This third aspect receives a fuller and more sympathetic treatment than the other two, by far the larger portion of the book being devoted to the various phases of this truth.

Moberly's treatment of the past heritage of sin is in many respects unsatisfactory and unconvincing. His discussion of the present power of sin and its vitiating influence in the soul is more to the point, but it is to the future that he gives his attention most fully. So we find him dwelling on the gift of the Spirit at Pentecost, as an indwelling presence and power in the believer. He views the Christian personality as the new creation of the Gospel and an extension of the

Incarnation, and insists that the Church is a community of such persons. We find him saying, in his discussion of the "objective" and the "subjective" aspects of the Atonement, that "the heart of the matter would lie in the exposition, and realization of Pentecost".¹ Moreover, "an exposition of the Atonement, which leaves out Pentecost, leaves the Atonement unintelligible—in relation to us" (p. 151).

One of the most interesting and important features of his treatment is Moberly's insistence on the link between the death of Christ and the gift of the Spirit. He says, "Calvary is the condition precedent . . . to Pentecost . . . it is the possibility of Pentecost; and Pentecost is the realization, in human spirits, of Calvary." . . . "Calvary without Pentecost would not be an atonement *to us*" (pp. 151-152). Moreover, when we think of the Holy Spirit in relation to man, "it is clear that we are thinking of what is, in fact, a result of the Incarnation. It is thus, indeed, as sequel and consummation of the accomplished completeness of the Incarnation, that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit begins to be unveiled to men's thoughts at all . . . because the significance and work of Incarnation and of Atonement would be . . . without the presence of the Holy Ghost . . . incomplete" (p. 181). "Everything, then, turns upon the full recognition . . . of the *transcendent fact of Incarnation*"² (p. 200); and the "doctrine of the Holy Spirit . . . is the extension of the Incarnation, the application of the Atonement" (p. 309).

Further, Moberly insists that the Incarnation is the dominant fact in the New Testament (p. 189 f.). He is right in this position only in the sense that the Incarnation is implied in everything that is recorded in the New Testament. But it is not the fact most fully and openly discussed, nor is it dominant in the sense of being prominently emphasized in the early tradition and preaching of the Apostles. A much stronger case can be made out for the predominance of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Corinthians xv, 3-4).

There is no reason to object to the emphasis laid on the work of the Holy Spirit in man as the sequel to, and the

¹ *Atonement and Personality*, p. 151.

² Italics mine.

consummation of, the Atonement. In this, Moberly has rendered a service to Christian thought of great value and of permanent worth. But we are entitled to question his insistence on the primacy of the Incarnation in the work of redemption. To single out any one fact in the whole movement of God to save men is opposed to the full idea of God's intervention in Christ, for every fact finds its meaning in its place in the complete movement. There is thus in Moberly's treatment an element of one-sidedness, and we must admit that he tends to emphasize as dominant a factor that is not the first in importance in the Early Church.

Rashdall has pointed out that if the implications of Moberly's position were consistently thought out, "they would land him considerably nearer the position of Spinoza than he would wish to find himself".¹ This comment is unassailable, for the semi-Hegelian idea of personality which Moberly enunciates, leads in a definitely pantheistic direction. His treatment of "free-will", in which he almost completely explains it away, and his failure to distinguish between the concepts of "individuality" and "personality", are the results of this pantheistic strain in his thought. When he deals with free-will and with personality in relation to the Holy Spirit, he not only ignores the distinction, but goes a long way towards annulling it altogether.

With regard to Moberly's relation to other writers, he comes more into line with Dr. McLeod Campbell than with any other. He has little sympathy with Dr. Dale's position. He opposes Dale's retributive idea of punishment, and his idea of God as "Punisher" implied in this. He gives more or less a travesty of Dale's views. He objects to the idea of "transaction" in the Atonement, but he contends for an "objective" conception. This implies some process outside ourselves before it can become a power within us. Moreover, he hints at some kind of penal substitution, for he speaks of Christ "being so self-identified with sinners" that He voluntarily stood in their place, "accepting insult, shame, anguish, and death . . . yet outwardly inflicted as penal".² Again,

¹ *Journal of Theological Studies*, vol. iii, p. 186.

² Italics mine.

Jesus' sacrifice took on the real character of the penal averting of God's face (p. 130). Further, "The suffering of penitence may *quite fairly be termed penal suffering*"¹ (p. 131). "He . . . bowed Himself to Death,—Death in its outward form inflicted with all the contumely as of penal vengeance" (p. 133). So we see "revealed in Him the meaning of penal death" (p. 280).

This aspect comes out more clearly in some of Moberly's sermons. Where he speaks of Christ on the Cross "stretched and nailed, dying *penally* the death of the neglected and accursed".² There is thus a deep inconsistency in Moberly's treatment. In the main, however, Moberly's view is that of moral satisfaction, and he is greatly indebted to Dr. McLeod Campbell, but whilst Campbell emphasizes confession most strongly, Moberly makes penitence primary. It is curious to find Moberly criticizing Campbell very severely, and saying that we cannot accept his whole exposition as it stands (p. 410).

II

Dr. Mozley has insisted that it is difficult to give an idea of the contents of *Atonement and Personality* except by taking the chapters as they come. The book falls into three parts. Part I contains important studies of Punishment, Penitence and Forgiveness (chaps. i-iii).

Part II deals with certain aspects of the Person and Work of Christ (chaps. iv-vii).

Part III is the longest and most characteristic (chaps. viii-xii). This part is nearly three times as long as that dealing with Christ and His work, and almost ten times as long as the chapter dealing with "The Person of Christ". It is about six times the length of the treatment given to "The Atoning Death of Christ". These facts give us an insight into the interest and the attitude of Dr. Moberly, for the subjects considered are "The Holy Ghost", "The Church and the Sacraments", with a final chapter on Man's Imperfection.

Looking at the book, we note that chapter i deals with punishment. He rejects Dr. Dale's view, but recognizes three

¹ Italics mine.

² *Sorrow, Sin, and Beauty*, p. 120.

points of value in it: (1) that punishment takes the form of suffering; (2) that suffering is applicable to a sense of guilt; and (3) that it must be regarded as proceeding from righteousness. Punishment can only have meaning for persons, and one should also note that for this reason it has to do with the sinner rather than with sin. The meaning of punishment must be sought in the end it seeks to achieve, and this end is the moral benefit of the sinner and not merely the punishment of his sin. We must recognize that some punishment fails to achieve this end. Men may become worse, and in this respect, "Hell" is a possibility and a reality.

Moberly thus gives up his idea of punishment as non-retributive in this crucial instance, and, whatever he may subsequently say, cannot overcome this lapse. He smoothes it over by suggesting that there is a retributive element latent in all punishment, which, if it fails to restore men, asserts itself as vengeance. It seems, then, that God's first attitude to the sinner is one of love and mercy, and if this fails it turns to vengeful punishment. It can only benefit the sinner, however, in proportion as it induces penitence. The possibilities of penitence are inexhaustible, and all vengeful punishment, if accepted in the right spirit, can be translated "to the side of penitence". When punishment brings about self-identity with righteousness, it has atoning virtue, and its power to sanctify or atone is just in proportion to the measure in which it ceases to be punishment and becomes a mode of penitence (p. 23).

In chapter ii Moberly deals with "Penitence", regarding it as the most distinctive characteristic of the Christian consciousness and experience. It can only become the condition of a personality with a capacity for righteousness, but who has sinned and has become wretched because of the sin. This wretchedness is a token of man's greatness and the spring of it, as well as its essence, is love. So much is this so, that in the final issue, the love is the pain. Sorrow is thus the utterance and the relief of love. Many degrees of penitence are possible to men, but none is wholly perfect, because sin has rendered man incapable of such penitence. Past sin remains in man as

guilt, but to remove guilt is not the same thing as breaking the power of present sin in the soul. The sense of guilt, however, may become a germ of penitence, and this may work such a change in man that he "is absolutely one with the spirit of holiness". This is the ideal, but no human penitence reaches it. Penitence is really restorative, but perfect penitence is only possible to one who is personally himself without sin. At this point Moberly's position is extremely doubtful. He insists that what is impossible in respect to ourselves is *exactly real in the Church*, the breath of whose life is the Spirit of Jesus Christ. In the final issue penitence is the echo in man's spirit of the Spirit of Christ.

Chapter iii is a consideration of "Forgiveness". This is not merely remission of a penalty, though this may be an element in forgiveness. Before it can become real, there must be a consciousness of deserving punishment, but it never means only the passing over of the punishment. We cannot say, either, that in forgiveness guilt is ignored; it goes deeper, and depends on something in the sinner. It can never be unconditional but depends on the sinner's "forgiveableness" (p. 56). When man is in a state in which he can be forgiven, he is forgiven absolutely. It cannot be "earned" or "deserved", and it can only reach perfect consummation when the forgiven penitent has become, at last, completely righteous. Moberly in most passages that follow, appears to identify forgiveness with justification, but this is unwarranted. He illustrates forgiveness in the case of parent and child, and here he is very effective. He omits, however, the dynamic element in such forgiveness, the new trust on the parent's part in the child in spite of his sin.

In chapter iv Dr. Moberly considers "The Person of the Mediator". The problem of Atonement is how to get one who is unholy to be holy. "Is a mediator needed or possible for this?" Human experience shows that the hope of a bad man lies in someone—mother, friend or wife—becoming in a sense a mediator. Such mediatorship is successful only when (1) the person undertaking it does so voluntarily out of love; (2) that he is closely related to the guilty one and can

be his representative; (3) that his sacrifice of vicarious endurance is the deepest way to produce the contrition and sanctification of the guilty one. In Christ these conditions are fulfilled.

Here Moberly brings forward his difficult and doubtful theory of Christ as "inclusively man". His humanity is not merely the humanity of a finite creature, but the "Humanity of the infinite God" (p. 89). Moreover, the interpenetration of a human spirit by another is only possible through the Spirit of God which has become, through the Incarnation, the Spirit of Man. In this way "human-kind is summed anew, and included in Christ" (p. 90). Christ, then, is not a mediator in the sense of an intervening third, but is identically and inclusively God and Man. We are now able to see Moberly's basic ideas. Punishment is primarily restorative, and meant to induce penitence which has atoning power. Penitence is only fully possible to a sinless being, and in such a being it has supreme atoning efficacy. Forgiveness is the possibility, and the means, of man's self-identity with righteousness, whilst the idea of "inclusive humanity" in Christ makes His action and His sufferings those of humanity which is summed up or recapitulated in Him. The subsequent chapters are an application of these ideas to the various aspects of Christ's life and work, and to the indwelling Spirit of Christ. We need not dwell as fully on these.

Chapter v is a study of the obedience of Christ. Jesus was man, but more than man, for He was the Logos, God expressed under the limitations and possibilities of a human person. His life was all through absolutely dependent on God, and this dependence revealed itself in obedience and in prayer. "The central characteristic of His manhood . . . was the absoluteness of His relation of dependence upon God" (p. 193). Jesus' life was "a real energy and revelation of active and most stupendous obedience" (p. 107).

In chapter vi Dr. Moberly considers "The Atoning Death of Christ". Jesus' relation to sin is very mysterious, for "He was made sin". "He condemned sin", by judging and conquering it. His judgment on it is that of Eternal Righteous-

ness. He conquers it by His perfect repentance and this is the Atonement. Moberly raises at this point the question whether anyone can be penitent for the sins of another. He says Yes! for we can see it every day (p. 118). The law of vicarious suffering and energy is manifest through human life.

We feel at once that the argument here is very weak. Vicarious suffering is one thing, but vicarious penitence is quite another. The idea of "inclusive personality" is again brought forward and this leads to the question of the experience of sin in One who is sinless. Three elements are suggested. First, the extent of the capacity for self-identification with the sinful. Secondly, Christ's "inclusive humanity" makes this possible, so that "the full consciousness of sin in the full light of holiness might be His own personal consciousness". Thirdly, the consummation of penitence is the real atonement for sin. Christ on the Cross offered to God the sacrifice of perfect obedience, and of supreme penitence, and these are the Atonement (p. 130). There is in His death no element of vengeance (p. 139), yet Moberly speaks in an earlier page of His death in its outward form "as inflicted with all the contumely as of a *penal vengeance*" (p. 133).

In chapter vii the question of "objective" and "subjective" is considered, and an effort is made to show that what was done objectively by Christ must be accepted by the believer, if it is to be effectual.

Chapter viii deals with the Holy Spirit, His place in the Trinity, and His work in the redeemed soul.

Chapter ix contains a long discussion of the Holy Spirit in relation to human personality. Here Moberly's pantheistic tendency becomes evident, for human personality is in danger of being lost in the Spirit, while the Spirit Himself is attenuated into an influence, or identified with divine grace (p. 194).

In chapter x we have a treatment of the Church and the Sacraments, followed by a chapter of recapitulation, and a final chapter on "Our Present Imperfection" (chap. xii) in which various topics figure.

III

The outline given makes it clear that Moberly's treatment is an impressive contribution to the idea of the Atonement, with many valuable and important points. He has lifted the whole subject away from the "transactional" framework of the older theories and raised it into the sphere of personal and spiritual realities. Some points of difficulty have, however, been mentioned—the uncertain view of punishment, and the conception of "inclusive humanity". In view of other aspects of Moberly's treatment we may ask two questions: Does God *ever* leave any man, even the vilest, wholly to himself? A human parent, worthy of the name, would scarcely do this. Again: Does divine love cease towards the sinner if he fails to respond, so that only vengeance remains? The Cross, in its deepest meaning, answers these questions with an emphatic negative. We note further points.

(a) Moberly's insistence that perfect penitence is only possible to a sinless person raises the question, What has the sinless to repent for? If Jesus were really penitent, does not this imply sin in Him? It seems inherently impossible in the nature of things for one man to be really conscious of the guilt of another, nor can we conceive how a sinless being can have an inner consciousness of sin. Without this the penitence of such a being will lack some element, and this the most distinctive element, of a real penitence. Moberly brings in the idea of Christ's omnipotence to solve the problem, but this is a desperate and unsuccessful expedient. Certainly the burden of proving that a sinless being can be penitent rests with him, and as far as we can see he has not succeeded in doing this. Stevens remarks, "Of course it is true that all human penitence is imperfect. . . . But is it not the very nature of the *grace* of God to accept us in our imperfect desires and intentions? . . . Is not this, indeed, the very meaning of the divine grace?"¹

(b) In his treatment of penitence and the Atoning Death of Christ, Moberly has failed to establish any real or neces-

¹ *The Christian Doctrine of Salvation*, p. 351.

sary connection between the penitence of Christ and His death. He speaks of the death as the climax of His penitence, but he does not indicate in any way why it should be so. We miss any suggestion that the sacrifice of Christ has any relation to the eternal necessities of the nature of God. If Christ's penitence were the Atonement, man's salvation might have been secured without Christ's death.

(c) It is not easy to understand how penitence can mean anything to God Himself, in such a way that He suffers. Men have felt that whatever was done on the Cross meant something to God, and that it revealed, or was a symbol, of His suffering. In this lay the "objectivity" of the Atonement. But penitence seems incompatible with the fulness and perfection of His being.

(d) Another difficulty arises in Moberly's attempt to eliminate the distinction between "objective" and "subjective" theories. It is good to have an idea that transcends and fuses these two in a higher unity, but we cannot reach this along the line that Moberly suggests, for his solution is inadequate. There is a subjective emphasis woven into the fibre of Moberly's thinking, and we must agree with Dr. Mozley that it would be easy to make his theory into a Moral Influence Theory.¹ Other questions arise such as whether we can regard forgiveness as progressive. Again, has he not in his emphasis on immanentism, and the idea of "inclusive personality", endangered the transcendent factor in human personality and, to some extent, in God? More especially, has he not ignored the transcendent element in Jesus Christ? In spite of these difficulties, and questions, we must say with Dr. Mozley that *Atonement and Personality* is a great book.

PRINCIPAL A. E. GARVIE, D.D.

Dr. Garvie² was first Professor and then Principal of New College, London, which post he held for many years. After his retirement in 1933 he continued to make his contribu-

¹ Mozley declares that Principal H. G. Grey treats Moberly as an expounder of a merely subjective view: *The Doctrine of the Atonement*, note on p. 195.

² Dr. Garvie died in 1945.

tion to Christian truth. A man of encyclopaedic mind and great energy, he has written many valuable books, including an important volume on Ritschl and a comprehensive study of *The Inner Life of Jesus*. This is the work of a devout and reverent heart, with ample psychological knowledge and insight, and a sincere effort to find the truth.

It is somewhat difficult to write about his view of the Atonement, for he has never written systematically on the subject, so that his conception has to be gathered from various passages of books devoted to other topics. Moreover, he touches on so many aspects of the work of Christ, that it is not easy to weave his position into a whole. It may be said, however, that his basic principle is that of the obedience of Christ—"a stupendous obedience", as Moberly calls it—for this is what gives the deepest meaning to, and provides the dynamic in, the work of Christ on behalf of men.

In his *Inner Life of Jesus* he makes a careful study of the consciousness of Jesus during His passion in the Garden and on the Cross. He finds in this consciousness two main elements that must have developed in the mind of Jesus as His ministry proceeded. The first is what may be called a redemptive element, the sense that what He was doing, and more especially what He was suffering, was on behalf of others. This had probably been derived by meditation on the Suffering Servant of God and his vicarious sacrifice for others. The second element is the sense that, in all He was doing, He was carrying out the will, and fulfilling the purpose, of His Father. This element finds expression in Jesus' words in the Garden: "Not my will, but thine, be done". This meant the final surrender of Christ and His dedication to the task which He felt to be God's. Henceforth He was consecrated to this at whatever cost. This surrender revealed itself in His attitude and bearing throughout His trial; it sustained Him in His sufferings on the Cross, and it must have yielded Him a strange joy, the joy of giving Himself up fully and completely to God, to carry out His purpose. This surrender, and the submission of the will which it entailed,

was not lightly undertaken, for Jesus definitely and deliberately made it. He had freed all the issues, and in full light of all that was involved, He had chosen it and bent His will to carry it out. Such a deliberate and concentrated act of will, by such an one as Jesus was, must have great dynamic power within the moral and spiritual universe, nothing less than the breaking of the power of sin's dominion, and the enthroning of the principle of freedom and love. The view that Jesus' obedience is decisive, finds an echo in the New Testament, for St. Paul speaks of Him as being "obedient unto death", whilst the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks of Him as learning "obedience by the things He suffered". We cannot understand all the mystery of the Cross, but we know that in all He was obedient to His Father's will and purpose.

In a volume entitled *The Christian Certainty and the Modern Perplexity*, Dr. Garvie has a chapter (chap. v) on "Sin, Sacrifice and Atonement", in which he gives us valuable hints on the subject. Here he starts by quoting Harnack: "The primitive Christian community called Jesus its Lord, because He had brought the sacrifice of His life for it, and because it was convinced that He, raised from the dead, was now sitting at God's right hand. . . . (His) death had the worth of a sacrificial death."¹ Dr. Garvie then stresses the fact that, in the time of our Lord's life, the Jews held the conception of sacrifice as a penal substitution. He then considers the question of the origin of sacrifices. In sacrifices two motives are operative: (1) Man's sense of sin and his desire for God's pardon, moving him to offer something for himself as a substitute to expiate his guilt. (2) Man's sense of dependence on God seeking expression in an act of homage. Probably the first offering was a gift. In later development the idea of sacrifice becomes more moral and spiritual, whilst the idea of vicariousness gradually becomes prominent. Further, the ideas that sin deserves punishment and that the innocent may suffer for the guilty, are so universal and permanent that they cannot be lightly dismissed. The vocation of Jesus was envisaged by Him on the lines of that of the Suffering

¹ *Das Wesen des Christentums*, p. 97 (E.T., *What is Christianity?*, pp. 156, 160).

Servant of the Lord. He presented to God the sacrifice of an absolutely obedient will as well as the sacrifice of a broken heart. In His self-identification with men, through sympathy, and with God, through submission to His will, Jesus combines perfect human penitence and perfect divine condemnation of sin in the act of enduring the consequences of sin. In this actual endurance both human penitence and the divine condemnation could be finally expressed. We must find the efficacy of what Christ has done through union with Him, and in this union we find life, for it is the distinctive human experience.

We might ask why the judgment of God on sin made it necessary for Christ to die? Dr. Garvie answers saying: (a) Only in the case of one who knew and felt all that sin meant, both to God and to man, was it possible that death should be invested with its full significance and righteous import. (b) The function of Jesus was to be the Saviour of Men, by conveying the assurance of forgiveness. "He brought God to men in grace and brought man to God in faith." By revealing the Father He awakened in men the desire for Sonship, whilst by His tenderness He assured, even the sinful, of their pardon. For this pardon to have its full effect, the holy love of God had to be revealed, and this could not but involve a judgment on sin.

In his *Handbook of Christian Apologetics* (chap. v) Dr. Garvie deals with "The Christian Salvation", and here we get his clearest views. He opens by saying that we can best reach the truth about the Person of Christ through the worth of His work for men. The primary element in religion is deliverance from evil, and just in proportion as it meets this need, it is *Redemptive*. This, however, is only the negative side of religion. Its positive side is *Perfective*. Salvation has too often been viewed on its negative side, but men are saved to grow in perfection. Sin is the evil from which religion delivers men. If God participates in man's moral life and struggles, it is impossible to exclude His judgment on sin, for there must be a reaction against sin in His personal relation with men.

We must distinguish between sin and the guilt of sin, for

sin is not merely disobedience to a divine law, but distrust of divine love. Guilt, however, is the sense of estrangement from God which sin creates. Again, forgiveness is not merely the cancelling of the penalty of sin, even if this were always possible, for there are consequences of sin that forgiveness does not at once arrest. In a world where holy love reigns, if sin and guilt disturb the relation between God and man, forgiveness must restore this relation. Restoration of loving fellowship between man and God is what atonement is meant to achieve, and the first step towards this is forgiveness. Salvation can be also regarded from the point of view of sacrifice, and the Suffering Servant in the Old Testament is represented as offering himself a sacrifice of Atonement for the salvation of the people, voluntarily and vicariously. In the Cross of Christ we see the fulfilment of a desire and the satisfaction of a need that men have vainly sought throughout the ages, and it is so because it is God's self-sacrifice for the sins of men. In Christianity it is not man that approaches God in penitence and with sacrifice; it is God in His sacrifice who approaches man with pardon.

Here it is that we come to Dr. Garvie's basic principle. Christ's sacrifice is vicarious in two senses. It was made for the sins of others, and it secured salvation for others. In considering this vicarious sacrifice of Christ, Dr. Garvie lays very great emphasis on the fact that it was voluntary and deliberately willed. Jesus did not merely submit to the doom imposed by men, He surrendered Himself to the will of God, and in obedience to God, "He . . . *willed* that the crime of the Jewish people should be the ransom that He offered for the many, the crowning act of His ministry". "He *willed* that the hate of man should in Him be made the means for the manifestation of the love of God."¹ To say or think that the physical conditions of His death are sufficient to account for His sorrows in dying, is simply to make His willing Spirit subservient to His weak flesh. "Surely it was because He *willed* that His death should be a ransom . . . that the cup was so bitter."² His death was vicarious, not in a legal sense,

¹ P. 125.

² P. 126.

but in the language of love. It was not an outward substitution for mankind but an inward identification, a *willed* identification with mankind in a death that was His sacrifice. He died, not only in compassion for men, but also in obedience to God, and his participation in human suffering was a *willed* submission to divine judgment. He felt Himself enduring to the very uttermost, not only all that sin had inflicted on men, but also all it involved to God. The will of Christ was in it all, and this was the dynamic power, and still is the dynamic power of the Cross.

Now, in order that men may receive the benefit of the Cross and share in the new life it procures,—in other words, receive forgiveness, and new power, they must be brought to penitence. For this it is necessary to reproduce in man's soul God's judgment on sin. Moreover, the Cross must be seen to be necessary, if it is to show God's love: and to awaken the love of men. To awake man's penitence it is necessary to perceive God's judgment on sin. The Cross evokes penitence because it conveys this judgment. There is a false note in men's antithesis of objective and subjective in relation to the Atonement, for the value of the Cross in its subjective influence on men must correspond to its validity in its objective testimony to God. God's self-expression in His condemnation of sin is as necessary to Him as His self-expression in the forgiveness of sinners. It is the deep conviction of men that, in the Cross, God judges the sin He forgives, and that it is God's own sacrifice of Atonement. Jesus forgave sin during His life, and He claimed authority to forgive. In the Cross this forgiveness became possible for all, and His authority was vindicated and upheld. All the New Testament writers regard Christ's death as an atoning sacrifice, and we have ground for inferring that this was a view Jesus Himself bequeathed to them. Christian experience bears witness to the fact that the Cross is the most potent influence in bringing about "the broken and the contrite heart", in inducing the repentance that can claim forgiveness, for in it the Fatherhood of God is revealed as love and sacrifice. So it derives its power from the two facts of God's revelation as love and the

voluntary and deliberately willed obedience of Christ and His surrender of all to God. Dr. Garvie suggests that the power of this obedience is so great that it changes the basis and principles of the moral universe, subduing the powers of evil, and opening the way to the possibility of universal salvation. So saving grace is bound up with the Person and the personal activity of Christ.

Chapter V

BACK TO THE BIBLE

ONE of the most interesting developments in relation to the Atonement is the decided movement towards the study of the Scriptural witness to its meaning and reality. A most thorough and detailed examination is being made of the ideas and the cognate practices bearing on the question of Atonement, in both the Old and the New Testaments. This is being done in order to secure a firmer Scriptural basis for the idea and the meaning of Atonement, and to place the doctrine on a more lasting foundation. Some of our most competent scholars are carrying out this study along the new line and method of modern Biblical science, and in the light of the fresh knowledge obtained through historical criticism and recent discoveries. The added spiritual insight into truth, made possible through the enlightenment of the Spirit of God, has also made its contribution.

This study needs the utmost caution as well as a considerable measure of critical ability, for it not only means the examination of the ancient documents, but must trace the subsequent development of ideas and the changed emphases that appear in each generation. Thus, the development of Old Testament ideas and practices in the Apocalyptic period must be considered, whilst the influence of this development on the thought-world of the New Testament must be taken into account. Moreover, the process of development does not cease in the time of the New Testament, for subsequent growth has been rendered possible under the guidance of the Spirit of God. This movement back to the Bible follows two main lines.

The first is a fuller study of the Messianic Hope of the Jews in all its implications as to the vocation and the character of the Messiah. This leads to an examination of the self-consciousness of Jesus in regarding Himself as the Messiah

and the differences between His view and that of the popular thought of His day. The second line of study is an examination of the sacrificial ideas and system of the Old Testament. An endeavour is made to trace the development of such ideas into New Testament times. Beyond the life of Jesus, the Jewish sacrificial ideas must have suffered a radical change in view of the fact that, through the Fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, no sacrifices were possible, for the Temple was destroyed, and all the sacrifices prohibited and rendered impossible. Among the Christian believers, also, there must have been a profound change in such ideas, for the idea of Christ as the One Sacrifice had grown—in some circles Sacrifice and Priest—a sacrifice that centred in itself all the meaning of the older sacrifices, and fulfilled their purpose so that they were no longer necessary. The Hebrew sacrifices were never revived, except in a few sporadic attempts, which failed, while the Synagogue, which had acquired considerable prominence in later Judaism, became the centre of Jewish worship; keeping what can only be called a shadow of the ancient feasts and celebrations.

In the study of the Messianic Hope, it has become clear that the figure of the Messiah is not a stereotyped and static one, for it appears in different forms according to the circumstances of the times. Beginning with the idea of a Davidic Prince, who is to restore and enhance the splendours of the nation in the reign of Solomon, we find later that the idea changes. It is possible that the underlying thought of a Davidic person never quite disappeared, but the form becomes different. Thus, even before the Exile, and more so during that event, as is clear from the latter part of Isaiah (known as Isaiah II), the Messiah gets to be regarded as a prophet, full of wisdom and understanding, knowing the counsels of the Lord and teaching the people His truth. This conception probably reflects the ideas of the prophetic party and school. On the other hand, in Ezekiel, who was a prophet of the Priestly class, the Messiah is envisaged as a priest, who is to exalt worship and offer perfect sacrifices. We find a further suggestion in Ezekiel that the Messiah is a

shepherd who is to protect and guide God's people. This view underwent considerable development, especially among the Jews of the Dispersion, for we find in the writings of the Alexandrian Jew Philo repeated references to the Messiah as a shepherd. There are also reflections of this idea in some of the Apocalyptic writings.

It is clear also, that the idea of the Messiah was fluid, for Cyrus, the Persian king who granted the exiles permission to return to their land, is spoken of as Messiah, the anointed of the Lord. This notion of the Messiah being the Anointed, as the very name suggests, appears to have persisted through all the phases of the development of the idea.

An important article by Robertson Smith and Kautzsch in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* gathers up the main ideas regarding the Messiah, his function and vocation. This article makes it clear that the Messiah's primary function was that of being a special representative of God who was to inaugurate His Kingdom. This event was to take place on "the Day of the Lord", and it meant the establishment of the reign of God on earth, with Jerusalem as the centre. To Jerusalem all nations were to come, and out of it, the Law was to spread throughout the world: the vocation of the nation, under the Messiah, was to "be a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel".

This was primary, but for its accomplishment, special powers were necessary, and they were to be given as an endowment from God to His representative. There was, however, a wider aspect of the Messiah's vocation, an aspect that involves more than the possession of power. His task is to make ready the people, and fit them for the Kingdom. In this way a redemptive element is woven into the conception by the idea of the renewal of men. Moreover, with the growth of the idea of sin, this redemptive task is brought into relation with sin. So an element of Saviourhood enters into the conception with all this implies, and there are suggestions of substitution and of vicarious sacrifice. Such ideas appear to have grown during the exile. It is of great interest

to note that the idea of the "Suffering Servant" of the Lord seems to have appeared at the same time, probably because of the absence of the customary sacrifices. This afforded the opportunity for a different idea of sacrifice to develop, which was linked on to the conception that the nation in its sufferings during the Exile was, in reality, suffering on behalf of others,—indeed, for the world.

As far as we can see, there is no definite evidence within the pages of the Old Testament, that the ideas of the Messiah and of the "Servant" came into relation with each other, and we cannot trace any attempt at fusing, or identifying, the two conceptions. When, however, we come to the New Testament, the identification of the two ideas is strongly emphasized from the earliest period of the "Acts", to the later phases of New Testament thought. This identification was probably due to the hint given by the risen Lord to His fellow-travellers on the Emmaus road, when He spoke about its being necessary for the Messiah to suffer, and urged them to search the Scripture on this question. This suggestion was acted upon, with the result that the Suffering Servant picture became prominent.

We know that one of the outstanding problems of the Early Church was to reconcile the sufferings and death of Jesus with the claim that He was the Messiah, for the Jews could not tolerate the idea of a suffering and dying Anointed One. It is clear that the main difference between Jesus' idea of the Messiah, and that of His contemporaries, lay in the introduction of the element of suffering into His picture. This probably means that in His consciousness the idea of the Messiah had fused into that of the Suffering Servant, and that He interpreted the vocation and task of the Messiah in the light of vicarious sacrifice and death of the Servant. The Servant vicariously bears the sufferings caused by his people's sin, and gives himself to death as a substitute for others. In this way a vicarious and substitutionary element enters into the very fibre of Christ's self-consciousness and the rôle of the Suffering Servant becomes His ideal of service. This is a very suggestive line of study, and it throws valuable light

on the redemptive consciousness of Jesus, and on the relation of God to His death, for in the Servant passage it is said that "it pleased the Lord to bruise Him".

Two recent writers have studied the Atonement along this line, and given us important results as to the fusion of the two ideas mentioned, in Jesus' mind, as well as in His sense of mission. We shall follow their study in this chapter. The second line of approach is to study the problem of the Atonement from the point of view of the Old Testament sacrifices and the sacrificial system, as these became more ethical and spiritual in later thought. Dr. Hicks, at one time Bishop of Lincoln, emphasizes most the Old Testament witness, whilst Dr. Vincent Taylor lays most stress on the sacrificial implications in the Passion-sayings of Jesus, and various other New Testament passages. It is highly probable that the development of sacrifices into a definite system, bearing certain implications and expressing specific ideas, is a late product in the Old Testament.

As far as we can discover, there were no priests in the early period of Hebrew and Semitic history. The father of the family, apparently, acted as a priest for the family, for we read of Abraham offering sacrifice for his family. Noah presides at a sacrificial offering, whilst Job is said to offer sacrifice for his children, "if perchance they have sinned". The first appearance of anyone like a priest is in the book of Judges. It is true that Melchizedek is mentioned in the early chapters of Genesis as a priest of the Lord, but two things are clear with regard to him. He was evidently not an official priest, and again he was not a Hebrew. He appears as a kind of superhuman figure, a natural priest in virtue of his nobility and human sympathy. Moreover, he does not imply a sacrificial system. It appears clear that the definite system of sacrifice became established in the period of the Priestly Code, through the exertions of the priestly caste. Some changes in the various sacrifices were made later, and these developed the gloomy ritual of the Day of Atonement.

In the consideration of the Old Testament sacrifice there is a grave peril of emphasizing the physical aspects too

strongly, dwelling on the blood and the disposal of the flesh, and losing sight of the inner spiritual meaning. Dr. Hicks is not quite free from this charge. Moreover, we must not forget that, to the vast majority of Jews, the sacrifices were regarded as efficacious in connection with ceremonial faults. The more thoughtful section of society saw more in them, but to the people moral and ceremonial faults were confused, often regarded as equally sinful, and demanding similar sacrifices. This was one ground of the protests and the opposition so evident in the prophets, more especially in Amos, Micah and, later, in Jeremiah.

We must also take note of the fact that the basic idea of sacrifice changed with the development of more ethical ideas, and the growth in the idea of God. Two factors in the early period hampered this development. The first was the idea of corporate responsibility which was deeply ingrained in the Hebrew mind from early times. The unity of the clan life and the patriarchal idea, which vested responsibility with the Father, developed into the wider idea of corporate responsibility as the nation grew. Thus sin was largely, in the ultimate, a wrong against the clan or the nation, or the welfare of the nation. This idea is clear in the book of Genesis, and we can see a flagrant case of it in the story of Achan, where the whole family is punished with death. We need not, at this point, discuss the idea of sin, with its almost magical and contagious elements, which is involved in this story, but it makes it quite clear that responsibility rests with all the members of the family. This corporate idea prevailed until individualism grew in Hebrew thought, mainly in exilic and post-exilic times. The corporate idea governed also Hebrew worship which was regarded as a communal and corporate act of acknowledging God, while sacrifices were regarded in the same way, although there were individual offerings. The main forces in breaking down this conception were the growth of individualism and the gradual moralization of the idea of God.

We begin to find individualism in the prophet Jeremiah, and there are three stages in its development. In him we find

it as individual communion with God, and the consciousness that God accepts the individual's worship. This grew out of the prophet's experience, that in the midst of his people's rejection and persecution, he could, and did, enjoy intercourse with the Eternal. In Ezekiel we find the second stage, that of individual responsibility. Men were hiding behind the idea that they were suffering because of the sins of their ancestors, and that the calamity of the Exile was due to the evils of Manasseh. A proverb was current to the effect that "the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge". Ezekiel assails this proverb, insisting that the responsibility is each man's own, and that it is the soul that sinneth that shall die, thus asserting individual responsibility against corporate responsibility. The third stage is that of the development of the idea of individual immortality. This takes place in the Apocalyptic period, and we need not follow it.

It is clear, however, that the introduction of individualism into corporate worship and sacrificial practices would tend to undermine their basic principle and weaken their efficacy. The individual's responsibility got to be interpreted in ethical terms, rather than in ceremonial or sacrificial terms: Justice is more important than burnt offerings. "To obey is better than sacrifice and to harken than the fat of rams." Micah's famous saying is to the point here: "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?"¹ The development we have traced was partly the result, and partly the cause, of the prophetic consciousness in Israel.

The second fact that hindered the growth of more ethical ideas of responsibility and worship was the covenantal idea, and the sense of privilege and security which this induced. Jewish religious life moved within the orbit of the covenant originally made at Sinai. This was at the basis of Hebrew national life and consciousness, and it determined such ideas as those of sin, of punishment, and of the relation of Israel to her God. This was particularly so with regard to worship,

¹ Micah vi, 8.

for it moved in, and derived its chief meaning from, the covenantal relationship, for, as Professor A. B. Davidson has shown, all interests above those of finding food, etc., were regarded as within the scope, and under the aegis, of the covenant. In later years this developed into a favouritism that narrowed the Jewish outlook, and became detrimental to its ethical life.

The growth of the individualistic and ethical ideas we have considered, had an effect on the idea of God. It is the glory of the Hebrew prophets, and a crowning achievement of the prophetic consciousness, that Israel alone of all the nations of antiquity reached the idea of One God as an ethical personality. Whilst the surrounding nations were sinking deeper and deeper into polytheism and a naturalism that made sincere ethical worship most difficult, this nation climbed slowly up the summit to an ethical monotheism of the noblest kind, to the idea of God as an ethical personality, the ground of the moral universe, and the Protector of men.

We should note, also, that the other monotheistic religions of the West—Christianity and Islam—are based upon, and have grown from, this fundamental conception of God. We are not, however, to confine ourselves to the development of these ideas in the Old Testament, nor are we to rest on its conception of sacrifice. The process of spiritualizing such ideas was carried far in the New Testament, more especially in the mind of Jesus. The process is still going on under the influence of Christian ideas and their gradual leavening of thought with “the mind of Christ”. We are able to understand that sacrifice is not a matter of bulls and goats, nor yet of blood, but of the “Self”, with all its powers of mind, heart and will. “Faith” is, in the ultimate, such self-giving, the surrender of the total self, laying self upon the altar of sacrifice. This is the only real spiritual sacrifice, and this explains why “faith” holds so large a place in the Christian religion. Efforts have been made to interpret Old Testament sacrifices in this more spiritual sense.

Dr. Forsyth has an appendix to one of his books, in which

he seeks to do this, and deriving spiritual meanings from the "blood" and other features of the ancient sacrifices. Dr. Hicks attempts the same task. This effort is necessary, for there is a marked tendency in the mind to linger over the material aspect of the older sacrifices, and to ignore their moral and spiritual meanings. Dr. Hicks is not quite free from this tendency, as we shall see. The study of the ideas and the practices connected with the sacrifices, can clarify our ideas regarding certain aspects of the Atonement, but it cannot take us all the way into the heart of the problem and its gifts of grace and freedom to men.

(A) PROFESSOR A. B. MACAULAY, D.D.

I

Dr. Macaulay, who served for many years as Professor of Theology at Trinity College, Glasgow, has published some valuable books. His best known work is entitled *The Death of Jesus* (1938), and here we find his mature ideas regarding the Atonement. He states that his purpose is to consider the death of Jesus, historically, psychologically and theologically, and confesses that the masters, whom he follows, are Dr. Denney and McLeod Campbell. Of the latter's book he says, "A nobler book on the death of Christ than *The Nature of the Atonement* has, in my judgment, never been written in any age or language". Dr. Macaulay rejects the Penal Substitution Theory, but he is prepared to admit that the term "substitute" defines Christ's work, in relation to men, better than any other, but we must interpret it as moral substitution, consisting of the voluntary self-offering of Jesus for men.

In his first chapter we have a discussion of "The Task of Christian Dogmatics". Here he examines the nature and the danger of dogma, and stresses the need for revision and re-statement, saying, that "there will never be a genuine revival of religion on the basis of respect for what is hoary". He discusses the Apostle's Creed, and criticizes some of its

clauses; examines the Westminster Confession, insisting that reconstruction and re-statement are urgent. He declares that a revised statement was submitted to the United Free Church Assembly in 1926. This was duly received, but in view of the efforts for union with the Church of Scotland, it was considered unwise to take any further steps to give it final sanction.

In the following chapter the question of the "Postulates and Methods" of reconstruction is raised. Here Dr. Macaulay touches on the Moral Influence Theory, saying that it is not sufficient, because it fails to do justice to the relation of Christ's death to sin, nor does it provide any ground that will satisfy the awakened conscience, and assure it an unassailable peace. With regard to Christ's work on behalf of men, we must ask what it is in God that makes the Cross necessary, and we must realize that there is a Godward reference whenever the terms "ransom", "propitiation" and "sacrifice" are mentioned. The "Postulates" in any process of examination are: (1) We must not isolate the death of Christ from His life, nor emphasize the life at the expense of the death; for in the Gospels, both the life and the death of Jesus are viewed as one great moral achievement, which "had unique reconciling meaning and virtue". (2) Again, whatever meaning we give to the death of Jesus, it must be congruous with the reconciling influence which He exercised during His life. Jesus' attitude in life produced reconciling results; He embodied the power to evoke penitence; He articulated and bestowed forgiveness, and as in the case of the woman taken in adultery, He made the sinful have trust in themselves again.

With regard to the method of approach, Dr. Macaulay recognizes the value of customary approach along the line of the three offices of Christ, as Prophet, Priest and King, but he regards them as unsuitable, for it is not quite clear what each office, taken by itself, really means. He accepts the principle enunciated by McLeod Campbell, that the Atonement must be studied in its own light. In view of the fact, however, that three personal causes are involved in

the Atonement—man, Jesus Himself and God—he proposes to approach the subject along the line suggested in this division.

So in chapter iii he considers “The Will of Man in relation to the Death of Jesus”. He discusses the principal agents in the crime, assigning blame to the High Priests and the Sadducees. Jesus’ proclamation of His Messiahship aggravated the hostility of the priests. His claim to be Messiah was important, and Dr. Macaulay quotes Harnack as saying that “the story of the triumphal entry into Jerusalem has to be expurgated, if the theory is maintained that Jesus did *not* regard Himself as the Messiah, or was led to be regarded as such”.

Chapter iv is exceedingly important, and deals with “The Will of Jesus Himself in relation to His Death”. Here Dr. Macaulay gives us an able psychological study of the self-consciousness of Jesus. The basis of this is Jesus’ sense of His filial relationship to God; and here great use is made of the crucial passage in Matthew xi, 25-27. In his further study, Dr. Macaulay comes to the conclusion that the figure of the “Suffering Servant” of Isaiah liii was in the mind of Jesus from a very early date. This appears to have been His favourite passage of Scripture as a boy, and when at the age of twelve, in the Temple, when He spoke of His Father’s business, He had the Servant and his work in mind. Further, it shows that He had thus early accepted the Servant’s vocation. At His baptism He became conscious of Messiahship, and what really happened there was that the idea of the Servant became fused into that of the Messiah, so that He interpreted the Messianic to be the fulfilling of the Servant’s vocation. Jesus’ consciousness of Sonship is basal, and the rest follows from this and He accepted the sacrifice implicit in the Servant. In this way the idea of suffering grew into the idea of the task and service of the Messiah. The problem for Jesus was not that of reconciling His consciousness of being the Messiah with His realization of being the Servant, but to harmonize His early identification of Himself with the Servant, with His later discovery that He was the Messiah.

Dr. Macaulay holds that to Jesus, His death was present to His thought from an early period of His life, and that it was deepened at the beginning of His ministry. The baptism confirmed Him in this view by His committing Himself to the mind and will of God, and to the fuller realization of His vocation of winning men to God. His sense of future suffering and death was strengthened as He meditated on the fate of the Servant. The question is raised as to how the self-consciousness of Jesus supports the view expressed, that He was aware of Himself as One who is to fulfil the rôle and the vocation of the Servant, and to reach His destiny in death, before He began His public ministry. Jesus' words about "fulfilling all righteousness" at His baptism, suggest this. Moreover, it is clear from two other incidents: (*a*) His reading in the Synagogue where He says, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears", and (*b*) His reply to the deputation sent by John the Baptist.

Dr. Macaulay suggests that what the voice at the baptism meant to Jesus was not that He was the Servant,—He had had this before,—but that He was the Messiah. "What is distinctive of Jesus' self-consciousness from the day of His baptism, is the apprehension of Himself as the Messiah, along with His antecedent realization of Himself as the Servant." It was for the fulfilment of this dual vocation that He was endowed with the Holy Spirit. So Jesus accepted the name Messiah, conscious all the time that it was approximate and provisional. It seems clear that a wider horizon than that of a merely Jewish Messiah was present with Jesus, prior to His baptism. Once we grasp the uniqueness of the consciousness of Jesus, and His knowledge of the heart of God as pure love, we can grasp the idea of the kind of activity to which He was prompted. The solemn committal of Himself to the career and the destiny of the Servant supplied the psychological condition necessary for the revelation to Him of the fact that He was the Messiah, the Anointed of the Lord. There are thus two foci to the consciousness of Jesus: first, His identity with the Servant, and secondly, His consciousness of being the Messiah. The synthesis of these two foci

was far from easy. It cost Jesus the trial of His temptations, He struggled with it in the Garden. It enables us to understand that Jesus saw His death before it came. He spoke of this more frequently towards the end, and His words show with what a complete consciousness of identity with the Servant He was embracing the ideal before Him. He spoke of the need of suffering on the Emmaus road. It was the voluntary acceptance of the Servant's work and mission. "He was put to death at the hands of men, but He gave His life freely to His work." It was not taken away from Him; it was rather He that laid it down. In reality He had given it before He died.

From this point Dr. Macaulay considers "The Ordeal of Jesus in His Death" (chap. v). Jesus died in His vocation of inaugurating the Kingdom of God. Here he considers the "ransom" passage, and finds in it suggestions of the Servant. The Supper passage is also examined, and here again "the influence of the Servant passage (Isaiah 53) is unmistakable". Probably Jesus was helped in His idea of sacrifice, by His Mother's sacrifices at home, but it seems clear that the system of Jewish sacrifice contributed nothing. It must have slowly dawned upon Jesus that somehow "His death entered determinatively into the work of redemption, of reconciling men to God, and of mediating forgiveness to them". It appears from the saying "He suffered being tempted", as if Jesus was tempted by His sufferings. Pain was a temptation and gave rise to the struggle of the Garden. It is perhaps at the root of the "Cry" on the Cross.

Here Dr. Macaulay agrees with McLeod Campbell that the "Cry" is not one of desolation, but of unbroken trust. We must not, however, regard the sufferings of Jesus as penal. The Moral Theories are unsatisfactory because they fail to do justice to the exposure of Jesus to the full meaning of sin and because they have nothing to offer as a ground for the assurance of forgiveness to the awakened and alarmed consciences of men. Jesus saw sin as God sees it and agreed with God's attitude towards it. The resurrection guarantees the reality and truth of forgiveness. Dr. Macaulay then

comes to his final chapter, vi: "The Will of God in relation to the Death of Christ". Jesus' death came in carrying out the purpose of His life, the establishment of the Kingdom of God; and His ordeal was a real encounter with sin. This involved two aspects (a) the trial of His love for men, and (b) the trial of His filial consciousness and relation to God. He was not the personal object of divine wrath, but He realized to the full, as He alone could, the guilt of sin and the divine reaction against it. He had forgiven men during His life as in the case of a paralytic, and of Zacchaeus, and they were persuaded that His word of forgiveness had divine authority. Jesus' death has relation to the fact of vicarious sacrifice, for as Bushnell says, "vicariousness is just another name for love". Dr. Macaulay, however, condemns Bushnell because he says "Christ died for us", but is not prepared to say "Christ died for our sins". The ordeal of Jesus, then, was that of being the subject "to a perfect consciousness of the divine reaction to sin", and what the term "substitute" emphasizes is the fact that there was something in Christ's death from which He saves the sinner, something with which we could not deal, and with which He could only deal in a perfected experience, in death at the hands of sinners. It is due to Him that repentance is awakened in men, and that the assurance of forgiveness is begotten in their hearts.

There is a further point in Jesus' death; it is a revelation of God, and it mediates this to men. There is a necessity in the nature of God for what He does on the Cross, and it is all of free unremitted grace. "It is love alone that can reconcile." The suffering of the innocent is always a mystery in the divine ordering of the world. The idea of God's wrath must be toned down but it must cost something to God to help men. The term satisfaction is ambiguous, but it means that the death of Christ has some meaning, and affords some satisfaction to God. Moreover, the death had a substitutionary and inclusive character. The cost to God was in infinite sorrow, but forgiveness is in the very nature of God and is not acquired by Him at cost. So the Cross of Christ bears a double witness, to sin and to love. The ordeal of Jesus must

not be construed in the terms of His willingness to bear "ransom", "propitiation" or "satisfaction", but rather in terms of a dreadful temptation of His love and faith in men, and of His filial consciousness in its assurance that His own attitude to forgiveness was also the attitude of the Father.

This is a very suggestive treatment, openly subjective and emphasizing the fact that in the Cross we have the victory of Christ over all the forces of evil. Every page displays fine scholarship and clear thinking, while through all the treatment there is a real and devout loyalty to Jesus Christ.

(B) PROFESSOR W. MANSON, D.D.

Dr. William Manson holds the Chair of New Testament at New College, Edinburgh,¹ and is a scholar of wide reputation. He has written many books, the last of which, entitled *Jesus the Messiah*, was published in 1943. In this he acknowledges his debt to Dr. Macaulay for the suggestions he had made, and says that his book is meant to carry the ideas he had propounded a stage further. The book is not specifically a contribution to the doctrine of the Atonement, but as the idea of Atonement is deeply interwoven with the conception of the Messiah, certain aspects of the doctrine have to be considered. It is scarcely necessary to say that there is thorough knowledge and competent scholarship behind all the points that Dr. Manson makes. He admits at the outset that his primary purpose is not to treat of Jesus' Messianic consciousness as a whole, but to show how, on the basis of that consciousness, the Church built up the structure of its distinctive witness to the Christian revelation of God. He assumes that the tradition of the Church, from the very first, "embodied a substantial core of authentic, historical reminiscences of the words and work of its Founder".

On this supposition he examines the utterances of Jesus regarding His mission and His Person, His predictions of His passion and other aspects of His teaching, and works down from these to the underlying character of the mind

¹ Now (1946) Professor of Biblical Criticism at Edinburgh University—(J. T. H.).

regarding God and man, in which Christianity had its origin. Dr. Manson says definitely that "the evidence compels me to believe that the Messianic ideas of Israel were the medium through which, not only the Church, but Jesus Himself interpreted the urgency and finality of the religious revelation *with which He knew He was charged*". It is clear that those Messianic ideas "underwent a total change in being appropriated to Jesus the Crucified". We must, therefore, start from the Crucified rather than from the ideas.

Dr. Manson further holds that "the real background of the mind of Jesus . . . was not Jewish Apocalyptic or Ethnic gnosis, but the prophetic religion of the Old Testament", although we must believe that Jesus' consciousness of God surpasses that of the Hebrew prophets. In the first chapter "The Primitive Christian Confession" is considered. This consisted of ideas rooted in the Jewish stratum,—Son of Man and Son of God. These developed and expanded through the enthusiasm of the early believers. Even before the tradition began to crystallize, Jesus was already regarded as the Messiah of Israel. This confession "stands so near the beginning of Christian history that no other starting point is perceptible". Moreover, we can say that "this confession . . . could not have originated except on grounds already given in the life and mind of the Crucified Himself". So the Messianic Confession is a presupposition of the Church's tradition, and there is no reason to suppose "that the original nucleus of Christians in Jerusalem ever regarded Jesus in any other way except as the Messiah", and the idea, suggested by some writers that it came from outside the Church, "would not have survived Calvary".

Dr. Manson sums up by saying: "The conclusion to which the above argument has tended is that somewhere and somehow, Jesus before His death stood self-revealed to His disciples as the Messiah". The consciousness of Jesus of Messianic vocation is "not the starting-point but rather the climax of His self-expression, the moment of highest tension in the unfolding of His sense of destiny". We must note, however, that Jesus' life and death, His Spirit and His self-

disclosure, have profoundly changed all Messianic ideas as we find them in the Old Testament.

After examining the question of Form-Criticism of the Gospels (chap. ii) and the "signs" and "mighty works" of Jesus (chap. iii) which proved His Messianic vocation, among which was the forgiveness of sin and the claim of authority to do this, Dr. Manson devotes two chapters (chaps. iv and v) to the "Teaching of Jesus". There was a note of crisis and urgency in His teaching and a sense of fulfilment of the Messiah's mission. Moreover, "it is clear that to Jesus God's will and God's Kingdom included His saving grace as well as His will to righteousness". Further, Jesus' teaching had a unique, spiritual emphasis, and is absolute in its religious and ethical demands.

In an examination of the "Messianic Categories in the Tradition" (chap. vi) Dr. Manson brings forward the Suffering Servant idea, saying that "tradition lays emphasis on the features in Jesus which correspond to the Servant". Jesus' sense of mission was clear at the beginning, and He was conscious of doing mighty works by divine inspiration, while He had a definite sense of authority. In the course of development in the Apocalyptic period, the Servant had been "invested with Apocalyptic glory in the figure of the Supernatural Son of Man". We cannot be certain whether the Messiah was to be regarded as this Servant, but it is certain that it was believed that the Messiah was to be a redeemer, and the Messiahship of Jesus came to be regarded "as the final seal on that sense of revealing the Father which had carried Him in all His work for men". Jesus never speaks directly of the Servant, but He uses other titles suggesting the idea, and it is clear that "the glory of the Son of Man can only come about by enduring the suffering predicted of the Servant".

Dr. Manson then deals with "The Passion and Death of the Messiah" (chap. vii). Here he begins by noting the fact that the death of Jesus on the Cross made a profound impression on the early Christian mind, and became above all the factor which determined its conception, not only of the

Messianic salvation, but also of God's entire revelation of Himself to a sinful world. Further, it is clear that it was not long before, "that Jesus was the Messiah in spite of the Cross" became changed into "Jesus is the Messiah in virtue of the Cross". There was an offence in the Cross, and the early Christians had to apologize for it. So they said it was "of the determinate counsel of God", and early preaching lays stress on the necessity for it to fulfil prophecy, hence the quotations from the Old Testament. St. Paul saw deeper, and to him the death of Christ had relation to sin (cf. 1 Corinthians xv, 3-4), and the natural suggestion for a Jew was that the death was a sacrifice, and that there is a causal link between it and our sin. This is seen in the reference "according to the Scripture", which means the Servant in Isaiah 53. This is due, in all probability, to the teaching of Jesus. It is highly probable that the primitive Christian community taught as an article of faith, that "Jesus died for our sins according to the Scripture". The death in its nakedness did not illustrate the love of God, yet through it they came to know that love. Christ Himself was conscious of giving His life as a ransom-price, and it is clear that the idea of redemption was rooted in the objective teaching of Jesus. The idea of vicarious sacrifice was embedded in the figure of the Servant. The idea of the atoning significance of martyrs in their death found expression in the fourth book of Maccabees. There is evidence that the Christians, from the beginning, found in the death of Christ the supreme assurance of forgiveness, and this hope of forgiveness went back to an objective ground in Jesus.

Dr. Manson discusses, at this point, the question of "ransom", and suggests that Jesus found the idea in the Servant who gave his life for others as their substitute. In this way Jesus saw His work and teaching to be fraught with meaning to His people in their conversion and redemption. The Supper conversation, again, is rich in suggestions of the Servant, and here Jesus finally accepts the covenant office and its responsibility, and the reference to "blood" is to the covenant blood shed for many. There is also an analogy to

sacrificial rites in Israel. To the early Christians, thus, "Jesus steps into the place of the ancient sacrifices of Israel, representing the sacrifices in fulness".

In the Epilogue (chap. viii) Dr. Manson insists that we must find the origin of Christianity in an idea in the mind of Jesus, and that the New Testament message is nowhere a doctrine, but a person, not ideas, but a unique Man. It is clear, also, that Jesus had inspired early Christians with more than a Messianic hope. It was not a case of the Messianic hope leading men to believe in Jesus, but of their faith in Jesus leading them to believe in the Messianic hope. They realized that, in listening to Jesus, they were brought face to face with God, and His teaching brought them, not ideas, but a God. The Spirit of Jesus was the determining factor in their vital communion with God and it is still so. So the significance of Jesus, as Spirit, sets Him in a unique and unsurpassable place as the Mediator of God to us, and the Messianic conceptions became absorbed into the sphere of the Spirit. So the Gospel came finally to express the central place given to the death of Christ in the early community, as well as the unique redemptive value assigned to it.

The Christian message was, and still is, "Jesus suffered a sacrifice for sin", and "the Synoptic tradition makes it plain that Jesus' acceptance of death was the price, not simply of His fidelity to truth or to His vocation, but of His task of reconciling the many to God". In doing this He was convinced that He was serving the will of God. His death was, in this way, sacrificial in its character. "So to the Christian mind the vicarious self-devotion of the Son of Man has revealed itself from the beginning, as having the reality of a complete and perfect sacrifice." If now we summarize Dr. Manson's position we find these points:

(a) There was a redemptive element in the consciousness of Jesus very early in His life, derived from meditation on the figure of the Servant.

(b) As in the case of the Servant, this redemptive element was vicarious and substitutionary, and involved the surrender of life.

(c) This surrender of life was a perfect sacrifice, and was the consummation of the idea of the ancient sacrifices.

(d) The death of Christ mediated forgiveness to men because it was God's way of dispensing it, and because God was operative in it in His love and power.

(e) This forgiving love and power are continued through the risen Christ, and by His Spirit men can still experience forgiveness.

(f) There is a suggestion that we must return to this conception of the death of Christ and weave our theory of Atonement around these basic ideas.

II

The second line along which the more intense study of the Bible has been carried out is the consideration of the sacrifices, and the sacrificial ideas of the Old Testament, in their bearing on the mind of Christ, and the basal ideas of the New Testament. It has already been said that the recent work of Dr. Wheeler Robinson, *Redemption and Revelation*, belongs to this class, and might have been considered in this section. It is indeed a valuable contribution to this aspect of the subject. We have now to consider other writers who represent this attitude to the whole question.

(C) PRINCIPAL VINCENT TAYLOR, D.D.

Dr. Taylor, Principal of the Methodist College at Headingley, Leeds, is one of our leading authorities on questions of the New Testament, its interpretations and its criticisms. His first work on the Atonement was a careful and detailed examination of the Passion-sayings of the Gospels, entitled *Jesus and His Sacrifice*. He published later his Fernley-Hartley Lecture, under the title *The Atonement in New Testament Teaching* (1940), and he promises yet another volume on the subject. In his *Jesus and His Sacrifice* he starts by insisting that a knowledge of the Old Testament background is necessary to understand the basic ideas of the New Testament, but that such a knowledge is not a sufficient key to the mind of Jesus.

We cannot assume that He simply accepted and appropriated these ideas. They passed through the crucible of His mind, and He added His own contribution to them. These ideas had to be used if His contemporaries were to understand Him, but under His experience and interpretation, they became new. So although such ideas "clothe His thoughts, they need to be stretched, patched and refashioned, because the life they hide is too strong".

Dr. Taylor treats his subject in three parts. Part I is a consideration of various relevant ideas of the Old Testament, more especially the sacrifices and the sacrificial ideas. The idea of the Kingdom of God—the phrase is not found in the Old Testament—is rooted in the conception of Jehovah as King, and is present in all forecasts of the new order to be inaugurated by the Messiah. It means the Reign of God, for the community idea is secondary. We must think of it, then, as "Kingly Rule" rather than Kingdom. In the Apocalyptic literature it became linked on to the idea of a supernatural man, and in some respects Jesus shared this view, but He gave the idea a distinctive character of His own. We cannot ignore this in thinking of the life and death of Jesus, for He lived and died, contemplating and speaking of the "Rule of God" among men.

Again, it must be noted that Jesus claimed to be the Messiah. The Gospels show the strength of this hope in the first half of the first century, but again Jesus added His own specific contribution to the idea. Dr. Taylor discusses "The Son of Man" the idea of which came from "Daniel", but Jesus again put His own ideas into it. In the same way He gave His own interpretation to the Old Testament conception of the "Son". In a consideration of "the Servant of Jehovah", Dr. Taylor agrees that it was never identified with the Messiah in Jewish teaching, but regards it as very important for us to get a true idea of the nature of the conception and its influence on the mind of Jesus. In his consideration of the picture of the Servant, he agrees that the suffering of the Servant is representative, but that it is not crudely substitutionary, for "it is not by the simple transference of

punishment that healing comes to the recipients of divine grace". Yet there is a substitutionary element in the picture, for the "Servant" bears the consequences of the sins of others. He notes that there are very few echoes of the "Servant" in subsequent Jewish literature, and that in later Jewish thought propitiatory value was assigned to the sufferings of the righteous and to the death of martyrs (2 Maccabees vii, 37 f.; 4 Maccabees vi, 27 f.; xvii, 22). In Rabbinical literature also, high ethical importance is attached to suffering.

It is clear, however, that in the time of Jesus no *suffering* Messiah was expected, and that "the religious and spiritual conception of the 'Servant' was waiting to be adopted and filled". Jesus did this, and we cannot doubt that the Apostles read the story of Jesus in the light of the Servant idea, though the idea is not frequent in Paul, in John, or in the Apocalypse. It entered deeply into Jesus' mind, for its echoes are unmistakable in the prophecies of His death, in His sayings about "a ransom" and at the Last Supper. So the conclusion is forced upon us that Jesus interpreted His sufferings and death in the light of the Servant idea, and that this is of the utmost importance, more especially in the conception of representative suffering which it contains.

Dr. Taylor next approaches the question of Sacrifice. This idea is very deep in the Old Testament, and must be approached along the background of Hebrew religion and worship. He thinks that the idea of sacrifice as a substitutionary rite is a misunderstanding due to the practice of the worshipper laying his hands on the head of the victim. This does not mean the transference of guilt to the victim for it is still regarded as holy. It is rather the worshipper's declaration that he identifies himself with his offering. The distinctive character of the various Old Testament sacrifices is their tributary, eucharistic and conciliatory nature, and they express the offerer's joy as well as his contrition. They are in general expiatory rather than propitiatory, and they apply mostly to ceremonial faults. Their purpose is to make it possible for men to approach God by the removal of such

obstacles as hinder this. They are a method devised by God whereby men can approach Him. Moreover, it appears clear that the victim is slain in order that its life (in the blood) may be set free as an offering to God. So we may say: (*a*) that sacrifice held out to the worshipper the possibility of fellowship with God, by the removal of obstacle; (*b*) it sharpened the conscience of the worshipper; (*c*) was a real help in focussing the penitent spirit on God; and (*d*) it suggested the surrender of life to God. Dr. Taylor thinks it highly probable that Jesus thought of His death in terms of sacrifice, but not in terms of substitution.

Part II consists of a careful examination of the Passionsayings of the Gospels. Here we find that some of these imply the identification in the mind of Jesus of the Son of Man with the Servant. There are references to the Servant in the "ransom" passage and in the Last Supper, in the reference to "remission of sin", to the new covenant, and to the body given to and for them. It appears clear from these sayings that Jesus and the Apostles did not regard the sufferings as a punishment inflicted by God. They are to be regarded as penal only in the sense that He shares in the sense of desolation and loss which sin brings in its train, when it is seen and felt for what it is.

Part III.—Here Dr. Taylor considers the doctrinal implications of these sayings. The question is, How did Jesus interpret His suffering and death? The following implications are evident, that Jesus believed that the experiences and purposes of His passion were deep in the providence of God; that the relationship between Him and the Father was one of perfect unity; that His death and resurrection were elements in His Messianic vocation, and that this vocation is closely related to the Kingdom of God. Certain other features are clear, that He regarded His death as a victory over evil powers; that it is vicarious and representative and is sacrificial; that men are to enter into the blessings of His death, and that the death is to be reproduced spiritually in them. Thus we come to the "Ultimate Questions raised by these Sayings". These may be stated thus: What is the relation of

His sufferings to the perfecting of the Rule of God? What is the sense in which they are representative? How does the Servant idea bear on the issue? Is there a penal element in the suffering, and the nature of the fellowship of men with His sufferings? In answering the first question it is clear that His perfect unity with the Father excludes all ideas of vindictive punishment. Moreover, Jesus was conscious that whatever happened to Him was in the providence and purpose of God, and that what He does is well-pleasing to the Father.

Again, Jesus thought His passion was the fulfilment of His Messianic vocation, and was related to the Kingdom of God. What He does are specific Messianic acts, on which the realization of the Rule of God depends. Further, it is undoubted that Jesus interpreted His sufferings and death in the light of the Servant idea, and this had a representative element in it, with a suggestion of substitution, in the sense that He did for others what they could not do for themselves. "The true view of Jesus' representative activity is that which recognizes that in His suffering and death He has expressed and effected what no man has the power to achieve, but into which, in virtue of an ever-deepening fellowship with Him, men may progressively enter, so that it becomes their offering to God." This involves the idea of corporate personality, and in Jesus this becomes self-identification with sinners. We must interpret His representative character in this wider sense. Is His agony penal? Most ancient theories and many modern conceptions accept the idea that it is. Here very much depends on whether we believe that sin carries with it penal consequences which must be traced to the will of God.

Here Dr. Taylor says that it is the penal element in punishment that makes it effective, a difficult position to defend. Again, he mentions that some writers speak of the inevitable consequences of sin in a moral universe. But this explains nothing, and it becomes perilously near to giving a natural account of an ethical relation. It is a hasty generalization, also, to trace the operation of punishment to a particular attribute of God as His justice, for the final ground of God's nature is love. It is obvious, also, that penal suffering cannot

be transferred from one person to another. We may say that there is a penal element in the sufferings, but it is ethical, not legal, and like forgiveness, it is a mark of God's redemptive dealings with men. But it is doubtful if a better word than "penal" can be found—that of a suffering which is caused by the inevitable consequences of sin in a world ruled by God. "The sufferings of Jesus are the cost of the redemptive lover who enters into the penal suffering of the beloved, and bears it upon his heart, because there is nothing else that love can do." On man's side faith is needed, and this means in the final issue, being crucified with Christ.

It is probable that the unifying factor in these various aspects of Christ's suffering and death is that of the sacrificial principle. The aim of sacrifice was to restore fellowship with God; its medium was representative offering; its spiritual condition was the attitude of the worshipper; its rationale is the offering of life, and its culmination is the sharing in the life offered by means of a sacred meal. These ideas are the natural background against which the Passion-sayings can be really understood.

In his final chapter on "The Atonement", Dr. Taylor maintains that the Passion-sayings are not sufficient as a basis for a theory of the Atonement, a broader foundation is necessary for this. He notes that the Moral Influence Theory is popular, but the criticism against it, that it is inadequate to meet human need, and fails to account for the sufferings and death of Jesus, is difficult to meet and refute. The difficulty of a doctrine of the Atonement is to view it as a whole and generally we only take part of it, while there is no atonement apart from the whole process, by which sinners are reconciled to God, and this includes the passion of God as expressed on the Cross. There are two points of importance in the complete process: (a) the self-identification of Christ with sinners, and (b) the union of believers with Him. Some say God did not need a sacrifice. This is true only if we take the idea of sacrifice as appeasing an angry God.

As a means of approach to, and reconciliation with, God the idea of a sacrificial offering is in harmony with the highest

conception of love and with the holiness of God. In the work of Christ, this offering is made representatively in the name of men, and with the intention that they may participate in it. The offering is that of Christ's self. What is the nature of His self-offering? The best answer is one in harmony with the sacrificial principle, and with the Passion-sayings of Jesus. There are three elements in this answer: (1) self-offering is His perfect obedience to the Father's will; (2) Jesus' perfect submission to the judgment of God on sin; and (3) it is the expression of His perfect penitence for the sins of men. His offering avails for men so far as they participate in its redemptive power through union with Christ. The central element is the offering Jesus made, as the representative of men, to God. His death, thus, is a sacrifice of Himself to redeem men, and to establish the Kingdom of God.

In his Fernley-Hartley Lecture (*The Atonement in New Testament Teaching*) Dr. Taylor examines with great care the New Testament witness. Here he notes that the objections to his theory of the sacrificial death of Christ are based on an obsolete theory of sacrifice, which is a legacy from the past. Some of the objections are due to fear of neglecting the older theories, more especially the Penal Substitution Theory. He then examines the various books of the New Testament, giving special attention to the Synoptics, the witness of St. Paul, of Hebrews, and of St. John.

On the basis of this study Dr. Taylor faces four points: (a) the difficulty of seeing how the purpose of God is fulfilled in the work of Christ without accepting an immanent view of His Person; (b) the relation of the death of Christ as a fact of history to the eternal reconciling purpose of God related to the needs of all ages; (c) the representative ministry of Christ; and (d) the sacrificial allusions must be interpreted in a way that gives room for the reconciling purpose of God.

Discussing the Ultimate Problems of the doctrine of Atonement, Dr. Taylor dwells on the Representative & the Sacrificial aspects of it. The idea of sacrifice must be purged from all unethical and degrading associations, and also from the idea of propitiating God, an idea which is thoroughly

pagan. We must not think that Christ's sacrifice was identical with the sacrifices of the Levitical cultus. As to the doctrine of the Atonement we cannot compare it with anything else, for it is *sui generis*. The best word for it is "Reconciliation", with which forgiveness is almost synonymous. Reconciliation seems to include the meaning of redemption and forgiveness, and at the same time emphasizes the idea of a restored fellowship. The barrier to fellowship is sin. This has an effect on man's knowledge of God, and makes it impossible for him to love God. The question is, How can it be annulled? The problem has a divine and a human side. The only thing necessary for reconciliation is a change in man. How does God seek to bring about reconciliation? No real reconciliation is possible on legal terms, for God is always love, and on this is based the reconciliation. What does this assume? Two movements are necessary: (1) a triumphant disclosure of God's redeeming love, so that men may know His willingness to receive repentant sinners into fellowship; (2) such an effective expression of that love, that the response of men will be all, both in kind and degree, that is demanded by the holiness and the love of God. The first of these movements we find in the Incarnation, the death and resurrection of Jesus, and His exaltation; the second is met in the representative ministry of Christ, in His obedience, His suffering and sacrifice. So the Cross commends the love of God. The human side of the problem is met by the repentance of men, their obedience and submission to the will of God. So "the work of Christ is vicarious because it is representative, and it is representative because it is sacrificial".

This is a challenging and thought-provoking treatment, and it gives us a surer basis for a definite theory than most other theories.

(D) BISHOP HICKS

The most important study of the Old Testament sacrifices was made by Dr. F. C. N. Hicks who was Bishop of Lincoln, but who has since died. His book, called *The Fullness of Sacrifice*, is an able work, with great detail and careful hand-

ling of the subject. As, however, Dr. Hicks is interested in the question of the Eucharistic Controversy, his treatment of the Atonement is secondary, and loses some of its value for this reason. Still, we get an able study of the sacrificial idea behind the Atonement, and the book has considerable importance on that aspect of the subject, and deserves careful examination. Dr. Hicks says in his Preface that his object is to show how the idea of sacrifice played an important part in the formative period of the Christian Religion, and how it throws light on some of the modern difficulties of the Atonement. His treatment falls into three parts—Part I, The Old Testament and After; Part II, The New Testament; Part III, After the New Testament.

In Part I he seeks to show how deeply the idea and language of sacrifice is woven into the life of the Old Testament. Some of its terms are used in the New Testament. So we must try and find what sacrifice meant to Jesus, and the interpretation of it that was the norm for the early Christians. The Temple and its sacrifices made its contribution to the atmosphere of thought in which Jesus thought and lived. It could scarcely have been so much so in Nazareth as Dr. Hicks imagines, although it might well have been so in Jerusalem. The Temple sacrifices in the time of Jesus are then examined, and Dr. Hicks mentions the outstanding features: (1) the offerer draws near with the victim; (2) lays his hand upon it; (3) the victim is killed by the offerer; (4) the work of the priest begins—the blood is sprinkled and other details are observed; (5) the flesh is put on the altar and burnt with holy fire; (6) the other part of the flesh is eaten. These six actions follow one another in orderly and logical sequence. These actions mean that the offerer approaches God, identifies himself with his victim; kills the animal, and its death is his death. Life is set free and, as blood, a symbol of life, is taken by the priest and presented to God, while the flesh is burnt so that it also may be given to Him. So “the Atonement has been made and the fellowship is sealed in a common meal”. There are different kinds of sacrifices, but not all have piacular efficiency, while some sins could not be

atoned for, since they put men outside the covenant. The dominant attitude in God is His righteousness, and His law is holy, but there is mercy also, for it is God who ordained the sacrifices as a method of covering (*kipper*) sin. The most impressive sacrifice is that of the Day of Atonement, and in this, as in the guilt and sin offerings, the basal thing is the use made of the blood. It was not the death of the victim that atoned, but the life set free, and the death was vital to the sacrifice only because it set free the life. In all sacrifices the blood was wholly forbidden to the Israelites, because it was holy and retained for God. There were offerings of cereals also, and it is important to note that all that is done or implied moves within the covenant idea. Moreover, there were always sacrifices when covenants were made.

Dr. Hicks discusses the origin of sacrifice, and he accepts the view of Professor Robertson Smith, that it originates in a common meal in which the bond of unity in blood is renewed between the clan and God. This view has very few defenders in these days. The theory is that God is father of the clan. It appears clear that the significance of the sacrifices is in the use of the blood, and the central point is not the slaughter of the victim, but the application of the blood and the sharing in its life. The act of communion, in the early days, was completed by drinking the blood, part of it being applied to the altar as God's portion. "Round the whole institution there gathers the feeling of the family spirit." At a later date spiritual ideas became interwoven with the sacrifices, and they were organized in the Priestly Code.

Dr. Hicks next considers the attitude of the prophets to the sacrifices and maintains that their opposition was not to the sacrifices themselves, but to the excessive emphasis upon them, and the abuses that grew around them. In general there were three kinds of sacrifices. The sin-offering whose basal idea was that of making atonement; the burnt-offering with the idea of worship and self-dedication; and the peace-offering with its enjoyment of God's gifts. The later views of sacrifices are considered, and it becomes clear that the thought of atonement through blood develops until it becomes effect-

ive and passes into the idea of ransom, so that in 4 Macabees the blood of martyrs "becomes a ransom for the remission of sins", and the blood of righteous men was thought to deliver Israel. With the growth of synagogues, the idea developed that the offering to be made was one of the spirit, and this spiritualization of sacrifice became, not its abrogation, but its justification.

Dr. Hicks maintains that in the old days the Fatherhood of God was regarded as of the flesh, and that, even in the Old Testament, the idea is derived from that of a common life. This point is one of the weak spots in Dr. Hicks' theory, as we shall see. Part II is a consideration of the New Testament witness. Dr. Hicks asks: How far does Christianity embody the ultimate principles of sacrifice? Is there an idea of sacrifice in the work and teaching of Jesus? The idea issues in certain Eucharistic notions in St. Paul and in St. John. We find in the Gospels the ideas of sin and its forgiveness, dedication and offering of the self, and union with God, as the contents of the life of Sonship. The conceptions of the sacrifices are present in the surrender of life so as to achieve recovery from sin. Some surrender is necessary to find the lost sheep, and to recover the lost coin, and this means sacrifice. But the surrender of life leads to "the Transformation of Life". There was a transformation of Jesus' disciples until they became new men, and lived in the Spirit, and in the case of Jesus Himself He was transformed through death and became Spirit.

There is, however, a third stage: that of "Life Shared". The keynote of pre-Christian history is life, life as given, renewed and shared in society, whether in blood-clan, tribe or nation. It is life, also, that underlies the idea of divine Fatherhood and later of spiritual life. This idea gathers around Jesus, whose first and last secret is that life must be surrendered to be won. His own surrender is part of His work of seeking and saving sinners and He is to give it to God in obedience and service. This is seen in the greatest message of Jesus, the Fatherhood of God which means sharing His life. There is the idea of spiritual feeding in the

Messianic banquet, while the hunger and thirst after righteousness is no mere metaphor, for righteousness means doing God's will and this establishes *the closest blood-relationship*. The idea of life as shared is deep in the New Testament. The contemporary religion was rooted in the synagogue, but visits were paid to the Temple at the various Feasts. Jesus opposed the spirit in which men used the Temple, but He did not attack the Temple as such. There are traces of many of the principles of sacrifice in the teaching of Jesus. This is especially so in the discourse of the Last Supper; references to bread and to the cup, to the blood and a covenant, prove this.

Moreover, Dr. Hicks maintains that the redeeming work of Jesus falls under the idea of Sacrifice, and, further, Bishop Westcott and Professor A. B. Davidson say the Altar of Sacrifice carried the Cross in intention. The Table of the Lord is a meal of the family and God is regarded as present. The New Testament writers also give full force to "the blood" in their references to it. It bears the aspect of the surrendered life, but it goes further, "for it is the means by which we appropriate to ourselves the full life of the covenant". This is the real significance of the Eucharist. Many other references to sacrificial practices are found in the Gospels, and there is the idea "that Jesus gives His new manhood to His own people in the gifts of His new body and of His blood which is His and their eternal life". This, and nothing less, is His Sacrifice, not the Atonement only, but the Incarnation also in the fulness of its meaning. Jesus' coming into the world was a sacrifice, and every stage of His life had sacrificial meaning, and all together make the one sacrifice.

Part III is concerned with the development of the idea of Sacrifice after the New Testament. Ethical ideas come in and Eucharistic Conceptions grow. Among many of the Fathers the idea of Sacrifice as death developed, and at the Reformation the equation "Sacrifice equals death" is universally accepted. It was through the idea of purgatory that the propitiatory side of the Eucharist came to be applied in dubious ways. In a concluding chapter Dr. Hicks considers

"The Complete Picture". He suggests that the three aspects mentioned as being present in Sacrifices—Life given, Life transformed and Life shared—are present in Christ. Here he mentions that the keynote of the life and work of Christ is His perfect obedience and "in Him manhood has passed wholly and fully into the new and wider world of which He so often spoke". Dr. Hicks is conscious that there is a danger of magical ideas blending with sacrificial practices and with the Eucharist, but insists that "all offerings are symbolized and summed up in the offering of the Eucharist, and that Jesus gives Himself to us in the Communion".

Dr. Hicks' book is painstaking, and his position is carefully argued, but it is not above criticism at several points. Various writers have objected to his acceptance of Professor Robertson Smith's idea of the origin of Sacrifice. This has been largely rejected by modern writers in favour of the "gift idea" of the origin. But as Dr. Vincent Taylor suggests, the two theories may not be mutually exclusive. If that be so, the sting is taken out of this aspect of criticism.

There is, however, a deeper criticism. The Bishop makes much of the blood-relationship between the clan and its God, and speaks of the idea of the Fatherhood of God as signifying a flesh relationship. His emphasis on the kinship of blood and its renewal in the common sacrificial meal are based on this idea. This basic idea is very insecure, and the idea of blood-relationships between the Hebrews and God is not proved, but the evidence is rather against it. The idea of a blood-relationship between men and their gods was held in many ancient nations, among them the neighbours of Israel—Egypt, Babylonia and Canaan,—but it cannot be assumed to be true of Israel. In fact there is in the Old Testament no trace of a natural and physical descent from God. Moreover, no consort of Yahweh is mentioned, nor is there a Hebrew term for goddess. There are female deities in the Old Testament, but they are importations, and when they are mentioned, they are spoken of as the *god* Astarte, etc. The infiltration of Canaanite ideas may have taken place, but as far as native Hebrew is concerned, there is no trace. This may have been

due to the compilers of P expurgating all references to such ideas, but it is clear that they were not congenial to Old Testament writers. To assume this, as Dr. Hicks does, and to build an elaborate argument on the assumption, makes his foundation unsafe.

Again in his dealing with the New Testament, the physical element looms large, and the emphasis on "blood" is strong, while in the Bible the emphasis on "faith" is much stronger, and "faith" is, in the final issue, purely spiritual. The mysticism of the New Testament is not physically based. It is spiritually based, and it always assumes "faith" and is experienced through faith. This means that it is thoroughly spiritual. It may express itself in some physical medium, but it is itself the outgoing of the personality in a spiritual act of the will in surrender.

One other criticism bears on the question of sacrifice as a whole. We might ask, Does not the emphasis on sacrifices, as well as the sacrifices themselves, stress the manward rather than the Godward side of the Atonement? It emphasizes what man does, and for this reason; it has been suggested that the stress on Sacrifice was the first form of the Moral Influence Theory with its manward movement. The Christian Atonement, on the other hand, emphasizes the fact that God initiates the process; it is something which He does to save men. All through it is He who is acting, and the sacrifice is made by Him rather than received from man.

(E) BISHOP HEADLAM

Dr. A. C. Headlam, Bishop of Gloucester, reached the idea of the Atonement as a Sacrifice by another line of study. The Bishop is a fine scholar, and has a number of important volumes to his credit. He delivered a course of lectures at King's College, London, which were published in 1935 under the title *The Atonement*. Dr. Headlam thinks of our redemption, not as something accomplished by a sort of transaction, but as something won for mankind by the life and death of Jesus Christ. The Cross is regarded as a victory

over evil forces, but he combines with this the idea of Christ's death as a sacrifice. All ideas of penal substitution are rejected, whilst Barth and Brunner are taken to task for reverting to this view in its extreme form. The Bishop himself seems to regard the Incarnation as the supreme fact in the whole movement for redemption.

The first lecture deals with "The Life and Teaching of Our Lord". We can learn from the Gospels, which are substantially accurate, the facts about Jesus' own idea of His work, that He came as a prophet of righteousness, and that His task was to seek and to save the lost. His vocation is most clearly seen in His forgiveness of sin. He could forgive sins because He revealed and represented the Father. Moreover, He came to establish a Kingdom in which the Rule of God was opposed to the rule of Satan. He agrees that Jesus deliberately took the Servant idea as His conception of His vocation, as may be seen in the "ransom" passage, which implies "that Christ's death is the price paid for the redemption of mankind" (p. 63). The Supper sayings are also based on the Servant idea, and they show that Jesus regarded His death as a sacrifice. Moreover, Jesus conceived of Himself as the Messiah, and as such, the Saviour and Redeemer of Israel, and through Israel, of the world (p. 74), but He spiritualized the whole conception of the Messiah's vocation. The Atonement was the whole life and teaching of Jesus, as well as His death, and the Cross was the summing-up of His work. "It was through the whole work of Christ that man was redeemed and reconciled to God, whilst the work of Christ was in a real sense the work of God."

In his consideration of "The Teaching of the Apostolic Church" (Lect. II), Dr. Headlam maintains that in the Apostolic Church, generally, the redemption of man was regarded as primarily the work of the Father, and the Cross as the fulfilment of God's purpose. This view is clear in the passages where the sacrificial aspect of Christ's death is considered. The crucifixion was explained by (a) the purpose of God and (b) the idea of it as a sacrifice. From the very beginning it was regarded as a sacrifice, based largely on the

Servant idea. What is meant by saying that the death of Christ was a sacrifice? There were many sacrifices in Israel, and it was generally recognized that sacrifice was offered for sin, whilst the pouring-out of blood was thought to take away sin. The problem, then, is why the death of Christ was an effective offering for sin. Dr. Headlam replies: Because it was a voluntary act of self-sacrifice (p. 100), not a formal or mechanical act, but an ethical sacrifice, a voluntary offering of Himself, and as such it made its appeal to the consciences of men. Jesus transformed the nature and character of sacrifice, for through Him it became self-sacrifice, whilst the absolute obedience of Jesus was the conspicuous fact in His death (p. 102). Because it was a great act of obedience and self-sacrifice, it wins men. So His death was not the payment of a penalty for sin, nor was it a means of placating God, but a revelation of the Father's love and a method of winning salvation for mankind. This central act of obedience and self-sacrifice inaugurated the new covenant of grace, and abolished the old covenant of law. Through His self-sacrifice and voluntary surrender on the Cross, Jesus won a victory and became the Saviour. The first great problem of the Church was that of explaining the Cross. They solved it by dwelling on a truth they had first learnt from Jesus Himself, that His death was a sacrifice, and that its efficacy rested in the fact that it was a sacrifice of love and obedience which overcame the forces of evil (p. 136).

In the next chapter the Bishop considers the position of Athanasius and Maurice, the latter regarding Sacrifice involved in, and basic to, the nature of God. Sacrifice was not introduced because of sin, but was rooted in the being of God, and the Cross revealed this to men (p. 174). In this way the Cross was in the eternal purpose of God, and was meant to complete and fulfil what was begun in the creation (p. 186). Summing up, then, we may say that redemption was won by Christ, because (a) He revealed the nature of the Godhead; (b) preached the Kingdom of God; (c) transformed the moral conceptions of life; (d) triumphed over sin and defeated the evil powers of the world; and (e) founded the Church. In all

this the death of Christ was the decisive fact. Why? Because, in the final issue, redemption must be won, not for men, but in men and through men. How can this be done? Through the work of Christ in dying for it, His death being a supreme act of self-sacrifice.

This is a careful treatment and although there is nothing new in the Bishop's treatment of Sacrifice, he makes a suggestive point in his emphasis on Christ's self-sacrifice as the victorious element in the Cross and the source of its power.

Chapter VI

THE MORAL INFLUENCE THEORY

THIS view is sometimes spoken of as "The Subjective Theory", and in recent days it has been called "The Exemplarist Theory", but the ordinary designation of it is "The Moral Influence Theory". The view has been widely held, although there are signs that it has passed its meridian and is now on the wane. It has grown more popular in America than in this country. This is probably due to the influence of Horace Bushnell and the Liberal School that derives from him. Apart from the remnants of the New England School, and the Presbyterian tradition derived from the school, the Moral Influence Theory appears to be the principal view among American theologians of repute. In this country the theory received a powerful impetus through the advocacy of the late Dr. Hastings Rashdall, and this was strengthened later by the efforts of Dr. Franks, one of our best-informed scholars in this field. The advocacy of these men, however, would have been of little avail unless the theory possessed certain advantages for the mind and the ethical nature of man.

These advantages are on the surface. In the first place, the theory escapes from, and renders unnecessary, many of the doubtful and, in some cases, revolting, elements in the penal and satisfaction views, which had swayed the minds of men for generations. Such ideas as those of the transfer of punishment, the dominance of forensic conceptions, the excessive emphasis on the outward sufferings of Christ, and the primacy of law and justice, are rendered unnecessary, so that the objection to the older views in many minds is eased or obviated. Again the emphasis on the love aspect in God, and on the Atonement as made possible by His love, renders nugatory the distinction made in the older theories between justice and mercy in God. The appeal to divine love kindles

the love instinct in man, and does away with the idea that mercy is something that can be purchased, and with it the whole commercial element that clings to the older theories. Further, this theory is easier to understand, for it has none of the subtleties that grew around the dominant views. It, also, stresses the manward aspect of the Atonement, and to the more scientific minds of this age this has been of value, for it falls in with the growing ascendancy of the inductive method in the field of science. Professor Grensted, who speaks glowingly of the theory, lays great emphasis on this fact that it approaches the problem from the manward side.¹ We cannot be sure that he adopts this view as his own, but very much that he says points in that direction. Abelard is usually regarded as the first advocate of the theory, but as Professor Grensted has shown, there are very many suggestions of it in the writings of the Early Fathers, though it never became a definite theory of the Atonement. This was probably due to the dominating position held by "the ransom to the devil" theory in the Early Church, and for nearly a thousand years afterwards. There was no need and no place for another theory, but in spite of this fact, it appears clear that the minds of men were seeking for a view akin to the Moral Influence Theory.

Abelard was the first to give expression to this view as a definite theory. He was opposed by most of the leading theologians of his day, including Bernard, and later, Peter Lombard. He bases his view squarely on the love of God, and appeals to many passages in the New Testament which lay emphasis on the idea of divine love. Dr. Hastings Rashdall quotes the following passages from Abelard's writings: "I think that the purpose and cause of the Incarnation was that He (God) might illumine the world by His wisdom and excite in us a love to Himself". Again: "Every man is made better, that is, becomes more loving to the Lord, after the passion of Christ than before, because a benefit actually received kindles the soul into love, more than a benefit merely hoped for. . . . Our redemption, then, is that supreme love

¹ See his *A Short History of the Doctrine of the Atonement*.

shown to us in the passion which, not only frees us from the slavery of sin, but acquires for us the true liberty of the Sons of God." Again: "The Son took our nature to instruct us, alike by word and example, even to death, and so bind us to Himself in love, so that the love kindled by so great a benefit of divine grace, should not be afraid to endure anything for His sake".

These quotations make fairly clear the basal position of Abelard. It seems that this view was adopted by some of the Cambridge Platonists in this country, probably because they had great sympathy with the mystical strain in Abelard. The view gained many advocates in later days. Dr. R. F. Horton, in a brief article on the Atonement,¹ tells us that he held the Subjective Theory, and rejoiced in the greater freedom of thought it gave him, until he read Dr. Scott Lidgett's volume on *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement* and realized that there was another aspect of the question. This led him to face the problem more thoroughly, with the result that he changed his view, and came to rest in an objective conception more in harmony with New Testament teaching. In recent days the Subjective Theory has been ably defended by the late Professor Auguste Sabatier, and others of the French School. In Germany the teaching of Schleiermacher and Ritschl proved a powerful influence in favour of the idea, while, later, Harnack added the weight of his reputation and learning to its support.

There is, of course, a sense in which the Atonement and its efficacy must become subjective in the experience of every person if he is to know its power. It must become subjective to every believer in the sense of being his very own experience. Whatever element of objectivity the Atonement possesses, this must become subjective if we are to realize its efficacy and share its blessing. It is futile to argue against this conclusion. But this is not the sense in which the theory is called "Subjective", for it really means that all that God meant to achieve in Christ and His sufferings was to produce the subjective experience of penitence in the soul. He had no

¹ *The Atonement in Modern Religious Thought*, pp. 127-139.

other purpose, and sought no other end. The change the theory envisages, and which the Atonement was meant to produce, is purely a change in men. This was its primary, indeed its sole, purpose. When this change has been produced in man, the blessings of God's grace become his without fail. Divine forgiveness flows freely through the penitence thus produced, and in a sense God has very little to do with this, since His nature is love and His attitude is eternally an attitude of forgiveness. If He can get men to become forgiveable, the blessings of forgiveness follow with the inevitability of a law. God's purpose in the Cross was to make such a disclosure of His love and of the suffering due to sin that men are by it won to a forgiveable state, and so obtain forgiveness. It is not easy to see how this process can be called, in any sense, an Atonement. What can we say of the theory as a whole?

Many objections have been raised to it, and various criticisms offered. We may note the following points: (*a*) On the surface this theory seems to mean little or nothing to God, except the effort to bring about a change in the mental and spiritual attitude of men. His forgiveness is regarded as unconditional, only demanding a change in men. When this change is wrought, forgiveness follows inevitably. It must, however, be insisted, that although forgiveness is free and a gift of God's grace, it is never unconditional, never works automatically, but is rather always a gift of God's will of love. God always wills it; He puts His will into it, and it must, therefore, mean something more than the operation of a spiritual law. God can only forgive in a way that safeguards His own personality, and the personality of the sinner who is forgiven. To make forgiveness cheap and unconditional is to do an injustice and a moral injury to the personality of the forgiven, for it wrongs his moral sense, undermines the stability of his moral universe, and works moral and spiritual degeneration in his being. It also endangers the personality of God, for He has cheapened the element in Him that is of transcendent value, His own moral being. We must speak reverently when we say that God cannot forgive us in a way

that is derogatory to Himself, or damaging to the personality of the forgiven. He has to deal with men as moral beings, and one of the primary conditions of this is that in His gifts and graces He must respect men's moral claims, and the ethical basis of their lives. In a sense we may say that one effort of His divine love is to safeguard the moral and spiritual integrity of every man, even in the granting of His forgiveness. This is the sense in which the term "objective" may be applied to the Atonement, the objective claim of personality on God, and His respect for His own objective personality in the distribution of His gifts of grace. It is a sense far deeper and more real than the idea of "objective" in the older theories, for it is based on the fact and the meaning of personality in God and in man.

When we examine the New Testament references to the work of Christ, we find that God is the agent in every aspect of the Atonement. It is the Godward, rather than the manward, side that receives the emphasis. God initiates the movement of redemption, His will is the power behind and through it; He brings about reconciliation. Dr. Forsyth insisted strongly that it was God who acted all through, and that the part of Jesus is that of active obedience to the purposes of God, and perfect submission to His will. He goes so far as to say that it was the Father who suffered. Horace Bushnell speaks of the Atonement as costing something to God, and having a meaning in and for him. We can say, then, that it is not only a method of bringing about subjective changes in men. It does this, but it does more, for the change is a result of the Atonement rather than the cause of its experience.

(b) Dr. Kenneth Kirk, Bishop of Oxford, in an "Essay on the Atonement",¹ makes another criticism of the Subjective Theory. He insists that if the theory is pressed, it works out in an inequitable way, a way in which we cannot regard God as acting. As human nature is constituted, some men are more easily moved than others by the sufferings and death of friends. There are emotional types and phlegmatic types; some are hard, matter-of-fact and cold natures, whilst others

¹ In a volume of *Essays Catholic and Critical*.

are mystical and affectional types. The more emotional natures are easily moved, and so have an advantage in this field over the colder and more phlegmatic types. This fact renders the Moral Theory, with its emphasis on the influence of the sufferings of Christ in producing repentance, unequitable and unfair. We cannot imagine God acting unfairly in an affair bearing so deeply on the souls of men, so we must conclude that the theory is inadequate, and does not give expression to all that is contained in the Atonement.

Another consideration is relevant at this point. It is well known that the continual habit of sinning hardens the consciences of men, blunts their sensibilities and blinds their minds to finer issues. This renders them incapable of the deepest emotion, and largely impervious to the appeal of suffering and goodness. It would seem, therefore, that the men who need repentance most are least capable of experiencing it if all that the Cross means and was intended to do was to produce repentance. This brings us to another point of criticism.

(c) The idea of sin behind the theory is superficial and inadequate. We have just noted some of sin's ravages in human nature in the loss of power and deterioration of character. There is, however, a positive aspect of its effects in the souls of men. It becomes, through evil habits and constant acts of sin, a power in the soul; it has dominion over men, and impels them to deeper sin. It rules them and holds them enslaved. The Moral Theory's basic idea of sin is intellectual, and its cure is intellectual, by the perception of the love of God in Christ.

This was the view held by some philosophers in Greece, that evil is ignorance, and that it may be mastered by more knowledge. If sin were, thus, a failure in knowledge, then the revelation and perception of the truth may be efficacious. But sin is much more than a matter of knowledge. It enters into the will and robs it of freedom; it eats into the spirit and stains the conscience; it becomes a power within that forces the soul into deeper sin. To master its power it is necessary for a stronger power to take possession of the soul, to

reinforce the will and quicken the conscience. In other words God must work in the Atonement itself, as well as in the life that follows. There must, therefore, be an "objective" source of power, and not merely a subjective change in man, before the Atonement can become effective. The degenerations and losses wrought by sin have to be met and conquered, and for this more than knowledge is necessary. This is what makes divine forgiveness the greatest and most amazing of all miracles, the act in which God is energizing most intensely and creatively. It calls forth all the resources of the divine will, and makes demands on the omnipotence of the divine love. The act of creating the world pales before the act of redeeming it, for God, so to speak, goes all out, and all the resources of the omnipotent God are laid under tribute in the forgiveness of sin. The Moral Theory has not envisaged this fact, it either ignores it or has not realized it.

For the reasons mentioned we find that the appeal of the theory is slackening, and men seem to be returning to some "objective" reality, some creative power, working in and through the whole redemptive movement. It is highly probable that the impetus towards this theory in this country came from the influence of Maurice and Jowett. We cannot easily discover the exact view of Maurice, but we can safely say that it leans in the direction of the Subjective Theory. One leading theologian claims Principal Fairbairn as accepting this view, but this is not so, and is due to a mistaken reading of Dr. Fairbairn's works, or to an excessive emphasis of certain suggestions and phrases in his writings.

During the period of the New Theology Controversy, the Rev. R. J. Campbell strongly advocated the theory, writing and preaching about it, but he reverted to a more orthodox view, and he appears now to be an enthusiastic supporter of the older theory. There was a strong undercurrent of thought flowing in the direction of the Moral Theory, and when Dr. Hastings Rashdall, in his Bampton Lectures, came out definitely and decisively on its side, many declared their acceptance of this view, and a great number of adherents was gained. The position of Dr. Rashdall as a philosopher of

standing, more especially on the Ethical side, won many to his views, whilst his critical ability and undoubted scholarship carried great weight. His book, as we shall see, is not without its faults, and Dr. Rashdall is not always quite fair to the Scripture witness. But the book is yet a massive, and in some respects a convincing, contribution to the subject, and it still demands careful attention. A little later the Abelardian position was supported by Dr. Franks, and his book also calls for examination. He seeks to combine the method of Abelard with the supreme and basal truth of Anselm, and this effort brings him strongly on the side of the Moral Theory.

We may note, also, that the modern growth of humanistic ideas, with emphasis on the needs and the value of the individual, has contributed to the development and the acceptance of the subjective position. The humanistic view, however, is a somewhat shallow conception of man. Its limits are usually confined to the affairs of this world, and to the more prosaic needs of man. This means that the view of the Atonement derived from it is rather shallow and unsatisfying. One charge brought against Abelard was that his views tended to ignore the death of Christ. This charge can still be brought against the advocates of his theory. We must insist that no theory of the Atonement can be adequate that neglects the primary act in its achievement and ignores the power that makes it effective.

(A) DR. HASTINGS RASHDALL

After considerable experience in teaching at various Colleges in Oxford, Dr. Rashdall was made Canon at Hereford Cathedral and later was appointed Dean of Carlisle, where he remained until his death in 1924. His main interest was philosophy on its Ethical side; but he published a volume of sermons and a series of Bampton Lectures (1915), published later under the title *The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology*. He was an honest and courageous thinker, with little respect for creeds and formularies, and ever ready to strike a

new path in the spirit of a pioneer. Impatient of opposition, he was not always fair to those who differed from him, and was more or less of a rebel from the established convictions of his Church. His view of the Scriptures and their interpretation is arbitrary and insecure, so much so, that his fellow-churchman, Dr. Mozley, declares that "Dr. Rashdall's treatment of the New Testament seems more impressive than sound" and that his exegesis is not fair, either to the Gospels or to St. Paul.¹

His treatment of "the Fathers" is no less arbitrary, as in the case of Origen, whom he claims as a supporter of the Subjective Theory. It is true there are many suggestions with regard to the Atonement in Origen, and he may be claimed, on the strength of some of these, as supporting almost any view. But it is well known that Origen was the main exponent of the "ransom to the devil" theory, and it is difficult to see how this can be reconciled with the Subjective view. Dr. Rashdall shows the same intolerance in dealing with modern writers, for he is extremely bitter against the supporters of the Penal Substitution Theory, attacking mercilessly Luther and Drs. Dale and Denney. His antagonism to their theories leads him, unintentionally, without doubt, to distort their views, and to be unfair to the men themselves. It should be noted, also, that Dr. Rashdall does not propose to write a systematic treatise on the Atonement, but rather to trace the development of the idea down to the Reformation. In the course of his study he discovers that the view of Abelard commends itself to his mind and he gives his final chapter to the elaboration of this view, stating that it is more in harmony with the mind of Christ and with the Fatherhood of God, than any other view. It is a theory that "thoroughly appeals to reason and conscience" (p. 360).

I

Dr. Rashdall must be considered a more thorough-going advocate to the Moral Influence Theory than Abelard himself, for while Abelard has leanings towards the orthodox

¹ *The Heart of the Gospel*, pp. 132-133.

position, there is no such tendency in him. Abelard was the master mind in relation to the theory, but Dr. Rashdall finds the theory in Origen, in the Eastern Fathers; declares it to be present in St. Paul and the Johannine writings, and claims that it was in the main stream of Catholic theology. He finds it in the Scholastic theology, and regards it as the view which Jesus Christ Himself held and expressed. These conclusions can only be sustained by ignoring other aspects of thought in all these cases, aspects of greater importance and more basic than the views which Dr. Rashdall advocates. It is only by a partial distortion that his position can be maintained.

His treatment of Origen, to whom he gives considerable attention, has already been mentioned. His treatment of other authorities is on the same lines. Thus he claims St. Paul as an advocate of the "Moral" view, but he can only do this by ignoring a whole group of terms in St. Paul which imply an "objective" reference, such terms as "propitiation", "redemption" and "reconciliation", and such views as that of penal substitution and of expiatory sacrifice. Dr. Rashdall admits that the penal substitutionary theory is "an integral part of St. Paul's thought", how then can he claim that St. Paul supports the subjective view? His inclusion of the Johannine writings might have a show of probability, for there are in them suggestions that salvation comes by knowledge and illumination. But, even here, there are elements which are more fundamental to the thought of the writer. Much the same process is repeated in the effort to prove that the "Moral" Theory was a decisive and prominent strain in Catholic, and in the Scholastic theology.

Dr. Rashdall's survey of the history of the idea of Atonement is of great value, from some points of view, but its trustworthiness in certain conclusions is vitiated by the tendency to over-estimate the place and the importance of the Moral Theory, at the expense of under-estimating the strength of the case on the other side. We see this clearly in the treatment given to Tertullian, to Augustine and other Western thinkers, as well as to Luther and the post-Reformation theologians. Dr. Rashdall confesses that he ranges him-

self by the side of Ritschl, and his debt to the great German theologian is clear at several points, more especially in his weak and inadequate treatment of sin. But he rejects Ritschl's repudiation of metaphysics in dealing with religion. Among British thinkers Dr. Rashdall admits his indebtedness to Maurice, Kingsley and Westcott, and the members of the Broad Church School. He makes no mention of Horace Bushnell, who was one of the main supporters of the Moral Theory.

II

We need only touch the salient points of Dr. Rashdall's survey. He insists in his Preface that the whole field of theology calls for re-examination in the light of modern philosophy and science. The continuity of Christian thought must, as far as possible, be retained. In some cases all that is needed is to return to an earlier stage in the development of traditional theology. There are many irrational and immoral ideas in some theories of the Atonement.

Lecture I deals with "The Teaching of Jesus concerning Forgiveness". Dr. Rashdall is drastic in his treatment of some of the Gospel statements. We may note the following, although there are many others. Thus he empties the famous "ransom" passage of all the meaning usually given it by the great majority of commentators, and finds in it nothing more than advice given by Jesus to His disciples (p. 31). In the same way the "Supper" conversation is robbed of all significance, apart from the insistence by Jesus that His disciples should imitate Him. "There is nothing in the sayings attributed to the Master at the Last Supper which implies any fundamental difference in kind between the service which He was conscious of performing and the service to which He was inviting His disciples." After an examination of the Gospels, the position is summed up as follows: "We have found, then, nothing . . . which can compel us to abandon the conclusion that our Lord never taught that His death was necessary for the forgiveness of sins, or that any condition was required for forgiveness but the supreme one of repentance and that amendment which is implied in all sincere repentance". He

insists that the principle of universal love makes it certain that "sin *ought* to be forgiven when there is sincere repentance" and that "a righteous God *must* forgive the past". Nothing else is necessary for forgiveness but repentance, and repentance is sufficient. So we get the conclusion that whatever Jesus did in His life, teaching and death was done in order to bring men to true repentance.

In his examination of the later doctrines Dr. Rashdall makes two assumptions: that (*a*) nothing is a legitimate development of the teaching of Jesus which contradicts the Fatherhood of God and His love, and (*b*) that the *only* atoning influence that can be recognized in the work and death of Christ is that which operates by helping to produce repentance, on which *alone* forgiveness depends. It is evident that his *sole* condition of forgiveness is without adequate foundation. In Lectures II and III the teaching of St. Paul and Primitive Christianity is considered. The development of the idea that Christ's death was an Atonement for sin was due to the tendency in all primitive religions to regard the gods as deliverers and saviours, to expectations with regard to the Kingdom of God and to the institution of animal sacrifices. Philo's idea of the Logos, and possibly the Egyptian religion of Isis and Osiris, may have also had some influence. Probably, however, the idea of the Suffering Servant was the most influential. Jesus dwelt on the picture of the Servant and "we must credit Him with accepting its implications with regard to His own work".

St. Paul is the initiator of the view of Christ's death as an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of men. To him the death of Christ is the ground of justification, and the idea that justice demands punishment is latent in his thought. Great stress is laid on the preposition which St. Paul uses, meaning "on behalf of", and not "instead of", and the idea of substitution cannot be reconciled with the teaching of Jesus, nor with the demands of the moral consciousness (p. 58). It is clear, however, that the Atonement springs from the eternal love of God, but there is no theory that the death of Christ was necessary, and there is a contradiction in all St. Paul's

teaching between the terms and figures he uses and his real convictions. His treatment of Primitive Christianity is on similar lines. Anything suggestive of expiation or substitution is traced back to the Servant idea, whilst in the Epistle to the Hebrews almost all is metaphor, and it is difficult to say where metaphor ends and spiritual reality begins. In all Dr. Rashdall's treatment of the New Testament witness there is much that is admirable and of great value, but one is haunted by the sense that it is all special pleading, and that much more is ignored than is really examined. The same is true of his treatment of the Apostolic Fathers and the Apologists.

III

Dr. Rashdall's basic principles can now be stated:

(a) There is, first, uncompromising antagonism to the penal view, as unchristian, unjust, and revolting to the moral sense. Further, the New Testament is against it; it is based on a retributive view of punishment; and the spiritual intuition of the Christian ages is against it. It must, therefore, be given up.

(b) On ethical grounds Dr. Rashdall had reached an idea of God as limited in power, but he held on to the idea that God suffers, because, as Father, He must suffer with His children, and because we have the fact of the suffering of Christ which reveals the anguish of God. So "the Christian God is not the pure intelligence,—cold, passionless and loveless,—that He was to Aristotle". In this sense "the sufferings which love imposed upon Christ . . . must needs be felt by a God of love", and we may say "that the suffering Christ reveals a suffering God" (pp. 453-454).

(c) "The death of Christ saves from sin because it is a revelation of the love of God." This was the basic principle of Abelard, but Dr. Rashdall is stronger in his emphasis on the position that nothing more is needed for man's salvation than the manifestation of God's love, and that this leads to repentance. It is Christ's death that reveals the Father's love most fully. When we examine what he says about the death of Christ, his position stands out clearly. Thus he insists that

His death was not Christ's own act, for He did not go voluntarily to the Cross except in the sense that he voluntarily accepted death as a consequence of His faithfulness to His Messianic vocation. Here we might ask: Did not this sense of His Messianic calling contain an element of redeeming suffering? Further, was this consciousness not present in His filial sense of God?

Dr. Rashdall, in some places, appears to regard the Incarnation as the main factor in the Atonement to the disparagement of the Cross (see p. 441). He appears to suggest that the Incarnation is Christ's own act, whilst His death is brought about by others, and so is less vital and efficacious than the Incarnation (cf. p. 447). To Dr. Rashdall, then, the death of Christ was necessary as a part of the self-manifestation of God. If we ask why it was necessary, the answers given are uncertain. Dr. Rashdall suggests that "in the eternal counsels of God, the death of Christ was allowed because it was foreseen that a life, ending in a violent and self-sacrificing death, would be a better proof and pledge of the Messiah's love than any other kind" (p. 442). We are not surprised that he goes on to connect Christ's death with "other martyr deaths". He dwells on another aspect of Christ's death, its vicarious sacrifice. He points out that the ethical ideal of Jesus is that of a life of self-sacrifice, and regards His death as the supreme realization of this ideal. Vicarious sacrifice is a law of human life, exemplified in men, and coming to its fulness in the death of Christ, but he refuses to accept the idea that the death brings forgiveness. All that is needed for forgiveness is sincere repentance. The love shown by Christ awakens answering love in the heart of the sinner, and this has a regenerating effect, "as it is felt that the love of Christ supremely reveals the character of God". It would appear, then, that the necessity for Christ's death and of the Atonement was at the human end rather than in God. Dr. Rashdall refuses to countenance any idea of expiation, substitution or vicarious punishment, and here he appears to go beyond his master Abelard.

IV

We have already offered some critical remarks about the Moral Theory in general. Certain points in this criticism apply to Dr. Rashdall's view, whilst there are some aspects of criticism that apply specifically to his position.

(a) First, we note that his position is tainted with a species of intellectualism, akin to that of the Eastern Church, by which salvation is thought to come through knowledge and illumination. There are traces of this view in St. John, but there is little or nothing to sanction it in the teaching of Jesus. Two lines of thought reflect the view in Dr. Rashdall's treatment. In the first place it is evident in his frequent assertion that the revelation of God's love, and its realization by the sinner, are sufficient to work repentance, and so obtain forgiveness. He quotes with approval a saying of Abelard, that "Christ took upon Himself our nature to *instruct* us alike by word and by example" (p. 359), while he himself maintains that the "acceptance of the supreme revelation of God in Christ is the true way of being saved from sin, and of attaining the fullest deliverance from sin" (p. 463). Nothing more is needed than this revelation.

(b) The same attitude is revealed in his emphasis on the teaching of Christ in the work of atonement, more especially His teaching regarding the Moral Ideal. This ideal, as taught and lived by Christ, is "the completest, fullest, most central revelation of God that has ever been made" (p. 448). This saying is not quite true to the New Testament position, for there it is implied and stated that God is most fully revealed in the Cross. To Dr. Rashdall, however, all that is necessary is for men to grasp Christ's teaching in order to be saved. The view underlying this position fails to take account of the ravages of sin on the moral and spiritual nature of man. An ethical teacher of Dr. Rashdall's eminence must know that the deepest and most radical influence of wrongdoing is not in the realm of man's intellect. It goes much deeper into the springs of man's being, and becomes a positive power in the personality of the sinner, luring him to

greater evil. Dr. Rashdall ignores this aspect of moral experience, as well as the havoc wrought by sin in the spirit of man. If he had realized this, he would have known that the mere revelation of an ideal, or even an example of the ideal, is not sufficient to undo and break the entail of sin in man's spirit.

(c) Dr. Rashdall has no sense of the cost of forgiveness. He says little about forgiveness, and when he does, it is to insist that all that is necessary for man to receive forgiveness is to repent. The Cross was a more or less dramatic episode, calculated to induce repentance, which it does through Christ's suffering, because suffering is the most potent means of bringing men to a penitent state of mind. Dr. Dale makes a distinction between the idea that Christ's death saves men because it is a revelation of love, and the idea that it reveals love because it saves. Dr. Rashdall believes that forgiveness is possible through a revelation of suffering, whereas the New Testament insists that it is the actual suffering on the part of God that makes it possible. In reality, forgiveness is never possible without cost to someone. This is so in human relations, it is more so in God. Dr. Mozley suggests¹ that Dr. Rashdall has not sufficiently realized the idea of a moral universe, and the basic realities of this universe. Mozley has not brought this view into relation with the question of God's personality, but his point gives a measure of sanction to the view we have uttered in an early section of this chapter.

(d) It can be said, again, that Dr. Rashdall's view is not true to the Christian experience of the ages. The death of the Cross is the underlying presupposition of all effective preaching, in bringing to men the initial experience of forgiveness, and in deepening this in growingly sanctified lives.

(e) Finally, there is in Dr. Rashdall's treatment little or no reference to personal union with the living Christ. His treatment is academic, and outside the realm of personal relationship with Christ. His account of "faith" does not give us its deepest aspects. He has much to say about the "Ideal of Jesus", and the revelation given us in Him. The New Testa-

¹ *The Heart of the Gospel*, pp. 128-149.

ment, on the other hand, says much of being "in Christ", of having fellowship with Him, of abiding in Him, all of which have a bearing on the forgiven life and the growth in holiness. In spite of these defects, Dr. Rashdall's book is a great work, and no one can withhold his mead of praise and gratitude to him for his sincere and courageous treatment of the central truth of Christianity.

(B) PRINCIPAL FRANKS, LITT.D.

Dr. R. S. Franks was Principal of Western College, Bristol, from 1910 to 1939. He made a place for himself in the theological world by the publication of his weighty and scholarly *History of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ* in 1918. He published a volume on *The Atonement* (1934) in which he makes a profound, constructive effort to understand the Atonement from a rational and metaphysical point of view. The book is not free from obscurities, and there appears to be too much reliance on Anselm and the Scholastics, but the treatment is impressive and based on adequate scholarship and deep spiritual insight. One of its chief weaknesses is its idea of an impassible God, for Dr. Franks refuses to accept the idea that God can suffer. The Moral Theory of Abelard is accepted and treated with greater detail than is done by Dr. Rashdall. The latter is criticized for giving too much history and too little positive construction. Moreover, his historical details are open to serious criticism, as being one-sided and unbalanced, and cannot be regarded "as a satisfactory defence of Abelardism".

The differences between the two writers are clear, for while Dr. Rashdall accepts the idea of suffering in God, Dr. Franks refuses to accept this. Further, the metaphysical ground differs, for while Dr. Rashdall postulates a *rational* ground of being, Dr. Franks attempts to combine a rational and an ethical ground in a view that makes love the basic reality in the universe, because love is the nature of God, and the foundation of His personality. From this basic position he derives his principle that "There can be no first principle

in theology other than that God is love" (p. 175). This principle determines his view of the Atonement, for in it God's love is manifested in such a way as to induce penitence, and so make men forgivable. Thus "the sacrifice of Christ is the offering of Himself up to God on the Cross to be the means of revealing the divine love" (p. 172).

After stating that he seeks to combine the position of Abelard with the method of Anselm, Dr. Franks (chaps. ii, iii and iv) examines the witness of Scripture and of history. Here he maintains that Christ was crucified because He claimed to be the Messiah (p. 33), and insists that the teaching of Christ is to be our standard and final authority in interpreting His life and death (p. 34), but he declares that Jesus is more than His teaching, and that "His whole personality exceeds that which He put in words". The prophets of Israel suggest the position of Abelard, while the Servant passages influenced Jesus profoundly with regard to His vocation, as is clear in the "ransom", and the "Supper" passages, which reflect the Servant idea. Again, the idea of the Fatherhood of God favours Abelardism (p. 51), while, as regards St. Paul, justification means simply the forgiveness of sin expressed in legal terminology, and is an act of pure grace issuing in reconciliation; but the death of Christ is to him, first of all, a manifestation of God's love. His conception is complicated by the idea of propitiation and of exchange, and by the thought of counterbalancing Adam's disobedience by the obedience of Christ. Hebrews emphasizes sacrifice, and the Johannine writings stress the Incarnation, but they all emphasize God's love, and this agrees with the essential principle of Abelard (p. 76).

It seems to be assumed by all who favour the Abelardian position, that they alone do justice to the love of God. This is far from being true, for what they stress is the revelation of this love, while some other theories emphasize the dynamic, the sin-bearing and the suffering element in the love as revealed in the Cross. In his examination of history, Dr. Franks does not claim that Abelard held an important position in Mediaeval and Scholastic thought, but that he

held that any idea of satisfaction is incompatible with the goodness and the justice of God, and that any view based on the idea of the Sovereignty of God assures no certainty of forgiveness to the repentant sinner (p. 96). Any view of the Atonement demands a metaphysic of the universe. In the next few chapters Dr. Franks attempts to state such a metaphysic. Sufficient to say that love is the foundation of the universe (p. 104) and that this can be proved by reason. Dr. Franks here seems to identify Kant's "good will" with the love of God (p. 121). This love basis of the universe is brought into relation with individual experience through Christ, and we can do God's will "because the divine love moves our will to reciprocal action" (p. 130).

There is grave danger in Dr. Franks' position at this point, of a species of philosophical "occasionalism", though he partially safeguards himself by insisting that in all revelation there is not only a self-disclosure of God, but also an intuition on the part of man. This insight or intuition comes through love. Insight fraught with feeling is "trust", and through trust, which is faith at its deepest, we know God. God, however, does not need our love, for He is self-contained, and His life is one of unchanging joy without any suffering. It is difficult to square this position with St. John's saying that the love of God is made perfect, when we love Him. Dr. Franks insists that we cannot say that Christ on the Cross revealed God as suffering for sin. God is love, and all His power is controlled by love for moral ends, and He must always respect the moral personality of man (pp. 142-143).

If Dr. Franks had considered this truth more deeply, it would have led to a modification of his Abelardism, for if God always respects moral personality in man and in Himself, He cannot make His forgiveness cheap or utterly free and unconditioned without endangering personality in Himself and in man. The Abelardian solution of the problem of the Atonement is too easy, and we can take it for granted that an easy solution of a great problem is not an adequate solution. There is more in the situation caused by sin in the

relation between God and man than the Abelardians seem to realize.

Dr. Franks, then, considers Forgiveness (chap. vii), and this is, as he declares, the centre of his whole theory. His treatment, however, does not appear to be convincing or adequate. He begins with a discussion of sin, which is "the rejection of Divine love, alike as standard of conduct and in its transforming power . . . it is failure to trust and obey God" (p. 152). Here Dr. Franks is on strong ground, for no conception of sin can be adequate that does not view it on the background of divine love. He might, however, have said more, for it is not the "rejection"—this word is too weak,—it is an outrage on love, disloyalty and a rebellious spirit against a Father and His love. This destroys fellowship between God and man as well as between man and man. Sin is always personal, and although we may speak of corporate sin and guilt, it is only in individuals that sin is really sin. It brings a sense of guilt. In reality, guilt has nothing to do with the consequences of sin; it has to do with our standing before God. Dr. Franks does not quite ignore the poignancy and depth of the consciousness of guilt in the soul, but he comes very near this. He insists, however, that in addition to the sense of wrong against God there is a sense that it is man's own guilt, that *he* did the wrong, and stands condemned by his own moral sense, as well as by God. Dr. Franks appears to minimize, if not to deny, this element in the consciousness of sin and guilt, for the removal of guilt, since it has nothing to do with consequences, does not involve the remission of punishment. The removal of guilt "is a change in the judgment of God by which He judges us no longer rebels" (p. 155), and as a matter of fact, the evil effects of sin may go on, even when the sinner is forgiven, as is clear from the physical effects of sin in disease.

Dr. Franks, at some points in this discussion, comes perilously near to the idea of an "objective" element in the Atonement, so difficult it is to maintain a purely subjective theory in view of the witness of Scripture, and of Christian experience. "A change in the judgment of God" is surely

an objective reality, however it may be brought about, and this is something more than the subjective forgiveableness of the sinner. The name for this "changed judgment", that annuls guilt, is forgiveness (p. 156), and this is a restored fellowship with God, a breaking-down of the barrier between God and man. We might ask, Is man, by his penitence, able to break down the barrier? Is it what man does, or something which God has done, that makes possible the changed judgment? Having made a lapse into a measure of objectivity, Dr. Franks asks, Is a satisfaction necessary? If it were, it would make forgiveness not only unnecessary, but also actually impossible. If a debt is paid, even by another, the same debt cannot be forgiven. Payment and forgiveness exclude one another, for forgiveness, in its very nature, is entirely free (p. 158).

Dr. Franks cites the parable of the Prodigal Son as "a perfect exposition of sin and its forgiveness". We may say with regard to this, that it is being growingly realized that this parable does not go to the heart of the matter, nor does it give a complete revelation of God's attitude to a sinner. Archbishop Temple protests that it only gives a partial view of God, not in full harmony with the New Testament's general position. The Christian God is one who would go forth to seek and find the prodigal. He initiates the movement for reclamation and reinstatement. Various aspects of the inadequacy of the parable are emphasized by Nygren in his book *Agape and Eros* (p. 59) and by Dr. Sydney Cave.¹ Dr. Franks himself admits that the parable does not contain the whole truth of divine forgiveness, for it does not show God as taking the initiative. The Son comes home "on his own notion", although "this was inspired by the memory of his father's goodness". He also bids us remember that "the parable of the prodigal son does not stand alone in the fifteenth chapter of Luke", and that it only exhibits one aspect of divine forgiveness.

There is another aspect manifest in the two preceding parables, more especially that of the lost sheep (p. 166). If

¹ *The Doctrine of the Work of Christ*, pp. 24 f.

Dr. Franks had explored more fully the meanings of the Lost Sheep parable, he would have realized, as indeed he hints, that it is more true to the Gospel than that of the prodigal son, for the shepherd actually goes forth to seek the lost sheep. He would have realized, also, that there is an element in the parable which cannot be squared with his Abelardian position. The Shepherd not only goes forth to seek the sheep, bearing the rigours of the journey and the dangers of the search, but he actually takes the sheep on his shoulders. The rescue costs him something in effort, in energy and in weariness and pain. It was no easy home-coming, but costly, painful and burden-bearing. Are we not right in saying, according to the teaching of this parable, that it costs God something to forgive and bring home the wanderer?

Further, a deeper understanding of the parable of the Prodigal Son shows that we cannot altogether eliminate the idea of costliness from it. The situation here is not quite as simple a matter as Dr. Franks makes it out to be. In the first place, if the father was a true father, he must have suffered agony and anguish of heart while the son was in the far country. This is not all, for his escapade cost the son something also, not merely in the degradation and privation of the swine-fields and the far country, but also when he came home. The son could not take exactly the same position as before. Dr. Franks describes the situation thus: "Equally clearly is shown the nature and manner of forgiveness. When the prodigal repents, the father freely forgives him, restores him to the home, to its life, its duties and its privileges" (p. 159). There is one obvious difference, which makes it impossible for him to share in the privileges of the home as he did before going away. He had no part in it, his portion had been squandered and he had no claim except by the free grace of his father. The elder brother's protest was quite legitimate at this point. The prodigal had to bear some cost in himself.

All this means that the situation was not as simple and easy as Dr. Franks makes it out to be. "Forgiveness", says he, "is the judgment pronounced by the Divine love, through

which God receives the penitent sinner again into communion with Himself." But we must add that forgiveness is more than a pronouncement, it is a creative action, a dynamic intervention, something borne and done by God. Further, if we grant Dr. Franks' position and regard it as a pronouncement, there must be some ground on which God can make the pronouncement, something in Himself in addition to the changed attitude of the sinner. To make God's action merely dependent on the attitude of man is to make the government of the universe unstable and uncertain.

If we ask Dr. Franks what the death of Christ has to do with forgiveness, he replies, first, that it has the effect of an example, or an ideal. It is wrong to believe that an ideal or an example has no power for its own realization. "Example in the New Testament, and especially the example of Christ, is never a mere example. It is an example containing in itself power and life, the principles of its own reproduction" (p. 164). It would, however, be more true to say that, in the New Testament, the power to reproduce itself was not found in the example or the ideal, but in the person who set the example. It was Christ Himself who was the inspiration and power by which the example was reproduced. Dr. Franks states that the real problem of the Atonement is "how to make the sinner forgivable" so that he is "sincerely willing to accept forgiveness". There is no problem on God's side, but on man's side in the hardness and impenitence of his heart. The problem is, therefore, how to get the sinner to confess his sin and to trust in God. Jesus does this by manifesting the love of God in the Cross (p. 167). The value of Christ's death and suffering "is not purificatory, nor expiatory, nor yet satisfactory; it is revelatory". It shows how much Christ loved us, and this induces the requisite penitence and trust in the sinner. "The death of Jesus, for love's sake, brought to a focus the whole energy of love, which was the principle of His life in the world from start to finish." "How His death became a power of Atonement . . . is not inexplicable; it is like the death of martyrs; the only difference between Christ and other martyrs is in the principle of life,

for which He was a martyr" (p. 169), for "no other ever lived like Him, exclusively in the power of Divine love". So "the power of the Cross is the power of the love that died". Should we not say, rather, that it is the power of a Person, who died on behalf of men in love? Dr. Franks again says: "The Cross makes the sinner forgivable, because it creates penitence and trust" (p. 170).

At this point he brings the death of Christ into relation with the Church and the Sacraments, admitting that at the Last Supper Jesus intended to present His death under the aspect of a sacrifice (p. 172). He returns to this question in the last chapter (pp. 196 f.). This view, if he had followed the clue offered, would have led him beyond the Subjective Theory he has expounded to us.

We have already given expression to several points of criticism, but one obvious criticism remains to be mentioned. It is the inherent contradiction between two of the basic principles of Dr. Franks' treatment. One is the principle that God cannot suffer; the other is, that love is the fundamental fact in the universe, because, in the ultimate, God is love. It is impossible to reconcile these two principles, for if God is love, it must be possible for Him to suffer. Love carries within itself the possibility of the most poignant suffering. We may say with Dr. Fairbairn, that if God is love, He must be able to suffer. Moreover, the witness of human experience bears its testimony to the same fact.

We must admit that Dr. Franks' treatment is a very able and well-reasoned statement of the Moral Theory. But, as Aulen remarks, what is wanted is a doctrine which is "objective", yet one which also does justice to the experimental view for which Dr. Franks pleads.

(C) PROFESSOR D. MIALL EDWARDS, D.D.

Dr. Miall Edwards was for many years Professor of Theology at Brecon College in South Wales. He wrote several valuable books in English, including an excellent work on *The Philosophy of Religion*. He also wrote many books

in Welsh, among them an important volume under its Welsh title, *Bannau 'r Ffydd*, in which he gives his views on the main doctrine of the "Faith". He deals with the Atonement in chapters iii, iv and v of this volume. He stresses the fact that the doctrine needs to be interpreted afresh, and he attempts to do this. He first considers the New Testament witness, and gives a brief account of the various theories propounded in the Church (chap. iii). After this, he faces the task of reinterpretation (chap. iv), while in chap. v he considers the doctrine under three heads, thus: (a) the Need of Salvation, (b) the Nature of the Christian Salvation and (c) The Method or Means of Salvation according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I

The need of salvation is evident, for it is clear that something is wrong with man—the evil within and without from which he needs deliverance, true freedom and peace with himself and with his fellow-men. Deliverance is needed from natural evil (pain, disease, poverty and other evils), from intellectual evil (mistakes and ignorance), and from moral evil or sin. The Gospel has something to say regarding all these, but most of all regarding moral evil. There is a tendency to ignore, or mitigate, the evil of sin, but it is still in the human heart, and though we cannot accept the idea of total depravity, we cannot ignore the fact of sin. The guilt of sin is a reality, and there is also a divine discontent; conscience is also a witness to the divine presence in man. We must admit that man is in bondage. Evil can be viewed from the religious as well as from the moral point of view. Religiously, sin disturbs the relation between man and God and it affects God's moral being. Morally, evil affects the character of man, as well as his relations with his fellow-men. The question is, Who shall deliver man? St. Paul says Jesus Christ can do this, and the witness of the New Testament and of the Christian ages upholds the truth of this. In reality, we must measure our sense of need by what God has done to deliver us and to meet our need.

II

The nature of salvation must be viewed from the same two points of view. Religiously, it means a change in the relation between God and man, whilst morally, it means making the character grow towards perfection. The danger of the older thinkers was to separate these two aspects rigidly from one another. The Gospel works (1) *negatively* in the deliverance from all evils, notably from sin, for sin is the root of most evils. Here he discusses the remedy that Greek philosophy had to offer for moral evil. The answer of the Gospel to the need for deliverance is forgiveness, for it proclaims the good news that God forgives without any condition except repentance. It is from the grace of God that this great gift comes to men. Forgiveness does not annul all the effects of sin, nor is it to be regarded as remission of penalty, but it brings the sinner into fellowship with God, and reconciles him to God, giving him a new status in his relation to the Father. It is a spiritual miracle, and man in his repentance acknowledges God's condemnation of sin, and experiences the love of God. Forgiveness, then, is not legal, but is a real experience, bringing peace, hope and victory. It is a great mistake to make the idea of punishment central in a theory of Atonement.

(2) The positive aspect of the Gospel is more important, for man is saved to positive blessings of great value. Those blessings are membership of the Kingdom of God, adoption into the family of God and eternal life.

III

Regarding the method of salvation, we can consider it under three heads as follows: (a) God as the Fountain and Source of Salvation, (b) the Work of Christ as the Mediator of Salvation and (c) The Human Condition of Salvation. Dr. Edwards gives a fairly lengthy treatment of the first and second divisions.

(A) The basal teaching of the Gospels, and the New Testament as a whole, is that the first step is taken by God in the salvation of men and that forgiveness is His gracious gift

to men, without money and without price. It is not something that man can win. God sheds his forgiving and saving love on men even when they are yet sinners and without merit, and Christianity is a religion of divine magnanimity, and the name for this magnanimity is "grace". At this point Dr. Edwards discusses the positions of Augustine and Pelagius on the question, and admits that there were elements of truth in both positions. The initiative, however, is with God, and His grace is a moral power. Coming to the second division—

(B) "The Work of Christ as Mediator of Salvation"—Dr. Edwards admits that all theologians agree that salvation centres in Christ. This does not necessarily mean that the grace of God comes *only* through Christ; it comes in history, in providence and in human experience. But in Christ the love of God is supremely manifested, not only in His death, but also in His life and teaching. It is seen most clearly, however, in the Cross, and this fact raises the question of the Atonement. Dr. Edwards rejects definitely the idea of the payment of a debt, or the giving of any satisfaction to God, to law, or to justice in the death of Christ. He also refuses to accept the idea that Christ bore the punishment of sin, and so removes the barrier from the path of God's forgiveness. Moreover, the idea of a transaction between God and Christ, or the thought of Christ's death as a drama, cannot be entertained.

Dr. James Denney is criticized for rejecting the idea that the virtue of the Atonement is the impression it makes on the minds of men. Dr. Denney says, "By fulfilling the divine demands Christ opened the door to forgiveness". Dr. Edwards asks, "Did Christ, then, push open a way to God that had not been open before?" Dr. Denney puts the idea of vicarious homage to moral demands instead of punishment, but the question arises, How can this be the basis for forgiving sins? Do not the divine moral necessities of love demand the personal homage of all men? Doubtless the obedience of Christ was valuable in the eyes of God, but how can it profit me? It cannot begin to have any worth before

God on my behalf until it becomes a manifestation to my being, through the faith-union with Christ. Repentance and faith fulfil the conditions of such a union. It would be better, on Dr. Denney's view, to speak of the sacrifice of Christ to the moral order as the effective cause of the union of the believer with Christ, and the foundation of his pardon, independent of the impression that Christ's death makes on him. In reality, true repentance is the condition of forgiveness, and Christ's death was meant to produce such repentance. There must be some acknowledgment of his transgression, and a confession of his wrong-doing, by man as a necessary prelude to fellowship with God. True repentance is such an acknowledgment.

Dr. Edwards refers to the position of Bishop Kirk, who appears to make the Atonement a symbol to God only, saying that a symbol is meant to enable men to apprehend a reality, and that God does not need a symbol, for He sees reality as a whole. The Cross may be a symbol to me of divine love, but not, for God, of the abandonment of sin. Dr. Edwards at this point declares that he believes in an objective Atonement, but not in the sense of the older theories, for he can have no room in his system of thought for an idea of the Atonement as a transaction between Christ and God, in order to reconcile love and justice in God. The fact of vicarious sacrifice is throughout the universe, and in this sense "I believe in a vicarious atonement". What is the connection of the Atonement with the work of Christ? The following points are made.

(a) The value of Christ's death depends on the nature of His life. The Protestant idea is that Christ came to earth to die and the death is separated from the life. This is unwarranted, and the best thought of today values Christ's life as an essential part of His work as Saviour. But Dr. Edwards rejects the idea of Athanasius, that the Incarnation was the Atonement. The death of Christ was the result of His life and it was not God who crucified Him, but the Jews and the Romans. "The crown of perfection of life in Christ was the death of the Cross, and its chief principle was fidelity to His

vocation of bringing in the Kingdom of God." This principle Jesus learnt through suffering.

(b) In what sense are the sufferings vicarious? In the sense that Jesus' love and sympathy cause Him to enter into the trials, and carry the burdens, of men's sins as if they were His own. Vicariousness arises from the nature of personality, and is a characteristic of human nature, and the moral personality of man refuses isolation, for the heart of man is an abode for others, and man can enter into the trials, and carry the burdens of others. This is seen clearly in mothers, but most clearly in Jesus Christ. It is not in terms of punishment that we should understand the Cross, but in terms of love, and of the depth of sympathy whereby the ordinary man bears the burdens of others. In the same sense Jesus bore the burden of the world's sin.

(c) In all He did Jesus was revealing the character and the sacrificial love of God. All nature reveals God, but there are degrees of revelation. In Christ we get the key to the Character of God, and the deepest thing in God is in Him. We must, therefore, view the Cross, not in isolation, but as an expression of God's sacrificial love, carrying men's burdens and saving them. God Himself suffers with us, taking sides in the struggle of humanity, and suffering pain and agony because of the world's sin. The Cross is the measure of our value to God.

(C) "The Human Condition of Salvation."—The saving work of Christ is not influential until the appeal kindles repentance and faith in the breast of man, and brings him to personal union with God in Christ. Dr. Edwards has already said that repentance is the only condition of forgiveness, so the death of the Cross is meant to produce this. There must be a personal response to the appeal of God's sacrificial love. The Cross, as the revelation of divine love, brings repentance; it also reveals to men their sin, and enables them to see sin as God sees it. This is a means to repentance, and it leads to union with Christ and fellowship with God in Him.

This is a sincere attempt to face up to the problems involved in the Atonement, and there are in it many sug-

gestive thoughts and ideas. Its chief weakness is, probably, its failure to realize the havoc that sin makes in human nature. Dr. Edwards emphasizes the fact that sin separates men from God, and this is undoubtedly its most serious aspect. But it has devastating effects on the nature and character of man, and Dr. Edwards does not seem to have realized the extent of these effects. This is probably the reason why, after his extensive treatment of the subject, he comes finally to rest in a subjective view.¹

¹ This is not a translation, but rather a short paraphrase of the section devoted to the Atonement in Dr. Edwards' book.

Chapter VII

THE MYSTICAL THEORIES

THE term "mystical" in this connection is somewhat ambiguous and needs to be clarified, for there are at least two widely different senses in which it can be applied to the Atonement. In reality "mysticism" and "mystical" are terms that apply to purely spiritual realities, and they mean the interpenetration of one spirit by another, the interfusion and permeation, in the ultimate, of the spirit of man by the Spirit of God in a union of love. This permeation is possible in the realm of human life, and is exemplified in all pure love, for in proportion to the spiritual quality and purity of the love, there is a union of spirits and of life in which one lives in the other, thinks the other's thoughts, and fuses into the other in a unity of being that can become the transcendent experience of the spirit on the human level. The union of the spirit of man with the Spirit of God is more intimate and wonderful still, and is exemplified in the Christ-mysticism of St. Paul which finds expression in such sayings as, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me", "We have the mind of Christ", and "Our life is hid with Christ in God". This is pure "mysticism", and the experience is "mystical" in essence and reality.

Our psychological knowledge is as yet inadequate to the task of discovering the extent to which such interpenetration is possible between human spirits, but the recent study of mysticism has brought considerable light on the possibilities of the interfusion between the spirit of man and the Spirit of God. The Christian emphasis on the indwelling Spirit of Christ in the believer is one aspect of this interpenetration, and this fact has a profound bearing on the idea of Atonement. We have already noted that many thinkers—including Forsyth, Mackintosh, Denney and others—have come to the conclusion that the atoning work of Christ only becomes real "in Christ" in a union of love with Him which means an

interchange of love and life. This is the real and deepest meaning of the term "mystical", when used regarding the Atonement. This, however, is not the meaning of the term when usually applied to the Atonement, for it has a physical basis and rests in the physical union of God with humanity in the Incarnation, whereby God expresses Himself, and reveals His being within the limits of human life and experience. This raises many questions, some of which we shall have to face later, more particularly the problem of the extent to which Christ shared our humanity. Did He take our human nature in every aspect of it, with the entail of sin and its element of moral weakness? This question has a profound bearing on the theory of Atonement, as we shall see.

In general, then, the Mystical Theory of the Atonement holds that the very fact of Christ coming into human nature constitutes an at-one-ment, the bringing of humanity, which was separated from God through sin, into a real union with Him, and this union is itself the Atonement. Underlying this idea is a theory of divine immanence in the world and man, an immanence that makes possible the coming of God into human nature, and of which the Incarnation is the crowning and supreme instance. It also makes possible the conception of Christ as our Representative, and in some cases as our Substitute. In the theory certain other elements are involved in this physical union, but the main stress is laid on the physical and racial side. A measure of sanction for this is found in St. Paul's idea of Christ as the Second Adam. The First Adam is regarded as mystically one with us on the racial and human side, while Christ, as the Second Adam, is the Head of a spiritual race, mystically one with Him and He with it. More often than not a physical strain comes into the theory, and the emphasis is laid on the generative and material side. So the oneness in this case is one of physical nature rather than of spirit and ethical life, whereas all through the history of "mysticism" the more spiritual aspect of the union has been retained, the union of love with Christ or with God.

We must admit that among some of the mystics, figures of speech are used that suggest the physical relationship of

lovers, and even in some cases suggestions of sexual relations. Such figures are sometimes found in the most sane and genuine of mystics, and are present in profusion in some of the more emotional and erotic mystics. But the basal idea is that of a spiritual union of love and faith, an interpenetration of the human spirit by the Spirit of God, in an experience of spiritual ecstasy and bliss. The mystics are striving to give utterance to a real experience of the inner life.

The main tenet of the Mystical Theory of the Atonement is that the Incarnation *is* the Atonement, the fact of the Coming of God into humanity in Christ brings some element, aspect, or power into human nature that redeems and saves it. The very incoming of the divine life and reality into humanity contributes something to it that effects its redemption, and constitutes the Atonement. Thinkers who accept this view very often speak of at-one-ment (not that they are the only ones who do this), and of this having taken place in the union of the divine and human in Jesus Christ. In Him the at-one-ment has become a reality, and this is the promise and potency of the at-one-ment of all men in Him. It is quite clear that such an idea is frequently found in the writings of the mystics, for it gives expression to one of their deepest tenets, that of the possibility of real and immediate union with God. Moreover, it has been a frequent point of criticism of the mystics, that they have emphasized the Incarnation at the expense of the Atonement, that Bethlehem is made to supersede Calvary and that the Cradle becomes more important than the Cross.

There is a measure of truth in this criticism, but we must also bear in mind that many mystical writers exalt the Cross. This is so in Tauler, St. John of the Cross, Catherine of Genoa and others, as well as in many later mystics. Further, it was a mystic poet who wrote the words

Though Christ in Bethlehem a thousand times be born;
And not within thyself, thy soul will be forlorn.
The Cross on Golgotha will never save thy soul;
The Cross in thine own heart alone can make thee whole.

We have already insisted that the movement of God in

redemption is one whole, although it contains several parts, and embodies different experiences. It is therefore inadmissible to make the distinctions of the various parts so pronounced as to separate them, or to emphasize one at the expense of the other. Such a procedure is a falsification of the unity of God's purpose and the fundamental coherence of His redemptive work in the Atonement. The Incarnation and the Cross, the birth of Christ and His death are part of one and the same movement of divine love to deliver men, and to bring them back to fellowship with God. We should regard them thus, and reckon that the whole method of redemption, and our view of the Atonement, include both events, so that each gives meaning to the other, and enriches our thought regarding it.

It is almost inevitable, when the primary position is given to the Incarnation, that the centrality of the death of Christ should suffer a measure of eclipse, and that writers of this school should find it difficult to assign to the Cross and Jesus' experience of death a place in their scheme of things. To do this is to lose the profoundest aspect of God's revelation in Christ, as well as to weaken the dynamic of the Cross. When all is said and done, it was a Christ who was crucified, and not merely one that was born, who was the central subject of preaching in the New Testament times and the most real power in Christian life and faith. St. Paul determined not to know anything but Christ and Him crucified. Moreover, it is still true that it is in and through His Cross that Jesus is winning His victory over the hearts and lives of men. The birth of Christ and His death form one whole; into this whole are woven His life and experience, and as a whole the complete action of God in Christ saves men, and restores them to the fellowship of the Father.

The source of the view we are considering is to be found in the Early Fathers of the Church, notably the Greek Fathers. In reality it can be regarded as the dominant theory among the most important and influential Greek thinkers. We find foregleams of this view in Irenaeus, in his idea that Christ "recapitulates" the story of humanity and its experi-

ence, summing up the various stages through which humanity has passed, and consecrating each stage by living it. His coming into human nature had an effect that consecrated and re-made the whole of humanity, redeeming it from its weakness and exalting its meaning and value. There are many suggestions of a similar kind in Origen. But it is Athanasius who emphasizes this view most strongly. In his *De Incarnatione* several suggestive figures are used to give expression to this idea. Thus Athanasius speaks of the Coming of Christ into humanity, as if asbestos were put into the middle of fire, resisting all the heat, and mastering all the flame. So Christ comes into the midst of the destructive forces in human nature, resists all evil and masters all its power. Again, His coming is like the entrance of healthful tissue and life into a diseased body, giving it new vigour and changing it into a healthy condition; or like the coming of something incorruptible into the corruptible, so that by His presence the corruptible becomes incorruptible, and the lost becomes redeemed. His idea is summed up in his well-known saying, "He became human that we might become divine". So His coming into human nature is sufficient to make it divine, in such a way that man shares the life of God. Athanasius does not wholly neglect the death of Christ, for he assigns some place to His experiences on the Cross, but the prevailing idea is that of God in His grace and love coming into humanity as a health-giving presence, and by this fact man is redeemed and lifted up to union with God.

Most of the Alexandrian theologians who followed Athanasius kept this point of view and emphasized the Incarnation, although some of them expressed it somewhat differently. This view appears to have found partial expression in Gregory the Great, in whom ancient thought was summed up. Through the influence of Augustine, with his profound sense of sin and its ravages in man, Western thought took a different turn, but in the East the Athanasian point of view was never wholly lost, for there is, undoubtedly, behind it a profound truth. After Christ had come into humanity, it could never be the same as it was before. A power and

presence had come into it that raised its status, and enriched it, so that in a profound sense it was in Him redeemed humanity, a manhood in which God dwells in reality and power. It is, however, a grave mistake to regard His coming into humanity as making the Cross null and void; or at least unnecessary, for "Christ crucified" is "the Heart of the Gospel", as Dr. Mozley has suggested. God made a great sacrifice in His self-limitation and coming into human nature in Christ, but this fact needs for its completion and full expression the stage of greater self-sacrifice and self-giving, such as we have in the Cross.

We must allow a measure of truth to this contention, more especially as there is ground to believe that something deeper and more real of God was revealed in the suffering of the Cross than we could know through the Incarnation. Further, it would seem that it was after the death and resurrection of Jesus that the power and life of God came into humanity in their fullest measure, in the gift of the divine Spirit of Pentecost. The resurrection, therefore, is part of the same movement of divine love to redeem men, and we may infer that the incoming of God into humanity in Christ was consummated and became available for all men in the living, risen Christ. This is the richest meaning of the truth of the indwelling Spirit of Christ in the believer, as the source of power and of the victory over sin. In a sense the secret of the Incarnation has to be reproduced and repeated in all true believers. This is the reason why in these days men are emphasizing the truth that the Atonement can only be completed and made effectual in men through union with Christ, in a real interchange of spirit with Spirit through love. By this union and the love it entails, some presence or power comes into the nature of each man that enables him to keep the flesh under, to master the entail of sin and guilt, and to walk in the Spirit. This is, at its deepest, St. Paul's conception of the Spirit of Christ in the life of the believer, for His presence within makes believers "more than conquerors".

We have already mentioned that there is an important problem behind the general position we have discussed. It is

concerned with the question of what we really mean when we say that Christ took our nature, and became man, in the Incarnation. Did He take human nature in the full sense of that nature as it belongs to us? In other words, did Jesus take human nature with its entail of sinful tendencies, and the bias due to sin, or did He take a nature essentially different from ours in that it was devoid of these factors and without sin's entail? It seems clear that the story of the Virgin Birth was meant to safeguard the latter position. If we accept this it involves two important points. First, it makes it necessary for us to believe that the sinlessness of Jesus was due to the physical fact of His birth, and not to the conquest of His own will; that His sinless life was the result of physical nature, rather than an achievement of His own. In the first case, it would have little moral and spiritual value, while in the second case it would have ethical value of immense and incalculable value.

Again, in the second place, if Jesus had a nature different from ours, as Professor Leonard Hodgson suggests, then temptation could not mean to Him the same as it means to us. He was tempted, as we know, but on the theory of a different manhood, the result in every case was a foregone conclusion. How, then, can the example of Jesus help and inspire us, if His temptation was not the same as ours? How, further, can a New Testament writer say that "He was tempted in *all points* as we are"? He adds "yet without sin", and this is His glory and supreme achievement. He fought our foes and withstood the same trials, but whereas we fail and fall, He mastered them all—walked through the fire, as it were, without being burned.

This position certainly makes Jesus much more completely one with us in our trials and struggles than the other position. Nor do I think we ought to be afraid of this view, or fear to accept all its implications, as long as we understand it aright, and hold that through all Jesus was victor in every temptation. His sinlessness was the result of His own willed effort of complete obedience to God, and as such it had value for Him, for the Father, and for the world. It is

probably some such feeling that has prompted some men to give definite expression to the view we have mentioned. Thus, Edward Irving, the founder of the Catholic Apostolic Church, gives emphatic utterance to this position. He made a distinction between the nature of man and his personality. His "nature" is that which he shares with all men, whilst his personality is what he makes of the stuff of nature, as it were, that was given him at his birth. So while he shares his nature with others, his personality is his own, his very own. Jesus at His birth shared the nature of every man, with the entail of sin, but his personality, the self He had built out of this nature, was without sin. He conquered every tendency to evil, mastered every temptation, and lived a perfectly sinless life, knowing our struggles and battling against our weaknesses in very reality, yet conquering them all, and so "without sin". His sinlessness is thus the result of His own willing, the achievement of His own Self.

A more recent advocate of this view has appeared in America, in the person of Dr. Du Bose, a very able thinker and commentator. In this country, the late Professor Peake appears to have had a leaning towards this view at one period of his thought, but he seems to have abandoned it later. It will be clear that this view does not harmonize with the idea that "the Incarnation is the Atonement", for Christ's victory is won after the Incarnation, and within His humanity. Moreover, He had to be victor over Himself before He could win the victory over evil for us. On the other hand, He could be more of an example and an inspiring leader than on the different view. It is for this reason that Dr. Robert Mackintosh speaks of this view as "Salvation by Sample". Salvation is to come to all as it came in Christ, through His victory over Himself, but once He had won the victory in Himself, the powers of evil are vanquished and broken, and we are able to conquer in Him.

The Mystical Theory, as we have seen, had many advocates among the Church Fathers, but it would seem that the position of Principal John Caird is at the foundation of the modern view. We must, therefore, consider his views. The

most important defender of the theory is the late Bishop Westcott, the great Biblical scholar and thinker, while the theory has a very enthusiastic supporter in Archdeacon J. M. Wilson, who, in a series of Hulsean Lectures,¹ defends the position with great energy and power. We shall examine briefly the contribution made to the position by the three thinkers we have mentioned.

(A) PRINCIPAL JOHN CAIRD, D.D.

Principal Caird was a Presbyterian minister in Scotland who afterwards became Principal of Glasgow University. A brother of Edward Caird, he wrote a number of books and delivered a course of Gifford Lectures which were later published in two volumes under the title *The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity*. In these lectures he discusses the question of the Atonement, and gives us his own views.² Principal Caird, throughout the work, more especially when dealing with the Person of Christ, lays great stress on the principle of immanentism, or the immanent presence of God in the universe and in man. It is perhaps not without significance that those who hold the Mystical Theory of the Atonement also accept the position of immanentism, and this becomes a basis for their views. The Principal in his lectures covers a wide field, but comes to rest at last in a view of Atonement, and the salvation it secures, as the indwelling of God in Christ and through Christ, His indwelling in fuller measure in all men. He is very strong in his emphasis on the grace and the love of God, but though he mentions the death of Christ, he does not dwell upon it, nor does he lay very great weight upon it. He comes very near at some points to the Moral Influence Theory, but it is probably correct to classify him as one who accepts the Mystical Theory.

In Lecture XII he deals with "The Possibility of Moral Restoration". He has previously dealt with the origin of moral evil, and here asks: Is it remediable? Is there a pos-

¹ *The Gospel of the Atonement*. Hulsean Lectures, 1898-1899.

² *The Fundamental Ideas of Christianity*, Lectures XII, XVI, XVII and XVIII.

sibility of its cure? In his answer Principal Caird rejects the theory of "total depravity", because if man were wholly bad, he could not know himself as evil. Moreover, if man's evil were absolute, no recovery would be possible, and total depravity is only another name for moral impotence. Further still, God would have no material on which to work in His effort to save men. Again, the very consciousness of evil implies that man is not wholly bad. We cannot, however, reckon on this consciousness as a guarantee of restoration. It may condemn, but it cannot restore. How is restoration to be accomplished? By redemption and grace. Something must come into man, for he has no sufficiency in himself. Some greater love must come in and redress the balance, "the expulsive power of a new affection". This is what we get in Christianity. It brings into man a new motive force of conquering love. So Christianity not only stresses the moral ideal, it gives the power to achieve it. Moreover, it reveals the ideal in a person who loves us and gives Himself to us in love. The moral ideal, as law, is powerless, but as love, it is full of power. Further, the real penalty of sin is inward and spiritual, therefore the restoration must be inward and spiritual, not the cancelling of a penalty, but a renewal through love, and this is to come by "the sight of self-sacrificing love". Restoration is to come, then, through love and the power of the Spirit immanent in us. This is to take place through Christ becoming an indwelling power, a personal presence within, for the Spirit of God is in the world, and can now be in us through Christ. This is eternal life realizing itself in the spirit and life of humanity. It became a reality in the Incarnation, and is still real and living in the world and in men who believe.

In Lecture XVI Principal Caird considers Anselm's theory, and rejects it on various grounds. First, it deals in metaphors as exact equivalents of spiritual realities. Again, it over-emphasizes some of the Biblical metaphors. Three errors are possible with regard to the Atonement arising from an over-emphasis of these metaphors: the commercial, the forensic and the sacrificial views. With Anselm it is a commercial view emphasizing the payment of a debt. It is a

serious attempt to face the problem but is vitiated by its basic principle. It is an attempt to extract from the metaphor more than it really means. Further, moral obligation can only be very imperfectly represented as a debt, and debts can be transferred, but moral obligation cannot. Further still, there is no need in this theory for any moral relation to Christ or of His work within. Finally, the idea of the transference of Christ's merit to us is, as depicted, morally impossible. This view, then, is rejected.

In the next Lecture (XVII), the Principal considers the Substitutionary Theory. This substitutionary idea is present in the sacrifices of the ancient religions as well as in the Jewish sacrifices. It is blended with forensic ideas, and Christ is regarded as paying a penalty for us. This theory is not acceptable, because (*a*) justice is made to compel the judge to punish, and (*b*) guilt is not transferable, and therefore the full punishment cannot be transferred. We might also ask with regard to the theory whether there is an absolute justice that precludes forgiveness until it is satisfied. The question has to be faced also as to whether there is any sense in which the satisfaction of justice can be made by an innocent person for the guilty. Again we may ask: Cannot God do more than we? We can forgive without first punishing the offender. Surely God can do so. In reply to this it is said that sin is not an affront to a person but to an Eternal Law, and even if God forgives, the law still condemns men. God has no personality apart from moral right; He is justice and holiness. The Infinite moral ruler is thus debarred from forgiving sin unless it is first punished.

What can we say regarding this position? We must distinguish between justice and vindictiveness or revenge, but can we conceive of God making the endurance of punishment the indispensable condition of forgiveness? There is a higher and better satisfaction to divine justice than punishment, that of forgiving wrong-doing. Further, society does not regard the infliction of punishment as establishing a claim to forgiveness, and a criminal is not forgiven when he has served his sentence. He is still guilty. Moreover, pain as pain

possesses no atoning mercy, for no pain can be commensurate with moral guilt, nor can it obliterate guilt. We can also ask, Is there any way by which infinite justice can get satisfaction from the pain or suffering of a transgressor in such a way as to become the condition of forgiveness? Some say there is a kind of suffering that makes expiation, and offers spiritual satisfaction. But there is a difficulty here, for no human being can render such satisfaction to the Infinite Righteousness for sin. This is a doctrine of despair and not of hope, for our sorrow for sin partakes of the imperfection of our moral nature. This difficulty is said to be met in the perfect and sinless Christ.

We can ask of the Substitutionary Theory as a whole two questions: (1) Is not the satisfaction for sin on which it is based an unreal satisfaction? and (2) Even if it were not so, can virtue be transferred from the sinless to the sinful? The sorrow for sin must be in the heart of the sinner himself. Further, a perfect being cannot experience guilt, and it is inconceivable that moral transference, especially the transference of guilt, is possible.

Having been led to reject the two main theories of the Atonement, Principal Caird in Lecture XVIII seeks for the elements of a true theory. He begins by asking what kind of suffering for sin can we ascribe to a sinless being and whether there is any sense in which the moral benefits of a sinless being can be transferred to the sinful. With regard to the first question, it is universally agreed that some elements of the suffering caused by sin are beyond the possibility of anyone except the person who has sinned, and one of these elements is the consciousness of guilt. We cannot, on this account, think of Christ as suffering the sense of guilt and its anguish. It is one of the inward evils of sin and is the sinner's own. Further, the consciousness of the "wrath of God" is only possible to the sinner himself, and this again cannot be attributed to Jesus Christ. There was no anger in God's heart towards His Son; rather, in the midst of His suffering, Jesus had the divine approval, and felt He was doing the Father's will.

In dealing with the second question, as to whether the benefits of the sinless can in any sense be transferred to the sinful, the Principal rejects any suggestion that the suffering of Christ were penal, asking how He could be punished if He were sinless. We can say that a good man can suffer for sin, but he will suffer in proportion to his goodness. In fact there is some suffering for sin that only a sinless being can suffer, but this is not the guilt of sin. The question, however, still presses, Can any transference take place morally and spiritually? We can suffer for others, but we do not, and cannot, sin and feel guilty for them. There is a profound meaning in the phrase "justification by faith", but its meaning is that of a spiritual link that brings about a living union with Christ so that in the fundamental principle of our moral life we become one with Him. It is not that the merit of Christ is ascribed to us, but that it becomes actually our own, for the essential principle of Christ's life becomes, by faith, the principle of our own lives. His merit is not then imputed to us, it is actually ours. Now it was for this that Jesus was born, and in His Incarnation this union with humanity was a reality. Principal Caird does not actually say that Jesus died in order that this might become a reality to men, but this idea is implicit in his position, and there are suggestions of it. The necessity of Christ's death lay in the realization of His Incarnation in men, the reproduction of His birth and His death in those who believed on Him.

The Principal states that there is an objective element in the Atonement, and this is the historical fact of the coming of God into humanity in Christ. The objective element, however, must not be pressed too heavily, lest it exclude every subjective aspect, for this would be false. It must become subjective, and, apparently, mainly subjective, as the experience of union with Christ, and the reproduction of His life in the soul. A salvation without moral goodness would be useless, and no spiritual good can be passively conveyed to us. It must be received and willed; in other words, it must become subjective, for spiritual blessings must be spiritually received. Faith in Christ makes us participants in His perfect

righteousness, and the principle of His life, made possible and realized in the Incarnation, becomes the principle of life in all men who believe. This brings about the gradual elimination of the life of self, and a blending more and more with the mind and the will of Christ. This blending can become so complete that self goes, and our life is lost in Him. This is the final consummation of the Atonement.

(B) BISHOP B. F. WESTCOTT

There is a distinct mystical strain in all that Bishop Westcott wrote, and this becomes more fully articulate in his contribution to the Incarnation and the Atonement. In this connection the mystical element reveals itself in three of his basic ideas, whilst it underlies his whole treatment. Those three ideas are:

(a) That Christ was not only man but representative man, that in some deep and mysterious sense humanity was mystically in Him, just as physically it is thought to be in Adam. Jesus is the "last Adam", a "life-giving Spirit", as the first Adam is a life-giving man. Thus he says in his lectures on the Apostles' Creed:¹ Jesus was not only man—"perfectly man"—but He was also "representatively man". He was perfectly man, and "Nothing limits His humanity but the limits proper to humanity itself". He belongs to no one people, to no one time. But He is also representatively man in such a way as to include all and belong to all, so that in speaking of eating His flesh and drinking His blood, St. John means appropriating and using the virtue of His humanity as He lived and died for us. There is an eternal power in humanity, and it is within our reach.

(b) The second basic idea is that Christ's shedding of His blood was the giving of His life and that by this shedding He made His life available to all men. He gave His life *for* men in order that He may be able to give it *to* men. In a note on "The blood of Christ" (Note 8) Dr. Westcott bases his conception of this on the Levitical idea (Leviticus xvii, 10 f.)

¹ Entitled *The Historic Faith* (1883), pp. 62, 63.

that the life is in the blood. For this reason the blood of the sacrifices is not to be taken by men, but is rather to be sprinkled by the priest. The shed blood is distinctly treated as living, and when sprinkled on the altar, it makes atonement in virtue of the life in it. The life was first surrendered, and then united with God. Jesus fulfilled all that was foreshadowed in the sacrificial system. All men are capable of vital union with Him, and they find in Him their true life. So the blood of Christ represents His life, (1) as rendered in free self-sacrifice to God for men, and (2) as brought into perfect fellowship with God, having been set free by death. This mystical aspect of the matter is brought out in John vi, where participation in Christ's blood is participation in His life. Other passages are mentioned. The Bishop quotes Scriptural passages that support his position, but he ignores other aspects of Scriptural teaching, some of which imply different ideas and principles. This makes his treatment somewhat one-sided and inconclusive.

(c) The deepest strain of mysticism becomes evident in the third basic truth, that men participate in the blessings of the Atonement, through mystical union with Christ. He stresses the necessity of being "in Christ" before men can share in His life and possess His spirit. This idea is akin to the Christ mysticism of St. Paul, and it is as fundamental to the thought of the Bishop as it is to that of the Apostle. "We must be one with Him—His life must be our life before His work avails for us." "The life of Christ was wholly sacrificed to God so that it might be available for others; it is the means of our forgiveness, and of our access to God." This would appear to be the ground of the necessity of Christ's death, rather than any necessity in the nature of God Himself. In reality, the Bishop says very little about Christ's death, but he says a great deal about His suffering and His shed blood. Moreover, he insists that "Christ gives new life to the sinner by uniting him to Himself".

In accordance with his basic conceptions great emphasis is laid on the Incarnation, although Calvary is not forgotten or ignored. "In His humanity—Jesus accomplished the true

destiny of man", whilst in His death He "accomplished, through suffering, the destiny of man fallen".¹ During His humiliation Jesus manifested the Glory of God to those who had eyes to see. But the Incarnation would have been necessary, and would have taken place, "for the fulfilment of man's destiny", even if man had not sinned. The passion of Christ was necessary because man had fallen and had failed to realize his destiny. This made the redemption of fallen man necessary. So the idea of redemption, as well as the suffering of Jesus, presupposes the idea of "a fall". "Christ took to Himself and bore to the grave, the uttermost burden of sinful humanity",² but we must acknowledge in His death the supreme triumph of divine love. "He conquered through suffering." Our imagination cannot grasp what was done but our hearts are moved by it.

In Lecture X, Dr. Westcott deals with "the forgiveness of sin". Nothing seems simpler than forgiveness, yet nothing is more mysterious. It is more than passing over wrong, and although men may forgive in this superficial sense, in its real meaning forgiveness is beyond the possibility of men, for it involves (a) perfect knowledge of the offence, and this man cannot have, and (b) perfect restoration of love, and this is only possible to God. There is no forgiveness in Nature, for "The deed done remains while the world lasts". But divine love is above Nature, and so "the great mystery of the future is not punishment, but forgiveness". The work of Christ showed us first, man and his sin, but it showed us, also, the universality of the divine love. "In His own Person He fulfilled the will of God. . . . And whosoever is 'in Him' shares the virtue of His life. By such a union the evil of the past is done away and the crowning miracle of being is accomplished",³ that is, the forgiveness of sin. Here the Bishop is at the heart of truth, for if we understand it aright, forgiveness is the greatest miracle in the universe. It involves more of God's power and love than any other act of His. Creation demands less of God than redemption, and the core of redemption is the forgiveness of sin and the reconciliation that follows this.

¹ *The Historic Faith*, p. 60.

² *Ibid.* p. 67.

³ *Ibid.* p. 132.

During Holy Week in 1888, the Bishop preached six sermons at Hereford Cathedral which were afterwards published under the title *The Victory of the Cross*. In this volume we get a clearer expression of his views, and a more complete disclosure of his mystical position. In the Preface, Dr. Westcott ranges himself by the side of Athanasius in his emphasis on the Incarnation, and maintains that the idea of the solidarity of mankind contains the key to the problem of the Atonement, for it is the work of Christ as representative man, and so is in a real sense the work of humanity. The main points of his treatment of the doctrine are stated in the Preface. These are: (1) The Incarnation must be regarded . . . as the attainment of the divine likeness in humanity. (2) The Incarnate Son fulfilled the destiny of humanity in spite of the Fall. (3) Sin carries its own spiritual punishment, the chief of which is separation from God. (4) God cannot regard pain in itself with pleasure, but only willing sacrifice, that is, obedience. (5) Christ took to Himself and took away sin, bearing in His own person all that the righteous love of God had connected with sin, as its due chastisement. (6) So in His Incarnate Life, He gave Himself a ransom for men, and not only redeemed them but brought them the Divine Love. (7) The work of Christ, through His perfect manhood, was for humanity as a whole, and there is no forgiveness outside Him. (8) In doing His work for men, Christ was not a substitute for men. (9) At the same time Christ truly suffered for our sins. By fulfilling the destiny of fallen man, He gave access to God, but He did not bear our punishment.

Three of the above are of cardinal importance, but the most important is the solidarity of humanity which is realized in Christ, and this truth will grow in importance in the future.

The first sermon deals with this solidarity and the natural fellowship of men. This is a fundamental thought of the Gospel, and it forms the basis of our belief that duty is the law of individual life, whilst solidarity is the law of universal life. This solidarity reveals the possibility of redemption. It reveals also the ground of the sense of fellowship in common labour, and the sense inherent in human nature that men

are bound together, and form a fragment of an organic and growing whole. It reveals itself also in the fellowship of men in sorrow, failure and sin, in the common lot of all men. All this is the teaching of Nature, but in Christ we find something more. In the perfection of his humanity man's nature has been charged with the infinite potency of His love, whilst human sorrow has been transformed into joy by His Cross.

The second sermon is on "The Power of Sacrifice". Dr. Westcott insists that the possibility of redemption lies in our fellowship which is based on our solidarity and that the condition of redemption is fixed in sacrifice. "Whosoever shall lose his life shall save it" is the central truth four times repeated in the Gospels. Jesus showed that sacrifice and self-denial are the beginning and the essential principle of higher life. This is the secret of the life of Christ and of the life of the Christian. This law of sacrifice is based on the essential moral relationship of men. The voice of humanity declares it, it is written large in the history of men and of nations. Patriarchs, prophets and Apostles lived by it. Moreover, the power of sacrifice is justified by the facts of experience. Sacrifice is also a revelation of higher spiritual life; it is charged with victorious power, and is the Spirit that brings eternal blessing.

The third sermon deals with the central truth of the "Unity of Humanity in Christ". The Christian idea is, that men are vitally connected with one another, and *that men are one man*. The Incarnation is a part of this conception. "All are one man in Christ Jesus, not 'one' only in the abstract . . . but *one man*: one that is, even as the living vine is one with its many branches, one as the living body is one with its many members: one by the presence of a vital energy guided by one law, one will, to one end."¹ So deeper than all that divides men is this unity. This is clear in Genesis, where God is said to make man in His own image, and capable of fellowship with Him. This destiny was frustrated by sin, but Christ "fulfilled for man fallen the destiny which was provided for man unfallen".² Further, "If Christ has been born as other men, He would have been one man of many, limited

¹ *The Victory of the Cross*, p. 41.

² *Ibid.* p. 43.

by an individual manhood, and not, in very truth, the Son of Man, the perfect representative of the whole race".¹ "So the Gospel is not a theory or a message, it is a Person, a redeemer living for ever, with a life that is universal and divine." Dr. Westcott dwells on the saying "Ye are all one man in Christ", saying that the life of Christ is a universal life, that this universal life is the divine life, "a human life lived in God". In it, both in its human and divine realities, we share, and we share it that we may reveal it to the world.

The next sermon is a consideration of "The Sufferings of Christ" based on the verse in Hebrews in which it is said that Christ, "though He was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things He suffered". Christ's life found its fulfilment through suffering, and is the realization of the Divine Ideal. His sufferings have a relation to us, as a ransom and an atonement, but they also have a bearing on Him, for He was made perfect through suffering, and if we understand this it involves the other aspect. Suffering in sacrifice is in the constitution of the world, and it can become the source of abiding joy. Noble natures are made strong and tender by suffering, for suffering is both a test of manhood and a revelation of manhood. Jesus learned obedience through suffering, but He did not learn to obey, for there was no disobedience to be conquered. He carried to the utmost the virtue of obeying, and He endured in His pain every penalty which the righteousness of God connected with sin, though He was not punished by God. He offered to God the absolute self-surrender of service, and fulfilled, in spite of the Fall, the original destiny of man. His suffering was voluntary, foreseen and understood, and was therefore the spring of His perfection. He knew evil in every shape, and for Him suffering was an intrusion into the divine order consequent on sin, and witnessing in every form to its source. He made every human sin His own by the innermost fellowship of spiritual life, and bore the consequences of every transgression as entering into the divine law of purifying chastisement.

In the succeeding sermon, "The Virtue of Christ's Suffer-

¹ *The Victory of the Cross*, p. 44.

ing" is discussed. Here we approach the sanctuary of the divine righteousness and love. We feel that the voluntary death is the measure of our need of Christ's sympathy, and the destruction of our selfishness, as well as the consummation of the counsel of God. The experience of Christ shows how the Father made the Son perfect through suffering, it shows also the fruit of every travail of soul. Christ's sufferings, further, concentrate, in our minds, the assurance of a restored harmony with God, and they have an infinite value. The infinite value of His work, however, does not depend on His capacity of infinite suffering. To believe this is to hold on to a fragment of truth. It was Christ's fulfilment in every respect of the will of God under the conditions of our present life that had value, and this raised every faculty of man to perfection. So "Christ as the Head of humanity was able to bring within the reach of every one who shares His nature the fruits of His perfect obedience, through the energy of the one life by which we all live. . . . His sufferings were not 'outside' us. They were the sufferings of One in whom we live, and who lives in us. Christ gathering the race into Himself suffered for all by the will of God."¹ Moreover, Christ exhausted all suffering, bearing it according to the will and the mind of God. But we, on our part, need the constant support of His present sympathy in our labours. So He is able to communicate the virtue of His work in the reality of forgiveness to all who are in Him. The believer makes Christ's work his own, and God sees him in the Son. Further, Christ gives the virtue of His life to quicken the soul that rests in Him. We must guard the truth of the transforming power of union with Christ, for "Christ can communicate the virtue of His work, and we can enter into His glory".² We can come into a transforming relationship with Christ, and by this relationship, "the sense, as well as the reality of sonship is given back to us". In this assurance we perceive the efficacy of His work. It restores our faculty of true sight so that we know the world as our Father's world.

¹ *Ibid.* p. 80.

² *Ibid.* p. 85.

In the last sermon Dr. Westcott speaks of "Christ reigning from the Cross". He links the Cross to the resurrection, and regards the Cross as a symbol of Christ's throne from which He reigns, until all men are won. His sovereignty in the Cross is a new type of sovereignty. It is universal, divine and a present sovereignty. Moreover, it is a sovereignty exercised through His people, and is a thoroughly effective sovereignty.

There is much that is suggestive and beautiful in many respects in this treatment and there runs through all a deeply devotional spirit. The mystical element is evident throughout, but it is particularly prominent in the fourth and fifth sermons. Some points of criticism, however, force themselves to the front. First, we may question the assumption that suffering is the result of sin. Much of the suffering of the world is due to sin, but there is suffering among animals, though it is not as poignant as among men. Moreover, such suffering was in the world before the Fall.

Again, men may doubt, and do doubt, the historicity and actuality of the Fall. It is not safe, or necessary, to base a theory of the Atonement on an assumption that is uncertain. Further, it is not easy to accept, or understand, the theory of the representative character of Christ as the Bishop expresses it. This is, on his view, little more than an abstraction.

Again, the idea of the solidarity of mankind is usually understood in a physical sense, in the continuity of seminal basis and organic relationship. It cannot be maintained in exactly the same sense in the sphere of spiritual reality. We might also object to the decision of the Bishop not to consider the various theories, nor to seek the aid of the different systems of theology, and to rest on the Scriptural basis. It is important to base our theory on the witness of the Scripture, but it is scarcely sufficient. Some attempt must be made to face the basic ideas of philosophy and of modern thought, and this has not been done of set purpose. In spite of these points of criticism, there is great value in this treatment, and we must feel a great measure of gratitude to Dr. Westcott.

(C) ARCHDEACON J. M. WILSON

In his Hulsean Lectures¹ Archdeacon Wilson gives definite and explicit expression to the Mystical Theory, repeatedly saying that the Incarnation is the Atonement. He has aspects of thought that suggest the Moral Influence Theory, and these led one writer to say that his view is a peculiar brand of the Subjective Theory. The subjective aspects of his thought, however, are subservient to his main conception, and there is no doubt that his view is to be classed with those of the Mystical Theory. Further, the Archdeacon claims Bishop Westcott as the source of his ideas, and the main advocate of his views. His lectures are very stimulating and challenging, for he is fearless in his expression, yet with a decided religious attitude and a sane view of the place and meaning of religion in the ordinary life of man and of society. There are four lectures, the important ones being Lectures II and III.

The first lecture is devoted to an examination of the method of science in the formation and verification of hypotheses. The same method has its place in the research for religious truth. There is always an unknown land of mystery in the realm of science. So there is in religion, but this does not invalidate its truth any more than it undermines scientific truth. Here he touches on the questions of Creation, the Antiquity of Man, the State after Death and the Inspiration of the Bible.

These great questions are somewhat like the doctrine of the Atonement in two respects: (*a*) they are not defined by creeds, and (*b*) they have been the cause of very much alienation from Christ. Some of the forms of the doctrine of the Atonement have repelled men's divinely implanted sense of justice, and led to silent and, in some cases, active opposition. Many feel that the transactional and the forensic views are impossible, but thinking that the Atonement is essential to Christianity, they are troubled in mind, or they stand apart from the Church in doubt. A doctrine that is immoral cannot

¹ *The Gospel of the Atonement.*

be tolerated. Yet the doctrine of salvation from sin through Christ, the redemption of the world by Him, the New Life in Christ and the indwelling word of God form the centre of Christianity. We must therefore face the doctrine of the Atonement, and try to find how Christ saves us and gives us His life. The cardinal truth here is that of the Atonement in its relation to the Incarnation.

We come, thus, to Lecture II. During the life of Christ, there appears to have been no question as to the precise way in which His death was to affect the relation of men to God. The question does not seem to have arisen in the minds of the disciples, but a new source of power had entered into their lives, and they were lifted to a higher plane, from the human to the divine plane; and they felt the divine life welling up within them. They felt themselves to be the depositories of the knowledge of the divine sonship of all men. This divine secret was centred in Jesus. They, and all men, shared the same human nature as Jesus, and He was the Eternal Life, the very Son of God. Their faith was based on the conviction of Christ's presence in them and, through this, of the identification of the spirit of man with Christ, and through Christ with God. So "the Christian theory of life is that somehow man, however sinful . . . is the possessor of an element or germ of divine life". This theory was later defined and interpreted by St. Paul, a Jew, and he did this in terms and ideas prevalent among Jews in his day. These ideas are sacrifice, propitiation and expiation. A Jew could not think of the facts except in such terms as these, more especially in terms of sacrifice. Moreover, the language of religion was saturated with the conception of a transcendent God and the complete separation of God from men.

St. Paul is sometimes mystical, and our tendency is then to explain him away. At other times he is Judaic, and in this phase we have misunderstood him by interpreting him literally. The mystical element expressed in the phrase "in Christ" really implies that the same eternal life as was in Christ is shared potentially by all men, and only needs begetting again, or awakening in men, to make them conscious

possessors of that eternal life. The question is raised, Is our spiritual life literally the life of Christ in us? St. Paul says yes! If so, how can we be more at one with God than by sharing the Spirit of Christ? What other at-one-ment is possible? If the original root-notion of the sacrifices was union, the idea of Christ as sacrifice had place and meaning, for the divine life of Christ is itself the union of man with God. John says we have fellowship with the Father and the Son as established in the Incarnation. The means of approach to God, therefore, is the direct awakening of the divine life, or the divine word in man, and the sense of divine sonship which comes through fellowship with God and with Christ. If, then, the word "propitiation" could be taken to mean no more than the assurance of God's love towards us, and of His union with us—"which I believe is John's meaning"—then Christ is most truly the propitiation for our sins. But this differs wholly from the idea so long read into the word, that of appeasing an angry God. Christ may be also regarded as a "sacrifice" if it could be taken to mean the crowning instance of that suffering of the innocent for the guilty which springs from the solidarity of mankind. "This is indeed the sacrifice of the death of Christ, but in it there is no thought of substitution, or of expiation, as has been ascribed to the word sacrifice." In Apostolic and sub-Apostolic times the general sense is that man is delivered through Christ from the dominion of death, but without explaining how.

Certain metaphors are used, but, in general, it is taken to mean "the imparting and the recognition of a new spiritual life made known in the Incarnation and dwelling in their hearts". "It is practically the *logos* doctrine applied to men", the truth of the indwelling of God in men. So in Clement of Alexandria, redemption is the revelation of a relationship between God and man. The deepest thought of the Greek Fathers is spiritual and ethical, and emphasizes man's essential unity with the divine nature. In Athanasius we have the thought of the redemption wrought by Christ as being the result of Christ's revelation of man's participation in the divine nature, and "of man being part of the divine". This

revelation of the union of man with God authenticated itself in human experience. With Anselm a change came, for he diverted the stream of speculation on the nature of redemption, and stressed other metaphors, more especially the metaphor of debt. His theory attributes to God something less perfect than Fatherly love, and it presupposes that the death of Christ worked a change in God. The Archdeacon asks: "Did He pay my debt to God? If so, I am free." Moreover, if the world is a manifestation of God, whom we call Father, we do not want a substitute to bear our discipline and suffering for us. We want a power to strengthen and sustain us.

Archdeacon Wilson thinks that Luther's real idea is that of Christ making Himself one with us by His Incarnation and death, and our making ourselves one with Him through surrender, and through Him, one with God. There were many modifications of the forensic idea of the Atonement, but our thought of God makes all such ideas impossible for us. For us "the Incarnation is itself the Atonement" (p. 88), "The reconciliation of the ancient dualism is found in the identification of the human and the divine life in the Person of Christ", and "the doctrine of the Incarnation is replacing that of the Atonement". "Let us say boldly that the Incarnation is . . . the identification of the human and the divine life. This identification is the Atonement. There is no other."

In the next lecture (Lecture III) he emphasizes still further the idea that the Incarnation, and the whole life of Christ, is the identification of the human and the divine life, and "that, therefore, it itself constitutes the Atonement". "A complete union of human and divine man was manifested in Christ, and this union is thus revealed as, in its degree, existent in all men." Christ has by His very existence explained the relation of man to God, a relation of union not of separation. So "Christ is, therefore, the Atonement". This manifestation of God was quickly followed by His manifestation through the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men. If this is the Atonement, we must eliminate from our minds every trace of expiation or penalty, except as illustrations or metaphors and we must regard such metaphors as temporary. All

commercial ideas and the idea of transfer or merit, "have become unsatisfactory and indeed impossible". Such doctrines have outlived the thought of God from which they sprang.

Archdeacon Wilson, then, considers why the work of Christ, especially His death, is central to Christianity, and states that "the Atonement was completed on the Cross". The Cross inspires humility and reverence in all who approach it, for they realize that Christ was the revealer of the divine to the world, and in this He is the Saviour of Men. At this point we see the Archdeacon's leaning towards the Subjective Theory, but this is not basal to his thought, although he is attracted by it. He asks: Why is the Atonement connected so closely with the death of Christ in the Bible? We note, first, that the shedding of blood is only the identification of the human and the divine life; but did this identification necessitate the death, and did this make death the supremely significant fact of His life? We cannot be sure of this, for the real centre of Christianity is the Fatherhood of God as revealed by Christ, and this was made clear in the Incarnation. This idea developed into the truth of the love of God and this is quite alien to the idea of sacrifice, and to the thought of substitutionary and forensic theories. Such elements were inherent in Jewish law, and saturated the minds of the disciples, but they have no place in Christianity. Yet the death of Christ has a place in the Christian system, for its effect upon us and "the emotion it produces in us are immense". It brings the sense of a friendship renewed, or of the quieting of conscience, "but this does not mean that these are facts". What is a fact is that Christ makes us one with God.

It must be said, however, that "in some way it is the suffering and death, more than the life, that have so affected us", and is, therefore, in a special sense the power of reconciling us to God. This it does by inspiring love to Him. It was necessary for Him to suffer, because power springs from suffering by a mysterious law of spiritual life, and this suggests that there is an inherent necessity in the divine nature to suffer. Without suffering, some heights of spiritual life cannot be

reached. This is the real meaning of the Servant picture in Isaiah liii, and it is true of all good men. It is in this principle that we find the identification of the Atonement with the Cross, for the divine suffers from the weight of sin and woe. "If He had escaped the Cross and died naturally somewhere, He would have been a great teacher, but not a revealer of God, a reconciler and saviour." It is through His sufferings alone that we are assured that, in spite of all, God is our Father. There is something of the divine in suffering, for suffering is inseparable from love. The redemption of the world through Christ, and principally through His sufferings and death, is the supreme instance of a universal and divine law. This law was revealed in the Cross, the law that nothing but self-sacrifice is of the least avail in the moral world. Renunciation of self is the supreme law of spiritual life and the only path to the higher life. It is the law of God's own life and it is exemplified and verified on the Cross, for Christ's death is the supreme instance of its operation. So "the death of the Cross demonstrates that the human and the divine know but one and the same law of life".

Archdeacon Wilson, then, shows how his theory bears upon, and confirms, some other doctrines. It shows the uniqueness of Christianity, explains the gift of the Holy Spirit, discloses revelation in its true meaning of purpose as the gradual unveiling of the relation of the soul to God. Moreover, it is a theory that can be preached. He, then, asks, "What does this way of regarding the Atonement make of sin?" "If it passes over sin lightly, it fails." The strength of the expiatory theory is, that it stresses sin in its terrible effects. The Archdeacon is weak at this point, but he insists that we must distinguish between forgiveness of sin and the remission of the penalty of sin, for "forgiveness of sin is like the healing of a disease". Again, he lapses into subjectiveness, saying that "the soul is re-begotten by the truth of the divine love and sympathy", but he recovers his position by stating that "the Spirit can dwell in every man and this brings salvation through the consciousness of union with God". This is the thought "the world is waiting for, the renewal of

the consciousness of God within". "God has been manifesting Himself from the beginning, and at last in a perfect man, He has shown us that our human nature is not outside the divine, and that we are children of God and partakers of His nature." He has made us one with God and has shown us that nothing can break the unity of our life with that of God. "Here in this life of Christ within, in the divine element revealed in human life, is eventually to be found the reconciliation of every dualism and contradiction." This brings us to Lecture IV.

Lecture IV.—This lecture is not as important as the preceding ones. In it the Archdeacon endeavours to show the bearing of his theory on contemporary movements of thought. Thus, it is in harmony with the modern scientific method of inductive reasoning. Again, it is in line with the trend of philosophical thought, for there is a tendency to revert from Latin Theology, with its emphasis on the transcendence of God, to the Greek idea, based on the immanence of God and the community of nature in God and man. He dwells on this Greek idea and amplifies it, insisting that the supremacy of this thought determines man's way of looking at everything. It lays stress on the necessity of realizing and developing the Christian life within ourselves. "All are One Man in Christ." The restoration of faith demands the fuller understanding and the wider recognition of this type of theology in the Church.

He discusses the Latin view with its idea of God as transcendent and as Judge. This idea creates "a passion for distinctions" and seeks to define everything. Salvation becomes a scheme of interposition between two permanently distant objects, a transaction rather than a spiritual process. It is opposed to his theory for it separates God from man.

Again, the Archdeacon's theory is in full accord with the democratic spirit of our time, for it emphasizes the solidarity of the race, and the value of each individual to God. "The divine life may exist in us without our knowing it", and salvation is achieved through making it known. The Society of Friends is commended for its emphasis on the "Inner

Light" which implies the position held by the Archdeacon. Further, he holds that "the Church is the herald of the Atonement, and the agent of the Kingdom of God". "The doctrine of the Incarnation means that the very life of God is in man, manifested to our eyes in Christ. This is the only philosophy of life which is open to all ranks and intelligible to everyone."

This is a suggestive and well-argued view and there are in it many elements of value. Three points of criticism may be made. (a) The Archdeacon fails to find a real connection between his theory of the Atonement and the death of Christ. (b) His idea of sin is inadequate, for he has no sense of its deep, ingrained ravages, and its wide devastation in the nature of man. (c) The view of personality and the need of safeguarding it in God and in man is insufficiently apprehended, and as a consequence the theory is basically weak.

Chapter VIII

PSYCHOLOGY AND THE DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT

THE development and widespread expansion of psychological study has influenced the theory of Atonement in many ways, and is making a valuable contribution to the doctrine. The more intense and detailed examination of the workings of the mind, research into psychic phenomena, and the attempt to estimate the energies and forces of human personality have modified our ideas with regard to forgiveness, and the consciousness of redemption in Christ, thus compelling us to re-model and re-state our conception of the Atonement. Our knowledge of the operations of the psychological factors in man is as yet tentative, and there are uncertainties and questionings among the psychologists themselves. Moreover, they lack agreement as to basic principles and standards, so we are unable to profit to the full extent from the new knowledge. More prolonged and serious study of the deeper movement of the spirit of man is necessary before we can reap the full benefit of the new study.

As far as the study has progressed, it has yielded valuable results of far-reaching importance regarding the relations of man to God. It is, however, not too much to hope that greater gains are to come, providing psychology keeps to its own field, and does not attempt or pretend to cover the whole realm of religious experience. There are certain elements in man's relationship to God that psychology alone can never fathom nor explain, much less create. It can render great service in explaining how some of these elements operate, and how they can modify consciousness or mould character, but it can never produce them. The Spirit of God and His grace are needed for this. Thus, their source is far deeper than psychology can probe or fully understand. It is a comparatively new science and is still in its swaddling clothes,

and some of the claims made on its behalf are the characteristic marks of youth in every realm. In its youthful enthusiasm it claims as its field the whole world of human life and experience, and it regards nothing as sacred and beyond its reach. Wiser counsel and deeper knowledge will modify this attitude, and enable us to find richer treasure from the study in the days to come. We can already see some fore-gleams of such treasures.

Thus, the fuller understanding of the working of consciousness,—more especially the moral consciousness,—in man, has created a widespread opposition to the unchristian and more revolting elements in the penal theories, and emphasized the need for the revision and re-statement of the idea of Atonement in terms more agreeable to the moral sense of humanity. Again, it has helped men to realize and understand the deeper meanings of sin, the distinction between sin and moral disease, and the difference between guilt on the one hand and misfortune on the other. This deeper understanding of sin has had a direct bearing on the theory of Atonement, for it gives us a better realization of what is necessary to forgive sin.

Further, psychology helps us to understand the experience of forgiveness itself, and gives us light as to the meaning of the faith that saves men, in distinction from the faith that merely believes truth and is little different from credulity. In the wider reaches of thought it has made it impossible for us to accept a theory of election and predestination such as Calvin expounded and which became for many generations the heritage of the Protestant world in the West. Further, it has modified the conception of the Sovereignty of God by emphasizing the experience and the love of Fatherhood and Sonship, and so made men realize the worth of man and his moral and spiritual rights, even in connection with God. Again, the deeper interest in, and the study of, the psychology of mysticism have yielded valuable data as to the nature and extent of the love-union of spirit with spirit and the interpenetration and permeation of one by the other. This is important with regard to man's relation to God and the

possibility of the indwelling of the divine Spirit in man. It enables us to understand more fully the "Christ mysticism" of St. Paul. There is, as we have already seen, a definite tendency among theologians to regard this love-union with Christ as the culminating point in making the Atonement effective in human life; it enables men to share in the victory achieved by God in Christ on the Cross and to experience the blessings that flow from it to them.

In this way we begin to realize some of the possibilities arising from a deeper and more assured knowledge of psychology and of psychological facts. We might widen the field even more. When we recall the fact that it is Christianity alone among all the religions of the world, that has a definite idea of atonement, it becomes evident how important it is to understand and have a definite theory of its meaning and of the psychic experiences it involves. All religions have their methods of deliverance, but it is only in Christianity, that deliverance from sin is regarded as made possible through a definite and specific historical fact, such as the life and the death of Jesus Christ.

The Jewish religion, from which Christianity sprang, and the ideas of which are behind much of the teaching of the New Testament, had no clear and definite theory of Atonement. There are in it a number of suggestions, as well as various methods, of escaping from the consequences of sin. This was the purpose of many of the sacrifices, and in some cases the idea of the transfer of guilt was implied, as in the practice of the Day of Atonement, when a scapegoat was led away to Azazel. In later thought as in 4th Maccabees, the idea grew that the merits of good men, or of martyrs, might make it possible to pass over men's sins, and there are suggestions of justification by works and even sometimes by faith. But Hebrew and Jewish thought is, on the whole, halting and uncertain in this matter. Further, the idea of sin became largely ceremonial, and the thought grew that the sacrifices were necessary as a shield to protect men from the perils and the penalties of ceremonial uncleanness, and secure men's approach to God in a clean condition ceremonially.

This was undoubtedly the idea of the vast majority of the common people, although it is possible that the leaders and the thinking section of society may have thought differently. The verb ordinarily used for "atoning" is *kipper*, whose primary meaning is "to cover" and shield men from the forces that had been set in motion by sin, and to procure indemnity, or as it was expressed, "the forgiveness of sin". The sacrifice was thought to keep back the evil consequences and the penalty of sin.

Our fuller knowledge of the psychological factors involved in sin makes it clear that such a conception of "forgiveness" is wholly inadequate in the Christian sense of the term. Sin is much more than ceremonial defilement and forgiveness means more than the remission of penalty, or a shield to protect men from punishment. Psychology is outside its own realm in this field, but even here it can yield valuable information with regard to the consciousness of man in the experience of forgiveness as obtained by this "covering". This consciousness may yield a certain satisfaction, but with the development of moral distinctions and of ethical knowledge, this can only be an uncertain satisfaction. Probably the nearest approach to a more spiritual view in the Old Testament is in the picture of the Suffering Servant, and as we have seen, this picture influenced the mind of Jesus, and held a definite place in the thought of the early Christians.

Probably the point at which psychology helps us most in this field, is in the examination of what is involved in personality. Its research into self-consciousness as the primary factor in personality, the examination into the various aspects of consciousness,—knowing, willing and feeling,—as well as some of its exploration into the "Unconscious" and instinctive forces that constitute much of the motivation of life, have made possible a deeper knowledge of personality as a whole. This, again, has made possible new views and ideas with regard to certain aspects of the Atonement.

We must, therefore, look a little more carefully at the question at this point, for it has an intimate bearing on our conception of personality in man, and of the personality of

God. We need to approach this question with reverence and with a measure of caution, for many men speak glibly, and write confidently, about personality in God without having seriously faced the problems involved. We must first understand that there are regions of being in God which are beyond the comprehension of the mind of the human personality. The early "Fathers" were impelled to make a distinction between the "Logos endiathetos" and the "Logos prophorikos" in God. The "Logos endiathetos" was God in Himself, in the sacred depth of His own Being. This was sometimes called "The Abyss" or "The Unfathomable". It was a mysterious realm as far as man was concerned, and the only attitude towards it was one of wise and reverent agnosticism. On the other hand, the "Logos prophorikos" was that aspect of God's Being that could go forth towards men.¹ This was the revealable and outgoing element in God and it faced manward rather than towards the hidden depths of His Being. It could be known, and had been actually made known in Jesus Christ, so that men might comprehend this aspect of the eternal. All that was in God was not revealed in Christ, but only such elements in Him as were revealable and could go forth towards men.

We may not accept all the implications of the Fathers' position, but we must agree in the basal truth, that man by searching cannot find out all the hidden mystery of the Divine Being. It is sufficient for us to know that all of God that is necessary for our redemption has been revealed in Jesus Christ, and that we can rest our destiny on the truth He has revealed. Now there is, also, a region of mystery in human personality, a depth that no one can fathom, a sanctuary of being into which no one can enter except God. There is a wall of individuality beyond which no person can go, a sacred, inalienable selfhood with its reserve and its deep impenetrable silence. We know something of this, and it is true that no person can fully know the deep places of another person's being. We remain, in the ultimate, closed books to our best friends. Love takes us furthest on the way towards

¹ See Harnack, *History of Dogma*, E.T., vol. ii, p. 211.

these mysterious depths, and here love is the great revealer yielding us fuller and more intimate knowledge than our intellects can give. These depths in man are a faint shadow of the inwardness and the abyss in God.

When we turn to consider the revealable aspect of God, that element in Him which is more akin to man, we must not over-estimate this likeness and similarity. It is quite true that personality is the highest category by which we can form our conception of God, and also that our own personality is our safest and surest way of coming to any knowledge of God. But we are compelled to admit that there are fundamental differences, and that it is unsafe to dogmatize in this field.

We must examine this point. For instance, our human moral sense has to operate amid perplexities and uncertainties. Conscience is often not sure of the way it should go. Our moral sense is an unerring guide as long as its light is clear, and the path of duty is direct and definite. But the light is often flickering and unsteady; clouds surround the throne, and "we see through a glass darkly". We perceive in "broken lights and in divers manners", and this makes it imperative that we have a guide, one who lives out the moral imperative, and articulates it in conduct and life. Our conscience needs refining and illumining; it must be spiritualized and ennobled, for we are frail and earth-bound. It cannot, however, be so in God. His moral sense is never perplexed; the path of duty is never clouded and the way to work is always clear. We cannot imagine God having to seek His way or following any light but that which shines in His own moral being. This is the fact that makes Him the centre of the moral universe, the foundation of the moral order and, in the final issue, the Judge of all men. Some such difference as we have envisaged must exist between personality in Him and the personality of man.

We can go further and claim that a similar difference exists in every aspect of His conscious life. Thus, God never has to reason, or to argue His way to truth as we have to do. Truth comes to us piecemeal and in fragments. We reach our truth; He possesses it and it shines in His own being. He sees it in a glance as a whole, and with certainty. The nearest

approach in us to what knowledge means to God is what we call "intuitional knowledge", knowledge that sees at a glance and grasps things and events in their wholeness. As James Ward says, "God must see the whole in one moment and grasp it in its entirety".

Again, when we consider God's love and affection, the difference we have envisaged becomes clearer. Love in man, at its best, is the most divine feature in him. Yet in the best human love there is an element of refined selfishness. The lover seeks to win and to keep the loved one to himself, and to keep all others outside his paradise. There is a flaming sword in the garden of love that faces in all directions, to keep others away from the loved one. We cannot eliminate this strain from human love, even when it is at its best. We cannot believe that it is so with God. His love is absolutely selfless and self-giving; it lives in pouring itself out for others, and has no eye for the acquisitive or the possessing aspect of love. It just gives itself, and its reward is just this giving. This is a great mystery, but it is, and must be, true for it is the highest and most creative kind of love. We can dimly conceive it, though we can never attain to it. Probably the difference we have stressed is most clearly seen in the realm of goodness and nobility of character. We know that the moral life for us is a perpetual struggle, and that we have to fight for every inch of gain in this region. Goodness does not come easily to any one of us. It is a stern, unrelenting and continual conflict, and at best, "a battle hard won". We cannot conceive of God having to struggle thus, and to overcome opposition on the way to goodness. In us, it is always a conquest, but it is an eternal possession in Him. He is the essence of goodness, it abides in Him, it flows from Him into creation and redemption, into all the beauty of the world and all the noblest joys of life. It is difficult for us to understand on what other terms we could attain goodness, for it must be an attainment for us. As far as we can see, it can only be won in conflict, and by a conquest over many foes. The goodness that is easy, or the innocence that has not been won, means little or nothing. It is the conquest and the struggle,

in the final issue, that gives life its moral worth and its spiritual meaning. It cannot be so with God. If there is any limitation in Him it is self-imposed. No one outside Himself can set any limit on His operations or fetter His achievements. The differences we have envisaged have to be recognized, and it is not good thinking to minimize or to ignore them. It must be admitted that psychology offers us great help in this field of thought, and its influence can be traced in modern thinkers in their ideas of the Atonement.

Thus Dr. Garvie, in his *Inner Life of Jesus*, reveals acute psychological insight and draws on the best psychological findings of his day. The same is true regarding some aspects of his views of the Atonement. We might, indeed, have included him in this chapter as a representative of this theory, but, taken as a whole, his view is more in harmony with the position already assigned to him. Bishop Kirk, again, in his essay on the Atonement,¹ makes very extensive use of psychology, for it is woven into the texture of his thought. Dr. Scott Lidgett also makes very considerable use of the findings of psychology, and it is safe to say that very few modern thinkers in the field of theology leave psychology out of count, and none can ignore it. This is especially so in the realm of the Atonement, since this is an experience of the soul with mental and psychic elements of profound meaning and value. In the final issue, the Atonement must be regarded all through as the approach of God to man, and the impact of His Spirit on the spirit of man, together with the results of this impact. It involves faith or self-surrender on the part of man, and self-disclosure and self-impartment on the part of God.

All these factors are matters that come within the purview of psychology, and they involve the whole personality of man, as well as the revealable aspect of the personality of God. As yet, research into the realm of the Unconscious has yielded little of value with regard to the Atonement. One of the contributors, whose views we are to consider, approaches the subject from this point of view, but his contribution

¹ *Essays Catholic and Critical*.

cannot be regarded as of serious importance. His views, however, have to be considered if we are to cover the whole field of modern thought in relation to the Atonement. Briefly, the points at which the impact of psychology is strongest, and where most valuable results may be obtained are in connection with the idea of sin, the experience of forgiveness, and the basal question of personality in its relation to God.

PROFESSOR W. FEARON HALLIDAY, M.A.

Professor Halliday, a Presbyterian minister, was Professor of Theology at the Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham. He was a psychologist of considerable reputation, and wrote in 1929 a book on *Psychology and Religious Experience*, which shows careful study and great spiritual insight. He had published an earlier book in 1919 entitled *Reconciliation and Reality*, and in this we have his views on the Atonement: There is an impressive amount of latent psychology in this book, more especially with regard to personality, and this is sufficient to warrant his inclusion in this chapter. He begins by stating that he regards reconciliation as the central problem of Christianity, and that he is writing a theory of it which enables him to understand his own religious experience. There is a profound sense of need in man, and when properly explored, this need is found to be a demand and longing for permanent fellowship with God. There is an instinct for fellowship in the soul of man and the ultimate need is that of experiencing the love that is eternal. This can only be found in reconciliation, and this involves a right view of the Atonement.

The traditional theories do not give this. The Substitutionary theories fail, for the attitude all through is a legal one, and there is no idea that the evil in man is to be changed. Moreover, it implies an impossible idea of God, and its language is based on the old sacrificial system, which involved an arbitrary symbolism. The Representative theories hold that Jesus saves humanity by representing it, and are founded on the idea of the unity of humanity. It is a unity,

but not in the sense in which man is a unity. The person, not humanity, is the basal reality, and humanity as a unit is an abstraction. Our moral sense refuses to believe that any man can represent another before God. A form of this view is that represented by McLeod Campbell and Moberly, but this cannot be maintained, for vicarious penitence is morally impossible. The Moral Influence Theory holds that Jesus saves men by showing His love and by the influence of His example. This is not sufficient. Mass judgments in religious thinking are a snare and a delusion, and they have prevailed regarding the Atonement. "No theory of the Atonement, therefore, is adequate which represents the work of Christ as a cosmic act of saving value to humanity apart from its meaning for the individual soul."¹ Some views are buttressed by the authority of Church and creed, but no religious man can own any authority which does not compel his conviction. Man has the capacity of thinking in abstractions, but authority in religion must rest on the soul's inward conviction.

The permanent fact in religion is an attitude of soul to God and the finding of God at the centre of life. Our view of the Atonement is determined by our idea of God. This is seen in Jesus, but men's preoccupation with what happened to Him has made them miss the real question of what He was in Himself. He has made clear to us what is in God, that all moves on the spiritual plane, that He gives Himself without losing Himself. Moreover, that He is omnipotent, though it is not arbitrary omnipotence but that of love. Further, He is more concerned with persons than with events. In the Atonement, therefore, a new definite power must come to us from God, and this is the power of love and loving insight. Man's personality, as self-conscious and self-determining, is our highest category and through it we can know God. Personality has absolute value, for its essence is spiritual, its end is to overcome limitations and to identify itself with truth and love. Anything impersonal is below personality, and to say that the world is rational is, in the final issue, to say that it is personal. God is perfect spiritual personality.

¹ *Reconciliation and Reality*, p. 27.

Man is spiritual personality also, for he is not man because he has a body, but because he has a self-conscious spirit. Cosmic power or knowledge is inferior to spiritual personality. It follows that the unique value and meaning of Christ was in his personality, not in His power, for at bottom power is irreligious and unspiritual. It is spiritual personality that gives value to the world, and it is wrong to think that humanity has more value than the individual, for humanity is only an aggregate of individual persons. Du Bose insists that "The Incarnation was in humanity and not only in man"¹ (p. 71), but this involves that humanity is an entity apart from the individuals that form it.

To many Christians the worth of Christ is found in His greatness, not in His personality. To the Christian, however, it is found in His Spirit and His personality, and through Him every man comes to be thought of as a child of God and of infinite worth. Moreover, the basis of morals is that every man is an end in Himself.

In discussing the Moral Order and Moral Law Professor Halliday insists that the moral order is the ultimate reality of the world, and we can only realize our personality by being in harmony with it. Moreover, "Theology will never come to its own until it realizes that the legal sphere is never religious" (p. 78). It is true that God must vindicate righteousness, but He can only do so by making men recognize and love it. This can never be done by punishment. The problem of vindicating the moral order in man is, therefore, the problem of bringing home to men what they are and what they ought to be. God can only vindicate the moral law by effecting real penitence in sinners. Further, the moral order must be rooted in the moral nature of men, and this is proved by the fact of moral responsibility. The sense of right is part of our nature, and is the common term between my personality and God's. Again personality is such that it cannot be created perfect like a machine. It must acquire goodness and attain to perfection by struggle, and in this men are co-workers with God. It is clear that the nature of things is intolerant of

¹ *High Priesthood and Sacrifice*, p. 217.

evil and favourable to goodness, and the highest and holiest treasures of life are hewn out of the rock of sorrow and difficulty. Moreover, there is a vicarious element in the nature of life.

In his treatment of sin (chap. viii) Professor Halliday objects to the statement in the Westminster Confession that "sin is any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God". This depends on what we mean by the law of God. It is not legal, it is more than a taboo or convention, and its consciousness is an inward state of the soul. Its neglect can become a habit of evil, and this hinders self-realization, and for this, man is responsible. Man is not free except when he is master of his world. Ultimately sin is a state of personality and there is no sin apart from the consent of personality. There is another aspect to sin, and here it is a wrong attitude to God and a denial of love, for all sin is really against God. So sin is in reality a religious conception; a transgression against the nature of things and the meaning of life, and an outrage on love. Sin brings punishment, but this is inherent in the sin. The nature of iniquity is destructive, but the nature of good is constructive. The punishment is not arbitrary, but is in the sin itself. Moreover, we cannot say that God Himself punishes sin, except in the sense that He makes and sustains the moral laws which carry punishment in themselves. It would be more correct to say that men punish themselves by sinning and setting in motion forces that work themselves out in punishment. Part of the punishment is a sense of guilt, and this cannot be transferred, for it is personal. It is impossible for religion to deal with men in the mass as some of the theories of the Atonement do. Sin is always a personal matter and depends on the free assent of the persons involved.

The punishment of sin has often been regarded as due to the "wrath of God" working violently and causing suffering. It is true that penal judgment is in its very nature destructive, but it is inconsistent with the love of God, for love is positive not negative, creative not destructive, and is, in God, a redeeming identification of Himself with sinners. Punish-

ment is inevitable in a moral order, and is the negative aspect of an order that is positively good. Sin is morally abhorrent to God, but a redemptive desire is always present with Him. There is something deeper than anger caused by sin and that is sorrow. Sin alienates from God and this causes Him sorrow, for it is supremely against Him, and His person. This is a profound treatment of sin and it involves great psychological analysis and a real apprehension of the situation involved.

In chapter x Professor Halliday deals with salvation, which is on the negative side, salvation from sin, and on the positive side, salvation into the likeness of Christ. It is sometimes thought to be the remission of the penalty of sin, rather than salvation from sin itself. Salvation is a state of soul, and it involves a change in man, the effect of which is that he ceases to sin, otherwise it is purely a legal matter. As Dr. Skinner says: "It is far more important that we should live rightly than understand deeply" (p. 152). For this change of character a new birth is necessary, and then a new nature develops. "This new nature is nothing less than the nature of Jesus" (p. 154). What is needed to bring a new nature? "It is the coming of God to men in the apprehension of Jesus Christ that awakes and recreates the soul" (p. 156). This new nature is the result of reconciliation, for salvation really means the acquirement of a certain type of personality which is like God, and like Jesus Christ. We are drawn to Jesus not merely by His work, but for what He is in Himself in the depth of beauty of His soul, for His soul was a perfect mirror of the soul of the Father. This deliverance through a change of heart can only be brought about "when we recognize God as our Father and . . . understand the Sonship of Jesus", finding in Him the meaning of the universe (p. 161). Jesus is Saviour because He creates in us the change, making us like Himself and reconciling us to the Father. His redemptive plan was the outcome of a divinely-human love which could express itself in no other way and through it He revealed the perfect personality of God and of man.

It will be evident that Professor Halliday has strong leanings towards the Subjective view of the Atonement. This is

clear from his repeated emphasis on apprehending God, on recognizing His love in Christ and understanding His perfect personality. It seems clear, however, that he does not finally rest in this view, for he proceeds in his succeeding chapters to consider, the method of salvation, dwelling on the Cross, on the word "propitiation", on Christ crucified and on the necessity of the Cross.

In dealing with "The Method of Salvation" (chap. xii) he seeks to show how the life and death of Jesus avail to create the type of soul which develops in man's new nature. The love that possessed Jesus saves us by the very light that unveils God and the love that possesses us, and in possessing us, recreates us. The first need is light on our condition and on God's forgiving attitude towards us, and the secret of Jesus is to unveil the divine love and allure the human heart (p. 165). It is vital for us to understand the soul of Jesus, and the important thing is what was revealed of Him through the circumstances of His life. But this revelation would only bring despair if it were revelation only, for we need something besides light and knowledge; we need power, and this need is satisfied in Jesus, for He conquers us and takes possession of our souls, coming personally to us in love. Power is impossible apart from the living presence of Jesus and our personal love to Him. The resurrection was necessary for this. The chief power in life is love, for it is more than a relationship, it involves identification with the object, and as such, it is creative and formative. A supreme affection has often changed a man to the depth of his being, for what we love we grow like.

Our supreme need is not merely to know that God is personal and forgiving, it is that God should come and possess us and that we should love Him. He has to come to us, and Professor Halliday suggests that the death of the Cross has made this possible. Moreover, we find God in Christ and this is the way of salvation. "It may seem to some that our theory . . . makes the Cross unnecessary" (p. 176). This is not so, for no example can of itself effect salvation, for Christ's death is more than a martyrdom, and it is different from this because

Jesus is Himself different from men. God was in Him, and in reality; God was operative in the Cross. So it is that "in His death He has absolute and complete value for all, and so He died for all" (p. 180). The meaning of anything spiritual is in the quality of soul and not in its power, and so the meaning of the Cross is in the quality of the Soul of Jesus and His love. Further, the Cross unveils sin and judges it, it vindicates righteousness as well as reveals the infinite love of God. "The Cross was the inevitable consummation of the antagonism between light and darkness; but, the nature that suffered it was the same that had lived with the Cross in its heart" (p. 185). So the meaning of the Cross is the meaning it had for Jesus and the revelation of the love of God. Moreover, what Jesus was in Himself gives it its meaning. The particular quality of Jesus was self-giving as the expression of the self-giving of God, and this is revealed in His death. In essence the Cross is inevitable wherever God in Christ meets sin. It is also the means whereby Christ expresses Himself as well as the means through which He takes possession of us. It was inevitable as the resultant of certain definite forces of iniquity and Jesus saw that it was inevitable.

The word "propitiation" involves an act of God through Christ, which annuls sin. Further, the Cross vindicates the divine righteousness. This can only be done by one who lives righteously, and Jesus died for this. Again, the suffering of the Cross was an expression of the vicarious nature of life. He suffered the inevitable consequences of sin, not the punishment of sin, but He saw that the vicarious principle of love is the divine method of overcoming evil. Therefore He accepted the Cross as the will of God for Him. His obedience to God's will has value, but obedience must not be regarded as an offering, but as the expression of His personality. By loving self-identification with sinful men, He tasted death for all men, and by this means made known the redemptive movement of the divine heart. He also seeks to awaken us to ourselves in order that we might be saved. The Cross has been regarded as a sacrifice, and if by "sacrifice" we mean dedication, then Jesus did sacrifice. Moreover, if He had

failed to go the way of sacrifice it would have proved that He was not righteous. So the Cross not only reveals the righteousness of God, it reveals the righteousness of Jesus as a perfect soul. In this way, again, it vindicates righteousness. So love and righteousness led Jesus to Calvary, and it proved the absolute quality of His love. In this world, as it was and still is, "Jesus crucified" is absolutely necessary for He was the living revelation of God and the centre of all things, but we can say that it is not the Cross as such that saves men, but Jesus Himself. Moreover, the Cross and its self-giving love must have a place in the heart of the believer and, in the final issue, it is the Cross in the heart that saves men. This involves an attitude of soul to God, and a readiness to sacrifice the self for others. In the final issue salvation comes by the trust that connects our lives with God, and the proof of this salvation is the new nature and the new living. This new living reproduces the spirit of the Cross in society, and reconciliation must be the basis of any permanent civilization and of world-order. This involves the new Christian personality made possible in Christ.

This is a very suggestive treatment and is to be commended for its great and noble idea of Christ and of His place in the world. Its tendency to a subjective view of the Atonement is transcended, by his insisting on the necessity of the Cross and the place of the death of Christ in the moral and spiritual order of the world. The psychological ground of the whole treatment is clear at every point.

PROFESSOR J. G. MCKENZIE, D.D.

Professor McKenzie has been for many years the Jesse Boot Professor of Social Science at Paton College, Nottingham. He is a keen psychologist, and has had considerable clinical experience of certain aspects of psychotherapy. His interests are mainly in the abnormal and psycho-analytic side of modern psychology, and these interests colour all his writings. From this point of view he has written a book on *Personal Problems of Conduct and Religion*, and another on *Souls in the Making*.

He published in 1940 a work entitled *Psychology, Psychotherapy and Evangelicalism* in which he endeavours to analyse psychologically the Evangelical experience of salvation as this has been found, and still is found, in the Protestant Churches.

This book is not a treatise on the Atonement, but subjects cognate to the Atonement, as well as the Atonement itself, fall for discussion in the course of his treatment. The bent of Dr. McKenzie's mind is evident throughout all his treatment, and it is noteworthy that almost all his illustrations are taken from his experience of cases of abnormal psychology. His faith in this is evidently very great, and one general criticism of his book as a whole is that he tries to make psychology do more than it can do, or was meant to do. As an example of this we may take his attitude to sin. He states that he is not dealing with sin theologically, but psychologically, and that he rules out the theological implications connected with it. After considerable discussion of sin, some of it very good, he comes to the conclusion that sin is a personal matter, and that in the ultimate, it is sin against God, and an outrage to divine love. Now, if sin is against God it must be treated more or less theologically; in other words, it cannot be treated merely in a psychological way, a religious element must enter in, since it affects the relation between the Spirit of God and the personality of man. This cannot be ruled out, and any consideration of sin that ignores this, is an abstraction and a partial aspect of the whole. Again and again the same fact appears in the book, and it is due to an over-estimation of the value and of the possibility of psychology in the realm of religious experience.

When this has been said, it yet remains true that the book has considerable worth, and there are in it many fresh suggestions and an amount of spiritual insight, which show that Dr. McKenzie is more than a psychologist. He is a religious man who has had a profound experience of what the saving grace of God means, and from hints in his book we gather that he knows that there are some things in this experience that psychology cannot explain, though it may throw light

on some aspects of the experience.

In Part II Professor McKenzie deals with "Salvation and its Problems". Chapter iv deals with "The Sense of the Need of Salvation", while in chapter vi certain specific problems of Atonement are discussed, such as Guilt, Sin, Forgiveness and the Atonement itself. These are the chapters we have to consider (pp. 65-81 and 115-158).

In dealing with salvation and its problems, Professor McKenzie begins by saying that the experience of salvation, regarded from a psychological point of view, is critical for the understanding of Evangelicalism, and asks: What psychologically is "the need of salvation"? We must also enquire what relation there is psychologically between the death of Christ and the realization of forgiveness, and, further, What is the experience of forgiveness? Too much emphasis has been laid in the past on the experience of those who are akin to psycho-neurotics, such as Augustine, and too little attention has been given to those who can look back to no dramatic crisis. What really is the experience of this sense of need? Dean Inge has stated it to be "a sense of dissatisfaction with ordinary experience", "a desire to get nearer the heart of things", "a sense of discord" and the desire to escape from it. "We can escape from it only . . . by escaping from ourselves." The sudden conversion, as the solution of the problem, is of no more value religiously than the slow gradual adjustment of the mind and will to the intention of God. The solution is the unification or integration of the self around some person or some cause. There are different dissatisfactions and quests among men, intellectual longing for unification, moral longing for an ideal, and religious longing for peace. Dr. McKenzie appears to regard these as on the same level of experience, and their solution, in a sense, to be religious. This is not quite correct, for the religious quest differs from all others in the fact that it involves the whole personality, whereas the others involve only an aspect of personality, the reason or the moral sense, and not the whole self. This profound difference makes the solution of the religious need far more transforming than the others, and it

yields a deeper joy, although the others can bring joy and an element of peace.

Dr. McKenzie is right when he insists that there is a mystic element in the religious experience, and "a moment of vision", and that to some people the "moment of vision" comes slowly, whereas to others it breaks in like a flash. There is a new birth in the slow, progressive experience as well as in the sudden conversion. The difference is often due to differing home conditions. Many Christians confuse the elicitation of a sense of need with the arousal of a sense of guilt, but they are very different, and the Atonement has to do with the sense of guilt.

After considering the question of Conversion (chap. v), Dr. McKenzie passes on to deal with guilt and the other problems involved in the Atonement (chap. vi). He notes that from the standpoint of psychology there is a difference between sin and crime or immorality. His view of "guilt" is not fully satisfactory. He says "the sense of guilt is the sense of having broken the law of the land", and goes on to insist that it applies to the criminal. While this is true, it is not the whole truth. In reality we should distinguish "legal guilt", "moral guilt" and "religious guilt". Here, again, the difference lies in the fact that religious guilt is an experience and an expression of the whole personality, whereas the legal and moral sense of guilt is the utterance of a partial aspect of man.

Dr. McKenzie is right in his insistence that there is an element of fear in all sense of guilt, but, again, we can demur from his contention that in all cases it is the fear of punishment. It may be so in the case of a criminal who is afraid of, and flees from, the punishment of the law. Dr. Drever has suggested that in certain cases of moral guilt, it is the fear of having fallen below the standard which the moral self has set itself. In the religious sense of guilt, whilst there is an element of fear of punishment, there is much that is deeper. There appears to be in this type of guilt, a dim sense of a rupture in personal relationship with God. This may differ, for to some it may be vague, or even unconscious, whilst to others it may be intense

and consuming, as in the case of the Psalmist when he cried "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned". But dim or intense, this sense is present in all religious guilt. Dr. McKenzie appears to have seen this, when he says that "the sinner can only have a sense of sin to the degree in which he acknowledges God's Holy Love and God's Holy Law". If we have a correct idea of sin as an outrage against a Father's love (and Dr. McKenzie comes to rest finally in this conception of it) there must be in the sense of guilt which sin engenders, a dim sense of the loved one whose love has been flouted. If sin is, in the final issue, against God, there must be a vague consciousness in guilt of God behind all the sense of having wronged Him. This may often be misunderstood, and in some cases it may issue in a fear of punishment, but in most cases it is the apprehension of the soul in the consciousness of a personal presence behind all, like the feeling of discomfort we all experience in the presence of a person we have wronged, and the element of fear that makes it difficult for us to look into his eyes. In a sense it is a holy kind of fear rather than that of punishment. Dr. McKenzie quotes Dr. Leonard Hodgson to the effect that the deadlock created by sin and the sense of guilt "is met in the doctrine of the Atonement regarded as an act of God making possible the neutralizing of the evil effects of sin. . . . This is the fundamental message of Christianity, that as a result of the act of God in Christ, sins repented are sins forgiven." He insists that the sense of sin is relative to the experience of sin, and that real sin is an outrage on the love of God. Moreover, "the central moment in the experience of the conviction of sin is not guilt, but the sense of alienation from God and the longing to be reconciled to God".

Dr. McKenzie is saying here what we have maintained above that there is a dim sense of God in the experience of sin and of guilt, and that the element of fear in guilt is the fear of not being reconciled to God. He insists that guilt does not lead to repentance, and while guilt is felt there is no repentance. But, as we have held, the sense of wronged

love inherent in guilt is what moves to repentance, the transference of consciousness from the fear element to the affectional aspect of the fault is what in reality induces a penitent spirit. Dr. McKenzie suggests this when he says that in sin the sense of alienation from God is most prominent in the sinner's consciousness. He goes on to say that "a sense of guilt is not a prerequisite of forgiveness", but that "we get no complete and true sense of change until guilt is removed", for "the attitude to sin must change from guilt to spiritual shame". Dr. McKenzie appears, here, to be emphasizing a distinction that is not basal, and his psychoanalytic trend peeps out in his saying that "modern psychology traces the sense of guilt to the experiences of childhood which have little or nothing to do with the present life". He insists again that the sense of guilt "is always a fear of the violated law", "it is generated by the infantile prohibitive conscience and not by the adult positive conscience", and is largely connected with sex (p. 120). This is far from being the case. It is as adults and for our own acts that we feel guilty rather than for something that happened in the irresponsible period of childhood.

He comes back to solid ground in his insistence that guilt is destructive of fellowship with God. We can also wholeheartedly agree when he says that "the sinner knows he is not suffering from 'a complex', but from a state of soul that can only be met by a new relation to God". The actual evil of sin cannot be equated with the sense of guilt and even Freud agrees that it can never be changed without a birth from above. Sin's most baneful power is the disturbance it brings about in all spiritual relationships, but most of all in the relation between man and God. The sense of the outrage it is to God, and the alienation from Him which it entails, is the central experience of sin. The element of alienation occupies the focus of consciousness, and with it a sense that we have caused the alienation.

There is a difference between moral disease and sin, but Dr. McKenzie says rightly that most of "the cases of moral disease have developed from habitual sinning". He also

acknowledges that we must look beyond the instinctive impulses for the root of sin. Instead of the old idea of selfishness he brings forward the idea of Ego-centricity and of Object-centricity, the former being akin to selfishness, whilst a change-over to Object-centricity is necessary for deliverance. This is a legitimate inference as long as the object is a person, and in the ultimate the personal God. "The most object-centred principle is love", and this must be rested upon God. "Sin, then, is Ego-centricity,—a tendency of the self as a whole to subordinate all things to the ends of the self." We should, however, reject the idea of "total depravity", and only those who accept a purely biological interpretation of human nature can countenance such an idea. As we grow better and more Christian the sense of sin grows deeper and the new birth means "the initial movement from self-obsession to Christ-possession". In dealing with forgiveness and its conditions, Dr. McKenzie insists that we must consider, not only the effects of sin on our own spiritual condition, but also its effect on those against whom we sin. Sin always separates us from those sinned against. This results automatically, and there is a sense in which all the effects and punishments of sin work automatically. They are the working out of a law. "Forgiveness is the restoration of a spiritual relationship."

Two basal conditions must be fulfilled before forgiveness can be truly experienced. On the side of the sinner repentance is necessary. The whole spiritual attitude must be changed towards any sin prominent in consciousness. The other condition must be in the forgiver. "He must feel the sin as though it were his own", in order to fully forgive. "Something has to happen in the forgiver as well as in the repentant sinner, before forgiveness is a reality to both."

This brings Professor McKenzie to the Atonement. He has said many good things about forgiveness, but he might have gone further and considered the dynamic and creative power of real forgiveness, which is found in the new trust in the sinner which forgiveness involves. In his dealing with the Atonement, the emphasis he has laid on something

happening in the forgiver, leads him to take a thoroughly objective view of it. "The whole problem of the Atonement is what happens in God and how does it happen?" "The Atonement is objective, else it is meaningless psychologically; for forgiveness is an experience in which two are involved." Psychologically, then, the approach to the problem of the Atonement is from the point of view of the Holy Love of God rather than from His Holy will.

Dr. McKenzie at this point comes perilously near a dualism in the nature of God. He opposes the old theological dualism between the justice and mercy of God, but to set God's will in any opposition to His love, even though that opposition be ever so slight, is unwarranted for the will of God is love and His love moves His will. We cannot imagine any cleavage between them. He also suggests a conflict in God between His love for the sinner and the repelling and retributive force of His nature. This appears to be the objective element in the Atonement, and it is also that which the Atonement costs to God. To Professor McKenzie "the problem of the theologian seems to be, How ward off the repelling and retributive force? Who will bear the chastisement of sin which must be exercised in the very act of forgiveness?" The history of the doctrine of the Atonement is the record of how theologians have tried to answer these questions. "The tension within God is felt, not as a tension between justice and mercy, nor between God's love . . . and the violated moral law . . . but between the Holy Love which by its very nature separates itself from sin and all that has to do with sin, and the inevitable compulsion of that love which would draw sinners in." The tension is within the sentiment of His love; something must happen in Him if the tension is to be overcome and this is the objective element in the Atonement.

We cannot but feel that at this point Dr. McKenzie is stressing unduly the similarity between the love life of God and that of man, without realizing that there are profound differences between them. Tension of this kind may happen, and does happen, in the love sentiment of men, it is an

unwarranted assumption to regard it as happening in God. It must be stated, however, that his view is much to be preferred to the cleavage between justice and mercy that was prominent in the older theologians. After discussing and differing from the three main historic theories of the Atonement,—the Penal, the Satisfaction and the Moral Theories,—he says, “Every theory holds some aspect of truth”, but “it is not the theory which elicits the intuition [of faith] but the preaching of the word of reconciliation”.

This is well said, for whatever the theory be, the proclamation of the possibility of the forgiveness of sin, if done earnestly, can awaken faith and foster repentance, thus making forgiveness a reality. We owe a debt of gratitude to Professor McKenzie for his attempt to approach the problem of Atonement through a psychological analysis of forgiveness. His treatment is immature and inadequate at many points but it is a sincere effort to solve a very difficult problem, and considering the state of psychology in these days we must regard it as a successful attempt, although it fails at critical points. We can expect more adequate and convincing treatment along this line, for psychology has still more light to give us on problems of this nature.

It is worth noting in this connection that, in America, the late Professor Josiah Royce in his work on *The Problem of Christianity* has sought to give expression in psychological terms to a view closely akin to Anselm's idea of satisfaction. This is not a very successful attempt, but it points the way, and it is likely that the future will witness many more efforts in this direction with more successful results.¹ In the last chapter of this book, when an attempt will be made to state a constructive theory, several important psychological principles will form the basis of that theory.

¹ Professor J. Dick Fleming, D.D., *Redemption*, pp. 172-176.

Chapter IX

SOME OTHER REPRESENTATIVE THINKERS

THE preceding chapters have covered most of the ground of research and discussion with regard to the Atonement along the various lines taken by modern thinkers. The whole field, however, has by no means been fully explored. In reality a very large volume would be needed to cover the whole ground and to examine all the books written on the subject during the last fifty or sixty years. All we can do in this chapter is to give a selection of some of the most representative writers. We shall follow, as far as possible, the grouping adopted in our previous study, for that is fairly exhaustive. We shall find, however, that some writers do not fit in completely with the groups in which they are placed, and that the sections cannot be regarded as absolutely distinct, for they cross and recross each other. Some writers, in certain aspects of their thought, are found to belong to one group, while in other aspects they may be classed with members of another group. Our classification can, therefore, only be regarded as approximately correct and there should be certain subsidiary groupings within the main groups. An approximate classification is, for this reason, all that can be attempted.

I. The Satisfaction and Penal Substitutionary Views

These views still hold a strong place in the minds and hearts of evangelical and fundamentalist groups of believers. Moreover, many older believers among the more progressive sections of Christian thinkers cling to fragments of this ancient faith. Among younger Christians and more scholarly thinkers, only remnants of the older theories are left, and these are modified almost beyond recognition. But

it is clear that many still remain who find comfort and assurance in these views, although it must be admitted that, in general, they belong to the older stratum of society. We must examine some of their views.

(a) CANON J. G. SIMPSON in his *What is the Gospel?* (1914) is unmistakably objective and substitutionary in his view of the death of Christ. In the Cross God intervened to redeem men, and the Atonement is not something we can do, but which God alone can do. So "Redemption is God in action" (p. 23) and it is God's most mighty action (p. 190). Christ's death, or the shedding of His blood, is the cost at which He has become able to confer on men the inestimable benefit of peace which believers in Him experience (p. 51). It brings about reconciliation and "Christ and His Cross become my point of contact with the living God" (p. 40). Reconciliation was not achieved without cost, and the Cross represents the pain of God. "It is nothing short of this, that the living God has torn out His very heart in order to redeem them" (p. 196). There is a suggestion that suffering has some redemptive potency, for "God is mighty to save because He was strong to suffer" (p. 135). Vicarious suffering undoubtedly has some redemptive power, but it is not sufficient, and McLeod Campbell's theory of vicarious confession does not go far enough, nor is Moberly's view of vicarious penitence sufficient (p. 192).

Canon Simpson holds that Christ's death was an expiatory sacrifice. He realizes that there are objections to the idea of a propitiatory sacrifice, but "when it is the Eternal Son who offers Himself without spot to the Eternal Father, the ethical objection . . . vanishes" (p. 192), and in the Cross an offering for sin is actually made as part of the divine act of love. Moreover, "the purification of sins" somehow takes place within God Himself (p. 192). It is difficult to understand what exactly Canon Simpson means at this point, but it is evident that something was accomplished on the Cross that made a difference within the nature of the Eternal, and so was "objective" in the sense in which the term is understood by the post-Reformation theologians. He also accepts

the full substitutionary view, and he does not hesitate to say that Christ "died instead of me" (p. 186). No other word except "substitution" can adequately express "the relation of the work of Christ to what I can recognize as my salvation" (p. 200). "Christ was crucified for me. . . . He stood in our place and so became our substitute. It is this which makes Christ crucified an ethical motive of the highest power" (p. 203). From another point of view the Cross manifests God's displeasure with sin, and in a sense Christ's atoning work may be regarded as a "covering" placed between men and the divine displeasure, in the same way, evidently, as the Old Testament sacrifices were said to "cover" the sinner.

Canon Simpson's emphasis on the objective and substitutionary aspects of the work of Christ does not, however, make him blind to the subjective aspect, for he speaks of the revelation of divine love as meant to draw us to God, whilst the preaching of the Cross involves "the most tremendous moral appeal that the mind of man can conceive" (p. 196). We should further note that there is no hint of Christ's suffering being penal. Dr. Mozley classes Canon Simpson among those who emphasize the idea of Christ's sufferings as penal, but this is very doubtful, although he does stress the idea of expiation. It is evident, however, that the full view of penal satisfaction has been considerably modified and that the substitutionary idea is the most prominent in his thought. The volume we have considered is a popular work written for laymen, but Canon Simpson wrote an earlier work entitled *The Religion of the Atonement* in which the question was more fully considered, but his position is essentially the same as the one given above.

(b) Dr. Mozley suggests that CANON GRENSTED is to be classed in this group on the strength of the position stated in his *A Short History of the Doctrine of the Atonement*. He maintains that Grensted holds an objective "satisfaction" view, although this is somewhat modified by Moberly's position. It is difficult to state Canon Grensted's position for there is a strong subjective element in his teaching, reinforced by

his insistence on the fact that redemption is achieved by union with Christ. He does not, however, abandon the "objectivity" of the Atonement, although he repudiates the extreme penal aspects of the Reformers' position.

(c) DR. AGAR BEET in his *Through Christ to God* lays great stress on the justice of God, dwelling on St. Paul's statement in Romans iii, 25-26, where he says that the aim of the propitiation made in Christ's blood was to give proof of God's righteousness, and to justify Him in view of His forbearing attitude in overlooking sin in the past ages. Dr. Beet maintains that "whatever weakens, or seems to weaken, the sequence between sin and suffering, is ruinous to the highest interests of man", and the question is how the invasion of eternal justice into the world is involved in the forgiveness of sins. He insists that, according to St. Paul's teaching, for God to forgive sin apart from the death of Christ would be unjust, and further, that Christ by His death removed the obstacle that stood in the way of a saving union with God. He speaks much of the enmity between man and God, and says this was removed by the death of Christ. In a discussion of "the Rationale of the Atonement", he says that the death of Christ, as a costly means of salvation, was necessary because of sin and its relation to the justice of God.

Two questions are then propounded: (1) Why could not God exercise His prerogative and forgive sin freely? The answer to this is that sin *must* be punished or it weakens the authority of the law. "When the guilty goes free the innocent is injured" and "Mercy to an individual is cruelty to the nation". God must maintain the principle of justice, and this would forbid the pardon of man by mere prerogative, but the justice which forbids this is an aspect of that love which is the essence of God, and which always seeks the welfare of His creatures. (2) The second question now arises: If free forgiveness is forbidden by the justice of God, how is pardon reconciled with His justice by the death of an innocent victim? The transfer of punishment to an innocent person would not be allowed in human government, but *it*

was actually ordained by God as a means of saving the world. We can still ask, Why so costly a revelation of love? Here Dr. Beet turns to the idea of vicarious suffering for sin in which the innocent suffer with and because of the sinner. "That God struck down His beloved Son is the strongest means of revealing the inevitability of the sequence of sin and suffering." So "the death of Christ reveals the justice of God", and it discloses the attitude of God that underlies the sequence of sin and suffering. This vindication of the divine justice has rendered morally harmless the forgiveness of sin assumed in the Gospel. Christ died as a means of saving men by revealing the justice of God, a revelation needful in order to vindicate His justice, and He died for the whole race. Dr. Beet says very little about the love of God,—he only mentions it once,—but he says a great deal about the divine justice. He accepts the penal aspect of Christ's suffering without reservation, and believes in the substitutionary character of His death. An important aspect of the divine justice is mentioned when Dr. Beet insists that God has to safeguard the personality of man, as well as His own personality, in granting forgiveness. This makes it impossible for Him to make forgiveness cheap or trivial, and obliges Him to uphold the moral dignity of man in His forgiving love.

(d) PRINCIPAL D. W. SIMON advocates strongly the substitutionary view in his *Redemption of Man*. This is a clever book, with ripe scholarship and considerable insight into moral and spiritual problems. Dr. Simon takes a wide sweep and seeks to relate the idea of Atonement to the ethnic religions, to the Old Testament sacrificial system, as well as to the teaching of the New Testament. He follows the usual line of treatment, but insists that the earthly mission of Jesus and His obedience unto death were an episode in the history of the Kingdom of God, or it may be called an act in the great drama of that history. He discusses with acuteness the constitution of humanity, the relation of man to God, and the Old Testament sacrifices. Here he maintains that these sacrifices were a fundamental provision made

by God to impress the principles of law and of forgiveness on the minds of the Hebrews as a preparation for the gospel. He accepts the idea of the anger of God, and in dealing with forgiveness he makes the point that forgiveness is never associated with punishment in the New Testament. Moreover, he gives the views of many of the Fathers and of the Protestant divines on the subject. He hints at the solidarity of the race in Christ, saying that "humanity subsists in the Logos and that the Logos is a living channel between God and man". Further, the Logos would not have become man if there were no sin, so that "the Incarnation was the fruit of sin". Christ individualized the eternally manlike element in God. As Christ, however, the Logos entered more fully into sympathy with the sufferings of men. The suffering of Christ was for us in order that something might be wrought in us and by us.

After considering "Justification and the Death of Christ according to Paul" (chap. ix) he sums up the "Influence of Christ's Death" (chap. xi). Negatively He delivers men from darkness and captivity and abolishes death, while positively He brings men to God, makes them new creatures, gives them the gifts of eternal life and of the indwelling spirit. This is a suggestive treatment, but all through, the substitutionary view is upheld and demonstrated.

II. *The Attempt at Re-statement*

Here there are many writers, some approaching the subject from one point of view, others from another, but all seeking to make some of the older ideas acceptable to the modern mind by modifying and re-stating them.

(a) PROFESSOR PEAKE.—We have Dr. Peake's view most clearly stated in his book entitled *Christianity, its Nature and its Truth*. The late Dr. Robert Mackintosh groups Professor Peake under the head of "Salvation by Sample", a view suggested by Edward Irving, and very ably expounded by the American theologian Du Bose. This view rests on the theory that Christ in His Incarnation took sinful human

nature, and that He had first to conquer sin in Himself before He could effect the deliverance of men. His victory was actually a victory over sin in His own nature, and having broken the power of sin in Himself, His victory became available for all men who were prepared to accept His gift. There are suggestions of this view in Professor Peake's conception of sin, but when he deals with the atoning work of Christ, his view is definitely in line with the Ethical Satisfaction Theory. In the final issue it is Christ's voluntary self-identification with humanity in its sin, and humanity's identification with Christ by faith, that effects salvation. The effective and objective element in the Atonement is this voluntary self-giving of Christ to and for men. There are suggestions of a purely subjective view in certain aspects of his thought, but he cannot be classed with those who hold the complete subjective theory, for he maintains that there is an objective reference in the self-surrender of Christ. He must, therefore, be classed with those who hold an Ethical Satisfaction Theory.

In his treatment of sin (chap. vii) he repudiates the modern tendency to make light of sin, for sin is so serious a fact that Christ's death was necessary to atone for it. Like Pfeiderer and Holsten, Professor Peake seems to regard the "flesh" as inherently evil, so that Adam's act of disobedience was not the origin of sin, but only a revelation of what was in human nature before his act. There is some ground for this position in Jewish thought, for one explanation given in later thought, of the origin of sin, was that there was an evil disposition (*yetzer hara*) in the nature of man, and that he sinned because of this. The danger of this position is that if it is pushed to its ultimate, the origin of evil is thrown back upon God. Professor Peake suggests that if Adam's nature had not been evil, sin could not have appeared at all. He concludes (p. 132) that in St. Paul's view the initial act of sin was the consequence, and not the cause, of human sinfulness, and speaks of sin as "an anachronism", "the survival from a lower stage into a higher" (p. 135). He further says: "We all recognize that sin is inevitable for every individual, yet, at the same

time, we regard this sin as blameworthy" (p. 138). It is difficult to understand how man is responsible if sin is inevitable. We find in this book suggestions of another view of sin, according to which the seat of sin is not in the bodily constitution or the "flesh" of man, but in his spirit or his will, but the prevailing view is that sin is inherent in the "flesh", and so apparently Christ took sinful flesh.

This is the ground on which Dr. Mackintosh bases his view of Professor Peake's position. His idea, however, is undermined by the Professor's treatment of the work of Christ in relation to sin (chaps. xv and xvi). Here there is no suggestion that the nature of Christ was sinful. The idea of penal substitution is rejected, but the Atonement is regarded as "objective". Professor Peake insists that it is not our theory of the Atonement that saves us, but our faith in God through Christ. Theology has devoted itself too exclusively to the death of Christ, but we must believe that the work done during His life, as well as His teaching, were significant, for in these He showed us what God is and what man ought to do for Him. The Incarnation, as well as all Christ's subsequent life, was a sacrifice, and this was crowned by the sacrifice of the Cross. Again, we must take care lest our view of the work of Christ should show God in an unholy and unethical light, as is done in some theories which obscure the divine love, and emphasize unduly God's justice. In reality the death of Christ could never have taken place had not God's attitude towards men been one of yearning love. His love, however, is "holy love", and there is a sense in which we may speak of "the anger of God", but this is an element in the fire of His love. All through our consideration of the Atonement we must cling to the idea of the Fatherhood of God.

What, then, is needed for man's salvation? First, that man should realize the true nature of sin. Christ sought to do this during His life; He did it supremely on the Cross. The awful nature of sin is revealed by the tremendous cost of the Cross. Moreover, the Cross shows us what God thinks

of sin and feels about it. This is done in order to bring men to repentance. So far, then, it would appear that Professor Peake adopts the Moral Influence Theory, but he proceeds to show that there is an "objective" element in the atoning work of Christ. St. Paul insists that Christ's death was the means of vindicating God in the face of the charge of moral indifference; it was an expression of the righteousness of God, and revealed His holiness. This was necessary for God to forgive, for it would not be good for the sinner himself, if he were forgiven too easily (p. 274). Nor would it be good for God if He forgave too easily. Whatever is done in the Cross, we cannot regard it as penal substitution.

The Professor accepts the idea of the solidarity of the race in Christ, and since Adam did not sin instead of us, so Christ did not die instead of us. His act, however, was the act of humanity. Dr. Peake brings forward, at this point, the idea of Christ's voluntary self-identification with men, and here he reminds us of Bushnell's view of vicarious and sympathetic sacrifice and sin-bearing. In His sympathetic identification with men Christ knew what sin is, and what its consequences are. He bore vicariously the consequences of sin, although not by way of penalty or substitution. Jesus assents to God's judgment on sin and its penalty. "So God passes, in Christ, a new judgment on the race, not of condemnation but of approval." Like Bushnell, again, Professor Peake maintains that in doing this, Christ did nothing extraordinary; He only did what He ought to do. He says, almost in the words of Bushnell, that Calvary is the climax, and the classical example of a process as extensive as human history, that of vicarious suffering. We must not, however, think that there was virtue in the sufferings themselves. They got their value and their virtue through the personality of Christ, so that it is in Him we get redemption. What, then, has Christ done? He broke the power of sin in the flesh; He quickens faith and kindles love. Faith is necessary for the appropriation of forgiveness, and the believer's love to Christ conquers sin. We are really saved when we are "in Christ".

Professor Peake's view has several different strands of

thought, some of which are difficult to reconcile with others. In the main, however, his position approximates to the Ethical Satisfaction view with some leanings to the Subjective Theory.

(b) PRINCIPAL SYDNEY CAVE.—Dr. Cave has written a short History of Doctrine, and a volume on *The Doctrine of the Work of Christ* (1937), as well as several other works. In the book on the work of Christ he endeavours to cover the whole field, and he does this in a very readable and suggestive way. He begins with the Scriptural basis, then traces the development of thought in the first two centuries (chap. iii); in the Eastern Church (chap. iv); in the Western Church (chap. v); in the Reformation and Post-Reformation Period (chap. vi) and in the Modern Period (chap. vii). Here he deals with Bushnell, Dale, McLeod Campbell and Moberly. In a concluding chapter he suggests "An Approach to the Doctrine of the Work of Christ", in which he attempts a synthesis, not only of the Objective and Subjective theories, but of the three dominant views called by Gustav Aulen the Classic, the Latin and the Moral theories. These are, respectively, the Ransom or Victorious, the Satisfaction and the Abelardian theories.

Dr. Cave has been profoundly influenced by Aulen's work,¹ and he admits this. Aulen seeks to rehabilitate the "Ransom to the devil" theory as expressed by many of the Early Fathers. He insists that, if stripped of its grotesque and oftentimes barbaric ideas, this theory means that Christ, in His death, gained a victory over all the forces of evil in the world; that the Cross was, in effect, a great cosmic struggle in which the forces of good and evil joined issue, and evil was finally defeated. We should, therefore, regard the Cross as the victory of God in Christ, His final and decisive effort to be master in His own world, and to decide for ever the issue between good and evil. The Cross is thus the guarantee that the purpose of God for the world will be accomplished, and that, in spite of all opposition, the Kingdom of God will be finally realized. Dr. Cave, without

¹ *Christus Victor*.

accepting all the implications of this view, adopts the central idea. He seeks to do justice to the other historic theories, but he attempts, in a very suggestive way, a synthesis of Aulen's idea with the most reasonable interpretations of the ancient theories. This is an interesting attempt to solve a difficult question and we are likely to hear more of it in the days to come.

(c) BISHOP KENNETH KIRK.—In an important essay on "The Atonement" in a composite volume,¹ Bishop Kirk gives us his views, and in the course of this essay he makes many valuable suggestions. At the outset he insists that Christ's death is central in Christianity, but that Christians must understand His death as a paraphrase for His whole life and the crowning illustration of the ethical principles running through His teaching. In reality there is no absolute need of the Cross and the passion, for these are simply accessories introduced by the unfortunate events of the time and the occasion. Christ might have died quietly, and though the dramatic appeal of His death would have been less, the atoning effect would have been the same. The question may be asked, however, does the death of Christ only summarize His teaching, or does it contribute anything that the Incarnation does not give? First, we can answer that it is necessary for our salvation, for man is powerless to save himself and, besides, there is a deep-seated disorganization in the universe, which Genesis suggests is the consequence of sin. We can say two things in this connection: (1) that sin frustrates all man's hopes and efforts, and (2) that without a change in his moral attitude man cannot become better or happier. A change in his environment is not enough. Man, then, cannot save himself, for his enemies are spiritual and cosmical. Moreover, his salvation involves more than a new moral attitude and outlook, it must bring the assurance that Christian fortitude must, in the end, triumph over the cosmic evils of the universe. This triumph is impossible apart from Christ.

The Bishop then raises the question whether the only

¹ Entitled *Essays Catholic and Critical*, pp. 249-277.

function of the death of Christ is an example to men and the exemplification of the supreme principle of His teaching. Here he gives us a careful and penetrating study of the Moral Influence Theory, which he prefers to call the Exemplarist Theory. He rejects the theory on several grounds, but mainly because it fails to give us any assurance against the complete disorganization of the universe through sin; for it has no guarantee of final victory. The death, and most of all, the resurrection, of Christ is the only proof and guarantee of such victory. St. Paul speaks with assurance of this victory, and maintains that redemption was won on the Cross, but guaranteed by the resurrection. So no doctrine of the Atonement can be complete without emphasis on the resurrection.

The Bishop then turns to the question of Christ's death as the price of sin. Here he insists that God does not demand a victim, nor is the idea of a ransom to the devil to be entertained. All that was done on the Cross had for its aim the winning of men, but past offences have to be recognized. A mere cessation of offence in the present is not sufficient, for it does not restore the original relation. Even the complete reversal of behaviour is inadequate. Something more is needed, though we cannot tell what exactly this "something" is. The various phrases, "God's offended majesty", "His holiness", "natural justice", "the craving of the soul for expiation", or "the constitution of the moral universe", all suggest it but do not fully express it. Moreover, the natural fitness of things demands that something should be done. Natural fitness and God's decrees are the same, and Christian thought must cease to interpret God's decrees and demands in an unnatural and unethical sense. So it appears that in the nature of things, "God calls for the acknowledgment of past sin as a piece of natural justice". Further, the conscience of man makes the same demand. Something of this kind was behind the Jewish idea of sacrifices, more especially of the Sacrifice of the Day of Atonement. The "covering" of sin is the primary thought of the system, and sacrifice was necessary for newness of life. One who

has no sacrifice may associate himself with the sacrifice of another.

The question arises, Can we make adequate acknowledgment of sin? Human lips cannot. Further, the deep-rooted disorganization of the universe has to be taken into account. So once we get Paul's idea of the corporate character of sin, the absolute necessity of some such act as the death of Christ, to rectify it, becomes clear. So in Christ humanity as a whole paid a price to correct the cosmic disorganization, and to break the power of sin in the soul. He did it as a representative man, and without such an offering no reconciliation was possible. Bishop Kirk suggests that the death of Christ was potent to effect reconciliation and so save men, because the adequacy and value of His death was in His Godhead (p. 267). The Bishop believes that the greatest contribution which St. Paul made to Christian soteriology was contained in the word reconciliation. It is of interest to note that Dr. Kirk makes the parable of "the Two Sons" basic to all his treatment, and holds that this parable expresses the secret of the Atonement better than the parable of the Prodigal Son. Moreover, he interprets "the wrath of God" in the sense of "the fitness of things" (p. 272).

This is a very acute presentation of the position in Atonement, and whilst it raises many questions, it also offers solutions to many points of difficulty. It calls for careful and patient consideration on the part of thoughtful men.

(d) DR. W. R. MALTBY, in a series of lectures entitled *The Meaning of the Cross* (Epworth Press), insists that "there is hardly a conceivable interpretation of the Atonement which cannot claim some high authority, and no interpretation can claim supremacy", though most of their theories were moving in the region of great moral realities. There is a very real paradox in the Cross, for on the one hand it reveals the incredible cruelty of man and on the other discloses the eternal love of God. It also holds a psychological miracle, transforming a passion of just resentment against evil into a nobler passion of wonder at the ways and sacrifices of God. Dr. Maltby then discusses Christ's determination in going

up to Jerusalem, and asks why He was crucified and the reason why He laid down His life? He answers that both Christ's character and His sense of vocation "had committed Him in life to a unique experience". Jesus' Incarnation limited Him, but this does not mean that He had *all* our limitations. His mercy and sympathy had no limits, and He was made perfect through suffering, He realized that the manner of His dying must be a revelation of His mission, and of His acceptance of God's will, and that His death would not release Him from His vocation, or put an end to His work. It would rather free Him from limitations. So He hastened to Jerusalem to die and thus get fulness of life and power. His sufferings followed inevitably from His character and His office as a redeemer.

In his examination of St. Paul's witness Dr. Maltby agrees that there has been too much preaching of the Cross and too little of the Crucified, and he accepts the saying of Principal Forsyth that "we must preach Christ on the Cross rather than the Cross of Christ". At this point the idea of expiation is considered, and all expiatory theories are rejected as well as "all theories that find the meaning of the Cross as something done between the Father and the Son alone", such as the payment of a debt, or the satisfaction of divine justice. But the subjective view of the Atonement is also rejected and an "objective" idea of it is fully expressed. "It is the homage paid by Christ to the moral order of the world established and upheld by God; a homage essential to the work of reconciliation. It contributes an objective Atonement whether any person is impressed by it or not." Christ and His work have this absolute value to God whatever this or that individual may think of them. God's problem is that of making forgiveness possible without making it free and easy, to forgive the sinner without making his sin appear light, and to achieve reconciliation without compromising the truth. This is the real problem of forgiveness. Further, whatever sacrificial language was employed in the New Testament cannot be taken to mean for us what it meant to the early Christians. The sacrifices

are over and Christ was the chief factor in their elimination, so the ideas they contained cannot be regarded as permanent. What is clear is that the New Testament proclaims all through that God is Himself the author of salvation.

Dr. Maltby next discusses the relation of the idea of expiation to the divine attributes, criticizing Moberly's position, and insisting that his illustration of a mother's sympathy with a fallen daughter is psychologically wrong. When it comes to a question of guilt, the boundaries of personality are inexorable. "No pressing of the relation between Christ and the human family makes it thinkable that God should find satisfaction in, or the moral order receive justification from, the punishment of the beloved and sinless son." Moreover, "if we say again that Christ bore the divine condemnation of sin", we can reply that "God could not condemn His Son at the hour when, at great cost, He was doing His Father's will". Dr. Maltby insists that the Subjective Theory is too easy a solution of the problem involved.

In his final lecture he attempts "A Re-statement", saying that "if to bear sin is to go where the sinner is and refuse either to leave him or to compromise with him . . . then this is what Christ did on the Cross and it is the innermost secret of the heart of God". Jesus came into the world to reveal God and to save men. By His character and by His vocation He was here to help and to recover every sinful sore. This is an infinite task and of necessity involves an infinite burden. Jesus saw sin as no one else did except God, while the enmity that gathered around Him, and wrought His death, brought home to Him in a realistic sense the evil of sin and the greatness of the task He had undertaken. But the task was not too great for love, and the love of Christ never failed, though His frame was broken in suffering unto death. The recovery of men cannot be done at a stroke, for moral results demand moral means. He will not do violence to our moral nature, and His help must be consented to and accepted. Jesus was, from the beginning, "the sin-bearer" in the deepest sense, not in the sense that

the guilt of the race, or the condemnation of God, was transferred to Him. He died on the Cross, but He arose, alive for evermore. He has not deserted His office nor forsworn His name. The Cross and His risen life and work are the Atonement. His bearing of sin did not cease with His death, and it cannot cease until all is won. We are confronted now with One who died and rose again, and our relation to Him, and the sharing of His life, are our means of salvation. We are still bidden to come to Him, and our part is to receive, to take and not to give. All is personal and involves a personal relationship. Before repentance we can only know a "demanding" God, after we know a "giving" God. There are suggestive points in this treatment but it leaves some questions unanswered.

(e) CANON RAVEN published a volume of addresses originally given at Cambridge entitled *Our Salvation*. There is no detailed elaboration of a theory, but sufficient is given to enable us to know his mind. His starting-point is the fact that sin is never left unpunished, but more often someone else besides the sinner has to pay most for it. The sinner certainly suffers morally and spiritually, but it is usually someone closely related to him who bears the greater part of the cost. The conscience of the sinner gets blunted; he becomes hardened in his sinful ways so that he may feel little of the pain and the punishment, although the process of degeneration goes on steadily and quietly. "The people who pay most are those who love us most" (p. 26). This fact of vicarious suffering and sin-bearing is deep in the nature of life and appears to be one of the basal laws of the spiritual life in the world. In Jesus Christ it finds its climax, and in Him there is revealed a way of escape from sin and also a power that not only liberates us but carries on the work of redemption in us. "Christ sets free, and makes available for men, the love which casts out self and conquers sin . . . a love which is God in man" (p. 28). For this reason Christ is rightly called "Saviour", not teacher or example only, not King or Judge, but "Saviour". His teaching is valuable and His example inspiring, for they show us that

He emphasized positive good and not negative precepts, and this points to the fact that we cannot fight sin by the way of negative repentance alone. Repentance cannot lift the soul, for it has no dynamic, although it may and does serve as a way of preparation. Christ's life and teaching, however, help men to find God and to realize the divine presence. But even this is not sufficient, for love alone can change a man's life, breaking the power of present sin and changing the character of life. Love appropriates Christ into the self and thus makes man victor over sin. Christ came to earth that we might enter into the life of God and become united to Him. This is only possible through love, for we gradually become like those whom we love.

What, then, of Christ's death? Canon Raven says, first, that it came in the fulfilment of His mission, "it was the price He paid for the delivery of His message" (p. 55). Again, His death is a summary of His teaching and of the meaning of His life. Jesus lived out the profoundest elements of His own teaching by going to the Cross. Two other aspects remain. It reveals the nature and quality of sin, as well as its tragedy; in other words, it reveals the truth that the innocent has to suffer for the guilty, ". . . for He bore in His body the sins of the world" (p. 61). The Cross also manifests the love of God, and there was substitution in the death of Christ, not penal but moral substitution, the willing acceptance of the burden and of the vicarious suffering due to sin. We must not, however, dwell exclusively on the death of Christ, but must connect it to the resurrection and the ascension. Pentecost also must be included, for what Christ did on the Cross would not have been permanent without these. We may say, thus, that there are three aspects in the work of Christ. First, in His life and teaching He revealed God as Love. Secondly, He made known the way to God, through love, and His own love, even to death, made this knowledge and approach possible. Lastly, through Pentecost and the gift of the spirit, the life of God manifested in Christ can become incorporated in men. How does this work of Christ in its three aspects become ours? By union with

Christ like the mystic union envisaged by St. Paul when he speaks of being crucified with Christ, or filling up what remains of the sufferings of Christ and reproducing in other ways His life and experience. We are saved by the indwelling presence of the living Christ within us, and we are saved to a life of service for Him and for men, a life that finds its expression in, and derives its strength from, the Christian community in the Church.

There is much in Canon Raven's position that suggests a purely "subjective" view, but on the whole his emphasis is on the "objective" theory: Christ's voluntary acceptance of suffering and sacrifice on behalf of men constitutes His work into an objective reality which has power with both God and man. Dr. Raven may be regarded as on the side of those who accept a moral satisfaction theory with definite leanings towards the idea of substitution, although not penal substitution.

III. *The Moral Influence Theory*

There are many advocates of the Subjective Theory, but we can only consider two such theories.

(a) DR. A. T. CADOUX.—In his book entitled *The Gospel that Jesus Preached*, Dr. Cadoux makes a strong stand for the Subjective Theory. He does not base his position on Abelard's foundation, but seeks to establish his view by a careful and scholarly study of the New Testament, although it has to be admitted that he omits reference to other aspects of New Testament teaching that make against His position. He first insists that Jesus granted forgiveness to men and proclaimed it in His teaching, before He spoke of His death. Further, the basal idea of the Gospel, the Fatherhood of God, does not fit in with the traditional view of the Atonement, for in these views the necessity of the Atonement is based on other divine attributes than that of love; whereas a real atonement should spring from God's love. The crucifixion of Jesus was His final rejection by Israel, and the deepest significance of His sufferings lies in His experience of this failure and defeat. His death was concerned with

the fulfilment of His task and so we must understand it in the light of what is told us in the Gospels. From this point of view we can say (1) that He regarded His death as a means to the Kingdom of God, in founding, and in the effort to realize, the Kingdom; (2) He suffered as one who is the Son of Man and Son of God.

Dr. Cadoux next considers very minutely the witness of the Gospels. The ransom passage has little significance except the giving of His life for men. Moreover, the Supper passage is doubtful and does not carry us very far. The influence of the Servant picture in Isaiah liii is traceable in all that Christ said about His death, while as to the cry on the Cross, this does not foreshadow a break in His fellowship with God, while Christ's reference to "the cup" not only suggests suffering, but has a strong suggestion of fellowship, a fellowship in God's suffering. Again, Jesus never says His death is necessary for the forgiveness of sin, and He had proclaimed forgiveness before He spoke of His death. Moreover, "So long as we stipulate that the death of Jesus was a necessary condition to the forgiveness of sins we contradict Jesus' own teaching as to forgiveness and are precluded from regarding His death as the forthright outcome of His life" (p. 50). Christ's teaching is the supreme power to bring men to repentance and in assuring men of God's forgiveness, but Christ's death also "drove a way for God's love into the hearts and minds of men" (p. 51).

The Old Testament sacrifices are examined, and the witness of St. Paul. The idea of justification is far from the thought of Jesus, but it is brought into prominence by the Apostle. Romans iii, 23-26 is studied, and afterwards the idea of reconciliation (p. 81). This means oneness with God and with Christ, and participation in His life. This is the meaning of St. Paul's frequent use of the phrase "in Christ", and when the Apostle speaks most feelingly we have little more than the reiteration of the Gospel that Jesus preached. The traditional ideas of the death of Christ obscure the wider Gospel of Christ, for these make forgiveness conditional, whereas in the Gospel it is free. Forgiveness of sins

involves a moral experience of a profound kind, and to be forgiven means at least two things: (1) the assurance of a personal attitude of fellowship on God's part, and (2) the securing of our future against destruction by the effects of our wrong deeds. We need to know the love of God and we get this knowledge in Christ, and to know this is to be saved. On the other hand, in His suffering and death Christ's power becomes finally effective and "the relation between the life and death of Christ and forgiveness is that they give us the assurance of God's goodness which we need to make repentance real", and when it is real, this is the only condition of forgiveness. Now if we believe, as Jesus evidently believed, that God forgives those who repent, there is no problem of forgiveness, but only one of repentance, and repentance depends on an adequate knowledge of Him against whom we have sinned.

It is clear that, to Dr. Cadoux, the deepest meaning and purpose of the Cross is to produce repentance in men. There seems to be no idea in His book of the impartation of the spirit of Christ and His power to men. To know and realize the love of God appears to be enough. Moreover, it seems as if this view of Dr. Cadoux does not demand faith in God, it creates faith (see p. 188). All that seems necessary is to know the character of God in Christ, and to know this through Christ's teaching is enough to bring salvation.

(b) DR. MALDWYN HUGHES's book on *What is the Atonement?* in the final issue sustains the Subjective view. He makes a careful study of the "Implications of the Atonement", faces up to the question of punishment in a comprehensive way, discusses the question of the transference of sin and guilt, and examines the Biblical idea of the anger of God, maintaining that though His anger may be compatible with His love, it is love that is the essence of God, and all other attributes are under the sway of His love. After a survey of the Old Testament sacrifices, the question of vicarious sacrifice is treated, but this does not account for all that is in the death of Christ. It would seem that Dr. Hughes finds the element of value and virtue in the death of Christ, in

His absolute obedience to the will of God, even unto the Cross. Moreover, the Cross reveals the suffering of God, and this is one of the main sources of the dynamic of the death of Christ. Dr. Hughes finds several elements of permanent value in the traditional theories.

In a chapter of "Constructive Summary" (chap. xi) he regards the Cross as a revelation of the love and the mercy of God. It is also a manifestation of divine righteousness, and this manifestation is made through one who shared our human nature. He asks, How does the Cross save? He replies that it breaks the power of sin, cleanses men from the guilt of sin, and finally reconciles them to God. This is involved in forgiveness, but forgiveness is only possible through repentance, and the deepest meaning of the Cross as well as its power, is an appeal to men to repent. So in the ultimate it is a subjective method of salvation.

IV

There are some writers that show decided marks of a psychological approach to the subject, and although they maintain other ideas, the influence of psychology is quite clear in their treatment. We shall touch on two writers.

(a) DR. DOUGLAS WHITE, in an exhaustive study of forgiveness,¹ considers it mainly from the psychological point of view as the experience of the redeemed soul. He insists that forgiveness is always a personal act and moves in the sphere of personal relationships. It is not mechanical, nor artificial, nor is it external. It is a heart to heart transaction between the offender and the person whom He has injured. If forgiveness is real, it is much more than the passing-over, or the cancelling, of an offence; it must mean the restoration of a broken spiritual relationship, the welcoming-back of the offender into the circle of love and friendship which he had forfeited by his evil-doing. Moreover, he must be made to feel that, in spite of his sins and failures, the wronged person, in forgiving him, still trusts

¹ *Forgiveness and Suffering.*

him. This trust in him becomes a power in the soul that lifts him up and remakes him. To do this means sacrifice and cost, and there is a sense in which the value and quality of forgiveness can be estimated by the pain and the intensity of suffering which it causes to the offended person. As a rule, the person who endures the injury is the one who suffers most. Such forgiveness as is here envisaged is only possible to love, and in the full sense is only possible to divine love.

(b) DR. RUSSELL SCOTT (*Christ, Sin and Redemption*).—Although Dr. Scott does not write specifically from the psychological point of view, there is a great amount of psychology in all his treatment. After examining the Scriptural witness, he considers the question of sin, refusing to regard it merely as a breach of a law, or a failure to live up to an ideal. It must be viewed in the realm of personal relations, a matter of the attitude of one spirit to another, and, in the final issue, of the attitude of the human spirit to the Spirit of God. From this point of view sin is man's rejection and disregard of the love of a Father, and is to be regarded as nothing less than an outrage, or a flouting of divine love. Its most serious effect is to bring about an estrangement between God and man, a separation between him and the Eternal. So the Atonement must rectify this broken relationship, and bring man and God into union again.

In his consideration of Redemption, Dr. Scott's most suggestive contribution is in relation to forgiveness. He, like Dr. White, insists that forgiveness can never be a matter between a person on the one hand and a law, or a moral order, on the other. It is a matter between persons all through. Moreover, we do not forgive wrong, but wrong-doers. So in any theory of the Atonement, the central fact must never be regarded as the sin done, but the sinner, and the sinner in his personal relationship to God. It is something between a Son and His Father, and, in the ultimate, the love aspect of his Father. Moreover, forgiveness assumes not only the free personality of God, but that the basic element in His personality is His self-giving and sacrificing

love to men. With forgiveness is connected the fact of forgetting sin on the part of God and of the sinner. This is only possible in the sinner through the new trust which forgiveness involves, and by the patient nurture and energy of the indwelling Spirit of Christ. This indwelling, and the union with Christ which it implies, are the efficient cause of redemption.

There is much that is suggestive in the whole of Dr. Scott's treatment. All that remains is to mention some other books without any discussion of them. These are Eck (*The Incarnation*); Canon Hart (*Spiritual Sacrifice*); Fleming (*Redemption*); Riddell (*Why did Jesus Die?*); and Professor H. H. Farmer's view as given in his book *The World and God*, chaps. ix, x and xi.

Chapter X

A CONSTRUCTIVE VIEW

WE have examined the various theories and found something worthy of commendation in every theory, whilst, at the same time, we have noted many points of criticism and possible emendations. In the course of our survey we have encountered many suggestions of re-statement or rectification which we have been prepared to adopt. In this chapter our task is to try and gather those together, and to weave them, as far as possible, into a unity, so as to form a constructive whole that commends itself to our reason and our experience. It is, however, necessary to insist again that we cannot hope for a complete and final theory of the Atonement, and that for two reasons.

In the first place, we are dealing, in this matter, with the profundities of the divine nature and the divine will. As there are depths in God that we cannot fathom since they are beyond the capacity of the finite mind, we must accept the principle that there are some aspects of the Atonement, which is the supreme operation and utterance of the divine heart, which we cannot hope to fully understand. It may be that we shall understand these aspects in another world, under different conditions of life and thought, but in this world all we can reasonably expect is to reach a theory that is consistent with the best we know. Moreover, it is imperative to believe that all that is necessary for the redemption of men has been disclosed in the life and death of Christ, and that beyond this we can only move by faith. It is good, at this point, to remember that mystery has its mission and purpose, since it leaves room for trust and the faith "that flings itself on God".

In the second place, our understanding of the Atonement can only come through our experience of it. Our theory, in the ultimate, must be the result of our effort to interpret

and articulate this experience, and here we are under a two-fold disability. First, our interpretation can never be a complete expression of our experience, for it is true, as Goethe has said, that "the deepest cannot be uttered". Moreover, words change their meaning, terms vary and carry different implications for different minds, they convey various shades of meaning and suggestions to almost every man. In the experience of the divine operation in the soul there is a sense in which every person passes through phases that are different from those of every other person. This experience is one of the deepest, probably the very deepest, of the experiences possible to man, and in many cases "it breaks through language and escapes". Of course it is possible for men to accept a theory which is not, in reality, an interpretation of their own experience and to believe it "ready-made", as it were. In some respects this is an advantage, for the effort to "think out" and interpret the experience involves mental strain, and demands concentration and a fair measure of knowledge. For this reason it is much easier to accept a ready-made theory that commends itself, or is taught by the authoritative Church, than for men to think out matters for themselves. But, in reality, such a faith is only second best, for the theory is accepted at second remove from the real experience. As such, it is apt to lose all its vitality and to become a species of credulity rather than a committal of the whole self to a reality that transcends all creeds, and oftentimes baffles all descriptions.

Again, in the second place, the difficulty is enhanced by the fact that the experience itself is a growing one; it becomes deeper and more meaningful with time and through the influence of the happenings and trials of life. To a Christian the Atonement must mean more towards the closing years of life than it did at the first experience. There may be more of the element of glamour and intensity, with a greater emotional reaction, in the early experience. But in depth and meaning the later phases are richer. The battle of life, the struggle with temptation, and the growing intimacy with Christ, make the earlier experience and its

subsequent development more full of meaning and more precious to the spirit of the believer. Many men rest in the memory of the first experience with its thrill and intensity; but the real experience of the Atonement and its consequent power is a growing one, for redemption is not only the deliverance *from* sin, but also redemption *to* righteousness. The growth of the soul in holiness must add to the experience and make a contribution to its interpretation. To express the matter in terms of an earlier day, "Justification must become effectual in sanctification", and it is only reasonable to assume that the understanding, as well as the interpretation, of a sanctified soul can mean more than that of the first experience, intense and wonderful though this may be. For this reason only, a complete and final theory is impossible. We cannot adequately define or describe a growing experience, nor can we articulate a changing feeling or emphasis. We may, however, be able to give expression to the principle that underlies a changing experience, and describe the varying operations of this principle as it works itself out in different ways, or produces different results. For this reason the interpretation of one age cannot be regarded as adequate to a later age, except in very rare circumstances. The position has to be thought over again, and it must be expressed in terms familiar to the age in which this is done. Basic principles have to be retained and fundamental truths safeguarded, since there is something eternal in this act of God, but the principles will express themselves in different ways, and the truths will shine with differing lights as age follows age. This is the justification of all progress, for it is an essential element of the mind's activity as well as of the heart's self-giving. It is also the justification of this attempt at re-statement and more adequate understanding of what is the central fact of our religion.

Many of the theories we have examined, as well as numerous suggestions offered in the effort to rectify their weaknesses, are at fault, not in being untrue, but rather in being inadequate. Most of them are perfectly true, but they

do not take us far enough into the heart of the situation and, in the form they are stated, do not afford us any real and secure standing-ground unless they are supplemented by some view that takes us nearer the heart of truth. They may be true, but they leave some questions unanswered and some meanings undeveloped. Thus to say that the death of Christ is the supreme example of a law that lies deep in the constitution of the universe,—the law of vicarious sacrifice,—is perfectly true, and, as we have seen, almost all modern writers emphasize this. But a moment's thought makes it clear that something more is necessary if the richest meaning and the most important implications of this truth are to be reached. The principle of vicariousness lies very deep in the constitution of the world, and every parent knows its truth and exemplifies its reality. Anyone who enters deeply into human life and experience knows that men have to "share the travail that makes the Kingdom come", and to share in the sacrifice for others, if progress and enlarging life are to be possible. The instances of the operation of this law are legion; they are to be found in every age and among all classes. Every martyr for any cause exemplifies the law; every fight for freedom, as well as every victory over evil, proclaims its truth.

But in Christ's death there must be some element of difference, for unless there is, we must range Him by the side of "the noble army of martyrs". He *was* a martyr for truth and holiness, but He was something more and did something different from other martyrs. To say that He died vicariously on our behalf does not, in itself, meet the problem of this "something more". It is of great importance to realize and believe that His death was in accordance with a universal law, and that it was the crown and climax of the operation of this law, but the question remains, Wherein does His vicarious sacrifice differ from that of the countless host of those who have made such sacrifices for the life of others? Are we to regard His death as merely an instance of martyrdom on a line with all the others in which our world is so rich? It is clear that this theory does not take

us quite far enough and that we are left one stage removed from a view that gives reasonable satisfaction to the mind and to the heart. Again, it is not sufficient to rest, as some have done, in the contention that the death of Christ is a revelation, and indeed the supreme revelation, of the love of God. This is perfectly true and almost all writers on the Atonement have insisted on its truth. Every theory is, in the final issue, based on this conception, even the theories which have made a distinction between the justice and the mercy of God, or have maintained that justice is supreme in Him. Even these have laid great emphasis on the love of God. This emphasis, however, cannot give us ground for regarding the theories as satisfactory. The Atonement is an act of God and a method of operation which His love has constrained Him to adopt for the redemption of man, and the final question is not regarding the source from which it flows, although this is of great importance, but regarding the method He adopted and the efficacy of His action.

With regard to these we may, and do ask, Was this the best possible method of operation? Could not the love of God devise some other way of expressing itself and of granting forgiveness? Many writers insist that God forgives freely, and that there was, in reality, no need for the death of Christ and the agony of the Cross, to make forgiveness possible. This position forces upon us the question, Was the tragedy of the Cross necessary and inevitable, and, if so, why? What was the necessity? So we are still left with a note of interrogation, and that fact means that we have not reached a satisfactory resting-place for heart and mind.

Once again to lay emphasis on the death of Christ as a sacrifice, as is often done, cannot be accepted as conclusive, or be regarded as fully satisfactory. The idea of the death of Christ as sacrificial is profoundly true, true in the deepest meaning of sacrifice, but this does not fully answer the questions that arise in our minds. The rationale of sacrifice has to be considered and understood in a far more spiritual sense than that of many who dwell on the sacrifice of Christ. Moreover, the question remains, Does the sacrificial aspect

of Christ's death differ from that of ordinary sacrifices? Is it more effectual than the ordinary sacrifices which men make? Great sacrifices are made by parents for their children, and the record of these would fill a glorious page in the history of humanity. Further, sacrifices are constantly being made for truth, for knowledge, for exploration and discovery as well as for social service. War demands great sacrifices in the surrender of the amenities of civilized life, in loss of health and limb and, above all, the loss of life itself, life freely given for the sake of country and home. All these are real sacrifices. Is there any difference between the sacrifice of Christ and these sacrifices and, if so, what is the difference? Is it a difference merely of degree and not of kind? Is there any difference of nature and reality?

To these questions we may answer, that the difference or distinction made between degree and kind does not really hold and is not final, for a difference of degree may become so great as to initiate and establish a new kind. We may, therefore, say that this is what happened in the sacrifice of Christ, that it differed from men's sacrifices to so great a degree that it became a new kind or nature of sacrificial offering, and that thus it fulfilled the eternal meaning and purpose of all sacrifice. But we can still ask, Is the death of Christ, just as the ancient sacrifices of the Old Testament were, a way in which God chooses to forgive and "cover" sin? If this were so, does the Cross afford some satisfaction to God? If it does, what is this satisfaction? These questions remain even though the truth implied in Christ's sacrifice is accepted, and this fact proves that the idea of His death, as a sacrifice merely, is inadequate. It may be that we have to rest in such inadequate conceptions, and that in the very nature of things we cannot get beyond these. Something of this kind is implied by the fact already emphasized that we cannot hope to reach a final theory of the Atonement in this world. But we must not acquiesce in such inadequacies until we explore the field as thoroughly as possible, and all suggestions are examined.

This fact makes it clear that there is a demand for renewed

exploration, for a fresh effort to push our way as far as we can into the truth, and to find as reasonable and convincing a view of the Atonement as we can, even though, in the final issue, we may have to rest in a view that is not final nor fully adequate. We must not give up the search until necessity compels us. If it forces us finally to rest our minds and hearts in a "glorious probability", rather than in absolute certainty, we must graciously acquiesce in this and live by faith. We must find consolation in the fact emphasized by some thinkers, that it is not the theory of the Atonement that saves men, but the great and inexplicable act of God in Christ on the Cross, accepted by faith and made effectual by union with Christ. Is it not sufficient to rest in this? We have, however, to carry out our search.

We begin by noting the fact, that in the New Testament the basic idea of the Atonement is that of reconciliation, the re-forming of a broken relationship between man and God, the re-uniting of a shattered friendship, and a re-experienced union with God. This idea of the work of Christ becomes evident as soon as we envisage sin as an offence against love, and the disunion which is a consequence of this. The inadequacy of the older theories arises almost wholly from a misunderstanding on this point. Thus, if we conceive of sin as the breach of a law, juristic and forensic ideas of the effort to redeem men inevitably arise. Again, if sin is regarded as a debt, commercial elements must, more or less, cling to the idea of the way of deliverance. This principle of the dependence of the conception of the Atonement on the idea of sin holds in all cases, so that it can be definitely stated that the more personal and spiritual our view of sin, the closer we get to the heart and the spiritual meaning of the fact of the Atonement.

We can say, further, that the idea of the Atonement as "reconciliation" underlies all other ideas and suggestions of it in the New Testament. In reality it is the access of man to God "by a new and living way", the return of a wanderer, the bringing-back of a lost sheep, and the home-coming of a prodigal. The great basic ideas of St. Paul imply this

reconciliation and union with God. Justification by faith is a step towards the attainment of it; "propitiation" is a sacrificial term that suggests it; "expiation" means the removal of an obstacle on the way of such home-coming, while "redemption" is the buying-back of one who is lost or enslaved so that he may re-enter the old fellowship and share in the life of love and friendship again. It can be said, thus, that not only is the idea of reconciliation basic in the New Testament, but that it is assumed by all the other ideas, and brings to completion the truths and suggestions implied by them. When, again, we treat sin as a matter of personal relations and as effecting the affectional bond between persons, we are able to understand more fully the consequences that follow from it. Almost all writers maintain that the most disastrous consequence of sin is the separation from God which it entails.

Looking at the matter from our own human experience, it can be said that the most serious effect of sin is found in the separation it produces between friends and loved ones. It shatters the most noble friendships, rends the bond between the truest lovers, breaks up the best families and destroys the closest fellowship of spirits. On the human level the separation can and does become a physical fact, loved ones may part, sons and daughters may leave home, and friends drift apart. There is thus a real separation between personal selves. We cannot conceive of man's separation from God in just the same way, for however deeply men may sin, He is still with them since His presence is everywhere. In this case, then, the separation is entirely a spiritual fact.

If, now, we enquire more fully into the matter, we discover that, even on the human level, the separation of personal presences we have mentioned is due to a spiritual reality, the sense of estrangement, the consciousness of a strained relationship mingled with a sense of guilt, a certain inability to be comfortable and at ease in the presence of the wronged person. All this is meant by estrangement between human persons. The sense of estrangement is the essence of the

separation between man and God which sin brings about. It is a spiritual strain, an inability to be at ease, or at home, in the fellowship of God's presence, and the sense of distance which this evokes. The free flow of love is impeded and the loving intercourse between spirits is interrupted. The love is still there, at any rate, on God's side. We cannot say that it is still there on the human side, for there is a decided tendency, on the human level, for estrangement to grow into enmity, and to develop into anger even between old and tried friends. When the Scriptures speak of the anger or the wrath of God, it is probably through the reading back to God, of the experience, so often found among men. If there is enmity in the situation it is on man's part, not on God's, for in Him love still remains in spite of man's sin. One of the marvels of divine love is that it loves us when we are sinners, and that God sends His son to save us "while we are yet sinners". The wonder of the whole position is that God takes the initiative in the effort of salvation, though it is against Him that men have sinned.

If, then, the core of the problem is this question of estrangement and the feeling of guilt it entails on the human side, the task of atonement must be that of taking away the estrangement and annulling the separation, removing the element of guilt so that there issues a reunion, a new and living union with God. It is the removal, not so much of sin, as of the sense of sin and the estrangement which is evoked through it. The parties between whom an estrangement has developed are not fully re-united until the old freedom of intercourse between them is restored and a harmony of spirits is realized. There must be an unimpeded flow of affection and of the give and take of one to the other, before real union is established. Only when this is done can the barrier of estrangement be said to have been removed. When we pursue our enquiry a stage further, we find that the essence and the efficient cause of the removal of the estrangement and the re-establishment of affectional relations is forgiveness on the part of the person wronged, and the ability to accept forgiveness on the part of the wrong-doer.

Forgiveness is much more than the remission of a penalty or the cancelling of the consequences of wrong-doing. It is this, but it is much more. The wrong-doer is really forgiven and experiences the sense of being forgiven when he is received into fellowship, warm, gracious, self-giving fellowship, with the person he has wronged. He is not forgiven if, after the remission of the penalty, he is kept at arm's length, or avoided and shunned. The wrong-doing child is not forgiven until he is able and willing to put his arms around his father's neck and to have the father's arms around him, and he is nestling on his father's bosom.

So, metaphorically speaking, man is only forgiven, in the deepest sense of the term, when he is nestling in the bosom of God, when all distance or estrangement between him and God is removed, and they are united in a union of love in which the old freedom of intercourse is re-established and enjoyed. Forgiveness is complete and the estrangement removed only when such a union is achieved. It would appear, therefore, that the central point in the Atonement is forgiveness, and that, from this point of view, forgiveness is the greatest miracle of divine love. In the full sense it is only possible to God, and all human forgiveness is a pale shadow, or a partial exemplification, of the reality as it is in God. That it is only possible in its completion for God is clear from the fact that it demands complete knowledge, such knowledge as is beyond the capacity of man and possible only to God. God's forgiveness is a dynamic power in the soul, and this is largely due to the fact that it stirs a new trust in the heart of the forgiven person as well as a new self-giving of God to this trust. Again, for forgiveness to be real and effectual, it must be free. A purchased forgiveness cannot meet the spiritual situation, nor can a forced forgiveness do so. Real forgiveness must be free, spontaneous and ungrudging, "without money and without price". Any other idea or experience of it vitiates its spiritual reality even though it may remit penalties and modify the outward conditions of the sinner. Spiritually, however, it means little or nothing unless it is free and self-giving, bearing in itself

something of the spiritual reality and experience of the forgiver. We must understand, however, that to say that forgiveness is free is not to assert that it is unconditioned, for there are conditions on both sides. On the human side the prime condition is real repentance, a condition of mind and heart that makes man forgiveable, able to receive and appreciate forgiveness. Such a repentance is not merely an emotional state or experience, or a surrender under the influence of what McDougal calls "negative self-feeling". A surrender of this kind is implied in the experience, but it is more than emotion for it implies an effort to make amends and, as far as possible, to rectify the wrong done.

There is another suggestion in the New Testament, that the possibility of receiving forgiveness depends on man's readiness to forgive those who have wronged him, and that his forgiveableness is in proportion to his willingness to forgive. In the Lord's Prayer, God is asked to forgive us as we forgive others who trespass against us. Without a really penitent and forgiving attitude of soul, the forgiveness of God, however free and unrestrained, cannot become ours, for we cannot accept it so that it becomes a possession of the soul. On the other hand, there are conditions on the divine side. The dim realization of this is what accounts for the fact that the older theories insisted that some satisfaction must be made to God. The justice of God demanded satisfaction for its claims, or the honour of God had to be vindicated and His government sustained before He could forgive. Again, the moral order had to be respected and the demands of the moral law fulfilled before He could effectively grant forgiveness to men.

St. Paul suggests¹ that the word of God and His character had to be vindicated and safeguarded in view of the fact of His forbearance in the past and His reluctance to carry out the full punishment of sin, that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die". Our ideas in these days make it difficult, if not impossible, for us to accept many of these theories. But we can realize that the condition on the divine side is that God

¹ Romans iii, 25-26.

can only forgive in harmony with His estimation and value of personality in Himself as well as in man. As far as we can divine, personality appears to be the most highly prized reality to God, for it is to rescue and redeem human personality that He came forth in Christ and underwent grave sacrifice and deep pain. We may infer, therefore, that whatever He does in His effort to redeem will be done in such a way as to honour and preserve personality and its moral values in man. Similarly He will honour and safeguard His own personality. To make forgiveness cheap and easy, or to grant it without conditions, would do an injury to the moral aspects of personality in man, and tend to undermine his sense of moral values and appreciation, and disturb his moral foundations.

On the other hand, God must not grant forgiveness in such a way as to imperil His own personality and endanger the moral ground of His being. This means that the forgiveness that has reality and meaning cannot be granted without cost, at any rate without what it costs to safeguard His own personality and that of man. It can never effect its purpose and be real unless it costs something, and costs to both sides involved, and we are inclined to agree with one writer who says that "the reality and intensity of forgiveness is in proportion to the suffering it entails". This fact is in reality what we ought to mean by the "objectivity" of the Atonement, and it suggests the ground on which it is possible for us to say that the Cross reveals to us the suffering of God. It is perfectly true, therefore, to state that the divine forgiveness springs from love, and the mode of granting it is an expression of love.

We might also insist that one aspect of the Cross is the transformation of failure and defeat into a spiritual victory as well as the transmutation of suffering into a real peace and joy. But we might still ask, Why does the love of God express itself in this specific way involving such suffering? We might answer that it is in the nature of love to bear suffering for others, and to give itself for their sakes. More especially it tends to give itself for the needy and the

distressed in the effort to help them. We might believe the truth expressed in the book of Exodus that God saw the anguish of Israel in their Egyptian bondage and had compassion and came to their help. His compassion set His love in motion in an effort to help them. Many thinkers remain at this point and are satisfied. We might believe, however, that there was something more compelling in God than the perception of, and compassion for, human need.

I have a measure of hesitation in stating what is in my mind and mention it with a degree of trepidation. It is that God was somehow involved or implicated in human sin and its consequences, that a certain sense of this was in His moral consciousness, and that His effort at Atonement was an attempt to rectify a situation in which He felt Himself implicated, and so find solace for His moral sense. This is a daring idea and must only be expressed with a due sense of reverence and caution. We need to guard it from misunderstanding and overstatement, and it must be treated very carefully. My mind has long been impressed with this idea, but I have hesitated to state it fully. In two of my latest books I have mentioned the possibility of such a situation.

I am emboldened to give it fuller expression by the fact that Principal Wheeler Robinson has worked out a somewhat similar idea with regard to human suffering. In his *Suffering, Human and Divine* he declares boldly that God is responsible for the possibility of suffering, since He made human nature with capacities and tendencies for pain. Dr. Robinson is careful to safeguard the character of God, for he does not refer pain itself to God, nor does he regard Him as responsible for suffering. He does, however, regard Him as implicated in the suffering of men, and as responsible for the possibility of its occurrence and invasion into the life and experience of men.

In a later book, *Redemption and Revelation*, Dr. Robinson goes a step further and insists that we must regard God as responsible for the possibility of evil as well as of pain. Here it is much more necessary to safeguard the character of God. In no sense must He be regarded as responsible for

sin, since sin is man's doing and he must be held responsible for it. The sense of guilt in his soul is a proof that it is his own doing. But since God gave him his will and his power of choosing, this carried with it the possibility of evil-doing and the ability of making a wrong choice, and for this reason we can say that He was at least implicated in sin, and if implicated, that there was in His moral consciousness a sense of discomfort with regard to sin. Such an idea as this seems to have occurred to the mind of Dr. F. A. Cockin (now Bishop), for he stated in a B.B.C. broadcast that God took responsibility for sin in the Cross, and made an effort to eradicate it.

This sense of being implicated in a situation or event, even when there is no full participation in the fault or in the guilt, may linger in the soul of man and prompt him to take some means of rectification or amendment. Thus, Wilmot Buxton tells us of the experience of Elizabeth Barrett Browning.¹ She was a frail and delicate girl and had to leave the atmosphere of London for a more congenial clime. She was taken to Torquay, and as a companion her brother Edward was sent with her. In a terrible storm, Edward was drowned while boating in Babbacombe Bay. Elizabeth had no connection with this tragedy, nor was she in any way responsible for it, but the feeling haunted her all through her life that she was implicated in his death and had, in some sense, a measure of responsibility for it, since it was for her sake that he had come to Devon.

A somewhat similar case is mentioned in Anthony Trollope's novel *Framley Parsonage*, and in this case it prompts an action to overcome and rectify the situation. Lord Lufton introduces the young vicar of the parish to a crafty and unscrupulous personage, who induces him to pledge himself and sign bills that involved him in financial difficulties. When the bills became due the vicar found himself unable to meet them, so that his reputation suffered. Moreover, his home was visited by bailiffs and was in danger of being broken up. The young lord, who had been

¹ *A Book of Noble Women.*

abroad, returns to find the situation grave and threatening, and at once feels that he was implicated in it and was to a measure responsible for the trouble. He immediately goes to his mother, tells her that he feels himself partially responsible, and asks for sufficient money to pay the bills and save the vicar's reputation and his home. In this way he eases his own conscience and removes the anxiety and distress of the vicar, thus rectifying the situation and avoiding a catastrophe.

This sense of implication is a very real experience of the spirit of man and can become very intense until some effort at rectification has been made. Is it not possible for us to think that something of this kind is true with regard to God? If this is so, we have a profound truth which helps to make the idea of the Atonement reasonable and intelligent. We can regard the Atonement as God's effort to rectify the disorder and disorganization caused by sin in the moral and spiritual universe, and by so doing satisfy His sense of being implicated in it, and of having some measure of responsibility for it. In it God goes all out in an effort to rectify the disturbance made in the moral order and the spiritual upheaval caused by the tragedy of sin. In this way it is essentially the act of God, and the outgoing of His love, prompted by His sense of being involved in the whole tragedy.

We must move carefully in this region, for we are dealing with deep and mysterious realities. Moreover, we are reading back into God's mind and moral consciousness what we experience ourselves, and are only certain that it is true with regard to us. So we are liable to the charge of "anthropomorphism" of a very serious kind. We can reply that it is only by thus reading back to God some of the best intuitions and impulses of our own nature that we can get a measure of understanding of the divine nature. This is really what we mean by speaking of personality in God.

Another question occurs at this point, for we might ask, What is the relation of this sense of implication in God to the death of Christ? It is open to us to reply that Christ's absolute obedience even unto death brought about a change

in the foundations and the realities of the moral world. It is probably true that the only way to rectify the disobedience which lies at the heart of sin is by an unfaltering obedience that is stronger than sin. We can, at any rate, suggest that the sacrifice of Christ was the spiritual offering of perfect obedience, the offering of Himself in the deepest region of His Selfhood, in the innermost factor of His being, His will. The sacrifice of His body and the surrender of His physical life in death were due to the exigencies of the situation in which He found Himself and to the historical circumstances of His time, but the surrender of His will was wholly His own, and was an act of divine significance, an act wrought with eternal consequences. To bring this offering to its perfection meant suffering and anguish, and "He learnt obedience through the things He suffered".

We can go further and believe that this absolute obedience was so potent and tremendous a fact in the moral universe, that, to quote Dr. Forsyth, "it changed the foundations of the moral universe", and reversed the processes and the forces set in motion by the disobedience of sin. Something of this kind is suggested by St. Paul when he says that "as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Romans v, 19). We know enough of the influence of moral devotion and of loyalty to truth and righteousness in the service of a higher cause, to realize that it has great power and an element of redemptive energy. When such influence is extended to its utmost power, as it must have been in the perfect obedience of Christ, we can understand that in the depth of the moral universe, past our understanding, this act could be so dynamic and powerful as to bring about a change in the fundamental reality of the moral order and, to quote Dr. Forsyth again, "make the world a forgiven world".

Can we go any further in our search? I think we can, for here we can call psychology to our aid. It is recognized in psychology that one of the most important principles in the science is what is known as the principle of equilibrium,

the tendency of the mind and the organism to recover equilibrium when disturbed and when their steady flow is broken. Adler made this principle the basis of his whole system, and the other leaders of psychological thought have recognized its place and its power in life. This principle reveals itself in divers ways. The process of the mind's tendency to adapt itself to difficulties and perplexities, and bring about an accommodation to the more pressing needs of living, is an instance of its operation. Thus it is possible for the mind to accustom itself to pain after a time, until it almost ceases to be painful. In the same way the body or the organism can become acclimatized to a warmer or a colder region, and is able to live there in comparative comfort.

Probably we can see it more clearly in the case of an intense sorrow. At first the grief after the death of a loved one is poignant and intense. The foundations of life have been disturbed and a deep affectional relationship has suffered violence, so that nothing can be quite the same again. Time passes, and we know that time is a great healer. Slowly the mind and heart accommodate themselves to the loss sustained. There will remain an ache in the heart and a conscious sense of loss, but the sting is taken out of the sorrow, and the wound finds a measure of healing. This healing process is an aspect of the principle of accommodation and the natural tendency of the mind to find equilibrium. The principle, however, lies deeper than any of the illustrations we have given, for it appears to be an essential element in the nature of the mind. Adler has insisted that it can be found in all realms of mental life, while Freud has made it one of the pillars on which his theory of psychoses and mental aberrations rests.

We can, however, extend our outlook and regard the principle as holding throughout the universe in its physical, moral and spiritual aspects. Physically it is illustrated by the tendency of natural objects to recover from an injury or a disability. Thus a branch of a tree, when injured, rights itself, if given time, whilst if it be broken away

there develops over the wound a rough, tough fibre that keeps out wind and storm, frost and cold. The very soil itself seems to carry a measure of potency to recover when disturbed, for when a cutting is made into the earth very soon it appears to heal itself, becoming hardened and covered with a fresh carpet of green. In a similar manner the human body tends to heal the wounds made in it, if they are kept clean. In some cases the wounds or lesions are in a vital part of the body and the organism cannot effect a recovery, or an equilibrium, so that death supervenes. But in the vast majority of cases Nature does her own work of healing whenever she gets an opportunity. The blood does its utmost to cast out impurities and eliminate any alien presence that invades its realm.

Another aspect of the same natural tendency is mentioned by the late Professor J. Arthur Thomson, the famous scientist, when he insists that there is a power in Nature that works for the elimination of ugliness and distortions, and makes for the multiplication and establishment of beauty. In the moral sphere it is possible to regard the tendency of the conscience to become accustomed to certain acts of wrong-doing, to lose its sensitiveness or, as St. Paul says, to become "seared as with a hot iron", so that it ceases to trouble us, as an illustration of this principle, whilst spiritually it can be seen in the case of sorrow mentioned above.

There is no doubt, therefore, that the principle is a real and important fact in the nature of the universe. It appears legitimate, therefore, to suggest that the Atonement is but another illustration of this principle. We may regard it as fundamentally an effort by the moral universe, of which God is the author and ground, and in which He is active, to recover equilibrium after the disturbance caused by sin. The moral order seeks to right itself, and the whole movement may be regarded as a supreme effort on the part of God to break the power of sin and to be master in His own house by overcoming the forces of evil and disruption.

From this point of view the Atonement is a cosmic fact

in the deepest sense of the term. It goes to the heart of the basic reality and affects the moral and spiritual universe at its deepest. It is not pretended that this view solves all the problems that arise regarding the Atonement, but it makes it rational and in harmony with some of the basic laws of the world, more especially of the moral and spiritual universe. We can, in the light of this fact, understand what is meant when it is said that the name of Christ stands above all names, for His work is basal to all the conflict with sin, and every victory of holiness and righteousness. It establishes beyond all criticism the absolute uniqueness of Christ and the finality of His work. The Cross thus becomes His crown; it is His glorification as St. John suggests, and through it He is destined, in the ultimate, to draw all men to Himself. We can understand how it was that the earliest preaching was not only the preaching of Christ, but of "Christ crucified". Moreover, it makes it clear that to know God in Christ is life eternal, for the very life of God can become ours through the work of Christ on His Cross.

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